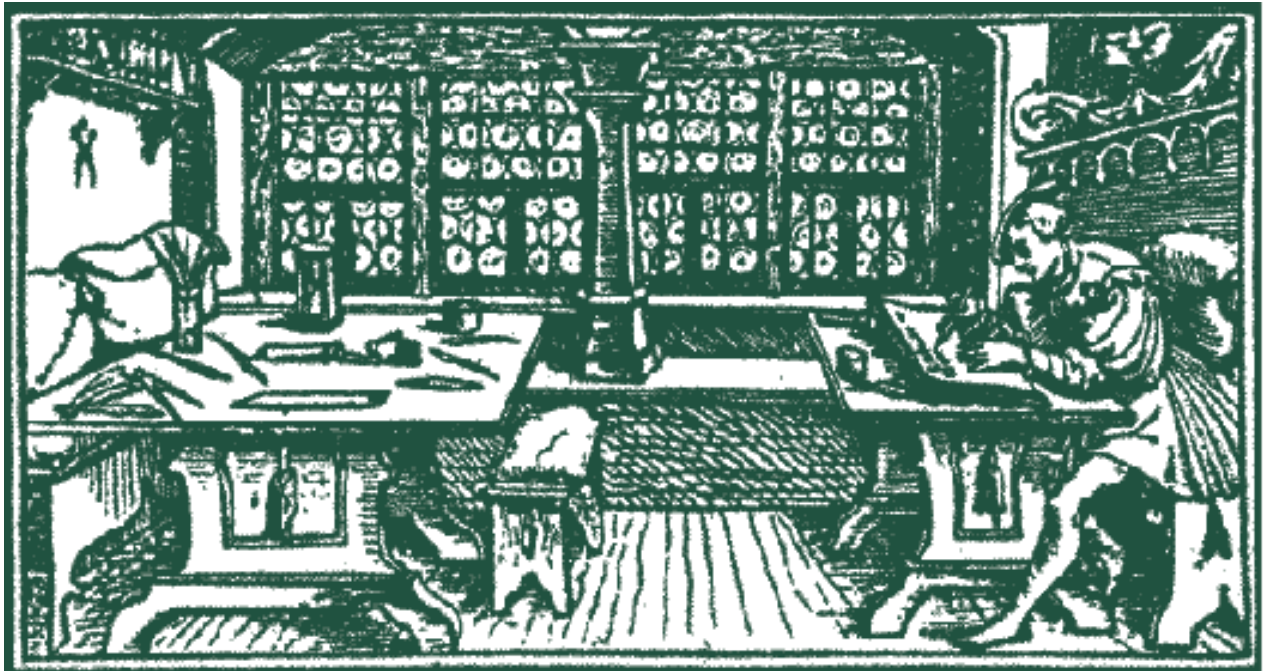




STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS
BABEȘ-BOLYAI



PHILOLOGIA

2/2021

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI
PHILOLOGIA

**Volume 66 (LXVI), 2/2021,
June 2021**

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI PHILOLOGIA

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Studia UBB Philologia is a Category A scientific journal in the rating provided by Romania's National Council for Scientific Research.

As of 2017 *Studia UBB Philologia* has been selected for indexing in Clarivate Analytics' Emerging Sources Citation Index for the Arts and Humanities.

YEAR
MONTH
ISSUE

Volume 66 (LXVI) 2021
JUNE
2

PUBLISHED ONLINE: 2021-06-20
PUBLISHED PRINT: 2021-06-30
ISSUE DOI:10.24193/subbphilo.2021.2

S T U D I A
UNIVERSITATIS BABEȘ-BOLYAI
PHILOLOGIA
2

Desktop Editing Office: 51st B.P. Hasdeu, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Phone + 40 264-40.53.52

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POSTMODERNIST FACES OF TRUTH AND FICTION IN IRIS MURDOCH'S *THE SEA, THE SEA*

ELISABETA SIMONA CATANĂ¹

ABSTRACT. *Postmodernist Faces of Truth and Fiction in Iris Murdoch's The Sea, The Sea.* This essay analyses Iris Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea* and argues that the concept of truth stands for multiple-faced fiction to be interpreted according to the readers' vision, culture and education. One's vision of the world represents one's truth about the world. Emphasizing the fictionality of truth and inviting the readers to analyze the symbols of the *sea* and of the "various lights" (Murdoch 77), which stand for different views on the past and the world, Iris Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea* evinces its postmodernist and metafictional condition.

Keywords: *truth, fiction, postmodernist faces, vision, the past, the present, the sea, the light, the world*

REZUMAT. *Fețele postmoderniste ale adevărului și ficțiunii în romanul Marea, Marea de Iris Murdoch.* Eseul argumentează faptul că în romanul *Marea, Marea* de Iris Murdoch conceptul de adevăr este asociat cu ficțiunea, având fețe multiple ce urmează a fi interpretate în funcție de viziunea, cultura și educația cititorilor. Propria viziune asupra lumii reprezintă propriul adevăr despre lume. Evidențiind caracterul ficțional al adevărului și invitând cititorii să analizeze simbolul *mării* și simbolul "luminilor variate" (Murdoch 77) ce scot în evidență puncte de vedere diferite despre trecut și despre conceptul de lume, romanul *Marea, Marea* de Iris Murdoch își dovedește condiția de roman postmodernist și metafictional.

Cuvinte-cheie: *adevăr, ficțiune, fețe postmoderniste, viziune, trecutul, prezentul, marea, lumina, lumea*

Introduction

Drawing on the theory of postmodernism developed by Linda Hutcheon (1988) and on the theory of metafiction put forward by Patricia Waugh, this essay shows that Iris Murdoch's novel, *The Sea, The Sea*, illustrates these theorists'

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ideas. The concept of truth escapes a unique meaning, having various faces or interpretations and turning into fiction. Supporting the theory of Lacan quoted and enlarged upon by Judith Butler (1990), I claim that in Iris Murdoch's novel women speak and uphold their own truth, coping with the man's power of manipulation and denying his truth. Just as the concept of truth is given diverse interpretations by the characters in this literary work, the novel is revalued as a theatrical performance and a narrative with multiple faces including the autobiography, the memoir, the diary.

Analyzing Iris Murdoch's novels in the chapter entitled "Post-War and Post-Modern Literature" in *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, Andrew Sanders (1994) shows that all of this author's novels "are carefully patterned, though the rules of the obscure game which decide these patterns often seem to be broken, reformed, and realigned by the very nature of the freedom which she allows her characters" (598).

Iris Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea* consists of a *Prehistory*, six chapters entitled *History* and a *Postscript* entitled *Life goes on*. The unique narrator, Charles Arrowby, a former famous actor, wants his piece of writing to be "a continuous meditation" (26) without any reference to a specific historical period. He often appears to hesitate about the choice of the events he would like to focus on, wondering if he really wants to write about a particular subject like his childhood or about certain aspects from his past life. Being invited to decide whether Charles Arrowby's piece of writing is a memoir, a diary or an autobiography, we are suggested that this literary work is open to our own interpretation. Hesitating upon mentioning a definite genre of this literary work, Charles Arrowby considers it a combination of a memoir, a diary and an autobiography: "I had written the above, destined to be the opening paragraph of my memoirs. [...] Is that what this chronicle will prove to be? Time will show. At this moment, a page old, it feels more like a diary than a memoir" (1). Further on, he says, "I have started to write my autobiography" (22). Charles Arrowby frequently tells his readers that he rereads his own piece of writing. He insists that his autobiography does not reveal the absolute truth of his past. He enlarges upon the metaphor of the world as a stage, associating the theatre with life and with an instrument which offers us the opportunity to "tell our everyday lies" (33). Charles Arrowby represents his past as a world on a theatre stage and the six parts of the novel entitled *History* look like a theatre play. The theatrical performance he stages alludes to William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Moreover, his approach to the theme of the world as a stage and his vision of the artist as a magician, who tries his best to impose his will upon everyone by his power of manipulation, echo William Shakespeare. The former successful actor and director of the Shakespeare theatre, Charles Arrowby, associates himself with Prospero and admits that his

vision of life has been influenced by this dramatist's plays: "I owe my whole life to Shakespeare" (27); "I think I was a good Prospero" (38). Like Prospero, Charles Arrowby is an artist who attempts to subdue his world by the power of his mind, by his knowledge and by magic: "From the guileless simplicity of my parents' life, from the immobility and quietness of my home, I fled to the trickery and magic of art" (29). At the same time, Arrowby associates his own life with a novel – "So I am writing my life, after all, as a novel" (153) – and turns his piece of writing into metafiction as defined by Patricia Waugh. According to this theoretician, exploring the concept of one's life (world) as fiction is specific to metafiction.

Metafiction pursues such questions through its formal self-exploration, drawing on the traditional metaphor of the world as book, but often recasting it in the terms of contemporary philosophical, linguistic or literary theory. (Waugh 2-3)

Iris Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea* is a postmodernist metafictional novel which draws our attention to the fact that truth is nothing but a "veiled face" (500) and the result of our own analysis and interpretation. "Reason said that the evidence was not conclusive and could be read in other ways" (158). According to Patricia Waugh, in a metafictional novel, "through continuous narrative intrusion, the reader is reminded that not only do characters verbally construct their own realities; they are themselves verbal constructions, words, not beings" (26). In line with Patricia Waugh's idea, Charles Arrowby suggests to his readers that his piece of writing can be associated with his autobiography and his diary, but it is also his fictional creation. Arrowby mocks at his readers' readiness to believe what is written, emphasizing the fictionality of his own autobiographical account. That is why he is an instance of what Seymour Chatman calls an "unreliable narrator" (233). According to Chatman, "in 'unreliable narration' the narrator's account is at odds with the implied reader's surmises about the story's real intentions" (233).

The title of the novel, *The Sea, The Sea*, is an invitation to analyze Iris Murdoch's novel beyond its surface structure and declared status of an autobiography. The symbol of the *sea* stands for the hidden meanings of fiction and the past to be explored and understood. Like fiction, whose meanings can be either easy to decipher or hidden into symbols difficult to understand, the sea either allows us to penetrate its mystery by laying bare its bottom at ebb and flow or it hides its mystery in its abyssal depth difficult to reach and understand. Both fiction and the sea stand for complex worlds with various faces whose interpretation requires open-mindedness and a broad cultural

background. Both fiction and the sea are open to our analysis in a postmodernist fashion. Their unique truth is never known. In Iris Murdoch's novel, the image of the sea is shown as a background, its changing color and mood being present throughout the novel. To Charles Arrowby, the sea is his source of happiness, of energy and inspiration. Moreover, the sea stands for the narrator's hidden consciousness and for the present past whose depth we have to investigate and understand.

Visions of the Past and the Present Conveying Various Truths

Conducting an experiment with the form of the novel, Iris Murdoch's literary work introduces us to six chapters entitled *History* which look like the six acts of a well-staged play whose background is the sea with its changing colors and moods. The stage director is Charles Arrowby, the narrator of the novel, whose former successful acting career in the Shakespeare Theatre seems to have influenced his perspective on the concept of fiction writing. The protagonists of this six-act play are Charles Arrowby and his former colleagues and friends, his cousin James, his former girlfriend, Hartley, her husband, Ben, and her adoptive son, Titus. The stage is Charles's house "called Shruff End" (10) in the village of Narrowdean near the sea. Being considered a "haunted" place (54), Shruff End can be associated with Prospero's haunted island. Like Prospero who subdues all the spirits met on the desert island, Charles, a former charismatic actor and theatre director, influences his friends and former colleagues' lives both in a positive and in a negative way. His influence is imprinted on their minds and that is why they keep visiting him at his new house in Shruff End. They are either willing to build new relationships with him, as Lizzie and Gilbert Opian tell him, or they want to take revenge against him, as Peregrine and Rosina show him. Before coming to the scene of taking revenge, the characters ponder on the past, with Charles, and spend their time eating, drinking, swimming and chatting. Their dialogues evince their different visions on the truth of the past and the present, their views on Charles's ideas and actions. They argue about what they consider the truth of their lives. Unlike Prospero who defeats the evil spirits led by Caliban and who finally comes to terms with his relatives and former enemies, Charles Arrowby is defeated by his former friends who reject his views and do not accept the consequences of his actions. He is a world apart in his approach to the past and to the present and turns into a tragic hero in a drama we are invited to watch.

Having important roles in Charles's play, his friends, former colleagues and actors express their frustrations over their past relationships with Charles and over their life. They reflect on their past and attempt to avenge it. Thus,

Peregrine and his former wife, Rosina accuse Charles of having maliciously dissolved their marriage. On the other hand, Lizzie and Gilbert Opian try to rekindle their old friendship with Charles in order to come to terms with their past and present. Except Charles, all of his visitors view the past as a lost time. Their vision on the past conveys their own truth regarding the meaning and the importance of the past.

To Charles, the past is like a property which he strives to hold and protect at all costs. In his opinion, "the past can recover" (84). Charles argues that "we must quietly collect our past, collect it up with tacit understanding, without any intensity or drama" (121). He does not perceive any difference between the past and the present. They are "so close, so almost one, as if time were an artificial teasing out of a material which longs to join, to interpenetrate" (153). Being an idealist who preserves his old illusions about the perfect love which he met and lost in the past and which he still searches and hopes for, Charles Arrowby, considers the past "the most real thing of all, and loyalty to it the most important thing of all" (354). He is determined to live the past again and wait for Hartley, the love of his childhood and the woman of his present dreams, hoping that she will come back to him: "I've got to wait. She'll come to me here. She's part of me, it's not a caprice or a dream" (354). Charles Arrowby lives in a present past which offers him food for thought, urging him to ask many rhetorical questions about its faces, its reactions and final outcome. Stubbornly embracing an illusory idea, he turns into a hilarious character who lives in a dream world, tilting at windmills to have his dream come true. Only time shows him that his illusions have been shattered, urging him to admit that "the past refused to come back, as it did in dreams, to be remade" (414). His vision on the present past fades as he admits that "the past buries the past and must end in silence, but it can be a conscious silence that rests open-eyed" (500). Nevertheless, by associating the past with the "conscious silence that rests open-eyed" (500), Arrowby suggests that the past is still alive and open to interpretation.

Charles exploits the complexity of fiction which offers various perspectives on the past and on the present under the guise of an autobiography or a diary. To give more authenticity to his account, Charles Arrowby shows us his full letters to Lizzie, to Hartley, to Mr. Fitch and their replies as well as other letters. This technique of combining various types of texts and writing styles within a novel is specific to postmodernist literary works. According to Frederick M. Holmes, "it is fairly typical for postmodernist novels to present themselves as unintegrated agglomerations of different kinds of documents" (34). Not only does Charles Arrowby include various letters in this novel but he also presents us what he imagines these characters might think. He asks and tries to answer many rhetorical questions about the characters' feelings and their possible approaches

to the past and the present. At a certain point, Charles tries to convince the readers that they read a truthful account of the events, playing with their expectations: "This novelistic memoir, as it has now become, is however, as far as its facts are concerned [...] accurate and truthful" (239).

The narrator, Charles Arrowby, focuses on his obsession with his past and present love for Hartley, turning his novel into a love story. His successful career of an actor at a famous London theatre and his various love affairs have not managed to make him forget his pure childhood love for Mary Hartley Smith who left him when he decided to attend an acting school in London. We are introduced to Charles's dramatic encounter with Hartley and to their different truths about the past, the present, and the world. He accidentally meets her in the street many years later when he retires and moves to Shruff End in a village near the sea. He has a private conversation with her in a church and pays her unexpected visits, hoping to convince her to leave her husband, Ben, and marry him. Despite her old age and physical change, Charles seems to be enchanted with the beauty he remembers from his past. Mary Hartley Smith is the woman of his dreams who shared his love in his childhood and who abandoned him when she found out that he wanted to pursue an acting career. Just as Charles believes in his ideal love which can never die, Hartley believes in the importance of her marriage despite its hardships. She thinks that an actor cannot make a good husband, preferring an unhappy married life, an isolated life with a tyrannical, jealous husband. Both Charles Arrowby and Hartley illustrate and uphold their own principles and nothing can convince them to change their mind.

Hartley represents the faithful and obedient wife who would rather die for her principle. She considers that she has to protect her married life by being a submissive, humble wife no matter how painful it might be rather than accept Charles's offer of a new life. Her vision on married life is her own truth. She upholds an old tradition which encourages women to be obedient and humble, preventing them from making their voices heard in their married life in order to be happier. Accepting Charles's invitation to his house in Narrowdean and satisfying his curiosity, Hartley tells him her story and insists upon the misfortunes she has suffered in her married life. Her only reason for having accepted to suffer has been her desire to make her husband, Ben, happy at all costs. "And I married him to make him happy" (227). Her life principle prevents her from escaping her condition. "You can't see it, nobody can understand a marriage. I've prayed and prayed to go on loving Ben" (228). Accepting marriage as a prison is part of an old tradition of female submissiveness as a condition for maintaining the matrimony. "And, as I told you, I've never really had any friends, Ben and I have lived so much together, so much on our own, so sort of secretly, a kind of hidden life, like criminals. I never had anyone to talk to, even

if I had wanted to talk" (229). Planning to save her and keep her in his house in Narrowdean, showing her the advantages of starting a new life with him, Charles faces her hostility, aggressiveness and stubbornness. Frightened by a new life perspective and refusing to make new decisions and changes, she behaves like a hostile woman lost for words and ideas and subject to her violent instincts.

As she was crying out Hartley had been running to and fro in the kitchen like a demented animal. [...] She then began to fight me, silently, violently, and with a surprising strength, kicking my ankles, writhing her body about, one hand pinching my arm, the other pressed hard against my neck. (232)

Despite the clear evidence that Hartley will not come back to him as she cannot escape the prison of her principles, Charles still hopes that he will succeed in convincing her to start a new life. He starts spying on her secretly, trying to obtain important information. He spends his time just remembering their beautiful past love:

I did not want to become simply obsessed with her misery. [...] So I reverted to the past when she was the unspoilt focus of my innocent love, seeing her as she had been when she seemed my future, my whole life, that life which had been taken from me and yet still seemed to exist somewhere as a packaged stolen possibility. (245)

Charles's views on his present and past reality must be associated with his own truth about this reality. The dramatic scenes of Charles's obsessive love story are vividly recreated and staged starting with the moment when Titus, who is Hartley's and Ben's adoptive son, enters his life. Being informed of Ben's suspicion that Titus might be his own son following a secret relationship with his mother, Hartley, Charles tries to make Titus his ally in his plan to convince Hartley to marry him. Having left his adoptive parents for not loving him, Titus does not feel happy to meet them. Nevertheless, he accepts to have an encounter with his adoptive mother, Hartley, in Charles's house, warning him that she will never leave her husband as "nothing could make her happy" (259). Hartley forgot "about freedom long ago" (274).

Charles is determined to keep Hartley in his house in Narrowdean away from Ben and convince her to relive their beautiful past and love story. This scene is fundamental for the condition of a tragic heroine – a humiliated woman, prisoner to Charles and to her own tyrannical husband, having no choice but to take the blame upon herself. Charles turns into a merciless oppressor who only shows his interest in taking advantage of any opportunity that could determine Hartley to leave her husband and marry him. He behaves like a gaoler, locking the door of the room where she stays for fear that she might run away and drown

in the sea. Seeing Hartley's misery, sickness and hysterical attitude, Charles finds it difficult to admit that his actions are doomed to failure. He contradicts Hartley, being unable to understand her decision and mentality. He cannot understand the dutiful Hartley who believes that "life is pain" (304) and who gives in to her misery, accepting her unhappy marriage and terrible fear as normal states of affair. Charles fails to properly grasp Hartley's hysterical reactions, her feelings of pain and revolt against him, which are nothing but her desperate means of revealing her own truth about happiness and pain, life and the world, her past and her present. She is nothing but a tragic heroine misunderstood by Charles who claims to love her. Invited and kept in Charles's house for a while, she behaves as if she were bedridden in a hospital, refusing to eat, enjoy life with Charles, sleeping on a mattress and asking Charles to let her go home.

Finally, Charles has to accept his defeat and he becomes a tragic hero as well. "I felt dread and a terrible fatalism; and bitter grief, grief such as I had never felt in my life since Hartley had left me so many years ago" (310). In fact, both Hartley and Charles look like tragic heroes in a Greek tragedy. Both of them are doomed to personal disaster due to their own actions and decisions. Struggling with his impulses and illusions, Charles takes his friends' advice that it would be better to leave her free to go back to her husband. Charles's theatrical performance shows how ambitious he is to play the role of Prospero. He tries hard to impose his will upon everyone and hopes to be successful. Unlike Prospero, Charles ends up in a bitter defeat, having to adapt to a painful reality. According to Andrew Sanders,

as a range of novels from *The Flight from the Enchanter* (1955) to *The Sea*, *The Sea* (1978) and *The Philosopher's Pupil* (1983) suggest, those characters who attempt to impose nets, theories, mystical enchantments, 'artistic' arrangements, or restrictive myths upon reality must themselves adapt to a world which of necessity eludes predetermined human systems of control. (598)

Charles's approach to his past and present reality is rejected by Hartley and by his friends. Hartley associates him with a bird and a fish for his total freedom of movement and thought. She calls her love for him a dream impossible to come true.

Yes, I suppose I love you, I've never forgotten you, and when I saw you I felt it all again, but it's something childish, it isn't part of the real world. [...] There isn't any place for this love in the world now, it's pointless, it's irrelevant, it's a dream, we're in a dream place and tomorrow we must leave it. (280)

Charles is a voice apart as all of his visitors to Shruff End – his former colleagues, Peregrine, Rosina, his cousin, James, Gilbert Opian, Titus – disagree with his ideas and actions. Peregrine accuses him of considering Hartley his personal possession and looking down on women. Charles is also accused that he has only taken advantage of women all of his life, cheating them and destroying their married lives. To James, Charles's effort to marry Hartley is an act of vanity and power. Charles fights for an illusion: "Some kinds of fruitless preoccupations with the past can create such simulacra, and they can exercise power, like those heroes at Troy fighting for a phantom Helen" (352-353). Charles's attitude, discourse and wishful thinking about Hartley turn him into a Don Quixote tilting at windmills. Only when informed that Hartley has sold her house and left for Australia with Ben, does he admit his total defeat and the fact that he has been just an actor in this story.

Pondering on Charles Arrowby's actions and discourse, one can associate him with the symbol of oppressive power and determination to have his desires satisfied. On the other hand, Hartley stands for a reasonable, thoughtful woman conscious of her own reality and of Charles's impossible dreams. Her power to stick to her principles prevails over Charles's oppressive power. She represents the power to convince by means of reason. She convinces Charles that he believes in a dream which cannot come true. Hartley confirms the theory of Lacan quoted and commented by Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. According to this theory, women are the power whereas men have the power.

Women are said to "be" the Phallus in the sense that they maintain the power to reflect or represent the "reality" of the self-grounding postures of the masculine subject, a power which, if withdrawn, would break up the foundational illusions of the masculine subject position. In order to "be" the Phallus, the reflector and guarantor of an apparent masculine subject position, women must become, must "be" [...] precisely what men are not and, in their very lack, establish the essential function of men. [...] On the other hand, men are said to "have" the Phallus, yet never to "be" it. (Butler 61-62)

Mary Hartley Smith's determination to continue her married life with her husband, Ben, and her belief in the importance of her own marriage and in her own truth demonstrate her feminine power to be what she wants to be and to have what she wants to have. Fighting Charles's plans to marry her, she looks like a tragic heroine in a Greek tragedy. Her view of happiness differs from Charles's vision. She understands and accepts her own condition and limits, rejecting any change in her life. Her attitude and tragic condition confirm the

idea expressed by F.I. Zeitlin in the article entitled *Playing the Other: Theater, Theatricality and the Feminine in Greek Drama*, where he shows that women as tragic heroines in the Greek drama have more power of reflection than men and acknowledge their limitations much better.

Woman comes equipped with a “natural” awareness of those very complexities men would resist, if they could. Situated in her more restrictive and sedentary position in the world, she is permitted, she is asked, we might say, to reflect more deeply, like Phaedra, on the paradoxes of herself. Through these she can arrive better at the paradoxes of the world that she, much better than men, seems to know is subject to irreconcilable conflict, subject as well to time, flux and change. (F.I. Zeitlin 122)

In Iris Murdoch’s novel, women speak their own truth and are powerful enough to uphold it. They either endure misery and humiliation, coping with the male power of manipulation, oppression and with their illusions like Hartley and Lizzie, or they take revenge, like Rosina. Unlike Hartley’s strong power and determination to uphold her own principles, Lizzie’s attitude does not show any sense of feminine dignity. The scene when Lizzie visits Charles in Narrowdean to beg him to marry her and love her as he has promised her shows the condition of a woman ready to make any compromise and be humiliated just for the sake of getting married. Says Lizzie: “I’m yours. [...] I don’t want you to be unselfish and scrupulous and generous, I want you to be the lord and the king as you have always been” (189). Lizzie does not protect her dignity and does not restore her pride. Nevertheless, like the other female characters, she plays her role successfully on the stage of Iris Murdoch’s novel.

This is a postmodernist approach to truth, namely there are different meanings assigned to the past and the present, to the concept of happiness and pain according to the characters’ vision, personality, education, and life experience. Moreover, there is a postmodernist outline of autobiography, diary, and memoir that are nothing but the faces of fiction in Iris Murdoch’s novel structured like a well-staged play whose analysis may offer multiple interpretations.

The Symbolic Representation of the World in Iris Murdoch’s *The Sea, The Sea*

A postmodernist novel which evinces the fictionality of the autobiography, the memoir, and the diary and encourages multiple interpretations, Iris Murdoch’s *The Sea, The Sea* draws our attention to a series of symbols that can help us understand Charles Arrowby’s vision of the past and the present, happiness, life and the world. Claiming that truth has a “veiled face” (500), Charles Arrowby suggests that truth is the result of our own analysis and conclusions. He is

the protagonist of a postmodernist fiction defined by Linda Hutcheon as "historiographic metafiction." According to Linda Hutcheon, "what historiographic metafiction explicitly does, though, is to cast doubt on the very possibility of any firm 'guarantee of meaning', however situated in discourse. This questioning overlaps with Foucault's challenging of the possibility of knowledge ever allowing any final, authoritative truth" (55).

Charles's discourse evinces his own truth about the past and Hartley, about true love, happy life and the world whereas his friends and former colleagues offer different perspectives on these notions, arguing for different truths. The multiple truths to be uncovered and acknowledged are symbolized by the metaphor of the *sea* in the title of the novel. The different interpretations are symbolized by the metaphor of "various lights" (77) perceived by Charles while writing. The "various lights" (77) are the various truths about the past. One of the *lights* is associated with the symbol of the "mouth opening to the daylight" (77) which stands for the plethora of details we read and have to make sense of. This special *light* is also associated with "a hole through which fires emerge from the centre of the earth" (77), a symbol standing for our creative reading and reconstruction of the past. Another *light* is associated with Charles's deep feelings of love for Hartley. "Perhaps it is the only true light in my life, the light that reveals the truth. No wonder I feared to lose the light and to be left in the darkness forever" (79). Despite her physical change and old age, Charles perceives Hartley in the same *light*, not making any difference between the past and the present. Thus, Hartley, the woman of Charles's dreams, becomes a symbolic representation of an axis mundi as she is associated with "the world centre" (115) and with his "pure substance [...] like nerves, like blood" (170). Charles's unrequited love for Hartley is metaphorically represented by *the sea monster* that he sees a couple of times: "What was I looking for? I was looking for that sea monster" (130). Moreover, the symbol of the sea serpent can stand for death as Charles sees this monster in the cauldron where he was pushed by Peregrine in order to be killed. "The monstrous sea serpent had actually been in the cauldron with me" (466). Charles's world is represented as a stage whose lights and symbols are open to our own analysis and interpretation in a postmodernist fashion. The play on the stage evinces the interconnection between the past and the present. It points to man's vanity and desire to keep control of the world as well as to woman's power to uphold her own truth and principles.

Conclusion

Iris Murdoch's novel offers a postmodernist representation of the faces of truth which are the different meanings the characters assign to the world, to the past and the present, to happiness and pain. The two protagonists of this

novel, Charles Arrowby and Hartley, as well as the other characters speak and uphold their own truths about the past and the present, revealing their own feelings and perspective upon the world. Their power lies in their ability to argue for their truth and follow it. In a postmodernist manner, Iris Murdoch's novel invites us to cast our interpretation on the dramatic representation of its world, on the various truths supported by the characters and on the symbols in the novel. Associating the concept of truth with the symbols of *the sea* and *the light*, Charles Arrowby, the narrator of Iris Murdoch's novel, demonstrates that one's vision of the world represents one's truth about the world. The concept of truth is nothing but fiction with multiple faces (drama, autobiography, memoir, and diary). Iris Murdoch's fiction evinces its postmodernist condition, having the power to hint at the various faces of truth as perceived by the narrator and by the other characters in the novel.

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MAX BLECHER'S CENTRAL EUROPEAN AFFINITIES

GABRIELA GLĂVAN¹

ABSTRACT. *Max Blecher's Central European Affinities.* Max Blecher's connections with the Central European literary imaginary, which scholars have established through readings that place Blecher in the proximity of authors such as Bruno Schulz or Franz Kafka, could be revisited not only comparatively, but also by tackling some key issues in his work and biography that may confirm the writer's belonging to this vast intellectual territory. Provincial spaces, marginality, uncertainties regarding identity, existential confusion, immaturity, the pervasiveness of objects and of the artificial, they all reveal a perspective upon literature that may function, in the absence of a geographical belonging, as a bridge and connection between worlds that mirror each other's essence and difference.

Keywords: *Central European literature, identity, the province, periphery, Jewishness*

REZUMAT. *Max Blecher – afinități central-europene.* Conectarea lui Max Blecher la imaginarul central-european, consolidată critic prin asocieri cu Franz Kafka sau Bruno Schulz, poate fi rediscutată nu doar din perspectivă comparativă, ci și prin explorarea unor aspecte ce-i pot justifica direct apartenența la acest vast teritoriu intelectual. Provincia, marginalitatea, incertitudinea identității, confuzia, imaturitatea, invazia obiectelor și a artificialului revelează o viziune literară ce poate funcționa, în absența unei apartenențe geografice, ca punte și conector între lumi ce-și expun în oglindă specificul și diferența.

Cuvinte-cheie: *literatura central-europeană, identitatea, provincia, perifericul, evreitatea*

Max Blecher cannot be included in a literary geography of Central Europe without the necessary mention that his potential belonging to this imaginary framework could only be justified by an affinity that transcends a territorial

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principle. In his fundamental essay “The Tragedy of Central Europe”, Milan Kundera defines Central Europe as “the part of Europe situated geographically in the center – culturally in the West and politically in the East” (Kundera 33). This connection to a Central European sensibility is confirmed by certain stylistic features and thematic structures that directly favor Blecher’s inclusion in a Central European context alongside writers such as Bruno Schulz or Franz Kafka. Beyond their aesthetic affinities, these writers are connected by their common Jewish heritage, which imprints a self-reflexive identity marked by fragility and constant sense of crisis and uncertainty.

Comparative interpretations connecting Max Blecher to Bruno Schulz have facilitated the inclusion of the Romanian writer in an extended perimeter of Central European literature (cf. Berechet, 80). This coincides with the efforts of some Romanian critics from the seventh and eighth decades of the twentieth century to place the interwar writer in a central canonical position in the Romanian literary history. In *Romanian Literature between the World Wars*, Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu, one of the most prominent critics of the period, integrates Blecher in the same “family of writers” (Crohmălniceanu 543), as Schulz, Robert Walser and Kafka, who share a modern artistic consciousness, narrative techniques, and perceptions that reflect “in paroxistic forms the sick consciousness of their time, living in a perpetual ‘acclimatized nightmare’” (ibid.). With no further insistence on the common ground of these authors, Crohmălniceanu indicates some relevant similarities between Blecher, a Romanian writer from the provincial city of Roman, and the three writers with whom he shared “a faculty to inhabit misfortune” (544). Over a decade later, in 1980, Nicolae Manolescu added important details to the same critical position, namely that the common ground consists of a unity of vision and that “the perspective upon the world is the real connection” (Manolescu 561).

In a more recent approach, Dumitru Tucan (345-356) argues in favor of a comparative perspective that allows for a parallel reading of Bruno Schulz’s visionary prose and Blecher’s oneiric and introspective fiction, summarizing at the same time the most prominent Romanian critical approaches to the Polish writer. He argues that “the main critical reading of Schulz in Romanian culture was [...] ‘existentialist’ or mediated by Blecher’s imaginary” (Tucan 347) due to the authoritative critical voices that set the tone for the potential association between the two writers. The revival of an existentialist code within the interwar Romanian literature, which materialized in various dialects of authenticity and experiment, coincides, as Tucan also noted, with an opening of the Romanian critical discourse towards themes and cultural issues coherently discussed in Western criticism. This clearly favored a strong connection to the trends and critical directions of the moment, at a time when Romanian culture was greatly

challenged by increasing political control. Blecher was rediscovered and re-read decades after his initial critical validation, and his canonical status started to be consolidated by leading literary critics, such as Manolescu.

A certain predilection for immaturity, kitsch, the melancholy of the province, and a vision of the world as artifice and decor are just a few of the aspects that connect Blecher's literature to Bruno Schulz's fantastical and obsessive writings. Another and even more prominent feature defining the works of both writers is what Jerzy Ficowski called "the pictorial character of Schulz's prose" (1998, 514) – both Blecher and Schulz created deeply visual fictions, projected in images, frames and tableaux. Bruno Schulz's artistic career, including his activity as a painter, well known due to the temporary and rather unfortunate protection he received from SS-Hauptscharführer Felix Landau, for whom he worked in the final year of his life. Blecher's belief in the ultimate power of images is clearly stated in *Adventures...*: "Ordinary words lose their validity at certain depths of the soul. Here I am, trying to give an exact description of my crises, and all I can come up with are images" (Blecher 10).

The stories of *Cinnamon Shops*, translated by Ion Petrică and published in Romanian in three editions (1976, 1997, 2004) so far, together with those from *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, resonate both stylistically and thematically with Blecher's *Adventures in Immediate Irrerality*. Although Blecher and Schulz were contemporaries and both published in the 1930s, it is unlikely that they were aware of each other's activity or read each other's writings. The aesthetic vision they shared, a certain transfer between the biographical, geographical, and the literary, a string of shared typologies, metaphors and concepts can be invoked in a comparative exploration of the two writers. Adriana Babeți gives a brief synopsis of the major themes of Central-European literature, underlining the modern character of these representations: "paternity, immaturity, masochism, impossible masculinities, sexual deviations, misogyny, incest, physical and psychological vulnerability, sickness, agony, the obsession with the void, with the 'neutral', and with the unreal, self-hate, lust for self-annihilation, metamorphosis, guilt, the aestheticization of vital energies" (Babeți 81). The obsession with form and matter recurrent in the writings of other Central-European writers, such as Witkiewicz or Gombrowicz (Babeți 81), the overwhelming and melancholic familiarity of the small provincial town (Roman, for Blecher, Drohobycz, for Schulz), the shadow of small shops, fermenting obscure desire, the proliferation of the artificial décor, stridently fake, an active fantasy of violent destruction and death, all these elements articulate, as comparative explorations have already shown (Tucan; Glăvan), a similarity of vision that connects them in a larger spectrum of the cultural space they both intellectually belong to. That territory is Central-Europe, the land of men

“without qualities”, as Robert Musil suggested in the title of his seminal novel, of identity crises, often manifested in explosive forms, trademarks of a space that has Vienna as its absolute center.

The strongest connector encouraging comparative readings of Blecher and Schulz is the oneiric nature of their writings. Depicted in dramatic tones, the dusty, anonymous provincial streets shelter strange people and uncanny events. Towns emerge from memory, their geography expanding like fantastical fairy tales, exposing unusual places and their mysteries. Completely immersed in the overpowering melancholy of margins and peripheries, the adolescent narrators of Blecher and Schulz detail their adventures into the unreal. A parallel reading of Blecher’s *Adventures in Immediate Irreality* and Schulz’s short stories reveals their affinities for a complex modern thematic spectrum defining Central European literature as well. This spectrum postulates the fundamental need for finding oneself through a perpetual effort of interpreting the outside world, despite its uncertainties and constant metamorphoses. Blecher places this search under the sign of sickness and existential malaise; with Schulz, the inner world of his characters flourishes in hallucination, mystic experiences and dreams.

A potential connection of Blecher’s works to a Central European imaginary does not rely solely upon the proximity with the mystical and fantastical territories of Schulz’s fiction or, in an extended comparative endeavor, upon a certain consubstantiality with the alienated vision of Kafka’s works. As Tucan argues, “B. Schulz’s literature is read in Romania almost exclusively through a Blecherian detour” (Tucan 349). Connecting Blecher to the spirit of Central European literature could rely on a comparative approach to Schulz in order to prove the consistence and viability of this association. Probably the most often invoked similarity of vision derives from these writers’ approach to the issue of “matter”, integrated into a subjective philosophy concerning, in Blecher’s case, the fundamental essence of the outside world, and, in Schulz’s case, the process of creation and the competing authority of imagination against divine work. The adolescent narrator of *Cinnamon Shops* highlights the extravagant theory proposed by his Father, an old, ailing, alienated man whose retreat from life and the real world is defined by delirious verbal explosions. Father is, therefore, “the fencing master of imagination” (Schulz 30), a fearless heresiarch prophesizing his visions in a *Treatise on Tailor’s Dummies, or the Second Book of Genesis*, included as such in the textual corpus of *Cinnamon Shops*. “My father never tired of glorifying this extraordinary element – matter” (Schulz 35), the boy confesses. Unlike Blecher’s protagonist, who feels threatened and violently overwhelmed by all surrounding matter, Father sees the unlimited potential of creativity in relation to it:

Creation is the privilege of all spirits. Matter has been given infinite fertility, inexhaustible vitality, and, at the same time, a seductive power of temptation which invites us to create as well. In the depth of matter, indistinct smiles are shaped, tensions build up, attempts at form appear. The whole of matter pulsates with infinite possibilities that send dull shivers through it. (Schulz 35)

Father's divagations touch upon essential dichotomies (such as life and death), claiming there is a vast range of creative methods besides the "classical" ones, thus questioning not only divine creation but artistic endeavors as well:

'There is no dead matter', he taught us, 'lifelessness is only a disguise behind which hide unknown forms of life. The range of these forms is infinite and their shades and nuances limitless. ... [I]f the classical methods of creation should prove inaccessible for evermore, there still remain some illegal methods, an infinity of heretical and criminal methods. (Schulz 35)

In his delirious state, Father reaffirms his critique of the divine creation: the almighty Demiurge favored noble materials as fundamentals of creation, while "we shall give priority to trash. We are simply entranced and enchanted by the cheapness, shabbiness, and inferiority of material. [...] In one word, Father concluded, we wish to create man a second time, - in the shape and semblance of a tailor's dummy" (Schulz 36). This second-rate universe, fermenting shapes and forms in a perpetual state of decay, should not be disconsidered. The prevalence of the artificial, of backdrops, waxwork and props is openly reaffirmed:

Figures in a waxwork museum [...] even fairground parodies, must not be treated lightly. Matter never makes jokes: it is always full of the tragically serious. Who dares to think that you can play with matter, that you can shape it for a joke, that the joke will not be built in, will not eat into it like fate, like destiny? (Schulz 38).

For Blecher, the essence of his memory, of past experience shaping his perception of the real, is captured within humble, kitsch objects that quantify his inner turmoil and restless identity quest.

In small insignificant objects – a black feather, a banal little book, an old snapshot of frail, long-forgotten figures with the suffering that comes of serious internal ailments written all over them, a dainty ashtray made of green porcelain in the form of an oak leaf and forever smelling of dead ashes – in the plain, simple memory of old man Samul Weber's thick spectacles [...] I find the melancholy of my childhood and the futility of [the] world. (Blecher 33)

Both Blecher and Schulz aim at capturing the essence of the material world and its myriad forms, hence their focus on the concept of “matter.” Their philosophical allegories differ, though. While Schulz’s Father conjures matter in a mystical “treatise”, invoking the Demiurge, his fallible creation and imperfect imagination, Blecher’s teenager protagonist deplors his captivity in the endlessly aggressive realm of objects and of the artificial. Blecher’s matter is personal and universal at the same time, yet besides the writer’s constant return to the unreal, which encodes one of the major notions of the Avant-garde, it does not transcend the borders of literary experiment. Schulz’s visions seem, to a certain degree, opaque and impenetrable, harboring mystical propensities, encouraging a mystical reading as well. Despite their divergent structural anchors, both writers inhabit the same aesthetic realm. Their subjective mythologies emerge from the fundamental belief in the evanescent, protean nature of the real, imagined as a foreign, often hostile continent prone to strange metamorphoses. The parallel reading of their works is revelatory not only from a comparative perspective, but also from a perspective that connects Blecher to the cultural essence of Central Europe, which lies at the core of Schulz’s work. In one of his most penetrating observations, the young protagonist of *Adventures into Immediate Irreality* desperately declares:

I was surrounded by hard, fixed matter on all sides – here in the form of balls and sculpture, outside in the form of trees, houses and stone. Vast and willful, it held me in its thrall from head to foot. No matter where my thoughts led me, I was surrounded by matter, from my clothes to streams in the woods running through walls, rock, glass. (Blecher 77)

An unusual connector between the worlds of Blecher and Schulz, which could function as a unifying allegory, is the image of a horse drawn carriage inviting to bold adventures and a fearless outlook on the future. As Jerzy Ficowski explains in his comprehensive exploration of Schulz’s life and work, this image was ever present in both his drawings and literature: “A fascination with the image of a horse-drawn carriage never left Schulz, and it found expression in numerous drawings and stories even in his mature artistic period” (2003, 37). Blecher invokes this vector of escape and refusal of the real in indirect terms – it is the father of his adolescent protagonist who dreams of traveling all over the world in a magical carriage: “Once, when Father was reminiscing about his childhood, I asked him what his most fervent secret wish had been and he told me that what he had longed for most of all was a miraculous carriage that would take him around the world [...]” (Blecher 57). Years after that moment, the desire to escape, travel and live great adventures nourished the boy’s

imagination, offering him the chance to acknowledge that “beyond bedeviled places teeming with fits and vertigo [...] the earth has its benevolent places, places whose walls seem to have harbored the dream of a carriage roaming the world” (57).

Travel, adventure, roaming the city and walking down empty streets at night or dawn reflect the prevalence of restlessness and a sheer curiosity towards the eerie and unfamiliar. Schulz and Blecher adhere to the same code of estrangement from the familiar, a trait they share with Kafka. By turning all known objects and places into unsettling decors, Blecher's young wanderer into the unreal recreates the outside world according to his own inner life. Schulz's mythologies of the small provincial town, although similarly luxuriant, follow a more vital line. In the story of Pan, a dirty vagabond seems to be defecating in the wild, untamed vegetation of a secluded street. Nature protects him, amplifying his grotesque mimicking and gestures. Blecher's town idiot is equally repulsive in her habit of showing her sex to people passing by, but she remains displaced and unfit. She used to perform this act “with a panache which, were the intention different, would have been called ‘a model of elegance and style’” (Blecher 38).

Schulz dissolves urban geography into a canvas of oneiric projections. The periphery has a greater potential to become blurred and permeable, therefore it is the fittest environment for welcoming the unreal. The young boy, narrating his daytime reverie, walks along with his mother, witnessing the metamorphosis of the streets around them:

The suburban houses were sinking, windows and all, into the exuberant tangle of blossom in their little gardens. Overlooked by the light of day, weeds and wild flowers of all kinds luxuriated quietly, glad of the interval for dreams beyond the margin of time on the borders of an endless day. (Schulz 11)

Blecher's “cursed places”, where his senses were dramatically stimulated to the point of dizzying sickness, were also contaminated by the ineffable essence of dreams. One of them is located in the town park, in a clearing at the end of an abandoned path: “It was a wild, isolated spot, as lonely as could be. The heat of the day felt more enervating there, the air I breathed more dense. The dusty bushes blared yellow in the sun in an atmosphere of utter solitude” (Blecher 6). *Cinnamon Shops* abounds in descriptions of familiar surroundings turning strange and barely recognizable: “in the black thickets of the park, in the hairy coat of bushes, in the mass of crusty twigs, there were nooks, niches, nests of deepest fluffy blackness, full of confusion, secret gestures, conniving looks” (Schulz 62).

Despite the fact that the core of their works displays similar modern archetypes and narrative devices Blecher and Schulz share a unique propension for estrangement within the banality of the “immediate” real. This subtle strategy has been critically exploited under various terms, but I consider it important to note that this is a creative element that defines the works of Kafka as well, along with a significant part of Central European literature. Alienation within the familiar has become a trademark of Mitteleuropean poetics, shaping the modern literary canon. Although he belongs to a smaller culture outside the imaginary borders of Central Europe, Blecher could be integrated into a paradigm that allows a more generous inclusion, based on affinities and shared cultural vectors.

Blecher’s exasperation with the apparently infinite proliferation of objects, backdrops and, generically, the artificial, echoes Schulz’s fascination with the aberrant fertility of people and nature as well. It is Aunt Agatha that proves to be the archetype of abnormal fertility, as she possessed an “almost self-propagating fertility, a femininity without rein, morbidly expansive” (Schulz 15). For Blecher, the abundance of flesh transgresses the semantic field of the human and is presented in glorious terms as dead animal meat: “When I got to the marketplace, I found men unloading meat for the butcher shops, their arms laden with sides of red and purple beasts glistening with blood, as tall and proud as dead princesses. The air was redolent with flesh and urine” (Blecher 66).

A comparative reading of Blecher and Schulz cannot function as the sole argument for placing the Romanian author in the cultural framework of Central Europe. The thematic range, the main allegories, the oneiric tone of confessions, and the obsessive mapping of the unreal are essential elements that place Blecher in the proximity of a Central European imaginary, also displaying various Eastern undertones. The most important connector, though, is Jewishness, a spiritual and artistic matrix that becomes obvious throughout Blecher’s works, although not on a declarative level.

M. Blecher was born in Botoșani, the son of a Jewish family living in the Moldavian town of Roman. Doris Mironescu, Blecher’s biographer and a prominent scholar of his work, vividly recreates both the atmosphere of the provincial town where the writer spent most of his life and his family history. With rich European roots and unexpected ramifications, Blecher’s family was a favorable environment for the education of a young man with medical talent who later wanted to study abroad, in Paris. At the beginning of the twentieth century, when Max Blecher was born into the family of Lazăr Blecher, owner of a ceramics and glass shop, Roman was a small provincial town, well connected politically and economically to the resources of modern life. The Jewish community consisted of approximately 5,000 members, most of whom followed the tradition of small family businesses or generational crafts and

manufactures and lived harmoniously alongside the Romanian majority. Andrei Oișteanu completes this description with significant details. Quoting historian Carol Iancu, he points out that three quarters of the Jewish population of Romania lived in Moldova at the beginning of the last century (Oișteanu 190) and the traditional Jewish crafts were tailoring, tanning, shoemaking, plating, clockmaking, the number of craftsmen being much larger than that of merchants. There were also liberal professions, such as physicians and attorneys. In another significant study, Andrei Oișteanu argues that in Central Europe, “Jewish intellectuals [...] would not channel their efforts toward isolation (by founding institutions meant to preserve their cultural identity), but, according to the principles of Enlightenment, toward integration into the dominant culture” (Oișteanu 2013, my translation). The young Blecher did not proceed any differently, as he sought the company and validation of central figures of the culture of the majority (Arghezi, Bogza), more than that of the ethnic minority he was born into. It was not a refusal, but a gesture of opening towards others. Milan Kundera, in *The Tragedy of Central Europe* emblematically defines the formative role of Jewishness in this area:

indeed, no other part of the world has been so deeply marked by the influence of Jewish genius. Aliens everywhere and everywhere at home, lifted above national quarrels, the Jews in the twentieth century were the principal cosmopolitan, integrating element in Central Europe: they were its intellectual cement, a condensed version of its spirit, creators of its spiritual unity. (Kundera 35)

Although Jews did not enjoy equal rights in the first decades of the twentieth century in Romania and were denied citizenship until 1923, the community of Roman had the freedom to found several important institutions, such as the theater, schools for boys and for girls, and several charitable societies (Mironescu 37). The Blecher family enjoyed prosperity and business success, due to the small ceramics factory they inherited from their paternal grandfather Saul Blecher. The writer recalls scenes and details concerning this family venture along with some painful recollection from his adolescent years in *The Lightened Burrow*. It is still uncertain if Blecher spoke Yiddish (the Blecher family considered themselves part of the Ashkenazi community, although the writer’s maternal grandfather was a Sephardic Jew). However, following Mironescu’s arguments and Dora Wechsler Blecher’s various confirmations, one may safely assume that Max Blecher took part in the most important rituals of the Jewish community of his town and was raised and educated in close connection to the values and spirituality of Jewish culture. Despite all

these, the Jewish element is not directly present in a legitimizing manner in Blecher's work, but rather as part of his fictional imagination. The grandfather, reciting the prayer of the dead, the sewing machine shop², "the miraculous, the ecstatic figure of Walter" (Blecher 25), the house of Samuel Weber and his sons, Paul and Ozy, are the few clues that may suggest a Jewish component in *Adventures in Immediate Irreality*. The novel is an elaborate oneiric fictional construct containing numerous biographical references, unfolding in the anonymous melancholic setting of a small provincial town. In real biographical terms, though, identity unrest includes issues of ethnic belonging. At one point between the autumn of 1933 and the spring of 1934, when he used to sign his articles under pseudonyms, Blecher wrote an undated letter to his friend, painter Lucia Demetriade Bălăcescu, whom he had met at the C.T.C. sanatorium in Techirghiol. In the post-scriptum of this letter (Mironescu 142), Blecher questioned whether it would be appropriate to sign the introductory text to the artist's exhibition catalogue with his real name: "Ci-joint le «papier», je crois qu'il serait mieux tout de même de signer Mihail Bera ou Minu Bera ou bien Emile Zola, ou n'importe comment, sauf M. Blecher, qui fait trop hébraïque, peut-être" (Blecher 148). In the end, the writer signed the introduction as "M. Blecher."

The 1930s brought a climate that was not favorable to Jewish writers, as Z. Ornea shows in his complex and pertinent analyses, in his volume *The Thirties. The Romanian Extreme Right*. The critic argues that "the extreme right press was scandalized by the way morals were being vitiated by literature" (Ornea 440), and recalls the arrest and incarceration of Geo Bogza, a culminating point in the rabid campaign carried out by this press against writers such as Arghezi, Eliade, Bonciu, I. Peltz or Mihail Celarianu. On 8 April 1937 Ovidiu Papadima published an article in the *Sfarmă Piatră* magazine, where, in an antisemitic rage specific to some of the press of those times, he included Blecher among the writers that allegedly undermined the morality of the general readership:

It is claimed in all the Jewish³ newspapers and publications that Haimovici Bonciu and Blecher and their ilk are simply geniuses, so that the Jewish trade should work in literature just as well as it does in all the other areas where we are methodically robbed (qtd. in Ornea 451).

² In his biography of Blecher (2018), Doris Mironescu mentions that Iancu Wexler, the president of the Jewish Community in Roman, told him that during the writer's adolescence, on Ștefan Cel Mare Street, across the road from Lazăr Blecher's shop, there was a Singer store selling sewing machines.

³ The author used the pejorative antisemitic term "jidovești", meaning "Jewish", but with an important negative connotation.

Although Blecher lived far from the epicentre of the capital, protected by the shade of the province, the favorable reviews announcing the publication of his first novel, *Adventures in Immediate Irreality*, drew the attention of those that would soon contribute to the instauration of terror and criminal hatred. With a few notable exceptions, such as the study published by Paul Cernat (2001) in a volume dedicated to the contribution of Jewish writers to Romanian literature, Blecher's Jewishness, although frequently invoked, is a biographical detail which still has a lot to reveal.

Similarly to Bruno Schulz, who, in Karen Underhill's view, can be seen as "a writer who goes to some length to de-ethnicize and de-contextualize his writing, seeking its entry into a non-marked community of European letters that shares a broadly modern, cosmopolitan sensibility" (Underhill 30), Blecher primarily counted on his quality as a writer, keeping the ethnic component of his identity private. Although the Romanian society of those times with its political unrest, its antisemitic asperities and cultural wars, did not spare Blecher, he perceived it differently than his friends Geo Bogza or Mihail Sebastian who were the direct victims of purist and antisemitic attacks. Blecher's Jewishness, the matrix of his particular integration into the literary modernity of the Romanian interwar period and of a certain type of belonging to Central European culture, remains a transparent framework that allows its numerous nuances to reveal themselves freely.

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NARRATEMES IN AGATHA CHRISTIE'S POIROT NOVELS

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ABSTRACT. *Narratemes in Agatha Christie's Poirot Novels.* In this paper, Agatha Christie's selected Poirot novels are examined for recurring narratemes, limited, for the purposes of this research, to actions and results of actions as important constituents of the plot. As point of departure, Propp's narratemes, structural elements of Russian folktales are referred to. Then, ten recurrent narratemes are identified in twenty-two Poirot novels and their functionality is established. The need of further research on this topic is articulated. It is likely that more narratemes be recognised and localised and thus they broaden our knowledge about the componential aspects of Christie's work.

Keywords: *Agatha Christie, Poirot, detective novel, narrateme, plot, suspense*

REZUMAT. *Naratele din romanele Poirot ale Agathe Christie.* În această lucrare sunt analizate câteva dintre romanele Poirot ale Agathe Christie pentru a afla naratele recurente, mai ales cele care sunt acțiuni și rezultatele unor acțiuni și care devin, astfel, elemente constitutive ale conflictului. Se pornește de la naratele lui Propp, elemente structurale ale basmelor rusești. Apoi, cele zece naratele recurente sunt identificate în douăzeci și două de romane Poirot și se stabilește funcționalitatea lor. Se precizează că mai e nevoie de cercetarea acestui aspect. E probabil că mai multe naratele să fie recunoscute și localizate și astfel, cunoștințele noastre despre aspecte componențiale ale operei lui Christie să devină mai ample.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Agatha Christie, Poirot, roman polițist, naratem, conflict, suspans*

1. The concept of the narrateme

According to Schmid (467) a narrateme is a "smallest unity of interest and concern" in the flow of the narrative. It is "ready-made", which means that

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it follows a well-known pattern. Wolf (467) explains narratemes as the “core traits of narrativity”. In relevant literature (e.g. Hsieh et al. 2019, Soto y Koelemeijer et al. 2018, Alberski 2012), the term narrateme is sometimes applied to Vladimir Propp’s thirty one “functions of dramatis personae” in Russian folktales (25). These functions are identical with either the actions taken by the characters or the situations they face in the course of events. Here go some examples: (1) someone has left or the parents are dead, (2) the disguised villain deceives the hero or the victim, (3) a family member lacks or desires something or somebody, (4) the hero agrees to take the action, (5) the villain is defeated.

As pointed out by Wolf (163), action is perceived as a fundamental narrateme in narratology. However, as can be derived from the foregoing examples, Propp’s narratemes, at least perceived as such in contemporary research, encompass not only direct actions but also their immediate consequences (someone has left) as well as lasting conditions (someone’s strong desire). The present research is focused on the narratemes limited to dynamic structural element of the narrative, where a person takes action, something happens or has happened with plot-relevant results.

2. Poirot and Poirot-based narratemes

Apart from over fifty short stories and two plays about his adventures, Agatha Christie produced thirty-three detective novels featuring a private investigator Hercule Poirot. This protagonist figure was created in Christie’s first novel *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920) that founded her fame as a detective novelist. The mere series character of Poirot-novels accounts for some recurrent narratemes, due to the main hero’s established working and communication methods as well as the frequent company of his friend and associate Captain Hastings. Poirot often shares his thoughts with Hastings with the reference to his reliable “grey cells” (e.g. in *The A.B.C. Murders*, Chapters 3 and 31, *Lord Edgware Dies*, Chapter 30, *The Big Four*, Chapters 1 and 4 and *Tragedy in Three Acts*, Chapters 6 and 25) and assembles the interested audience at the end to reveal the perpetrator and explain his reasoning (e.g. in *Lord Edgware Dies*, Chapter 30, *Three Act Tragedy*, Chapter 27, *Five Little Pigs*, Conclusion, *Murder on The Orient Express*).

In what follows we shall not focus on Poirot-related narratemes since they are inscribed in the series character of the novels.

3. Narratemes in Poirot-Novels

In this section, the narratemes encountered in twenty-two Poirot-novels will be discussed, without the ambition to provide their exhausting list.

The ones resulting from the genre itself, like crime, its specific type or intervention of the police forces will not be taken into consideration. An attempt will be undertaken to determine their function(s).

3.1. A character receives or finds a letter (12)

The novel *Sad Cypress* (1940) begins with an anonymous letter that the main character Elinor receives from a declared "well-wisher". The writing roughly outlines the initial situation in that it mentions a dying aunt who is likely to favour another person in her last will. Another crucial letter is mentioned in the same novel is the one sent by Eliza Gerrard to her sister whom the reader gets to know as Nurse Hopkins. From this letter, the alleged Nurse Hopkins gets information about what motivates her to kill for money.

In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), the actual killer Evelyn manages to mislead her victim's family by presenting the victim's letter with a forged date. This diverts the investigators' attention from the real criminal, lets them put forward wrong hypotheses and arrest an innocent man before the case is solved.

In *The Murder on the Links* (1923), a love letter is found in the victim's coat pocket that points at a wrong person as the perpetrator. It takes some time until Poirot finds out that the coat belongs to the victim's son and the real addressee of the letter.

In *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), Mr. Ackroyd receives a posthumous letter from his lover, in which she confesses to her husband's murder but also reveals the name of the man who has known about it and blackmailed her since then. It is this letter that induces the blackmailer to kill him in order to avoid disclosure.

In *Peril at End House* (1932), on Michael Seton's fatal accident, the main character Magdala, nicknamed Nick, kills her cousin of the same name who was secretly engaged to him. Then, she claims to be his fiancée and heir herself, presenting some love letters he sent to the victim. The letters are found and quoted in full length in Chapter XIV. They help uncover the murder motive.

In *The A.B.C. Murders* (1936), Poirot receives letters in which the killer announces the murders in alphabetical order of the victims' initials. The entire story is built upon these letters. The detective travels to the places indicated to face the crime committed and collect information that helps him identify the perpetrator.

In *Evil under the Sun* (1941), a young girl Linda writes a letter to her father in which she admits to her stepmother's murder, based upon her fantasy. This confession occupies the investigators for a while, diverting them from the real perpetrators.

In Chapter III of *The Mystery of the Blue Train* (1928), the rich Mr Van Aldin opens a letter from his daughter Ruth and hurries to see her immediately. As turns out soon, Ruth is facing severe problems in her marriage. Thus, when Ruth is killed on board of a luxury train, her husband becomes the main suspect who finally proves innocent. Another letter, found in the victim's handbag, written by her declared admirer and travel companion Comte de la Roche, quoted in full length in Chapter XIV, makes the investigators suspect the sender who will prove innocent, too.

In *Murder in Mesopotamia* (1936), before she is killed, Mrs Leidner receives threats in a series of letters. It is also reported that it had happened to her before her marriage to Dr. Leidner, too. Since she suffers from a psychological disorder, the investigator does not rule out a fabricated story. His other hypothesis includes a person from her remote past staying near her. A mistaken identification of the sender's handwriting as her own causes additional perplexity and wrong conclusions. Therefore, the letters outline the victim's situation but also complicate the investigation, introducing additional thrill to the events depicted.

In *Dead Man's Folly* (1956), the woman who pretends to be the murdered Hattie receives a letter from Hattie's cousin with information about his unexpected visiting plans. She disappears in order to avoid confrontation but first she kills a young girl who has learned about her secret.

In *Five Little Pigs* (1942), before she is executed for her husband's murder, Caroline Crale writes a letter to her daughter Lucy in which she pleads innocent. Sixteen years later, as a grown-up woman in possession of the due inheritance, Lucy engages Poirot in order to learn the truth about her father's death.

In *Three Act Tragedy* (1934), the multiple killer Sir Charles Cartwright fabricates some letters in the name of the victim's non-existing servant Ellis whose identity he created himself by playing his role.

In sum, the letters introduced in Poirots fulfil the following functions: they provide information about the characters' situation (informative function), generate hypotheses about the possible perpetrators (suggestive function), help understand the criminals' motives and thus verify the hypotheses (explanatory function), mislead the investigators and thus increase the thrill (suspensive function) or trigger the detective's action (provocative function).

3.2. A character inherits or can inherit a fortune (9)

In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), Alfred Ingelthorp marries a rich elderly woman with the intention to kill her and take possession of her property. The prospective inheritance proves a murder motive. At the same

time, since Mrs. Ingelthorp is in the habit of changing her last will frequently, her stepsons and relatives appear as suspects, too, which intensifies the thrill and complicates the investigations.

In *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), the victim's nephew Ralph Paton is generally considered the main suspect because of his unquestionable main heir's status. At the same time, like in *Styles*, the other family members (sister-in-law and niece) are not ruled out as perpetrators for their probable benefits.

Similarly, in *The Murder on the Links* (1923), the victim's son and heir is wrongly suspected of his father's murder. The inheritance would solve his existential problem and render him the freedom to settle a private life of his preference which was not accepted by father.

In *The Mystery of the Blue Train* (1928), Katherine Grey inherits a fortune from her employer, which allows her to travel on the luxury train, meet Poirot and the victim Ruth as well as being recognised by her cousin Lady Tamplin, who hopes to get a share in Katherine's newly obtained wealth.

In *Peril at End House* (1932), the pilot Michael Seton inherits a fortune after his uncle's death and bequeaths it to the woman he loves. The female protagonist of the same name kills the beneficiary in order to claim the wealth. So, the prospective inheritance becomes a murder motive.

In *Sad Cypress* (1940), the woman known as Nurse Hopkins kills the rich Laura Welman and her illegitimate daughter Mary to frame Laura's official heir Elinor in Mary's murder and claim the inheritance herself on grounds of Mary's manipulated last will. The inheritance provides a multiple murder motive as part of an elaborate plan.

In *Evil under the Sun* (1941), Mrs Marshall inherits a fortune from her former lover. When she is murdered, her husband and legal heir who finally proves innocent becomes number one on the initial list of suspects. Thus, inheritance that does not play a role in murder affects the investigation and occupies the detectives for a long time.

In *Death on the Nile* (1937), Simon Doyle's plan includes wedding the rich Linnet Ridgeway, killing her and conducting the life of his dream with his beloved woman. So, inheritance constitutes a direct murder motive.

In *After the Funeral* (1953), all the numerous family members and heirs of the deceased Richard Abernethie seem to have a motive to have killed him for inheritance before it is established that he died of natural causes. The suggestion of murder was meant to confuse the investigators of his sister's murder.

In sum, inheritance serves as a real or assumed murder motive (explanatory function). It has impact on the investigation and thus on the thrill in that the detectives follow this hint and neglect other available evidence

(suspensive function). Moreover, it is a crucial factor in the outline of a character's situation (informative function) that triggers a chain of actions as a plot design (provocative function).

3.3. A character commits adultery or is suspected of it (9)

In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), Mary Cavendish wrongly suspects her husband John of a love affair with a neighbour Mrs Raikes, whilst she herself is said to maintain a romantic relationship with the family's friend Dr. Bauerstein. When John's wealthy stepmother is killed and he is framed with her murder, Mary's actions that result from her care about her marriage suggest her possible involvement in the crime. Therefore, the assumed adultery complicates the investigation. In the same novel, the victim's husband Alfred Ingelthorp and her companion Evelyn are lovers who have planned the crime long ahead. The crime involved both Alfred marriage to the rich elderly woman as well as the continuation of his relationship to his accomplice.

Similarly, in *Death on the Nile* (1937), Simon's lucrative marriage is part of a big plan to kill his wife and appropriate her fortune. The revelation of the continuation of his then extramarital love relationship to his former fiancée Jacqueline provides the key to the murderer's and his accomplice's identification.

In *The Mystery of The Blue Train* (1928), both Derek Kettering and his wife Ruth maintain extramarital relationships. As a result, when Ruth is murdered during a pleasure trip in her lover's company, both the lover and husband are taken into consideration as possible killers. In this way, adultery constitutes a remarkable factor in the investigators' approach, leading to false conclusions and delaying the revelation of the truth, which increases suspense.

In *The Hollow* (1946), the victim Dr. Christow has a love affair with the family's friend Henrietta. Moreover, he is known to have had numerous passing romances with nurses. Nevertheless, it is not his repeated unfaithfulness but a one-night adventure with his former fiancée that induces his wife to shoot him. So, adultery proves a real murder motive but it also misleads the investigators towards his other lovers, including Henrietta, as possible killers.

In *Sad Cypress* (1940), Mary Gerrard, Laura Welman's illegitimate daughter from extramarital relationship to the late Sir Lewis, does not know about her real origin and her resulting title to inheritance. The whole story as well as the inbuilt intrigues and crimes are based upon this fact. In this way, an adultery from the past entails a chain of tragic events that include a double murder. At the end, its revelation helps the detective reconstruct the circumstances and identify the perpetrator.

In *Five Little Pigs* (1942), the victim, who is a talented painter, is known to have extramarital love affairs generally tolerated by his wife Caroline. One of them, to a teenager Elsa, seems serious enough to put their marriage in jeopardy. When Amyas Crale is poisoned, his wife is charged with murder and executed. Poirot examines the case after fourteen years, hired by her daughter Lucy. Adultery creates a frame for the tragedy and helps the real perpetrator, Caroline's sister, frame the cheated wife.

In *The Murder on the Links* (1923), a married woman Mrs Beroldy incites her lover to her rich husband's murder to abandon him once the crime is committed and to blackmail him years later when they both become neighbours in France under false names. Thus, it is the initial adultery that generates the successive fatal circumstances lead to a crime.

In *Appointment with Death* (1938) the victim Mrs Boynton's stepdaughter-in-law Nadine, a nurse by profession, is in love with a family's friend and she thinks of leaving her husband to escape her stepmother's tyranny. When her stepmother is found dead, suspicion is shed on Nadine who had a good opportunity and skills to poison the woman.

In *Evil under the Sun* (1941), the actress Mrs Marshall is generally believed to develop a love relationship with a fellow holiday maker Patrick. These appearances make the investigators consider the husband's jealousy as the obvious murder motive when she is found dead on a remote beach. In this way, the assumed adultery confuses the detective and contributes to the overall suspense and thrill.

In sum, adultery that implies the involved person's wish to get rid of the partner or their spouse/lover has the following functions: it provides a real murder motive (explanatory function), implies an assumed murder motive and thus increases the suspense and thrill (suspensive function), suggests fake circumstances (creative function) or constitutes a part or real circumstances (informative function).

3.4. A character is acting under a false identity (11)

In *The Mystery of The Blue Train* (1928), the victim's maid known as Ada Mason is in reality an actress Kitty Kidd, known for her advanced skills to impersonate men. She uses these skills to leave the train disguised as a man and thus mislead the investigators.

In *Sad Cypress* (1940), as has been mentioned above, Mrs Welman's nurse known as Nurse Hopkins proves to be Mary Riley, sister of Mary Gerrard's foster mother. She uses her false identity to get close to her victims, poison them and frame their relative.

In *The Murder on the Links* (1923), both Mrs Beroldy and her lover Georges Conneau take on false identities on having killed Mr Beroldy and

escaped the justice. It is meant to prevent them from a possible punishment in case of being found guilty in future.

In *Elephants Can Remember* (1972), an unbalanced woman called Dorothea kills her twin sister Margaret Ravenscroft who obliges her husband to protect the killer. In order to fulfil her wish, Mr Ravenscroft reports Dorothea dead and allows her to play Margaret's role. When he commits suicide on having shot Dorothea, the false identity of the woman impedes the investigators in reconstructing the crime. In the same novel, a young American woman accepts a secretary position at Professor Willoughby's Institute of Psychiatry and becomes his son's lover because she is seeking an opportunity to kill the professor and thus avenge her mother's death as a result of the treatment methods.

In *Death on the Nile* (1937), a young man introduced as Mr. Ferguson who supports the communist ideology proves to be Lord Dawlish. Until Poirot discloses his identity, the young man seems to have an ideological motive to kill the rich Linnet. In the same novel, the passenger known as an Italian archaeologist, Mr Rachett, is finally unmasked as a wanted terrorist, but not as Linnet's killer.

In *Dead Man's Folly* (1956), the wealthy Sir George Stubbs is hiding his real identity of James Folliat and his disgraceful past as a deserter, bigamist and murderer of his illegally wed rich wife, whose identity has been adopted by his legitimate wife Hattie.

In *Cat among the Pigeons* (1959), the school secretary Ann Shapland, who commits three murders of teachers, proves to be a skilled espionage agent nicknamed Angelica. She saw the precious jewels being hidden in a girl's tennis racket and followed them to England, to the girl's boarding school.

In *Murder on The Orient Express* (1934), the victim who travels as a businessman, Rachett, proves to be a child kidnapper and killer. He is murdered collectively by the child's relatives, one of them identified as a famous actress Linda Arden, travelling under the false name of Mrs. Hubbard.

In *After the Funeral* (1953), Miss Gilchrist kills her employer Cora Lansquenet to take possession of a valuable painting from her collection. Then, she impersonates the dead woman at a family gathering that follows the funeral of Cora's brother, where she suggests that the man was murdered.

In *Evil under the Sun* (1941) the holidaymaker Patrick Redfern is finally identified as Arlena's murderer. His real name is Edward Corrigan and he killed his wife Alice. The woman he introduces as his wife Christine turns out to be his accomplice in both murders.

In *The Murder in Mesopotamia* (1936), one of the main characters in the archaeologist introduced as Dr. Eric Leidner who in reality is Frederic Bosner, who married his adored wife under a false identity. In the same novel, a notorious thief Raoul Menier pretends to be father Lavigny, a reputable epigraphist.

In sum, a false identity has the following functions: it helps the murderer approach the victim (auxiliary function), creates fake circumstances (creative function), misleads the investigators and increases the thrill (suspensive function).

3.5. An actor enters the scene (6)

In *Three Act Tragedy* (1934), the actor Sir Charles Cartwright impersonates a servant at his victim's party and uses this opportunity to commit murder. Then, he fabricates letters meant to suggest Ellis's guilt and let the police chase a non-existent person.

In *The Mystery of the Blue Train* (1928), the actress Kitty Kidd takes up the job of the victim's maid. When Ruth is killed by her accomplice, she employs her skills to first impersonate Ruth, and then leave the train in men's disguise.

In *Cat among the Pigeons* (1959), a hired actress plays the role of an Oriental princess at a boarding school, where she looks for some invaluable jewels hidden in another girl's tennis racket. Her presence, and then her staged kidnapping occupies the investigator's work when three teachers are murdered one after another.

In *Lord Edgware Dies* (1933), the actress Carlotta agrees to impersonate another actress, Lady Edgware, at a private party, without being aware of providing the latter with an alibi for Lord Edgware's murder time. Using her own actress's skills, Lady Edgware in the person of a fictive American friend, an elderly Mrs van Dusen, meets Carlotta at a hotel to pay her for the performance that impedes the investigation, complicates the plot and increases the thrill.

In *The Big Four* (1927), the actor Claud Darrel, nicknamed Destroyer, appears in different roles and commits several murders before he is identified as "number four", the fourth wanted member of a transnational criminal association.

In *Cards on the Table* (1936), Poirot hires an actor who pretends to be a window cleaner and to have seen Dr. Roberts killing Mrs. Lorrimer. The intention is to provoke the perpetrator's confession, which actually happens.

In sum, the actors enter the scene in the following functions: they use their professional skills to create fake circumstances (creative function) in order to confuse the investigators and intensify the thrill (suspensive function). Their intervention usually explains the murder design (explanatory function).

3.6. A character performs an act of love and care (6)

In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), the victim's stepson Lawrence Cavendish smashes a cup that, in his opinion, might give evidence against Cynthia, whom he loves secretly.

In *The Murder on the Links* (1923), Bella Duveen, who is in love with the victim's son Jack, confesses to the murder when Jack is charged with the crime.

In *Death on the Nile* (1937), the admitted killer Jacqueline shoots her beloved accomplice Simon to save him and herself the inevitable trial and death sentence. In the same novel, Rosalie Otterbourne suppresses the fact of having seen Tim Alerton at the fatal night since she feels affected to him and wants to save him in the case of his guilt.

In *The Hollow* (1946) the dying Dr. Christow, shot by his humiliated wife Gerda, utters the name of his lover Henrietta as a plea to protect the killer. As a result, it is not only Henrietta but also the entire family who intentionally mislead Poirot, suggesting their own possible involvement in the crime.

In *Three Act Tragedy* (1934), Charles Cartwright's housekeeper Miss Milray, who is in love with him, tries to destroy evidence of his guilt, the distilling equipment for nicotine poison production.

In *Cards on the Table* (1936), Mrs. Lorrimer confesses to the murder of the party host Shaitana because she believes to have seen her daughter stabbing him to death.

In sum, the acts of love and care have the following functions: they boil down to false confessions or false testimonies (creative function), confuse the investigators and increase the thrill (suspensive function) but also reveal real feelings (informative function).

3.7. A character may commit a crime but does not kill (7)

In *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926) the victim's niece Flora confesses to having stolen forty pounds from her uncle's room at the night of his murder. Having been seen near his office door she is initially not ruled out as the murderer.

In *The Mystery of The Blue Train* (1928), the man known as Comte de la Roche, has elaborate plans to steal Ruth's precious ruby, without the intention to kill her.

In *Death on the Nile* (1937), Tim Allerton, who proves to be a serial jewel thief, steals Linnet's valuable pearls but does not murder her.

In *Lord Edgware Dies* (1933) the victim's butler Alton disappears with the money stolen from his employer's office. He only uses the murder as an opportunity to steal.

In *Evil under the Sun* (1941), the holidaymaker Horace Blatt, one of the suspects of murder, is finally arrested for drug smuggling. He is not involved in Arlena's murder.

In *Peril at End House* (1932), the main character's lodgers, the Crofts, prove to be forgers and are known to the police as such. They do not play any role in murder.

In *The Murder in Mesopotamia* (1936) the man who impersonates Father Laviny steals valuable items from the dig but does not intend or attempt to murder anybody.

In sum, another crime committed by a character in the direct environment of the murder scene has the following functions: it suggests fake circumstances (suggestive function) and misleads the investigators and thus increases suspense and thrill (suspensive function).

3.8. A character overhears important conversation (6)

In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), the narrator Hastings overhears Mary Cavendish's argument with the victim, her husband's stepmother. It is about a piece of writing the elderly lady refuses to show to her stepdaughter-in-law. Mary supposes the writing confirms her husband's infidelity and his mother is trying to shield him.

In *The Murder on the Links* (1923) Marthe overhears their neighbours' conversation and learns about their plans to leave France on having staged his kidnapping and death.

In *Five Little Pigs*, the painter Amyas Crale's young lover Elsa overhears a dispute between him and his wife Caroline to learn that, against his promise, he is not going to abandon Caroline. Deeply disappointed and hurt, she puts poison in his drink.

In *Appointment with Death* (1938), Lady Westholme overhears a conversation from which she gets to know that she was identified as Mrs. Boynton's murderer. She commits suicide to avoid public scandal and punishment. Earlier in the same novel, Poirot overhears a talk between two siblings who speculate about their stepmother's murder. When Mrs Boyton is really found dead, they are taken into consideration as possible perpetrators.

In *Death on the Nile* (1937), Poirot overhears two conversations between Jacqueline and Simon. From the first one he gets the impression that she cares about him much more than he cares about her. The second one confuses him because he is convinced that Simon is talking to his then wife Linnet.

In *Lord Edgware Dies*, Lady Edgware overhears Donald Ross's phone talk with Hastings and realizes that the speaker is about to inform Poirot that she was substituted by Carlotta Adams at the dinner party that gave her strong alibi for the time of her husband's murder. She kills Ross and delays the detective's revelations.

In sum, overhearing a piece of information has the following functions: it reveals details about the situation (informative function) and thus helps advance hypotheses (auxiliary function), misleads the investigators and increases the suspense and thrill (suspensive function) and triggers criminal action (provocative function).

3.9. A character is hiding a crime committed in the past (7)

In *Murder on the Links* (1923), the characters known as Mr Renauld and Mrs Daubreuil killed her husband and managed to escape punishment. They took on new identities.

In *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934), the victim who travels as a businessman called Rachett is a child kidnapper and murderer Cassetti.

In *Five Little Pigs* (1942), Lady Dittisham who poisoned her lover Amyas when she was a teenager known as Elsa Greer is identified as the murderer after sixteen years. Amyas's wife was charged with murder and executed.

In *Cards on the Table* (1936), Mrs. Lorrimer killed her husband in order to marry another man, and her daughter poisoned her former employer. They are both invited by Mr. Shaitana who knows their secrets.

In *Appointment with Death* (1938), the British woman introduced as Lady Westholme is recognised by Mrs Boynton as a former prisoner. She kills Mrs. Boynton to avoid scandal and commits suicide when identified as the killer.

In *Dead Man's Folly* (1956), Sir Georges Stubbs proves to be a bigamist who killed his illegally wed second wife.

In *Evil under the Sun* (1941), the holidaymaker Patrick Redfern is identified as Edward Corrigan who killed his wife and escaped punishment with the help of his accomplice who gave him an alibi. She now pretends to be his wife.

In sum, the fact that a character is hiding a crime committed in the past has the following functions: It increases suspense and thrill (suspensive function) and provides explanation for a character's behaviour (explanatory function).

3.10. A character faces or makes up an attempt at his or her life (5)

In *Death on the Nile* (1937), before she is killed, Linnet Doyle is nearly hit by a falling heavy stone. What is initially interpreted as an accident proves to be a premeditated action by her lawyer and friend. In the same novel, Jaqueline pretends to shoot at Simon, whilst in reality she deliberately misses him. He badly hurts his leg himself with another shot, to reinforce the appearances.

In *Peril at End House*, (1932), Nick informs Poirot that the brakes in her car were manipulated with the perpetrator's obvious intention to kill her. She stages another attempt at her life when she eats a safe portion of poisoned chocolate.

In *After the Funeral* (1953), Miss Gilchrist eats a bit of a poisoned cake to create appearances of an attempt at her life.

In *Cards on the Table* (1936), Ann Meredith is trying to drown her friend Rhoda who knows about her secret.

In *The Murder on the Links* (1923), Paul Renauld's murderer Marthe is trying to kill his wife to stop her from disinheriting her son, Marthe's intended husband.

In sum, real or fabricated attempts at somebody's life have the following functions: they reinforce the initial suspicions (informative function), create fake circumstances (creative function) and make the investigators advance wrong hypotheses, intensifying the thrill and suspense (suspensive function).

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The research has established recurrent narratemes, ten of which have been listed above. For the presentation in this paper only those have been selected that were encountered in at least five novels. The most frequent among them proved a letter (encountered in 12 works), a false identity (in 11), inheritance (in 9) and adultery (in 9). The others occur in seven, six or five works. The identified narratemes have the functions labelled as: (a) suspensive, applying to all the ten depicted narratemes, (b) informative, postulated for six of them, (c) explanatory, attached to five (c) creative, proposed for another five (e) provocative, claimed for two, and (f) suggestive, postulated for another two narratemes. Clearly, the suspensive function dominates, which cannot surprise in the light of the discussed genre. It seems that the writer draws from a certain limited repertoire of narratemes that are rearranged and modified in different novels. Naturally, an assumption instead of certainty, a hypothesis instead of a thesis may disappoint in the concluding part of a study. However, a generalisation based on an instructive but narrow range of samples would abuse the valid standards of honest research.

It must be added that some more narratemes were noted in the course of this research that were not scrutinised or mentioned above because of space limits but seem worthy of scholarly interest, like a broken love relationship (e.g. *Sad Cypress, The Elephants Can Remember*), a commoner marrying an aristocrat (e.g. *Lord Edgware Dies, Appointment with Death*) or a doctor acting as a family friend (e.g. *The Mysterious Affair at Styles, Appointment with Death*). Therefore, further investigations are recommendable in order to verify the above hypothesis.

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NOT *THE ONLY STORY*: NARRATIVE, MEMORY, AND SELF-BECOMING IN JULIAN BARNES' NOVEL

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ABSTRACT. *Not the Only Story: Narrative, Memory and Self-becoming in Julian Barnes' Novel.* Julian Barnes's *The Only Story* depicts the affair of the narrator, Paul, with an older, married woman, Susan. Yet while the obvious subject matter may be trite, the writer's treatment of it is noteworthy. More specifically, the present paper aims to explore the manner in which this story is remembered by the narrator. Using Paul Ricoeur's work on the narrative self, we suggest that the protagonist does not wish to deliver an accurate account of the events that shaped his life, but rather he attempts to come to terms with the latter through storytelling. Thus, "the only story" is not necessarily that of Paul's first love. It is, rather, the only story that matters to him, which must include all others and which he must tell in order to shape and understand his own process of becoming.

Keywords: *The Only Story, Julian Barnes, Paul Ricoeur, memory, storytelling, self-becoming, identity*

REZUMAT. *Nu doar Singura poveste: despre narațiune, amintire, și devenirea-de-sine în romanul lui Julian Barnes.* Romanul lui Julian Barnes, *Singura Poveste*, dezvoltă relația amoroasă a naratorului, Paul, cu Susan, o femeie căsătorită, mai în vârstă decât el. Tema este banală, însă modul în care aceasta este abordată de către autor este remarcabil. Mai precis, lucrarea de față explorează felul în care naratorul își amintește povestea sa. Cu ajutorul teoriei despre sinele narativ a lui Paul Ricoeur, sugerăm faptul că protagonistul nu își dorește să prezinte un raport meticolos al evenimentelor care i-au modelat viața, ci mai degrabă să se împace cu acestea prin povestire. Așadar, "Singura poveste" nu expune, neaparat, prima iubire a lui Paul. Este povestea care le include pe celelalte și pe care el trebuie să o spună pentru a-și înțelege devenirea de sine.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Singura poveste, Julian Barnes, Paul Ricoeur, amintire, povestire, devenire-de-sine, identitate*

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Julian Barnes' 2018 novel, *The Only Story*, follows the account given by the narrator, Paul, of his own life from adolescence to the present, particularly through the lens of his affair with an older, married woman, Susan MacLeod. Thus, what begins as an innocent love story in the first chapter of the novel is subsequently complicated by Susan's abusive marriage, Paul's devotion to put an end to her suffering, as well as the failure of the two to live together in London after leaving their homes. In an agonizing turn of events, Paul ultimately loses Susan to alcoholism and decides to "return" her to one of her daughters for care. Overtly, then, his narrative is one of love and of loss, while its telling is seemingly motivated by his duty to "remember [Susan] correctly" (197). Yet, his story is, at the same time, about responsibility, guilt and shame, albeit less declaratively so. Paul, in other words, does not merely convey memories, nor does he attempt to tell a story that is equally comprehensive about all of its characters. The novel is the only story that matters to him and, furthermore, the story that can help him make sense of and come to terms with his past and consequent present. His focus is not necessarily to achieve objectivity in this telling of events, but rather the desire to reach an understanding of the latter and, perhaps, to find some form of reconciliation. The narrative, then, is an essential step towards Paul's self-understanding, and a way for Paul to assess his life from an ethical point of view. In this respect, the novel closely follows Paul Ricoeur's theoretical work on the issues of self-understanding, narrative identity, and memory. Accordingly, the chief concern of the present paper is that, while "the only story" that actually matters may indeed be about love, the novel is more importantly an overarching life story, an attempt to bring together other, often disparate events into a coherent and therefore meaningful whole.

Paul Ricoeur's philosophy explores the idea that the self is at least partially the product of the internal life story that each individual more or less knowingly constructs. This has become a widely debated topic not only in literary criticism, but also in the fields of psychology and neurology. It has thus been proposed by philosophers, humanists, and medical researchers that identity emerges as a result of the internal elaboration of a life story (cf. Hydén 33; Herman b 1) or identity is what Antonio Damasio refers to as "self-as-knower" (18). The latter is made up of several layers that work together in order to give rise to what we commonly call subjectivity and without which there can be no consciousness (cf. Damasio 20). Perhaps one of the most noteworthy aspects of the neurological definition of the self is that it is acknowledged not as a rigid thing-in-itself, but as a dynamic process (cf. Damasio 19). Indeed, it seems that the human propensity to employ narrative devices in order to make sense of experience is so inherent to the human nature that even those suffering from "severe memory impairments (...) maintained a strong sense of sameness, in fact, of self-continuity – despite

the chaos in their minds and lives" (Medved and Brockmeier 22). Maintaining a coherent identity is likely part of a primordial self-conservation mechanism that human beings share and that endures for as long as one is conscious. Psychologists emphasize the relational aspect of this process, which is why they employ the term narrative identity when referring "to the stories people construct and tell about themselves to define who they are for themselves and for others (...). [These are] the stories we live by" (McAdams et al. 4).

In literary studies, certain scholars, such as Monika Fludernik, argue that the primordial feature of any story is its experientiality, namely its "quasi-mimetic evocation of 'real-life experience'", its ability to evoke "consciousness or (..) the representation of a speaker role" (9). Although stipulating a hierarchy between narrative features does seem to become problematic for defining and working with other narrative categories, there is no doubt that every story originates from a self whose particular body is responsible for creating it. David Herman refers to experientiality as "the 'qualia' (or felt, subjective awareness) of real or imagined consciousnesses undergoing [a] disruptive experience", (Herman a 9) without necessarily favouring it over emplotment or the driver of the plot. The problem with achieving this narrative coherence of the self is that memory is never equivalent to experience. It is rather a blend of real experience and the story resulting thereof, which is altered, in time, through the workings of memory. Memory, as such, is an interpretive act. It is not "recounting the past but (...) making sense of it" (Freeman 29). In addition, the fact that we remember only the highs and lows of a particular experience is firmly grounded in scientific inquiry. Not only is lasting memory formed after the fact, but its very formation is highly susceptible to certain physiological processes, the most impactful of which seems to be arousal (cf. McGaugh 2). The resulting disparate recollections are difficult for the human mind to comprehend and, as such, to accept, in the absence of narrative coherence, which is precisely the topic of much of Ricoeur's philosophy, as well as of Julian Barnes' *The Only Story*.

As is the case with several of Barnes' novels, including *The Sense of an Ending* and the more recent *Levels of Life*, the workings of memory, its ties to identity, as well as its shortcomings permeate Paul's narrative in *The Only Story*. From the very beginning, the protagonist directly addresses the narratee in order to draw his attention to the unreliability of memory which must, nevertheless, serve as the link and guide to one's past:

I'm not necessarily putting [my story] down in the order that it happened. I think there's a different authenticity to memory, and not an inferior one. Memory sorts and sifts according to the demands made on it by the rememberer. (...) I would guess that memory prioritises whatever is most useful to help keep the bearer of those memories going. (21)

Elsewhere, Paul returns to the same topic and describes recollection by analogy to “an electric log-splitter in action” (117). He argues that, when committed to memory, his life was sectioned down the middle as a log would have been when placed in an electric splitter. The happy or, at the very least, the acceptable memories remained on the one side, while the events more difficult to come to terms with were neatly isolated on the other. This explains why, in the first part of the novel, the protagonist depicts only his seemingly joyous relationship with Susan, in isolation from the rest of the world, as well as barring details that did not necessarily fit in with the picture of innocent love and happiness. Throughout the narrative, some memories become more important, while others are lost altogether, no doubt, as Paul himself observes, for the purpose of “retrospective reorderings of life”, which are “always likely to be self-serving” (209). For instance, the protagonist recalls that he and Susan finally “managed a brief holiday.” Yet, although the event was anticipated and the two even took pictures, he finds it impossible to remember those days, together with “what we said, thought, discovered about one another.” More importantly, Paul is aware that, with the help of the pictures, at least, “you could, if you wanted, (...) deduce the season; also, no doubt, the weather” (77), but this, according to him, is not the purpose of his story. Indeed, he notes, when first describing the setting of the story, the weather and “other stuff as well” escape his memory and become unimportant:

When I gave you my estate agent’s sketch of the Village, some of it might not have been strictly accurate. For instance, the Belisha beacons at the zebra crossing. I might have invented them (...). I suppose I could do some real-life research – look for old postcards in the central library, or hunt out the very few photos I have from that time, and retrofit my story accordingly. But I’m remembering the past, not reconstructing it. (...) You might be used to more. But there’s nothing I can do about that. I’m not trying to spin you a story; I’m trying to tell you the truth. (40)

Paul’s attitude to the weather and setting is not limited to the sphere of the trivial. It is rather a reflection of his manner of storytelling and, more specifically, of the fact that, as we will see, he may have altered several details of this “only story.” Like in the case of the contested existence of “Belisha beacons at the zebra crossing”, he could set matters straight, but chooses not to. He could, for instance, use the photographs he has of Susan to more accurately describe her and “remember her correctly.” Nevertheless, he finds that “photographs were useful, but somehow always confirmed the memory rather than liberating it” (198). In all of these instances, then, a seemingly peculiar phenomenon of memory is suggested. On the one hand, the narrator feels that it is his duty to

work through his memories in order to find the truth about himself, Susan, and their time together. At the same time he discredits the help of various documents, research and pictures, all of which are commonly viewed as “hard evidence” and associated with truth more readily than one’s fallible recollections. For Paul, therefore, the truth is not necessarily to be found in the most objective recounting of events. This seems contradictory, to begin with, but it acquires new meaning when viewed through the lens of Paul Ricoeur’s theories on the narrative self.

Ricoeur’s philosophy of life can be distilled, more or less, to one of his many statements on the importance of narrative. Indeed, for him,

self-understanding is an interpretation; interpretation of the self, in turn, finds in the narrative (...) a privileged form of mediation; the latter borrows from history as well as from fiction, making a life story a fictional history or, if one prefers, a historical fiction, interweaving the historiographic style of biographies with the novelistic style of imaginary autobiographies. (Ricoeur 1992, 114)

In other words, it is essential for one’s understanding of the self that they read their life as a narrative or, better still, by using the interpretative tools offered by the narrative form. The story resulting thereof is a mix of truth, as characteristic of historic writing, and of fabulation, which is commonly subscribed to the sphere of fiction. There is, in fact, as Ricoeur himself maintains, a continuity or overlap between these two forms of narrative that come together in the telling of one’s life story. History and fiction are not, as one might immediately be tempted to consider, analogous to fact and lie. Unlike fiction, history is, of course, viewed as a “scientific discipline” in that it “aims at the truth and deals with historical facts.” Yet, in order to arrive at this truth, the historian must always perform an analysis of certain known events. Thus, “the very act of interpreting [the] facts in the name of truth leaves open the way for alternative explanations, and thus destroys objectivity” (Simms 88). This is relevant for our understanding of Julian Barnes’ narrator in *The Only Story* not because the latter is a historian, but because the task he undertakes in telling his life story is, according to him, motivated by the desire to remember his past correctly. Yet, as Ricoeur would likely respond to such an endeavour, “to narrate a story is to ‘reflect upon’ the event narrated” (Ricoeur 1985, 61), which naturally leads to the conclusion that “no ethically neutral narrative” can ever be formulated (Ricoeur 1992, 115). If the protagonist of the novel alters certain details of his story, then, this is because the narrative would otherwise be impossible to tell. As Paul himself notes about his attempt to keep a journal, even as he was

“searching to be objective, the subjective kept undermining” him (162). To reach some form of truth, the narrator was compelled to renounce the idea of an objective life story. After all, according to Ricoeur, one must not “ignore the fact that sometimes fictions come closer to what really happened” (Ricoeur 1992, 162), simply because they have the ability to reach “the meaning beyond or beneath the facts” (Ricoeur 1992, 162). In other words, what is related through storytelling is more than “a supposedly neutral set of facts” which “cannot be separated from the discourse in which they are articulated” (McCarthy 197). As such, any narrative goes beyond the exposition or transcription of events and, by bringing these events together into a coherent plot, creates additional meaning. It is from this point of view that we may begin to understand Paul, as well as his narrative in *The Only Story*.

One of Ricoeur’s formulas thus becomes particularly relevant. Indeed, the philosopher argues that the understanding of narrative follows “the destiny of a prefigured time that becomes a refigured time through the mediation of a configured time” (Ricoeur 1983, 54). When extended, this formula proposes that a reader brings to the narrative his or her prior understanding of the world, referred to as “prefigured time”, which is then employed in order to make sense of the events described. Once the reading is finished and the story is understood, the reader enters a “refigured time” or, in other words, a new or deeper understanding of the world that is implied by the narrative itself. The two states are mediated by “configured time” or emplotment, which is the time of the story and the manner in which events pertaining to it have been ordered into a larger whole. One of the functions of the plot is therefore that of Aristotelian “phronesis” or practical understanding in the sense that “by engaging the text hermeneutically I am touched by the world it presents to my imagination. (...) Thus, narrative understanding crosses over into self-understanding: I gain perspective on myself by gaining perspective on the narrative” (Hall 55). The phenomenon is not unlike that experienced by Paul in the telling of his own story. Not all readers will interpret a given text in the same manner, however, and this is closely linked to the idea of “prefigured time.” According to Ricoeur, each individual is “tangled up in stories” (Ricoeur 1991, 30) prior to their encounter of the text. “This entanglement then appears as the pre-history of the story told, the beginning of which is chosen by the narrator. The pre-history of the story is what connects it up to a vaster whole and gives it a background” (Ricoeur 1991, 30). On the one hand, this view of the human being proposes that the individual is already influenced by various cultural and social stories prior to their encounter of any narrative proper, which further justifies the notion that self-understanding can be reached by means of interpretation. On the other hand, Ricoeur also suggests that the reader is decidedly influenced by their pre-

history in the interpretation of any new story and, as such, in their interpretation of and engagement with life.

In *The Only Story*, Paul grapples with precisely this issue for much of his narrative and even refers to his and Susan's pasts, prior to their meeting, as their "pre-histories." In fact, to a certain degree, their backgrounds, and particularly the cultural and social context of their affair, seem to impose an inevitable conclusion to their relationship before the latter even begins. For instance, the affair takes place in and nearby London at a time when "the chemist would sell verruca plasters and dry shampoo in little puffer bottles, but not contraceptives", when "sexual items" were not accessible in the suburbs (5). Issues such as homosexuality and high-school pregnancies were deemed marginally tolerable by parents, but adultery and particularly those affairs between young men and older women were "so far beyond the pale that [they] could not even be admitted, much less sensibly discussed" (31-3). The language the two lovers speak further affects their ability to comprehend and come to terms with their feelings for one another, for light, "tabloid terms" like "cougar" and "toy boy" had not yet been coined, while French novels describing the "older woman teaching 'the arts of love' to younger man" were too far removed from their context. They had, as the narrator contends, "only those morally laden English words to deal with: words like scarlet woman, and adulteress" (16), which, in retrospect, had no doubt played their part in Susan's eventual breakdown and Paul's inability to prevent or even understand it. Susan, furthermore, had been abused by her uncle when young and, upon the death of a man she loved in her early life, found herself in a violent marriage with Gordon MacLeod, whom she believed when he referred to her as "frigid" (37). Although they are having an affair, Paul does not seem to be able to grasp the implications of the stories Susan shares about her past. He airily dismisses her "frigidity" and only later in life does he ponder whether she felt any satisfaction during their time together: "How many orgasms had she had? Indeed, did she ever have one? There was pleasure and intimacy, surely; but orgasm? At the time he couldn't tell, nor did he ask; nor know how to ask. To put it more truthfully, he had never thought of asking" (242). Eventually, perhaps as a means to accept the agonizing turn of events in his relationship with Susan, Paul considers that while some view life as an expression of free will, others see it as "all inevitability" under the immutable rule of "pre-history." Thus, during his youth, he had thought that "a life – his own, of course – could be lived first under the dispensation of inevitability, and later under the dispensation of free will" (299), but given the outcome of his and Susan's sorties, he can no longer support such a perspective with equal conviction (209). Nevertheless, there remains a justification to Paul's retelling of his own life story in spite of all the events he cannot and could not alter and that may or may not have shaped it. This justification is at least twofold.

To begin with, as we have already gathered from Ricoeur's work on the importance and the nature of narrative, the telling of one's life story is key to one's ability to achieve self-understanding. In the philosopher's own words, this is the case because emplotment "'grasps together' and integrates into one whole and complete story multiple and scattered events, thereby schematising the intelligible signification attached to the narrative as a whole" (Ricoeur 1983, x). Often, like in the case of the narrator Paul, an individual's existence can seem chaotic and nonsensical, while disasters occur randomly and without explanation. To humanise such disparate happenings, one must develop them into a story or life narrative, which casts "a retrospective glance over existence from the past to the present; the story I erect around the events that have happened to me organizes my existence into a meaningful whole" (Hall 40). A kind of synthetic, but absolutely necessary unity results from this, as Ricoeur himself contends:

[T]he plot serves to make one story out of the multiple incidents or, if you prefer, transforms the many incidents into one story (...). [T]he recounted story is always more than the enumeration, in an order that would be merely serial or successive, of the incidents or events that it organizes into an intelligible whole. (Ricoeur 1991, 21)

For Paul, this is "the only story", not because it grasps entirely the lives of its protagonists, who could undoubtedly tell other stories, but because it is the only one that matters to him. More than coincidentally, it is, perhaps, a love story centred on his affair with Susan, but more importantly, it is also the narrative that is told in order to link events of his existence, some more random or traumatic than others, all with the hope of finding new meaning and understanding. The intelligibility or connection Paul seeks is not necessarily "the kind of intelligibility that scientists generally seek" (McCarthy 153) when they describe the world in terms of cause and effect, which is why he never attempts to distil the objective truth of his memories. Instead, the unifying connection established by his narrative order is "the interpretation of human events as a part of a larger frame or story whereby each event becomes meaningful in relation to the whole and vice versa" (McCarthy 153). In this manner, Paul desires to fathom Susan, their relationship, and, ultimately, himself.

When Susan shares more or less arbitrary details from her past, Paul observes that "things like this tumbled out of her in no particular order, and in response to no particular enquiry on my part, other than the tacit one of wanting to know everything about her. So she laid them out, as if expecting me to make sense, to make order, of her life, and of her heart" (70). Only the narrator's perspective is accessible to us in this exchange, which makes it impossible to determine whether or not Susan actually expected the former "to

make sense" of her tumultuous existence. What is clear, however, is that Paul felt the duty and, indeed, the need to do so, at least partly for the sake of a deeper understanding of his lover. The same holds true for their time together, which further explains why, for the first part of the novel, the narrator chooses to recall only those aspects of their relationship that made them happy, as if to draw out the essence of their love and separate it from everything else. In the process, he includes some events, but discards others, often unintentionally, depending on their link to the "intelligible whole", or that meaning which he desires to attribute to his and Susan's lives.

Paul remembers, for instance, that it was his mother who suggested that he joined the local tennis club, which he accepted "in a spirit of nothing but satire" (6-7), a sentiment that characterized him at the time and that no doubt contributed to his willingness or even excitement to break the social norm regarding amorous engagements. He also considers that after three weeks of play, he took part in a "Lucky Dip Mixed Doubles tournament", where he drew Susan MacLeod for his pair "by lot" or, as he now muses, "by destiny" (8). Predictably, he brings to mind moments essential for the definition of any relationship, including their first kiss, the first time they made love, meaningful conversations they had together and even their first disagreements. However, other details and even entire other stories that one would expect the protagonist to discuss given the nature of his affair are pushed to the margins of the narrative. Susan's husband, Gordon MacLeod, is hardly ever mentioned and, for the better part of the novel, is referred to by the childish nickname of "Mr E.P." or "Mr Elephant Pants", which further serves to project him as not real. Susan's daughters, Martha and Clara, receive a similar treatment and are addressed as "Miss G" and "Miss NS" or "Miss Grumpy" and "Miss Not So (Grumpy)" (55). Susan's entire family and past are thus minimised by the narrator, who projects them merely as catalysts for the woman's alleged desire to escape her current condition. Only when Paul discovers that Susan sometimes returns home from London after their departure does it occur to him that he had, perhaps, miscalculated how significant his lover's past, her pre-history, continued to be for her.

It is furthermore notable that Paul shares certain memories which are apparently trivial, but which are nevertheless given great significance, not necessarily because they change his relationship with Susan in any noticeable way, but precisely because they occupy a privileged position with respect to the meaning of the overarching story as configured by the narrator. He remembers, for example, the time when the car he was driving with Susan malfunctioned and continued to accelerate even though he pushed the break. In doing so, he considers that "it never occurred to me to ask Susan what to do. I thought, this is my problem, I've got to fix it" (48), which, in retrospect, appears to be analogous

to the way he decided to handle his relationship once it began to slide out of control. Elsewhere, Paul recalls an endearing episode at his lover's house:

I remember her, one afternoon, wearing a print dress with flowers on it, going over to a chintz sofa and plumping herself down on it.
'Look, Casey Paul! I'm disappearing! I'm doing my disappearing act! There's nobody here!'
I look. It is half-true. Her stockinged legs show clearly, as do her head and neck, but all the middle parts are suddenly camouflaged. (60)

Although seemingly trivial, the event becomes pregnant with entirely new meaning when Susan turns unrecognizable due to alcoholism. Later in life, Paul sees this as "another disappearing act" (173), whereby "her body is still there, but what lies inside – her mind, her memory, her heart – is slipping away. (...) And all the sweetness of her nature, the laughingness and trustingness central to the woman you fell in love with can no longer be seen" (173-4). Of course, this is not to say that Susan's innocent trick on her living room couch could have anticipated, in any way, the drastic turn of events in the following years. Yet this turn of events took place nevertheless and, for Paul, inexplicably so. As such, in his attempt to understand it, he draws connections between otherwise disparate episodes of his and Susan's time together, all the while looking for clues that might elucidate some kind of explanation.

Finally, Paul addresses the fact that, after several years, he decides to assign Susan's care to one of her daughters, who accepts this responsibility without further questions. Although this is rarely stated as such, it is this act in particular that brings about his feelings of shame and guilt. This draws attention to a purpose of the story that is intimately linked to, but goes beyond self-understanding. Ricoeur's philosophy is once again of assistance in this respect. Indeed, according to Ricoeur, to live a "good life" means to maintain an "ethical intention" or, in other words, to aim "at the good life with and for others, in just institutions." To evaluate whether one's life has been good, one must read it as if it were a story (Ricoeur 1992, 171-2). Paul's narrative, then, serves not only his better comprehension of his past, but also his scrutiny of his own life and actions. According to Maria Duffy, for instance, who discusses the notion of "pardon" from the perspective of Ricoeur's work, there can be no forgiveness until "memory has been dealt with", since memory is essential towards understanding and acceptance, and the latter are "forms of reconciliation and healing in their own right" (46). Inspired by Freud's thought, she concludes that the work of remembering is similar to that of mourning. Both can be painful exercises, but are nonetheless necessary to achieve reconciliation with oneself and with one's losses (Duffy 52). Certainly, Ricoeur agrees, one cannot undo the

past yet, this past remains perpetually open to new interpretations. "One cannot undo what has been done, nor pretend that what has happened has not. On the other hand, the *meaning* of what has happened to us, whether we have actively done it ourselves or have undergone it, is not fixed once and for all" (Ricoeur 2000, 33). The work of remembering is viewed, in this respect, as one's answer to and deliverance from the weight or "debt" of the past. In *The Only Story*, Paul's duty to "remember Susan correctly" can be better understood from such a perspective.

Indeed, the narrator of Barnes' novel inevitably blames himself for the turn Susan's life takes after the two move to London in order to live together. However, like Gordon MacLeod, Susan's husband, this is rarely discussed overtly. For instance, when Paul mentions the issue of early alcoholism with Joan, one of Susan's oldest friends, she advises that "if everything goes belly-up and pear-shaped, you'll probably get over it and she probably won't" (139). The protagonist repeats this statement several times throughout the rest of his narrative and this clearly continues to haunt him once he leaves Susan and attempts to carry on with his life. Undoubtedly, Paul does everything in his power, at least as far as he can fathom of the matter, to prevent Joan's foresight from materialising. Revisiting the past, he attempts to reconcile with his decision to "hand back" Susan by arguing that there was a certain "inevitability to it, which lent the action a different moral colouring. He found that he simply couldn't go on. He couldn't save her, and so he had to save himself. It was as simple as that" (210). The details Paul brings together to compose his story make this point all the more convincing. After all, given her past, Susan was prone to self-destructive behaviour long before they even met. Her eventual mental deterioration was foreshadowed by episodes such as her "disappearing act." The cultural and social context of their affair, described in some detail by Paul as part of their "pre-histories", placed too heavy a weight on their psyches. Under the circumstances, neither of them had any choice. Retrospectively, at least, this much seems obvious and must be stated as such as a form of "duty" to the past:

He had a duty to see back to how she had been, and to rescue her. But this wasn't just about her. He had a duty to himself. To see back and... rescue himself? From what? From 'the subsequent wreckage of his life'? No, that was stupidly melodramatic. His life had not been wrecked. His heart, yes, his heart had been cauterized. But he had found a way to live, and continued with that life, which had brought him to here. And from here, he had a duty to see himself as he had once been. Strange how, when you are young, you owe no duty to the future; but when you are old, you owe a duty to the past. To the one thing you can't change. (202-3)

Yet Paul cannot help but note that “all those years ago”, while “there was her shame to deal with”, there was “also, he knew, his shame” (204). Neither at the time of their affair, nor later in his life, however, does Paul earnestly contemplate this fact or the effect it has had on him. Meanwhile, considering that he has never been able to love again and that his life becomes a complacent routine, the effect is, indeed, great. His remorse is rarely mentioned or hinted at, although it becomes increasingly obvious as the narrative perspective begins to shift. As such, the first-person perspective of the first part of the novel, which describes Paul and Susan’s affair at its happiest, drifts into a second person perspective during the second part of the novel, when their relationship gradually dies out, suffocated by the woman’s addiction to alcohol and the protagonist’s inability to comprehend or “save her.” At times, it is as if, in his attempt to justify his actions, Paul invites the narratee to empathise with him, as well as to confirm his decisions and to reassure him that he has done everything conceivably possible for someone in that particular situation. By the third part of the novel, which largely describes Paul’s life after leaving Susan, the narrative is in the third person, so as to suggest, perhaps, that the protagonist, emotionally detached from a life without his lover, can no longer recognize himself in his own actions. By now, “it was as if he viewed, and lived, his life in the third person” (195-6).

By and large, it is quite possible that Paul and Susan’s story was headed toward its catastrophic end from the very beginning, merely because of each of their pre-histories. Yet, shame and remorse resulted from their relationship nonetheless, which, for Paul, brought about a life without any further vitality. Having remembered his past, Paul considers an image that had haunted him for the entirety of his life. Often, he would think of himself at an upstairs window with Susan hanging on the other side. In this portrait, he would try to hold on to his lover by her wrists, but would eventually let go and have to witness her fall. Late in life, Paul touches upon something he has previously repeatedly ignored as he wonders:

if he had always misconstrued that indelible image which had pursued him down his life: of being at an upstairs window, holding on to Susan by the wrists. Perhaps what had happened was not that he had lost strength and let her fall. Perhaps the truth was that she had pulled him out with her weight. And he had fallen too. And been grievously damaged in the process. (256)

From the reader’s point of view this certainly appears to be the case in *The Only Story*. Indeed, if we are to accept Ricoeur’s theory that the answer to

the question “Who is this?” is inevitably “the story of a life” (Ricoeur 1988, 246), then this final conclusion to Paul’s narrative best explains his own identity to himself. It suggests that, by means of telling his story, Paul has, at last, reached a form of understanding and acceptance, excruciating as it may be, of his past and his present self. Certainly, Paul’s life intersects more than this “only story”, which, ultimately, is the only story that matters to him. This is precisely because it links and endows all other events with a coherent meaning, while at the same time allowing the narrator to discern whether or not his life has been “good.”

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TRAVEL AND ESCAPISM: ELVIRA BOGDAN AND OLGA CABA¹

MIHAELA MUDURE²

ABSTRACT. *Travel and Escapism: Elvira Bogdan and Olga Caba.* Olga Caba and Elvira Bogdan are female writers for whom travelling became an escapist strategy. Thus could they express, in diluted Aesopic terms, their discontent with Romania's political evolution in the 1940's and afterward, under the more acceptable mask of longing for other realms. Elvira Bogdan's lyrical outbursts in Rome or on the Valley of the Loire and Olga Caba's enthusiastic soliloquies in Scotland turned into double emphasis discourses under the restrictive travelling mode that prevailed before 1990.

Keywords: *travel, gender, France, Italy, escapism, discontent*

REZUMAT. *Călătorie și escapism: Elvira Bogdan și Olga Caba.* Elvira Bogdan și Olga Caba sunt scriitoare pentru care călătoria s-a transformat într-o strategie escapistă. În acest fel, ele au putut să-și exprime nemulțumirea față de evoluția politică a României în anii patruzeci ai secolului al XX-lea și ulterior, sub masca, mult mai acceptabilă, a dorinței de a vizita alte țărâmurii. Izbucnirile lirice ale Elvirei Bogdan la Roma sau pe Valea Loarei, precum și monologurile entuziaste ale Olgăi Caba în Scoția s-au transformat în discursuri cu accente duble în condițiile sistemului restrictiv al călătoriilor existent înainte de 1990.

Cuvinte-cheie: *călătorie, gen, Franța, Italia, escapism, restricții, nemulțumire*

This paper focuses on two Romanian female travellers, Olga Caba and Elvira Bogdan, with a view to pointing out to the multiple potential of travelogues produced by female subjects, travellers abroad, and beholders of

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other realities before and after World War II. Another claim of this comparison is the agency of the female traveller enjoying the privilege of her status: she can watch the world from beyond the imposing immediacy of the natives' contingent. This agency is to be found in the incidents selected for reconstruction in the travelogue and also in the surreptitious signals sent to the reader in the Aesopic discourse of the travelogue.

The connection between escapism and travelling although pretty obvious, in my opinion, has not been too much present in literary scholarship. Rather it has been of interest from the psychological point of view. Probably, Holland and Huggan offer the perspective that is the closest to my own in their study *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections of Contemporary Travel Writing*. I share with Holland and Huggan the idea that travel writing affords "a licence for escapism" (v). Like Holland and Huggan, I consider that an important aim of a project focusing on travel writing is assessing its "capacity to analyze and transform gender perception" (xii). On the other hand, the two scholars consider that travelling also provides an excellent environment "for sexual play and queer performativity" (xii), which is beyond the scope of my analysis. Olga Caba's and Elvira Bogdan's impediments to travelling were mostly of political nature deriving from the very nature of the dictatorships they had to face for historical reasons.

The connection between escapism and travel or travel literature is the focus of two other studies authored by Julia Sanders and David G. Farley. Julia Sanders offers a very competent analysis of the problem in her article dedicated to two early modern English writers: Ben Jonson and Richard Brome. From a political point of view her approach relies on post-colonial theory. This critical grid is much more useful when reading Caba who is aware of the power games that influence the perception of the Other and she foreshadows, in certain details, the (post-)colonial gaze. On the other hand, Bogdan's travelling dilemmas are decisively the result of the political circumstances when she wrote and published, namely before and during the Cold War. Farley's work on modernist travellers talks about "a generation enlivened by travel writing" (2), more precisely about writers who turned to the travelogue as a literary genre that functions "as natural extension of their imaginative work" (3). Farley insists that for the modernist writers "travel was surrounded with an aura of transgression" (10). This article shares with Farley the focus on intellectual writers. On the other hand, Farley's analysis does not go beyond a certain time limit: the outbreak of World War II. Or this is a very important limit for Caba and Bogdan because World War II brought about the supremacy of the Soviet Union and the domination of communist totalitarianism over Romania. Caba's and Bogdan's lives were profoundly influenced by these changes.

Less than two decades separate the two female writers who come, both of them, from an intellectual and middle class milieu. They enjoyed the educational opportunities in Greater Romania after World War I, they went through a period of obscurity from 1948 till after the Communist Thaw (1965), and then resumed their public literary activity more intensely.

Elvira Bogdan was born in Bucharest, in 1904 and died in 1987, also in the capital of Romania. A teacher's daughter, she graduated from the Faculty of Letters in Bucharest, in 1931. Thanks to Nicolae Iorga who also prefaced her first novel *Talismanul de aur* [*The Gold Keepsake*], she benefited from a specialization stage at Sorbonne in 1931 (full studentship was probably considered too much). Upon her return to Romania, she taught at different high schools in Bucharest. From 1940 till 1946 she was a clerk at the Press Committee and after being jobless for two years she got obscure clerical and translation jobs at the Minister of Health and at the Geological Committee. She made her debut in 1928 and she was also editor-in-chief of *Mariana*, a conventional women's magazine (1942-1944). There is a breach in her literary activity between 1947 (the publication of *The Castles of the Loire Valley* [*Castelele Loarei*]) and 1969 when she published *Domnița Ruxandra* [*The Lady Ruxandra*]. Bogdan also published other novels for children: *Aurora, mireasa soarelui* [*Aurora, the Sun's Bride*] (1969) and *Mirela cu voce de aur* [*The Gold-Voiced Mirela*] (1982). Bovaristic in her excessively glamorous style, Elvira Bogdan is, however, a pleasant writer interested in the beauty of her expression and less in a highly original personalized view. Graceful and within beaten tracks... this is Elvira Bogdan.

Olga Caba was born in Valeva, Bukovina, in 1913. Like Elvira Bogdan, she was the daughter of a teachers' family. Caba studied English at the University of Cluj, under the supervision of Peter Grimm and graduated in 1934. During her studentship she benefited from a scholarship in Britain when she visited Scotland. She taught English at different schools in Botoșani, Focșani, Oradea, Bucharest between 1936 and 1952. From 1952 till 1953 she was imprisoned at Mislea and Văcărești with women from the former elite of the country. After getting out of prison, Caba withdrew at Sebeș where she taught French starting from 1954. This is the moment when she met Eric(a) Tecău, a hermaphrodite, and they fell in love (cf. Cârlușea). In 1956 Eric(a) was operated on in Bucharest and got a masculine identity. The two could finally marry in 1958. But this was no end of troubled times for the two lovers. This matrimony caused great scandal among the local authorities of the time. A teacher must be a model of morality! Conventional, prudish morality of course! In a country where homosexuality was punishable by prison, such a marriage could offer a good example neither to children nor to the community. Caba lost her teaching position in 1958 was obliged to live for the rest of her life on a meager pension. She died in 1995, Eric had preceded her in 1994.

Caba made her debut with a travelogue entitled *Vacanță sentimentală în Scoția* [*A Sentimental Journey to Scotland*] in 1944. It is a memorial of the happy times when she visited Scotland as a student. A long period of silence followed in her literary life. In 1970 Olga Caba resumed her literary activity with a collection of poems. Until 1988 she published several novels, as well as a collection of short stories. Then she got silent again. A collection of plays was published posthumously in 2001.

Three travelogues are under scrutiny in this paper: Olga Caba's 1944 *Vacanță sentimentală în Scoția* [*A Sentimental Voyage to Scotland*], Elvira Bogdan's 1947 *Castelele Loarei. Viața de glorie și strălucire din trecutul Franței* [*The Castles of the Loire Valley. The Life of Glory and Magnificence from the Past of France*] republished in 1970, under a slightly changed title, and in a reviewed and enriched version, and Elvira Bogdan's Italian 1976 travelogue: *Prin Italia, patria artei. Note de călătorie și evocări despre Roma, Siena, Florența, Veneția și Milano* [*Through Italy, the Homeland of Art. Travel Notes and Evocations about Rome, Siena, Florence, Venice, and Milan*].

The two writers' temperament and literary strategies are different. Olga Caba is ironical-lyrical and she relies on the intertextual mechanism reinventing Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* not to France and Italy, but to Scotland. Her travelogue turns into a statement with political connotations during World War II. Caba's apparently innocent travelogue talks about a happy period in the author's life before the war: her stage as a student at Durham and her exploration of Scotland. This journey became even more sentimental in 1944 when the book inspired by this experience was published. The travelogue is also an Aesopian text in its own way because it indirectly tries to re-connect Romania to a European and democratic tradition to which it belonged before World War II.

Elvira Bogdan is a more lyrical temperament. Her travel notes are resurrections of personal memories and of important historic personalities associated with the places that she visits. Elvira Bogdan digs up in her personal treasure hoard of memories and turns her psychological experiences into notes which contain both eternally valuable characterological observations and information on the history and culture of the country which she visits. This informative content increases significantly after 1947 when the travelogue becomes a surrogate travel for a readership that was forbidden the actual experience of travelling. The first edition of Bogdan's travelogue to the castles of the Loire Valley (namely, the 1947 edition) ends with the description of Fontenay-aux-Roses, the Romanian school founded by Nicolae Iorga in a suburb of Paris. In its own way it was a "castle" for the young Romanians who had come to France to improve their education. When Bogdan visited it immediately after

World War II, both the visit and the building implied a political message. France had been ravaged by war but it was resurrecting in a new world. Bogdan's love and admiration for France obviously means attachment to the Western values of civilization and hope that Romania will continue to be part of the democratic world after World War II.

Elvira Bogdan surrounds, protects both her text and herself with considerable paratext. This textual threshold invokes the protective father figure of Nicolae Iorga thanks to whom Elvira Bogdan could study in France from 1931 to 1934. The 1970 edition preserves the reference to Iorga and the image of the Romanian house at Fontenay-aux-Roses but they are placed at the end of the 1947 text and precede new travel impressions. These additions are the fruits of a 1969 journey, a privilege allowed by the then establishment, a concession the author is very much aware of and whose price she is eager "to pay." The "Foreword" to the second edition expresses Bogdan's joy when meeting old friends and admiring the same monuments she had admired before the Cold War. They all are impressive and impassive in their beauty. She wishes the past and the present were the same: "... it seems to me that nothing has changed here in the ever imposing grandeur of this great town of the world!" (175).³ But history makes us all change and we can hear Elvira Bogdan paying tribute to the Communist Romania in the wooden language of that time. "But during those hot years, through our hard, enthusiastic, and relentless work, all of us, heroic, and steadfast. confident in victory, united, all our fiery generation laid the foundations of today's Romania flourishing, powerful, and beloved by all" (1970, 173).⁴

According to a note found on the back cover of the 1970 version of *The Castles of the Loire Valley*, the book was published at the author's expense. The lack of any financial support points to the author's impatience to see her authorship turned to account, but this does not mean less servitude to the exigencies of censorship. The loophole is simply not big enough. *The Castles...* travelogue is dedicated to the author's mother. She is responsible for Elvira's never sated passion for history and culture.⁵

"The Preface" was written by Victor Eftimiu, a writer who had submitted to the exigencies of the Communist regime. He authored plenty of conventional verse but also preserved something from the inter-war atmosphere by his

³ "... mi se pare că nimic nu s-a schimbat aici, din măreția impunătoare dintotdeauna a acestui falnic oraș al lumii!" (1970, 175).

⁴ "Dar prin munca noastră încordată, entuziasă, fără răgaz, cu toții fiind eroici, dârzi, încrezători în izbândă, noi toți laolaltă, întreaga noastră generație de foc puneam în acei ani fierbinți temeliile nepieritoare ale României de azi: înfloritoare, atotputernică, iubită de toți" (1970, 173).

⁵ "care mi-a sădit în suflet din cea mai fragedă vârstă, pasiunea pentru istorie, pentru cultură ..." (1970, 5) ["... who aroused in my soul the passion for history, for culture since my youngest age..." (1970, 5)].

manners and appearance (elegant suits and extravagant bows). In his encomiastic paratext Eftimiu appreciates the beauty of Bogdan's style and the suggestive virtues of her historical reconstructions.⁶ Victor Eftimiu advised Elvira Bogdan to offer the Romanian readership new presentations of French castles, in other words, enrich the 1947 version of the travelogue, and change the title of the book from the rather passeistic *Castelele Loarei. Viața de glorie și strălucire din trecutul Franței* [*The Castles of the Loire Valley. The Life of Glory and Magnificence from the Past of France*] to the more touristic *Castelele Loarei. Note de drum și evocări din trecutul de glorie și strălucire al Franței* [*The Castles of the Loire Valley. Travel Notes and Evocations from the Glorious and Magnificent Past of France*]. Indirectly, he recommended Bogdan to the authorities of the time so that she get permission to travel abroad again. The preface becomes therefore, not only a text about the book which one is about to read but also a timid attempt to negotiate some freedom with the Authority of the time.

Elvira Bogdan's Italian travelogue also has a consistent paratext. After a dedication to Nicolae Iorga, under whose authority and protection the author places her creative effort, there follows the preface by Paul Cernovodeanu, senior research fellow at the "Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History in Bucharest. Says Paul Cernovodeanu: "For every monument, the author judiciously proceeded by writing a short but enlightening history and then described it artistically, with the inspired quill of a gifted writer" (1976, 8).⁷ According to the paratextual author-ity, Elvira Bogdan undertakes a popularizing enterprise⁸ - a word so dear to the Communist propaganda which aimed at translating high culture into popular culture apparently for the benefit of the masses. In fact, "popularization" was an exercise of censorship and expurgation in order to adapt high culture to the necessities of Communist propaganda. Cernovodeanu goes on emphasising the author's attitude: she "... did not fail to manifest her patriotic attitude and her profound understanding of the past" (1976, 8).⁹

Both in her 1970 French travelogue and in her 1976 Italian travelogue, Elvira Bogdan informs the reader paratextually that she was a member of the Tiberine Academy in Rome. Unlike Olga Caba who prefers to limit the paratext to a minimum absolutely necessary for the reader's information, Elvira Bogdan uses the ample paratext as an indirect mediation terrain for negotiation and compromise with the Authority. She seeks legitimacy by inscribing her travelogue

⁶ "... frumoase pagini de evocări istorice" (1970, 5).

⁷ "Pentru fiecare monument autoarea a procedat judicios, întocmind câte un scurt - dar edificator - istoric, și apoi descriindu-l din punct de vedere artistic, cu o pană inspirată de scriitoare talentată" (1976, 8).

⁸ "operă de popularizare" (1976,8).

⁹ "...autoarea a ținut să-și manifeste atitudinea patriotică și adâncă înțelegere pentru trecutul" (1976, 8).

in a prestigious context of patriarchal power and intellectual prominence. If there is also some maternal source of author-ity (see the dedication to Bogdan's mother), this is rewarded with loving and affectionate respect, but it is the power of the patriarchal figures of Bogdan's paratext that facilitate her public recognition.

Another difference between the two women writers refers to the poetic quality of the text. With Caba this poetic value comes from the reality it describes, namely the beauty of the Scottish landscape described in Sterne's sentimental mode. Scotland becomes a romantic topos of lost causes – think of Bonnie Prince Charlie! – but at the same time, there is always a touch of irony which brings us back to the prosaic realities of modernity. "Spring had brought me so close to the borders of Scotland that opening my window, which overlooked the hills, it seemed to me that I could hear Bonnie Prince Charlie's bag pipes. Spring is always full of callings although nowadays, there is such heavy traffic on our roads and maps are so good that it is impossible to let yourself be seduced by the illusion that you do not know where you are going".¹⁰ Caba is able to combine, very deftly, irony and fear, horror. For sure, there is no better place for such mixture than Loch Ness. Caba does not want to let herself be submerged by fear but she also realizes that she may lose some of the unique charm of the place by this excess of rationality. She sees no trace of the famous monster. "In vain did I gaze at the smiling and blue water table, I could see nothing, not even a fish, maybe because I was a foreigner and the monster only appears to the natives" (127-128).¹¹ Another explanation for this banal and peaceful landscape of Loch Ness is a pleasantly ironical self-reference: "[t]he land took revenge upon me for I did not want to believe in fairy queens" (120).¹²

Sometimes Olga Caba's depiction of the Scottish landscape gets impressionistic touches. Loch Ness calls for such a pictorial approach as water has always been a matter of utmost concern for the Impressionistic artists. "Around the lake [Loch Ness] floats a blue and soft mystery of grey mist, the hills, the sky, the lake, they are all blue, the contours melt, and the light of the sun is a little bit steamy because of the humid air. All this subtle landscape would make you cry, or it would simply slip between your fingers unless the massive yellow of

¹⁰ "Primăvara mă aduse atât de aproape de hotarele Scoției, încât, deschizându-mi geamul înspre dealuri, mi se părea că aud cimpoaiile lui Bonnie Prince Charlie. Primăvara este întotdeauna plină de chemare, deși în zilele noastre drumurile sunt atât de bătute și hărțile atât de bune, încât este imposibil să te lași sedus de iluzia că nu știi unde te duci" (9).

¹¹ "Eu, însă, degeaba mi-am plimbat ochii pe oglinda zâmbitoare și albastră, nu vedeam nimic, nici măcar un peștișor, poate pentru că eram străină și dihania nu apare decât indigenilor" (127-128).

¹² "[t]ara s-a răzbunat asupra mea, pentru că n-am vrut să cred în zâne" (120).

the flowers nailed it in gold”.¹³ Poetry is always at hand when Olga Caba describes the beautiful nature of Scotland. “The lake is quiet and virginal, like a fairy queen who has fallen asleep under her blue veils” (76).¹⁴ At Glen Nevis: “[w]ild waterfalls throw themselves into precipices ...” (108)¹⁵, at Inverness “[b]lue are the distant hills and blue is the sky looming through the white fog like an eye drowning in tears” (131).¹⁶ The interference of modernity is loathsome, according to Caba’s classical taste. She talks about “the advertisements for the McClelan toothpaste and the Shell oil machines, these ghosts which damage the aspect of the most romantic corners on earth by their unexpected appearance” (43).¹⁷

On the contrary, Elvira Bogdan is very informative and only occasionally is she tempted to mount Pegasus and let her poetical voice go. Here is, for instance, the passage describing Piazza di Spagna in Rome. “Flowers, flowers, everywhere the most diverse flowers, wherever you might look there is an abundance, a profusion of flowers offered by the beautiful and talkative flower girls full of joy and grace, who smile at you, tempt you, with their slightly singing voice and their friendly, inviting looks, to buy from them”.¹⁸ This poetical passage relies on an association constructed according to the traditional patriarchal recipes associating the flower girl with her merchandise (the flowers), namely with fertility. Selling flowers, in other words selling the sexual organ of the plant, also intimates that flower girls symbolically sell something that bodily belongs to them. They are beautiful, enticing, and slightly promiscuous.

Other poetic passages from Bogdan’s text belong to the romantic poetics of the ruins. Occasionally she also introduces poetical fragments from other authors – all of them canonized males - as if she were looking for support among the confirmed poetical authorities of Romanian literature or world literature. This is how she instrumentalizes Stendhal, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Goethe, Henri de Régnier, or Carducci. These poetical revisitations point to her culture and are also escapes to the world of art and beauty.

¹³ “În jurul lacului plutește un mister albastru și dulce de ceață fumurie, dealurile, cerul, lacul, toate sunt albastre, conturile sunt topite și lumina soarelui e puțin aburită de aerul umed. Tot acest peisaj subtil te-ar face să plângi, sau pur și simplu, ți-ar aluneca printre degete dacă galbenul masiv al florilor nu l-ar fixa cu cuie de aur” (125-126).

¹⁴ “Lacul e liniștit și feciorelnic, ca o zână adormită sub vălurile ei albastre” (76).

¹⁵ “[c]ascade sălbatice se aruncă în prăpăstii...” (108).

¹⁶ “[a]lbastre sunt dealurile din depărtare și albastru este cerul întrezărit prin ceața albă ca un ochiu înneecat în lacrimi” (131).

¹⁷ “reclamele de pastă de dinți McClelan și automatele de benzină Shell, fantome care prin apariția lor totdeauna neașteptată strică înfățișarea celor mai romantice colțuri ale pământului (43).

¹⁸ “Flori, flori, peste tot cele mai felurite flori, cât cuprinzi cu ochii o bogăție, o profuziune de flori, pe care ți le oferă florăresele frumoase, gureșe, pline de voieșie și de grație, zâmbindu-ți, îmbindu-te cu glasul lor, ușor cântat și cu priviri prietenoase, galeșe – să le cumperi...” (108).

In spite of all the difficulties Bogdan has succeeded in travelling to Italy and she can now admire the glorious ruins. Her enthusiasm translates into short exclamatory sentences or points of suspension because the emotion is too intense. She escapes from the world of the word that must be said.

Rome, the matchless city!
 Rome, the queen of all cities! Rome, the immortal City!
 Rome, beloved by all!
 Rome...¹⁹

Still, Elvira Bogdan is not so keen on giving the reader her own subjective impressions of the realities she sees abroad but rather offers “objective” information about the famous monuments and the famous owners or tenants of the buildings that she sees in Italy or France. In the 1970 edition she does not forget to add that nowadays the famous castles of the Loire Valley are “the property of the French people” (1970, 274).²⁰ The political implications are evident and they are meant to please the censor.

A very interesting authority used by Bogdan to legitimize her travelogue is the Romanian historian Vasile Pârvan whom Bogdan quotes several times. On the one hand, this is agreeable to the ears of the Communist censor as Pârvan was instrumentalized in the National Communist discourse growing during those years of Nicolae Ceaușescu’s dictatorship. On the other hand, Pârvan’s verse about his disease – he used to suffer from epilepsy – has a hidden meaning for the reader who used to live under the tyranny of a political pathology, namely the communist ideology imposed as the only possible truth in society: “Every murmur is a disease/ every pessimistic thought is a heresy against the principle of life!”²¹

Like many other travellers Caba and Bogdan also construct their home in national terms and set themselves in contrast with other ethnic identities essentialized as the Others. For instance, Caba feels proud to sign in a Scottish hotel’s guest book as its first ever Romanian guest.

After breakfast the guests’ book was brought to me so that I could sign in mentioning the country I came from. I leafed through two volumes and found people who had come from all the four corners of the world

¹⁹ “Roma cea fără de seamă în lume!
 Roma, regina cetăților! Roma Cetatea eternă!
 Roma cea îndrăgită de toți!
 Roma...” (121).

²⁰ “bunuri ale poporului francez” (274).

²¹ “Fiecare cârtire e o boală, fiecare gând pesimist e o erezie împotriva principiului vieții!” (11).

but I found no Romanian signature. So I proudly wrote my name as the first from my nation who had reached these lands and I felt like Cook when he first landed in Tahiti.²²

Scotland becomes a kind of Mioritza²³ land and the Scottish melancholic songs are felt to be close to the *doinas* sung of the Romanian shepherds. The Scots are one of those peoples who still suffer because of some historical defeats. Caba understands this longing for an inexorable historical past that has shaped the present in ways felt to be unfair. "For him [the Scotsman], the past is the present and in any moment he is ready to cry over his favourite Prince Charlie whose exile occurred two hundred years ago, over Queen Mary's sufferings, and the clans' fall" (51).²⁴ Caba realizes the double nature of the Scots, a sort of double consciousness that is not shaped by race (as in W.E.B. DuBois' famous essay *The Souls of Black Folk*), but by the political balance of power extant in Great Britain. The battle of Culloden (1746) has sealed (at least for two centuries and a half) any dream of Scottish autonomy or/and independence. The Scotsman became a second rank ethnicity in this ethnic puzzle called Great Britain. Caba realizes all these evolutions with amazing perception and sympathy which comes from the Romanian historical experience as well. The Romanians also could not enjoy political autonomy or/and independence for a long time. "The Scotsman lives a double life as he is of a nature composed of two contrary instincts. Being realist, hardworking, and objective, he realizes that his only possibility to live a major history is to make the British cause his cause. At the same time, he is of a sentimental nature which cannot forget the past" (118).²⁵

Hotels or youth hostels are wonderful contact zones where Caba constructs her ethnic essentialist observations. Somehow maliciously, she mentions the characteristics of each ethnic group. The passage is quite long but it is worth quoting for its irony, humour, and direct exposure of ethnic stereotypes.

²² "După dejun mi s-a adus cartea vizitatorilor să mă iscălesc, menționând țara de unde vin. Am răsfoit două volume și am dat de oameni veniți din cele patru colțuri ale lumii, dar n-am găsit iscălitura nici unui român. M-am semnat deci cu mândrie, ca prima din națiunea mea care umblase pe acele meleaguri și m-am simțit la fel ca Cook, cind acesta a debarcat pentru prima dată în Tahiti (30).

²³ Famous Romanian ballad with anonymous author and transmitted orally.

²⁴ "Pentru dânsul, trecutul este prezentul și în orice moment e gata să deplângă pribegiile favoritului său Prinț Charlie de acum două sute de ani, suferințele reginei Mary și prăbușirea clanurilor" (51).

²⁵ "Scoțianul trăiește o viață dublă, pentru că este o natură compusă din două instincte contrare. Fiind realist, sărguincios și obiectiv, își dă seama că singura sa posibilitate de a trăi o istorie majoră, este aceea de a face cauza brită, cauza lui. În același timp, este o natură foarte sentimentală care nu poate uita trecutul" (118).

The Frenchman is considered to be too nervous. His quick and expressive gestures, his lack of spontaneity in action - for example when he meditates, while holding the lid in his hand, whether to put it on the kettle or on the coffee pot - his ceremonial kindness, they fill the atmosphere around him with humour or even malice. The Frenchman notices, gets confused and mad. A new explosion of gaiety. (33-34) ... The silent Scandinavians, always looking like some sailors on land, are very similar to the English except that they are much calmer. (34) ... The Canadians, even if they have English or Scottish origins, are considered to be provincial relatives who do not have the same good quality, had they been born in the British kingdom. Rather they are some distant family treated with some kind of superior goodwill, patted on the shoulder, and generously guided. (34) ... The Englishman is much more at ease than his colonial relatives and somehow he even looks down on them. The accent, the manners, the new customs of the English having lived in the colonies for several generations are, all of them, drawbacks pointing to provincialism and inferiority (35) ... the English of the young generation do not share this prejudice to the same extent and they no longer imagine that one cannot live a human life outside the British Isles or that simply it is not *proper* to live outside England (35). ... But the Southern peoples are considered to be suspect and one should not meddle with them (35-36). ... As for the peoples from the South-East of Europe, the average Englishman, even the cultivated one, knows little, if anything. I was asked strange questions; for instance, if Romania is in Asia or if we speak the Yougoslav language. ... But as I learnt English very quickly and I could sit at table without putting my fingers into my mouth, I may not have offered them the show they expected and they may have said behind my back that I was as civilized as if I had been an English woman, they did say that about poor Pinto, my Portuguese colleague. (36)²⁶

²⁶ "Francezul e considerat prea nervos. Gesturile sale repezi și expressive, lipsa lui de spontaneitate în acțiune, de exemplu când meditează cu capacul în mână, dacă să-l pună pe ceainic sau pe ibricul de cafea, ceremonioasa lui complezență, umplu atmosfera din jurul lui cu umor, ba chiar maliție. Francezul observă, se încurcă și se înfurie. Nouă explozie de veselie" (33-34). ... Scandinavii, tăcuți, cu veșnicul lor aer de marinari pe uscat, aduc mult cu englezii, doar că sunt și mai potoliți decât aceștia (34) ... Canadienii, chiar de proveniență engleză sau scoțiană, sunt considerați, ca niște rude de provincie, nu chiar atât de bună calitate ca și când s-ar fi născut în regatul britanic, ci ca membri mai îndepărtați ai familiei, tratați cu bunăvoință cam de sus venită, bătuți pe umăr, ghidați cu generozitate. (34) ... Englezul e însă mult mai degajat decât rubedeniile sale din colonii și chiar le privește cu oarecare dispreț. Accentul, manierele, obiceiurile noi acumulate de englezii trăind în colonii de mai multe generații, sunt tot atâtea defecte, trădând provincialism și inferioritate (35). ... tânăra generație de englezi e mai degajată de această prejudecată și nu-și mai închipuie că în afară de insulele britanice nu se poate trăi o viață omenească și că pur și simplu nu se *cade* să trăiești în afară de Anglia (35). ... Popoarele sudice sunt însă considerate ca oameni suspecti cu care nu e bine sa te amesteci (35-36). ... Cât despre popoarele din sud-estul Europei, englezul mediu și chiar cel cultivat, știe foarte puțin, dacă nu chiar nimic. Am fost întrebată lucruri foarte stranii, de exemplu, dacă România este în Asia, sau dacă vorbim limba iugoslavă. ... Deoarece, însă, am învățat foarte

The perspective of Caba, the traveller, on other ethnicities is influenced by the power games created by history and it is turned into account during one of those privileged instances when the West looks at the East and the East looks at the West. The Scots suffer because of the imperial gaze of the English but they identify with the imperial power and gaze once they can reconstruct the same power game that oppresses them while holding the upper position against others. It is really a kind of see-saw of symbolic power. Olga Caba's mindset is both performative and oppositional. She realizes with almost physical pain the stereotyping of the Southerners and the inclusion of the Romanians among the so-called lesser peoples. Not only do they melt into the undistinguishable sea of ethnicities which are not English, in other words they are not significant, but they also seem to hover on the margins of humanity. While in Edinburgh, Caba records such an incident partly with humour, partly with sadness. Caba put up at a youth hostel. The warden of the hostel was shocked when he realized that a Romanian slept under same roof as himself and his family. "When I told him I am Romanian, he looked at me as if I were the ninth wonder of the world because he had never seen Romanians in his life. He even called his wife to see me" (51).²⁷ Everybody needs an Other.

Unlike Olga Caba, Elvira Bogdan's writing is much more suppressed and contained. When referring to others, it displays a sort of political correctness *avant la lettre*. In fact, rarely does she offer ethnic observations except when she talks about the Italians.

The Italians are also friendly, full of gaiety, extrovert, warm and generous, ready to present you the object that you like. The Italians are ready to give you even their heart and they seduce you with their sentimental, friendly, and enthusiastic nature, their ageless youth ready to burst out at any moment. (16)²⁸

The Italians are the Romanians' brothers. This cannot be forgotten and it leads to an idealization of Italy which inherited Rome and all its virtues. The alliance between Musolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany which led to Romania's loss of Northern Transylvania in 1940 is forgotten by Bogdan, the enthusiastic

repede englezește și știam să stau la masă fără să îmi bag degetele în gură, nu le-am oferit poate spectacolul dorit și poate au spus și despre mine pe la spate ca sunt aproape tot atit de civilizată ca și când aș fi fost englezoaică, cum au spus despre săracul Pinto, colegul meu portughez (36).

²⁷ "Când i-am spus că sunt româncă, s-a uitat la mine ca la a noua minune a lumii pentru că nu mai văzuse români în viața lui. A chemat-o și pe soția lui să mă vadă (51).

²⁸ "Italienii sunt și ei prietenoși, plini de vioiși, expansivi, apropiați și sunt gata să-ți dăruiască, generoși, din ceea ce posedă, obiectul care-ți place. Italienii sunt gata să-ți dăruiască chiar și inima lor – și te cuceresc prin firea lor sentimentală, prietenoasă și entuziastă, printr-o tinerețe a lor, nelimitată de vârstă, gata să izbucnească în orice prilej!" (16).

traveller. One must “keep coming back to Italy, with the burning desire to see its treasures again and discover new ones, like a new Aladin” (12)²⁹. Bogdan’s patriotism melts into her incantatory admiration for Italy, and a new alliance is produced. “And never shall we be able to give this wonderful country and its beloved people enough proof of our gratitude, of our love for how much we all owe it!” (12).³⁰ It is from this point that Bogdan develops an almost obsessive discourse about the Latin/Roman origins of the Romanian people and the sisterhood between Italy and Romania. Historically, both countries have always been at the crossroads between the East and the West. They have always functioned as “gateways” against all sorts of invasions and aggressions. “Beyond anything else, Italy has been our Latin sister. Romania and Italy have always been connected by the closest ties of affectionate friendship. We love Italy with all our hearts and Italy loves us” (13).³¹ Such rhetorical effervescence does not exist in Bogdan’s French travelogue which is mostly informative and referential from the cultural point of view.

Olga Caba’s ironical stance differentiates her from Elvira Bogdan. The latter’s repertoire shows a strong sentimental identification with the object of her perception as a traveller. On the contrary, Caba’s humorous wording hovers on the efficiency and the conciseness of the English paradox as cultivated by Oscar Wilde. For instance, the poor and shy Michael Droops carries all Caba’s shopping and does not dare to say a word to her. “The Englishman cannot be a cavalier because he lacks the talent to make compliments. He is so shy that it would be easier for him to hit a woman than tell her something graceful” (61).³² While visiting the Zoo from Edinburgh, Caba admires Kitty, the turtle. Caba makes an experiment. She lights a match right in front of Kitty’s eyes. The animal makes no movement, it keeps looking without blinking. Caba writes down in her travel notes: “In Great Britain even the turtles have cold blood” (62-63).³³ With charming and humorous detachment, Caba also establishes the rules of hitch-hiking: “limp in order to attract attention” (89).³⁴ Once somebody took you in his car, the hitchhiker should follow this “dialogue”: thou shall not smoke, thou shall not ask questions, thou shall amuse the driver.

²⁹ “revii în Italia de fiecare dată cu arzătoarea dorință de a-i revedea comori, de a descoperi altele noi, ca un nou Aladin” (12).

³⁰ “Și niciodată nu vom putea să îi dovedim îndeajuns, acestei țări minunate și poporului iubit, toată recunoștința noastră, toată dragostea noastră, pentru cât de mult îi datorăm cu toții!” (12).

³¹ “Italia este mai presus de orice, sora noastră întru latinitate. Între România și Italia au existat dintotdeauna cele mai strânse legături de afectuoase prietenie! Iubim Italia din toată inima și Italia ne iubește și ea” (13).

³² “Pentru ca sa fie cavalier, englezului nu-i lipsește decât talentul de a face complimente. E atât de timid încât poate că i-ar veni mai ușor să lovească o femeie decât să-i spună ceva grațios” (61).

³³ “În Marea Britanie până și broaștele țestoase au sânge rec” (62-63).

³⁴ “limp in order to attract attention” (89)

Olga Caba is very aware of her condition as a woman travelling all over Scotland. The Scottish kilt brings about a feeling of uneasiness. In Glasgow she is sorry that she does not have her trousers with her in order to mark a certain ironical difference between the two sexes. It is a distinction that she feels to be extremely important. The suggestion that sexual identity might be fluid is shocking for Caba, at least in this moment of her life. "In the tourists' home I only found men and they were all wearing kilts, except an American. I was sorry that I had not brought my trousers with me, I felt like putting them on out of a sense of decency and in order to mark a certain distance between the sexes" (67).³⁵ But the most daring gendered challenge is still to come. The night, the most erotic moment of the day, fills the Romanian traveller with excitement and frenzy. Will her virtue be tempted or not? "When I went to bed, I was thinking how compromised I would be at home if they found out that I slept in an abandoned house, behind God, without keys or locks, in the vicinity of the bedroom sheltering two young men. But I was not afraid for I knew that human love is more powerful than animal lust and humaneness, that angel guardian of the tourists, was at my bedside watching over me" (79).³⁶

Caba, the traveller, lives in the most direct and concrete reality. She tells us about the hotels where she put up, the restaurants where she ate, her financial problems and her strategies to save money, Elvira Bogdan is so grateful that the Authority allowed her body to cross borders (physically, of course) that she reinforces these borders mentally and constantly refers to the Romanian officials who act as guides and landmarks during her supervised voyage. For Elvira Bogdan there is nothing more important than returning within the protected borders of Romania and avoiding defection. "I have travelled a lot since my early youth when I left for Paris as a university fellow, alone, far away from my country, among foreigners... And no sooner had I graduated over there than I returned to my country for there is not greater suffering for a true human being than longing for his homeland" (1970, 15).³⁷ Elvira Bogdan's conformism is obvious, she constantly pays tribute to the ambassadors of (Communist)

³⁵ "În casa turistă am găsit numai bărbați și pe toți în fusta plisată, în afară de un American. Mi-a părut rău că nu mi-am adus pantalonii lungi cu mine, mi-ar fi venit să-i îmbrac dintr-un simț de deconță, pentru a demarca o distanță dintre sexe" (67).

³⁶ "Când m-am culcat, mă gândeam cât de compromisă aș fi acasă dacă s-ar afla că am dormit într-o casă părăsită, la spatele lui Dumnezeu, fără chei și broaște, în vecinătatea dormitorului care adăpostea doi băieți. Teamă nu-mi era pentru că știam că dragostea umană e mai tare decât cea animală și îngerul păzitor al turiștilor numit omenie îmi veghează la căpătâi" (79).

³⁷ "Am călătorit mult, din cea mai fragedă tinerețe, când plecam ca studentă bursieră la Paris, singură, departe de țara mea, printre străini... Și de îndată ce mi-am terminat studiile acolo, degrabă m-am reîntors în țară mea, căci nu este mai mare suferința pentru un om adevărat ca dorul de Patrie!" (15).

Romania under whose paternalist protection her Italian experience could take place. "True harbingers of culture, arts, and science, Romania's ambassadors prestigiously represent us, they organize, abroad, numerous cultural, artistic, and scientific events, which make us even more thoroughly known all over the world" (17).³⁸ Sometimes this tribute to the Romanian guardian angels is more personalized. For Elvira Bogdan, Nicolae Iorga is the father figure who supervises her actions from a distant and happy past – her studentship. Bogdan proudly remembers that she was present at the solemn inauguration of the Accademia di Romania in Rome. Among many other guests, "although I was young enough and too little known, I had the great honour to be sent by Professor Nicolae Iorga 'in order to be present and tell how it was'" (114).³⁹ In 1969 Accademia di Romania in Rome was reopened. Alexandru Balaci, the president of the Accademia di Romania in Rome, made the honours. He is another incarnation of the patriarchal authority, an important source of legitimation for Elvira Bogdan, the Wanderer. The source of Bogdan's enthusiasm is genuine patriotism but this sincere feeling also fits the requirements of the nationalist propaganda of the Communist regime under which she published her Italian travelogue. "Accademia di Romania, this oasis of Romanian feeling in Rome, is Romania's most important cultural centre abroad, a beacon and a banner we are proud of" (114).⁴⁰

Elvira Bogdan's journey seems to be the enterprise of a traveller who does not consider her gender too much. Not much does Bogdan tell about herself as a woman travelling to Italy or France. Still, there are some gendered implications in her presentations of certain tourist sites. While at St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, she cannot miss the opportunity to talk about the women who were granted the privilege of a burial place inside the famous edifice: Matilde of Canossa, Maria Sobieski-Stuart, and Christina of Sweden. Although Bogdan is proud to mention these great women of the past, her characterizations do not go beyond very traditional and stereotypical lines. A good example, in this respect, is the portrait of Catherine de Medici. "Besides these virile qualities, Regent Catherine added, when fighting for victory, other feminine weapons: shrewdness, dissimulation, plotting, slandering the enemy in order to discredit him with rumours or insinuations" (24).⁴¹ When visiting Sienna,

³⁸ "Adevărați soli ai culturii, ai artelor, ai științei, ambasadorii României ne reprezintă cu prestigiu, organizând peste hotare numeroase manifestări culturale, artistice, științifice, care ne fac și mai temeinic cunoscuți în străinătate" (17).

³⁹ "deși eram destul de tânără și încă prea puțin cunoscută, am avut deosebita cinste să fiu și eu trimisă de profesorul Nicolae Iorga, 'ca să fiu de față și să povestesc cum a fost'" (114).

⁴⁰ "Accademia di Romania, această oază de românism la Roma, este cel mai important centru de cultură al României peste hotare, un far și un stindard cu care ne mândrim" (114).

⁴¹ "Acestor calități virile, regenta Caterina [Caterina de Medicis], în lupta pentru dobândirea succesului dorit, le adăuga și alte arme feminine: viclenia, simularea, intriga, defăimarea dușmanului spre a-l discredita prin zvonuri ori insinuări lansate despre el" (24).

Bogdan somehow imprudently –from the point of view of Communist censorship – pays special attention to Catherine of Sienna, the fourteenth-century mystic. “Catherine of Sienna ... the daughter of a petty merchant ... vivid intelligence ... lots of sensitivity ... strength of character ... an example of virtue and vitality serving the meek” (145).⁴² Bogdan does not use the lexem “Christian” forbidden during the Communist regime in a publication referring to a contemporary event, but her wording (the substantivized adjective “the meek”) reminds the knowledgeable reader of the Biblical language.

The increasing disembodiment of the traveller is re-presented by her loss of organic bodily necessities such as eating or sleeping or falling ill. The reader is not informed where Bogdan sleeps, eats or washes during her Italian or French voyage. The sexualized body turns into a sort of ghostly presence and this is evident in the traveller’s purely intellectual interest in female personalities. Flings, amours or any possible erotic attractions are mercilessly repressed in the re-presentation of Bogdan’s voyages.

Carefully does Bogdan record any illustrious Romanian presence in Italy. For instance, while visiting Lido, the island near Venice, she does not forget to mention having seen the flat once occupied, in this enchanting area, by Nicolae Titulescu⁴³. She also talks about Asachi’s portrait at Caffé Greco, near Piazza d’Espagna in Rome, a place where the Romanian scholar used to come. “Our embassy has recently inaugurated here Gheorghe Asachi’s portrait, he also used to come to Caffé Greco, this confectionary-café so full of and rich in memories” (110).⁴⁴ Proudly she includes in her inventory of Romanian personalities the opera singers. “At Scala sang so many acclaimed opera singers who later became stars, the greatest one being our memorable Darclée” (234).⁴⁵

Caba’s writing displayed some irony and humour when referring to ethnicities. Bogdan prefers a sort of stiff, artificially restrained political correctness occasionally tampered by patriotic and romantic pathos. This evolution of the travelogue is relevant for the literary genres’ evolution and evaluation during the Communist regime: from satire and comedy, to odes and hymns. Caba dares to be ironical in her Scottish reminiscences where the lyrical alternates with the comical. Bogdan feels the need to be almost ecstatic with gratitude for being allowed by the communist gatekeepers to travel to the West, on her own footsteps. Stylistically, the metaphor collapses into metonymy as travelling is

⁴² “Caterina de Siena ... fiica unui modest negustor ... inteligentă vie ... multă sensibilitate ... tărie de caracter ... un exemplu de virtute și vitalitate în slujba celor umili” (145).

⁴³ Nicolae Titulescu (1882-1941), prominent Romanian diplomat.

⁴⁴ “Ambasada noastră a inaugurat de curând aici portretul lui Gh. Asachi, care și el a frecventat această atât de bogată în amintiri cofetărie-cafenea Caffé Greco” (110).

⁴⁵ “La Scala au cântat și atâția români consacrați, deveniți celebrități în frunte cu marea noastră Darclée” (234).

more and more a privilege and travelogues become the hashish of the repressed Romanians obliged to stay home and read about travel instead of travelling.

A characteristic of the travelogue is the representation of the self confronting otherness and changing, as a consequence of such radical an experience. Both Caba and Bogdan consider that the Romanian travelling self remains as still as a rock, reinforced in its conviction that there is no place like home. The difference is Caba's explicit awareness that the relations between ethnicities are influenced by political power. Caba's travelogue is tinged with (post-)colonial influences.

The three travelogues under perusal point to the increasing pressures upon the traveller and the travelling author during the increasingly aggressive dictatorship that travelled to and across Romania from the East. Both for Olga Caba and Elvira Bogdan travelling became an escapist strategy. Thus, under the more acceptable mask of longing for other realms, they could express, in diluted, almost Aesopic terms, their discontent with Romania's political evolution during the 1940's and afterwards. Under the Communist regime, Caba was silenced for many years. During the same period, Bogdan had to make amends to the ideological gatekeepers. Elvira Bogdan's lyrical outbursts in Rome or on the Valley of the Loire and Olga Caba's enthusiastic soliloquies in Scotland turned into double emphasis discourses under the ever more restrictive travelling modes. They not only described beautiful and politically remote geographical realities, they also sent a subversive message by creating or maintaining aspirations for free movement and unrestricted knowledge of the world. Elvira Bogdan's intellectually luxuriant and exuberant text, which clearly shows her pleasure of enumerating monuments and the world's artistic treasures, as well as Olga Caba's lucid and ironical comments are signifying discourses marked by the awareness of being observed and observing not only from the cultural point of view, but also politically. Elvira Bogdan and Olga Caba are both travellers and political subjects. Their writing cannot escape from the imposition of Europe's political boundaries often expressed in a subliminal way. While visiting Scotland, Olga Caba foreshadows both autumn and truth in freedom, she hopes that, someday, all ways will return.⁴⁶ Interesting is also the analysis of the subsequent editions of Elvira Bogdan's French travelogues. The differences between her 1947 and her 1970 *Castles of the Loire* point much more to certain political relaxations and less to the growing ripeness of the author's style.

Last but certainly not least, this paper points to some gendered peculiarities of the two travelling writers (one of them lyrical and more conformist, the other one more ironical and a future inhabitant of the Gulag). Although they

⁴⁶ Olga Caba: "...presimțeam toamna și în libertate, adevărul că odată toate drumurile se întorc" (74).

make no explicit comments about their own condition as travelling women, in terms of safety prerequisites, or meeting other women, or commenting on women's condition in other countries, Olga Caba's and Elvira Bogdan's travelogues are not completely gender blind discourses. Bogdan writes with great pleasure and respect about the way in which her authority as a traveller was reinforced or actually conferred by some father figures in Romanian culture (Nicolae Iorga, Alexandru Balaci, or the Romanian ambassadors). From the 1940's till the 1960's travelling occurred increasingly under the Eye of Authority. The Romanian travellers did not need to take their *penati*⁴⁷ with them for they were constantly in a Panopticum, namely under the watchful eye of the Romanian embassy whose mission was both representation and surveillance. After 1960 some relaxation did occur, but at least lip service must also be offered to the Authority. The two travelogues were inscribed in the power structures of the then culture and society. This burden became almost a kind of gravitational field inevitable to the human condition. Olga Caba's and Elvira Bogdan's travelogues are good samples of the bricolage results of gender constructions and political censorship (more or less internalized) which worked together, under the growing pressure of the Communist dictatorship. All these imposing factors turned Caba's and Bogdan's travelogues into forms of escapism.

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⁴⁷ Roman gods of home.

REQUIEM FOR AN IDENTITY: ANALYZING REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SELF IN *SONG OF MYSELF*

IOANA MUDURE-IACOB¹

ABSTRACT. *Requiem for an Identity: Analyzing Representations of the Self in Song of Myself.* The paper explores the introspection into the experience of selfhood by deconstructing the representation of identity into four stances – the poetic self, the self as other, the deistic/ heroic self and the bohemian self. The pairing into dual and opposing sets and their subsequent distribution in the framework of syzygial unity-in-duality is meant to render a more punctual picture of Whitman’s plethora of identifications in *Song of Myself*. The analysis sets into motion the identity of “I”, showing that the conundrum of identity is given by specific and independent identifications of the self with figures of the American society and imaginary. The validation of the multifaceted “I” embedded in the self-discovery is made by approaching the addressability of I-You autoscopies, in an attempt to restore identity through the filter of readership.

Keywords: *selfhood, identity, autoscopies, addressability, identification*

REZUMAT. *Requiem pentru o identitate: Analiza reprezentărilor sinelui în Song of Myself.* Această lucrare explorează introspecția în experiența sinelui, deconstruind reprezentările sinelui în patru ipostaze - sinele poetic, sinele ca celălalt, sinele deist/ erou și sinele boem. Asocierea acestor ipostaze în seturi duale și opozante și distribuția acestora în dualitatea unității sizigiale are rolul de a schița o imagine punctuală a multitudinii de identificări din *Song of Myself*. Analiza pune în mișcare identitatea “eu-lui”, indicând că enigma identității este schițată de identificări specifice și independente ale sinelui cu imagini ale societății americane și ale imaginarului. Validarea “Eu-lui” multilateral integrat în descoperirea sinelui se face prin referirea la adresabilitatea autoscopiilor Eu-tu, într-o încercare de a reface identitatea prin filtrul cititorului.

Cuvinte-cheie: *sine, identitate, autocopii, adresabilitate, identificare*

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Introductory Remarks: Foundations of the Self in *Song of Myself*

Walt Whitman's poetry stands out particularly due to its subliminal reading: as experimentation in form and style (notably analyzed by Carl Strauch), as a celebration of the mystical experience (according to James E. Miller), as a blend of spirituality and sensuality (Paul Zweig) and respectively as an exploration of the limits of human knowledge. *Song of Myself* was held as the centerpiece of *Leaves of Grass* throughout the entire revision process over the thirty-five years since its first publishing in 1855. It is an all-encompassing poem, encapsulating themes that vary from sexuality, to identity, to democracy and solitude, but, above all, *Song of Myself* is a declaration of freedom. Stemming from this premise of liberating energy, the current study aims to reflect on the conundrum of *self*-identity, broken into pieces of identification and then restored in plurifaceted autoscopies based on the dialogic addressability "you-I" in the poem. In doing so, Whitman's poem is to be read as a cathartic stimulus for a wandering audience that questions the boundaries between the stances of the self.

The paper will use the deconstructive framework of splitting the identity of the self to pursue the discovery process of deciphering the "myself" code that Whitman establishes in order to imagine his poetic laboratory. The motivation for this study considers two viewpoints regarding the way in which Whitman's *Song of Myself* triggers addressability and identification. On one hand, there is Harold Bloom's comparison of Whitman to "a prophet protesting in the name of the poor and the exploited voices of the interminable generations of slaves" (388). On the other hand, Edwin H. Miller, in his *Mosaic of Interpretations* (1989), refers to limits on the spectrum of accessibility, claiming the "*Song of Myself* has never spoken to a mass audience. Its originality, the absence of rime and conventional meter, the quirkiness of the lines and the sometimes obscure subject matters [...] limits access to an elite readership" (Miller 12).

In between the two viewpoints, if *Song of Myself* (referred to as *Song* from hereon) stands out as a polyphonic riddle that contains a cryptic identity; the reader needs to unlock it by reconstructing identity backwards, in such a way as to visualize the filters of identifications. The "self apparel" would represent the itinerary followed throughout the poem in search of any valid selves that can define the authorial identity.

Discussions of the multiple stages at which the identity of the "self" is projected start from the division of identity into four distinct stances of the self: 1. the poetic self, 2. the self as the random American "other" (read through the filters of Lacan's representation of *otherness*), 3. the self as a deistic representation of the hero and, respectively, 4. the self as a bohemian wanderer. Moreover, another particularity of the study uses Ray Benoit's concept of "syzygial unity-

in-duality" (Benoit 23) as a framework for pairing these particular four stances of the self in balance of opposing identifications. However, we understand the four identifications of the self as facets of the "self" apparel, or as opposing pairs of forces that tend to blend and juxtapose in the filter of the reader's response.

Using the reader-response theory with regards to the "I-you" autoscopies allows us to restore the identifications of the self and shift the focus from a wanderer type of reader to an active comrade. Juan Santiago Navarro's article "Beyond the Myth of Narcissus: The Role of the Reader in Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself'" (1990) serves as one reference point with respect to the readership addressability in *Song*, where "the reader [...] is not the passive recipient of the traditional poetry, nor is he a voyeur who contemplates with pleasure the narcissistic display of egotist" (Navarro 114).

Another claim that the current study makes is that Whitman is by no means telling us how to interpret the tone of *Song*, but is rather sending an invitation to join the poetic self in a communion of discovery. Likewise, the issue of addressability refers to Cristian Moraru's "autospecular mimesis" (26), aimed to prove the functionality of the poetic self as a paradigm of an author/reader ideology that insists on reciprocal discovery. Paving the way for "I-you" autoscopies, such addressability issues are meant to verify whether the reader can rebuild the trajectory of the selves towards an identity that is all-encompassing, yet more articulate than the disparate identifications.

In coining the conundrum of identity, there is a significant threshold between the two terms that stands at the basis of this analysis, namely: *identity* and *identification*. The former – for which Paul Ricoeur offered an essential theoretical contribution to the topic in *Soi meme comme un autre* (1990), encompassing mainly the status of the self in the individual² – represents the definition of the individual with regards to the larger community (*others*) and respectively to the universal, what sets one apart from the rest. The latter identification implies a joint communion with others through which parallelisms up to the point of juxtaposition occur between two individuals or with the things that one may perceive. Whitman's use in the poems is a matter of identifications which altogether corroborate a larger scheme of identity.

² Paul Ricoeur sees the cognitive interpretation of selfhood as a spiral made of two well-drawn elements that he named "l'identité *ipse* et l'identité *idem*." The pathway for an establishment of selfhood derives precisely from this settling of the two terms above, which can be translated by "other," respectively "alike/identical" as pillars of the foundation of an identity: "Je rappelle les termes de la confrontation: d'un côté l'identité comme *mêmeté* (anglais: sameness), de l'autre l'identité comme *ipséité* (anglais: selfhood)" (140). Ricoeur advocates the idea that the two categories are inseparable to such an extent that if a subject's identity is bereft of "ipse," the "idem" will never be completed and will transform evolution into stagnation.

From the poetic “self” to “self” as voicing of the “other”

The first projection of the “self” construction – the author “self” – is primarily anchored in a pseudo-reality: it presents the “I” as the speaking “self” in the position of an unconventional author willing to dismay any patterns of lyric repetition. It is from the beginning of the poem that identifications of the “self” occur and continue to gain force throughout the process of the self quest: “I am the mate and companion of people, all just as immortal and fathomless as myself” (Whitman 29). Being the “companion” functions as a lowering of all virtual barriers that exist between author and others because the aim is to become the person that crosses through his visual filter.

There are two fundamental contexts in which the quest of the Whitmanesque “self” can be read: the autobiography and the epic poetry³ frameworks, but for *Song* the tendency is towards a combination of the two, in which the author sets a poetic identity and presents his private self-gratulation myth. This consciousness of singing the private experience in an attempt to label the narrative is divided by the poet into three main components, according to Harold Bloom: “which he termed the soul, the self, and ‘the real ME’ or ‘me myself.’” By soul, Whitman meant character, as opposed to the self or personality. This is what Whitman regarded as his darker aspect, an estranged or alienated element in his nature, his soul, which comes out of the depths in most of his major poems. By “myself”, Whitman means what he calls “Walt Whitman, an American, one of the roughs.” Yet that more masculine or aggressive part of the self is split from “the real Me” or “me myself”, which ultimately is one with the world of night, death, the mother, and the sea. [...] the “real Me” is something like a knowing even as one is known, a kind of American Gnosis, of which Whitman is an authentic seer” (10).

The self is subsequently divided into instances of perception – of others, of the world and of the private emotions that transgress the human soul. It is with the soul that the “I/self” enters the realm in *Song of Myself*, through the sensory experimentation of the outer natural world:

³ Autobiography has received several definitions throughout ages, but generally it can be referred to Lejeune’s definition of autobiography as “[a] retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality.” The mutability of authorial identity in the nineteenth century suggests that representative selfhood enabled writers to construct a self in accordance with pre-determined social categories, but it also enabled them to question the existing social, political and economic order by exposing the exclusions and hypocrisies of its universal claims of freedom. Epic poetry has been used by peoples of the world to transmit their traditions from one generation to another, without the aid of writing.

My respiration and inspiration, the beating of my heart, the passing of
blood and air through my lungs,
The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark
color'd sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn
The sound of the belched words of my voice loos'd to the eddies of the
wind,
A few light kisses, a few embraces, a reaching around of arms, [...]
The feeling of health, the full-noon trill, the song of me rising from bed
and meeting the sun.

(Whitman 25)

Openly declaring the sundering of the self from civilization, senses function as vehicle for establishing a virtual proximity to nature, by which touching, hearing, smelling, seeing or tasting work as instruments of coalescing the speaking "I" with other selves. The aim of surrounding the entrance of the "self" into a natural realm is to shift focus towards the actual status of the "I" who rejoices the ordinary, the old and the new altogether, without pushing aside any raw experience. Particularly, nature is filtered by the machinery of the five senses in an attempt to free the "self" of any biased and worldly preconceptions and to locate it in a realm of ecstatic accomplishment.

Later, section 26 tells of another sensory experimentation, one that takes the path of perceiving the mundane and the industrialized facets of the world, rather than the natural façade:

I hear the sounds I love, the sound of the human voice,
I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,
Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds of the day and night,
Talkative young ones to those that like them, the loud laugh of work-
people [...]
And this indeed is music – this suits me.

(Whitman 44)

With a renewed accent on the senses, the "self" is on the verge of seizing the ecstatic poetic experience. The "I/self" switches the universal identification (with the sensory perception of nature) with the human identification (defined by the tangible and material locus), reaching the level of the *transcendental self*. If the "self" can be conceived of as a virtual/spiritual entity that exists eternally, the result is that the "self" becomes a moving force, comprising sequences of experiences and insights. And to obtain the essence of this *transcendental self* the poet is bound to create a fusion of the two counterparts that define the "I" in the poem, by merging the identification of the *poet's self* with mankind, represented by the figure of the *other*.

The identification that the “Self” takes with the random, ordinary American is a striking feature in the poem and it suggests that, in representing the odyssey of identity in *Song*, one should witness a series of refurbishments of the speaking “I.” To read the “self” as a voice of the random American it suffices to refer to Harold Bloom’s denominations of the identities that occur in the poem: “fighter for all causes, sympathetic observer of Americans and participant in their lives” (78).

The theoretical framework used by Jacques Lacan in *Ecrits*, who resorts to the referentiality of the “other” in order to seize the core of the self serves as resourceful reference for the juxtaposition of these two “selves” in *Song*. Lacan’s use of the term “self” is an identification always in terms with an apparent image. In this sense, otherness gains shape by the rejection of the binary opposition: “self, seen as ‘what is not other’ and other, seen as ‘what is not self’” (Lacan 29). Consequently, for Lacan, “the concept of self relies on one’s misidentification with the image of an other” (Klages 81) –other that can be engraved in two distinctive categories, named “Grand autre” – Other and “petit objet a” – other (Lacan 243). This way, other is precisely the “myself” in Whitman’s poem or the “self” (that Lacan develops in his theory concerning the mirror stage⁴), whereas Other stands for the items populating the numerous catalogues in *Song*. The manner in which the “self” as observer is formed is a strictly dependent equation of finding the unknown. But the unknown, in this case, is not the other/ the common American, as the poem gives a detailed depiction of the entire canvas of American life. In fact, the liminal position is occupied by the enigmatic “self” striving for a proper medium of development.

“When we use language, our relation with the other always plays on this ambiguity. In other words, language is as much there to found us in the Other as to drastically prevent us from understanding him. The subject doesn’t know what he is saying [...] because he doesn’t know what he is. But he sees himself. He sees himself from the other side, in an imperfect manner” (Lacan 245). Therefore, in the *Song* dialogue carried out between the “self” and the ordinary man/character in the poetic discourse the scope is a narcissistic one. The “I” doesn’t strive to satisfy the reader’s curiosity by representing the features of commonality, but rather the “I” indulges in a deterritorialization of the author into the realms of a self-quest. Also, Whitman’s “not knowing what he is saying” accounts exactly for the indecisive and fragmentary presentation of identity instance:

⁴ Lacan’s *The Mirror Stage as Formative for the I* introduced the starting point in theorizing otherness- the stage of childhood when a child first encounters his reflection in the mirror. This event led Lacan to a theory according to which human identity is decentered and that, even before the function of language is manifested, one apprehends its self as composed of multiple parts. The full recognition of the self as “I” appears only through the contact with the others, who function as mirrors for the self.

I do not know it-it is without name-it is a word unsaid,
 It is not in any dictionary, utterance, symbol...
 Perhaps I might tell more. (Whitman 68)

Otherness in the Lacanian vision is not an enclosed separateness, nor difference from the self, being, on the contrary, linked to the idealized image of the "I" as a single. The mirror recaptures the image of the whole otherness and offers it as a framework for the undefined self, functioning as a connection path for the two poles of identity. The reflection of the mirror in this case shows a pattern in which the "self" can mould, which means that the entire idea of the self, as apparent opponent to otherness and as the inner being designated by "I" is based on an image and consequently on an other. These boundaries between I and the other are blurred and eventually the two concepts are intermingled.

In treating the relation of the subject ("Me") to others ("Not-Me"), Whitman envisions a radical multicultural self on the basis of the transcendental jouissance. Even if the "absolute Other within himself" allows such an adaptation of jouissance, it refuses its credit in the foundation of the self, which becomes melted in the larger identity scheme. If Lacan grounds the ethical relations of the subject to himself and the neighbor on the Thing-jouissance, Whitman dismantles the self by not separating it from all signifiers and by making the other a non-representational self, but rather a mirror version of my-self. The "self" that marks this category of identification (with the random other) is, therefore, a distinct expression of identity. It is actually in search of rendering the perceived reality as a world that is mutually shared with others- these being all from the poet, the readers, the members of a community.

The "self" between macroscopic and microscopic stances: from the heroic to the bohemian self

Passing through instances of identification with mankind, poetic authority or supernatural entities, the quest of the "self" cannot be complete without an introspection into new terrains, defined by deity, on the one hand and by wandering impulses, on the other. To sketch the profile of this dual representation of the "self" the framework reference is the bipolar category that Zhang Yong-Lan applies to the interpretation of "myself", where the foundation pillars are "microscopic and macroscopic" (Zhang 638). Zhang Yong-Lan approaches the matter of the "Self" by coining a double structure of the two terms that stand for microscopic - "the self as unification of body and soul" and respectively macroscopic - "self as embodiment in the eternal cycle of nature, without any time and space limit" (Zhang 640). But for the current analysis the intention is to reapply the two terms to a new set of identifications with the *macroscopic as heroic/deistic* and respectively with the *microscopic as the bohemian self*.

The heroic identification occurs at the level of the self as deity or messiah, not necessarily religious-dominated, but in terms of hegemony. The messiah self can be read as a pillar in the identity structure because it primarily affects the other selves, much in the same manner induced by the poetic self. Moreover, it is in this messianic projection of the self that the sense of authorship becomes an even more stringent element in the discourse, as the nomination is directly embedded and associated with the 'kosmos' dimension:

Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son,
 Turbulent, fleshy, sensual, eating, drinking and breeding,
 No sentimentalist, no stander above men and women or apart from
 them, ...
 I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of democracy,
 By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of
 on the same terms. (Whitman 41)

The identification of the self with a messianic entity has essential effects for the reading of Whitman's religious lyric thought, disclaiming a punctually sacrilegious presence in the adoration exercise. Particularly, the self's adoration is redirected from God and pointed towards the common other by the corporeal channel or the love creed, in the desire to assign a tangible objective to the worshipping. Consequently, the self's identification with the messianic should be referred to as the *mystic self*, taken in a less conventional approach than the traditional mysticism and ethical doctrine.

J. Miller reads the sequence "as an inverted mystical experience", where the poet is quivered "to a new identity", "purified by a purgation not of the senses but of the illusion of the senses as vile" (20). Considering that purification involves an acceptance of the body and all its functions, this acceptance reflects the poet's goal to achieve mystical experience through physical reality. Nevertheless, this is in opposition to the puritanical view of purification through mortification of the flesh. In Whitman's philosophy, the self is purified not through purgation but through acceptance of the physical following the principle that man should free himself from his traditional sense of sin.

In the mystical identity nexus of representations, Whitman's *superman self* becomes an epitome of the mystical identity. The immanent comparison between Nietzsche's "overman" and Whitman's "superman"⁵ shows that the

⁵ In this respect, various critics, among which Eduard Bertz, Henry Bryan Binns, Frederik Schyberg or C. N. Stavrou, emphasized the similarities occurring in the representation of the overman/superman and identified some of the following: messianic aspirations, contempt for conventional morality, an attack of Christian-based hierarchies and respectively a need to found new religions. But, with respect to the perception of democracy, Nietzsche sees it as a sick morality of the herd, Whitman was a fervent proponent, excluding any other possibilities of identity for his superman.

construction of the ideal individual's identity is a matter of contextual mirroring of the self in others:

Nietzsche's hero is his own justification for being; his greatness derives not from his utility to history but from intrinsic worth. [...] Whitman's hero conforms closely to Emerson's fearless, self-reliant individualist who does not hesitate to place his trust in whim and who laughs to scorn the restraints of prudence. The principal difference is that Whitman's hero is free of all Emersonian prudishness, inhibitions and delicacy.

(Miller *apud* Brasas 59)

The superman self, consequently, is a daring self, willing to embrace mystical challenges, but, at the same time, prone to take such identifications with a mockery attitude if found unfit for the larger identity shell. The "perpetual journey" in which the "self" launches in section 46 is the other reference pole of the self-the bohemian one:

I know I have the best of time and space, and was never measured and
will never be measured
I tramp a perpetual journey (come listen all!)- urging all to join him and
uttering the warning,
"Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you,
You must travel it for yourself (Whitman 48)

The *bohemian self* is Whitman's replica of Baudelaire's flâneur who takes passion in the streets and who detaches the artistic inspiration from the shifting crowd. Consequently, this "self" becomes engulfed in the reality of the reckless movement which will be subjected to a filtering and refining of the images seen on the streets in view of capturing a composite moment of the others. Such a process of marking other selves in a journey of discovery paints the speaking "I" in a new light: the "I" with an appetite for anything that is non-I that is for the entire mass of otherness that exists outside the inner world of the self. The search, therefore is not for something that can be an instance of similarity but, on the contrary, for all that presents disparities.

The identification with the street crowd is momentous in *Song*, a testimony for emphasizing the idea that the need to identify with the "selves" filling the streets comes from the necessity to set new realms of existence:

By the city's quadrangular houses-in log huts, camping with lumbermen,
Along the ruts of the turnpike, along the dry gulch and rivulet bed, [...] Approach
Approaching Manhattan up by the long-stretching island [...] Pleas'd with the native
Pleas'd with the native and pleas'd with the foreign, pleas'd with the new
and old,

Pleas'd with the homely woman as well as the hansome,
Pleas'd with the earnest words of the sweating Methodist preacher,
impress'd seriously at the camp meeting,
Looking in the shop windows of Broadway the whole forenoon, flattening
the flesh of my nose on the thick plate glass

(Whitman 50)

In passing through the multifarious organism, the bohemian "self" creates and appropriates a structure for a private purpose of recreating an identity out of the individuals that add to the existence of the "I." It is in fact a travelogue approach of the lyric "Self" that engages in two directions of analysis: on the one hand, the self-construction forges an American experience as patch-construction of different individualities. Accordingly, the incidental reunion with the population erring the virtual streets in Whitman's poem is a strategy of enforcing the sense of identity: once the "self" pertains to a more global label – the American – the ground of development is hereby reshaped.

On the other hand, the travelogue approach that Whitman uses is a means of explorative quest in which writing and the virtual travel of the "Self" are leading actors. The epiphany born out of wanderings is therefore complete, because neither experience nor art requires coherence, consequently, one's identity can easily be preserved in the middle of the shifting spectacle.

Hurrying with the modern crowd as eager and fickle as any, [...]
We pass the colossal outposts of the encampment, we pass with still feet
and caution,
Or we are entering by the suburbs some vast and ruin's city,
The blocks and fallen architecture more than all the living cities of the globe.

(Whitman 51)

Commonly, the flâneur "Self" reiterates the story of wandering the city in lyric terminology, turning the erring walk into an explorative journey of identity. However, it is a mere spectatorial enterprise, as the "self"'s interest is to record a panoramic view of the crowd: "to be able to recreate the world of experience the artist had to have identified himself so fully and intently with the world outside that he could reproduce objects in it from within himself" (Seigel 116). But there is a difference between Baudelaire's flâneur and the bohemian "self" that *Song* introduces at the level of this urban epiphany. Namely, Whitman chooses to replace the limited spectatorship of the flâneur with an "undiscriminating gaze of a camera simply because he wouldn't represent the city, but what can be done with it" (Brand 185).

In the encounter stage of the designated selves that occur throughout *Song*, the best means of rendering their cohabitation is by using Ray Benoit's

“syzygial unity-in-duality”⁶ (17) a concept borrowed from Jungian philosophy that seems to best comprise the complexity of the “I” identity. Benoit’s *syzygial unity-in-duality* is a combination between the concept of syzygy and the “quaternity archetype”, another Jungian term referring to the idea that complete systems were four-fold, such as the famous “Function Type” quaternity of Thinking, Feeling, Sensate, and Intuition. Moores explains the way the quaternity archetype functions as:

the quaternity archetype, believed to be a representation of the entire Self is the totality of psychic energies in a given person. The quaternity archetype has a numinous character in that it is beyond the conscious self, located in the collective unconscious among many such archetypes. Experience with this archetype can take the form of sexual conversions, illuminations, emotional shocks, blows of fate, religious and or mystical experiences.

(Moores 9)

Consequently, the *syzygial unity-in-duality* refers to the representation of oppositions in quaternal entities in such a way as to render an identity consisting of opposing, yet reconciliatory selves.

In *Song* the *syzygial unity-in-duality* mirrors the structural pattern, consisting of four representations of the self, posed in oppositional interaction: the random other split between the woman self and the man self, the bohemian self and its counterpart as heroic/mystic self, the addressed self consisting of the reader “you” and the collective self “you” and eventually, the poetic self, built out of Me and the Not-Me. Each of these quaternal pairs, previously discussed, constitute the foundation and solid structure of the consciousness level of identity, being also the vehicle for Whitman’s all-inclusive scheme of representation. Whether these four stances of representation manage to fully recreate a framework of opposing and juxtaposing identification for the speaking “I” is an issue that moves the debate onto the realm of addressability.

Reader addressability and autoscopies of I-you in *Song of Myself*

Escaping the limitations of the authorial tone, Whitman accomplishes a foundation of new identities that correlate to build the “I/self” feature of the

⁶ Syzygy refers to the term Carl Jung used to describe deep psychological relationships: “It is usually the anima/animus pair, but also reflects other ‘opposites,’ like male paired with female. The parental pair, which arises only when the ego develops enough, stands behind it and is molded by it, like a base carries the lightbulb. The syzygy has three components: a man’s femininity and woman’s masculinity; the experience man has of woman and vice versa; and the masculine and feminine archetypal image” (Psychology Dictionary. <<http://www.psychology-lexicon.com/cms/glossary/glossary-s/syzygy.html>>).

poem. The altering of the identifications display can be seen as the game the author plays with the readers' perception of who is the "me" to whom all the atoms belong. But there cannot be a complete hypostasis of the "I" until the reader has seen all of the identifications and has compared or merged them all into one all-encompassing story.

The "you and I" dialogue that Whitman inserts in the lyric discourse stands as a cornerstone for determining the status of identity in relationship to others. "You" becomes an active listener: "All mark as my own you shall offset it with your own,/Else it were time lost listening to me" (Whitman 68). But "you" is first and foremost the advised reader, who delivers from the isolation of "I", and who is a channeled force capable of passing the "I" through "you" into a desired "we." Identifications made with "you" function therefore at pluralistic levels: of setting the route of the quest for an identity, of following a rite of passage to a joint "en masse" identity and finally of building a solid reference wall onto which the speaking "I" can mold its selves. The poetic self, therefore, engulfs all other representations of the "I" and functions as a Trojan horse for the self's odyssey.

The rite of passing from one "self" to the other is made by use of an external mechanism, namely, by using the direct reference to the reader – "you":

What I assume you shall assume [...]
 You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through
 the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the specters in books,
 You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
 You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.
 (Whitman 25)

The use of the pronouns "I" and "you" in this poetic sequence is in fact the version of a challenge by which the poetic "self" dares to reevaluate the standard relationship that commonly occurs between these two entities. The relevance of lyric addressability in the construction of identity refers to the occurrence of another self – the reader self, intertwining sequentially with the poetic self and responsible with the authentication of identity: "Whitman imagines readers' minds gaining ever more "energy" and "precision" as they struggle. The goal of this struggle is to produce minds supple enough to navigate the gulf between democracy's convictions, aspirations and the people's crudeness, vice, caprices" (Doty 153).

Furthermore, the status of authorship in poetry also has implications upon the equality between selves. Particularly, based on Northrop Frye's idea that the "poet turns his back on his listeners" (249), the function of authorship becomes an exercise of power in which the addressee is present conceptually

but not necessarily invited in the receptive process. The lyric discourse is oriented from a monologic poetic self towards a present, but unidentified reader self. Likewise, the poetic self calls upon beings/ entities that are inaudible, rendering a type of lyric discourse that is the “embodiment of poetic pretension” (Culler 143). Participation then becomes an open act to which the reader self may adhere, without being subject to discrimination.

In *Song* the poet is neither the puppeteer nor the peaceful story-teller, but a hybrid that approaches the reader in a fairytale and induces new states of consciousness surpassing the ordinary. In fact, there is a process of reinventing the lyric “I” that interferes with the speech because Whitman seems to claim that “you are not merely listening to me, overhearing me- you are to be taken into my poem with me in a way no poem has done” (Williams 54). And such a form of inter-relatedness between the poet and the reader shows that the created “self” cannot reach completeness unless it gains the experience of any adjacent forces, be that reader, nature or divine intervention. Selfhood is then seen as political individualism where “the individual is founding site and calls to each reader to become a poet himself” (Bercovitch 151).

The use of “you” in a multifarious voicing of “I” might make the reader prone to interpret the lyric discourse as an open monologue destined to anyone interested. But the use of “you” also bears resonance in the identification area, in the sense that it is, like the self, a moving construct that might find finality of addressability in either the reader or any of the other selves. The reader self is then the ultimate projection allowed to modify the discourse, creating therefore a participative identity in the text. Navarro voices the interconnected dialogues between “you” and “I” by restoring the reader as instrument of validation for the identity knit based on “the assertion of the poetic self as expressed in the text, the series of commons and cues offered in the text to allow and provoke reader response, and the final merging of the self and the other as a consequence of the text-reader interaction” (111).

The “self” in *Song* is a mechanism prone to change, simply because alterity and changeability represent a form of consciousness incapable of suppression. But the play of “you” and “I” that occurs in the poem is perhaps something more related to a teaching lesson of the poet directed towards uninitiated readers. The relation of the “self” to “you” becomes even more interesting since the “I” must be regarded as an identity that reaches prophetic features: Whitman engages readers in a quest whose destination is the source of any poetic experience:

Have you practiced so long to learn to read?
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?
Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems
(Whitman 25)

The teaching lesson granted to the “you” self stands for a “pedagogical relation; the reader becomes a kind of apprentice to the poet – we’re being instructed on arriving at a condition of consciousness like the one the poem demonstrates and proposes” (Williams 65). This becomes a process of *teaching the reading* in which:

Myself can then be understood as existing in what structuralists would call a ‘vertical’ or ‘associative’ relationship with the word ‘mine,’ which had in contemporary life effectively usurped its place at the center of people’s conception and definition of themselves. The word ‘mine’ has a kind of absent presence in the context. “You”, assumes two different meanings: it tells us that ‘your atoms are every bit as good as my atoms,’ but at the same time Whitman is making us an extraordinary offer: to share every atom of himself with us. The two meanings, brought like a single pair of eyes to bear upon the opening phrase, give a stereoscopic prominence to its hitherto concealed meaning.

(Miller 48)

But the “teaching” lesson enters other realms as well, departing from the identification of “you” as the reader self in the deciphering context and moving towards the territory of experience. The other form of teaching introduced by the poetic self is then a *teaching of the living*:

I am the teacher of athletes,
He that by me spreads a wider breast than my own proves the width of
my own,
[...]
I teach straying from me, yet who can stray from me?
I follow you whoever you are from the present hour,
My words itch at your ears till you understand them.

(Whitman 66)

The “you” here is a random address form, an open invitation to embark on the identity quest, but not without limitations. Namely, though the poetic self functions as universal teacher, the reader self cannot reach the same path without private experimentation and building of his own identity. The invitation is not lacking a warning, nonetheless: “Not I, not any one else can travel the road for you/You must travel it for yourself” (Whitman 66), emphasizing therefore the fact that, despite the equality among selves, each must compel a private construction of identity. Whitman’s open claim that *Song* sings the “average identity” also implied that the reader needed to synthesize the self and the other in order to accompany Whitman and his average man on the flight.

Cristian Moraru's syntagm "autospecular mimesis"⁷ used in the framework of reading *Song* as a deconstruction of the selves indicates the functionality of the poetic "self" as paradigm of an author/reader ideology that allows the bipolar and mutual rediscovery and not on one party's development in the reading process.

The mimesis that I shall call 'autospecular' [...] is characterized by a metaphysical signification that we still have to specify: acting in a mimetic way, the poet creates (*poiei*) while creating himself (*poieitai*). Mimetic poiesis appears as self-poiesis because the work of art leads to no "empiric" reality. Similarly, the *mimetes* becomes another as soon as his memory of the superior world is activated and he recognizes in his fictional forms the Form above all, and in this life, a previous one led on a very different ontological level; in other words, he recognizes his *metaphysical past*. Mimema determines, so to say, a specular identification: the onlooker detects his deeper self and, excited by that, throws himself toward it. Perceiving his former nature, the subject rises in time and ontological position to that identity previously acquired. (Moraru 26)

With this specular identification the passage from the poetic "self" to the "self" that stands as voice of the common individual is much facilitated, because the reader (who impersonates exactly the random man) can find in the poem a means to coalesce with the speaker's sensed identity and therefore aims at a mutual recognition. Accordingly, the lyric "I" gradually transforms into autoscopies for the reader, with the "self" passing as author, American, hero, God or nature-visions that add up to the conundrum of the "I"- identity.

Following the pattern of passage, "I" also accomplishes the function of shifting between personas, without emphasizing the category of otherness. If the designation of "I" as community landmark accounts for a specular identification with the democratic in Whitman's poetry, the self manages to complete the task of rewriting history and thus reassigning a metaphysical past. This reassignment is made possible through the shifting of "I" and the implicit borrowing of history to each of the "possessed" persona, adapting therefore community in terms of private history. Whitman's use of autospecular mimesis facilitates a circular passage, accounting both for the lyric "I" to be heard and for the reader "you" to be absorbed in the identity vortex.

⁷ The phrase was coined in Moraru's book *Poetica reflectării. Încercare în arheologia mimizei* [*Poetics of Reflection. Essay in the Archeology of Mimesis*] and refers to the idea that the opposition between the simple mimetic (or imitative) *logoi* and autospecular (or "narcissistic," but without any negative psychoanalytic connotation); *logoi* represent precisely the projection of the Western literary and philosophical discourse -as an interplay of these original terms.

Lastly, the interplay “you”-“I/myself” is in fact a rite of passage that involves a performative alteration of the poetic “self”, which needs to experience bits of other selves so as to gain a complete authority of “lyric teaching.” But “to pass is to enact a narrative or an identity dependent on fabrication” (Price 90) and this requires that the auctorial strategy should pass via two roads: *identity*-the “self” and to pass via *writing* – that is by simulation of any alternative identity.

The *passing* via writing is the direct vehicle that allows for the expansion and the drawing of the “self”, because identifications thus become credible and maintain a genuine author/reader communion. The writing passage as a means of disclosing poetic identity is one that is not restricted by formal structures, nor is it limiting the expression of the speaker. It compels the development of the reader’s identity, projecting the addressed self in different identifications formulas.

But this exercise of writing is like a mirror projection of the art work as mimesis, in which the auctorial tool is to call the soul’s avatars of the “self” and to carry reference not on the exterior facade of the lyric work, but on the interiority of the poet. The mimetic interplay in *Song* accomplishes the precise function of searching and revealing the contents of “myself” up to a hectic self-assertiveness of the poet throughout the lyric discourse. By writing, the poet is revealing himself to the readers and self-growing in his own poetic scheme by means of acquiring new cognitive structures of the self’s identity.

Conclusion

The series of identifications that Whitman creates in order to create the conundrum of identity validate the reader’s sensed experiences of the poem. The lyrical discourse becomes a necessarily conventional medium in which the process of passing is facilitated: the self must “pass”, from a state of inner and possibly solipsistic consciousness, to a state of otherness and outer consciousness.

Moreover, the dissolving of “I” into “you” verifies the construct of the “self” identity, and refers to the sequence of the selves’ appearance. The acknowledgement with which Whitman confronts the problem of multiplicity is an illusion endemic to absolute selfhood, because he is aware of alterity and the changing of one’s identity. Indeed, the necessity to pass from one self to another and the experience of latent or active selves translates into an exploration of the world of relations through a vocabulary of relationships. Accordingly, the identity of “myself” is not only a juxtaposition of these selves but an agglomeration of experiences bound to reconstruct the “I.”

In reading the self oppositions as such, the *self apparel* accounts for the occurrence of the *syzygial unity-in-duality*, made to better reflect the quaternary structure of identity, as made of opposing, yet conciliatory selves that cannot

exist independently. Despite the premise that Whitman allows for an all-inclusive identification, the pairing of selves in a *syzygial unity-in-duality* proves that the all-encompassing permission is firstly based on a duality that verifies in the you-I dialogue. Particularly, the self cannot establish an identity in the absence of its necessary other.

Whitman's poetry is, above anything else, transformative for the individual, primarily because it manages to reconcile the disparities of iconic identity for any random American other. Bearing such relevance in the identity conundrum, Whitman's lyric discourse is nonetheless a pseudo-transparent speech, as the "you" and "I" dialogue spans far beyond the duality of addressability, because Whitman conducts a vortex movement in drawing the baselines of identity, with the core always focused on the self unit.

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“THE HEAVE OF THE SWELL” – METAPHORS OF THE SEA IN SHORT STORIES FROM ATLANTIC CANADA (1900–1930)

JUDIT NAGY¹

ABSTRACT. *“The Heave of the Swell” – Metaphors of the Sea in Short Stories from Atlantic Canada (1900-1930).* The paper examines the use of sea metaphors in Atlantic Canadian short stories written between 1900 and 1930. Lakoff and Kövecses’s cognitive concept of the metaphor will provide the theoretical framework for the identification and classification of sea metaphors surfacing in the texts to be analysed. Using the socio-cultural background information provided in the first part of the paper, the more substantial second part will constitute the actual analysis, which will concentrate on the sea metaphor use of the works of prominent Atlantic Canadian short story writers from the golden age of the sea story.

Keywords: *Atlantic Canada between 1900-1930, socio-cultural background, short story, sea-related short fiction, cognitive metaphor theory, metaphors of sea*

REZUMAT. *“The Heave of the Swell” – Metaforele mării în nuvele din Canada Atlantică (1900-1930).* Lucrarea se ocupă de metaforele maritime în nuvelele despre Canada atlantică, scrise între 1900-1930. Conceptul cognitiv al metaforei dezvoltat de Lakoff și Kövecses va oferi cadrul teoretic pentru a identifica și clasifica metaforele maritime din textele analizate. Folosind informația socio-culturală din prima parte a lucrării, partea a doua, mult mai substanțială, constituie analiza propriu-zisă care se va concentra pe folosirea metaforei maritime de către mării nuveliști ai Canadei atlantice în epoca de aur a nuvelei.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Canada atlantică între 1900-1930, contextul socio-cultural, nuvela, proza scurtă maritimă, teoria cognitivă a metaforei, metafore maritime*

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I. Introduction: Motivation and Structure

The period between 1900 and 1930 spelt the golden age of the sea story in Atlantic Canada. To illustrate the abundance and popularity of the contemporary sea subject, an example well worth mentioning is that thirty-seven sea-related books were published by the Seaward School² alone in Atlantic Canada in the first three decades of the 20th century (Bell 7). This fact also suggests that the use of sea metaphors in Atlantic Canadian short stories written in the given period forms a relevant research subject.

To place the short story texts to be analysed in a socio-historical context, the first part of the paper will present a concise overview of the historical and social changes that prompted the flourishing of sea-related short fiction in the Atlantic Canada of the examined period. In addition, the paper will also touch upon how these stories were inspired by and facilitated the further development of an Atlantic Canadian regional consciousness. Next, Lakoff and Kövecses's cognitive metaphor theory will be relied on as a means of identifying and classifying metaphors of sea surfacing in the texts to be analysed.

Using the background information provided in the first part of the paper, the more substantial second part will constitute the actual analysis, which will concentrate on the sea image use of the works of prominent Atlantic Canadian short story writers of the golden age of the sea story such as Arthur Hunt Chute, Norman Duncan, Wilfred Grenfell, Albert Hickman, Colin McKay, Archibald MacMechan, Theodore Goodridge Roberts, Frederick William Wallace.

II. Background

Socio-historical context

The first three decades of Maritime Canada were characterized by urbanization, industrialization, modernization and progressive reform. In fact, progress in the region already started in the 19th century, and could be largely written down to the boom in shipping timber from Canada to Europe. Therefore, the middle of the 19th century is often referred to as "the golden era of shipping", or the era of "wood, wind and water" (Mackintosh 182).³ However, with the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railways, shipping went into decline. Therefore, in spite of the taken measures promoting progress, the period between 1900 and 1930 was not that of full-blown economic success: severe economic depression followed after WWI, which resulted in several instances of political and social

² Bell's term, referring to the fact that even though the then active Atlantic Canadian writers did not form a literary group per se, they were connected, for example through *McClure's Magazine* or *The Canadian Fisherman*, which connection their correspondence also documents (7).

³ For further details, see Conrad, Finken and Jaenen, 84-130.

unrest as well as a massive exodus from the Maritimes (Brown, 428). Parallel to this, the strengthening of regional consciousness was also observable. For example, this era saw the emergence of the Maritime rights movement, which aimed at increasing the region's influence within Confederation (Brown 434). At the cultural level, the strengthening of regional consciousness manifested in the search for objects and people to function as cultural icons representing the region (Slumkoski 139).

Reasons for the popularity of the sea story

Bell remarks that "the most significant era in the history of Atlantic-Canadian maritime writing [...] was the period from 1900 to 1930" (6). Boone reinforces Bell's views when he comments on the Maritime writing of the time as characterized by sea tales (735). One is tempted to ask what may have prompted the boom of the sea story in the given period. Bell stresses the influence of the North Atlantic as the most significant force shaping the history and the culture of the Maritimes and Newfoundland (5), which seems congruent with the above-mentioned implications of the socio-historical context.

Three distinct but not unrelated trends can be identified. First, the abundance of the sea story can be interpreted as a nostalgic yearning for the glorious past of "wooden ships and iron men"⁴ (Paine, 97), signifying the prosperous era of "wood, wind and water" (Mackintosh, 182). With the passing of time, however, "[t]he golden age of sail was becoming a memory" (Bell 7) even though fisheries and international coastal trade were still in need of schooners to be built. In this view, the heroic world of majestic schooners is seen as the embodiment of something lost and presently impossible to regain.

Secondly, as has been hinted above, the popularity of the contemporary sea story may result from a growing regional consciousness in search of cultural icons to uphold. Indeed, the Bluenose became a symbol of regional pride in the Maritimes of the 1920s, also reinforcing Atlantic Canada's close bonds with the sea. As Bell explains, "regional sentiment also found strong expression in culture, much of it centering on the most crucial aspect of Atlantic Canada's identity – its relationship with the sea" (8). Further supporting Bell's premise, references to other sea-related contemporary cultural products abound in several literary genres as well as painting and photography of and from this region.⁵ As Walker ruminates, "[h]ow can you paint, sculpt or get creative here

⁴ The expression was first used in the 1800s. It was popularized by Frederick William Wallace's work published in 1924

⁵ Canadian Group of Seven painter, Arthur Lismer earned his fame as an artist by painting WWI naval ships in Halifax harbour. Further examples include Edith Smith and Henry Mortikar Rosenberg, whose works are exhibited in the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (Walker 467-68). With regard to literature, William Albert Hickman, Frederick William Wallace, Frank Parker Day and

without getting inspiration from the surrounding sea that provides jobs, food, briny smells and a never-ending calming swish that rocks you to sleep?" (467). Thus the tangible popularity of the sea subject of the given period may be written down to Maritimers' growing awareness of regional identity and their need for self-definition, a phenomenon markedly present in Canada from the 1920s (Murray, 12).

One final argument for the popularity of the contemporary sea story is linked with the "dictates of the literary marketplace" of the time (Bell 8) and its preference of fishing and sea-faring accounts, which, on the one hand, was fuelled by a general demand for short fiction, on the other by that of local colour and adventure. Indeed, both general interest magazines such as *McClure's Magazine*, *Blakwood's*, or *Canadian Magazine* and pulp magazines as exemplified by *Adventure*, *Blue Book*, or *Argosy* abounded in stories of fishermen's adventures and their struggle for bare survival at sea, such accounts becoming "a mainstay of adventure fiction" (Bell 9).

Subjects and story types

The subjects of these sea stories were in very close connection with the above trends, that is, nostalgia for the glorious past, regional consciousness and local pride, and finally, the dictates of the market. One of the well-known story writers of the era, Frederick William Wallace noted in a letter that "[t]he romance in seafaring is in retrospection – seldom when one is actually engaged in it. Nobody thought much of the sailing ship when they were common" (Bell 10). Moreover, as for the "nostalgic evocation of a lost golden age of 'wooden ships and iron men'" (Bell 10, Payne 97), these stories are mostly inspired by Romanticism, and they focus on the heroic action of capable seamen and on the voyages of grandiose old-style sailing vessels sometimes also reaching exotic destinations (Bell 10, Boone 735).

Next, mostly fuelled by regional consciousness and local pride, Realist sea stories of the period occupies itself with the quiet courage of the region's mariners and their fortitude against the dangers of the sea, such as its storms of elementary force. The Atwoodian *bare survival* is a key element here just as these stories often draw on the first-hand experience of veteran sailors and young men of crew facing Nature "raw in the tooth" (Atwood 50), which Bell sums up as "local colour, stirring drama and adventure, and the elemental struggle of man against the sea" (Bell 9).

Theodore Goodridge Roberts can be mentioned as relevant examples (Boone 735). For photographs, see Scott Robson and Shelagh MacKenzie's *An Atlantic Album: Photographs of the Atlantic Provinces before 1920*. Nimbus Publishing Ltd., 1985.

Finally, also connected to regional consciousness, contemporary folklorist-documentary sea stories are mainly concerned with the seafaring traditions of the Maritimes and Newfoundland (Boone 735). This tradition was also favoured by foreign writers such as Jack London, James Connolly, or George Allan England.

III. Methods: cognitive metaphor as an analytical tool

Bell’s remark on the North Atlantic being the most significant force shaping the history and the culture of the Maritimes is in support of the metaphor generating the power of the sea in the region in the examined period as the cognitive linguistic view of metaphor “maintains that – in addition to objective, pre-existing similarity – metaphors are based on a variety of human experience, various kinds of non-objective similarity, biological and cultural roots shared by the two concepts” (Kövecses 69).

Cognitive linguistics defines metaphor as “understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another” (Kövecses 4) wherein the “individual instances of the mapping from the one domain (source) to the other (target) are called *linguistic metaphors* or *metaphorical linguistic expressions*” (Kövecses 25).

As for the key cognitive linguistic concepts of metaphor, the term *tenor* will denote an entity in terms of which the sea is seen while the term *vehicle* will comprise entities which are seen in terms of the sea. Along the course of the analysis, reference will be made both to the individual linguistic sea metaphors and to the mappings these realize. The former will surface as examples, the latter as category heads (Figure 1).

<p>Tenor: (1) S < X: The sea is seen in terms of a person, animal, colour, etc. Example: <i>solitary ocean</i> (Chute 208) [a person is solitary → the ocean is solitary]</p>
<p>Vehicle: (2) X < S: A person, animal, abstract notion, etc. is seen in terms of the sea Example: MacCumber’s voice referred to as “the terror of the Western Ocean” (Chute 206) [the Western Ocean is terrifying → the person is terrifying]</p>
<p>Individual linguistic metaphor: (i.e. the actual metaphors appearing in the text) “she rose and fell to <i>the heave of the swell</i>” (McKay 98) [of a ship in the waves]</p>
<p>Mapping: sea → movement (i.e. observable consistent patterns built up of individual linguistic metaphors with the sea as tenor/ vehicle) The above individual linguistic metaphor forms part of the [sea → vertical movement] subgroup of this mapping</p>

Figure 1. The cognitive linguistic concept of metaphor for sea

IV. Analysis

The corpus for the analysis presented in this paper is John Bell's volume entitled *Atlantic Sea Stories*, comprising 10 stories, all taken from the period of the golden age of the sea story, and providing examples of all the above-mentioned story types and subjects (i.e. nostalgia over the glorious past, regional consciousness and pride, folklorist-documentary seafaring traditions). The research question to be answered is what mappings were realized by the individual linguistic metaphors and how frequent these were in the examined corpus. Metonymic references to the sea, such as "the tumult of the waves" (Roberts 74) were also considered in the count of sea metaphors.

All in all, 125 sea metaphors were found in the corpus – the sea acts as tenor in 120 of these, and it embodies a vehicle in only 5 cases. This implies that the sea is seen in terms of another entity far more often than the other way round. What may account for the discrepancy is that "thinking about the abstract concept is facilitated by a more concrete concept" (Kövecses 4), which is based on the observation that "our experiences with the physical world serve as a natural and logical foundation for the comprehension of more abstract topics", referred to as *the principle of unidirectionality* (Kövecses 6) or *the Platonic ladder* (Ricoeur 212) in the literature.

Figure 2 displays the seven well-distinguishable mappings which seem to have realized in the $S < X$ sample. These are as follows: (1) sea — 1-2-3 dimensional spatial entity, (2) sea — movement, (3) sea — sound, (4) sea — colour, (5) sea — transforming people, (6) sea — evil force, (7) sea — victim. An eighth, miscellaneous group has individual linguistic metaphors which did not fit into any of the seven groups.

SEA → (1/2/3 DIMENSIONAL) SPATIAL ENTITY
SEA → MOVEMENT
SEA → SOUND
SEA → COLOUR
SEA → TRANSFORMATION (OF PEOPLE)
SEA → EVIL FORCE
SEA → VICTIM

Figure 2. The cognitive linguistic concept of metaphor for sea
[John Bell's *Atlantic Sea Stories*]

The first large group, SEA → SPATIAL ENTITY can be subdivided into three further categories: the sea mapping into a one-dimensional, a two-dimensional and a three-dimensional spatial entity. Describing a ship's voyage, Grenfell's expression, "the miles rolled off like water from a duck's back (78) suggests that the sea may be seen in terms of the distance covered, which is a

linear concept. The same story, "'Tis Dogged as Does It" uses the term "passage" which again indicates a one-dimensional conceptual projection putting the sea in the position of extending from point A to point B: "[t]he passage of the Western Ocean in the month of December, in a ninety-nine-ton schooner, would not be dangerously exhilarating" (Grenfell 78).

Next, the sea is perceived as a plane, a two-dimensional entity in a number of examples. In McKay's "The Wreck of the Cod-Seeker", "[t]he schooner lay on her side, with her spars flat on the sea" (96), where the preposition "on" is suggestive of the sea being a two-dimensional entity. Similarly, through the word "open", Wallace's expression, "to windward lay the open sea" (120) also associates the sea with a geometrical plane.

An example of depicting the sea as a three-dimensional entity can be found in Chute's "The Bluenose Bucko", where a ship "take[s] on the appearance of some great white-winged seabird fluttering before her flight" (204) realizing the ship — bird and the sea — air parallel mappings. Here the air functions as a three-dimensional entity.

Two and three-dimensional projections of the sea often mix in a metaphor. Grenfell's "'Tis Dogged as Does It" describes the sea as a large sheet of water, the surface of which is a battlefield for survival: "[t]hey were in the middle of the North Atlantic. The water was bitterly cold, and they were bruised, wet and exhausted" (83). At the same time, the expression "in the middle" may imply a three-dimensional entity, and the second sentence of the quotation suggests that the protagonists are in the water, presenting another three-dimensional aspect of the sea. Similarly, Hickman's *Gossander* "ploughed up and down North Harbour" (42), where the sea is projected onto a field, a two-dimensional entity. Yet, "up and down" adds a vertical axis, depth to the image of the sea. Finally, Chute's "The Bluenose Bucko" uses the expression "under that engulfing sea" (212), with "engulf" enabling both two- and three-dimensional associations, whereas "under" is more suggestive of a three-dimensional space.

This last, mixed group also reveals a consistent pattern, the sea — depth mapping, as in Duncan's "widening gaps of sea" (24) or "the Great Deep" (30). In "The Gossander", a yacht is described as "a wonder on the face of the deep" (Hickman 34), where the terms "face" and "the deep" furnish a two- and three-dimensional reference to the sea, respectively. Sometimes, the two- and three-dimensional aspect appear in juxtaposition: "on the placid surface of the cove where the skiff had gone down" (Roberts 69).

This example is also illustrative of the observation that, in the examined stories, it is usually the two-dimensional entity which represents the positive aspect of the tenor in the "surface versus depth" trope, whereas the sea as the three-dimensional entity is often associated with some hidden danger, such as an underwater object making navigation unsafe: "the bottom of the skiff smashed against a submerged ledge [...] "By the time we had scrambled to our feet the

wounded craft was half full of water and settling aft, preparatory to sliding off the ledge into the unknown depths” (Roberts 68). In the case of McKay’s protagonist, it is the pressure pertaining to underwater space that poses a threat to humans: “I felt as if my head would burst with the intolerable pressure” (98).

Finally, the sea as a three-dimensional entity represented by depth can also connect metaphorically to something in-built or deeply ingrained in humans. Upon describing Newfoundland fishermen, Grenfell comments on their inborn capacity to comprehend the ways of the sea “the mysterious deep” as follows: “these men were all Newfoundland fishermen, with the genius of the sea inborn, with minds and bodies inured from childhood to every mood and whim of the mysterious deep” (78).

Not completely unrelated to the perception of dimensions, the second systematic mapping of sea-related individual linguistic metaphors found in the corpus links the sea with movement. Two large subgroups can be distinguished within the SEA → MOVEMENT category: one views the sea in terms of vertical movement, the other one in terms of horizontal movement. Vertical movement is often expressed through metonymic references to the sea. In McKay, for example, a ship “[s]luggishly [...] rose and fell to the heave of the swell” (98), where even the musicality of the text reflects the way the waves rock a hulky body up and down, and the movement of the sea is illustrated through the movement of the ship. Wallace’s “lift of the open water” (123) and MacMechan’s “the vessel went down on a sea just as I happened to lift on one” (197) are illustrative of the same process at work. It is interesting to note that the sea itself may denote waves in the phrase “rolling sea” found in Grenfell (90).

The individual linguistic metaphors of the sea — horizontal movement mapping also show a number of metonymic references depicting the sea in relation to waves or vehicles riding and sailing it as in McKay’s phrase “a heavy sea continued to run” (103), MacMechan’s “a heavy sea was running” (186) or in Wallace’s “the schooner glided” (127).

In some instances, the horizontal and the vertical movement combine in the mapping. For example, in Chute’s “The Bluenose Bucko”, the sea is referred to as a “swinging and heaving world” (207), and, a few lines later, it is associated with an earthquake. The term “swinging” may refer to both a side-to-side and an up-and-down motion, and similarly, a tremor has both horizontal and vertical force components. Also, Roberts’ “A Complete Rest” has the sentence “[t]he Guardian Angel was rolling lazily in the slow seas” (72), where the sea is regarded in terms of enabling/ disabling progress through the action of waves. On the other hand, the term “roll” may refer to both horizontal (progress) and vertical (rising and falling) movement. In addition, through the idea of progress, the sea — horizontal movement mapping can link up with the sea as a one-dimensional entity (i.e. a distance to be covered or gapped).

The third mapping realized by a group of individual linguistic metaphors is that of SEA → SOUND. Very often, the sound of the sea is viewed as unpleasant. For instance, in Roberts' description of a sea storm, "the water roared into her [the ship] through hatchways and companions [... in the] tumult of waves' (74). The word 'roar' denotes an unpleasantly loud noise, frequently connected to destructive entities such as a fierce storm or a ferocious beast. 'Tumult' can also be associated with a noisy human crowd, with equally unpleasant connotations.

The sea — noise mapping makes a frequent appearance in scenes describing a storm at sea, such as the one in McKay's "The Wreck of the Cod-Seeker", where "the awful roaring of the sea affected our [the crew's] ear-drums" (103) and "the seas crashed against the wreck with dreadful roaring sounds" (102).

In some cases, the unpleasant sound appears as one of the attributes of a wild beast or a giant monster in the sea — sound mapping. For example, McKay's protagonist reminisces that he often "ducked under", "the noises were frightful", he heard the "roaring, snarling sound of surf" amidst "blood thirsty gurglings" (99) upon being trapped in a capsized boat. Here the word "roar" is accompanied by "snarling" and "blood thirsty" impersonating the sea as a wild beast. In the same story, the expression "howling seas" (101) may be indicative of the unpleasant sound of the stormy sea and an angry wild beast simultaneously. Similarly, the sea is associated with giant and sound at the same time in Chute's "The Bluenose Bucko": "Sky and sea alike were breathing uneasily like a rising giant" (216).

However, the sea — sound mapping does not always rely on the use of unpleasant sounds. The previously mentioned story by Chute, for example, brings together the sea and the sound of silk in the individual linguistic metaphor "seething foam" (213).

In a number of instances, the sea is projected onto color. The individual linguistic metaphors realizing the SEA → COLOUR mapping often carry information on the different "moods" of the sea. Roberts' phrase, "the sun shone on a world of blue and white waters" (74) assigns a happy mood to the sea through his metaphor using of the colors blue and white, whereas Chute's "the water black with a squall of wind" (212) signals the arrival of a tempest at sea. Similarly, the color green may also be associated with an angry sea: "the solid green sea broke inboard over the lee rail" (212).

Sometimes personal characteristics and colors combine to build an individual linguistic metaphor of the sea — color mapping. To furnish an example from Chute's previously mentioned story, the protagonist describes the sea during a winter voyage through the phrase "solitary ocean, grey and cold" (208). In this example, the attributes "cold", "solitary" and "grey" appear in coordination. However, it is also possible for a personal characteristic and a color to realize a subordinate constellation such as "wicked-looking creamy foam" (212), the phrase "creamy foam" representing the color eggshell white. Similarly, McKay

combines two-dimensional entity, person and color to form the vehicle of the sea metaphor found in the sentence “the sea lay broad, silver-tinted, smiling and strangely friendly-looking” (107) to illustrate a happy moment at sea.

The sea may also be seen in terms of an entity transforming people. The SEA → TRANSFORMATION (OF PEOPLE) mapping has a number of different realizations in the corpus. The sea may induce both a positive and a negative transformation in people, which the resulting metaphors equally reflect. In Chute’s “the Bluenose Bucko”, Barney Uppgate is characterized as “an Irish packet rat, grown tired of the sea” (201) putting the sea in the position of wearing out a person. Similarly, MacMechan’s protagonist refers to life at sea as “one unending bout of sea-sickness” (183) connecting the sea with discomfort and disease, just as it can render a person unfeeling as reflected by Chute’s old sailor’s words: “[t]he sea makes ye hard, me son” (212). In addition, the sea may become the embodiment of a test of hardships, which seamen have to take: “[t]hey [the crew] braved the rollers of the wintry ocean. [...] They graduated when, adrift in a dory in thick fog in open ocean, without food or water, they had run for days” (Grenfell 79).

The sea can also act as a positive transforming force in the individual linguistic metaphors building up the sea — transformation (of people) mapping. It can induce, for example, “pride in the sheer brotherhood of the sea” (Grenfell, 90) being conducive to the formation of both human bonds and pride in these among sailors, also inducing a sense of belonging. Next, it may provide some peace for the soul through “the still of the cove” (Roberts 68) or a cure for a person sick and tired of civilization: “[t]he sea-winds, the quiet nights and days, the seclusion and peace will make a new man of you” (67). Moreover, the sea can transform a group of people at the same time, by bringing life to a community on shore, for example. To exemplify this use of sea metaphors in the sample, in Chute’s “The Bluenose Bucko”, Falmouth, Nova Scotia is characterized as a “village a-hum with seafaring activity” (200) thriving on the businesses provided by the sea. Also Chute’s protagonist comes alive at sea, experiencing a change in his way of walking from the “stiff gait” of lands people to the “swinging lilt” (214) of seamen.

The SEA → EVIL FORCE mapping has the highest number of individual linguistic metaphors in the corpus. Duncan’s protagonist, James Moth “fell back and was drowned” (24), where the passive verb form in place of the active one is suggestive of the sea performing the action of killing the misfortunate sailor. The same story elaborates more on the “sea as a deadly enemy to fight against” metaphorical connection in the introduction: “the Newfoundlander pits his naked strength against the sea: and that fight comes, to most men, at the end of life, for few survive it” (15).

The antagonistic force embodied by the sea may surface as a human being or an animal or monster-like creature. In Duncan's previously-mentioned story, James Moth is attacked by the sea waves when he tries to find shelter on an ice-floe: "the sea struck him that brutal blow on the shoulder" (31). The expression "strike a brutal blow" is characteristic of men fighting, just like Chute's "naked fists against a naked ocean" (213) in "The Bluenose Bucko." Similarly, "sweep" as in "the next big sea would sweep him" (McKay 101) and "swing" as in "a heavy sea had swung her into the iron wall of the ship's side" (Grenfell 90) may also put humans' fighting in the position of a vehicle in terms of the individual linguistic metaphors of the sea — evil force mapping.

In some cases, the battle between man and sea involves a series of individual linguistic metaphors with all their vehicles depicting a human being fighting. For example, in Duncan's "The Strength of Men", a parallel is drawn between a man wrestling with his opponent and the crew's encounter with the waves:

Wave came upon the heels of wave, each, as it were, with livelier hate and a harder blow – a massive shadow, rushing forth; a blow, a lifting, a tug, [...] but none overcame him. Then a giant wave delivered its assault: it came ponderously – lifted itself high above his head, broke above him, fell, beat him down; it swept him back, rolling him over and over [...] he recovered his first position, and again he was beaten down and again he rose to face the sea, and again a weight of water crushed him to his knees. (29-30)

Sometimes the metaphorical reference to the sea-to-men fight makes use of army-, battle-, and war-related images. For example, "the captain and the mate drew apart and held a council of war" (MacMechan 187) learning that the ship they were aboard of was inevitably sinking in "The First Mate", and Duncan's crew in "The Strength of Men" resembles an army preparing for battle before they abandon their ship to avoid being smashed on the rocks: "some took off their jackets to give their arms freer play in the coming fight, some tightened their belts, some filled their pockets with things they loved most: all made ready" (20).

Within the sea — human fighting mapping, the power of the sea is shown in terms of human passion in a number of vehicles such as Duncan's "the sea's passion wasted itself and she fell into that rippling, sunny mood in which she gathers strength for the new assault" (20).

As has been hinted above and also along the discussion of the sea — sound mapping, another large group of individual linguistic metaphors builds up the sea — wild animal mapping within the sea — evil force category. Through the terms "gather itself", "bore down", "hissing", "tower" and "dash", Hickman's description of a wave – a metonymic reference to the sea as tenor – is suggestive of a huge and fierce animal as vehicle: "[a] big roller gathered itself together and bore down on the boat's starboard side, breaking and hissing as it went. For a moment, it towered, and then it dashed into the starboard paddle" (59). Duncan

uses “snake” for a vehicle in the phrase “little waves hissed viciously” (26) whereas McKay’s description of the sea links it with a hoofed animal through the employment of the term “stamp”: “now and then a heavier sea [...] would stamp right over them” (101). At the same time, MacMechan’s vehicle is reminiscent of a large-bodied, ferocious carnivore through the words “heavy”, “come over” and “tear”: “The heavy seas were coming over the ship and would fairly tear you” (190). The resulting human reaction is fear and distrust. As is said of Peter Meechan of Roberts’ “A Complete Rest”, “[t]he fear and distrust of the sea was in his blood” (75).

Monsters also surface as a related group of vehicles in the sea — evil force mapping, their activity often consisting in destroying a sea vessel, like MacMechan’s *Regina*: “[i]t was as if two gigantic hands had seized the Regina and wrenching her in opposite directions” (184).

Finally, the sea — evil force mapping does not always have concrete vehicles such as a human being or a group of humans fighting and a wild beast or a monster attacking; sometimes it is only a general destructive force that is present as a vehicle. In Duncan’s story, for example, the sea appears as a force to measure up against, seamen have to face this “supreme, brutal force of strength” (15) or “the very whirl of the sea’s forces” (Roberts 68), “the buffetings of the seas” (McKay 101), or the “towering surges rushing down upon [people]” (101). These forces sometimes “clear out” (MacMechan 186) a part of the sea vessel taking a journey or destroy it completely: “[the ship] had paid her last tribute to the powers she had so long successfully withstood” (Grenfell 92).

Even though the sea mostly fulfils the role of victimizer its metaphorical applications, a few cases in the corpus indicate that it can also embody a victimized tenor. Let us display some examples of the SEA → VICTIM mapping now. In Hickman’s “The Goosander”, one of the racing water vehicles pumps “hurling a jerking stream of water eight feet from her side” (53), “the paddles pound the sea into smoke and disappear in the spray” (57) and the boats “leav[e] the water white behind them” (57). The spectators of the boat race can witness “the boil and rush and swirl of white water being hurled back by many screws” (56). In all these examples, the boats disturb the peace and calm of the sea; they act as a victimizing metaphorical vehicle described through terms such as “hurl”, “jerking,” “pound”, “leaving the water white”, “boil”, “rush” or “hurl.” The sea gets victimized verbally in Chute, where the parson on board of the Bluenose Bucko swears at it being “unconscious of his sacrilege of the sea” (208).

The corpus boasts four unique individual linguistic metaphors that do not fit into any of the above mappings. What these have in common is the employment of a human vehicle. Acting through a wave as a chauffeur, the sea drives the lifeboat into the side of the *Rippling Wave*: “a great sea drove her into the vessel’s side again” (Grenfell 91). As an experienced fisher, “the sea baited its trap with swarming herds” in Duncan (31). When the *Regina* got into a storm,

"the boarding seas filled her deck" (MacMechan 184) like passengers embarking on a voyage. Last, the *Goosander* "floated in a sea that reeked of Cognac" (Hickman 40), where the sea is portrayed as a drunken man. This metaphor has additional symbolic importance in the given story, the subject of which is bootlegging.

All in the above examples the sea functioned as a tenor in the discussed individual linguistic metaphors and mappings. However, it can also feature as a vehicle, even if it does so in considerably fewer cases. In fact, the corpus can boast only five such instances.

Speaking of life at sea, the narrator of Grenfell's "Tis Dogged as Does It" reminisces that "[t]here were lessons to be learned that will have served some of them well when they come to past the last bar, and 'meet their Pilot face to face' on the shore of the great ocean of Eternity" (79). Here the expression "the great ocean of Eternity" is a metaphoric reference to death with the sea as a vehicle. Next, Captain MacCumber's voice is referred to as "the terror of the Western Ocean" (Chute 206) in "The Bluenose Bucko" projecting the sea onto human character. In the same story, the phrase "drowning sea" is mentioned twice to describe a person's incompetence in handling matters: "At that moment, Robertson's utter inadequacy came over him like a drowning sea" (Chute 208) and the feeling this situation induced in the given person: "the terror of the drowning sea" (213). In both cases, the sea provides the vehicle for the metaphor to describe a human character trait. In addition, when the parson realizes that he has to work on board to earn his fare, he acknowledges this with a "sinking heart" (208), with the sea acting as a vehicle to express disappointment.

V. Conclusion

The sea used as a tenor was far more popular than sea used as a vehicle in the analysed stories. Ricoeur's Platonic ladder concept and/or Lakoff's principle of unidirectionality may account for this discrepancy. The above examples have provided ample illustration of both the qualitative and the quantitative characteristics of the metaphors of sea found in the corpus. As was demonstrated, the SEA → EVIL FORCE mapping realized the highest number of individual linguistic metaphors. This is perhaps not so surprising taking into consideration the fact that a dominant feature of the life of the people at sea is the constant struggle they have to face. In addition, the contemporary readership expected adventure and excitement from these stories, so the peaceful idyll of a voyage could hardly have satisfied such audiences' taste. The popularity of the SEA → EVIL FORCE mapping and the high number and diversity of the SEA → TRANSFORMATION (OF PEOPLE) in the corpus as compared to the conventional use of sea metaphors result from the basic metaphoric principle also specified by Kövecses: we see those aspects of the world which affect us the most. Yet, as Bell reveals in the context of Atlantic

Canada in the first three decades of the 20th century, “[o]ne important area that has been largely overlooked [...] is the depiction of seafaring life in regional literature, particularly prose” (5). Hopefully, the present paper has contributed to enriching the existing literature on the subject.

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SPECULUM SPECULORUM: KINGSHIP AND SELFHOOD IN SHAKESPEARE'S KING RICHARD II

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ABSTRACT. *Speculum Speculorum: Kingship and Selfhood in Shakespeare's King Richard II.* Starting from the premise that the concept of the King's Two Bodies generates the separation between two selves within the nature of a king, I argue that the medieval practice of the *speculum principis* – the mirror of the perfect prince – plays an important part in the process of fashioning the kingly stance. Given that, in the Christian tradition, the mirror stands on the polarized ground between resemblance to the divine and self-idolatry, the reflection of the self is always deceitful. Two Shakespearean plays will serve for the analysis of the link between mirrors and kings: *Richard II* and *Richard III*. In *Richard II*, Shakespeare creates a climactic scene in which, after having relinquished his crown to Bolingbroke, the newly deposed king demands a looking-glass to identify the remaining aspects of his former self. The article reads the reversal of the sanctified ceremonial coronation, the substitution of investiture by divestiture as a demonic rite of reciting Scripture passages backwards. This act activates the most dramatic effects, transforming Richard's looking-glass into what Ernst Kantorowicz famously calls a "magic-mirror." The ambivalence of the mirror is manipulated by Shakespeare in order to unveil Richard's two-fold persona. The dissolution of kingship leaves behind a fragmented selfhood that can no longer ensure Richard's survival, reducing him to nothing.

Keywords: *mirror, kingship, selfhood, crown, deposition, Richard II*

REZUMAT. *Speculum Speculorum: Regalitate și personalitate în Richard al II-lea, de William Shakespeare.* Pornind de la conceptul celor Două Corpuri ale Regelui, care generează separarea dintre cele două identități ale regalității, studiul de față urmărește practica medievală *speculum principis* – oglinda prințului perfect – și prezintă rolul pe care aceasta îl joacă în configurarea identității regale. În tradiția creștină oglinda e văzută, pe de o parte, ca obiect folosit

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pentru căutarea asemănării dintre om și divinitate și, pe de altă parte, ca obiect al idolatriei de sine. Reflexia sinelui în oglindă este una înșelătoare. Două texte shakespeareiene vor servi ca analiză a relației dintre oglindă și regi: *Richard al II-lea* și *Richard al III-lea*. În *Richard al II-lea*, Shakespeare creează o scenă în care, după delegarea coroanei lui Bolingbroke, proaspătul rege depus cere o oglindă în care acesta urmărește identificarea aspectelor sinelui anterior. Inversul ceremoniei de încoronare – substituirea investiției cu depunerea – este interpretat ca ritualul demonic de citire inversă a unor fragmente din Scriptură. Această scenă declanșează efecte dramatice, transformând oglinda lui Richard în ceea ce Ernst Kantorowicz numește „oglanda magică.” Ambivalența oglinzii este utilizată de Shakespeare pentru dezvăluirea celor două identități ale lui Richard. Disoluția regalității are ca urmare un sine fragmentat, care nu îi mai asigură lui Richard supraviețuirea.

Cuvinte-cheie: *oglină, regalitate, sine, coroană, depunere, Richard al II-lea*

In *Genesis*, it is firmly and repeatedly stated how God wanted man to mirror him: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness [...] So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them” (*The Holy Bible*, 1.26-27). However, the meaning of God’s intention to sanctify the earth with the presence of man does not reside in the image, as it is nothing by itself, but in the likeness he conferred on man. Thus, according to the biblical narrative, in the genesis of our world there was intended a perfect mirroring between man and his creator. The emergence of sin darkened the mirror, and as a result, man and God could no longer compete in likeness. In *Proverbs 7.27* it is said that the Bible is “the unstained mirror” intended to educate man. It is in this divine model that the lost resemblance can be restored. Man must now strive to come near that likeness. Ideally, the subject must look in the mirror for his spiritual identity and not for the carnal envelope of his body. It is why, in the religious vocabulary of the Middle Ages, this mysterious object collected very polarized symbolic meanings: it was either an idealized version of the self or a pejorative reflection, a means of self-knowledge or an instrument for the paying of compliments, flattery and self-aggrandizement.

In this essay, I will examine the multiple symbolisms of the mirror from a theological and medieval perspective. The belief that the mirror is the object through which man may seek his resemblance to the divine is transferred to the mirror-books, also known as the *speculum principis*, which show a prince’s perfect image. The present study will focus on the liaison between the mirror

(of the perfect prince) and two Shakespearean plays, *King Richard II* and *King Richard III*. I will revisit the well-known notion of the king's two bodies and establish how such enormous power possessed by a king can be justified. Given the constraints of an academic article, my analysis of the two plays will focus on only a limited number of key scenes, including an elaborate interpretation of the Richard II's deposition scene.

There are two Christian texts that frame the medieval understanding of the mirror as an ambivalent item. In the epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, the former reveals how the knowledge man has of God is *per speculum in aenigmate*, "through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor. 13.12). According to Sabine Melchior-Bonnet, Saint Paul's mirror offers merely a "veiled image or representation of truth" (97). In the second instance, Saint James portrays the man who does not keep the word of God as someone who "looks at himself in the mirror, sees himself as he is, and after having looked, goes away and forgets at once what he is like" (James 1.23). The stark difference between the two texts is that the former aims at piercing the surface of the mirror in order to gain access to the true essence of the self, whereas the latter presents man's inability to see beyond his own earthly and deformed image. Nevertheless, both texts stress the paramount importance of the mirror as an item of divine resemblance and of the truest representation of the self. Melchior-Bonnet argues that, for medieval theologians, any representation of man that does not attend to his divine aspects is wicked and even idolatrous: "The moral status of imitation and of looking upon oneself is ambiguous due to the sacred character of the likeness. Imitation, when it is not interacting with or related to the divine, reduces itself to trompe l'oeil. Lucifer is the great usurper of likeness, sin being the foremost of false appearances" (100). Imitation always runs the risk of becoming immoral due to its ambivalent trait of revealing both the seen and the unseen sides of man.

Just like the Bible was the mirror in which man could recognize his likeness to God, the mirror-books known as *Speculum Principis* became the means for a prince to aim for perfection. The notion of *speculum*, namely mirror, was of the utmost importance in the ancient convention of political discourse. *Speculum principis* – the mirror of the perfect prince – consisted of advice addressed to the monarch on his duties. Similar to the Bible, the *Speculum* was supposed to properly guide and educate the prince in order to become the perfect version of the divine model intended for him. Imagery associated with mirror, glass, image, idea or counterfeit is abundant in Shakespeare's plays, as the *speculum* was a standard concept in Elizabethan political discourse. John Dickinson, writing on John of Salisbury, offers the following description of the virtues of the perfect prince:

The king should be chaste and avoid avarice; he should be learned in letters; he should be humble; he should banish from his realm actors and mimes, buffoons and harlots; he should seek the welfare of others and not his own; he should wholly forget the affections of flesh and blood and do only that which is demanded by the welfare and safety of his subjects; he should be both father and husband to them. (Dickinson 319)

Although *Speculum Principis* has its derivatives called mirror-books, it cannot be called a literary genre, but rather a convention of political discourse.

I shall establish the way in which mirrors are related to kings by analysing Shakespeare's *King Richard II* with reference to a counter-image in *King Richard III*. Kings are, in the theory of the divine right, God's sacred mission to dignify the Earth, as they are the embodiment of both the human and the divine. This is why the item of mirror is loaded with different meanings, the most important being the reflection of kingship and selfhood. According to King James, the monarch must resemble God's divine power on earth: "Kings are justly called gods, for that they exercise a manner of resemblance of divine power upon earth. For if you will consider the attributes to God, you shall see how they agree in the person of a king." The concept of kingship is that of the monarch ruling as the chosen vice-regent, independent of the consent of the commons, above ecclesiastical authority and outside the laws of the kingdom (Carroll 127). But how can such power be justified among subjects? The theory of the Divine Right of Kings has been questioned and doubted time and again. One of the leading justifications for the monarchical power was the doctrine of the King's Two Bodies. Ernst Kantorowicz makes use of Edmund Plowden's *Reports*, a work which collected the arguments and judgements made in the king's court regarding the "mystical talk" of kingship:

[T]he King has in him two Bodies, viz., a Body natural, and a Body politic. His Body natural (if it be considered in itself) is a Body mortal, subject to all Infirmities that come by Nature or Accident, to the Imbecility of Infancy or old Age, and to the like Defects that happen to the natural Bodies of other People. But his Body politic is a Body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of Policy and Government, and constituted for the Direction of the People, and the Management of the public weal, and this Body is utterly void of Infancy, and old Age, and other natural Defects and Imbecilities, which the Body natural is subject to, and for this Cause, what the King does in his Body politic, cannot be invalidated or frustrated by any Disability in his natural Body. (Kantorowicz 7)

Kantorowicz describes the body politic as “a likeness to the ‘holy sprites and angels’, because it represents, like angels, the Immutable within Time” (7). But what is the unifying element between these two bodies? The answer is provided by the historian in his study *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. He argues that the Body politic encompasses the Body natural, as the latter is the lesser one and so the former is consolidated. The Body natural, adorned and invested with the Estate and Dignity royal, and the Body politic are “together indivisible” (9). A portion of the natural self is always lost, as the Body politic is the greater and the more inclusive of the two. Thus, the anointed king is an entity similar to the Holy Trinity, multiple bodies in one Person. The result of this concept is that the king is infallible: although the body natural is subject to decay, his mortal flaws cannot be used against the validation of a monarchical decree. Given that the Body politic is not subject to death as the natural Body is, the doctrine of the King's Two Bodies provides the solution for the troubling questions of succession:

[...] or as to this Body [politic] the King never dies, and his natural Death is not called in our Law the Death of the King, but the Demise of the King, not signifying by the word (*Demise*) that the Body politic of the King is dead, but that there is a Separation of the two Bodies, and that the Body politic is transferred and conveyed over from the Body natural now dead, or now removed from the Dignity royal, to another Body natural. So that it signifies a Removal of the Body politic of the King of this Realm from one Body natural to another. (13)

Hence the saying “The king is dead, long live the king”, as there is, at least in theory, no gap between one monarch and the one who succeeds him.

The doctrine of the King's Two Bodies and the *Speculum Principis* are both dramatized in Shakespeare's plays. In the Elizabethan Age, the mirror became a universal symbol for instruction, knowledge and understanding. In *Richard II* in the deposition scene (VI. i) the looking glass becomes a central motif. Highly loaded with symbolism – both truth telling and falsity, both vanity and self-knowledge – the mirror activates the most powerful dramatic effects, becoming, in Ernst Kantorowicz's words, “a magic mirror” (39). According to Walter Pater, what takes place in this scene is an inverted rite, one of degradation and decay, held in a ceremony in which the order of the coronation is reversed. It is almost a demonic world turned upside down, where disorder is the norm: the roles of the dominant and the dominated are exchanged, as the king must learn “[t]o insinuate, flatter, bow and bend [his] knee” and be instructed in “submission” (IV. i. 166-68); the peers in Parliament can only be

thieves, devils or traitors, a fact confirmed by Richard's initial "God save the King" (172), which is met with silence and thus it is he who supplies the "amen" and be "both priest and clerk" (173). This ritual recalls the lords' blasphemous violation of the sanctity and integrity of kingship. The court is inverted by a demonically false *speculum of rex in parlamento*. Richard demands the preeminent regal emblem "Give me the crown" and while giving it to Henry, he creates a peculiar image, "Here, cousin, / On this side my hand and, on that side thine" (182-83). The ceremonial tableau takes the form of a mirror: two cousins, face-to-face, holding the royal crown between them. Faced with a familiar, but now alien object of the crown, he seems to see how fully he has identified with it and the other symbols of power. Hence, in response to Bolingbroke's "I thought you had been willing to resign", Richard claims "You may my glories and my state depose, / But not my griefs; still I am king of those." He insists that these griefs and cares, though "given away", they "tend the crown and still "with [him] they stay" (190, 192, 198-9).

Richard then summons all present to witness his personal act of abdication, performing the ritual of abjuring his monarchical status: "Now, mark me how I will undo myself" (204). He disowns his crown, puts away his sceptre, his tears washing off the holy oil with which he was anointed, and renounces all feudal oaths of loyalty made to him. The ceremony of the "undoing" (203-21) is the disowning of regal self and the realisation of the nothingness that results from it. Its formal structure is a reversal of the normative ceremonies - it is the equivalent of calling up devils by reciting Scripture passages backwards. Yet another histrionic mirror, this performance magically transforms the regal ceremony into a demonic rite. With each performative utterance, an item of the regalia is taken up and then removed from his person: "I give this heavy weight from off my head, / And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand" (204-5). Richard's divestiture of "kingly sway", "balm", "sacred state" is completed by similar symbolic gestures of possession and renunciation. These gestures are enhanced by the anaphora: "With mine own tears I wash away my balm, / With mine own hands I give away my crown, / With mine own tongue deny my sacred state, / With mine own breath release all duteous oaths" (207-10). In the demonic world of Bolingbroke's upside-down Parliament, the solemn ritual of the coronation is thus wholly mirrored in reverse to confirm the violation of God's will for kingship.

However, some critics argue that Richard's loss of crown cannot be attributed only to Bolingbroke's usurpation. Some even venture to say that Bolingbroke's act cannot be called a usurpation, but rather the natural aftermath of Richard's disowning acts unfolding throughout the play. Barbara Baines

pertinently points out that the first step taken by Richard in the process of decrowning himself is his denial of the principles and laws upon which the crown is instituted: "The destruction of the hereditary order in the duchy of Lancaster prefigures the destruction of the hereditary order in larger England" (25). When he denies Bolingbroke's rightful inheritance, Richard denies his own right to the crown, to his own inheritance. Both John of Gaunt and the Duke of York, strong believers in the Divine Rights of Kings, endorse this course of action. If the former prophesies Richard's loss of royal status, the latter supports it. Richard's process of self-deposition is triggered by two key elements happening prior to the deposition scene. In II. i, the dying John of Gaunt prophesies Richard's self-deposition:

O, had thy grandsire, with a prophet's eye,
 Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,
 From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,
 Deposing thee before thou wert possessed,
 Which art possessed now to depose thyself.
 (II. i. 104-8)

What further enhances this prophecy is Gaunt's conviction that Richard is not deposed by usurpation but by his own actions: "Landlord of England art thou now, not king" (II. i. 113). To Gaunt, it is a *fait accompli* even before Bolingbroke's return from exile. In the confrontation scene between Richard and Bolingbroke (III. iii), the latter kneels and declares "My gracious lord, I come but for my own." Richard's answer unveils that reality shaped in his mind: "Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all." It is clear by now that Gaunt's premonition is materialized.

Ernst Kantorowicz identifies three anticipatory moments in Richard's dethronement. These moments encompass the multiple persons embodied by Richard: King, Fool, God, "Thus play I in one person many people" (V.v.31). Each persona appears to dominate one of these key moments, reaching the ultimate climax of dissolution in the mirror scene. Kantorowicz's prototypes are thus distributed: "[...] the 'King' dominates in the scene on the Coast of Wales (III. ii), the 'Fool' at Flint Castle (III. iii), and the 'God' in the Westminster scene (IV. i), with man's wretchedness as a perpetual companion and antithesis at every stage" (Kantorowicz 27). Each scene represents a new kind of descent from the height of kingship to the nothingness of the self. On the Welsh coast, Richard goes through the initial stage of an epiphany, indicating the numbness of his majesty: "I had forgot myself, am I not king? /Awake thou coward majesty! thou sleepest" (83-4). According to Kantorowicz, Richard experiences a metamorphosis,

slightly moving away from the “Realism” of kingship to its dissolution “Nominalism”, a simple *nomen* (29). This state of semi-reality, exposed in the slumber of his *regalia*, foreshadows the royal “Fool” at Flint Castle. Kingship is here modified from permanent life to permanent death:

For God’s sake let us sit upon the ground,
 And tell sad stories of the death of kings—
 How some have been deposed, some slain in war,
 Some haunted by the ghosts they deposed,
 Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping killed;
 All murdered – for within the hollow crown
 That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
 Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits
 Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
 Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
 To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
 Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
 As if the flesh which walls about our life,
 Were brass impregnable: and humoured thus,
 Comes at the last, and with a little pin
 Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king!
 (III. ii. 155-70)

The king who, according to the notion of the King’s Two Bodies, should never die is replaced by the king who always dies. It is the beginning of the separation between the two bodies: “For you have but mistook me all this while: / I live with bread like you, feel want, / Taste grief, need friends – subjected thus, / How can you say to me, I am a king?” (171-2). The Body natural takes precedence over the Body politic, thus unveiling selfhood in opposition to kingship. This instance is yet another reversal of form. The only thing left in this scene is the semblance of kingship: “Yet looks he like a king” (III. iii. 68) declares York. In what follows, the “Name” of kingship reappears: “O, that I were as great / As is my grief, or lesser than my name!” (136). The realization of the permanent loss of kingship has a peculiar effect on Richard, allowing Shakespeare to conjure up the image of the Fool, whom the playwright uses as a countertype of Lords and Kings. Both Richard and Northumberland remark the former’s abandonment of senses: “I talk but idly, and you laugh at me” (171), “Sorrow and grief of heart / Make him speak fondly like a frantic man” (185-6).

Finally, the third important scene in the departure from kingship takes place at Westminster (IV. i). If in the previous two scenes Richard either tried to hold on to his “Name” or justify it by keeping up appearance, at Westminster, it becomes next to impossible to expound his kingship (Kantorowicz 34). Thus,

the natural sequence of events forces Richard to undo his kingship and begin to depose himself. As previously stated, his act becomes one of a reversed ceremony, which carries as much weight and solemnity as the coronation itself. It is the ultimate act of renunciation, stripping himself of all the regal symbols of dignity and reducing himself to nothing but the unfortunate Body natural:

Now mark me how I will undo myself:
I give this heavy weight from off my head,
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand.
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
With mine own hands I give away my crown,
With mine own breath release all duteous oaths:
All pomp and majesty do I forswear...

(IV. i. 254-61)

Along with the items of power pertaining to his *regalia*, his name is irrevocably taken away: "I have no name... / And know not now what name to call myself" (254-5). It is common in Shakespeare's stylization to form compounds of similar sound / nəʊ nɒt nəʊ / to emphasize the nothingness of his state. Having disowned himself of the outer kingship, he attempts to recover any bits of his former status by establishing an inner kingship. Thus, Richard asserts his unshakable position by making use of the analogy of the two buckets, a metaphor by which he seems to reverse the hierarchical pairings of high/low and up/down: "Now is this golden crown like a deep well / That owes two buckets, filling one another, / The emptier ever dancing in the air, / The other down, unseen and full of water: / That bucket down and full of tears am I, / Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high" (IV. i. 184-89). The bucket rising high is obviously Bolingbroke, yet, though its position carries the usual implications of high office and success, its "lightness" denotes lack of substance, and the potential to be easily swayed; the heavy bucket, while still figuring Richard's lowered status and heavy heart, also implies the weight of his natural authority, something that cannot be easily removed, as it is God-given. The exchange culminates in Bolingbroke's annoyance and subsequent question: "Are you contented to resign the crown?" (200). Richard remains elusive and ambivalent: "Ay, no. No, ay...", fearing that in parting from the regal emblem of the crown he "must nothing be" (201). According to Harry Levin, Richard's *yes* and *no* are meaningless, "there can be no identity under such conditions" (115).

After the legal rite of abdication, Richard asks for a mirror to read in it. As it is stated above, man is supposed to look in the mirror in order to identify his likeness to the divine. That is, man is required to look for the spiritual self he

holds within and see it reflected in the mirror. Richard becomes unmistakably aware of the loss of his external likeness to kingship. Still, in trying to create an inner representation of kingship, he demands a mirror, which is the literature of the self, to *speculate* his persona after the renunciation of his royal dignity. He is thus looking for his royal virtues reflected in the face of the mirror, but they do not appear in the *speculum princiiis*. It is by now evident that the need for self-knowledge is an expressed concern: "Let it command a mirror hither straight, / That it may show me what a face I have / Since it is bankrupt of his majesty" (265-7). He needs to know whether his loss of kingly identity will be reflected in his physical appearance. The Elizabethan mirror is often employed with the function previously encountered in iconography, that of showing either the past or the future. In this light, the mirror may not only be intended to show Richard's semblance to a former king, but also reveal Bolingbroke's future. Robert M. Shuler calls Richard's reading in the mirror a threat to expose Bolingbroke's past and present treachery (166). Ernst Kantorowicz famously called Richard's mirror a "magic mirror." Schuler suggests that the actual looking glass carries literal magical traits. These are expressed by Richard himself by addressing the mirror when it is given to him: "flatt'ring glass [...] Thou dost beguile me" (IV.i. 279-81). The magical connotations attributed to the looking glass are further enhanced by Richard's prior act of "undoing" his kingship. Rid of his former *twin-born* self, he appears to charge the scene with occult associations, seeking help elsewhere. Following the episode of the inverted rite of coronation, the demand for a mirror can be read in Elizabethan terms as a definite demonical and magical ritual. There is an aggressiveness in the mirror episode that signals Richard's intention to turn the remaining action to victory. He does so by deploying his own self-scrutiny as a weapon against Bolingbroke, and then by turning the conventional iconic mirror of self-examination into a literal magic mirror:

Give me the glass, and therein will I read.
 No deeper wrinkles yet? hath sorrow struck
 So many blows upon this face of mine,
 And made no deeper wounds? O flattering glass,
 Like to my followers in prosperity,
 Thou dost beguile me! Was this face the face
 That every day under his household roof
 Did keep ten thousand men? was this the face
 That, like the sun, did make beholders wink?
 Was this the face that faced so many follies,
 And was last out-faced by Bolingbroke?
 A brittle glory shineth in this face:
 As brittle as the glory is the face;

Dashes the glass against the ground

For there it is, crack'd in a hundred shivers.
Mark, silent king, the moral of this sport,
How soon my sorrow hath destroy'd my face.
(277-91)

He sees nothing more than his own face, without visible changes after his loss of kingship. But what is made clear is that the outer and inner face are not identical. This is the moment when Kantorowicz's prototypes – the King, the Fool and the God – dissolve and break into pieces (Kantorowicz 27). This utterance is “a kind of soliloquy”, as it is intensely private and introspective. The word “face” is easily understood in the context of the *speculum principis* as the sum total of the king's royal virtues. Not only the physical mirror, but Richard's monarchical face is cracked. The smashing of the mirror symbolises the “brittle glory” of his face and of his office.

Furthermore, Richard's choice for the word “out-faced”, instead of “usurped” or “deposed”, showcases his preference and concern for his image as king, given that the self had already been defeated by Bolingbroke. To Bolingbroke, he divulges a moral: “How soon my shadow hath destroy'd my face” (290-1). Shadow, the antithesis to sunlight, befits his present unkingly stance and even redirects him from the world of outer appearances to a sphere of innate realities, wherein “shadow” connotes something that is unreal and unnatural. At this point, Bolingbroke, whom Anita Howard calls “the new voice of authority” (86), indicates that his reflection was only a “shadow” (293) and cannot be destroyed along with that glass: “The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd / The shadow of your face.” Richard's reply suggests both that his shadow has substance, as it is full of grief, and that he dreads being reduced to his mere humanity, to his Body natural:

'Tis very true, my grief lies all within;
And these external manners of laments
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
That swells with silence in the tortured soul;
There lies the substance...

(295-9)

According to Schuler, Richard turns this opportunity to his advantage by insisting “not only on the difference between ‘shadow’ and ‘substance’ – between his ‘external manners’ and ‘the unseen grief ... in the tortured soul’ – but also on

the increasingly glaring discrepancy between Henry's ceremonial show ('shadow' = 'theatrical illusion') and the demonic reality of the pseudojudicial proceedings now underway" (165).

Another interesting reading of the mirror scene is provided by Ema Vyroubalova and James Robert Wood. Their research presents the interdependence between people and props on the theatrical stage. Often the people become like props, while the objects become like people. The mirror is an essential stage prop, which Richard employs in order to reveal either his past glories as king or his present woes. However, the mirror is rather an "unresponsive object" (16) for Richard, as it shows him unchanged. The accurate reflection of Richard is precisely this one, without encompassing either kingly triumphs or human miseries. The authors argue that Richard expects the mirror to be a "responsive living being" (16), not an inanimate object. Yet, it is this unchanged mirror image that "causes Richard to become aware not only of the mirror's unresponsive materiality but also the unresponsive materiality of his own body" (16). That is to say, it is not only his Body Politic that deserts him but also his Body Natural.

Harold C. Goddard calls Richard's mirror the perfect symbol for the "Narcissus-King" (188). In the medieval understanding, the mirror was an item used for spiritual purposes: the gaze that pierces through the mirror must find the resemblance between man and the divine. Narcissus's wrongdoing springs from his utter ignorance of the inner self and its resemblance to God. Melchior-Bonnet, whose study *The Mirror: A History* offers a thorough and detailed presentation of the history of mirrors, points out that "[a]ll references to the mirror up until the baroque period invite a movement beyond sensory appearances and a discernment of illusions aimed at reaching the light of the pure mirror" (100). It is why, she explains, Narcissus is placed by Dante in Purgatory alongside counterfeiters, who are all guilty of being pleased with the falsity of tangible appearance. In his quest for a restored identity, Richard looks both for his inner and outer image. Accordingly, I venture to argue that the resemblance between him and Narcissus lies not in their sins as much as in their tendency towards self-destruction: Narcissus dies by self-infatuation, while Richard dies of self-dissolution. What further differentiates Richard from Narcissus is the former's pursuit of self-knowledge, a process triggered by having seen his reflection in the mirror, where he acquires the kind of knowledge that transfigures him into his true self: "[...] and straight am nothing." He then insists that the only way to gain true access to one's self is accepting the desolate condition of being nothing: "But whate'er I be, / Nor I, nor any man that but man is, / With nothing shall be pleas'd, till he be eas'd / With being nothing" (V.v. 38-41). In this prison soliloquy, Richard also states his

discontentment vis-à-vis the “little world” he inhabits. To Schuler, this “little world” (9) of Richard is “nothing”, so he renounces it for the sake of a “spiritual crown [which] can make one ‘pleased’ and ‘content’” (Schuler 171). And as Pamela Bickley suitably points out, Richard’s loss of title results in his reduction to nothing (194).

Teresa Baluk-Ulewiczowa draws attention to the fact that in Elizabethan and Jacobean times, there was a custom for the most prominent courtiers and public figures to write books of advice for their sons – the “parentic mirror-books” (34). Thus, in his history plays, Shakespeare places the father-son relationship against the background of mirror-books. In *Richard II* Shakespeare illustrates the typical-father-son / tutor-pupil relationship by making the king’s two uncles, John of Gaunt and Edmund, Duke of York, father figures. The dying Gaunt prophesies Richard’s downfall, but first attempts to instruct him: “And thou, too careless patient as thou art, / Commit’st thy anointed body to the cure / Of those physicians that first wounded thee.” In the tradition of the *speculum principis*, a king’s courtiers and advisers were also considered to be a reflection of the king’s image: “A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown” is Gaunt’s assessment of Richard’s followers (II. i. 97-100). Yet the most relevant text in this regard might be *Richard III*. Baluk-Ulewiczowa attaches to the item of the mirror the metaphor “for human beings who inherit (or do not inherit) their ancestor’s virtues” (34). The Duchess of York compares her two dead sons, Edward IV and the Duke of Clarence, to “images” of “a worthy husband” as she “liv’d with looking on his images” (II.ii.49-50). The two dead sons were images of the former king, but now death renders them “two mirrors of his princely semblance [that] / Are crack’d in pieces” (51-2). This instance is suggestive of the son’s devotion to follow their late father’s guidance in their duties. However, she calls her usurping son, Richard of Gloucester /'glɒstə/, a “false glass” (53) /glɑ:s/as he shatters his legitimacy through his murderous acts. Thus, Richard does not mirror his ancestors and is therefore not the embodiment of inherited kingly virtues. There is no *speculum* as far as he is concerned, and so the transfer of the Body politic from the late king to his successor does not take place.

While Richard II could be purely mirrored in the *speculum principis*, as a God-chosen sovereign, Richard III is a self-crowned king, an antithetical figure, representing, in Marie-Hélène Bernault’s words, “the fallen nature of man” (110) and the deformed Body politic: a twisted mind in a twisted shape. Baluk-Ulewiczowa proposes that, in *Richard III*, Shakespeare “sports with *speculum* concepts and terminology in Richard’s soliloquies” (33). She argues that from the beginning of the play, that is from the “Winter of Our Discontent” soliloquy, he displays his familiarity with, and disregard for the derivative mirror-books when he reveals

that he is not “made to court an amorous looking-glass” (I.i.15) His second soliloquy emerges at the end of his courtship of Lady Anne, where he twice employs the metaphor of the looking-glass, but this time, surprised at his swift success, he decides to get a mirror to see what it is about his “shadow” that made her take him for “a marvellous man.” I would also argue that what takes place in this soliloquy is a representation of Richard’s need to counterfeit his image as king through abundant adornment of the self: “I’ll be at charges for a looking-glass / And entertain a score or two of tailors / To study fashions to adorn my body: / Since I am crept in favour with myself, / I will maintain it with a little cost” (I.ii.258-60, 267-68). This decoration is not merely meant to cover his deformity, as he declares himself “Cheated of features by dissembling Nature, / Deform’d, unfinish’d, sent before [his] time [...] half made up - / And so lamely and unfashionable” (I.i. 19-22), but rather to act as an adornment of the hidden self in order to become an apparent king. The general cultural belief in Shakespeare’s time was that bodily deformity implied moral deformity. Stephen Greenblatt argues that Shakespeare does not completely repudiate this assumption, but rather “allows his audience to credit the notion that a higher power, whether nature or God, has provided a visible sign of the villain’s wickedness” (41). The struggle between selfhood and kingship reaches its climax in the two soliloquies. While in his first soliloquy, Richard declares his discontentment with glancing at his true self in the mirror and chooses to merely “spy [his] shadow in the sun” (I.i. 26), in his second soliloquy, he declares a different position. The adornment of his body generates the desire to look at himself in the mirror: “shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass, / That I may see my shadow as I pass” (I.ii.67-8). The emphasis is on the words “spy” and “see”, which present Richard’s unmistakable want to be (falsely) transfigured by kingship. However, his selfhood cannot be hidden by the mere show of adornment, as he had ruined his right to kingship through the unnatural murder of his kinship. Elizabeth Woodville, the widow of Edward IV, recognizes Richard’s false kingship: “Hid’st thou that forehead with a golden crown” (IV.iv. 140), and unmask him.

In the end, most of the natural self is lost in majesty. Neither Richard II nor, as I have established, Richard III can separate the many personas they embody, but even more so, it is impossible to remove kingship and preserve an intact selfhood. The mirror of the perfect prince – *speculum principis* – provides the kind of self-fashioning that promises the appropriate conduct in such a stately position. It offered the perfect rhetoric of the self, which could become a model for crafting an artificial identity. The kingly stance has always been associated with theatricality, as it requires the staging of certain traits in order to exhibit an agreeable social image and, above all, admirable political virtues.

Thus, it could be argued that kingship is what Thomas Hobbes calls *Persona*, while selfhood is *Person* (217). If the latter can be seen as the face, the former is most certainly the mask. It is why a monarch cannot escape the inevitable intertwinement of *Person* and *Persona*, as it implies the cloaking of outer appearance in order for him to become a staged figure. The two images of selfhood and kingship always mirror each other. The interplay between displaying and hiding is a veritable mirroring of the two selves integrated in one Person. Richard II's stolen title reduces him to nothingness. His lesser self, the Body natural, is meaningless without being encapsulated in the regal self. Kingship and selfhood cannot be separated from one another.

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DICTATORSHIP, MACHISMO, AND THE CUBAN EXILE DRAMA IN A TRAGICOMIC MODE: CRISTINA GARCÍA'S *KING OF CUBA*

VERONICA TATIANA POPESCU¹

ABSTRACT. *Dictatorship, Machismo, and the Cuban Exile Drama in a Tragicomic Mode: Cristina García's King of Cuba.* Three years before the death of Fidel Castro, Cuban American author Cristina García published a fictional account of the Cuban dictator's death in a darkly funny and sentimental story of intertwined destinies, ironies of fate, machismo, failure and suffering. With El Comandante and a fellow octogenarian émigré as protagonists, García launches into a fictional exploration of Cuban masculinity, machismo, the dictator's fate, vanity, and failure. Written in what I will argue is a tragicomic mode, balancing the tragic and the comic, the horrendous and the laughable, the pitiful and the ridiculous, the novel reflects different perspectives on sensitive topics for Cubans on both sides of the Florida Straits, challenging preconceived ideas and inviting the reader to reflect on the relativity of truth.

Keywords: *Fidel Castro, dictatorship, machismo, Cuban American community, satire, tragicomic mode*

REZUMAT. *Dictatură, machism și drama comunității cubaneze din Statele Unite în manieră tragi-comică: King of Cuba de Cristina García.* Cu trei ani înaintea morții lui Fidel Castro, autoarea americană de origine cubaneză, Cristina García, publica o întruchipare imaginară a morții dictatorului cubanez într-o poveste sentimentală, scrisă cu umor negru, în care găsim destine încrucișate, ironii ale sorții, machism, ratare și suferință. Protagonistii sunt doi octogenari: El Comandante și un cubanez care trăiește în exil. Cu ajutorul lor García abordează teme precum masculinitate cubaneză, machism, condiția dictatorului, vanitate și ratare. Scrisă într-o manieră tragi-comică, alternând în mod echilibrat tragicul și comicul, oribilul și rizibilul, jalnicul și ridicolul, romanul reflectă diferite perspective asupra unor teme sensibile pentru comunitățile cubaneze de o parte și de alta a Strâmtorii Florida, atacând ideile preconceptuate și invitându-l pe cititor să reflecteze asupra relativității adevărului.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Fidel Castro, dictatură, machism, comunitate cubanezo-americană, satiră, manieră tragi-comică*

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Introduction

Cristina García has built her career as fiction writer by exploring narratively what it means to be Cuban in what Ana M. López calls “Greater Cuba” (39), a country of no conventional borders emerging from the experience of being Cuban on the island or away from it. “For me,” Cristina García confesses, “Cuba is as much about imagining and projection and perception as truth and history.” (“At Home” 81) This is especially true in *King of Cuba* (2013), a satirical text that complements her first two novels by writing about Greater Cuba from a male perspective, looking with critical distance into the heteropatriarchal mentality and traditional Cuban machismo that made Fidel Castro’s dictatorship a strange romance between a strong, authoritarian, yet equally charismatic leader, and a nation which succumbed to the macho leader’s charm and oratory.

García’s novel is built around two main characters: one a dead ringer of Fidel Castro, the other a character modelled on the novelist’s own father and other Cuban exiles of his generation. They are two octogenarians whose lives intersected in their youth and who end up dying together, in the most ironic and unheroic way possible. Portraying Fidel Castro in a kind of revenge fantasy novel was not without its difficulties, especially considering the controversial nature of the Cuban leader. Cristina García explained that she wanted to “build [her Castro character] from the ground up, to show how he became this charismatic, monomaniacal, mesmerizing figure ... to own him for the purpose of the novel” (“Cristina García Dethrones” n. page), although much of what happens in the novel – set in 2015 – is cleverly imagined by the author. She carefully researched her subject to understand the man as well as the public figure from inside out, to get to his essence: “What I wanted to do was reference Castro, but also give myself lots of room to create this caudillo, this strong man from the ground up. ... I took great liberties. Yet somehow, I think, I was attempting to get at the essence of the real Castro. His lonely essence.” (“Interview with Christina García” n. page)

Much of that essence, the novelist suggests, has to do with Castro’s machismo, reflected not only in his *caudillo* public persona and the heteropatriarchal social order carefully disguised as a Marxist egalitarian society (cf. Dominguez-García 3-22; Reiss 115-135), but also in his private life. The figure of the dictator is mirrored in the novel – in an upside-down reflection – by that of the old Cuban émigré Goyo Herrera. As this study sets out to demonstrate, what the novel contends is that irrespective of their radically opposed political views and lifestyles, the two old men are more alike than they are willing to accept, and their connection is deeply rooted in their ridiculous, exaggerated and even self-aggrandizing masculinity, which the novelist sees as the unacknowledged reason for the big divide between the two sides of Greater Cuba.

Cristina García's Fidel Castro: From beacon of the Revolution to Commander Frog

In his 1986 biography of Castro, Tad Szulc described the Cuban leader as “a fascinating phenomenon in our century’s politics ... a man of panache, a romantic figure, an ever-defiant, dizzyingly imaginative, and unpredictable rebel, a marvellous actor, a spectacular teacher and preacher of the many credos he says he embraces.” (Szulc 38). His was a charismatic authority (Weber 1947), manifested in a machista leadership that, in the words of Paul Sondrol, made Castro “fulfil a psychic functional requirement in Cuban society, still permeated by the [H]ispanic traditions of caudillaje ... embod[ying] in his own attractive and legendary mannerisms - bravado, machismo, a superb intellect, hidalgo generosity - those inner qualities that Cubans themselves feel and would like to manifest, were they only able to do so.” (609) Ironically, this type of leadership eventually proved disappointingly unromantic for many Cubans, who saw behind the public persona a megalomaniac, egotistical, cruel and sometimes irrational ruler, more of an absolute monarch in all but name (cf. Sánchez and Gylden 2014), which is the blueprint for García’s character.

In her text, the novelist captures the Luciferic fall of the leading hero of the Cuban Revolution. It is a portrait that reflects, in a tragicomic mode, the fact that, as Cristina García had realised during her visit to the island in 2011, “[t]he beacon that the Cuban Revolution once represented to the world had become nothing more than a grimy night light, with the Cuban people openly detesting Fidel himself – once a sacred cow – and his interminable gerontocracy” (“Fidel, the Promise” n. page).

It is precisely in this carefully balanced mixture of serious reflection of Fidel Castro’s legacy of dictatorship and charismatic authority and the irreverent overtones of his portrayal as a foolishly vain, incapacitated, and impotent Latin American *caudillo*, stripped of real political power, that the reader sees Cristina García’s craftsmanship at its best. Unsurprisingly, the novel belongs to El Comandante, who is given some of the most memorable lines that make the character credible as a fictionalised Fidel Castro, even in this satirical portrayal. The novel opens with the tyrant, alone in his room overlooking the sea and the Miami shore across the Florida Straits, meditating on death as something he is not yet ready to accept as a possibility:

The tyrant was accustomed to being exceptional, and so he didn’t expect that rules governing ordinary human mortality should apply to him. Nothing in his life had followed anyone else’s rules, so why must he go the way of every mediocre nobody on the planet? Dying, he’d decided, was a fate for lesser men. (*King of Cuba* 3-4)

Had it not been for his poor health and the disgusting *gusanos* (US Cuban exiles) plotting against him, ceaselessly trying to assassinate him and spreading vicious “lies” about his health and life in Cuba, he could at least enjoy today’s celebration of the 26th July attack on the Moncada barracks. To counterpoint El Comandante’s self-aggrandizing ruminations, García minutely describes his morning routine: a nurse comes to wash his emaciated body, an assistant (the Huele-huele, or ass-sniffer) opens the window for him, and another member of his staff comes with his morning pills, a stack of newspapers and breakfast: dry toast and oatmeal.

Looking back on his life so far, El Comandante feels a surge of pride thinking of his legacy: “He’d left his mark on history with ink, and action, and blood.” (*King of Cuba* 4) He has managed to alter people’s perception of reality with his impassioned speeches, a very hands-on leadership, repressive measures to annihilate all subversive actions, and a gift for controlling people’s minds and lives, and he takes pride in that. The tyrant’s cynicism is in character. At the end of his life, Castro’s fictional persona looks back at his role in the history of Cuba and he sees a great story – an idealist’s utopia – that he penned and offered to Cubans as an achievable reality, even after he realised he could not deliver what he had been promising. He has poured into the ears of his people the same stories for so long that he is incapable of envisioning an alternative history for his nation: “In the end, Cuba could support just one utopia— his. Why? Because nobody on the island had bigger cojones than he did. Nadie. Except perhaps, at one time, his father.” (8)

Much has been speculated on the influence exerted by Castro’s father on him,² and the novelist likes the idea of a testosterone-driven competition between father and son, which ties in with her theme, Cuban machismo. She considers the emotional, psychological relationship between father and son edifying in explaining Fidel’s excessive machismo, reflected not only in the same impulse to father several children (11 by most Castro biographers’ count, but possibly more), but also in his machista leadership, constantly proving his political vigour, his mental and physical stamina in public shows of political and personal virility. When the novel’s Fidel reminisces about his father, he can only think of his out of the ordinary genitalia, which the little boy saw as intimidating and inspiring at the same time. The novel suggests that Castro’s narcissistic personality, projecting in public an image of “grandiose omnipotence” (Post 201), was in fact rooted in his early need for recognition, both as his father’s son and as a virile force, in his public as well as his personal life.

² See, for instance, Bourne 1986; Coltman 2008.

It is this excessive narcissism and his intimidating authority that, he now understands, have estranged him from his people, from his country. He can see how it has all changed for the worse:

How the hell did he know what was true anymore? People told him only what they thought he wanted to hear. Nobody had the nerve to say that this plan was unsound, or that most government employees didn't bother to show up for work on any given day. Cuba was riddled with corruption, hustlers, parasites; plagued by a culture of sinecure, amiguismo, back-scratching, ball-scratching. (*King of Cuba* 91)

The failure of the Revolution, as indirectly admitted by the dictator, and the harsh realities of his dictatorial rule are reflected in the novel in more than a dozen interludes and explanatory footnotes which give the reader access to the complaints of Cubans across the social spectrum. The most disturbing confessions are about food. Meat, flesh, everything is for sale on the black market. The truth is that, in Cuba, food³ has become synonymous with power, the dictator's prerogative, as the reader discovers on two different occasions: the banquet offered to foreign heads of state and diplomats to celebrate the despot's 89th birthday, and the one the dictator organises for the imprisoned hunger strikers.

El Comandante's encounter with the hunger strikers from La Cabaña prison represents one of the most shocking scenes in the novel, revealing the despot's tactical and manipulative skills. It is a grotesque episode, which the author herself described as "*horribly funny*" ("Interview with Cristina García" n. page), in which we witness the cynical tyrant throwing a banquet for the five hunger strikers - dissidents who were supposed to have died quietly, like thousands before them, not as martyrs of the counterrevolution. The shrewd old despot presents the famished prisoners with a multi-course meal of exquisite food, playing with their minds and testing their will power. García's dictator cunningly fakes concern and understanding, while destroying their confidence and patiently waiting for them to show the slightest sign of weakness. This is a true feast fit for the tyrant's gourmet palate, an insult for everyone else, especially the miserable hunger strikers. As the first course is brought in, the tension in the room rises. One of the inmates sips some water and the others follow suit. It

³ Food is a recurrent motif in the novel: it is either rationalised and insufficient for most of the population (and a justifiable reason for illegal and/or immoral activities), or in excess in the Cuban American community. Bulimia among Cuban émigrés becomes a symbol of the trauma of displacement, as we see in the case of Luisa Herrera, Goyo's wife, and their island-born son, Goyito.

is a quiet moment, interrupted only by the sound of steps as the second course is served: lobster-stuffed avocados. Then, unexpectedly, one of the prisoners stands up, arms stretched as if on a crucifix, and with the words "I prefer my lobster grilled with butter sauce," he throws himself out of the window overlooking the sea, "wheeling into the air with astonishing grace, hovering for the length of a holy incantation, the summer day's haze outlining him as if he were a shimmering, stained-glass saint." (*King of Cuba* 135) The despot's reaction shows neither shock nor empathy: "He chose his own penance,' El Comandante said tersely, recalling how Che used to dine at the firing squads. 'No sense in ruining a perfectly good luncheon.'" (136) As the feast continues, the old tyrant grows increasingly proud in his successful tactics: "He had them where he wanted them— agitated and impotent. Their resolve was waning, he could sense it. They were feeble, ravenous, worn out. ... Soon the dissidents' hatred would lapse into exhaustion, as hatred invariably did." (136; 137)

As if feeding on the prisoners' weakness and naivety, the despot's pride becomes too difficult to contain: "'We must make our peace with the necessity of dying.' He paused, glancing toward the window. 'But remember this: you won't create a new solar system in which I am not the sun. Even after I'm gone, the heat of my presence will be felt.'" (137)

An upside-down messianic figure, this is what Fidel Castro becomes in García's novel. Far from saving his country from dictatorship, the imperialist threat, and capitalist exploitation – as relative as these threats may have been – Castro's legacy is shown in the novel as a Communist dictatorship, in the guise of a true, socialist democracy, with a founding father nothing short of a royal despot, his head "itch[ing] for a crown." (187) The banquet scene is a perfect opportunity for the novelist to show the tyrant in action without a mask. He has nothing to lose by showing his true face to a handful of men who are going to die in prison, like so many of the system's opponents. Now that he is no longer the official head of state, he lives on little acts of power that remind him of his former dictatorial omnipotence. The banquet scene is disturbingly dark and comic at the same time, especially the tooth-removal episode. It is sad and comic at the same time that the book's Fidel would prove his mental agility and his *caudillaje* in front of men who are, in so many ways, weak opponents to a man like him.

The truth is that at this point in life, the despot no longer has any opportunities for real battles. He is no longer regarded as a big player on the international scene and neither is he, the novel suggests, the adored and respected Maximum Leader of his nation. He fears that not all the shots he is getting from his medical staff are indeed vitamin cocktails, he knows about the island bloggers and other dissidents criticising his regime and his political

legacy, and when he wants to make a speech on national television, he is warned by his own brother, the President, that Cubans might be upset to have their favourite telenovela cancelled and replaced by his live speech.

But at no point is his image as Maximum Leader so tarnished and his respectability so publicly destroyed than on the evening of his 89th birthday, when the victory at the Bay of Pigs was also supposed to be celebrated. The dictator finds out, too late to do anything about it, that the envisioned realistic and grand re-enactment of the Cuban victory against the exiles and the United States in the Bay of Pigs confrontation has been turned into a musical directed by none other than gay theatre director Orestes Mejías, a reformed dissident. The tyrant feels he cannot trust a victim of his repressive regime, but it is too late to stop the much publicised show. “Facilis descensus Averno” (“The descent to the underworld is easy”), he tells his brother as a warning (149).

These words prove to be a most appropriate description of his experience of the production: not only is the re-enactment written as a musical, but the whole historic event is presented allegorically as a mock-heroic battle between amphibians (the Cuban army) and pigs (Cuban exiles), with El Comandante himself featuring as Commander Frog, played by an actor who is “unintentionally hilarious, woodenly reciting his lines with a slight lisp.” (178) The audience, mostly heads of state, foreign diplomats and journalists, are shocked and amused at the same time. The British ambassador whispers, right behind the despot: “*Animal Farm* meets La Revolución,” while the audience “laugh[s] uproariously” (177). The whole farce drives the despot mad: “He felt like a condemned man. ... This was no homage but a grand mocking of him and his revolution. He’d have that faggot’s head for this.” (178) To make matters worse, everyone else seems to have a blast, so by the end of the show, when the amphibians burst into a reggaeton on hip-hop rhythms as the grand finale, the beautiful Tomás Terry theatre becomes a true pandemonium, the ambassadors shamelessly joining in the dance. The cruel irony behind this incident is that the true architect of the despot’s humiliation may not be the director, whom El Comandante suspects, but his own brother, the new President, a budding dictator himself.

An atheist who sees himself on a par with Christ, yet unsure of what awaits him in the afterlife, the dictator is obsessed with his political legacy after a lifetime of dedication to his vision of revolutionary Cuba, and he is afraid. He fears the ungratefulness of his people, their preference for dead heroes such as martyred Ché Guevarra – “looking like a goddamn saint.” (29) He knows his fame has been waning, and this is unbearably frustrating. Long gone are the days when women threw themselves at him as if he were a Hollywood star, when he was adored by the millions of peasants for whom he had built schools. And the more he thinks about his present impotence (political, physical), the

more he wants to show the world that he is still the great man who could subdue masses with his endless, mesmerizing speeches. Marginalised, humiliated and silenced, he feels Cuba – and with it, his identity as the incarnation of the Revolution, of his country – are gradually escaping him.

The dictator has very little to look forward to now, and this is an insufferable torment, surpassing by far the crippling pains and failing body functions that keep him dependant on others. The more aware he becomes of how relative his absolute rule has become, the more consumed he is by frustration, even rage, and the more he needs to know that his life – the mark he has left on the history of the island – will mean something after his death.

García's perspective is not necessarily impartial, although she is brilliant at adding to the portrait of her dictator just the right brush strokes and shadows to make her protagonist credible, intriguing, interesting, ridiculous and pitiable at the same time. He is the reflection of a flawed Revolution, frail and vulnerable, yet ridiculous in his delusion of grandeur. Like Lear, the dictator has caused his own downfall through excessive pride and a failure to understand that, as one island blogger comments, "real revolutions ... don't last over half a century" (*King of Cuba* 131). Neither do dictatorships.

There are some instances in the novel when the author lifts her character's mask and looks deep into his soul to find the innocent, loving yet insecure boy hidden under layers upon layers of pretence. The dictator's vulnerability is revealed in the few instances in the novel when he allows his wife, Delia, to treat him like a child, or when he reminisces about his childhood years, when he felt safe and protected by an adoring mother, proud of her ambitious son. This subversive vision of the "omnipotent leader" gives the reader the possibility to decide whether to feel compassion or amusement, or rather to experience a little of each, remembering both the Lear-like tragic figure of the scenes where the dictator speaks and behaves like a great leader contemplating the possibility of a lonely, pitiful death of no historical significance, and his farcical portrayal as Commander Frog – a former dissident's expression of hatred and disrespect in a comic mode, symbolising an entire nation's long-repressed frustration and pain.

Goyo Herrera: A sentimental portrait of the Cuban American exile

The character of the tyrant would be incomplete without an exile nemesis as a symbol of the greatest threat from which the Revolution has to be defended. Cuban exiles – *gusanos* (worms), as he calls them – whom the dictator considers more annoying enemies than the US government. They are everywhere, the tyrant suspects, infiltrated among his staff, spreading lies about his health

and his private life, the worst kind of counterrevolutionaries. He is not too far from the truth as the hourly reports on his health condition on *hijodeputa.com* suggest. Goyo Herrera, now a Miami-based Cuban exile in his mid-eighties, checks this web site a few times a day, hoping that he will still be alive when the news of the tyrant's death is published there. Like the tyrant, he is an old Cuban macho wishing to die a hero's death. The former dreams of dying as a combatant, in public, defying his assailant; the latter hopes to become a Cuban hero on a par with José Martí by killing the despot, even if that means losing his own life:

His fixation with ending the tyrant's life had begun to consume Goyo day and night. The thought that he could die a hero tantalized him, probably more than it should. His heroism would've been greater had he undertaken the mission as a young man, but even grizzled and arthritic as he was, he might yet achieve mythic status. *HERE LIES A CUBAN HERO*. Goyo imagined these words chiseled on his headstone, the wreaths and tributes, the eulogies and Martí-inspired poetry read in his honor. (11)

Goyo Herrera is, as Cristina García told one interviewer, the result of distilled experiences in the Cuban exiles' communities ("Interview with Christina García" n. page), a composite character with traits from several old Cuban exiles, including the writer's own father (Cf. "Multi-hyphenated identities"). In many respects, he is more like the despot than he is willing to admit. They are both bastards with Galician fathers who married their mothers after years of living together as a family. Raised in the countryside, they both adore fishing. They share a Jesuit education, even though in different countries, and their lives intersected at the university (where at times people mistook them for one another), and they both took interest in the same young woman, Adelina Ponti. Adelina – the love of his life – had succumbed to the despot-to-be's charm, giving birth to his son. Tormented by regret for her weakness, she later took her own life, leaving Goyo remorseful for not having done more to save her.

In Goyo's mind, the despot is guilty not only of having destroyed his chances of a happy, fulfilled life with Adelina, but also of having stolen Cuba from him to turn it into a Communist make-believe democracy, sending hundreds of thousands of Cubans like himself into exile, depriving all of the only place they could call home:

There was no one in the world he loathed more, no one for whom he stoked a more bottomless fury, no one else he unwaveringly blamed for invading, oppressing, and misshaping his life than that fearmongering, fatigues-wearing, egotistical brute who continued to call the shots from his deathbed overlooking the sea. ... For him true heaven was the precious

memory of his youth, of the earthly paradise he'd lost. Cuba had been his birthright, his home, and it'd been taken away from him— brutally, eternally. What was death next to such banishment? (*King of Cuba* 11)

Goyo also holds the dictator responsible for everything that is wrong about his personal life: the loss of his great love, exile, a problematic marriage, a wife and son struggling with depression and bulimia, his son's drug addiction, and his daughter's wasted life. All his misfortunes, he believes, were set in motion by the actions and abuses of the dictator and now, before his death, he wants to take his revenge like a real man, in a heroic, patriotic gesture.

Goyo Herrera is in a slightly better shape than the dictator. At 86, he has already had a triple bypass, he has arthritis, borderline diabetes, diverticulitis (like the despot), weak lungs (which make him dependent on an inhaler), a kidney stone that sometimes bothers him and a shorter leg, following a car accident. He also lives on a strict diet because of his gastrointestinal problems, and his emaciated body often fails him when carrying out even the simplest tasks, making him dependent on his daughter at times. Unlike the dictator, however, he has not become completely impotent, something that makes him feel still strong in spite of his many health problems. A philanderer all his life, though he had married Luisa for love, Goyo started dating a Cuban woman only three months after his wife's death. García chooses to name her Vilma Espín after Raúl Castro's wife – a deeply ironic name considering how different these two women are. Goyo's "Vilmita" is the opposite of feminist Vilma: she exploits Cuban men's desire to constantly prove their sexual stamina as a confirmation of their manliness, using her voluptuousness and sex appeal to obtain small favours, including hard cash. Goyo knows what she is doing, but like the foreign tourists in Cuba, he is willing to pay for sexual favours, pretending he is just helping Vilma make ends meet. His philandering is, in essence, a proof of potency and charm, but unlike the dictator, for whom women were more like spoils for a warrior, Goyo's indiscretions have always been irrepressible impulses, which also helped him preserve his *cubanidad* in a foreign culture, even though he felt the pangs of remorse for how his affairs affected his wife, struggling as she was to adapt to a foreign culture.

Both Goyo and the dictator are terrible husbands and fathers because they are too self-absorbed to understand family life and their role in it. El Comandante's commitment to his Revolution is so complete that he sees himself as a paterfamilias for the entire nation, while he ignores his own children. For Goyo Herrera, being a good paterfamilias means providing for his family, having a successful business, especially in a materialist culture like that of the United States. Unfortunately, with a new business to develop and an increasing fortune

to manage, Goyo left his mentally unstable wife, Luisa, handle all family matters and the upbringing of son Goyito and daughter Alina, a task at which she failed miserably, emotionally maiming her children.

Now, in his old age, Goyo understands how his actions and his absence have affected his entire family, and the only thing he can do to escape the overpowering sense of failure as a husband, as a father and as a Cuban man is to channel all his energy into a plan to assassinate the man he holds personally responsible for his and his family's misfortune, his nemesis. With his wife no longer able to shame him into inaction, he is more committed than ever to kill the dictator. Before he can set out and achieve his mission, however, this old Cuban macho needs to accept that weakness, pain and failure are part of him, and that can only happen if he learns the lesson of unconditional love for his mentally disabled son, for himself: "[To] love what was lovable wasn't truly love, Goyo thought; only suffering made love worthy." (188) The same is true of his love of Cuba,⁴ which the old exile recalls as once beautiful, a perfectly lovable and happy place, its destiny irrevocably changed by the Revolution. It is, of course, an exile's sentimental perspective on his homeland, coloured by nostalgia and a deep feeling of yearning for an increasingly elusive homeland, evoked at times with its tropical colours, sounds, music and fragrances, and other times as "a floating scar in the Caribbean Sea" (42), a country maimed by the abuses of its dictator.

Cuba is evoked with great tenderness by Goyo. Above all, it is the nostalgia for a lost paradise that torments him the most, the longing for the place of his birth, of his youth, that has been denied to him for decades, now more a half-remembered, half-imagined place in his mind, in his heart: "Maybe this was what happened when a man approached death; senility and longing conspired to overtake reality. Perhaps Cuba had become nothing but an imaginary place, unrelated to any truth." (129-30)

The same nostalgia can be seen in the entire Miami community where Goyo and his wife chose to move as they got older. It is particularly evident in Cuban exiles' refusal to acculturate, living in a small community, a simulacrum

⁴ As in *Dreaming in Cuban* (Celia) and *The Agüero Sisters* (Blanca), Cristina García cleverly writes Cuba into her text in the guise of a character. Here the symbol for Cuba is Goyito, described in ambivalent terms as a once beautiful boy who was bruised and abused, and who is now, at the age of 60, a deeply disturbed man, with the mental and emotional development of a little boy, desperate for affection and reassurance, stuck in his world of psychotherapy, binge eating and the study of birds' singing. Although his physical appearance is grotesque, making him repulsive to all except his loving, guilt-ridden father, there is a lingering inner beauty about him – his wonderful sensibility from his childhood days – that makes Goyito intriguingly fascinating. He is like Cuba after decades of dictatorship, a victim scarred and mangled, yet still showing some of its former attractiveness, a victim that the exiles continue to love for being part of them, of their past and their identity.

of Cuba, with “nearly every octogenarian ... semibionic— replacements, hair plugs, heart transplants, and a panoply of other age-defying enhancements ... believing— if only for the two minutes and fifteen seconds of Pérez Prado’s ‘Mambo No. 5’— that the Revolution had never happened.” (34) There is also something terribly sad about these people’s escape into a fantasy Cuba, a nostalgia-tinted version of their homeland before 1959, and their hopeless dreams of a successful assassination of El Comandante. It is the only reason some of them, Goyo included, wake up in the morning to face yet another day of old-age afflictions and the humiliations they entail.

Here and in most passages describing Miami-based old Cuban exiles, Cristina García uses humour as a shield against excessive sentimentalism. Funny and extravagant as they are in their materialism, right-wing politics, anti-Castro sentiments, and refusal to accept any other version of historical truth than their own, these people are nevertheless sad, pathetic old men and women for whom Cuba time stopped in 1959, with the revolutionaries’ seizure of power. It was the moment that marked the end of life as they knew it. They are addicted to this simulacrum of a Cuban lifestyle, such as meeting for coffee and a chat in Calle Ocho cafés, or going to old Cuban music concerts, and the novelist shows some restraint in parodying them out of respect for their age and their predicament.

It is in the exiles’ and the dictator’s inflexibility and denial of reality that García finds the material for the most amusing scenes in her novel, including the tragicomic, anticlimactic ending. Both the dictator and Goyo Herrera are in New York, where the latter feels he has the upper hand. Following the humiliation on the evening of his birthday celebration, the despot looks forward to an opportunity to shine again and receive a standing ovation in front of the General Assembly at the United Nations. He has just dodged another bullet, an assassination plan that his security forces overturned on time for his safe arrival in New York, and he feels confident that his death, should it come soon, will be a hero’s death, as predicted by the strange angel of death, Vásquez, who visited him on the night he turned 89. Goyo, on the other hand, received a less clear message from a fortune teller, also named Vásquez. But he is determined to carry out his plan, or what that diviner called his “incurable fate.” (161) He is not deterred by shaking knees (fear, tiredness, both?) or his missed opportunity to take communion that morning. In fact, his determination grows as he sees the defiant despot enjoying an excessively warm welcome, the delegates seemingly “clap[ing] and screech[ing] like monkeys” (233). That bastard is fully enjoying every second of it – an unbearable farce, Goyo thinks. The writer builds the suspense by focussing on Goyo’s thoughts, on his mental calculations for the best time to attack, his rage exacerbated by what feels like an endless standing ovation for El Comandante. As he takes aim and shoots, his heart gives out, but he sees the despot collapsing on stage, and nothing else matters:

It was over. He'd done it. He, Goyo Herrera, had shot the son of a bitch dead. Let his heart stop, let the heavens fall down on his head, but he'd accomplished his mission. He'd come face-to-face with his destiny and pulled the trigger. ... Death, insistent, touched his brow. An ellipse of darkness engulfed him. Beyond it were vague shapes, a fading chaos. A hero. Sí, he would die a hero... (234)

Goyo's bullet misses the tyrant, but his heart attack prevents him from seeing that El Comandante's collapse was the effect of his own heart giving out at that precise moment. The dictator is fuming. He has been robbed of a hero's death:

The pain in his chest was unbearable. A knife thrust to his heart. Damn it, he should've taken the fucking bullet. He'd wanted to die in battle, on horseback, like the great Martí. Or like Caesar, looking his killers in the eye, the blood between them the last word. ... It infuriated him to succumb to something as mundane as a heart attack, or whatever the fuck was happening to him. He refused to surrender, to accept this as the story of his death. (234-35)

As he draws his last breath, the dictator understands something that had previously appeared to him in a dream: he is dying the pitiful death of an old despot. García holds him up to ridicule one last time by imagining him return to his old obsession with his father's menacing virility, seemingly the most important motivation for the macho despot he was to become. Behind even the fiercest dictator, the last lines of the novel suggest, there is a little boy, insecure and fragile, dependent on a woman's reassurance, a state to which he will return in his final moments for comfort and peace, annulling all pretences of grandeur or of omnipotence:

A dirigible floated on the horizon, its flesh-toned snout tilted toward the sun. An inexplicable joy overcame him. The tyrant imagined flying high over the Sierra Maestra, over Pico Turquino, which he'd scaled as a young man. Then he felt himself rapidly sinking, a leaky dinghy, deep into the Caribbean Sea without the prerogatives due him at death. Cojones, not like this! Around him, loved ones began to gather: Mamá, her apron filled with silky rose petals; Miriam, beckoning to him in her wedding gown; his naked father, prodigious balls quivering, shouting: "Get up! Get up!" "You're very brave, mijo," his mother whispered. "You are my bold boy." "Sí, Mami, lo soy," the tyrant sang back, and then he, too, was gone. (235)

Conclusion

Although *King of Cuba* may be read as a fictional representation of the two sides of the major political and historical divide created by the Cuban Revolution, what makes it stand out among García's other novels on the same topic is the fact that it also looks into how private and public masculinities work, especially in a cultural context in which machismo and heteropatriarchy are relatively uncontested, in which men grow up believing they are kings. In a radio interview with Peter Robinson, the author explains: "The 'king of Cuba'... refers to all Cuban men because they were raised in the arms of a Cuban mommy. Every single one of them [considers himself] the center of the universe. So 'king of Cuba' refers to both El Comandante, as well as his exile nemesis." (*KALW* 31:21-31:44)

Goyo Herrera and the dictator are hilarious and pathetic symbols of Cuban machismo: egotistic, controlling yet paradoxically somewhat powerless in their own homes, narcissistic, and with an almost pathological obsession with virility (especially the Castro character), and a long line of lovers to fuel their macho ego. The two octogenarians are distorted mirrorings of one another, a strategy that the novelist employs to emphasise the similarities (rather than the radical differences) between Cubans on the island and in the diaspora. They are, the novelist explains, vehicles for the exploration of Cuban masculinity in Greater Cuba, so clearly manifest in Cuban and exile politics:

I was ... trying to illuminate the false dichotomy between two men like El Comandante and Goyo. [They represent] the two Cuban points of view. The two sides of the [Straits of] Florida. Underneath this black and white, this "If you're not with us your against us" mentality, underneath the roots, [the two sides] are really entangled. They're really one in the same. They share that same intransigence, the same inability to compromise, the same [view of the] right and wrongness of things. ("Interview with Christina García" n. page)

From here derives, in the novelist's opinion, the potentially excessive exercise of masculine authority, or the "public intransigence of male Cuban politicians" in the public sphere: it is the effect of counterbalancing "a kind of political impotence at home." ("Multi-hyphenated identities" 209)

The author portrays both protagonists with a satirist's eye, focusing on their foolish, ludicrous, exaggerated, and pitiful behaviour. In spite of their political differences, the two octogenarians are deeply preoccupied by their deaths, which they hope will be honourable. The despot needs an appropriate ending to a life of power and history-making; Goyo Herrera hopes to endow his

otherwise unexceptional existence with meaning through an exceptional death. Their laughable yet painful old age predicaments, including a series of absurd mishaps and plenty of opportunities for both to show how testosterone-driven, narcissistic and obstinate they are, make them look more like old fools trapped in lives that elude their control. The anticlimactic ending of the novel only confirms what the reader has felt all along: that they are tragicomic characters whose desire to achieve greatness (Goyo) and determination to make of death a final act of heroic proportions (the dictator) are destroyed by unlucky coincidence and overstimulated old hearts.

The novel elicits, as a modern tragicomic text is expected to, both “tragic empathy and comic detachment” (Randall 13), leaving the reader amused but also moved after reading about the (mis)adventures of the two old protagonists, their ridiculous denial of reality, and their bathetic, mundane deaths. “Fictio cedit veritati ... Fiction yields to truth.” (*King of Cuba* 43), the despot remembers his Jesuit teachers saying. The novel’s fictional Castro, whose character stands out as the more interesting of the two protagonists, may not be a faithful representation of the Cuban leader, “a wax statue for her story to pose beside” (Greer, n. page), yet Cristina García has managed to reach a deeper truth of the Cuban dictator, whose final public appearances showed him as a diminished, sad-looking yet ridiculous shadow of the man he used to be. A visibly ill, almost voiceless man who could barely walk or stand, sporting Adidas tracksuits instead of his fatigues, he seemed the image of a deteriorating ideology, social system and country. In her novel, the writer shows the ambivalent attitude and the kind of critical distance a journalist raised and educated outside the Miami Cuban community can afford. With a great sense of humour and a vivid imagination, she pens an alternative end for the architect of the Cuban Revolution, envisioning his final months as a time of introspection, failed acts of power, and growing awareness of the corrupted Communist paradise that Cuba has become. Undoubtedly, this novel is Cristina García’s gift for her parents and the Cuban exiles of their generation.

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“HOW DO YOU GRIEVE A NUMBER?” – UNSUCCESSFUL GRIEVING IN JESS WALTER’S *THE ZERO*

AMELIA PRECUP¹

ABSTRACT. *“How do you grieve a number?” – Unsuccessful Grieving in Jess Walter’s The Zero.* Accountability and grief, assuming different forms and accommodating a variety of (sometimes antithetical) approaches, seem to be the dominants shaping 9/11 fiction and, consequently, the attendant criticism. Grief is a central theme to Jess Walter’s *The Zero*, examined in various manifestations, ranging from public to private, from counterfeit to genuine. The claim of this paper is that *The Zero* explores alternatives of grief only to invite the thought that the work of mourning, in a traditionally ‘successful’ sense, is no longer possible post-9/11.

Keywords: *9/11 fiction, exploration of grief, work of mourning, trauma narrative, Jess Walter*

REZUMAT. *“Cum deplângem un număr?” – Eșuarea travaliului de doliu în romanul The Zero de Jess Walter.* Luând diverse forme și permițând o plajă largă de abordări, uneori chiar antitetice, identificarea responsabililor și gestionarea suferinței par a fi dominantele care modelează proza despre atacurile teroriste de la 11 septembrie și, implicit, critica aferentă. Raportarea la suferință și doliu este tema centrală a romanului *The Zero* de Jess Walter, examinată în multiplele-i manifestări, traversând spațiul public și spațiul privat, teritorii ale superficialității, dar și zone restrânse de autenticitate. În acest context, lucrarea de față susține că romanul *The Zero* explorează alternative de raportare la suferință și doliu pentru a lansa ideea că travaliul de doliu, în accepțiunea tradițională a succesului acestui proces, nu mai este posibil în lumea de după 11 septembrie.

Cuvinte-cheie: *literatură 9/11, deplângere și suferință, travaliul de doliu, narațiune a traumei, Jess Walter*

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Over the past two decades, both 9/11 fiction and its criticism have explored the terrorist attacks and their aftermath with a view to grasping the meaning of 9/11. The pressure placed on writers to put the mechanisms of fiction into motion in order to mediate the restoration of the network of signification², to help apprehend an 'unpossessable' event "that somewhat in some way must be possessed" (Versluys 3), started to manifest itself shortly after the terrorist attack. The first literary responses paradoxically stem from an endemic writer's block³ and form a touching repertoire of texts⁴ poetically contemplating the event through the lens of a declared creative numbness⁵. In time, the literary reactions to 9/11 have extended to encompass a rich array of concerns, governed by the two dominants of the 9/11 discourse, namely accountability and grief. This dichotomist perspective is by no means intended as a reductive gesture⁶, but rather as an extension of Jacques Derrida's take on 9/11 as a "major event." In Derrida's words,

We must ... distinguish between two "impressions." On the one hand, compassion for the victims and indignation over the killings; our sadness and condemnation should be without limits, unconditional, unimpeachable; they are responding to an undeniable "event," beyond all simulacra and all possible virtualization; they respond with what might be called the

² For 9/11 as an "event" that breaks the chain of signification, see Jacques Derrida's interview by G. Borradori: "this very thing, the place and meaning of this "event," remains ineffable, like an intuition without concept, like a unicity with no generality on the horizon or with no horizon at all, out of range for a language that admits its powerlessness and so is reduced to pronouncing mechanically a date, repeating it endlessly, as a kind of ritual incantation, a conjuring poem, a journalistic litany or rhetorical refrain that admits to not knowing what it's talking about. We do not in fact know what we are saying or naming in this way: September 11, *le 11 septembre*, September 11" (86).

³ For an analysis of the responses to 9/11 as an 'unpossessable' event, see Versluys, 1-17.

⁴ As Kristiaan Versluys points out, "a conspicuous part of the discursive responses to 9/11 was the spontaneous outpouring of poetry – most of which was published online at Web sites set up for that purpose. ... Only a few among the thousands of poems written on the occasion of September 11 attain the level of discursive precision and human expressiveness." (9-10)

⁵ See for instance, Toni Morrison's "The Dead of September 11": "I must be steady and I must be clear, knowing all the time that I have nothing to say—no words stronger than the steel that pressed you into itself; no scripture older or more elegant than the ancient atoms you have become." Suheir Hammad, "First Writing Since": "there have been no words. / i have not written one word. /no poetry in the ashes south of canal street. /no prose in the refrigerated trucks driving debris and dna. /not one word." Lynne Sharon Schwartz, "Near November": "We have tried to proceed to the next sentence. But to write, you must know something and we know nothing beyond the intolerable questions that assail us. Grief, at an infernal temperature, has bunt knowledge out of us." (261). See also Richard Gray, pp. 13-15.

⁶ Grief and accountability should not be understood as narrow concepts, as limiting and rigid trauma-related scenarios or revanchist narratives, but accepted as inherent, structural components of the most variegated attempts at understanding the event.

heart and they go straight to the heart of the event. On the other hand, the interpreted, interpretative, informed impression, the conditional evaluation that makes us believe that this is a "major event." (89)

Thus, the overarching discourse on 9/11 draws on the exploration of trauma and grief and the examination of culpability and liability; it consequently lends its lexicon to fiction, which has begun to explore these aspects in the most intriguing ways.

The development of 9/11 fiction has benefited from increasingly insightful critical examinations, even if, at times, somewhat formulaic and confining. A decade after the event critics were still waiting and prescribing for 'the great 9/11 novel'. From Laura Miller's essay "Why we haven't seen a great 9/11 novel" to Richard Gray's complex analysis in *After the Fall*, the commemorative year 2011 seems to have been met with a consensus that the recipe for that long-expected great novel is in possession of the critics⁷, but tends to elude writers. Richard Gray's examination of 9/11 fiction operates with a rather restrictive divide between texts that "have failed to come up with an adequate answer" mainly because of their focus on the domestic space, on "the seductive pieties of home, hearth, and family and, related to them, the equally seductive myth of American exceptionalism", and "fictions that get it right ... thanks to a strategy of convergence, rooted in the conviction that the hybrid is the only space in which the location of cultures and the bearing witness to trauma can really occur" (16-17). A few years later, Paul Petrovic noticed a similar evolutionary pattern: if what he calls "the first wave" of 9/11 fiction and criticism appears to have been trapped in restrictive formulae dictated by domestic realism, over the years, the fictional approaches to the event have gained finer nuances. According to Petrovic, the 9/11 fiction of the "second wave" advances inventive and complex explorations of the 9/11 experience, largely set on "deconstructing the national exceptionalist fantasy" (x-xi). Moreover, criticism also tends to revisit and reevaluate early 9/11 fictions from more substantive standpoints, thus adding valuable nuances to the existing scholarship. Such is, for instance, the case of Jess Walter's *The Zero*, a novel originally published in 2006, but which had long been disregarded by critics, despite its being a finalist for the National Book Award.

Dolores Resano locates the beginning of criticism on Jess Walter's *The Zero*⁸ with John N. Duvall's 2013 article (136-137). Much of the scholarship on

⁷ For a brief, yet astute analysis of the formulaic and prescriptive tendencies of the criticism attending 9/11 fiction, see Worthington, 3-4.

⁸ Resano also acknowledges Bryan M. Santin's 2011 M.A. thesis, but decides to consider articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Bryan M. Santin performs a comparative analysis of three 9/11 novels, including Jess Walter's *The Zero* and argues that Walter's novel "criticizes not only the United States' surreally de-historicized political and cultural response to 9/11, but also

Jess Walter's *The Zero's* insists on the novel's satirical ambitions targeting the clichés of the overarching post-9/11 political discourse, which uphold fantasies of American exceptionalism and the attendant ideological abstractions that govern American culture.⁹ Walter's novel has also been approached with an allegorical key that opens a generous leeway for commentaries on the afterlife of postmodernism.¹⁰ Nevertheless, *The Zero's* polymorphic engagement with trauma and grief has also drawn the attention of scholars¹¹. Jason Dodge, for instance, looks into Walter's exploration of grief, from the commercialization of public grief through ironic grief to private, authentic grief. The novel's subversive mechanism, operating through satire and irony, is central to Dodge's argument. Lloyd Isaac Vayo's study, on the other hand, focuses on the construction of post-9/11 consciousness and endows the struggle of the novel's protagonist with synecdochical value. "His struggle is our struggle, our fumbling missteps on the way to reconciling September 10th with September 12th and everything after", Vayo writes, "and Remy's good intentions ... lead him to question the very foundations of mainstream post-9/11 identity ... arriving at a conscience of sorts in the process" (162). It is within the discursive terrain configured by these last two studies that the present paper locates itself by arguing that central to the novel is the failure to recreate a fluent narrative as a means of coping with trauma and grieving 'successfully'. 9/11 is presented as an event that evades apprehension and consequently denies the individual all the available mechanisms of coming to terms with what happened. It affects the individual structurally, splitting identity into pre- and post-9/11.

Trauma and grief theories seem to be lending themselves generously to the exploration of 9/11 fiction, just as literature seems to be contributing to trauma and grief studies;¹² the synergism stems from the common interest in

how this response produces dangerously blind redemptive narratives that promote secret, state-sponsored violence" (47). Walter's novel has since been analyzed comparatively in other theses, which add to the scholarship on *The Zero*. See, for instance, Danel Olson's work, which explores trauma in a corpus of 9/11 novels through Gothic aesthetics.

⁹ See, for example, John N. Duvall, Aaron Derosa, Marjorie Worthington, Dolores Resano, Anthony Flinn, Liliana M. Naydan, Elizabeth S. Anker.

¹⁰ See Elizabeth S. Anker.

¹¹ See also Kristine A. Miller's essay, which tackles questions of authenticity and "argues that fiction is not tertiary but primary to understanding trauma" by comparing the language and the narrative strategy of *The Zero* with the recorded personal accounts of the 9/11 first responders (31).

¹² As Cathy Caruth points out, "The phenomenon of trauma has seemed to become all-inclusive, but it has done so precisely because it brings us to the limits of our understanding: if psychoanalysis, psychiatry, sociology, and even literature are beginning to hear each other anew in the study of trauma, it is because they are listening through the radical disruption and gaps of traumatic experience" (*Trauma and Experience*. Introduction 4). Grief and bereavement studies also include literature in their interdisciplinary approaches. Robert A. Neimeyer explains the benefits of such complex approaches to the management of grief through therapeutic narrative reconstruction: "The result is a burgeoning interdisciplinary interest in narrative, as scholars seek out the

narrative and meaning. Trauma is largely understood as an abrupt disruption of the associative network of meaning, which is a processual component of *self-narrative*¹³ development. As Cathy Caruth explains, "trauma is the confrontation with an event that, in its unexpectedness or horror, cannot be placed within the schemes of prior knowledge"; consequently, it "requires integration, both for the sake of testimony and for the sake of cure" (Recapturing the Past. Introduction 153). Grief theorists also emphasize the therapeutic role of meaning reconstruction in successful bereavement adaptation. According to Neimeyer and Sands,

Fostering reconstruction of a world of meaning would therefore seem to be a therapeutic priority for many bereaved clients, one that could carry benefits not only in alleviating complicated grief symptomatology, but also in renewing a sense of hope and self-efficacy in their changed lives. (13)

Given "the narrative nature of the mind", to use Neimeyer's phrase (229), the attribution of meaning implies the integration of the traumatic episode into one's own life story.¹⁴ Adaptive strategies also involve "constructing a new reality, in which survivors' assumptive worlds and their view of themselves are forever changed" (Gillies and Neimeyer 36). Consequently, working successfully through trauma and grief presupposes the achievement of a coherent narrative to support the apprehension and inclusion of the traumatic experience, even supposing the readjustment of previously held assumptions about the self and the world.

When it comes to the terrorist attacks of 9/11, a structural recalibration of the sense-making apparatus is required, since the chain of meaning seems to have been disrupted beyond reconstruction based on previously available cognitive structures and mechanisms. As Derrida argues, the event affected

... the conceptual, semantic, and one could even say hermeneutic apparatus that might have allowed one to see coming, to comprehend, interpret, describe, speak of, and name "September 11" – and in so doing to neutralize the traumatism and come to terms with it through a work of mourning. What I am suggesting here might appear abstract and overly reliant on what seems like a simple conceptual or discursive activity, a question of knowledge; it is as if I were in fact content to say that what

relations between phenomenological, psychological, neurobiological, and even literary analyses of narrative and consciousness without privileging or diminishing the value of any of these approaches" (229).

¹³ The *self-narrative* is defined by Neimeyer as "an overarching cognitive-affective-behavioral structure that organizes the 'micro-narratives' of everyday life into a 'macro-narrative' that consolidates our self-understanding, establishes our characteristic range of emotions and goals, and guides our performance on the stage of the social world" (qtd. in Neimeyer and Sands 10)

¹⁴ See Caruth, "Recapturing the Past. Introduction", 152-154 and Neimeyer 244-245.

is terrible about 'September 11,' what remains 'infinite' in this wound, is that we do not know what it is and so do not know how to describe, identify, or even name it. And that is, in fact, what I'm saying. (93-94)

It is precisely this ungraspable nature of 9/11 that Jess Walter's *The Zero* draws on. The novel is made of incomplete vignettes, short episodes presenting the only fragments of experience that are remembered by the amnesiac main character, Brian Remy, a police officer who was among the first responders to an event the reader is invited to recognize as the terrorist attack of 9/11, and who presents symptoms consistent with dissociative identity disorder. Remy retires from the police force because of back pain, but it becomes unclear if he actually starts working covert operations for the Documentation Department of the Office of Liberty and Recovery and several other intelligence agencies or goes down a convincing delusionary path in which he imagines himself involved in shady national security operations for the above-mentioned organizations. The novel plays on the 'good cop/ bad cop' cliché¹⁵ and makes available only the episodes that cast Remy in a good light, while simultaneously teasing the reader to fill the gaps of the obscure, dark side of the story, for which Remy's villain alter ego seems to be responsible. The organization of the often incomplete episodes observes chronology, apparently facilitating the 'fill in the gap' exercise for the reader. The emphasis here is on 'apparently', since the reliability of the account is called into question.

The novel begins with Remy regaining consciousness after a self-inflicted gunshot to the head in what appears to have been a suicide attempt¹⁶. The suicide note seems to puzzle Remy more than the wound itself:

Okay. This was the problem. These gaps in his memory, or perhaps his life, a series of skips—long shredded tears, empty spaces where the explanations for the most basic things used to be. For a moment he tried to puzzle over it all, the way he might have considered a problem on the job. Cleaning oil might indicate an accident, but the note? What lunatic has ever written a note before.

Cleaning a gun?

He picked up the note: "Etc."

Et cetera?

Well, that was funny. He didn't recall being so funny. And yet there it was, in his own handwriting. Okay. He was getting somewhere. Whatever had happened, *whatever he'd done*, it was funny. (Walter 5)

¹⁵ In her exploration of the satirical prowess of *The Zero* Dolores Resano insightfully reads this narrative strategy through "the lethal logic of violence and forgetting" (142).

¹⁶ As Elizabeth S. Anker demonstrates, the trope of suicide is commonly employed by 9/11 fiction, with significant metaphorical engagement (464, 470-471).

To Kristine A. Miller, Brian Remy's suicide note is symptomatic of the "inability or unwillingness to describe their 9/11 experiences" manifested by both cops and civilians who had been directly exposed to the terrorist attack (31). On the other hand, Lloyd Isaac Vayo reads Remy's suicide in Baudrillardian terms, as coterminous to the suicide of the two towers (162-163). Along different lines, Dolores Resano claims that "this pivotal scene begins to debunk the trauma narrative and announces instead the onset of some sort of parody" (144). The content of the note as well as Remy's reaction to it do entice an anticlimactic reading. However, the suicide note is consequential both as a structural element and an interpretive tool. According to the *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, 'et cetera' means "and others, especially of the same kind: and so forth" and the *Cambridge Dictionary* defines it as "and other similar things." Thus, the suicide note is more than a simple, gratuitous abbreviation, written mockingly in order to deflate a tragic situation; it implies both repetition and anticipation of the kind of traumatic experiences that might have led Remy to such an extreme gesture. It is unspecific, of course, and this kind of vagueness hovers over the entire narrative, since Remy, in his amnesia, denies himself traumatic information. However, the note anticipates 'more of the same', which invites a reading starting from the Derridean claim that "the wound remains open by our terror before the *future* and not only the past" (96, italics in the original). As Derrida further explains,

Imagine that the Americans and, through them, the entire world, had been told: what has just happened, the spectacular destruction of two towers, the theatrical but invisible deaths of thousands of people in just a few seconds, is an awful thing, a terrible crime, a pain without measure, but it's all over, it won't happen again, there will never again be anything as awful as or more awful than that. I assume that mourning would have been possible in a relatively short period of time. Whether to our chagrin or our delight, things would have quite quickly returned to their normal course in ordinary history. One would have spoken of the work of mourning and turned the page, as is so often done, and done so much more easily when it comes to things that happen elsewhere, far from Europe and the Americas. But this is not at all what happened. There is traumatism with no possible work of mourning when the evil comes from the possibility to come of the worst, from the repetition to come – though worse. Traumatism is produced by the *future*, by the *to come*, by the threat of the worst *to come*, rather than by an aggression that is "over and done with." (97, italics in the original)

The hypothesis is confirmed at the end of the novel, when the *etc.* of the suicide note – the unspecified thing of the same category – seems to materialize in the severe wound Remy receives from the suicide bomber with whom he had been working and to whom he had actually provided both the bomb and,

unwarily, the incentive for the detonation. Repetition is not only a worrisome factor, but also part of the behavioral responses to trauma. Trauma induces the drive to revisit, reenact, relive, the traumatic experience, as a means of remembering and an attempt at owning it. As Bessel A. van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart explain, via Freud and Janet, “if a person does not remember, he is likely to act out” since “the crucial factor that determines the repetition of trauma is the presence of mute, unsymbolized and unintegrated experiences” (167). The reenactment of trauma does not presuppose the faithful recomposition of the traumatic event; according to Judith Herman, “traumatized people find themselves reenacting some aspect of the trauma scene in disguised form without realizing what they are doing” (40). In Walter’s novel, the repetition of and involuntary complicity to traumatic experiences similar to those that most likely led to Remy’s suicide attempt lend their relevance to both public and individual attempts at working through trauma. The end of the novel, foreshadowed from the very beginning, confirms the impossibility of the work of mourning, both publicly and privately.

Remy’s reaction to the suicide letter brings along the kind of subtle ambiguity that proliferates the ominous vagueness of the suicide note and foregrounds the importance of the opening scene as crucial for the entire novel. To him, the note is ‘funny’, he thinks of himself as ‘funny’ and extends ‘funny’ to encompass everything that had happened up to a particular moment to which he actually added ‘more of the same’. The polysemous¹⁷ quality of the word serves both to undercut the gravity of the scene and to expose the peculiar, bizarre, puzzling nature of the entire affair; it makes the event simultaneously possessable and elusive. Thus, traumatic information is kept at a distance and the significance of the event is left in abeyance.

The malfunction of sense-making mechanisms seems to affect most of the characters in the novel. A follow-up of the head gunshot-wound episode, Remy’s dialogue with his partner, Guterak, speaks to this symptomatology:

Guterak looked over. “Hey, you got your hair cut.”

“Yeah.” Remy put the cap back on.

“What made you do that?”

“I shot myself in the head last night.”

“Well.” Paul drove quietly for a moment, staring straight ahead. “It looks good.” (Walter 15)

The dialogue is just as funny, in the multiple senses of the word, as everything that had been labeled as such in the opening of the novel. Guterak’s

¹⁷ The Merriam Webster Dictionary explains the second meaning of “funny” as “differing from the ordinary in a suspicious, perplexing, quaint, or eccentric way: peculiar”, and the Cambridge Dictionary explains it as “strange, surprising, unexpected, or difficult to explain or understand.”

reply undercuts the intensity of the scene. It also reveals him as experiencing a blockage similar to Remy's when it comes to the exploration of potentially traumatic content with a view to apprehending and integrating it. In both cases, the elision of traumatizing information leads to emotional numbness.

The incapacitation of grieving mechanisms stretches to encompass both the general grief of the public discourse and private attempts at mourning. In truth, as Jason Dodge suggests, Walter's novel employs "satirical representations of grief" (154) in order to expose the corrosive effect that public modes of grieving – always sliding towards the monetary quantification of loss – have upon the authenticity of the individual work of mourning. Besides the configuration of grief in the public space (from the 'Portraits in Grief' to the Victim Compensation fund), Dodge's study focuses on the manifestation of grief in three characters of the novel, namely Guterak (Remy's partner), April (Remy's girlfriend), and Edgar (Remy's son). Although displaying behavior that clearly signals a traumatic rupture in his sense of the world, Guterak cannot identify authentic mechanisms for successful mourning. As Dodge argues, "Guterak is unable to escape participating in nationalist ways of grieving" (160) and therefore contributes to the commodification of grief by selling his story to a reality show and his image to an advertising company. April, on the other hand, who has lost both her sister and her husband in the terrorist attack, exhibits a more authentic type of grief; she "resists public modes of grieving in favor of the more intimate, personal, and domestic setting with someone she knows" (159).

Remy's son Edgar, however, presents a more challenging and revelatory approach to grief. He lets everyone in school believe that his father has died as a first-responder in the terrorist attack. Edgar builds a well-articulated, impactful discourse to mourn the death of his father, who is, however, very much alive. In a dialogue with his mother, he explains the symbolical killing of his father, who is a spectator to the scene:

"Then why is it so hard to believe that I could be grieving the same thing as those other children? I suppose you'd rather I behave like everyone else and grieve *generally*. Well, I'm sorry. I'm not built that way. General grief is a lie. What are people in Wyoming really grieving? A loss of safety? Some shattered illusion that a lifetime of purchases and television programs had meaning? The emptiness of their Palm Pilots and SUVs and baggy jeans? Look around, Mom. Generalized grief is a fleeting emotion, like lust. It's a trend, just some weak shared moment in the culture, like the final episode of some TV show everybody watches. It's weightless. You wake up the next day and wonder when the next disaster is scheduled. "But *real* grief ...oh, God." He cocked his head and stared at his mother. "Real grief weighs on you like you can't imagine. The death of a father is

the most profound thing I've ever experienced." Edgar's eyes seemed to be tearing up. "It's hard to get out of bed. And you want me to take a test? Play softball? Are you kidding? There are times when I can barely breathe. I can't... get over it. And I don't want to. The only way to comprehend something like this is to go through it. Otherwise, it's just a number. Three thousand? Four thousand? How do you grieve a number?" (Walter 34)

Edgar publicly reinforces the fantasy of his father's death by preparing a solo performance for the school's talent show, in which he commemorates his father by telling the story of how Remy had taught him to play chess and how Edgar ultimately beat him in the game. Anthony Flinn sees Edgar's actions not as "some sort of adolescent Oedipal spite, but an emotionally opportunistic performance, a counterfeit participation in a national grief" (224). To Flinn, Edgar is "the most grotesque" of what he calls the "counterfeit synecdoches" that the novel uses in order to capture "a blind and deluded grasping for the missing part of one's awareness that will help the mind make peace with itself by making sense of experience" (224). On the other hand, according to Jason Dodge, "Edgar has the most sophisticated theory of grief in the novel, despite the fact that we are tempted to say it is delusional and inauthentic" (161). Dodge reads Edgar's chess game as a pretext for the ironic performance of grief, based on Hutcheon's understanding of irony as a continuous vacillation between the said and the unsaid, and suggests that Edgar's alternative grieving "resists and highlights problems with dominant public modes of grieving" (162). John Duvall's reading of Edgar also starts from the ironic grieving thesis. In Duvall's words,

While Edgar's insistence on working through the death of his father as the only appropriate way of understanding the trauma of 9/11 (even as Edgar fully acknowledges that his father is, somewhat irrelevantly, actually alive) becomes a running source of humor in the novel, it is a humor that ultimately serves to ironize the personal form of grieving that Edgar argues to be more authentic. (288)

John Duvall extends his analysis in order to point out both the intersection points and the departure from Judith Butler's theory of grievability. Grieving "appropriately" is central to both Edgar's discourse and Butler's theory, and the exploration of grief is dependent on a sense of familiarity (Duvall 288-9). Moreover, Butler's thesis on the instrumentalization of public grief for political purposes and justification of war¹⁸ helps comprehend the character as he

¹⁸ In *Precarious Life*, Butler writes: "If we are interested in arresting cycles of violence to produce less violent outcomes, it is no doubt important to ask what, politically, might be made of grief besides a cry for war" (xii). Both Dodge (152) and Duvall (288) refer to Butler's view on the subservience of public grief as relevant to Walter's novel in general and the character of Edgar in particular.

enlists in the army with a view to avenging the imaginary death of his father. On the other hand, Edgar is skeptical of general, public grief, while Butler allows for such possibilities.

While the approach to Edgar's prescription for authentic grieving cannot bypass irony, it also allows generous extensions towards more complex nuances of grief. It raises questions of authenticity and modes of relating to loss and, most important, it attempts at understanding the kind of loss that one has to handle. The unfathomable and impassable nature of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, as discussed above in Derridean terms, makes the work of mourning unbearably challenging. What exactly does one mourn and how? What has been lost? In Baudrillard's opinion, the terrorist attacks destroyed "a whole (Western) value-system and world order" (*The Spirit of Terrorism* 37). Judith Butler claims that the Americans lost "their First Worldism as a result of the events of September 11", which is "the loss of a certain horizon of experience, a certain sense of the world itself as a national entitlement" (*Precarious Life* 39). This understanding of loss is precisely what fuels Edgar's rant; he cannot condone general grief stemming from the loss of what he perceives as superficial in its remote abstractness. Therefore, Edgar needs to internalize loss, to translate it into something that would 'weigh on him beyond imagination' and would consequently play a crucial role in shaping his identity.

Paradoxically, in order to grieve authentically, Edgar fabricates the object of his loss. The question of (in)authenticity raised by Edgar's construct of grief is reminiscent of the Baudrillardian regime of simulation. As Baudrillard explains,

To dissimulate is to pretend not to have what one has. To simulate is to feign to have what one doesn't have. One implies a presence, the other an absence. But it is more complicated than that because simulating is not pretending: "Whoever fakes an illness can simply stay in bed and make everyone believe he is ill. Whoever simulates an illness produces in himself some of the symptoms" (Litré). Therefore, pretending, or dissimulating, leaves the principle of reality intact: the difference is always clear, it is simply masked, whereas simulation threatens the difference between the "true" and the "false", the "real" and the "imaginary." Is the simulator sick or not given that he produces "true" symptoms? (*Simulacra* 3)

Approached from this perspective, Edgar attempts to expose and contest counterfeit models of grieving, simulacra forged and entertained by media and political discourse, by advancing a simulacrum of his own creation. He thus enters what Baudrillard explains as the "generalized cycle" of simulacra informed by the potentially inexhaustible mutability of the truth value in the regime of simulation (*Simulacra* 17). Through this character, the novel extends its approach to grief so as to comment on the impossibility of 'successful' grieving in a culture driven by the logic of simulacra.

Remy's reaction to his son's work of mourning is characterized by the same spectatorial stance he seems to have been forced to adopt towards his own life. Edgar belongs to that part of Remy's past that has made itself unavailable to him, from which he has been cast out. After enlisting in the army, Edgar tells Remy who is, again, a benumbed spectator:

"I've been through all the stages of grief. You can't want me to go back. What, to denial? Or or anger?" He shook his head. "Anyway, I don't think I *can* go back. Not now. Not after I've finally accepted your death." Edgar looked up. He was as tall as his father now. But so different. "And really ...someday, you are going to die. Right?" *Yes*, Remy thought. *Someday*. (Walter 279)

Consequently, Remy's quest throughout the novel is guided by his struggle not so much to make sense of what had happened before his suicide attempt, but to mend what seems to be a broken present and to find his way to coherent and cohesive self-narrative development. As Vayo explains, "[t]hrough his reconstructive efforts, Remy strives to regain his own consciousness, both in the form of a literal day-to-day lucidity, as well as in the form of a reality squared with the changed nature of the world in the wake of 9/11" (162). This, however, cannot be achieved without the integration of the traumatic experience that had broken him in the first place. Nevertheless, the integration is not possible since the past event that had broken him and his world is too difficult to reprocess, structure, and understand.

Remy is not haunted by traumatic memories, but rather by the lack thereof. Piecing together fragments of experience structures his quest throughout the novel. The gaps in his short-term memory often throw him into such intense explorations of the moments available to his apparently lucid self that they slide into derealization, informing Remy's detached perception of the world and dislocated, disconnected self:

Sometimes the gaps came like cuts in a movie, one on top of the other, with Remy struggling for breath; at other times he seemed to drift, or even to linger in moments that had ended for everyone else. Was there something he was supposed to take from such moments? Remy pulled the watch from its box bottom again and looked at its face, half expecting to see the second hand standing still, jittery and frozen, waiting for Remy to be jolted into the next moment. But the needle slid gracefully around the numbered face, scratching away moment after moment after ...

Behind him, the huge four-faced clock tower loomed like a dragon. He thought of the watch face. No zero on a clock. Around and around. No rest. No balance. No starting place. Just on to the next number. The sky was clearing, cold, the clouds opening between the brownstones. He stood on the sidewalk and looked back at the city, the burnt tip of the island and the bright hole in the sky. (Walter 96-97)

Unreliability haunts even those fragments of experience that are available to Remy. Has he actually become an agent working covert operations for various (non)-governmental intelligence agencies? His therapist, doctor Rieux,¹⁹ seems to doubt it, and Guterak's report – after Remy asked his ex-partner to keep track of his movements – cannot confirm Remy's involvement in any secret mission. Moreover, when at Guterak's, Remy watches a cop TV show with a plot closely reflecting his own experiences as a secret agent. All of these situations call into question the reliability of Remy's fragmented story and hinder his attempts at anchoring his present to some substantial reality which would help him achieve a coherent sense of self.

In his potentially hallucinatory role as covert agent, Remy was tasked with the reconstitution of the last days in the life of March Selios, a suspected accomplice to the orchestration of the terrorist attack. The March Selios affair offers Walter an excellent opportunity for satirizing government intelligence agencies and simultaneously invites the contemplation of yet another dimension of grieving or, rather, *grievability*, what Judith Butler defines as "a presupposition of the life that matters" (*Frames* 14). For a life to matter so as to be grievable, Butler claims, it has to be recognizable and recognized, which involves placing the subject in the corresponding frame of recognition (4-12). If applied to Walter's novel, the notion of grievability acquires additional interpretive configurations in its political assignation of value to human life, easy to construe by following the March Selios affair. March Selios is singled out; her status as a number to be grieved as an abstraction is changed by Remy's efforts to retrieve her last movements. For March Selios's life to matter, her recent history has to be reconstituted. On one hand, she is grieved, genuinely grieved by her sister April. However, the irony is that, in order to officially become recognized as grievable, she has to be dead and documented as such. As Markham, Remy's handler, explains,

But we've got to find March Selios. And if it turns out she is, in fact *dead* ...well, then everything is copacetic. Not for her, obviously..." He laughed uncomfortably. "But for the record. That's our federally mandated charge, after all—to have a pure record. All the columns adding up. But if, in fact, she's alive—well, then, we've got a problem. In fact, we've got a big problem." (Walter 64)

Thus, *The Zero* gains a critical hold on the definition of the lives that matter to the official agenda for which the phrase 'human cost' seems to have assumed too much of its monetizing meaning, thus leading to the collapse of the

¹⁹ For the intertextual references imbedded in the names of the doctors in the novel, see Dolores Resano's study, 147-148.

symbolic dimension that bestows significance upon human lives. The novel constantly contrasts the especially high value of paper and documents with the devaluation of human life. The efforts of retrieving the “paper blown into the world” (9) seem to eclipse those devoted to recovering the truth of what happened on the day of the terrorist attack. Guterak is haunted by what he perceives as the expendability of human life, the ungraspable loss, the impossibility of understanding and therefore coping with the traumatic event through the work of mourning:

“I just keep thinking we forgot something,” Guterak was saying on the other end of the phone. He sounded drunk.

“What do you mean?” Remy adjusted the phone in his own ear. He sounded drunk, too. “What did we forget?”

“Not just us. Everyone. We just kept going on and ... it’s like we all forgot to do something important. Like when you leave the stove on and go on a big trip.”

“What did we forget, Paul?” Remy cracked a little dark rum and drained it.

“The people,” Paul said, as if it were obvious. “We forgot the people. I mean ... where are they? (84)

Regaining, repossessing one’s life is central to *The Zero*, and so is the failure to achieve it. The novel portrays the terrorist attack as an event that irremediably changes the individual to the core; it splits individual life into *pre* and *post*, interfering with its continuity in the previously accepted fashion. The seemingly irreparable psychological damage has disconnected the main character from his present prevents him from integrating the traumatic experiences into his self-narrative, thus hindering any possible healing process through the work of mourning. March Selios’s is the only life he can reconstitute – albeit only vaguely – and the end of this process marks the reduplication of the initial traumatic event. Therefore, it appears that the only available course of action is shaped by the ominous circularity of revision and repetition, which elicits a self-destructive outcome.

The Zero reaches beyond the restrictive conceptions of trauma, grief, and accountability that tend to confine 9/11 fiction to myopic interpretive patterns. Rather, its tantalizing fragmented narrative lends itself to a variety of approaches and invites a kaleidoscopic contemplation of all of these notions. Valuable criticism has already pointed out the subversive potential stemming from the novel’s satirical engagement with a large array of topics, from the political discourse and homeland security, to media and advertising, lawyers, profiteers, and (in)authenticity in both the private and the public spheres. Moreover, as discussed above, in its engagement with trauma and grief, the novel invites the exploration of the critical changes that that terrorist attack has

determined at the individual level. The collapse of meaning-making systems, leading to derealization, confinement to spectatorship, simulation, and the devaluation of human life, hinders the integration of the traumatic experience into personal history and, consequently, prevents a 'successful' work of mourning.

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ART, DEPTH AND AFFECT IN WINTER: METAMODERNIST CONTEXTS OF ALI SMITH'S NOVEL¹

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ABSTRACT. *Art, Depth and Affect in Winter: Metamodernist Contexts of Ali Smith's Novel.* The paper discusses Ali Smith's *Winter* through the prism of the theory of metamodernism. The novel can be related to the works of authors who reject the cynical sophistication of postmodernist art and appropriate its strategies to focus on authenticity, sincerity, and affect. Drawing on Robin van den Akker, Alison Gibbons, and Timotheus Vermeulen, who maintain that the metamodernist structure of feeling manifests through a mix of/or oscillation between pre-modernist, modernist and postmodernist tropes and devices, the author considers Ali Smith's novel a mixture of postmodernist, modernist and romantic elements and explores how these elements function in the production of the metamodernist effect of her novel.

Keywords: *metamodernism, Ali Smith, Winter, art, depth, affect*

REZUMAT. *Artă, profunzime și afect în Iarna: Contexte metamoderniste în romanul lui Ali Smith.* Această lucrare se ocupă de romanul *Winter* de Ali Smith prin prisma teoriei metamodernismului. Acest roman poate fi asociat cu lucrările unor autori care resping sofisticarea cinică a artei postmoderniste și își însușesc strategiile postmodernismului pentru a se concentra pe autenticitate, sinceritate și afect. Bazându-se pe Robin van den Akker, Alison Gibbons și Timotheus Vermeulen care susțin că structura metamodernistă a sentimentului se manifestă combinând și/sau oscilând între tropi și procedee pre-moderniste, moderniste și postmoderniste,

¹ This research was supported by VEGA Project 1/0447/20 *The Global and the Local in Postmillennial Anglophone Literatures, Cultures and Media*, granted by the Ministry of Education, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

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autoarea apreciază că romanul lui Ali Smith este o mixtură de elemente postmoderniste, moderniste și romantice și cercetează modul în care aceste elemente funcționează în producerea efectului metamodernist al romanului.

Cuvinte-cheie: *metamodernism, Ali Smith, Winter, artă, profunzime, afect*

Ali Smith's novel *Winter* is the second volume of her *Seasonal Quartet* that she published in rapid succession between 2016 and 2020. Designed as a "deliberate publishing experiment, to see how close to publication the author can capture current events" (Merritt), the *Seasonal Quartet* is filled with reactions to some of the most pressing issues of contemporary British life: Brexit, the immigration crisis, the tragedy of Grenfell Tower, climate change, and various other political upheavals. Besides presenting readers with intensely political texts marked by radical topicality, Smith also offers interesting literary experiments in which postmodernist narrative strategies are combined with new post-postmodern sensibilities. In this article I read Smith's *Winter* through the prism of metamodernist theory to show that this novel can be related to the works of authors who reject the cynical sophistication of postmodernist art and appropriate its strategies to focus on authenticity, sincerity and affect.³

Metamodernism

The decline of postmodernism that has been repeatedly brought to attention by prominent postmodern theorists, such as Ihab Hassan (2003) and Linda Hutcheon (2002), has been met with the increased attempts of scholars to map and define post-postmodern elements in the postmillennial cultural paradigm. Authors who share the opinion that postmodernist theory has lost the potential to offer fresh and productive responses to the latest cultural developments have suggested a variety of terms for these contemporary trends: "remodernism" (Childish and Thomson 2000), "renewalism" (Toth and Brooks 2007) "hypermodernism" (Lipovetsky 2005), "digimodernism" (Kirby 2009), "altermodernism" (Bourriaud 2009), "automodernism" (Samuels 2010),

³ Jaroslav Kušnír draws attention to "meta-metafictional" or "post-scientific" authors, such as David Forster Wallace, who carefully approach postmodernist strategies, perceiving them as "primary weapons of mass culture", devoid of the rebellious potential that they once possessed (Kušnír 29). In this respect, Lee Konstantinou talks about postironists (e. g. Wallace Smith, Chris Bachelder, Rivka Galchen, Jennifer Egan and others) whose return to sincerity includes the preservation of "postmodernism's critical insights (in various domains) while overcoming its disturbing dimensions" (88).

“cosmomodernism” (Moraru 2010), “performatism” (Eshelman 2008) and “metamodernism” (Vermeulen and Akker 2010). Since Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker published their seminal essay in 2010, the term metamodernism has received considerable attention from scholars and is now widely accepted as the most suitable term for describing the postmillennial structure of feeling.

In “Notes on Metamodernism,” Vermeulen and van den Akker map out a new structure of feeling in the visual arts, arguing that “new generations of artists increasingly abandon the aesthetic precepts of deconstruction, parataxis, and pastiche in favour of *aesth-ethical* notions of reconstruction, myth, and metaxis” (2). Drawing on the metaphor of *metaxis*⁴, they stress the “both-neither dynamic” of metamodernism:

Ontologically, metamodernism oscillates between the modern and the postmodern. It 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. (6)

In their opinion, metamodernism finds its “clearest expression in an emergent neoromantic sensibility,” in “the return of the Romantic, whether as style, philosophy or attitude” (8), in contemporary artists’ “negotiations between the permanent and the temporary”; in their “questioning of Reason by the irrational”; or in the “re-appropriation of culture through nature” (8). In later publications (Akker, Gibbons, Vermeulen 2017; Gibbons, Vermeulen, Akker 2019; Akker, Gibbons, Vermeulen 2019) Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker, together with Alison Gibbons, focus on the re-emergence of historicity, affect and depth in contemporary art to further document its metamodernist trends.

Referring to Frederick Jameson’s study *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) that aligns postmodernism with the “weakening of historicity”, “a new depthlessness” and “the waning of affect”, Akker, Gibbons and Vermeulen (2019) maintain that the return to historicity, depth and affect in postmillennial art signals a return to pre-postmodern (modernist) artistic concerns. But they also note that this return is, in fact, shaped by new post-postmodern (metamodernist) sensibilities. While the weakening of historicity under postmodernism resulted, in extreme cases, in “the stifling of the sense of history itself” (Jameson quoted in Akker 22), metamodernism relies on a new

⁴ Vermeulen and van den Akker draw especially on Eric Voegelin’s idea that the structural principle of existence is an “in-Betweenness” that has been reflected over the centuries through “the language of tension between life and death, immortality and mortality, perfection and imperfection, time and timelessness, between order and disorder, truth and untruth, sense and senselessness of existence ...”(6).

regime of historicity which can be characterised as “multi-tensed” in contrast with the “presentism” promoted by postmodernism and the “futurism” associated with modernism (Akker 22). This metamodern regime of historicity is reflected in multi-tensed narrative structures that can be identified across contemporary culture.⁵

This return to historicity combines metamodernism with the “new depthiness” that has replaced the postmodernist depthlessness – the postmodernist repudiation of a variety of modern depth models such as “the dialectic schema of appearance and essence”, “semiotic codes distinguishing between the signifier and signified”, “the psychoanalytic obsession with the manifest and the latent” and “the existential politics of the authentic and the inauthentic” (Akker, Gibbons, Vermeulen 44-45). While postmodernist art reflected “a collective inability to experience, beyond a surface level, the totality of the objective (real, actually existing) conditions in which the subject lived its daily life” (Gibbons, Vermeulen, Akker 173) through its replacement of an “authentic depth of representation with free-floating signifiers on a surface level” (Gibbons, Vermeulen, Akker 173), metamodernist texts “produce a ‘reality effect’ – a performance of, or insistence on, reality” (Gibbons, Vermeulen, Akker 174).

The waning of affect in postmodernism can be seen as a natural human response to the superficiality of the postmodern representation, the representation of a hyperreality in which the image does not stand for a single referential real world but becomes a simulacrum, a “simulation that no longer has any meaningful relation to that which could previously have been described as reality” (Gibbons, Vermeulen, Akker 173). As Akker, Gibbons and Vermeulen (45) explain, the lack of depth in postmodernist art – the recipient’s inability to form an interpretative reality in order to comprehend the image – inevitably leads to the waning of affect. With the help of Frederick Jameson’s examples from the visual arts (the difference between the depth of Munch’s modernist painting *Scream* prompting the viewer’s emotional response to the tormented figure at its centre and the superficiality of Warhol’s postmodernist “stripped-back” images in *Marilyn* or *Diamond Dust Shoes*), the scholars provide a similar comparison between modernist and postmodernist literature to relate the return of depth and “affective turn”⁶ in literature to metamodern sensibilities.

⁵ See James MacDowel’s “The Metamodern, the Quirky and Film Criticism”; Josh Toth’s “Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and the Rise of Historioplasic Metafiction”; Jorg Heiser’s “Super-Hybridity: Non-Simultaneity, Myth-Making and Multipolar Conflict”; and Sjord van Tuinen’s “The Cosmic Artisan: Mannerist Virtuosity and Contemporary Crafts”.

⁶ As Alison Gibbons (2017) explains, the “affective turn” can be related either to the belief that the rise of affect emerged in parallel with the demise of postmodernism or to Jameson’s criticism by those who believe that he has done away with affect “too readily” (84).

While the rejection of psychological realism, the representations of fragmented subjectivities, and the emphasis on fictionality in postmodernist literature prevent readers of postmodern narratives from developing an affective relationship with the narrator and/or characters, metamodern texts, partly through their revival of modernist strategies, encourage readers' meaningful emotional responses that support "both self's relation to its own feelings and the self's relation to others" (Gibbons 86). Although some scholars, such as David James and Urmila Seshagiri (2014), perceive the revival of modernist narrative strategies as a core feature of metamodernism, Akker, Gibbons and Vermeulen maintain that the metamodernist structure of feeling manifests itself in literary works through "a mix of or oscillation" between pre-modernist (romantic, realistic), modernist and postmodernist tropes and devices that are "put to new use, engaging with, and responding to the social, ethical, political, economic, and environment material circumstances of the twenty-first century" (48). In the following pages I approach Ali Smith's *Winter* as an example of such a mixture of postmodernist, modernist and romantic elements and explore how they function in the production of the metamodernist effects of her novel.

Art, Depth and Affect in *Winter*

As with the other volumes of the *Seasonal Quartet*, *Winter* continues Ali Smith's explorations of the issues that she has repeatedly addressed throughout her literary career. A brief look at Daniel Lea's list of Smith's recurrent concerns (397) reveals that Ali Smith has long been interested in the effect of technology on human life, the failure of connection between people and the search for meaning through art. All of these features find their way into her story of a dysfunctional family and its reconstruction in the depths of winter. The novel also illustrates Lea's claim about Smith's interest in the creation of stories as "duologues or multilogues" which include "contrasting point of views" and "characters' differing versions of the world built around shared events or experiences" (397-398).

In *Winter* the multilogue of characters having different visions of reality acquires a centrality that opens up the possibility of reading the narrative as a "novel of ideas," a genre that has been identified as "a characteristic form of postmodernity" (LeMahieu 180). The novel's connection with postmodernism is also apparent in a typical feature of Smith's style, the tendency to "pitch voices against each other" without "the intention of establishing an authorised account" (Lea 398-399), an approach which has contributed to her image as an author who celebrates the carnivalesque and anti-hierarchical. Equally important is Smith's usage of postmodernist narrative strategies such as fragmentation,

puns and allusions or metafictional, intertextual and intergeneric elements. These postmodernist games with language and ideas are combined with modernist and pre-modernist (romantic) devices, tropes and concepts that draw the reader's attention to the importance of affect and depth both in human relations and in art, and thus connect Smith's novel with metamodern concerns and sensibilities.

Out of the four novels named after the seasons of the year it is undoubtedly *Winter*, with its focus on four characters forced to spend Christmas exchanging ideas in a house called CHEI BRES (or the House of the Mind), that most strongly encourages its interpretation within the framework of the novel of ideas. As Michael LeMahieu (2018) explains, the term has been applied to "fiction in which conversation, intellectual discussion and debate predominate, and in which plot, narrative, emotional conflict and psychological depth in characterization are deliberately limited" (177); and "action is sacrificed to discussion between persons who function as personifications of concepts or mouthpieces for ideas" (178). The four protagonists of *Winter*, Sophia, her older sister Iris, Sophia's thirty something son Art, or, Arthur, and Lux, hired by Art to play his "girlfriend" during their Christmas stay at his mother's, do function as personifications of concepts, ideas, and attitudes. Each character is defined by their name, and they represent four crucial elements of human existence: Reason, Passion, Art, and the Light of Inspiration. These characters are allegorical elements in contemporary post-postmodern society, but each of them also appears as having been shaped in their own way by the effects of the postmodern age.

Sophia (from the Greek Σοφία, or wisdom), the former director of a successful international business who has now retired to a house in Cornwall, represents wisdom reduced to rational economic thinking and the pursuit of profit. Iris shares her name with the Greek goddess of the rainbow, but her nickname Ire relates to the Latin *ira* (anger, wrath, passion, rage). The latter serves as a reminder that in the postmodern age the waning affect was paralleled with the intensification of the passions of those who, like Iris, participated in post-war social protests. Iris is a symbol of the social activism movements continuing to struggle in spite of the apathy of postmodern consumer society, just like the rainbow flag used at peace marches and demonstrations against nuclear weapons. Art, the unsuccessful writer of the "Art in Nature" blog, represents postmodernist narcissistic art, trapped between reality and the screen of modern technology, unable to convey an authentic experience of the world and in need of the light of inspiration. This light appears in the form of Lux, the fourth allegorical figure in the novel, who enters Art's life like a *deus ex machina* to inspire not only Art's own transformation but also the reconstruction of his family.

Given the symbolic meanings of their names, the reader cannot fail to ignore the symbolic aspects of the characters' interactions and the allegorical meanings of their multilogues. Sophia and Iris's long-term conflicts and their quarrels over the Christmas dinner table are clearly something more than merely the disagreements of two old women over such issues as Brexit, the immigration crisis or radical social activism. Ali Smith presents here the dichotomy between detached reason and passionate commitment that have respectively informed the sisters' lives. On the one hand, we see the cold headed involvement in the economic sphere that keeps the world going, on the other a passionate belief that the world needs fixing and the constant monitoring of its healthy and moral development. Smith's anti-authorial narrative avoids taking sides, however, and the reader may be left with the sense of multiple truths that sit together, albeit uneasily, just like the two old women at the table, each of them arguing a point worth considering.

In a similar vein, the novel draws attention to two radically different versions of art – one marked by presentism, instantism, and a spontaneity which may often lack authenticity; an art dressed up in the modern clothes of Internet blogs; and an art which is timeless, deeply philosophical, and written in language that is anything but instantly readable. Again, none of these versions of art are celebrated at the expense of the others. Both the "Art in Nature" blog and Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* – for which Lux expresses admiration because Shakespeare can make even a "mad and bitter mess" (Smith 200) into something graceful – have their place in the contemporary world. Only the former needs an injection of authenticity and non-narcissistic focus on the social and the political in order to comply with the definition of art offered by Smith in one of the many puns which abound in her text: "I said to your aunt last night, she [Lux] says. After you came out here, when you were asleep. I said, Art is seeing things. And your aunt said, that's a great description of what art is" (286). The fact that "Art in Nature" has had to be turned into "a co-written blog by a communal group of writers" (318) who have improved Art's original "*irrelevant reactionary unpolitical blog*" (59) suggests that authentic art is always political. However, it is timeless art that captures the depths of humanity regardless politics. "...THE HUMAN will always surface in art no matter [sic] its politics" (317). This is what Iris's text message to her nephew and Smith's message to us reads.

Smith's own work of art combines the political topicality of the novel of ideas that traditionally "reflects larger cultural trends and political preoccupations" (LeMahieu 181) of its given era with a focus on the timeless aspects of the human condition, which saves her text from becoming an example of what some critics of the novel of ideas call a "dressed-up political polemic" (LeMahieu 180). As Michael LeMahieu (179) explains, the novel of ideas emerged at the end of modernism as a negative counterpart to modernist aesthetics and has often

been perceived as differing from the concept of the “novel as art”. Smith combines the revived modernist aesthetics with postmodernist narrative strategies, an approach which produces a metamodernist oscillation between the modern and the postmodern that Akker, Gibbons and Vermeulen (2019) have identified in contemporary art. On the one hand, Smith relies on postmodernist strategies that highlight the constructedness of fiction and the allegorical nature of her characters, but on the other, she uses free indirect discourse in a way that revives modernist uses of the stream of consciousness and thus opens the sense of possibility that Akker, Gibbons and Vermeulen have identified in metamodernist texts – the possibility for the reader to enter into “an affective relationship” with the characters and “a depth relationship with a reality partially existing, perhaps performatively, beyond the pages of [the] book” (49).

A major postmodernist strategy of Smith’s novel is the fragmented narrative structure that alternates the focalisation of the characters with the focalisation of the narrator who provides background information on actual historical events such as the Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp. Smith also presents what seems to be future, improved versions of the “Art in Nature blog”, she includes a story within a story, or parallels a chapter that shows Iris narrating a story to a younger Art with a chapter in which the future Art reads *A Christmas Carol* to another small child. The postmodernist character of the novel is intensified by the presence of metafictional passages. For instance, the author-narrator imagines and then rejects an alternative “much more classical sort of story” (Smith 31) wherein Sophia is the protagonist and whose

perfectly honed minor-symphony modesty and narrative decorum complement the story she’s in with the right kind of quiet wisdom-from-experience-ageing female status, making it a story that’s thoughtful, dignified, conventional in structure thank God, the kind of quality literary fiction where the slow drift of snow across the landscapes is merciful, has a perfect muffling decorum of its own, snow falling to whiten, soften, blur and prettify even further a landscapes where there are no heads divided from bodies hanging around in the air or anywhere, either new ones, from new atrocities or murders or terrorism, or old ones, left over from old historic atrocities and murders and terrorism....

well, no,
thank you,
thank you very much. (Smith 31)

Instead, Smith constructs a narrative that, far from being conventional, plays with language and its playful deferral of meaning⁷. Smith depicts Sophia

⁷ The most telling examples of these postmodernist experiments with language and the explorations of its elusive meanings include the chapter in which Smith divides Art’s and Lux’s rejoinders into

as a female version of Scrooge, who is visited at Christmas by a ghost in the form of a child's head. Although Dickens's famous parable about the power of the Christmas spirit to save one's soul creates the main intertext of her novel, Smith offers a more realistic version. The Christmas ghost appears as a hallucination generated by the protagonist's anorexic and solipsistic existence. Just as with Dickens' Scrooge, the events which Sophia experiences on Christmas Eve offer her the chance of a personal revival which results in reconciliations with her estranged sister and son.

In the stream of consciousness passages Sophia enters the depths of her past by remembering the events that affected her relationships with Iris, Art, and Art's biological father. The result is a sense of psychological depth that takes Sophia out of the category of flat characters reduced to the representation of an idea, a political stance or a mere function in the construction of the plot. While Iris and Lux never fully shake off the apparel of the symbolic representations of the author's political positions and artistic visions, Sophia and Art, whose focalisations are offered in free indirect speech passages, appear, despite their allegorical functions, as complex characters filled with the depths of humanity. If the postmodernist elements of Smith's novel encourage the reader to appreciate, intellectually, Smith's carnivalesque play with language, ideas, voices, and plurality of truths, the modernist strategies open up the possibility of experiencing aesthetic pleasure through the empathetic emotional responses to characters whose troubled existence is revealed through their thought processes.

Sophia's and Art's focalisations provide insights into the rational and irrational parts of their minds (they both experience hallucinations and the surreal effects of dreams) and draw the reader into worlds, both psychic and physical, that appear no less real than our own. On the other hand, the postmodernist devices that continually emerge throughout Smith's narrative, even in the pages in which the modernist style of writing is dominant, prevent the reader from diving too deep into these worlds and ensure that the reader cannot move too far from the surface textual levels of these worlds and forget the constructed nature of those who inhabit them. In this respect the reader's experience corresponds with that of Vermeulen's "snorkeler", taken as a metaphor for a metamodernist modality of artistic imagination that is put into contrast with the experiences of the "diver" (the modernist modality) and the "surfer" (the postmodernist one):

two separate passages, thereby turning their dialogue, at least formally, into two monologic discourses. Another example is the chapter in which a child at an early stage of language acquisition reveals to Art and the reader the fluidity of concepts through which we try to fix a meaning and thus produce a meaningful vision of the spatio-temporal reality in which we exist.

Whereas the diver moves towards a shipwreck or a coral reef in the depths of the ocean, and the surfer moves with the flow of the waves, the snorkeler swims toward a school of fish whilst drifting with the surface currents. Importantly, the snorkeler imagines depth without experiencing it [...] he will not, and often cannot, dive downwards; or if he does, then it is only for as long as his lungs allow. That is to say: for the snorkeler, depth both exists, positively, in theory, and does not exist, in practice, since he does not, and cannot reach it...When I refer to the “new depthiness,” I am thinking of a snorkeler intuiting depth, imagining it – perceiving it without encountering it. If Jameson’s term “new depthlessness” points to the logical and/or empirical repudiation of ideological, historical, hermeneutic, existentialist, psychoanalytic, affective, and semiotic depth, then the phrase “new depthliness” indicates the performative⁸ reappraisal of these depths. (Vermeulen page 8)

These reappraisals of depths emerge in Smith’s novel through the metamodernist oscillation between modernist and postmodernist tropes, with the narrative constantly swinging to and fro between an emphasis on the constructed natures of her fictitious characters and the reality effect which some of them produce for the reader. Although Iris and Lux also exhibit aspects derived from the real world shared by the author and the reader, they remain mono-dimensional and static throughout the novel. In contrast, the insights into Sophia’s and Art’s personal histories endow these characters with a multidimensionality and inner dynamics that suggest reasons why they appear as troubled persons at the beginning of the narrative. This approach grants their transformations a genuine sense of verisimilitude.

The importance of the relations between the characters’ personal histories and their present and future selves is intensified by a multi-tensed narrative in which Smith plays with past, present, and future tenses: some parts are narrated in the past tense, but many past events are delivered in the present tense, while the glimpses into Art’s future are presented in the future tense. Paradoxically, the latter seems oddly inappropriate for rendering a future moment through the focalisation of Art’s future self that experiences the future moment as his immediately lived present. The complex multi-tensed narrative in which the past (emerging in memories) is given the sense of the present moment and the present appears as the future’s past seems to reject the postmodernist obsession with presentism and emphasises the extent to which our past is constantly present in our thoughts, memories, and identities. Our

⁸ The term “performative” is used by Vermeulen (2015) “above all in Judith Butler’s sense of the world. Just as Butler writes that the soul is not what produces our behaviour but is, on the contrary, what is produced by our behaviour – in other words, not inside the body but on and around, a surface effect – depth is not excavated but applied, not discovered but delivered” (<https://www.e-flux.com/journal/61/61000/the-new-depthiness/>).

sense of presence is constructed as a sequence of the moments that have just passed and our future is yet another present of just passed moments that we re-enter every day. Moving on the various temporal levels of Smith's narrative and struggling towards an understanding of the characters by forging connections between their pasts, presents and futures, the reader may experience the position of the metamodernist subject who "appears to be actively searching for, and cobbling together, [the] lost sense of temporal and historical orientation, in a mostly haphazard, helter-skelter, and makeshift manner" (Akker, Gibbons and Vermeleun 51).

By placing the characters in the tangles of their past, present, and future, Smith also invokes the reader's affective response to the complexity of the characters' life experience. Thus, the reader can be touched by the story of an elderly woman who has transformed from a sensitive and art-loving girl into a pragmatic careerist who chooses business over family only to end up losing both. At the end of her life, she finds herself in a state of emotional death:

Sophia had been feeling nothing for some time now. Refugees in the sea. Children in ambulances. Blood-soaked men running to hospitals or away from burning hospitals carrying blood covered children. Dust-covered dead people by the sides of roads. Atrocities. People beaten up and tortured in cells. Nothing. (Smith 29-30)

Similarly, the reader is encouraged to feel empathy with Art, the fatherless boy, conveniently shipped off to a boarding school at the earliest possible age. Art grows up into a young man unable to create authentic relationships and this inability even extends to his relationship with Mother Nature, as is shown in his "Art in Nature" blog posts. The characters' inability to relate to the world, human and natural, in an authentic, affective way relates to the disintegration of family relations in Smith's story. The novel seems to ask how we can feel true empathy with strangers if we have lost the ability of forming emotional responses to those closest to us. Even Iris, who as Sophia ironically comments, has spent her life "changing the world," (208), is shown as performing the most authentic and transformative acts at the moments when she deserts her younger sister for a life of political activism. Iris facilitates Sophia's development into the cold person which she later becomes, but afterwards she returns on Christmas Eve to save the aged Sophia from the madness of her solipsistic existence. Here the echo of Dickens' homily that "Charity begins at home" seems to have found its way into Smith's modern version of *A Christmas Carol*.

Another question that Smith poses through Sophia's and Art's life stories is whether we can be expected to learn how to create authentic relationships without being shown good examples. The art of storytelling –

techne – the novel suggests, plays a major role in such education.⁹ Thus, the seemingly banal quarrel between Sophia and Iris about a lost child travelling in snow story is, in fact, an unresolved conflict over the creation of a crucial formative memory which shaped the development of Art's personality. It is through memories such as the lost child story (and storytelling) that Art can reconnect with his mother and his aunt and become, in future, a storyteller (storyreader) and a shaper of his own child's personality. The importance of *techne* in Smith's works has also been noted by Daniel Lea who states that Smith perceives the art of storytelling as "the compensatory solace" in a world of rising dependence on modern technology that still remains unable to overcome our "discomfort with life's unanswerable questions" (401).

In the wake of postmodernist scepticism, the compensatory solace of art can no longer arise from the belief that "true" art offers truthful insights into the metaphysics of our existence and provides answers to our existential questions. Nonetheless, art still has the power to suggest the possibility of a deeper meaning lying below the surface level of our textual reality. In a metamodern gesture that revives the Romantic sensibility, Smith draws a contrast between the postmodern obsession with surfaces that can reduce Mona Lisa to the background of a selfie taken by visitors to the Louvre who are "no longer even bothering to turn towards it" (12) and the belief that beauty in art is the closest possible thing to what we can imagine as the Truth about the meaning of Humanity. This Truth glows radiantly through the multiple truths of our everyday lives. "Beauty is truth and truth is beauty," states Sophia, quoting Keats and stressing Beauty's potential to change the world: "Beauty is the true way to change things for the better. To make things better. There should be a lot more beauty in our lives... There is no such thing as fake beauty. Which is why beauty is so powerful. Beauty assuages" (211). Whereas Iris dismisses this *aesth-ethical* notion of Beauty's reconstructive power as naïve idealism, Smith's novel refuses to reject this in such a radical way. On the contrary, the beauty that Sophia finds in art and the beauty that her son Art (just like art itself) instinctively searches for in nature are endowed with the potential to recreate for their recipients "a coherent and meaningful sense of self" (Akker, Gibbons, and Vermeulen 52) that the metamodern subject tries to regain after "realising that it has for too long been indulging in, and succumbing to, postmodern euphoria in the credit-driven, mediatised comfort zone at the End of History" (Akker, Gibbons, and Vermeulen 52).

⁹ As Slávka Tomaščíková notes, it is narratives that "enable an individual to learn from and/or to teach others – all in the very essence of the meaning of the Latin word *narrō* – 'to make known, to convey information'" (96).

Lux is so moved by Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, a play which shows the human potential to create beauty out of the mess of existence, that she decides to move to the country that gave Shakespeare to the world (however ironic Smith may intend such a definition of England to be). The birdwatchers are so moved by the beauty of birds that they choose the pursuit of a highly improbable sighting of a Canada warbler in Cornwall over the more typical consumerist celebration of Christmas. Although one reviewer maintains that the bus full of birdwatchers only appears in the novel to give Smith an opportunity to add to the postmodernist games with language and "have Lux, the lover of Samuel Johnson, deploy a leaky pun: 'I refute it bus'" (Wood), the inclusion of a bus "full of people looking for meaning in the shape of a bird not native to [England] turning up in [England] after all" (Smith 290) contributes significantly to the metamodernist effect of her novel. While the Canada warbler and its highly improbable survival after its transatlantic flight stands for a "miracle" that suggests the possibility of God's existence and the beauty of the world in which such an unlikely possibility exists, the art that allows us to create affective relationships with the other (however fictitious this other may be) helps us to connect and reconnect with real people and our own selves. The fusion of art and nature, the two most powerful sources of assuaging beauty, and its crucial function in the constructing and reconstructing of our humanity is symbolically represented by the real-life imprint of a flower in an original folio of Shakespeare's works:

...it's nothing but a mark, a mark made on words. By a flower. Who knows by whom. Who knows when. It looks like nothing. It looks like maybe someone made a stain with water, like on oily smudge. Until you look properly at it. Then there's the line of the neck and the rosebud shape at the end of it. That's my most beautiful thing. (Smith 212)

The beauty of this unusual combination of nature and culture stems from the possibility of connecting affectively with a human being emerging from the depths of history. This human being could also appreciate the beauty of (Shakespeare's) art and enjoy nature in the form of the flower whose symbolic connection with beauty and the affection of one human being for another runs through the centuries.

Conclusion

Ali Smith's novel *Winter* represents an illustrative case of the turn towards metamodernism that has emerged in the postmillennial cultural paradigm as a response to the postmodernist structure of feeling. The oscillation between

postmodernist and modernist tropes and devices employed in Smith's complex narrative constructs a metamodern text that revives Romantic sensibilities. The rationalism of the narrator's sophisticated postmodernist language games is contrasted with much more "irrational" and subjective plays of the protagonists' minds that create a sense of psychological depth and encourage the reader's empathetic responses. The postmodernist focus on the temporary and its tendency towards presentism is contrasted with more permanent, timeless aspects of humanity such as the importance of affective relationships with other people (including those lost in the depths of history) with whom we share the capacity to enjoy the beauty of art, a process which helps us to become more sensitive and better human beings. Finally, the suggestion that an authentic relationship with nature and its assuaging beauty may result in more authentic patterns of cultural and social behaviour corresponds with the neoromantic "re-appropriation of culture through nature" that the theorists of the metamodern have identified in metamodernist developments of contemporary art.

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READING HABITS IN JANE AUSTEN'S *NORTHANGER ABBEY*

ANA VOICU¹

ABSTRACT. *Reading Habits in Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey.* This article focuses on the way Catherine Morland, *Northanger Abbey's* heroine, is influenced and even guided by the literature she either chooses or is given to read. Her reading habits, as well as her changing typologies as a reader, influence both the development of her character and the narrative. This study also debunks the idea that *Northanger Abbey* is a parody of Gothic fiction, contextualizing book reading in an age when the novel was yet to be considered a respectable literary genre.

Keywords: *wise reader, the avid reader, the hypocritical reader, character development, narrative development, Gothic fiction, novel theory*

REZUMAT. *Obiceiuri de lectură în Mănăstirea Northanger de Jane Austen.* Acest articol analizează modul în care Catherine Morland, eroina romanului *Mănăstirea Northanger*, e influențată și chiar ghidată de literatura pe care o alege sau care îi este oferită. Obiceiurile ei de lectură, precum și modul în care tipologia ei ca cititor se schimbă, influențează atât evoluția personajului, cât și narațiunea. Acest articol contrazice ideea că *Mănăstirea Northanger* este o parodie a ficțiunii gotice, contextualizând lectura într-o epocă în care romanul nu era încă un gen literar respectabil.

Cuvinte-cheie: *cititorul înțelept, cititorul avid, cititorul ipocrit, evoluția personajului, evoluția narațiunii, ficțiune gotică, teoria romanului*

“That is artful and deep, to be sure...”
(Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*)

Constantly attracting scholarly attention, Jane Austen's work has been not only relevant, but essential to the study of British literature for over a century, currently holding a place in the mandatory bibliographies of any university's courses which focus on the eighteenth-century English literature and the beginnings

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of the novel as a respectable literary genre. Criticised as a young female writer, then discovered and rediscovered, Jane Austen gave us accounts on the genteel society of her time which secured her a valuable place in the history of English literature. When it comes to reading habits, critics were more preoccupied with the way in which Austen's novels are read than with the fiction her characters enjoy. Thorough research has been conducted on the relation between Jane Austen's novels and those of her contemporaries or even to the work of the classics of her time. Nevertheless, there are few instances when the characters' reading preferences are directly analysed. In his article, "Jane Austen and Female Reading", Robert W. Uphaus focuses on "how, through her fiction, she [Austen] established a new practice of female reading and writing" (340). This critic insists very much on the literary context of the age and on the writers that Austen was preoccupied with and influenced by. To him, "Austen uses her own novel to reshape the prior conventions of female reading" (335). While this study does indeed focus on female reading, it is the characters' reading habits that are explored, as well as their typologies as readers which have uncovered new directions of interpretation with regards to her work.

Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* was first published in 1818, a year after the author's death, by Henry and Cassandra, her brother and sister. While in a previous attempt of publishing it, the manuscript was delivered by the title of *Susan*, the two close relatives decided on *Northanger Abbey*. A reader who was already familiar with her work might have known what to expect, but in spite of such knowledge, the idea of an abbey could easily be connected with gothic fiction. The question which thus arises is to be explored as it is an essential element in understanding the novel and its characters reading habits. How is *Northanger Abbey* connected to the Gothic novel?

In the "Preface" to The Cambridge Edition of *Northanger Abbey*, Janet Todd points out that Jane Austen "planned the action as a parody, or rather, a double parody, of the popular fiction of the period – the conduct novel or novel of manners on the one hand, and the gothic romances on the other" (XXV). It is imperative to mention the fact that Austen was supported by her family in her literary interests and pursuits. This does not only mean that she was encouraged to be a writer herself, but also that she had the opportunity of being acquainted with the great writers of her time and of reading both literature which was considered good, formative, and literature which was viewed as unsuitable for the sensitive female sex. Interestingly, she made a goal of neither copying the great authors, nor of devaluing those more negatively regarded, but of appreciating both sides by finding her own literary voice and thus contributing to their mission, whether primary or secondary, of establishing the novel as a respectable genre. Consequently, her parodying the novel of manners and the gothic romance

could appear as a negative reaction to these genres only at a superficial level. In fact, Austen presents a story of how these genres can facilitate the acquisition of knowledge of immediate use in a person's and, specifically, a young lady's life choices. This idea can be supported by direct reference to the text of *Northanger Abbey* where the reader, used to a generally objective and unobtrusive third person narrator, may be surprised at finding the following comment:

I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom so common with novel writers, of degrading by their contemptuous censure the very performances, to the number of which they are themselves adding – joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works [as novels], and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine, who, if she accidentally take up a novel, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. (21)

Needless to say, the heroine of *Northanger Abbey* reads novels and this is how her literary choices are justified to the reader. It is a fashion which might very well reflect the belief of the author behind the narrator. This is not a critique as much as it is a call for solidarity and for keeping in mind the issue of the questionable reputation that novels used to have at the time. Austen tries to prove the value of the novel through her example rather than mere comments, which she definitely succeeds.

The fresh, inexperienced Catherine Morland leaves her home for the very first time, accompanying a more socially engaged neighbour to Bath, a particularly rich place in terms of society and an unofficially established marriage market. The entrance into the world, along with the innocence of the main character might very well be the initial phase of a Gothic novel where a young woman finds herself in a new, unfamiliar, and hostile environment where she is to be exploited by other characters, usually males who are not exactly well-meaning, but worldly enough to appear so – to her, at least. Nevertheless, Catherine is indicated from the very first sentence of the first chapter not to be the familiar or the traditionally established material for a heroine: “No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy, would have supposed her born to be a heroine” (2). Her life is that of a perfectly ordinary and not exceptionally accomplished young lady of a family whose wealth is in its offspring rather than its material values. She is definitely vulnerable in her youth and freshness, but vulnerable to a world that does not allow “wild and barbaric behaviour” (Todd XXXVI), as Janet Todd described the scope of Gothic fiction and its space. Catherine belongs to “the civilized eighteenth century” (Todd XXXVI). When this unlikely heroine is “about to be launched into all the difficulties and dangers of a six week's residence in Bath” (Austen 7), the author comically and

superbly describes the way Catherine's mother, through her biological instinct of protecting her child against such "difficulties and dangers", advises her against everything but that which could actually threaten her primarily social safety – the less honourable members of the opposite sex. This episode is particularly significant in my view because it gives a concrete example of how the character's background defines Catherine's initial state. Catherine's mother is perfectly genuine in her concern, but partly clueless herself in terms of the way of the world. Well-meaning and kind, the mother might be innocent herself from a social point of view. Therefore, very probably, she is a simple woman of "plain sense" (Austen 2) with little intellectual or worldly education to pass on to her offspring. Thus, the heroine is thrown into the world under the guidance of an irresponsible guardian and little parental advice. She appears to be a damsel in distress almost without her realizing this herself. To Mathison, "it is a character's achieving maturity that makes her a heroine" (140). Consequently, Catherine's innocence can be considered a symptom which can or cannot lead to a heroic ending.

While Catherine's time in Bath does confirm her adherence to an ordinary existence rather than a heroic one, upon arrival at Northanger Abbey, she begins to feel that she is part of an exceptional world, one which is similar to that featured in her top literary delight, Anne Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Similarly to other Austenian heroines, her main pursuit is that of love, but this particular heroine finds herself in more serious conflicts regarding her adaptation to the environment and its ways or rather, adapting the environment to what is it that she believes it to be. As David Blair mentions in his "Introduction" to the Wordsworth Classics edition of the novel, "she marries the first man she dances with, which is pretty good going for a heroine whose ordinariness might arguably disqualify her from being one at all [...] This spares Catherine countless agonies of uncertainty about her own feelings and those of multiple choice" (VIII). Naturally, the differences of economic status between Catherine and her beau, Henry Tilney, are reason enough to give way to a courtship plot; yet this plot appears to be, in some ways, secondary, or at least less dealt with than in other novels by Austen. John Thorpe, the only rival young Tilney has, is not even acknowledged as an actual rival by Catherine. There seems to be no other obstacle in the way of the Catherine and Henry's marriage but General Tilney, the young man's father whose own ambitions are also reduced to material value. It is his presence and his own realistic sort of evilness which the heroine encounters and senses but misinterprets through the lenses of the one thing which defined evilness to her: a Gothic novel so far-fetched if taken literally. The mysterious, rather exotic abbey Catherine hopes for and expects to find is, in truth, delightfully English, well-maintained and suggestively decorated by the General who proudly

presents it to her, walks her through every part she is not interested in and tires her. Although the General is the embodiment of *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* evil Montoni to our heroine, it is clear by this point of the narrative that we cannot speak of a Gothic-inspired course of events. The reason is that while there is definitely something oppressive and vile in General Tilney and the family dynamic he had built in and around his home, the environment is too specifically English and too realistically fitted to its space and timeframe to allow any eventual supernatural, murderous, or barbaric instances.

Nevertheless, there is one Gothic element which is embedded into the narrative of *Northanger Abbey* and that is mystery. David Blair notes that "mystery is an element in this novel, as well as in Raddcliffe's, and the strand of plotting which culminates in Catherine's ignominious expulsion from Northanger is extremely carefully laid by Austen in a way that only a second or subsequent reading will disclose" (Blair VIII). Once the reader fully realizes there is no way the narrative could take the path of Gothic fiction, it is most likely that he would stop giving credit to any of Catherine's suspicions, and wait for her fantasy to be deconstructed and have her succumb to the realization of what the world is like, simultaneously rejecting that which seemingly confused her: the novels. And while this impression might stay accurate with some readers, at a closer reading and analysis, it is to be realized that there was, indeed, a mystery behind the invitation to Northanger Abbey: a less spectacular mystery, devoid of fantastical or homicidal intent, yet a real mystery of real vileness. The way Catherine's readings have helped her in this respect is to be explored in a following subchapter of this paper.

Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* is not, therefore, a parody of the popular fiction of her time as much as it is a testimony of its value as shown by the heroine's progress. John K. Mathison states that "in making Catherine become aware of true values, she [Austen] has helped the reader do the same" (150). Catherine Morland is a character not particularly sensational throughout the novel, but it is exactly this sort of ordinary character that proves a very important point. Novels are not only safe to read, but they are actually developmental in their own fashion. They have value in themselves: "her [Jane Austen's] novel, with no sensationalism, no unreality, no sentimentality, is no escape from life, but as she said that the novel could be, it is an illumination of it" (Mathison 150).

Regarding Catherine, Blair mentions that she "reflects on the whole tendency of her society to create precisely the kind of young woman that she is – ill-informed, anti-intellectual, trivial and entrapped within a limited and devalued agenda of femininity" (Blair XV-XVI). By her choice of readings which is obviously linked to delight and entertainment rather than information and education, Catherine threatens to become something even 'worse' than an intellectual of her sex: a woman who understands her own emotions, does not

fear imagination because she knows it is in her control and, most importantly, a woman who is aware not only of the limits, but of the external construction of her own femininity. While she does not appear to have fully realized all these things by the end of the novel, Catherine manages to surpass her naiveté and finally become an adult and, more specifically, a woman who is married to the love of her life: an intelligent, well-read man.

When it comes to Catherine's typology as a reader, it is only natural to assume that she started off as a "wise reader", one who engaged in readings compulsory for a wise young woman who is set on educating herself. The first chapter of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* provides the reader with a detailed description of the main character's situation in life and, in this particular case, early accomplishments, or rather the lack of accomplishments in those respects where a respectable young lady is supposed to be successfully trained in: reciting fables or poetry, music, drawing, French, and writing. All these activities feel confining to a child of "neither a bad heart nor a bad temper", but who "loved nothing so well in the world as rolling down the green slope at the back of the house" (Austen 2). Catherine is, in an Austenian word, unaffected. She is genuine in her person, in her thoughts and actions, she enters the world as a blank canvas which allows no false pretences on her part, no extravagance apart from a most natural longing for the entertainment which is so specific to the youth – entertainment such as curling her hair and going to balls (Austen 4).

In Dorothee Birke's view, "Catherine does not fulfil the requirements of the romance formula" (95) which is constantly hinted at throughout this initial part of the novel, meaning that her situation and accomplishments do not fit the standard – a standard which has been nevertheless explored through the literature she was given to read.

When learning about Catherine's readings of choice, the reader of *Northanger Abbey* is offered a line by Alexander Pope and, more specifically, a line from "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady": "those who bear about the mockery of woe" (Pope qtd. in Austen 6), whom "she learnt to censure" (Austen 6). While neither Catherine, nor the narrator is preoccupied with the analysis of the poem, the reader is invited to ponder upon the meaning of this quotation in relation to the heroine and her literary preferences. While the conclusions of such an examination might differ from one reader to another, it is my personal opinion that the lesson which is supposed to have been learned by Catherine in this particular instance is that she should avoid those who indulge in their misery to the extent that they fail to see anything good in the world, or any greater pain, for that matter. Concurrently, it is a call for her to learn from their negative example and be able to maintain her good-humour and stay a soothing presence in the lives of those of a less happy disposition.

This kind of lesson is actually a piece of wisdom which is passed down from the great writers who had proven their complex understanding of human nature in relation to morality. Their works are lessons of common sense which are often taught by the book, but mostly learnt from experience, especially in the case of young women of good breed whose education is primarily meant to shape them into pleasant and preferably unchallenging companions. This is also the case of other literary references inserted in this part of the novel. Most of them are slightly misquoted as proof of Catherine's attention or imagination having probably been diverted at the moment of reading. All these lessons qualify her as "heroine" material, meaning that they supposedly provide young Catherine with an amount of information, or rather with a set of qualities which are to shape a heroine as it stereotypically evolved from the tradition of the Romance.

Following Pope in this collection of quotes there is Thomas Gray with his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", from which Catherine learns that "many a flower is born to blush unseen, / And waste its sweetness on the desert air" (Gray qtd. in Austen 6). While this could be considered a pessimistic idea, it is simply necessary for a young woman not to take too much pride in or be too self-conscious about her own beauty. She is to understand and remember that her "sweetness" might go to "waste" or be "unseen" unless supported by favourable temper, character, and manners to recommend her to society, in general, and to a potential suitor, in particular. To an "almost pretty" girl such as Catherine (Austen 4), the reference might not directly implicate a ravishing beauty which she is delicately cleared of on previous accounts, but a consolation to any disappointment which could occur in her future interactions as a result of her not being appreciated. Furthermore, this is a very poetic and specifically romantic point which is suggested in the given verses, one to be contemplated by a heroine who has so many obstacles to overcome, especially when it comes to some of the people she encounters. No matter how accomplished, beautiful and "sweet" she may be, it is of no certainty that these qualities will conquer the world for her or, at least, provide her story with a happy ending.

If ill-humour is to be avoided and beauty of appearance and character might prove futile in the often cruel world, a more optimistic thought is to follow, again slightly misquoted from James Thomson's "Spring" part of his poem, "The Seasons": "it is a delightful task / To teach the young idea how to shoot" (Thomson qtd. in Austen 6). "The young idea" might be an impression which must "be taught to shoot" or must be, in my view, developed and properly let out through the gift of expression. This is an important skill for regular young women and heroines alike: they should be able to order their thinking, ensure its propriety and know, in terms of both quality and quantity, how to communicate it. At the same time, it is to be noted that Thompson's poem is about spring: the rebirth

of nature as well as that of human life, for spring regenerates nature literally and the human world metaphorically, and brings about the joys of youth. Catherine must meet people, have suitors, conclude a successful marriage, and proceed to build a family through which to restart this cycle of life.

This information comes in “a great store amongst the rest” (Austen 6) from Shakespeare as well. The first Shakespearian lines supposedly registered by Catherine are selected from Act III of “Othello”: “Trifles light as air / Are to the jealous confirmations strong / As proofs of holy writ” (Shakespeare qtd. in Austen 6). These verses of warning are, just like the others, only to be validated by specific circumstances the heroine might encounter. Yet, the presence of a linear plot might have aided Catherine understand and internalize the subject, hence the “great store [of information] among the rest” (Austen 6). A handkerchief dropped by Desdemona, a “trifle light as air”, is a deadly proof, or “confirmations strong”, to Othello’s suspicions of his beloved wife’s unfaithfulness, or “holy writ”. Although Shakespeare’s reader is empowered by the events and he can see that Desdemona is just as innocent as her husband is paranoid and obsessively jealous, these lines of wisdom are not exaggerated when related to a society of the most delicate etiquette, where unintentional, but careless movements or replies could be interpreted as subtle hints to other more driven minds. While Austen’s reader may be sure that there shall not be the smallest handkerchief to be dropped by Catherine, he or she will realize while reading on and on that this unlikely heroine remains genuinely ignorant in terms of the less obvious – or sometimes clearest – intentions of others. But there is one other piece of information Catherine receives from Shakespeare which is more suited to her character and experience, therefore easier to internalize. “And the poor beetle that we tread upon / In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great / As when a giant dies” (Shakespeare qtd. in Austen 6). This quote from Shakespeare’s “Measure for Measure” teaches Catherine the lesson of empathy which her kind heart is naturally inclined to: suffering is the same for everybody regardless of their “corporal” size or rather regardless of their strength or weakness. A heroine must understand this in order not to be cruel and keep a pure heart, the one treasure which promises her success and happiness.

The last reference in this collection of Catherine’s quotes is selected from the Act III of Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night”: “like patience on a monument, / Smiling at grief” (Shakespeare qtd. in Austen 6), which is, as the narrator specifies, “what a woman in love always looks [like]” (Austen 6). A certain irony is to be sensed in this comment as it is related to so solemn a quote. While it is a wonderful delight to be in love, it is not a circumstance to actually produce that joyous promised effect to most of the ambitious young girls. Being in love can only be fortunate if it is returned not only in intensity of feeling, but through

a well-timed proposal as well – and it is often this proposal, this moment of meeting between personal wishes and the arrangements of the world, which produces and only by itself cures a tremendous “grief”, a fear which hardly allows any moment of bliss. It takes the largest amount of patience to survive this period of courtship where one can be so easily deceived, and where the anxiety to encounter the object of one’s affection is positively insatiable. This anxiety is to be felt by Catherine as she falls in love with young Tilney and she is all the more justified in her want of patience since she is not supported by anybody in her attempts to find and keep his company.

While she “brought herself to read them [sonnets]” (Austen 6) and manages to learn lines of verified wisdom, all of these difficult readings were less of an aid to her than the novels she could actually grasp and learn to apply – a trial and error process of learning, but a successful one. She is not, in truth, a wise reader, but a young, inexperienced one who attempted the great works of literature too early, but proved herself captivated by those closer to her time and age, thus proving her entering into a second, more advanced stage in terms of reader typologies. Catherine becomes, as it will soon be argued, an “avid reader” who gets to *absorb* literature and its lessons not by rule, but unconsciously by the pleasure of reading.

About a week after her arrival in Bath, Catherine befriends Isabella, the daughter of an old school fellow of Mrs. Allen’s. This is a very fortunate event for the heroine since no company could be procured for her beforehand, besides that of young Tilney, a clergyman she takes special interest in and with whom she had the pleasure to dance. Isabella is Catherine’s superior in age and experience, which makes her a guiding presence in the heroine’s daily activities, especially reading, a habit to which they both adhere with joy and which is no longer a personal endeavour. According to Jody L. Wyatt, reading “serves as a touchstone for sociable intercourse throughout the novel” (271). In this particular friendship, reading might be the strongest bond between the two girls because while Isabella provides the material, Catherine shows very enthusiastic feedback or, in other words, they are on the same page – metaphorically and, often, literally. When asked about her reading *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Catherine readily replies to her friend: “Yes, I have been reading it ever since I woke” (Austen 24), which is the exact reaction Isabella might have hoped for. She tries to persuade Catherine to beg for further details to be revealed and as she fails at this particular task, she proceeds to present Catherine with a list of possible eventual readings, “all [of them] horrid” (Austen 24).

In her essay, “Rereading the Patriarchal Text – The Female Quixote, Northanger Abbey, and the Trace of the Absent Mother”, Debra Malina suggests that while Isabella’s superiority in social matters is clear to both the heroine

and the reader, it is the privilege of the latter to realize this particular character's inferiority in terms of character: "we recognize the selfishness and pretence of Isabella, though our heroine has not" (Malina 285). This is an important point considering the context of the novel: two young women who become enthusiastic readers, neither of them wise, but both of them exactly what they are expected to be. The fact that one is so vain might explain her interest in a genre which is generally disregarded by the highbrow reader of the time, while the other being so authentic and innocent makes her so taken with the unlikely, but exciting plot of a Gothic novel. Nonetheless, they are not the only characters whose opinions on such readings are revealed. For instance, John Thorpe who, besides being Catherine's insistent suitor, is "a boasting, blustering idiot" (Malina 285), expresses his position on novels, more exactly that he never reads them. When referring to Anne Radcliffe's name, he proclaims her novels to be "worth reading" (Austen 31) as if he had been an authority on the matter. Yet, Thorpe is ignorant of her being the author of the very work he had been asked about in the first place. This man and Isabella are, by their similarly shallow personalities, as well as by their different opinions on this subject, exceedingly illustrative in terms of the general reception of Gothic fiction, Catherine's genre of choice. When discussing the subject of her favourite novel with young Tilney and his sister, Catherine receives a different account from that which she had learned to expect:

The person, be it gentleman or a lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid. I have read all of Mrs. Radcliffe's works, and most of them with great pleasure. The Mysteries of Udolpho, when I had once begun it, I could not lay down again; - I remember finishing it in two days - my hair standing on the end the whole time. (77)

This account of Tilney's, which is eventually supported by his sister cannot be mistaken for irony or mocking, for although the character seems obviously witty and playful in his conversation drive, he is as authentic as his future wife, Catherine - a masculine truthfulness, therefore one devoid of naiveté or innocence. His opinion as a young man of good character weighs heavily upon Austen's novel's slogan: respect and appreciate literature. He is clearly a well-read man, which is proven to the reader as he proceeds to name characters and describe the many books he had read while studying at Oxford, as well as when he words his appreciation for history books.

Catherine cannot really share this opinion (Austen 78) since, to her, there is nothing in them that she can relate to. History belongs to men. There is no room for women neither in the course of the events, nor in their being registered in writing. It is also to be mentioned that this particular reticence the

heroine feels towards history is no impediment to her appreciation of her beau. “[A] good-looking girl, with an affectionate heart and a very ignorant mind, cannot fail of attracting a clever young man, unless circumstances are particularly untoward” (80). Foolish as she might appear to a contemporary reader, Catherine is simply charming to a potential husband who cannot but look forward to having a wife who can appreciate just the right amount – or genre – of literature. It is chiefly for this very reason that Henry Tilney appears to mock or at least confuse her, especially in a later episode where he presents her with a scenario of her experience at Northanger Abbey. Following Gothic patterns and motifs, he directs Catherine’s attention to the possibly frightening, but equally exciting prospect of “a room without windows, door, or furniture” (114), “the ancient housekeeper” (114), “gloomy passages” (114), “a ponderous chest which no efforts can open” (114), and many other elements meant to support the idea of the residence being “haunted” (114). Then he proceeds to describe the adventures as well as the responses Catherine might give to the unlikely, yet appropriate course of events, including the discovery of a secret door leading to a series of secret chambers, one of them furnished with a sophisticated cabinet which hides the diary of a “wretched Matilda” (115). While Catherine does not fall into a suspension of disbelief at this fantastical plot, it is definitely an encouragement if not a trigger for her to suspect that at least part of the fictional world she had read about had partially invaded her own. In “Early Experiments and Northanger Abbey”, Mary Waldron mentions that “it is here that Gothic fantasy and real life mesh for Catherine; for the first time her reading is her only guide” (31). However, it is not the space itself as it is its inhabitants that Waldron refers to in the quote; it is the family dynamic, as well as their behaviour towards herself which Catherine fails to understand, never having encountered something of the sort anywhere else but in the novels. Having learned that evil is to be expected, she senses it and exaggerates it according to the Gothic pattern, especially in the case of General Tilney who is “as immediately recognizable to the modern reader as he must have been at the turn of the nineteenth century as the archetypal domestic tyrant” (Waldron 31). While the building itself is typically English, modern and neat rather than eccentric and dark, there is a tension within its walls which manages to make it feel like a prison, without looking like one. It is the atmosphere which confuses Catherine; she finds right upon arriving that “the strictest punctuality to the family hours would be expected at Northanger” (Austen 117). This strictness intensifies the tension which the despotic head of the household, the General, seems to be creating: he rules the daily lives of his family members, this being another reminiscent of the Gothic villain.

At this point in Austen's novel, the reader might already be convinced that the heroine will marry Henry Tilney and might suspect that her visit to Northanger Abbey is, even to the naïve Catherine, an opportunity to deepen the acquaintance with the family and be courted by her chosen one. In spite of the legitimacy and favour of such an idea, it is soon to be realized that the object of affection is rather absent, as he is an already independent young man with a residence of his own – one which is not too far, yet bearing the obstacle of his father who presides over him at least from the point of view of their meeting. Eleanor, the polite, kind sister, is the only person who can provide pleasant company and entertainment to Catherine, yet her endeavours are either restricted or called off by her father, the absolute master of his home and its inhabitants. Nevertheless, while their position might soon be understood by the reader, it is not the case of Catherine. As Waldron explains, “both tolerate their situation and repress their reactions; their superior education and cultivated habits impress Catherine, who mistakes their sophisticated demeanour for happiness” (32). But it is not long before the heroine notices the anxious behaviour of Miss Tilney towards her father – a notice that might have never come to her if it had not been for the novels which shaped the little awareness she has of the situation: “impressions of horror rush in to fill the vacuum left by her education” (Waldron 32). Her growing concerns about her surroundings would have been a matter of parody if there had not been any glimpse of truth in them, but there is truth in them indeed, and Catherine's instinct if not her intellect is trained enough to sense it. According to David Blair, “in projecting the Radcliffean paradigms of the Gothic villain, Catherine is extrapolating from her own authentic responses to him and to the dark undercurrents of the Northanger milieu over which he presides” (Blair XI).

Despite her ability to sense trouble, there is no way she could have possibly suspected the real, worldly sort of evil in General Tilney. Her lack of wisdom is backed up by an embarrassing misunderstanding which finally proves the malice of his character, as well as his indifference to others. Tilney victimizes his own daughter by consequences of his mistake. The abbey tour he offered to Catherine was not meant to make him appear a welcoming host, but to display his wealth to her in the hope that it might mean to her what it means to him. Therefore, wealth should become a perfectly sufficient if not excellent reason for Catherine to accept his son's eventual proposal of marriage. In denying her access to his late wife's apartments, General Tilney has no intention of hiding a sinister secret, as Catherine suspects. It is simply that this part of the residence might not ensure a sight impressive enough to be worth his scarce time and effort to present. Although Catherine expresses her wish to see this particular part of the abbey and the General's daughter is actually excited to

show it to her, Tilney's mind cannot be changed. To him, the sentiments and the preferences of either his guest or his daughter are equally unimportant. As David Blair argues, the "General's patriarchal control and his ways of imposing it" are by "bullying others by hypocritically appearing to consult them only to pre-empt the result of the pseudo-consultative process" (XIII). He is perfectly indifferent to the feelings and wishes of those around him, strangers and family alike, and if there is any willingness in him to give them any comfort, it is merely because it is, in one way or another, in his own interest. His kindness towards Catherine is, therefore, a necessary step in his process of securing her interest in his home. Nonetheless, it is this exact goal that shatters his whole act once a misunderstanding is eventually proven to have occurred. This misunderstanding was caused, of course, by just another weak character. The proud John Thorpe was so sure that Catherine would become his wife that he decided to acquaint the world with his good luck and exaggerated the expectation of his supposed future wife's wealth and status. The heroine has neither an outstanding financial status, nor is she of superior birth, yet the circumstances she finds herself in seem to have tricked others into thinking she actually was – a mistake of their own prejudice, and one that Catherine has not suspected for a moment. She appears to be surrounded by evil, an evil situation which has General Tilney at its core.

While the house tour episode is the main trigger of Catherine's "enchantment" with the surroundings (Hofkosh 101), as well as her eventual awakening, there are other several instances where Catherine finds herself an unlikely heroine of the Gothic. She is amazed at finding "an old-fashioned black cabinet" (Austen 122) in the very regular room she has been assigned at Northanger Abbey. She feels quite embarrassed both at her own excitement and at Miss Tilney's discovery of this object. The latter calmly accounts for the object's presence. The fact that Catherine's chief finding in the drawers is not the diary of a "wretched Matilda", as Henry envisioned in his wild scenario (Austen 115), but a most unimportant note probably left and forgotten by a servant does not put an end to a fantasy she appears to be enjoying.

While Catherine appears to be carried away by the fantasies she encountered in novels, she does not allow them to completely shut her out of her own reality. The stories Catherine has read guide her by filling in the blanks of her wisdom and experience, but without ultimately concealing her own folly from her. They excite Catherine's instincts confronting danger which is nothing she has ever known before in her short, pleasant, and quiet life. The tension and the evil make her situation, indeed, delicate. Catherine is devoid of any immediate authority to protect her maybe not from literal imprisonment or murder, but from misfortunes of the more usual kind, such as humiliation or unsuitable marriage – misfortunes which, in real life, tend to equal the gravity

of those in the novels. Nevertheless, it is of utmost importance to mention that the Japan cabinet episode is primarily driven by Henry Tilney's scenario, while the events which are to follow are focused on his father who gradually becomes the Montoni of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* to Catherine. Much as she might try to temper herself, Catherine cannot help interpreting every new detail, be it about the late mistress of Northanger Abbey or its master. The General's morning walks and late-night readings, the seemingly too private circumstances of his wife's passing, as well as the consistency of the tension in the family dynamic seem far too suggestive for Catherine to resist them. Consequently, she allows a narrative of her own making to take control of her thoughts and actions. Catherine resolves to explore the apartments which do not seem to give her a moment of peace. To Catherine, they are the key to solving the mystery she cannot help reading into. The fact that the Gothic romance, which is her guide, deals with domestic danger, with the interior, with a book which might contain a note or a piece of furniture hiding some hint of violence fuels her quest. When exploring the rooms, she has become most interested in, Catherine realizes her own folly:

Catherine had expected to have her feelings worked, and worked they were. Astonishment and doubt first seized them; and a shortly succeeding ray of common sense added some bitter emotions of shame. She could not be mistaken as to the room; but how grossly mistaken in everything else! (140)

Needless to say, there is nothing irregular, nothing strange or dark about the apartments, and the heroine's sense of shame brings her back to reality. But it seems that in order for her to really understand the nature of her own illusion and renounce it, there must be somebody to give her some explanations. That somebody happens to be not only he who has initially excited her imagination, but he whose appreciation and approval she is most ardently looking for: Henry Tilney, the object of her affection. Upon analysis, he immediately realizes Catherine's motives and feelings, and replies to them accordingly. He gives her the sad, but ordinary account of his mother's passing. He also describes to her the nature of his father's feelings and concludes with the following comment on Catherine's ideas:

If I understand you rightly, you have formed a surmise of such horror as I have hardly words to – Dear Miss Morland, consider the dreadful nature of the suspicions you have entertained. What have you been judging from? Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians. Consult your own understanding, your own sense of the probable, your own observation of what is passing around you [...] (144)

This is one of the few instances when Henry Tilney addresses Catherine's feelings and confusions with such directness that she cannot possibly miss the reproach beneath his words. Young Tilney could not be a proper, omnipresent guide in this journey of hers as their bond, as well as his own problems, did not allow it, yet he is the only one able to really understand and finally "awaken" her (Austen 145). He basically determines her to reason and reconnect with her surroundings after having presented very clearly the truth of the events that are of so much concern to the heroine. The reader may trust him as much as Catherine does, since he has proven himself to both in many previous instances. Yet, it is not to be forgotten in this particular case that Henry's own education, his delicacy, as well as his filial duty, might have prevented him from giving a perfectly accurate account, at least when it comes to his father's character. As Mary Waldron argues, "he cannot, because of current standards of filial respect, say, My father is a cruel and hateful man and that is why you feel as you do", even if he manages to say just enough to clear the General of Catherine's suspicions (33). It is exactly this piece of information which he cannot share that the heroine has learned through her novels.

When Jody L. Wyatt discusses Catherine's supposed typology as a reader, she argues that,

If Catherine is a bad reader because she fabricates stories from the conventions of her Gothic reading matter to explain what she cannot understand in the real world, then we must reconcile her supposed reformation with the fact that her initial perceptions are often not far from the "truth" of her social reality, and intimate knowledge of novel conventions is necessary for the understanding of the characters within this novel as well as for readers of it. (268)

While the heroine was wrong and exaggerated in her supposition, there was, as explained by this quote, some truth in her seeing evilness in her surroundings and, more specifically, in General Tilney. Her shame in having taken her instincts too far is only natural and formative in its own right. Yet, while she had been foolish, she had never been dumb – and that is, to a certain extent, thanks to her reading, which provided an unlikely, yet useful set of ideas.

Catherine, an avid reader of Gothic novels, did not simply excite her imagination too far – as it may appear on a first reading of *Northanger Abbey* – fiction developed her instincts and awakened her sense of danger, helping her figure out a truth she needed to know, but which no one could tell her. At a time when no previous experience, knowledge or wisdom could guide her steps, Catherine found a sense of direction in the novels she read. In other words, fiction came in to help her make sense of the world and ultimately shape it.

In conclusion, the analysis of Austen characters' reading habits adds important points with regard to their personalities, development, success, and misfortunes. While *Northanger Abbey* is the most straightforward of the Austenian novels in showing the way fictions shape the world even within fiction, each and every Austenian novel is connected to the reading habits of the novelist's time. Austen employs these reading habits in order to support the characters and the development of the narrative.

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THE FEMININE PARADIGM OF CULTURE IN ALICE VOINESCU'S CONCEPTION

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ABSTRACT. *The Feminine Paradigm of Culture in Alice Voinescu's Conception.*

Alice Voinescu, the first Romanian woman to obtain a PhD in Philosophy, proposed a female cultural paradigm in the conferences she held between 1933-1943, in the context of the women's emancipation movement of the interwar period. In her view, the male model of knowledge, based on abstract thinking, must be permanently conjoined with the female one, based on intuition and affect, in a totalizing, modern perspective. The salvation of the "eternal human" through the "eternal feminine", characterized by respect for tradition and continuity both in culture and in society, represents an alternative for materialistic civilization, which is the outcome of the male cognitive pattern.

Keywords: *Alice Voinescu, femininity, feminism, spirituality, masculine, culture, generation, new man*

REZUMAT. *Paradigma feminină a culturii în concepția lui Alice Voinescu.*

Alice Voinescu, prima femeie doctor în Filosofie din România, propune în conferințele susținute între anii 1933-1943 o paradigmă culturală de tip feminin, în contextul mișcării de emancipare a femeilor din perioada interbelică. În viziunea sa, modelul masculin al cunoașterii, bazat pe gândirea abstractă, trebuie conjugat permanent cu cel feminin, întemeiat pe intuiție și afect, într-o perspectivă totalizatoare modernă. Salvarea "eternului uman" prin "eternul feminin", reprezentat deopotrivă în cultură și în societate de respectul pentru tradiție și continuitate, reprezintă alternativa unei civilizații materialiste, operă a tiparului cognitiv masculin.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Alice Voinescu, feminitate, feminism, spiritualitate, masculin, cultură, generație, om nou*

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In a period marked by the pre-eminence of the male spirit in culture, theorized as such by philosophers and art scholars, Alice Voinescu (1885-1961) was a special figure in the landscape of Romanian literature. Having obtained a BA degree from the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy in Bucharest, under the supervision of Titu Maiorescu (1908), she continued her studies in Paris, Leipzig and Marburg and, in 1913, became the first Romanian woman with a PhD in Philosophy. Despite the title conferred by the Sorbonne, accompanied by the invitation to occupy a position of assistant professor there, Voinescu returned to the country only to face a long series of difficulties and refusals throughout her life. The Department of History of Modern Philosophy of the University of Bucharest rejected her candidacy, on the grounds that “a woman cannot fill the position of university professor” (Grigorescu; Simion 393), so in 1922 she became professor of Aesthetics and Theatre History at the Royal Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Art. Her intellectual prowess, confirmed, among other things, by her numerous participations in the Pontigny debates, alongside renowned personalities such as André Gide, Roger Martin du Gard, André Malraux, François Mauriac, etc., was overshadowed by a tragic individual and collective destiny. When the communist regime was installed, at the end of the 1940s, she was arrested and sentenced to one year and seven months in prison, and then to forced domicile, until 1954, for having attended a conference held by Petru Manoliu (Crăciun 25). This exceptional writer and thinker “of the highest intellectual and aesthetic standing possible”, according to Petru Comarnescu (321), endowed with “subtle arguments and fine analytical discernment”, according to Nicolae Florescu (122), is relatively little known in post-war Romanian culture. During her life she published only two monographs, *Montaigne. Omul și opera* [*Montaigne. The Man and the Work*] (1936) and *Eschil* [*Aeschylus*] (1946), a volume of studies, *Aspecte din teatrul contemporan* [*Aspects of Contemporary Theatre*] (1941), and translations from Charles Dickens, Heinrich von Kleist and Thomas Mann. The collection of studies *Întâlnire cu eroii din literatură și teatru* [*Encounters with Heroes from Literature and Theatre*] was published posthumously (1983). After the fall of the Iron Curtain, two volumes of correspondence saw the light of print, as did a comprehensive journal considered by critics “a shocking document about the tragic fate of an exceptional intellectual woman” (Simion 323) and a series of radio conferences gathered under the title *Din cauzele crizei sufletești de azi* [*The Causes of Today's Spiritual Crisis*].

Writing in a sparse style, out of excessive aesthetic scrupulousness, and extremely modest, as she revealed herself in her journal, Alice Voinescu delivered outstanding courses and lectures, which represented, in Al. Paleologu's opinion, “her great art” (235). Her fragmentary, essayistic discourse, like a spoken book, reproduced a philosophy that had descended into the city. Patterned after the methods of ancient philosophy, her mind was lively, dialogical, concerned with the most diverse topical issues. Whether she talked about Paul Claudel's

theatre, Nicolae Grigorescu's painting, Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, Torquato Tasso's poetry, Goethe's Faust or various social moral issues, the thinker expressed her ideas in a clear, well-articulated manner, from a modern, multidisciplinary perspective.

The radio conferences she held in Bucharest between 1933 and 1943, in a period of socio-political unrest, but also of unprecedented cultural effervescence in our country, under the influence of Romanian existentialism, represented by the "Criterion" group, are a cultural document of utmost importance. What are the causes of today's spiritual crisis?, asks the professor of aesthetics, from the vantage point of a philosopher specializing in Montaigne, but also from the perspective of a woman trying to offer cultural legitimation to the women's emancipation movement, which has acquired ever greater momentum since the turn of the century. According to the vision expressed in these conferences, the historical, social, cultural and political role of women has solid philosophical and psychological theoretical foundations and can become, in turn, the cornerstone of a new type of culture and spirituality.

The reasons for the supposed spiritual crisis of the time, Voinescu believes, are of a social, economic, political and scientific nature. Collective mentalities, the shared prejudices regarding the place held by women in culture and society, also play a part. The new age is one of great transformations, grafted primarily onto the general conception of the theory of relativity, which can change the old philosophical paradigms. If mechanistic materialism believed in an objective and stable universe, the new vision will most likely shatter the traditional representations of space and time as fixed, immutable forms, offering the alternative of a non-material and non-objective universe, seen as the ensemble of the "perceptive actions of an infinite number of centers that create energy, individual centers linked by mutual relationships" (*Din cauzele crizei sufletești de azi* 55). The real thus becomes the creation of individual and collective consciousness. Therefore, the sense of social responsibility and man's confidence in his own forces must be widely cultivated. Naturally, the new scientific idealism calls for an imminent spiritual revival, in the opinion of the essayist.

Researching the psychology of the younger generation, theorized by Mircea Eliade and the "Criterion" group, the lecturer notices significant differences from the previous generations. Adaptability, emotional flexibility, optimism, an appetite for adventure, the acceleration of vital rhythms, a taste for the values of immediacy and the primacy of the will are some of the new trends, corresponding to the scientific dynamism of the time. The originality of young people, Voinescu says, in agreement with the philosophy of living, "lies precisely in their power to realize the now" (*Din cauzele crizei sufletești de azi* 42). The instant demands its right to spiritual valorization, determining a new type of morality and a new culture, that is, one based on the resources of the actual, which is elevated to the rank of a principle. The feeling of nothingness, Heideggerian anguish, both of

which represent existentialist attitudes characteristic of the new mentality, are considered positive and fruitful spiritual stances, symptoms of the need for fulfilment, for meaning. The apparent anarchy detectible among the young people is but the sign of this quest. Adopting a Bergsonian stance, the author notes the metamorphosis of the instant from the “tomb of time” (44) into lived duration, full of infinite possibilities. The younger generation embodies these changes in a very real, specific way. They are achieving, in fact, a blend between the real and the rational, between intellect and affect, becoming “in-between” humans, who are natural, social and intellectual at the same time.

The role of women, in this context, is a decisive one, because it is their task to bring to spiritual life this new type of human. As proof, “humanity, especially its female component, seems to be changing today” (65). The feminine paradigm of knowledge implies intuitive, participative understanding, of the “co-naître” type, which means, “to give birth *with* the known thing” (16). It also implies the primacy of poetic thinking over the theoretical one, of personal reflection over the system, of the particular over the general. The contribution of women in culture and society must be re-analyzed from a modern standpoint, with a view to adopting this cognitive model, in agreement with the new philosophical directions and with the assumptions made by Romantic philosophy.

However, the countless patriarchal prejudices promoted by the so-called common sense are against this ideal. Traditionally, women are considered simple toys, reduced to the sole quality of being likeable creatures, or simple working tools. “The mission of one half of humanity is to please the other half – this is an aberration that explains the feminist reaction”, Alice Voinescu comments (65). The very feeling of modesty, imposed by society for centuries, was nothing but a trap meant to feed the woman’s sense of inferiority. The current “impudent offensive” translates “the need to get out of ignorance and of the *childishness* to which she was indirectly condemned because of a poorly understood modesty” (71). The real reason behind the women’s emancipation movement is not, as it might seem at first glance, a tendency towards disorder and debauchery, but a “thirst for superior order and growth” (71).

Another widespread prejudice, even among people of culture, is that intellectuality poses the danger of defeminization, “as if the truth were not a healthy target of Eve’s curiosity, as if *knowing* could weaken the powers of her heart” (36). The problem arises in the context of an increasingly visible trend of equal education for the two sexes, which of course Alice Voinescu supports, not only theoretically, but, first and foremost, by her own example. Unlike in past times, a woman now has access to study, she can pursue her intellectual vocation, can have a career, and this is undoubtedly a reparation and a right she has earned, confirmed by her numerous achievements in many fields. However, it remains to be seen who is meant to assess the results of these achievements. “Don’t you believe”, Voinescu asks, “that no matter how vast the realm of

activities to be conquered by women from now on, no matter how many original scientific, artistic or social creations the genius of women will add to the cultural heritage, men will remain the masters of this realm, in the sense that they will possess the criterion for assessing female behavior?" (125).

Analyzing these criteria, which are masculine prerogatives, both in the social and in the cultural spheres, the author observes that the patriarchal mentality tends to either reduce women to pitiful proportions, or to exaggerate their qualities. The literary pattern of the "angel or demon" type is suggestive in this regard. In the collective male perception, all the virtues of women are located between these two extremities, like those of a Procrustean bed: "While the masculine realm is restricted to the purely human, prohibiting its own extremes, the realm intended for female development expands beyond the borders of the human, as if feminine nature could only be fulfilled beyond the borders of the natural, as it were, in the realm of the supernatural" (128). The unjust dichotomy of "angel or demon" that is applied to women seems to be the expression of some painful experiences and vain aspirations of the masculine soul.

What is the alternative proposed by Alice Voinescu, a fine analyst and a lucid, intelligent and erudite judge of the cultural and social biases which have been entrenched in the collective consciousness for centuries? Her conceptions, influenced by the cultural philosophy of her time, by Christian existentialism and, to some extent, by psychoanalysis, are not part of a single current of thought. They are neither traditional nor modern, in the narrow sense of the terms, but retain the sole criterion of assumed objectivity in a flexible and fluid personal manner. They are both philosophical ideas, without proposing a philosophy proper, and practical ideas, without being confined to narrow pragmatism. Through a series of social, moral, spiritual, psychological, philosophical, and aesthetic reflections, Voinescu's conferences advocate the achievement of a fair balance between the feminine and the masculine paradigms of knowledge, that is, they endorse a point of view that assumes the identity of the opposites which characterizes, in her opinion, culture itself.

The ideology of equality is, of course, endorsed by Alice Voinescu, the professor of aesthetics. The obvious moral, social and intellectual value of women was confirmed by the recent establishment of schools for girls in Romania, even prior to such implementation in other countries with a much older cultural tradition. Far from being a danger, intellectual education is the prerequisite for higher objectivity, the supreme intellectual quality, and this, in turn, is tantamount to a diminution of individualism, seen as egoism nourished by whim alone. "Serious instruction (the enlightenment of thought)", says Voinescu, "cannot be a threat to femininity, except perhaps in the eyes of those who consider femininity as nothing but unconscious and graceful childishness!" (36). The right of women to work, to get out of the passivity imposed by society and thus embrace a career, is fundamental and legitimate. In a conference entitled "Woman in state

positions” the author argues in favor of the legitimate possibility for women to occupy positions in the state by virtue of their ability to come into direct contact with the actual and to humanize ideas through intuition. If a man views the state as an ideal reality, a pure idea, a woman largely focuses on the human and living nature of social entities. Her capacity “to intuit and animate the concrete “(82), exercised for thousands of years in a narrow circle of experience, in her immediate world, could thus extend to the larger ensemble, to the broader reality.

Furthermore, women can play as active a role as men do – albeit not a military one – in defending the country. Apparently deprived of a heroic aura, professions such as nursing, social work, civil service, education have, in fact, an extremely rich potential. They are distinguished by the heroism of truth and patience and by the virtue of spiritual maturity. Although she firmly believes in full equality between women and men, Voinescu thinks women should, by and large, choose professions that are in tune with their natural calling, professions in the social or cultural fields that have to do with the human body and soul.

In her view, the two paradigms – the masculine and the feminine – represent two specific structural modes based on an archetypal pattern. According to this pattern, man tends to turn the concrete into abstractions, reducing it to pure laws, while woman captures the uniqueness of that which exists through a type of understanding that engages her entire being. Man “thinks the world”, while woman “animates it” (81). Female sensitivity, grafted onto an intimate contact with matter, differs from male sensitivity, which tends to convert the empirical into a category of consciousness. Knowing the living reality is the prerogative of women: owing to their mission of motherhood, they are forced to adjust to the most diverse conditions through a direct understanding of the “concrete” givens. Always in a haste to cope with the immediate turmoil, they cannot afford to linger on phenomena that are constantly on the move and strive to discover their fixed order. Instead of man’s scientific, disinterested approach to nature and life, as he is inspired by curiosity and by the desire to master reality, woman harbors feelings of solidarity and love towards the real. However, truth must be a synthesis of the real and the ideal, and therefore the typical masculine concern for the ideal must be combined with a feminine grasp of reality. Moreover, in order to keep a balance in society and culture, what is needed is not only knowledge of the subject, but also an interest in the individual; not only theoretical constructions, but also the feminine, intuitive way of knowing. In Alice Voinescu’s opinion, the inability to rise above the concrete, which women are often reproached for, may be “the last chance to save human individuality from the mechanized uniformity imposed by the materialistic ideal” (111). Thus, a possible better world cannot be envisaged as an abstract, masculine edifice. It is not a mathematical problem put into equations and solved solely by rational formulas, but a living reality, sifted through the filter of intuition and anchored in the

tradition defended, again, by women. Her duty remains largely that of saving the "feminine spirit of culture" by virtue of her maternal mission, transposed onto a spiritual level, in keeping with the law of the continuity and the preservation of values. And if woman sometimes lags behind man, this is not a sign of inferiority, but of "practical wisdom" (121). The contribution of women to European culture and civilization, Voinescu believes, has always encompassed gentleness, indulgence, kindness and the love of people, that is, "all those spiritual qualities that humanized the human animal and steered it towards the realm of the spirit" (122). Mere intelligence does not guarantee the spiritual evolution of culture and society if there is no respect for the individual and for emotional values. Culture, the essayist concludes, "is not saved by man, who doesn't give his life for it, but by woman, who keeps it alive through faith and patience" (122). For this reason, a better world means saving the eternal human through the eternal feminine.

In its outline, the philosophy of culture proposed by Alice Voinescu gives center stage to the feminine prototype, understood as a condition for the realization of the Universal. Unlike the Romanian interwar philosophers who discussed the ideal of the new man in the context of the "new spirituality", theorized especially by Mircea Eliade, Voinescu, the author of radio conferences, leans on the feminine type of the new human, encapsulated in the model of the superior woman, not as a simple exception, but as a whole generation of superior femininity. The generationist debate of the 1920s and 1930s is thus steered onto the ground of feminist ideology, which will gain more and more traction in the following years.

It is obvious that the theorist, who nearly embraces a "masculine" type of discourse in her celebration of the feminine, remains, at times, indebted to the mentality of her time. Moreover, she does not consider herself a defender of feminism, but of femininity. She does not embrace what she calls the "back path of feminist morality" (71), but looks much further, towards the "superior human with a feminine profile" (66). She does not want to level out the differences between the sexes, which would lead to a so-called "equality in mediocrity" (39), but embraces the ideal of a new human synthesis based on respect for diversity. In her opinion, the courage, freedom, voluntarism and lack of affection of the emancipated women of her time amount to a distortion of feminine consciousness. Moreover, the desire to equalize the natures and behaviors of the two sexes is not an authentic but a borrowed aspiration, signaling the prospect of a type of servitude which could be more dangerous than women's submission to men once was. It is not the "masculinization" of thought that she dislikes, but rather that of the will of her contemporary women, their conquering stance, the exaltation of heroism manifested as lack of shyness, bodily brazenness and brashness. The emphasis on sport in the education of women, their access to specifically masculine careers, such as those of aviator and explorer are commendable, but these are

bound to remain peripheral phenomena. As the example of Joan of Arc shows, if one is to stay true to one's feminine nature, heroism should be seen as the "courage of patience, the courage of expectation and hope" (37). Antigone and the Virgin Mary are the feminine models of European culture. They symbolize the respect for life and the prevalence of reflection over instinct, in contrast to the "type of today's intrepid Amazon", whose attitude betrays, for Voinescu, a false sense of freedom paid for with "sterile strains" and a fatigue manifesting as "sadness, surfeit and a taste of nothingness" (38).

In a conference entitled "On the psychology of women today. Woman and work", Voinescu discusses the impulse of modern women to conquer the territory reserved for men in the field of labor and identifies two features in the attitude of the new Eves. First, the legitimate desire to liberate themselves from the passivity of acceptance, peculiar to the older epochs, is often accompanied by a sense of conquest, which is not devoid of a touch of aggressiveness. Their sometimes-ostentatious pride, the confidence they exude in words and gestures, the radiant, youthful expression on their faces and their slight exhilaration at fulfilling their duty are the visible signs of this triumph, envied by most women who do not work. However, this much coveted independence does not correspond to a genuine spiritual need within the feminine soul. As proof, the working woman often willingly assumes new duties. Her longing for independence seems to be more of a longing for companionship, for a perfect communion with man. For most women, this is the true meaning of that famous "equality" between the genders. A second characteristic of the working woman would be her aspiration to move away from the subjectivity to which society has condemned her for centuries and strive for objectivity. However, the signs of this evolution are sometimes limited either to intransigent ideas, or to pedantry and cynicism. This shows that liberation from the vagaries of subjectivity is an arduous, long-lasting process. What woman lacks, in the opinion of Alice Voinescu, is not the power of abstraction or judgment, but the ability to use these qualities without the interference of sentiment. This is due to a lack of genuine confidence in her own forces, which is the prerogative of the specific objectivity of the masculine spirit.

Beyond these reproaches to mainstream feminism, which are still quite relevant today, but also working through them, Voinescu constantly pleads for objective, liberating knowledge, which is the condition for the full realization of the feminine model. She believes in emancipation enlightened by reason and moderated not by toning down the reliance upon common sense, but by what she considers to be respect for undisputable laws. According to these laws, individualism, pride and boldness (which pertain to masculine ways of thinking) do not fit into feminine patterns of thought, just like patience, gentleness and altruism (corresponding to intuitive, participatory thinking, of the "co-naître" type) do not characterize the masculine spirit. Only the conjugation of the two paradigms can provide a superior model of humanity.

The ethical and pragmatic stakes of Alice Voinescu's discourse are only of secondary import. In fact, her stance on interwar feminism is still under debate. Her articles and conferences, whose social vision is comparable to those of Alexandrina Cantacuzino, Martha Bibescu and Elena Văcărescu, primarily advocate the cultural and spiritual evolution of women rather than a change in customs related to a so-called natural plan. If Alice Voinescu, the professor of aesthetics, appears to have joined the feminist trends of ideas by virtue of some of her assertions, she does so only for cultural reasons, so as to support a humanistic philosophical conception to which all other practical aspects are subordinated. The same holds true for her literary and aesthetic comments, clearly inscribed in a more comprehensive cultural perspective. The essays devoted to Frank Wedekind, *Faustus* or "female humanism" in the volume *Aspecte din teatrul contemporan* (1941) eloquently outline her general vision of feminism as a modern cultural paradigm. Discussing Wedekind, for example, who is considered a champion of women's emancipation, Voinescu notes that the playwright focuses, in reality, on a psychological problem, not a biological one, namely "the right of legitimate expansion for all spiritual powers" (*Întâlnire cu eroi din literatură și teatru* 71). Likewise, the study on *Faustus* analyses not the female characters under their visible aspects, but the "feminine element" they embody: "without the harmony of feminine nature, *Faustus's* anxiety would be dissipated in aimless motion, in directionless change. In the Faustian symbol, the feminine element is the form towards which eternal hope aspires, it is the form in which absolute harmony is mirrored. The eternal feminine is the path that steers life to the mystery of its finality" (756). Before embodying destinies, the heroines therefore represent symbols, philosophical paradigms with archetypal meaning.

Combined with the statements from the essay "Umanismul feminin" ["Feminine Humanism"] and some remarks she makes in her *Jurnal [Journal]* (1997; 2002; 2013) and in *Scrisori către fiul și fiica mea [Letters to My Son and Daughter]* (1994), the ideas acquire the clarity of a system. According to Alice Voinescu, the purpose and foundation of life is freedom, meaning "deliverance from the clutches of necessity" (*Scrisori către fiul și fiica mea* 72), and from the multitude of contingencies and causalities. Freedom is synonymous with the spirit and is given especially by the values of culture that make possible "the perfection of human qualities" (*Întâlnire cu eroi din literatură și teatru* 756). Like Constantin Noica, Voinescu makes a distinction between culture and history in order to demonstrate the ontological superiority of the former, since culture is the essence of a higher type of humanity. Culture evolves by reconciling opposites, unlike history, which progresses by ceaselessly counterposing antithetical values. It is predominantly associated with spiritual knowledge, which rests on intuition, subjective epiphanic experiences, the ultimate finalities, and the "supernatural." It is not limited to theoretical knowledge, as in that of the masculine type, specific

to the intellectual self, which is also different from the cultural self. The role of woman, apparently traditionalist and insignificant, is to reveal to man the “area of mystery” and to help him create his “intimate humanity, not as an individual, as a superhuman or an abstract number, but as a personality” (*Întâlnire cu eroi din literatură și teatru* 764). Women enable the very transition from necessity to freedom, from matter and abstraction to spirit, through the exercise of a “formative geniality” (764), not so much from a pragmatic point of view, as in an ontological sense. As a form of higher existence, culture itself is such a transition from matter to spirit and from abstraction to embodied ideas, and femininity is the symbolic site of this evolution. As an integral part and, at the same time, as a measure of this all-encompassing unity, femininity represents the cultural expression of the spirit and the mark of humanism itself, specific to the feminine gender.

The author’s intellectualist traditionalism, which is evident at times, is filtered through a romantic strand of idealism adapted to the mentalities of her time. Voinescu supports gender equality against equalization, urges the pursuit of the feminine vocation instead of a mediocre uniformity predicated on the idea of women’s excessive similarity with men, and proposes a spiritual humanity of the feminine type against the materialism of its masculine counterpart. While she rejects the notion that women could practically abandon their maternal – natural or spiritual – vocation, Voinescu nonetheless compensates for this intransigency on the theoretical level. Instead of a feminist discourse about the emancipation of women, she prefers a “masculine” discourse about the spiritual paradigm of femininity.

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REVIEWING MINIMALIST THEORIES OF CONTROL AND A BRIEF LOOK AT ROMANIAN CONTROL

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ABSTRACT. *Reviewing Minimalist Theories of Control and a Brief Look at Romanian Control.* The phenomenon of control is a long-discussed topic within the enterprise of generative grammar. Multiple theories were composed and dismissed along with the advancement of the module, and with the development of the Minimalist program, more recent theories on control came to surface. The present article provides a review of two minimalist theories of control: the Movement Theory of Control and the Agree Model of Obligatory Control. A synopsis of one applied model of the MTC on Romanian data is also part of the paper, as is a brief commentary on the structure of Romanian control, namely an exploration of the tension between subjunctive and infinitive control complements.

Keywords: *control theories, minimalist program, Romanian control, Agree Model of Control, Movement Theory of Control*

REZUMAT. *O recenzie a teoriilor minimaliste de control și un comentariu succint asupra fenomenului de control în limba română.* În cadrul școlii gramaticii generative, fenomenul controlului este un subiect foarte dezbătut. Diverse teorii au fost compuse dar și respinse pe măsură ce modulul generativ a avansat, iar dezvoltarea programului minimalist a dus la apariția unor teorii noi, recente. Articolul de față prezintă o recenzie a două teorii minimaliste ale controlului: Movement Theory of Control (teoria controlului ca deplasare) și Agree Model of Obligatory Control (modelul controlului bazat pe acord). O parte secundară a lucrării de față o reprezintă un sinopsis al modelului de analiză al MTC adaptat și aplicat pe structuri din limba română. La acest rezumat se adaugă un comentariu succint asupra structurii gramaticale a controlului în limba română, concentrat asupra tensiunii dintre conjunctiv și infinitiv în structurile de control.

Cuvinte-cheie. *teorii de control, programul minimalist, fenomenul de control în limba română, controlul ca acord, controlul ca deplasare*

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Students of generative grammar coming across the notion of control might find difficulties in understanding its role and development within the enterprise. Oftentimes, control structures are defined in contrast with raising structures, the difference between the two being boiled down to the distribution of theta roles by the matrix verb. The classic examples are “John tried to kiss Mary.” versus “John seemed to kiss Mary.” In the first example John is perceived as both the kisser and the trier, whereas in the second example he is the kisser, but he takes no additional theta role from “seem”, i. e. he is no “seemer.” Although the two constructions appear very similar, they differ in a number of ways. See Table 1 for a synopsis, according to Hornstein, Nunes, and Grohmann in *Understanding Minimalism*:

Table 1.

Raising Structures	Control Structures
Subject takes a role associated with the embedded predicate.	Subject takes roles associated with both main and embedded predicate.
Expletives may occupy subject position.	Expletives may not occupy subject position.
Idiom chunks may occupy subject position.	Idiom chunks may not occupy subject position.
Voice transparent	Not voice transparent

When looking at control by itself, however, understanding it is strongly interconnected with the development of the program within which it is defined. Both the Standard Theory and Government and Binding (GB) contained accounts of control. In the first case, the proposition was that an internal rule—the Equi rule—deletes the lower John (the subject of the embedded clause), which is co-referential with a higher John, base-generated as specifier of the higher ν P. The Standard Theory approach, although important and the basis for future research, did not stand, as it failed to explain some of the basic properties of control, such as the selection of the controller in Obligatory Control (OC) and Non-Obligatory Control (NOC) structures.

The GB Theory introduced PRO as an empty category, base-generated as specifier of the lower ν P and anaphorically linked to John. The GB account involving PRO was an important starting point, but as more types of control were identified, more nuances needed to be added, and as such shortcomings in the theory came to surface. With the Minimalist program, both these accounts were revised, and a new analysis of control was deemed necessary. In this descriptive article, I present a synopsis of the main minimalist theories of control and an account of how an adapted framework might fit the analysis of Romanian data. The purpose of this article is to provide a basis for students of control to understand the current debate surrounding this phenomenon, especially for those looking to study Romanian control.

1. The Minimalist Context

A first account for this phenomenon within the program was that of the Null case, which posited that PRO (as understood in GB) carried an abstract null case, assigned to it by a non-finite inflection. However, this account seems to be a rather circular and non-productive justification, which only apparently solved an issue in the previous existent theory of GB. As explained in *Control as Movement*,

once the distribution of PRO cannot be reduced to a [\pm tense] feature of T, null Case finds no independent motivation within the system and follows from nothing but the attested distribution of PRO. [...] In order to work, the null Case approach requires three stipulations: (i) PRO has no phonetic content; (ii) null Case must be assigned to PRO; and (iii) only PRO can bear null case. These three stipulations track but do not explain the facts under discussion. (Boeckx et al. 18)

The GB and Standard Theory versions, as well as the idea of Null case, were necessary for the identification of certain problem areas, as well as for the understanding of what needs to be explained in order for a theory on control to stand. As mentioned in *Control as Movement*, there are four aspects for which a theory on control needs to account (Boeckx et al. 7):

- 1) The various types of control, how they differ, and why
- 2) The configuration of control, as well as that of the controller and the controlee
- 3) The interpretation of the controlee (how the antecedent is determined and what relation obtains between the two)
- 4) The nature of the controlee

All of these things considered, there are at the moment two accounts in the Minimalist program which attempt to explain the phenomenon of control: the Movement Theory of Control (MTC) and the Agree Model of Obligatory Control. A synopsis of the two theories is presented below.

2. The Movement Theory of Control

As proposed by Hornstein et al, the MTC is a theory that builds on—yet at the same time departs from—the earlier accounts of control, especially those of the Government and Binding theory. This theory relies on one aspect: that control is derived from movement, and as such it is movement-dependent. The operation Move is understood in the MTC as: one element is copied and moved to another position; later in the derivation one copy is deleted². The idea of

² Which copy is deleted differs depending on the language.

accounting for control with movement was received with skepticism, particularly as movement is what accounts for raising structures as well. However, this type of approach—to justify two different phenomena on the basis of one internal mechanism of language—has been justified within the Minimalist program. What helped the cause of this hypothesis in the case of control structures was the disposal of the Deep Structure (DS). At the DS level all thematic positions had to be filled in order for the derivation to continue, and as such, movement to a theta-position could not be postulated. Yet with Minimalism giving up on the DS, the path for a movement account of control opened up.

2.1. The MTC: Features & Proposal

Some defining characteristics of the MTC are that it “endorses a syntactic analysis of control, imposes locality restrictions on control, and sees the controller-controllee antecedence relation as parasitic on Move/Agree relations” (Hornstein and Polinsky 4). Within the theoretical framework of the MTC, three different versions have been proposed, all of which share the features mentioned above, but which differ on some essential aspects. Below is a representation of the sentence “John tried to kiss Mary” in each account:

First account: [John [past] [John v [try [(John) to [John v [kiss Mary]]]]]]]
 Second account: [John [past] [John v [try [PRO to [PRO v [kiss Mary]]]]]]]
 Third account: [John [past] [John v [try [(John-DP) to [John-DP v [kiss Mary]]]]]] (Hornstein and Polinsky 2-3)

The difference between these accounts lies in the nature of the moved element. The second approach employs PRO, and the third variant relies on a doubling of the DP, which could also be a PRO. These two variants postulate this empty category PRO to account for the theta-criterion, which prevents a single DP from having two theta-roles. The second and third options are different in regard to “whether movement to a θ -position is possible; yes on version three and no on version two” (Hornstein and Polinsky 3). However, the first account renounces PRO completely and deems the theta-criterion null³, allowing “John”

³ Some versions retain a variant of the theta-criterion, but the reductionist MTC makes a stronger claim to propose that it is rendered obsolete specifically because it was a consequence of the existence of DS: “In GB, D-structure is the representation of the level of grammatical representation where all and only θ -roles are filled. As lexical insertion precedes movement and as all and only θ -positions can be occupied at DS the prohibition against an expression bearing multiple θ -roles follows. In other words, the relevant part of the θ -criterion is not axiomatic, but follows from how DS was conceived in GB (as well as in almost every theory before it)” (Hornstein and Polinsky 8). Consequently, “the PRO-free MTC implies that DS cannot exist. Indeed, it implies something stronger still; that the θ -criterion is not a principle of UG.” (Hornstein and Polinsky 9).

to move to a theta position and receive a second thematic role. Although this idea of the MTC saw skepticism from the community, the MTC is part of the Minimalist program, and as such it seems only natural that it tries to simplify and reduce the number of conditions according to which control needs to be accounted for.

Further elaboration on the PRO-less account of the MTC is necessary. In this version, the OC PRO is treated as an A-trace, taking into consideration both its interpretative and configurational properties:

- a. It requires an antecedent
- b. Its antecedent must c-command it
- c. Its antecedent must be local
- d. It cannot appear in Case-marked positions
- e. It gets a sloppy interpretation under ellipsis
- f. It cannot have split antecedents
- g. It has an obligatory de se interpretation in “unfortunate” contexts
- h. It must receive a bound reading when linked to an only-DP (Boeckx et al., *Control as Movement* 39)

By employing the derivation model proposed by the MTC, all of these properties can be justified when treating PRO as a trace (result of movement). Furthermore, the MTC considers the PRO “a product of the grammar” (Boeckx et al., *Control as Movement* 44), and not a lexical category; at LF level, PRO is considered as indistinguishable from an A-trace.

Within the Minimalist program, the Bare Phrase Structure prevents lexically empty positions, since it “dispenses with the distinction between a lexical element and the position it occupies. Phrases are understood as projections of lexical items and are built through successive applications of Merge” (Boeckx et al., *Control as Movement* 44). Unlike PRO, which is considered a lexical primitive, a trace appears during the derivation as a result of computational mechanisms, and it is “not built from items of the lexicon” (Boeckx et al., *Control as Movement* 45), thus obeying the Inclusiveness Condition⁴ added in the Minimalist program by Chomsky. In this account, considering the OC PRO an A-trace satisfies the Bare Phrase Structure as well.

Boeckx, Hornstein, and Nunes provide an answer to the four main issues (mentioned above, repeated below for ease of reading) they deemed necessary for any theory on control (*Control as Movement* 47-48):

- 1) The various types of control, how they differ, and why: the main type of control is Obligatory Control, as a type of A-movement which takes a DP and moves it through multiple theta-marked positions. The other type

⁴ “Condition that the output of a system does not contain anything beyond its input.” (according to the Utrecht Lexicon of Linguistics)

is Non-Obligatory Control, which appears in cases where movement is not possible.

- 2) The configuration of control, as well as that of the controller and the controlee: As an A-trace, the OC PRO (the controlee) appears as subject in non-finite clauses, whereas the controller is the head of the A-chain, and defined according to its landing position.
- 3) The interpretation of the controlee (how the antecedent is determined and what relation obtains between the two): OC results in an A-chain (with multiple theta-roles, but an A-chain nonetheless); as such, the controlled element is basically a locally bound anaphor; possible antecedents for the controlee are defined by the positions to which it can move.
- 4) The nature of the controlee: the controlee is a copy, deleted later in the derivation (and as such it has no phonological realization at PF).

2.2. *Shortcomings and Problems*

Given the nature of the theory—to rest the explanation of control structures on the same underlying principle as that of raising structures—a significant amount of criticism was brought to the MTC. However, those who proposed the theory reiterate frequently that the MTC is not a raising theory of control, and that as such it recognizes the differences between the structures. The principle is simply that control and raising rest on the same computational mechanism, that of movement. Much of the criticism brought to the MTC has been addressed and solutions have been offered. Nevertheless, several shortcomings remain. Landau points out a number of these: the fact that the choice of controller and the phenomenon of control shift are part of lexical semantics, the issue of “reflexive implicit control” (Landau 64), the under-generated data pertaining to the classifications of obligatory and non-obligatory control, and some lost contrasts between raising and control structures. Furthermore, the authors also address issues such as “cases where raising is not allowed, but control is”, “cases in which the different morphological patterns associated with raising and control have been interpreted as showing that control constructions involve a Case-marked PRO”, “control constructions involving *promise*-type verbs and control shift phenomena”, as well as partial⁵ and split control⁶ (Boeckx et al., *Control as Movement* 103).

⁵ “A partial control configuration is one where the individual denoted by the controller is a proper subset of the understood subject of the embedded clause.” (Pearson 691)

⁶ “In split control, the referent of the controlee coincides with the joint referent of the matrix subject and object [...] Split control generally is possible with verbs indicating a cooperative behavior but also verbs of communication, commitment, or request such as propose and ask. Split control is a type of OC.” (Potsdam and Haddad 13)

An especially interesting argument against the MTC comes from Icelandic and relates to quirky case and raising-control contrasts. For a more elaborate presentation of this issue, see the case made by Bobaljik and Landau in their 2009 article and the response by Boeckx, Hornstein, and Nunes from 2010 (*Icelandic Control*). The issue was further reiterated in Wood's 2012 article and responses to it can be found in Drummond and Hornstein.

Another criticism that came against Hornstein's MTC is related to the fact that it analyzes control strictly from a syntactic position, whereas a comprehensive theory of control should also contain semantic (and probably pragmatic) considerations as well. Culicover and Jackendoff present a number of arguments for why the MTC is insufficient in this respect.

3. The Agree Model of Control

The Agree Model of Control was proposed mainly by Landau, and it sees control as a phenomenon that is parasitic/residual to the Agree operation. The Agree relation is actually a double one; the first operation appears between a matrix functional head and the controller DP, while the second ensues between the functional head of the matrix clause and an element from the embedded clause which carries phi-features. As such, the functional head in the matrix becomes coindexed with both the controller and the PRO, which leads to obligatory control.

3.1. The Agree Model of OC: Features & Proposal

This theory proposes that all complement types be classified according to features existent on I (inflection) and C (complementizer), more specifically $[\pm T]$ and $[\pm Agr]$. These are explained as such:

- $[+Agr]$: overt morphological agreement
- $[-Agr]$: abstract agreement (as in infinitives)
- $[+T]$: semantic tense (may/may not be overt tense morphology)
- $[-T]$: absence of semantic tense (embedded tense is anaphoric to matrix tense)

Besides these features, the Agree Model wishes to distinguish between referentially dependent and referentially independent entities: $[+R]$ (*pro*, overt DPs) and $[-R]$ (PRO). The rule which Landau proposes for R-assignment is the following (Landau 67):

- $[+T, +Agr] \rightarrow [+T, +Agr, +R]$
- $[-T, +Agr] \rightarrow [-T, +Agr, -R]$
- $[+T, -Agr] \rightarrow [+T, -Agr, -R]$
- $[-T, -Agr] \rightarrow [-T, -Agr, -R]$

This helps account for the control status of clauses, with the Agree relation between DPs with [R] (inherent) and the [R] on I or C (derivative). Where the I or C exhibit [+R], they would require an overt DP or a *pro*, whereas an I or C with [-R] would require a local PRO. As Landau points out, “[t]he interesting generalization that emerges is that “fully specified clauses” – typically, indicatives – would never exhibit OC, but any type of “partially specified” clause might” (Landau 67). Note that this rule is only applicable where there are both [T] and [Agr] features, and if one of them is missing, it does not apply.

This Agree-based model explains OC and is especially concerned with partial control and finite control⁷. With this approach, although PRO is still in use, it is not considered a result of government and it is not explained based on case considerations, but rather on multiple Agree relations. The underlying model simplifies the approach to PRO, considering it the “elsewhere case”, whereas DPs and *pro* are considered “natural cases” (Landau 67). The case of PRO is also explained through the nature of its Agree relation with the matrix probe (direct or indirect Agree – via C).

3.2. Shortcomings and Problems

One of the problems of this approach is that it relies on composite Agree relations, which complicate the explanations and require additional justifications for more specific problems. As Boeckx, Hornstein, and Nunes explain,

the technical apparatus rests on various stipulations regarding the properties of features needed to track the distribution and interpretation of PRO and on composite agreement relations that are not independently motivated and lead to overgeneration. (Control as Movement 30)

Landau also explains some additional shortcomings of the theory, including its lack of insight into backward control and copy control, as well as the impossibility to properly explain split control, and the fact that “its reliance on elaborate feature specifications is not always perfectly matched by overt morphology” (Landau 68). We will further see that especially when it comes to Romanian data, the Agree Model cannot provide a satisfactory framework for the analysis of control (especially backward control).

4. Romanian Control

Romanian is a *pro*-drop language with a rich morphology. In control situations, the subject can originate in a number of positions, and the sentence

⁷ Control structures with finite embedded clauses.

remains grammatical, which contrasts with other languages—English, for instance—where the “shared argument is constrained to a matrix clause position” (Alboiu 6). This is a phenomenon called backward control, specifically because in these cases, the contolee is the one that retains the phonetical form, while the controller is silent. Because of these aspects, it has been tough to properly classify Romanian obligatory control and to place it within the parameters of only one theory. However, in her work “Moving Forward with Romanian Backward Control and Raising”, Alboiu presents some of the main aspects to be considered when discussing Romanian control, as well as an adopted version of the MTC which seems to properly fit Romanian data. I synthesize some of her findings here, but not before tackling an issue related to the structure of Romanian control constructions.

In Alboiu’s study, she focuses on subjunctive OC complements, yet in the literature there is mention and frequent analysis of Romanian infinitival OC complements as well. Since infinitive shows no overt morphological agreement markers, these cases prove more difficult to insert in the described analysis. However, I have found that recently infinitival control complements have begun to fall out of use. Scientific curiosity pushed me to explore this issue further.

4.1. Are infinitival OC complements falling out of use?

A survey⁸ testing the acceptability of different sentences was carried out on 158 native speakers (L1) of Romanian and 3 speakers with L2 Romanian. The acceptability test featured a set of equivalent sentences with infinitival and subjunctive complements, with one additional condition across the board: 1st person subject and 3rd person subject. The six matrix predicates selected for testing were: “a încerca” (to try), “a începe” (to start), “a fi capabil” (to be able), “a hotărî” (to decide), “a se gândi” (to think (about/of something)), “a urî” (to hate). To diminish the mere exposure effect the test also featured fillers, which are not part of the analysis. As fillers I have also included test sentences to evaluate how well the respondents understand the evaluation scale; some were grammatically incorrect, some were semantically incoherent, others were perfectly acceptable from all standpoints. In order to randomize the sets of sentences to make sure the respondents were not simply getting used to a pattern, I first used the Latin square technique to distribute the sets, then I also randomized according to a random number. For the demographics, I gathered data on the age, gender, mother tongue, knowledge of other languages, the area in which respondents live, and the area in which they grew up.⁹ The test asked respondents to evaluate sentences on a scale of one to three, where:

⁸ The survey was part of my MA dissertation thesis. I present here a short summary.

⁹ For reasons of space, these data points are not presented here. Should anyone be interested in these results, please contact the author of the paper via email.

1 - nu am auzit și nu aș folosi propoziția (e incorectă după standardele mele)

2 - am auzit, dar nu aș folosi propoziția

3 - am auzit și aș folosi propoziția¹⁰

The tension which was created in the test and reflected in the results was infinitive control versus subjunctive control. The results for the evaluation of each sentence are presented in Table 2:

Table 2

Sentence ¹¹	Count of 1	Count of 2	Count of 3	Average score	Mode
M-am gândit a pleca eu însămi la mare.	99	55	7	1.428571429	1
Oana s-a gândit a pleca ea însăși la mare.	97	56	8	1.447204969	1
M-am gândit a pleca la mare.	88	64	9	1.50931677	1
Oana s-a gândit a pleca la mare.	96	60	5	1.434782609	1
Urăsc să stau singur în cameră.	2	7	152	2.931677019	3
Alex urăște să stea singur în cameră.	5	12	144	2.863354037	3
Urăsc să stau în cameră.	2	4	155	2.950310559	3
Alex urăște să stea în cameră.	2	14	145	2.888198758	3
Urăsc a sta singură în cameră.	65	75	21	1.726708075	2
Oana urăște a sta singură în cameră.	75	70	16	1.633540373	1
Urăsc a sta în cameră.	66	79	16	1.689440994	2
Oana urăște a sta în cameră.	78	74	9	1.571428571	1
Am încercat să gătesc.	2	1	158	2.968944099	3
Alex a încercat să gătească.	4	3	154	2.931677019	3
Am încercat a găti.	75	72	14	1.621118012	1
Oana a încercat a găti.	92	66	3	1.447204969	1
Am început să citesc cartea.	1	3	157	2.968944099	3
Alex a început să citească cartea.	5	15	141	2.844720497	3
Am început a citi cartea.	58	85	18	1.751552795	2
Oana a început a citi cartea.	62	84	15	1.708074534	2
Sunt capabil să merg la magazin.	16	31	114	2.608695652	3

¹⁰ 1 - Never heard it & would not use it

2 - I have heard it, but I would not use it

3 - I have heard it & I would use it (author's translation)

¹¹ For reasons of space, the glosses for these sentences are not part of the article. Should anyone need access to them, please reach out to the author of the paper via email.

Sentence ¹¹	Count of 1	Count of 2	Count of 3	Average score	Mode
Alex e capabil să meargă la magazin.	12	37	112	2.621118012	3
Sunt capabilă a merge la magazin.	75	72	14	1.621118012	1
Oana e capabilă a merge la magazin.	94	58	9	1.472049689	1
M-am hotărât să merg eu însumi la magazin.	26	82	53	2.167701863	2
Alex s-a hotărât să meargă el însuși la magazin.	26	63	72	2.285714286	3
Am hotărât să merg la magazin.	6	7	148	2.881987578	3
Alex a hotărât să meargă la magazin.	10	13	138	2.795031056	3
M-am hotărât a merge eu însămi la magazin.	79	67	15	1.602484472	1
Oana s-a hotărât a merge ea însăși la magazin.	86	62	13	1.546583851	1
Am hotărât a merge la magazin.	76	76	9	1.583850932	1, 2
Oana a hotărât a merge la magazin.	96	59	6	1.440993789	1
M-am gândit să plec eu însumi la mare.	52	75	34	1.888198758	2
Alex s-a gândit să plece el însuși la mare.	42	80	39	1.98136646	2
M-am gândit să plec la mare.	5	1	155	2.931677019	3
Alex s-a gândit să plece la mare.	0	7	154	2.956521739	3

At any point in the development of a language, it is likely for co-existent structures to fulfil the same function, until the point where one is preferred over the other and replaces it completely. What we witness with the change from infinitive to subjunctive might build up to this point as well. Looking at the results of this survey, sentences with infinitival constructions scored lower across the board. For example, the sentence “M-am gândit a pleca la mare.” had a count of 88 one scores, and a total of 73 of two and three scores combined.

m-	am	gândit	a	pleca	la	mare
CL.1SG	AUX.PAST.1SG	thought	INF	leave	to	seaside

I thought of going to the seaside.

Contrastively, the subjunctive counterpart of this example, “M-am gândit să plec la mare.”, had a total of 5 one scores and 156 two plus three scores.

m-	am	gândit	să	plec	la	mare
CL.1SG	AUX.PAST.1SG	thought	SUBJ	leave	to	seaside

I thought of going to the seaside.

These sentences are simple constructions, with no overt markings that could inflict bias (such as gender markings), so the correlation would be that their low score is the result of the infinitive, considering that similar sentences with subjunctive complements were rated as perfectly acceptable.

Although stating that infinitival control complements are definitively out of use is incorrect at this moment—since correlation is not causation—the test seems to show the native speakers' preference of the subjunctive over the infinitive in these contexts. If this tendency continues, the subjunctive control complements will become the norm in the natural language use. Now I turn back to an analysis of Romanian data against a minimalist framework for the study of control.

4.2. Romanian Control Constructions and the MTC

The following is a synopsis of Alboiu's proposal for Romanian data. Firstly, considering the fact that Romanian allows for backward control, the accounts based on PRO—as well as restructuring theories—are deemed infelicitous. Alboiu proposes that a version of a reductionist theory based on the MTC as elaborated by Hornstein could be appropriate for Romanian. There are some questions to be considered, for a proper account of Romanian control: "(i) Where does the DP subject originate? (ii) Is movement involved? and if so, (iii) What factors determine pronunciation site? (iv) Is there any genuine evidence for PRO or *pro*?" (Alboiu 7). The conclusion Alboiu reaches is that the proper analysis borrows "insights from Hornstein (1999 et seq.) but differs from that approach in at least two ways: [...] theta-roles can be satisfied simply by chain formation without any dislocation, and [...] A-chains cannot cross phasal CP boundaries" (36). In this analysis, theta-roles are validated simply through the operation Agree as feature-checking, and not necessarily under the condition of sisterhood. Furthermore, another important distinction is that case valuation does not fall under the domain of T, but it is a property of phasal domains. According to her proposal, "OC subjunctives are non-phasal, and, consequently temporally unsaturated domains" (Alboiu 20), which explains why a DP which is first selected from Numeration to merge with the lower VP will satisfy the uninterpretable theta-feature of the embedded v but will remain caseless, and therefore still be available for selection by further Agree operations. A second Agree operation which this DP can enter occurs when the matrix v merges with the higher VP (which takes as complement the CP/TP, the embedded clause) and it also has an unvalued theta-role to assign; it acts as a probe and selects the DP for valuation. However, the matrix functional head will have an interpretable [T] feature and as such it will be able to select the DP and assign it case, validating its need and rendering it unselectable for future Agree operations.

Another critical point is made in this work, related to Landau's critique on Hornstein's theory: the account of partial control. Although problematic for English and other languages, the problem of partial control does not apply to Romanian, which seems to only exhibit cases of exhaustive control in OC cases. The following examples are given by Alboiu to prove this point:

- a. * Eu vreau [să plec împreună]
I want. PRES.1SG [SB] leave.1SG together]
- b. * Vreau [să plecăm eu împreună]
want.PRES.1SG [SB] leave.1PL I together]
- c. Eu vreau [să plecăm x împreună]
I want.PRES.1SG [SB] leave.1PL x together]
'I want to leave together. (Alboiu 10-11)

Because of the overt morphological realization of Agree in Romanian, any semantic plurality is reflected in the syntax. As such, "syntactic plurality can only be guaranteed by formal feature checking against a plural value" (Alboiu 11), meaning that the embedded subject in the *c* example above would have to be a *pro*, which takes the sentence out of the scope of obligatory control. These examples also offer a classification of Romanian control, which is reduced to two cases: obligatory control (with verbs such as aspectuals, implicatives) and non-obligatory control (with verbs such as desideratives).

5. Conclusions

As theories still in progress, both the Movement Theory of Control and the Agree Model of Obligatory Control need the back-and-forth communication with the scientific community, in order to address crucial problems and identify more areas which cross-linguistically raise issues. The theories are not yet fully defined, just as the phenomenon of control is not yet fully understood. However, in order to approach the subject, one needs to be aware of the history of control theories, their development, and the current state of the research on the topic. This article presented a systematic review of the two theories mentioned above, comprising the main features, as well as shortcomings of both. Additionally, a look at one possible model of analyzing Romanian data against a minimalist framework was provided for the discussion on Romanian control, with a supplementary note on the structure of Romanian control based on an acceptability test performed on native speakers.

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WHAT TIME DOES IN LANGUAGE: A CROSS-LINGUISTIC COGNITIVE STUDY OF SOURCE RELATED VARIATION IN VERBAL TIME METAPHORS IN AMERICAN ENGLISH, FINNISH AND HUNGARIAN

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ABSTRACT. *What Time Does in Language: a Cross-Linguistic Cognitive Study of Source Related Variation in Verbal Time Metaphors in American English, Finnish and Hungarian.* Such a universal yet abstract concept as time shows variation in metaphorical language. This research focuses on metaphorical language within the framework of the cognitive metaphor theory, investigating time through a contrastive cross-linguistic approach in three satellite-framed languages. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, this study attempts to identify what time does in language in a metaphorical context, with a focus on verbs in causative constructions (e.g. *time heals*) as well as manner of motion verbs (e.g. *time rushes*), through an empirical corpus-based study complemented by the lexical approach. The two main conceptual metaphors that are investigated in this study are TIME IS A CHANGER and TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY. While these two conceptual metaphors are expected to be frequent in all three languages, differences such as negative/positive asymmetry or preference of a type of motion over another are expected to be found. The primary objective is to explore such differences and see how they manifest and why. The hypothesis is that variations among the three languages related to the source domain (CHANGER and MOVING ENTITY), are more likely to be internal and not external. The purpose is to investigate these variations and to determine what cognitive underpinnings they can be traced back to, with a focus on image schemas. The study reveals that source internal variation does prevail over source external variation. The results show that cross-linguistic differences of such a relevant concept as time do exist but more often through unique characteristics of the same source domain rather than new, distinctive domains.

Keywords: *cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, conceptual metaphor theory, metaphorical entailments, source domain*

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REZUMAT. *Ce face timpul: un studiu cognitiv al variațiilor conceptuale legate de domeniul sursă în metafora timpului în engleză americană, finlandeză și maghiară.* Un concept atât de universal, dar abstract, precum timpul, prezintă variații în limbajul metaforic. Această cercetare se concentrează pe limbajul metaforic în contextul teoriei metaforei conceptuale, investigând imaginea timpului printr-o analiză contrastivă în trei limbi satelitare. Prin combinarea metodelor calitative și cantitative, acest studiu identifică ce face timpul într-un context metaforic, cu accent pe verbe în construcții cauzale (*timpul vindecă*), precum și verbe de mișcare (*timpul fuge*), printr-un studiu empiric bazat pe corpus completat de abordarea lexicală. Cele două metafore conceptuale principale care sunt investigate în acest studiu sunt TIMPUL ESTE UN AGENT SCHIMBĂTOR și TIMPUL ESTE O ENTITATE ÎN MIȘCARE. Se anticipează că rezultatele studiului vor arăta faptul că, deși cele două metafore conceptuale sunt frecvente în toate cele trei limbi, există anumite diferențe, precum asimetria între imaginea negativă/pozitivă a timpului sau preferința pentru un tip de mișcare față de altul. Obiectivul principal este de a explora diferențele de acest fel și de a vedea cum se manifestă și de ce. Ipoteza este că variațiile dintre cele trei limbi legate de domeniul sursă (AGENT SCHIMBĂTOR și ENTITATE ÎN MIȘCARE) sunt mai degrabă interne și nu externe. Scopul este de a investiga aceste variații și de a determina pe ce principii cognitive sunt bazate, cu accent pe schemele imagistice. Studiul dezvăluie faptul că variațiile interne ale sursei domeniului prevalează asupra variațiilor externe. Rezultatele arată că există diferențe inter-lingvistice ale unui concept atât de relevant precum timpul, dar aceste diferențe se manifestă mai degrabă prin caracteristici unice ale aceleiași domeniului sursă decât prin domenii noi distincte.

Cuvinte-cheie: *lingvistică cognitivă, teoria metaforei conceptuale, corpus, implicații metaforice, domeniul sursă*

1. Introduction

As time is an abstract concept, it is often associated with more concrete domains through conceptual metaphors. Time has been linked with various concepts, such as money (Lakoff 210), a moving object (Lakoff and Johnson 42), a process or an object (Evans, *The Structure of Time* 253) etc. Time in language can appear as a personified entity that carries out actions. This corpus-based study attempts to give an answer to whether the metaphorical image of time as an agent could show variation in languages, how such differences manifest through metaphors, and what such differences can reveal. Although time has been studied extensively in cognitive linguistics, the specific objective of this paper differs from previous research, mainly in its combination of languages and its focus on a

particular type of difference related to the source domain, in the frame of manner of motion and causative verbs, as the examples show.

(1) *Time runs so fast.* (spoken; *CNN King*, 1990)

(2) *Tovább gördül az idő.* (web; forum)
 on roll.3SG.PRS the time.NOM
 'Time rolls on.'

(3) *Aika tuhoa-a muisto-t.* (web; *Ylilauta*, 2014)
 time.NOM destroy-3SG.PRS memory-PL
 'Time destroys memories.'

In this research source related differences are revealed between a sample of three languages. I have chosen American English, Hungarian and Finnish for the following reasons: first of all, they are all satellite-framed², and this is essential from several points of view: they can be compared on a common ground, second, verbs carry relevant information in these languages, as they possess a "larger and more diverse lexicon of manner verbs" (Slobin, *Mind, code and text* 458). As all three languages in this study are satellite-framed, it is expected that there is a complex collection of motion verbs in all of them, and thus there is a good chance that there will be differences in the way these verbs manifest in time metaphors. Secondly, research in cognitive linguistics often focuses on American English, and it is spoken by a large number of people. It serves as a good ground for comparison contrasted with the other two languages, which are related. Hungarian and Finnish are less frequently researched than English in general, and exploring other languages besides English is relevant in order to avoid Anglo-centrism. Finnish metaphors have been researched to some extent for instance by Huumo (*Moving along Paths in Space and Time*), and Hungarian metaphors extensively by Kövecses as well as Benczes and Ságvári (*Life Is a Battlefield: Conceptualizations of Life among Hungarian Adults*).

This research is based on methods of identifying linguistic and conceptual metaphors by gathering empirical data through corpus research. This is complemented by the lexical approach, which relies on various types of dictionaries and thesauri (Kövecses et al. 151). The lexical method involves consulting dictionaries to find or check the meaning of idioms, proverbs etc.

² Talmy distinguishes two main different attitudes in languages towards the motion event from a semantic point of view which are determined by linguistic typology: there are satellite-framed languages and verb-framed languages. In satellite-framed languages the path of motion is encoded in satellites (e.g. *go out* in contrast with *exit*, an exception in American English for being verb-framed, where the path is encoded by the verb), and the verb encodes the manner of motion (*Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Vol. I*).

These two methods complement each other very well and lead to better results (Kövecses et al. 173). Furthermore, native speakers are consulted to check the validity of the data.

The metaphors are collected from *The Corpus of Contemporary American English*, *The Hungarian National Corpus (Magyar Nemzeti Szövegtár)*, and *The Finnish Language Bank (Kielipankki)*. The following subsections are selected and used for the research: 1. formal texts, which consist of various types of media, as well as academic or scientific texts; this type of source makes up 42.5% of the American English, 55.9% of the Hungarian and 50,2% of the Finnish corpus; 2. informal texts, which are web based texts, e.g. blogs or social media, as well as spoken language; this makes up 43.8% of the English corpus, 36,2% of the Hungarian and 44.5% of the Finnish one; 3. literal texts, which constitute the smallest section, with 13,6% of the English, 7.7% of the Hungarian and 5.2% of the Finnish corpus. Since the size of the material varies, the quantitative analysis is based on normalized frequencies. Normalized frequency is a good way to compare frequencies across languages when the size of the corpora is different.

The metaphor identification method is based on the steps carried out by the Pragglejazz Group (2007). Time metaphors are extracted from the corpus using the node word 'time' and its collocates within the frame of finite verbs, which are then checked for metaphoricality taking into account the context as well. The corpus research is carried out independently first in each language, and the most relevant verbs are identified and selected before comparing them and rechecking the corpus for contrastive examples. Initially, approximately 200 metaphor-signaling verbs are selected from the corpus in each language, which are then contrasted in order to find differences.

The following criteria are met when selecting metaphors from the three corpora: first, the underlying conceptual metaphor has to be TIME IS A CHANGER or TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY; second, the role of time in the sentence has to be that of a metaphorical agent; third, the metaphor has to contain a finite verb; fourth, frequency must comply with the set minimum frequency³; fifth, the metaphor has to appear in a variety of contexts, not only one. This study presents an approximation⁴ of specificity and sharedness, as well as the reasons why some of these metaphors can be considered unique. The process is backed up by

³ In order to be considered relevant, metaphors must have a normalized frequency of a minimum of over 0.005 per million words. There are several reasons why this number is deemed to be suitable for the research. It is necessary to set a frequency, which allows the inclusion of rare, yet recurrent examples found in the corpus, yet which is high enough to exclude isolated occurrences that are not so important for the overall profile of time, as a conceptual metaphor.

⁴ It is an approximation, because in most cases similarities are superficial, and we cannot talk about completely unique metaphors either.

examples from the corpus, which are either rare, yet recurrent metaphors, or frequent conventionalized expressions.

It is questionable how much of the lexicon can be considered unique or universal. The natural semantic metalanguage (Wierzbicka 22) contains universal elements, but a large part of language can be considered culturally unique to some extent, and not universal (Dobrovolskij and Piirainen, *Figurative Language: Cross-cultural and Cross-linguistic Perspectives* 137). Even similar linguistic metaphors and idioms in different languages are only superficially similar, and different at the core (*ibidem*). This suggests that there are time metaphors that show differences from one language to another at a lexical level, grounded in the variation of certain conceptual underpinnings.

Based on the Conventional Figurative Language Theory (Dobrovolskij and Piirainen, *Figurative Language: Cross-cultural and Cross-linguistic Perspectives*) there are two types of figurative language, conventional and non-conventional. *Time passes by* or *time stops*, for example, are conventional metaphors, while *time travels* or *time grinds to a halt* are innovative ones.

Based on this observation, an assumption is that the unique metaphors are more likely to be in the second group of metaphors. It is also possible that some of these rare metaphors are novel versions of more conventional, common expressions. According to Cruse in 1986, metaphors can be “revived” when a synonym is used instead of the dead metaphor, meaning that one word is substituted (42). This might be the case with the American English metaphor *time stops*, a conventional example, and *time grinds to a halt*, a creative version that carries a similar meaning. This can be observed not only within a language, but among languages as well. Such differences between metaphors can be seen on a lexical level, in linguistic metaphors. However, this is not enough to make them unique, the underlying conceptual information that they carry needs to be analyzed as well.

Shared conceptual metaphors come from a shared experience of time: as time passes, we notice changes around us and all events happen in time; motion and time become connected, movement is also a type of change in this sense. Even though at the beginning we are all exposed to similar experiences that potentially form the bases of mental metaphors, these initial correspondences are later influenced by the culture and the language that we belong to (Casasanto 49). We learn metaphors through life based on our language and culture, and once mappings are created based on a metaphor we hear, the other possible mappings become weaker (*ibidem*). New correspondences are established and strengthened, but the old ones are also present. The Hierarchical Mental Metaphors Theory gives a reason for universality and variation of metaphors based on such changes (*ibid.*) according to which the initial correspondence is not lost, only weakened, which makes the conception based on mental metaphors flexible (*ibidem*).

As Kövecses explains in 2015, embodiment of abstract concepts is a reason for universality in many cases, and context (the environment) is the reason for variation: “my main suggestion will be that it is not possible to account for the emergence and use of metaphor without taking seriously the close dependence of the metaphorical mind on the surrounding physical, social, and mental environment” (XI). Kövecses enumerates some of the most relevant cognitive or construal processes that could lead to the development of universal or culture specific metaphors: some of these are salience (salient concepts differ from culture to culture), framing, prototype categorization, metaphor vs. metonymy preference, elaboration (some languages might share the same metaphorical expressions but their frequency might vary), specificity (metaphorical expressions can be generic or specific) and degree of conventionalization (*Metaphor in Culture*, 26-29).

In order to call a conceptual metaphor unique for a specific language, both source and target domains need to be unique (68). In the present research we cannot talk about unique conceptual metaphors; linguistic metaphors are more likely to show distinctiveness, and conceptual metaphors a limited amount of specificity. However, while there are many universal or near-universal metaphors, there is also a lot of variation (88).

Based on the corpus results, time metaphors, in which time appears as an agent, show some variation in the three languages. Variation of conceptual metaphors can occur on many levels: the source domain, the target domain, metaphorical mappings and entailments, etc. (118-123, 127), and can be attributed to several conceptual processes. The most frequent type of variation identified among the metaphors has to do with the source domain. Different construals for the same source domain can cause variation, which means that even metaphors which look the same at first may turn out to be different (118). For example, the source domain *family* can vary a great deal because of two construals for the source domain, which can be either “strict” or “nurturing” (Kimmel 277). Similar patterns can be observed frequently in metaphorical language. The source domain productivity can also be a relevant reason for variation (285). In the present case the source domain productivity varies to some extent, but since the focus is on verbs, only a specific section of entailments of motion and causation are included in the analysis.

We can distinguish “source internal”, creativity, such as elaboration and extension (Kövecses, *Metaphorical Creativity*, 212), where the aspect is related to the source domain, e.g. *dream* as an elaboration of the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS SLEEP (ibidem). In this case a connection is created between going to sleep and dying, and thus dream gets linked to both concepts. Source internal variations “can be elaborated differently in different languages/varieties” (Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 151). Elaboration is a type of conceptual variation, and it

refers to the number of mappings a metaphor can have (Lakoff and Turner 85). *Time is a moving entity that makes a sound* could also be an example of elaboration or extension, e.g. *time whizzed by*. Sound emission during motion is related to the source domain, and even though it is not always present and not its most characteristic trait, it is an entailment that belongs to the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY.

An example of “source external” variation, where there is a new source at hand (Kövecses, *Metaphorical Creativity*, 212), is the Finnish novel metaphor *aika soluu niin kuin joutsen* ‘time glides like a swan’ where the new source domain linked with time is SWAN. This is also motivated by conceptual integration or blending, where two seemingly different cognitive domains, that of time and of the swan, are integrated based on shared traits.

Target domains, more specifically the framing of the target domain, can vary as well (Kimmel 285). For instance, the Chagga in Tanzania only frames male lust within the metaphor SEXUAL DESIRE IS EATING, ANIMAL BEHAVIOR, AND HEAT while American English frames both female and male lust (ibidem). Creativity based on the target domain can entail a unique mapping between source and target, based on a less conventional or less obvious aspect of the target domain (Kövecses, *Metaphorical Creativity*, 212).

What the explanations drawn up by Kimmel and Kövecses suggest, is that there is a basic level conceptual structure that metaphors are grounded in, but which can vary when each culture makes the generic more specific. It is like a skeletal structure that can be built on and manipulated to a certain extent, but which is still bound as well (ibidem). This could give rise to metaphors which have a similar root but also show culture-specific traits.

In the case of the present study, the focus is on the source domain, and variation is measured based on metaphorical entailments. Entailments are also called “rich inferences” (Evans, *Cognitive Linguistics* 298). TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY entailments found in all three⁵ languages identified for the purpose of this study are the following: 1. time has a velocity that varies (*time speeds, time crawls*), 2. time can stop (*time stands still*), 3. time moves through air (*time flies*), 4. time moves through water or is moving water (*time flows*), 5. the motion of time can be cyclical (*the wheel of time is turning*), 6. time moves with a rushing sound (*time whizzed by*). Entailments of TIME IS A CHANGER metaphor show less variation across languages. They are the following: 1. time can have positive causative

⁵ Other entailments of TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY shared by two languages, but not all three are *the sound of moving time is that of water* in Hungarian and English through *csorog*, ‘flow’ in Hungarian (raw frequency 7, normalized frequency 0.006) and *drip* in English (rf 6, nf 0.06) and *the sound of moving time is that of an engine* (Finnish and Hungarian) through *robog*, ‘rush’ in Hungarian (rf 7, nf 0.006) and *hurahtaa* ‘rush’ in Finnish (rf 26, nf 0.030).

powers (*time heals*), 2. time can have negative causative powers (*time destroys*), 3. time can have non-polar causative powers (*time will tell*).

Cognitive underpinnings of metaphors are also investigated. It has been established that the two main metaphors are TIME IS A CHANGER and TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY; while the first one is usually based on the image schema of force and causation (Johnson 43), the second one is based on schemas of spatial motion (114), such as the image schema of path. Pre-conceptual force gestalts, which later influence language, stem from the way we interact with our environment (42). Metaphors motivated by TIME IS A CHANGER conceptual metaphor show this type of interaction between two entities. In the case of these metaphors, where time gains an inferred agency, *time* is the agent of cause, either in a negative or positive manner. Image schemas tend to be pre-linguistic (48), as it is the case of the path schema: we perceive time as motion (although time does not actually “move”), because of the way our cognitive system works. If there is an object and a path, and the location of the object changes, we associate this event with movement (ibidem), as in the case of *time passed by*, and many other moving time metaphors that follow this pattern. Johnson calls this the “linear spatialization of time” (114). Time is also often based on the image schema of cycle, which represents a temporal circle (119), a change in state.

TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY metaphors are analyzed based on the motion event (Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Vol. I*). The motion event has several components. The two main components are *Figure* and *Ground* “the Figure, performed by the concept that needs anchoring, and that of the Ground, performed by the concept that does the anchoring. This pair of concepts can be of two objects relating to each other in space in an event of motion or location” (Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Vol. I* 311). Thus the *Figure* is the moving object/entity and the *Ground* is the stationary reference object (ibidem). Besides Figure and Ground, other components are Path and the manner of movement (312).

This study focuses on verbs used metaphorically with time and their entailments. As an example, a unique entailment in time metaphors can be that time flies using wings, which is encoded into the verb only in Hungarian, not in Finnish or American English, through the metaphor *szárnyal az idő*, ‘time flies with wings’ (‘fly.3SG.PRS the time.NOM’). It may be assumed that other words in a metaphor can carry this meaning. This is true in Finnish, where time can carry out motion on wings (e.g. *aika hurahtaa siivillä*, ‘time rushes on wings’). In American English however, collocations with *time* and *wing(s)* are quite rare. This, therefore, is an example of particularity, an entailment, which is unique to Hungarian in this group of three languages only at the level of manner of motion verbs, and not overall in time metaphors. This can be observed in some other cases as well, for example, the American English manner of motion verb *grind*

or *lurch*, which in time metaphors expresses a gradual stop (*time grinds to a halt*), is probably coded in other languages through adverbs, or other constructions, e.g. the Hungarian *az idő fokozatosan lelassul*, ‘time slows down gradually’, (time.NOM gradually down-slow.3SG.PRS). Despite these shortcomings, these variations capture subtleties of language at a very specific level, the level of verbs of motion and causation that stand out in one of the three languages.

The types of variation are presented considering the source domain involved in the formation of the metaphor. The list contains the following conceptual mechanisms, as presented by Kövecses: 1. elaboration, source internal variation, 2. new source domain, source external variation (*Metaphor in Culture*, 82). For the present study, in most cases, particularity means that the specific type of variation can only be found in one out of the three languages.

To sum up, the aims of the research are the following, within the frame of agentive time metaphors marked by verbs: 1. to find source internal and source external differences among the three languages, 2. to establish their raw and normalized frequencies, 3. to identify cognitive mechanisms that these metaphors are based on, 4. to interpret differences based on theories of cognitive linguistics.

2. Source related differences

2.1. Source internal variation (unique entailments)

2.1.1. Hungarian

a. time has wings

The motion of time in Hungarian can be carried out with the help of wings, through the presence of the manner of motion verb *szárnyal*, a derivative of the noun *szárny*, ‘wing’. Besides motion through air, this verb also encodes fast motion. Such metaphors are rare. This verb used in time metaphors encodes the Medium of motion, which is air.

(4) *Csak úgy szárnyal-t az idő.* (press; *Promenáád*)
 only so fly-3SG.PST the time.NOM
 ‘Time just flew by.’

b. the motion of time sounds like the flapping of wings

The motion of time through air is also captured by verbal metaphors with *repül* (‘fly’) as well as *röppen* (‘flutter’), both sound imitative verbs. The latter expresses a sudden, momentary movement. This is another example of source internal variation, because this information is related to the source domain. These metaphors are marked by verbs of manner that also imply the

Medium of motion, in this case air. This verb also appears in an idiom (example 7), based on a rich image as well as marked by the presence of the Path ('above') and the Ground ('us') of motion.

- (5) *Gyorsan el-röppen-t* *az idő.* (web; forum)
 fast PTCL-fly-3SG.PST the time.NOM
 'Time has flown by fast.'

- (6) *Hihetetlenül gyorsan repül-t* *az idő.*
 (press; sports article)
 unbelievably fast fly- 3SG.PST the time.NOM
 'Time flew unbelievably fast.'

- (7) *El-repül-t* *felett-ünk* *az idő* *vas-fog-a.* (web; forum:
Törzsasztal)
 away-fly-3SG.PST above-1PL.POSS the time.UNGEN iron-tooth-3SG.POSS
 lit. 'The iron tooth of time flew away above us.'
 'We became old.'

c. the motion of the clock is the motion of time

This entailment is based on a metonymy, where the action of a clock stands for the action of time. The literal meaning of the example below is 'time walks towards midnight'. This expression is used in contexts where the exact time is not known, there is approximate time instead, expressed using 'about' or 'around' in English. In such metaphors, a part of a cognitive domain (clock) is represented by the entire cognitive domain (time). Alternatively, a Hungarian expression, *idő-járás* ('weather-walk' meaning 'weather') could have a connection with this metaphor, and thus it could be based on the time-weather polysemous Hungarian terms. As this aspect is related to the source domain, we have a source internal variation at hand.

- (8) *Éjfél felé jár* *az idő.* (press; *Origó*)
 midnight towards walk.3SG.PRS the time.NOM
 'Time approaches midnight.'

- (9) *Már hajnal-ra jár-t* *az idő.* (spoken; radio)
 already dawn-SUBL walk-3SG.PST the time.NOM
 'Time was approaching dawn.'

d. the passing of time results in beauty

This is the only entailment that refers to an aesthetic change through the verb *megszépít* 'beautify', which can be either a physical or an abstract change.

It is based on the correlation of the passing of time resulting in favorable situations, more specifically the fact that with the passing of time everything becomes better, thus it is an example of metaphorical causation based on the image schema of force and causation.

- (10) *Az idő meg-szépíti az emlék-ek-et.* (online; forum)
 the time.NOM PTCL-beautify.3SG.PRS the memory-PL-ACC
 'Time beautifies memories.'

2.1.2. American English

a. time can stop abruptly

The motion of time can result in a sudden stop, marked by verbs such as *screech*, *lurch* and *grind*. Although *screech* is not a motion verb, it stands for a high-pitched, loud noise, a shrill, unpleasant sound that for instance, a machine makes when it stops suddenly. In time metaphors, its figurative meaning implies motion used with *halt*, where the sound presumably comes from the contact between Figure and Ground. The high-pitched sound suggested by front vowels is not present in *lurch*. *Lurch* is a motion verb, where the manner of motion is unsteady or sudden. They all imply contact of the Figure with the Ground (discussed by Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Vol. I*) as well as the fact that motion preceded the action. *Grind* additionally implies a harsh contact with the Ground, possibly accompanied by sound emission. *Time grinds to a halt* as well as *time screeches to a halt* are creative versions of the conventional metaphor *time stops*; they have a similar literal, figurative and conceptual information, but they encode additional information that is related to the source domain.

- (11) *The Figure stands, moves into the light as time screeches to a halt.*
 (fiction; *Blade*, 1998)

- (12) *Time lurches to a stop.* (magazine; *Backpacker*, 2002)

- (13) *Time grinds to a total halt.* (magazine; *Astronomy*, 2013)

b. as time moves it changes position

This elaboration focuses on motion that is over a small distance and it also implies a type of change in position. Change through motion is related to the source domain, therefore this is an example of source internal variation. The type of motion implied in these metaphors differs from other types of motion that time is often associated with (e.g. *rush*, *march*, *slow down*, *speed*) because while the latter ones encode translational motion that happens from one point

in space to another, *shift* is a type of motion carried out by a Figure that does not necessarily carry out a movement between two set points in space. It can be an example of self-contained motion (Talmy, *Toward a cognitive semantics, Vol. II* 35).

(14) *Time shifts seamlessly.*
(newspaper; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1992).

(15) *Time had shifted under their feet.*
(Fiction; Chang, Lan Samantha: *Hunger: A Novella and Stories.*)

c. the motion of time happens in small increments

The motion of time associated with water is usually a continuous flow, except in this American English metaphor, which focuses on the passing of time that happens little by little, through an intermittent slow motion associated with a smaller body of water with a thin flow. It also implies motion from up to down. This entailment emphasizes the fluid-like nature of time as well, and is motivated by the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A SUBSTANCE.

(16) *Time slowly drips by.*
(newspaper; *Denver Post*, 2014)

(17) *Time drips like water.*
(fiction; *The Massachusetts Review* vol.59, 2019)

d. the motion of time is organized

Time marches (on) is a frequent metaphor in English. *March* expresses a determined, quick movement, as well as a rhythmic pace. It is a specific type of forward motion, one associated with organized, steady movement. Additionally, *march* in time metaphors also encodes the Path, the manner as well as the Goal of motion, as it usually appears with the verbal particle *on*. *Time marches* is an example of source internal variation, because while this type of action is consistent with the source domain, it emphasizes a particular type of movement that the other metaphors do not capture in the same way.

(18) *Time marches on.* (spoken; *CBS*, 2015)

2.1.3. Finnish

a. time covers with gold

This conventionalized expression based on the verb *kultaa*, 'gild', entails that the passage of time is beneficial for memories. This Finnish verb marks a

frequent fixed expression. This is similar to the Hungarian metaphor with the verb *megszépít*, ‘beautify’, but the Hungarian entailment is not as specific as in the case of this Finnish idiom, which always encodes ‘memory’ into this metaphor, connecting the past with the present. They are both based on the correlation of the passing of time resulting in favorable situations, more specifically the fact that with the passing of time everything becomes better.

- (19) *Aika kulta-a muisto-t ja vain hyvä-t asia-t nii-stä
on jälje-llä.* (online; *Suomi24*, 2014)
time.NOM gild-3SG.PRS memory-PL and only good-PL thing-PL they- ELA
be.3SG.PRS behind-ALLA
‘Time gilds memories and only the good things are left behind.’

b. time causes aging

Even though this is a very clear effect of time, it is only encoded in verbal constructions in Finnish, where the verb carries this meaning on its own. In this sense it is only a partial case of source internal variety, however, it is relevant because it cannot be found in the other two languages. It captures a negative attitude towards the passing of time.

- (20) *Aika vanhenta-a rakennuksi-a.* (magazine; *Karhunkierros*, 1995)
time.NOM age-3SG.PRS building-PTV.PL
‘Time ages the buildings.’

- (21) *Aika miehe-n vanhenta-a.* (newspaper; *Länsi-Savo* no. 161, 1992)
time.NOM man-ACC age-3SG.PRS
‘Time ages man.’

c. time moves like a worm

In this metaphor the manner of motion associated with time is slow and slithering, one that a worm would make. The contact of the Figure with the Ground (Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Vol. I* 311) is also encoded into the verb, where usually the entire body of the Figure is touching the Ground. The manner of motion is difficult, heavy. The verb *madella*, ‘to creep’, is the derivative of the noun *mato*, ‘worm’.

- (22) *Aika matele-e tuska-n keske-llä.* (online; *Suomi24*, 2014)
time.NOM creep-3SG.PRS agony-GEN middle-ADE
‘Time creeps in the midst of agony.’

- (23) *Joskus aika matele-e ja joskus kiitä-ä.* (newspaper;
Länsi-Savo no. 205, 1999)
sometimes time.NOM creep-3SG.PRS and sometimes speed-3SG.PRS
‘Sometimes time creeps and sometimes it speeds.’

2.2. Source External Variation

2.2.1. American English

a. TIME IS DARKNESS

Only American English has recurrent verbs in time metaphors that link time with the sensory perception of darkness. This probably is based on the metaphor FORGETTING IS DARKNESS, which refers to the passing of time that equals forgetting. These metaphors are context dependent and not necessarily negative, despite the lexical information that might suggest that. Verbs that express some type of fading caused by time can be found in Hungarian and Finnish, but they are not directly linked with darkness. These verbs appear in metaphors that could either show a positive or a negative attitude towards time, therefore they are context dependent.

(24) *Time obscures evidence.*
(academic; *Latin American Research Review*, 1999)

(25) *Time hasn't dimmed our memory.*
(spoken; *CNN event*, 2000)

b. TIME IS WEIGHT

Usually, time metaphors associated with weight are non-agentive time metaphors, and surface through expressions, such as *feel the pressure of time*. The metaphors here mean that time passes slowly. In the case of *hang heavy*, besides the slowness of time, tediousness, the metaphorical weight of time is also present. *Drag* implies a contact of a heavy Figure with the Ground. These are negative polarity metaphors. Weight is a new source domain, therefore this metaphor constitutes source external variation.

(26) *Time hangs heavy on your hands.*
(spoken; *Fox Special Report*, 2013)

(27) *Time dragged on.*
(magazine; *Smithsonian*, 1997)

2.2.2. Hungarian

a. TIME IS A JUDGE

This is a new source for time that is manifested through the verb *ítél*, which can be translated as 1. 'to pass judgment', 2. as well as the negative 'to

doom' or 'to sentence'. It creates a rare and novel metaphor with time, which usually appears in literature, but not only.

- (28) *A múltó idő feledés-re íté-l-né.* (spoken; radio)
 the passing time.NOM oblivion-SUBL doom-COND
 'Time would doom it for oblivion.'

b. TIME IS A MILL

This is a new source and an example of source external variation and not just an entailment because of the verb as well as the genitival component that is used metaphorically with time. *Az idő malma*, 'the mill of time', is unique to Hungarian, and it appears in this metaphor with the verb *őröl*, 'grind' or 'mill'. These can also appear without *malom*, 'mill' (noun). In some cases, the meaning refers to a harsh and aggressive action and not solely to pulverizing. This is evident through the presence of the 'tooth of time' in some of these metaphors. TIME IS A MILL is based on the image schema of cycle, except in example (31).

- (29) *Őröl rettenetesen az idő.* (spoken; radio)
 grind.3SG.PRS terribly the time.NOM
 'Time grinds terribly.'

- (30) *Az idő kerek-e, az idő malm-a lassan
 őröl.* (spoken; radio)
 the time.UNGEN wheel-3SG.POSS the time.UNGEN mill-3SG.POSS slowly
 mill.3SG.PRS.
 'The wheel of time, the mill of time mills slowly.'

- (31) *Más-t őrölje-nek helyett-em az idő vas-fog-
 a-i.* (online; forum)
 someone.else-ACC grind-3PL.PRS instead-1SG.POSS the time.UNGEN iron-tooth-
 3SG.POSS-POSS.PL
 'The iron teeth of time should grind someone else besides me.'

c. TIME IS A GUARDIAN

Metaphors with the verb *őríz*, *megőríz* 'guard, keep' appear often in literature, but in other contexts as well. They appear in positive polarity metaphors regarding the attitude towards the passing of time. The noun *őr*, 'guard' is a derivative of the verb *őríz*, therefore time metaphors with this verb show source external variation.

- (32) *A kincs-et az idő nem őrzi.* (web; Facebook)
 the treasure-ACC the time.NOM NEG guard.3SG.PRS
 'Time does not guard the treasure.'

- (33) *Eredmény-e-i-t pedig meg-őrzi az idő.*
 (press; *Nép Szava*, column: *Vélemény*)
 achievement-3SG.POSS-PL.POSS-ACC in turn PTCL-guard.3SG.PRS the time.NOM
 ‘In turn, time keeps his/her achievements’.

2.2.3. Finnish

a. TIME IS A TRICKSTER

Finnish is the only language out of the three that has an idiom that links time with the source domain of JOKER, TRICKSTER. These are based on the verb *tekee*, ‘do’, as well as the noun *tepponen* or in some cases *kepponen*, ‘trick’. Similar metaphors seem to be isolated occurrences⁶ in the other two languages in contrast with this recurrent expression.

- (34) *Ikävä kyllä aika on teh-nyt Kassila-n dokumenti-lle teppose-nsa.* (newspaper; *Länsi-Savo* 19, 1992)
 sad yes time.NOM be.3SG do-PTCP.NOM Kassila-GEN document-ALL
 trick-3SG.POSS
 ‘Sadly, time has played its trick on the documents of Kassila.’

- (35) *Mutta ikävä kyllä aika teke-e teppose-nsa farku-i-lle-kin.*
 (academic; *Behavioural sciences*, 2010)
 but sad yes time.NOM do-3SG.PRS trick-3SG.POSS jean-PL-ALL-CLIT
 ‘Sadly, time plays tricks on the jeans too.’

b. TIME IS AN EQUALIZER

Another example of source external variation is the case of the metaphor TIME IS AN EQUALIZER. This source domain used with time is captured by recurrent verbs only in Finnish. The Finnish *aika tasaittaa*, ‘time equalizes’ or ‘time evens out’ is an instantiation of the unique source domain connection, TIME IS AN EQUALIZER. This is a rare metaphor. It portrays time as an agent as a benevolent, rather than an evil entity.

- (36) *Aika tasaitt-i tunte-ita.* (newspaper; *Tukiviesti*, 2014)
 time.NOM even.3SG.PST feeling-PTV_PL
 ‘Time however evened feelings out.’

⁶ In American English, the linguistic metaphor *time plays tricks/jokes* exists, but it is limited to literary genres. In Hungarian, *játsz-ik az idő* (play-3SG the time.NOM), ‘time plays’, has a similar meaning and is also used almost exclusively in fiction. It also appears very rarely through the construction *tréfát t űz* (‘play a joke’), with the same meaning: (a) *Time plays tricks on everybody.* (fiction; Morressy, John: *Rimrunner’s Home*); (b) *Talán az idő játsz-ik vel-ük*, (maybe the time.NOM play-3SG with-3.PL ‘Maybe time plays with them’) (fiction; Kovács, András Ferenc: *Scintilla animae*).

3. Overview of results

3.1. Source internal variation

Measuring the specificities in each language seems the most challenging, because these are more qualitative and to a lesser extent quantitative aspects of metaphorical language. Variation of metaphorical entailments can be observed in each language, to a certain extent. Some of them are not very productive, and have only a few linguistic instantiations, while others are highly productive.

As the examples above show, several instances of source internal variation can be identified in time metaphors in Hungarian, Finnish and American English. **Table 1** and **Table 2** categorize such entailments, including cognitive underpinnings, such as image schemas and other relevant conceptual characteristics of metaphors that show source internal variation.

Table 1. Source internal variation in American English, Finnish and Hungarian and their cognitive underpinnings

No.	Metaphorical entailment	Most characteristic of	Conceptual underpinnings
1.	time has wings	Hungarian	schema of spatial motion image schema of path Medium of motion
2.	the motion of time sounds like the flapping of wings	Hungarian	schema of spatial motion image schema of path Medium of motion
3.	the motion of the clock is the motion of time	Hungarian	part of a cognitive domain (clock) is represented by the entire cognitive domain schema of spatial motion image schema of path
4.	the passing of time results in beauty	Hungarian	image schema of force and causation
5.	time can stop abruptly	American English	schema of spatial motion image schema of path contact of the Figure and the Ground
6.	as time moves, it changes position	American English	schema of spatial motion self-contained motion
7.	the motion of time happens in small increments	American English	schema of spatial motion image schema of path
8.	the motion of time is organized	American English	schema of spatial motion image schema of path
9.	time covers with gold	Finnish	image schema of force and causation
10.	time causes aging	Finnish	image schema of force and causation
11.	time moves like a worm	Finnish	schema of spatial motion image schema of path contact of the Figure and the Ground

As we can see above, in Hungarian there are four metaphorical entailments that carry information that cannot be found in the other two languages; there are four in American English as well. In Finnish three of such entailments are found in the corpus. As we will see, the raw frequencies (rf) and normalized frequencies (nf) of these show significant differences. The results have been normalized to the common base of one million words, marked with *nf* (based on the method by Friginal and Hardy 38). If there is more than one verb, the number stands for their combined frequencies.

Table 2. Source internal variation in American English, Finnish and Hungarian and their raw and normalized frequencies

No.	Metaphorical entailment	Characteristic of	Marking verb(s)	Raw frequency/ normalized frequency
1.	time has wings	Hungarian	<i>szárnyal</i> , 'fly'	rf 5, nf 0.004
2.	the motion of time sounds like the flapping of wings	Hungarian	<i>röppen, repül</i> , 'fly'	rf 255, nf 0.245
3.	the motion of the clock is the motion of time	Hungarian	<i>jár</i> , 'walk'	rf 375, nf 0.360
4.	the passing of time results in beauty	Hungarian	<i>megszépít</i> , 'beautify'	rf 54, nf 0.051
5.	as time moves, it changes position	English	<i>shift</i>	rf 10, nf 0.11
6.	the motion of time happens in small increments	English	<i>drip</i>	rf 6, nf 0.06
7.	the motion of time is organized	English	<i>march</i>	rf 84, nf 0.096
8.	time can stop abruptly	English	<i>grind, lurch to a halt</i>	rf 6, nf 0.06
9.	time covers with gold	Finnish	<i>kultaa</i> , 'gild'	rf 211, nf 0.251
10.	time causes aging	Finnish	<i>vanhentaa</i> , 'age'	rf 5, nf 0.005
11.	time moves like a worm	Finnish	<i>matelee</i> , 'creep'	rf 20, nf 0.023

The overall normalized frequency of source internal variation is 0.660 in Hungarian, 0.326 in American English, and 0.279 in Finnish. The combined normalized frequency of this type of variation is the highest in Hungarian and the lowest in Finnish. They are organized into two groups: metaphorical entailments that have a higher normalized frequency than 0.015 are as follows: the motion of time sounds like the flapping of wings (Hungarian), the motion of the clock is the motion of time (Hungarian), the passing of time results in beauty (Hungarian), time covers with gold (Finnish), time moves like a worm (Finnish), the motion of time is organized (American English). The rest of the instances, which are time has wings (Hungarian), as time moves it changes position (American English), the motion of time happens in small increments (American English), time can stop abruptly (American English), and time causes aging (Finnish) have a frequency below 0.015.

This suggests that in each language there are rare as well as frequent instances of source internal variation. What the table also captures is that in most cases source internal variation is marked by a single verb (e.g. *march*), and only rarely two different verbs (*grind*, *lurch to a halt*). Although the Hungarian entailment *time has wings* and *the motion of time sounds like the flapping of wings* is marked by verbs that can all be translated as 'fly', their differences lie in their focus regarding the characteristics of the Figure (in the case of *szárnyal*, 'fly with wings') and the manner of motion (*röppen*, *repül*, 'fly'), therefore they can be considered as separate entailments.

Among the linguistic metaphors found in Table 1 and 2 that signal source internal variation, multi-word expressions are very rare; only two such metaphors can be identified among the groups: in Hungarian marked by the verb *megszépít*, 'beautify', which often appears as *minden-t/ az emlék-ek-et meg-szépíti az idő*, 'time beautifies everything/the memories' (everything-ACC/ the memory-PL-ACC PTCL-beautify the time.NOM) and the Finnish *kultaa*, 'gild', that appears in the expression *aika kulta-a muisto-t*, 'time guilds memories' (time.NOM guild-3SG memory-PL).

What the numbers also show is that in Hungarian spatial schemas, especially the path schema is much more heavily relied on in these variations than the image schema of force and causation, and that the Medium of motion is often included into the mapping, which is air (time has wings, the motion of time sounds like the flapping of wings). The source internal variation that is based on the causation schema shows a positive attitude towards time (the passing of time results in beauty).

In English a similar tendency can be noticed: the metaphors are often based on the schema of path (the motion of time happens in small increments, the motion of time is organized) and in some cases the contact between the Figure and Ground is present as well (time can stop abruptly). In Finnish, on the other hand, these source internal variations are based predominantly on the image schema of force and causation, with a focus on the positive aspect of time (time covers with gold), and rarely on the negative (time causes aging), as the raw as well as the normalized frequency shows. Similarly to American English, these Finnish metaphors that are based on the schema of path also encode the contact between the Figure and the Ground (time moves like a worm).

3.2. Source external variation

Source external variation tends to be rare, as expected, and source internal variation is much more frequent. However, as **Table 3** shows, new sources can be found in Hungarian, Finnish as well as American English. Instances of source external variation in the three languages are grouped based on their cognitive

aspect, such as relevant image schemas and other conceptual factors that the metaphor carries. In contrast with Table 1 that categorizes such cognitive factors in instances of source internal variation, here embodiment is identified as a base for some of the new sources as well.

Table 3. Source external variation in American English, Finnish and Hungarian and their cognitive underpinnings

No.	Metaphor with new source	Most characteristic of	Conceptual underpinnings
1.	TIME IS DARKNESS	American English	image schema of force and causation, embodiment
2.	TIME IS WEIGHT	American English	schema of spatial motion, embodiment Contact of Figure with the Ground
3.	TIME IS A JUDGE	Hungarian	image schema of force and causation
4.	TIME IS A GUARDIAN	Hungarian	image schema of force and causation
5.	TIME IS A MILL	Hungarian	image schema of force and causation, image schema of cycle
6.	TIME IS A TRICKSTER	Finnish	image schema of force and causation
7.	TIME IS AN EQUALIZER	Finnish	image schema of force and causation

The table above contains the new sources used with the target domain time in agentive time metaphors. Two of such new sources can be identified in each language, which are predominantly variations of the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A CHANGER, with a single exception found in American English, TIME IS WEIGHT. This new source in fact is connected with TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY, in metaphors marked by the verb *drag*, as well as TIME IS SPACE in metaphors with *hang heavy*.

Table 4 shows the metaphor signaling verbs as well as quantitative differences in the data, the raw and normalized frequencies of the occurrences. In contrast with Table 2, which shows that source internal differences, i.e. unique metaphorical entailments are usually marked by only one verb, here a new source is in some cases signaled by more than one verb, e.g. *dim* as well as *obscure* or *hang heavy* and *drag*.

The frequency of source external variation is organized into two groups, based on normalized frequencies in the following way: TIME IS WEIGHT (American English) and TIME IS A GUARDIAN (Hungarian) are the only sources with a frequency that is higher than 0.015 per one million words. The rest of the sources, TIME IS DARKNESS (American English), TIME IS A JUDGE (Hungarian), TIME IS A MILL (Hungarian), TIME IS A TRICKSTER (Finnish) and TIME IS AN EQUALIZER (Finnish) are all rare, with a normalized frequency below 0.015. These numbers show that such new sources emerge in metaphors quite rarely, surfacing only once in

American English and Hungarian with a frequency that is over 0.015, and with an even lower nf in Finnish. We can conclude therefore that frequent, well-entrenched expressions among metaphors that show source external variation are difficult to find.

Table 4. Source external variation in American English, Finnish and Hungarian and their raw and normalized frequencies

No.	Metaphor with new source	Most characteristic of	Verb in metaphor	Raw frequency, normalized frequency
1.	TIME IS DARKNESS	American English	<i>dim, obscure</i>	rf 13, nf 0.014
2.	TIME IS WEIGHT	American English	<i>hang heavy, drag</i>	rf 40, nf 0.047
3.	TIME IS A JUDGE	Hungarian	<i>ítel, 'judge'</i>	rf 7, nf 0.006
4.	TIME IS A GUARDIAN	Hungarian	<i>őriz, 'guard'</i>	rf 16, nf 0.015
5.	TIME IS A MILL	Hungarian	<i>őröl, 'mill'</i>	rf 10, 0.009
6.	TIME IS A TRICKSTER	Finnish	<i>tehdä tepposensa, kepposet, 'play tricks'</i>	rf 9, nf 0.010
7.	TIME IS AN EQUALIZER	Finnish	<i>tasoittaa, 'equalize'</i>	rf 5, nf 0.005

The combined normalized frequency of this type of variation is the highest in American English with 0.061, 0.030 in Hungarian, and rarest in Finnish with 0.015 per one million words. Based on these numbers, the image schemas and other conceptual underpinnings that prevail in each language through source external variation are the following: the image schema of force and causation in English and embodiment by linking time to the sensory perception of darkness and weight (TIME IS DARKNESS, TIME IS WEIGHT); in the majority of the cases the image of time is negative; the image schema of force and causation in Hungarian, where the examples are equally distributed between the negative (TIME IS A JUDGE, TIME IS A MILL) and positive image of time (TIME IS A GUARDIAN), and in a similar manner the image schema of force and causation in Finnish (TIME IS AN EQUALIZER), where the examples show a predominantly negative attitude towards time (TIME IS A TRICKSTER).

4. Conclusion

To sum up the specificities, there is source-related variation in each language, which is most frequently source internal (through unique entailments) and less frequently source external (as specified by Kövecses, *Metaphorical Creativity*, 212). Source internal variation is more frequently based on the schema of path, except in Finnish, while source external variation happens in all cases,

but one, based on the image schema of force and causation rather than on spatial schemas, such as path. Source internal variation is the most frequent in Hungarian and source external in American English.

These figures show that variation occurs in frequent conventional expressions, not only rare, innovative metaphors. Although all the metaphors presented here are recurrent ones, some of the frequencies are quite low. This is not true, however, for all the cases, in fact some of them have a high to medium normalized frequency, e.g. *aika kultaa*, 'time gilds'. What this shows is that there are a few metaphors in each language that show unique traits of source internal variation, through high frequency entrenched metaphorical expressions. New sources are rare both based on the number of new sources and their raw frequency: this means that in these three languages the sources are usually the same. The cross-linguistic differences thus show relevant frequency not through the uses of new source domains, but by bringing into evidence specific characteristics of these domains through unique entailments. This then also means that most of the metaphors are more similar than different in these three languages.

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RENDRE PUBLIC OU TWEETER SUR LA PIERRE

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ABSTRACT. *To Make Public or Twitting in Stone.* The aim of this article is to study three ways to make a message public: tweets, videos of discourses posted on *Daily Motion* and the publication of a book at the beginning of the twentieth century where sentences were drawn as tweets with a pencil on stone by a shepherd. Through the anthropological analysis of signs production and diffusion, we observe the permeability between the private and the public field, the influence of the writing and the oral activity as well as the distinctions between the published, the public, and the popularity of these three mentioned forms.

Keywords: *tweet, video, signs production, anthropology, communicational traces*

REZUMAT. *A face public sau tweets de piatră.* Scopul acestui articol este de a studia trei modalități de a face un mesaj public: postările pe *Twitter*, videourile discursurilor postate pe *Daily Motion* și publicarea, la începutul secolului al XX-lea, a unei cărți în care propozițiile sunt desenate cu creionul, ca tweets, de către un cioban. Prin analiza antropologică a producerii și difuzării semnelor, observăm permeabilitatea dintre domeniul privat și public, influența scrisului și a activității orale, precum și distincțiile dintre ceea ce este publicat, publicul și popularitatea celor trei forme menționate mai sus.

Cuvinte-cheie: *tweet, video, producția de semne, antropologie, urme comunicaționale*

Introduction

L'objectif de cet article est d'explorer trois façons/moyens de rendre public : le tweet, la vidéo d'un discours, mise en ligne sur *Daily Motion*, la publication d'un livre de photographies sur des « phrases/tweets » tracés au crayon ou au charbon de bois sur la pierre, par un berger dans la première moitié du 20^{ème} siècle. Comment un gazouillis (ou tweet) commence à faire du

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bruit ? Sachant que ces trois formes cherchent à rendre public un contenu et en privilégiant, dans notre étude, la comparaison de formes et de mises en signes, nous cherchons à faire apparaître des distinctions dans le rapport entre le choix des formes et les relations au public, rapport qui nous semblait jusqu'alors plus implicite qu'explicite.

Est-ce qu'écrire de simples phrases et les donner à lire dans un espace partagé par des passants correspond aux mêmes modalités (Souchier 2004) aujourd'hui qu'au début du 20^{ème} siècle ? Que ce soit via Internet ou sur de la pierre, est-ce que l'espace (Deleuze & Guattari 1980) a une influence sur le tweet à lire ou l'image à voir ? La brièveté est-elle une facilité pour rendre public ou facilite-t-elle celui qui s'exprime ? Ces questions annoncent notre méthodologie qui vise à *anthropologier* la communication (Ouvrard-Servanton 2010) qui s'opère dans un espace d'actants (Latour 2001). Cette méthodologie consiste à explorer les traces communicationnelles (Serres 2002), les différencier et remettre en surface les actions et interactions qu'elles contiennent. Cette activité peut faire apparaître des repères, des éléments, des articulations, voire la structure des effets, que ces trois formes produisent sur le public. Ce travail s'apparente à celui qu'opérait André Leroi-Gourhan (Leroi-Gourhan 1964) avec les outils, élaborant ainsi l'anthropologie des techniques et retraçant les processus circulatoires entre les outils, les gestes et la parole qui transmet. On utilise les traces (Derrida 1967) pour reconstituer les gestes, les actions et les effets des outils, les artefacts ou effets de l'art (Agostinelli 2003).

La production de signes

Dans cette partie, afin d'établir une première série de distinctions entre les trois formes précitées, nous reprenons le titre d'un ouvrage d'Umberto Eco qui critique l'usage de la catégorie « passe partout » du signe pour en tenter une reformulation rigoureuse (Eco11). Son interrogation sur la différence de fonction sémiotique entre le mot ou l'image est intéressante pour les trois formes d'expression et de diffusion sélectionnées. La première forme (1) est celle que nous nommons « tweeter sur la pierre ». Un berger écrit sur des pierres au charbon de bois des messages avec un nombre de caractères limités (entre, environ, vingt et cent cinquante signes, dans le livre où les photos sont publiées). Quelques années après, un homme marcheur remarque ces messages écrits. Il les photographie, et publie un livre de photos (Blond 2012). Deux formes pour rendre public s'emboîtent. Il s'agit d'une mise en abyme communicationnelle. Une pensée est écrite de façon visible pour des passants puis ces messages sont rendus à nouveau visibles par des photographies

rendues à nouveau visibles pour des lecteurs. La deuxième forme (2) est celle de tweets, publiés à travers un réseau social *Twitter*, et rendus publics à travers ce réseau aux membres inscrits pour recevoir ces tweets. La troisième forme (3) est celle de vidéos d'un discours (en excluant les vidéos sans discours), postées sur un site *Daily Motion* (que nous avons choisi parce qu'il a une approche média avec des contenus et une mise en avant éditoriale à partir de choix éditoriaux sur la page d'accueil² alors que You Tube n'a pas de mise en avant éditoriale mais a organisé son site en espaces thématiques de vidéos pour personnaliser la sélection en fonction de l'internaute) pour être vues par des personnes qui vont, grâce à des moteurs de recherche, voir ces vidéos selon leurs choix.

Le premier ordre de classement d'Umberto Eco est « le travail physique nécessaire à la production de l'expression ». Dans ce travail, il répertorie quatre processus : la reconnaissance, l'ostension, la réplique et l'invention. Le processus de reconnaissance a lieu, notamment lorsque le produit de l'action humaine peut-être « interprétée par un destinataire comme l'expression d'un contenu donné, soit en fonction d'une corrélation déjà prévue par un code, soit en fonction d'une corrélation établie directement par le destinataire » (Eco72). Dans les trois formes (1), (2) et (3) choisies, le processus de *reconnaissance* fait partie de leur structure. Ces trois formes sont toutes trois associées à un contenu donné, donc reconnues pour et par leur contenu. Certaines corrélations peuvent être établies par un code et directement par le destinataire. Le travail physique par lequel il y a production de signes pour le « tweet » sur la pierre, et d'autant plus le tweet sur *Twitter* ainsi que la vidéo sur *Daily Motion*, est reconnaissable aussi car chaque individu peut concevoir et réaliser cette forme. La métaphore du pigeon voyageur se rapporte à un mode d'échanges, de communication déjà utilisé dans l'antiquité. Le passage d'une vidéo de la sphère privée (le film familial, par exemple, regarder sur de relativement petits écrans) à la sphère publique ne rend pas la forme moins reconnaissable.

Le deuxième processus : l'*ostension*, se réfère à une forme de consensus tacite ou explicite entre celui qui s'exprime et celui qui perçoit et, à partir d'un signe, communique ostensiblement tout un discours. Il correspond à la première forme (1) puisque le « tweet sur la pierre » est sélectionné par le photographe/marcheur et désigné comme des phrases/messages qui appartiennent à cette forme. Ces formes « phrases/messages » qui gazouillent au fil des bergeries visitées, sont codées et traitées comme telles, comme des indices permettant de suivre la vie d'un homme. Le tweet posté sur *Twitter* est aussi sélectionné et désigné comme classe de messages envoyés sur les comptes de ceux qui ont

² <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zn0Yj8Sk3bE>

choisi d'être membres qui explicitement désirent recevoir des messages et être suivis. En revanche, la troisième forme n'appartient pas au processus de l'ostension puisque les vidéos de *Daily Motion* ne sont pas a priori sélectionnées par un individu et désignées dans une classe d'objets dont il est membre. Les vidéos sont principalement recherchées, à partir de tags, selon leur contenu à un moment donné. Le site peut proposer, par déduction (à partir des mots tagués pour la recherche), des vidéos similaires aux vidéos recherchées.

Quant au processus de *réplique*, il est visible dans la forme (2) car les tweets se reproduisent à l'identique suivant un chemin de connexions et d'articulations dues au phénomène de réseau. Dans le cas de la forme (1), la première réplique est celle du photographe qui reproduit le message et qui conserve en partie sa forme initiale mais qui est aussi une rupture dans la production de signes (dans l'activité physique de production). Puis la réplique s'opère à nouveau lorsque le livre de photos est publié. Le nombre « traçable » de répliques des messages photographiés correspond au nombre de livres édités. Certes, la réplique sous forme photographique n'est exactement identique à celle du message tracé au charbon de bois sur la pierre alors que le tweet se réplique à l'identique. La forme (3) n'obéit pas au processus de réplique. La propagation des vidéos se fait à travers une autre forme : le lien internet qui est transféré d'un internaute à un autre, selon son choix.

L'*invention* transforme *quelque chose* en quelque chose d'autre qui n'a pas été défini et peut être modérée (celui qui perçoit peut se référer à un modèle sémantique codifié) ou radical (qui chamboule les codes de la perception). Les trois formes étudiées ne transforment pas les codes de la perception. Les tweets sur la pierre peuvent même donner la preuve que les tweets électroniques ne sont pas nouveaux. Les vidéos postées sur *Daily Motion* ont une forme et ne transforment pas les codes : elles reproduisent l'oralité (la connaissance de l'écriture n'est même pas nécessaire). De ce fait, cette forme est très accessible à tout public. De nombreuses vidéos sont même traduites en langage des signes pour les sourds et muets et d'autres sous-titrées. Une même vidéo peut être accessible en plusieurs langues.

Les trois formes choisies rendent public dans des productions de signes à la fois similaires et distinctes. Les trois formes sont reconnaissables et ne sont pas inventives par leur production de signes. Les formes « tweets » (1) et (2) utilisent l'ostension et la réplique dans la production de signes. Les formes (2) et (3) ont une réplique indirecte car on note une rupture dans la forme de la réplique : la mise en photographie et en livre pour la forme (2) et la mise en lien pour la forme (3).

Formes	Reconnaissance (par code ou destinataire)	Réplique	Invention
Sémiotique			
Tweets sur la pierre/ transformés en photos puis en livre	X	0/X	0
Tweets sur Twitter	X	X	0
Vidéos sur Daily Motion	X	0	0

Figure 1. Comparaison dans la production des signes

Concernant la production, nous avons repris les éléments mis en évidence par Umberto Eco dans la production des signes.

1^{re} colonne : Est-ce que ces trois formes expriment un contenu reconnaissable par un code ou un destinataire ?

2^e colonne : Les tweets se reproduisent à l'identique suivant un chemin de connexions et d'articulations dues au phénomène de réseau. La 3^{ème} forme ne se produit pas par réplique (chaque vidéo est supposé être « originale ». Il n'y a pas deux vidéos identiques d'un même discours. A moins qu'il y ait deux enregistrements simultanés.

3^e colonne : L'*invention* transforme *quelque chose* en quelque chose d'autre qui n'a pas été défini et peut être modéré (*celui qui perçoit peut se référer à un modèle sémantique codifié*) ou radicale (qui chamboule les codes de la perception). Les trois formes étudiées ne transforment pas les codes de la perception. Les tweets sur la pierre peuvent même donner la preuve que les tweets électroniques ne sont pas nouveaux. Les vidéos postées sur *Daily Motion* ont une forme et ne transforment pas les codes : elles reproduisent l'oralité (la connaissance de l'écriture n'est même pas nécessaire).

La perméabilité entre privé et public

Les trois formes existent grâce au travail physique qui produit l'expression, motivées par le désir de s'exprimer qui s'est mu en intention, puis en réalisation puis en diffusion. Dans le support choisi pour l'expression, est incluse la « visibilité » publique. Le Berger Albert qui écrit sur la pierre, choisit la pierre de la bergerie (bergerie ouverte aux passants) et non un journal intime pour s'exprimer. Le tweet n'est pas un texto car il se diffuse d'un abonné (follower) à un autre. Les abonnés le savent.

De notre point de vue, l'espace où circulent les flux communicationnels mérite d'être interrogé afin de savoir comment il influence l'articulation des actions et des effets des actions, les artefacts. L'effet est que le « tweet sur la pierre » et le tweet sur *Twitter* sont lus et les vidéos sur *Daily Motion* sont vues. Avec le choix du support, il va de soi que ce qui va être écrit ou filmé sera lu ou vu publiquement. A l'inverse, peut-on dire que les trois supports incitent à rendre public des aspects privés ? Clare Cook (Cook 2011) évoque la fluidité des frontières entre l'identité personnelle et professionnelle des journalistes, dans son analyse des pratiques sur *Twitter*. Elle raconte comment un journaliste va poster un détail croustillant sur sa vie privée « mais qui n'est pas la vie réelle » afin de créer une relation, maîtrisée, avec son public de lecteurs. Elle rapporte comment le présentateur sportif George Riley compare *Twitter* à « un mur blanc qui invite aux graffiti ». Cette expression « libre » est en même temps maîtrisée car les personnes ne racontent pas tout de leur vie mais ce qu'elles veulent ou choisissent. C'est en ce sens que nous mentionnons que le rapport entre la forme et l'interaction est « maîtrisée ». Ainsi, le fait que le message soit rendu public filtre ce qui est du domaine privé.

Le « rendre public » est perméable au domaine privé qui, celui-ci, est attiré à devenir public. L'autre indication qui montre la perméabilité entre la sphère privée et la sphère publique est celle de l'utilisation ou non d'un pseudonyme. Les graffiti sont souvent anonymes ou signés par des pseudonymes. Ils accaparent des surfaces publiques, non dédiées à cette activité qui, dans de nombreux cas, est passible d'amende à cause de l'utilisation non autorisée par la loi, de l'espace public. Le Berger Albert, qui écrit des messages sur la pierre signe aussi avec ce pseudo (son nom est Albert Ciocca). Par l'utilisation d'un pseudonyme, il devient un personnage sur la scène publique. Le photographe est d'ailleurs touché par cet être lambda (maladie qui l'empêche d'être incorporé lors de la première guerre mondiale, pupille de l'assistance publique, enterré dans la fosse commune à son décès) qui est aussi un personnage (encore actuellement les traces de ses écrits persistent sur les pierres des bergeries, des personnes racontent l'originalité de cet homme et s'en souviennent). Dans le magazine *Micro*³ qui explique l'utilisation de *Twitter*, une colonne est dédiée aux avantages d'utiliser un pseudonyme. Il en est de même pour le support *Daily Motion*. Certaines vidéos sont postées sous un pseudonyme. Alors que pour *Twitter*, l'utilisation d'un pseudonyme a comme première intention de préserver l'anonymat, pour les vidéos, cet anonymat est parfois remis en cause par le fait que les visages apparaissent. Chaque visage est reconnaissable. L'anonymat ne peut durer

³ 01net Micro, n° 736, du 31 mai 2012, *Le Newsmag du numérique hebdo*, p.13.

qu'un temps court. L'anonymat est souvent revendiqué comme offrant le droit à une liberté de ton. Le débat le plus important concernant ce support est la question du droit d'auteurs. Le nom, comme signature, est le filtre, là où la bascule se fait entre le privé et le public. L'utilisation du pseudonyme renforce la maîtrise de la perméabilité entre la sphère privée et la sphère publique. Les deux sphères sont perméables mais elles sont protégées par la maîtrise et les moyens qui vont avec, dont l'utilisation du pseudonyme est un exemple.

L'écriture ou de l'oralité pour rendre public ?

Les formes choisies satisfont-elles des buts différents ? Comment les évaluer ? À partir de quoi ? Avoir introduit d'analyser les vidéos postées sur *Daily Motion* dans cette analyse comparative peut surprendre. Les fonctionnalités des outils numériques (pour ne prendre que l'utilisation d'Internet via un ordinateur, par exemple, ou d'un téléphone mobile déclinant plusieurs connexions), offrent deux formes de production de signes, l'écriture et l'oralité : « Pour ceux qui étudient l'interaction sociale, les développements touchant la technologie intellectuelle sont forcément et toujours décisifs. Le plus important progrès dans ce domaine, après l'apparition du langage lui-même, c'est la réduction de la parole à des formes graphiques, le développement de l'écriture » (Goody 48). Nous avons fait sciemment le choix d'introduire une forme orale (par le biais de l'audiovisuel) dans les formes que nous voulions comparer. Le travail de Jack Goody indique que l'effet, pour ne pas dire l'influence, d'une forme écrite et d'une forme orale n'est pas le même sur la perception et sur la pensée.

Ces productions visant à rendre public, dès qu'elles sont abandonnées à l'espace qui les reçoit, se transforment en traces délébiles ou indélébiles. Chaque trace est signe, codé par l'écriture ou par l'image. La vidéo redonne l'oralité (Goody 2007) et le mouvement. Quel est le rapport entre celui qui produit le tweet ou la vidéo et celui qui le reçoit, le voit, le lit, l'entend ? Quelles que soient l'intention ou la motivation d'origine, il y a connaissance et reconnaissance dans la propagation. Le fait de retrouver les phrases écrites par le berger au charbon sur la pierre, peut-il nous faire considérer que le gazouillement, en tant qu'activité d'écriture qui rend public et témoignage par la trace, est du même ordre pour rendre public que le tweet des internautes ? Si l'on décompose, pour les trois médias de notre choix, certaines étapes permettant de rendre visible un message, nous pouvons déjà considérer deux macro étapes : l'expression/production et l'accès/la diffusion.

Dans la première macro-étape, l'accessibilité de la pierre et du charbon est-elle identique à l'accessibilité de l'ordinateur à l'internaute ? Y aurait-il une similitude d'accessibilité entre la pierre et le charbon de bois pour le berger et l'ordinateur pour l'internaute ? Si l'on admet que ces objets (actants non humains) font partie de l'espace familier des acteurs humains, on peut admettre que leur accessibilité est une évidence. Bruno Latour (Latour 2001) évoque cet enchevêtrement des actants dans ses théories de l'acteur réseau. En revanche, la mise en ligne d'une vidéo requiert une ou plusieurs étapes supplémentaires : la préparation technique, l'enregistrement vidéo et la mise en ligne. Qu'implique cette complication (Bergson 1959) ? Dans la deuxième macro-étape, on peut noter une nouvelle opposition concernant la durée (Bergson 1965) d'accès et de diffusion publics. Un tweet sur Internet a-t-il une longue durée de vie ? En combien de temps se diffuse-t-il au point de devenir public et combien de temps reste-t-il visible et accessible ? Le nombre de fois où il se diffuse participe-t-il à sa renommée publique ? En est-il de même pour une vidéo postée sur Internet ? La comptabilisation se fait et se fait savoir car chaque internaute sait combien de fois un tweet a été lu ou une vidéo a été vue. Le nombre a son importance. En revanche comment peut-on savoir le nombre de passagers qui ont lu les gazouillements sur la pierre du berger de Haute Provence ? Nous savons que l'un d'entre eux les a lus puisqu'il les a photographiés. L'étape de la production de l'ouvrage forme une nouvelle strate dans la mise en traces et dans la diffusion. L'ouvrage donne à voir et rend public sur une nouvelle strate communicationnelle (Ouvrard-Servanton 2010). Cette durée supplémentaire dans le rendu public peut se compenser par la durabilité de la trace via l'ouvrage. La vidéo dans sa diffusion va concéder plus de lenteur en passant elle aussi par un intermédiaire : le lien électronique. Elle se propage par lien. Les liens transmis par les internautes peuvent offrir une popularité à une vidéo. Actions et réactions sont visibles sur *Twitter*. En revanche, les réactions, devant les vidéos postées sur le net, ne le sont pas, de même que les lecteurs du livre à propos des phrases du berger inscrites sur la pierre en photos dans le livre.

Étrangement, par la visibilité de la réaction, le tweet sur *Twitter* semble plus proche de l'oralité (par son nom, associé au gazouillement des oiseaux, sonore dans l'émission et auditif dans la réception). Philippe Hert évoque la quasi-oralité dans l'utilisation du courrier électronique. Cependant, « vouloir oraliser l'échange électronique ne consiste pas à tenter de retrouver une situation effective d'échange oral, mais au contraire à toucher, grâce à la technologie, à un idéal de la communication absolue et directe du sens » (Hert 261). Bien que les réactions face aux vidéos ne soient pas visibles, le seul rapport à l'oralité qui reste est lors de la première écoute car pour le reste elles sont transmises à travers

le temps et mises à disposition de chacun : « Quand les pensées sceptiques ne sont pas notées par écrit, ni transmises à travers le temps et l'espace, ni mises à la disposition de chacun de manière qu'on puisse les méditer en privé et pas les entendre en public » (Goody 96). Car la forme orale éphémère (non enregistrée) rend difficile la mise au jour des différences qui oblige à voir les contradictions (Goody 1979) et ne peut pas être examinée en détail, décomposée en éléments ou manipulée dans tous les sens car l'attention est occupée par l'écoute et le regard.

La vidéo devient intemporelle en ne dépendant plus d'une circonstance et n'est pas solidaire, par le biais de l'oralité, d'une personne, comme l'est un message écrit et signé, quand bien même par un pseudonyme. On peut suivre la trace du Berger Albert et retrouver son identité par un recoupement de traces écrites et orales. Par cette traçabilité, Albert Ciocca devient un personnage public (avec un visage et un nom) même si l'on honore le pseudonyme qu'il a choisi. Néanmoins, si nous choisissons de prendre des notes lors de l'écoute d'une vidéo, nous passons de l'oreille à la main, de la perception essentiellement auditive et mouvementée (dans son aspect visuel) à la perception visuelle fixée qui fixe le discours et les idées. Jack Goody précise que « selon qu'ils sont transcrits ou prononcés, les mots entretiennent une relation différente avec l'action et avec l'objet » (Goody 100) pour montrer que le mot écrit est moins impliqué dans l'action quand il se détache du flot de la parole. Comme les gazouillis sur la pierre et ceux sur *Twitter*, ce qui est fixé par l'écriture, inciterait à l'expression de l'esprit critique et à moins d'implication dans l'action alors que les vidéos, à la première écoute, redonnent « la magie du mot parlé » (Goody, 100). L'action de parler et l'émergence du sens se font simultanément dans l'immédiateté du contact avec les sens. On est dans une forme d'Agora mais où l'on ne peut discuter car, même si les vidéos transmettent un discours oral, celui ou celle qui y accède ne peut couper la parole (même s'il peut couper le discours en arrêtant la vidéo). L'enregistrement d'un discours en vidéo et posté via un site tel que *Daily Motion* permet de conserver la parole dans le temps et dans l'espace. Le fait de voir les vidéos en groupe et de les faire connaître par le biais des liens électroniques rend publique cette parole enregistrée « audiovisuellement » en recréant le rapport de l'orateur dans l'Agora.

Le public et la popularité

Dans le travail d'*anthropologue* la communication, nous nous interrogeons sur les effets des actions. L'effet est plus longtemps visible que l'action elle-même. L'action d'écrire entre 20 et 140 signes est brève. L'effet peut durer des années.

La question ici est de discerner entre le fait que l'effet soit perçu et le nombre de fois que cet effet puisse être perçu. On peut supposer que le Berger Albert lorsqu'il écrit sur la pierre au lieu de choisir un petit papier ou un carnet, sait qu'il va être lu par quelques personnes. Une de ces personnes est le marcheur/photographe qui au départ suit des traces. L'effet de l'écriture du berger a duré au point que cinquante ans après, un marcheur puisse encore lire ses messages. Le « rendre public » est atteint en quelque sorte. Cette condition nécessaire de l'effet est-elle suffisante ? Les premières questions du marcheur qui deviendra le photographe de ces messages sont : « Qui est ce berger qui a signé « Berger Albert » ? Qui le connaît ? [...] Et qui est-il pour oser écrire si ouvertement ? » (Blond 17). Quelle différence pouvons-nous faire entre rendre public et diffuser ? Diffuser, serait-ce exprimer, informer, transmettre ? Dans la communication, l'aspect de la diffusion peut s'effacer au profit de l'échange. Jacques Derrida affirme, « il n'y a pas, à vrai dire, de trace immotivée : la trace est indéfiniment son propre devenir-immotivé. » (Derrida 69). C'est dans ce devenir immotivé qu'un autre passage s'effectue entre rendre public et rendre populaire, au sens de popularité, soit connu et apprécié de tous ou du plus grand nombre. La popularité induit une mesure de quantité. Dans le cas de la communication, la popularité est liée à la renommée ou à l'audience, c'est-à-dire le nombre d'individus qui échangent ou qui perçoivent/réceptionnent les messages.

Les formes (2) et (3) utilisent les réseaux pour se dupliquer. Le nombre de fois où ces formes sont lues ou vues est compté et compte pour les « exprimants ». Michel Maffesoli distingue ce qui est publiée de ce qui est publique pour éviter de les confondre. Les vidéos sur *Daily Motion* sont publiées et classées (via un choix éditorial). Elles permettent l'expression d'une opinion qui « se veut savoir, expertise, voire science » (Maffesoli 12) alors que l'opinion publique est, selon lui, « consciente de sa fragilité, de sa versatilité, en bref de son humanité ». La place publique est déterritorialisée (Deleuze & Guattari 1980) alors que « cette vieille chose qu'est la tribu, et ces antiques formes de solidarité que sont celles vécues au quotidien, exercées au plus proche, naissent, s'expriment, se confortent grâce aux divers réseaux électroniques » (Maffesoli 41-42) pour créer une *synergie de l'archaïque* (l'appartenance à une tribu) *et du développement technologique*.

Aucune des formes choisies ne perturbe les codes de perception. Les tweets sur la pierre sont éphémères car effaçables s'ils ne sont pas photographiés. Ils sont plus lents et plus longs en termes de diffusion que les tweets sur *Twitter*, comme les vidéos postées sur *Daily Motion* qui eux-mêmes requièrent du temps pour être « exprimées » (enregistrées et diffusées). Toutes ces formes sont

publiques. Les tweets sur la pierre n'acquièrent une popularité que s'ils sont transformés en photographies. Les vidéos n'ont pas la brièveté des tweets et transmettent une oralité qui ne rend pas l'échange oral. Pour ceux qui expriment/produisent, ces trois formes permettent de franchir l'espace et le temps au travers de leurs modes de diffusion publique. Pour ceux qui gèrent l'accès/la diffusion, ces trois formes sont sous le joug de la durée et du nombre pour estimer leur popularité publique.

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MODIFICATION VERSUS COMPLEMENTATION IN THE STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH NOUN PHRASES

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ABSTRACT. *Modification versus Complementation in the Structure of English Noun Phrases.* Apart from its head, the core element around which all the other phrasal constituents cluster, the noun phrase may contain dependent elements effecting determination (which poses few taxonomical issues), modification or complementation (two functions notoriously difficult to demarcate). This article outlines the inconsistent ways in which reference grammars make the distinction between modification and complementation in the structure of English noun phrases, and offers a more unified approach aimed to solve the terminological quandary.

Keywords: *complementation, modification, premodifier, postmodifier, complement, the noun phrase*

REZUMAT. *Structura grupului nominal din limba engleză.* Se remarcă, în structura sintagmelor nominale din limba engleză, constituenți greu de clasificat ca realizând complementarea sau tipul de determinare cunoscut în engleză drept *modification* (în contrast cu cel numit *determination*, foarte ușor de identificat), ceea ce a dat naștere unor analize contradictorii în literatura de specialitate. Pornind de la dificultățile în analiză create de similaritatea anumitor elemente direct dependente sintactic de termenul nominal cu rol de centru al respectivului grup, acest articol examinează structura sintagmelor nominale așa cum este ea prezentată în gramatica practică a limbii engleze, prin analiza comparativă a diferitelor publicații de acest gen.

Cuvinte-cheie: *complementare, determinare, predeterminare, postdeterminare, complement, sintagme nominale*

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Introduction

The phrase can be defined as a sequence of words that functions as a grammatical unit in the structure of a clause but does not include both a subject and a tensed verb, acting, instead, like a single part of speech, namely like a noun, adjective, adverb or the verb of a clause. Being, by definition, an internally structured unit, any phrase must have a head, the central constituent which determines the syntactic type of that phrase and whose presence is compulsory, except in the special case of ellipsis. Besides the head, the central component on which all the other phrasal elements converge, the English noun phrase might contain dependent constituents that effect not only premodification, often preceded by determination (which is specific to noun phrases, posing rather few taxonomical issues), but also postmodification and/or complementation. Since these two functions have so far proven to be notoriously difficult to demarcate, an exploration of the linguistic descriptions given to the structure of the English noun phrase in reference grammars is essential in order to examine the roots of this taxonomic quandary. By offering not only a clear outline of noun phrase descriptions provided by prominent researchers in the field but also personal comments on how and why the distinction between modification and complementation is made by some linguists or not made by others – as the case may be, in this article I point to the lack of consistency that mars the manner in which authors of reference grammars (fail to) accurately describe postmodification versus complementation when they analyse the structure of English noun phrases, and I also make an attempt to identify the proper approach aimed to settle this terminological issue.

An annotated bibliographical overview

In the structure of an English noun phrase, some grammarians have identified four and others five structural constituents that must appear in a fixed order: one or more determiners, premodifiers, a head, postmodifiers and/or complements. Premodification consists of all the modifying constituents placed after any determiners but before the head-noun, while the modifying constituents that appear after the head-noun form what is known as postmodification. The following is an example of a noun phrase containing a multitude of modifiers:

the rusty old engines outside in the back garden which John tried to mend

the = definite article, central determiner
rusty = adjective, premodifier

old = adjective, premodifier
 engines = common noun, head of the noun phrase
 outside = place adverb, postmodifier
 in the back garden = prepositional phrase, postmodifier
 which John tried to mend = defining relative clause, postmodifier
 (Dixon 21, adapted)

The existence of an additional structural constituent of the noun phrase, namely the complement, has been postulated. As Gerald Delahunty and James Garvey point out, “modifiers are not required or implied by the expressions they modify. These expressions would be grammatically complete without the modifiers – though of course adding or removing modifiers affects the meaning and consequently the referents of the modified expressions” (74-75). Complements, on the other hand, designate a central aspect pertaining to the head-noun, being essential constituents in the noun phrase. Thus, it has been stated that complementation appears either on its own or preceding postmodification, and normally takes the form of nominal clauses in apposition to the head-noun, of comparative clauses following the head-noun, of relative clauses, as well as of verbal clauses and of prepositional phrases. It will be demonstrated, however, that in a noun phrase comparative clauses and relative clauses are postmodifiers, not complements, and that not all verbal clauses and prepositional phrases are complements either, since many of these structures often function as postmodifiers.

Not all reference grammars differentiate between postmodifiers and complements in the structure of noun phrases. Some linguists use the term “complement” to refer solely to subject complements and object complements, in line with the narrow-scope definition given, for instance, by David Crystal, in *The Penguin Dictionary of Language* – “an element of clause or sentence structure, traditionally associated with ‘completing’ the meaning specified by the verb” (65), or by Stephan Gramley and Kurt-Michael Pätzold, who define the complement as “one kind of element which serves to complete the predication” (136). Consequently, such reference grammars only mention modifiers as post-head constituents in the noun phrase structure: “The noun head can be followed by several types of modifying expression” (164).

Gramley and Pätzold, for instance, classify prepositional phrases as “the most frequent postmodifiers” and also give some examples of verbal clauses and of relative clauses, but none of nominal clauses: “a person of distinction/ the valley beyond ours/ the valley to visit/ the valley which is situated beyond ours” (164). Geoffrey Leech also employs the narrow-scope definition of “complement”, as a constituent following finite verbs and telling us something about the nature of the subject or object (88). Leech analyses all the phrasal constituents other than the head-noun as modifiers (263), which “give more information about the headword” (361). Similarly, Geoffrey Broughton explains

that some “noun phrases also have one or more modifiers; those we put in front of the head are premodifiers; those after the head are postmodifiers” (195-196). The same is true of Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad, as shown in their examples of noun phrase postmodifiers, for instance prepositional phrases – “the best day of my life,” relative clauses – “a quality that I admire” (71) and nominal clauses – “The report that elephants were stampeding on the South Downs” (111).² It is clearly stated that, in noun phrases, prepositional phrases “act as postmodifiers” (74). John Eastwood counts relative clauses among a noun’s postmodifiers: “They are talking about a body which was recovered from the river.” (358) and, in what regards nominal clauses, he merely states that “we can use a that-clause after some nouns, mainly ones expressing speech or thought: The news that the plane had crashed came as a terrible shock. / Whatever gave you the idea that I can sing?” (345). Thus, it remains unclear whether Eastwood regards them as postmodifiers as well, but noun complementation is definitely not openly acknowledged, and the specification that nominal clauses “can be a complement of be” (“The truth is that I don’t get on with my flat-mate.”) suggests that he also favours the narrow-scope definition of the term “complement” (343).

Ronald Wardhaugh describes the noun phrase as containing postmodifiers in the form of prepositional phrases – “the boy at the back”/ relative clauses – “the person you are seeking”/ verbal clauses – “the place to be” (43-44), but nominal clauses that follow the head are termed appositives: “the fact that you said it” (44). Hilde Hasselgård, Stig Johansson and Per Lysvåg acknowledge the presence of complementation in the structure of verb phrases, adjective phrases and adverb phrases, but not in that of noun phrases, the elements positioned after the head-noun being termed postmodifiers (19), with the specification that a noun phrase may “also be expanded by apposition” in the form of proper nouns (“the author Erica Jong”), phrases (“Jostein Gaarder, the author of *Sophie’s World*”) or appositional clauses (“We have to face the fact that we made a serious mistake.”) called “that”-clauses (101-102). “Appositives” is the term preferred by Marcella Frank as well, but only in the case of nominal clauses – “His belief that coffee grows in Brazil is correct.” (280) and infinitive clauses – “his desire to be in good health” (326).³ In the chapter dedicated to relative clauses she states that the adjective clause “modifies a preceding noun or

² Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad use the term “noun clauses” but I prefer to employ the equally valid term “nominal clauses” in order to establish a stronger contrast with “noun phrases”.

³ Marcella Frank calls them “infinitive phrases” but the terminology used in this article takes into account the role of the infinitive forms in the economy of the sentence. Thus, they are classified as infinitive phrases if they “act like nouns or premodify the head of a Noun Phrase” and as infinitive clauses if they “postmodify the head of a Noun Phrase” or act like adverbs, “whether they are part of the complementation in an Adjective Phrase or in an Adverb Phrase, or simply show purpose, result, etc.” (Preda, “Phrases and Clauses” 34).

pronoun" (273). Prepositional phrases are considered modifiers – “the recovery of his son from pneumonia/ the recovery of the money from the thieves/ his injury to his knee/ our admiration for the doctor” (197-198). Sidney Greenbaum and Gerald Nelson also count among postmodifiers prepositional phrases and relative clauses (“a nasty gash on his chin which needed medical attention”), as well as nominal clauses (“the realization that miracles don’t happen”) which they call appositive clauses (48-50). Herman Wekker and Liliane Haegeman specify that, despite the significant differences between appositive clauses and relative clauses, both are viewed as postmodifiers (41-42). No clear distinction is, therefore, drawn, in these works, between complementation and postmodification.

Similarly, Leech and Svartvik include in the range of noun phrase postmodifiers both relative clauses – “Did you see the girl who was sitting in the corner” and nominal clauses – “The fact that she’s good looking”, as well as prepositional phrases – “Did you see the girl in the corner?” and infinitive clauses – “The next train to arrive was from Chicago.” (268)/ “We gratefully accepted his promise to help us.” (270).⁴ As it will be shown later, the former infinitive construction, “to arrive”, is a postmodifier, whereas the latter, “to help us,” is a complement, since it is appositive, just like nominal “that”-clauses in a similar position, clauses which are also viewed as complements. László Budai supplies examples of postmodifiers expressed not only by relative clauses, appositive clauses and prepositional phrases, but also by adjectives (“the house ablaze”), adverbs (“the room above”) and noun phrases in apposition (337-338).

Sidney Greenbaum explains that the “typical postmodifiers of nouns are prepositional phrases and relative clauses” but also offers more examples of parts of speech that appear as postmodifiers, including verbal clauses, as well as adverbs (“the day before”), adjectives (“something ethnic” and “the bonfire proper”) and noun phrases (“his address this morning”), specifying that these, however, are “more restricted in their use as postmodifiers of nouns” (219). Greenbaum (219) offers a more precise taxonomy of clauses that function as postmodifiers in a noun phrase, differentiating between finite relative clauses (“We don’t have a constitution which stops government from legislating certain things.”), relative *-ing* participle clauses (“The air mass bringing the coldest temperatures is the polar continental mass which comes in from the Soviet Union.”), relative *-ed* participle clauses (“An intake shaft would provide higher ventilation efficiency for the more extensive layout planned for the mine.”), relative infinitive clauses (“When is the best time to do it?”), appositive finite clauses (“It’s really shorthand for the view that well-being depends on more than the absence of disease.”) and appositive infinitive clauses (“This is an

⁴ Leech and Svartvik also call them “infinitive phrases” as they do not distinguish between infinitive phrases and infinitive clauses.

opportunity for Christians everywhere to at least unite in prayer for a speedy end to the war in the Gulf.”)⁵ Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik bring an even more detailed classification, mentioning appositive postmodification by *-ing* clauses (“I’m looking for a job driving cars.”) and appositive postmodification by *of*-phrases, pointing out the contrast between “the city of Rome” – which features an appositive prepositional phrase, and “the people of Rome” – which contains a “regular postmodifier” (1284). But although Quirk et. al. mention complementation, the example that they provide actually falls under adjective complementation rather than noun complementation: “a bigger car than that” (1239) displays the adjective phrase *bigger ... than that*, where the head *bigger* is complemented by the comparative structure *than that*. Thus, the head noun *car* is modified by a discontinuous adjective phrase, and not complemented by the comparative structure, since “*a car than that” would make no sense. As far as noun phrases are concerned, therefore, complementation is not acknowledged, and the postmodification is seen as “comprising all the items placed after the head” for instance prepositional phrases (“the car outside the station”), verbal clauses (“the car standing outside the station”), relative clauses (“the car that stood outside the station”) and nominal clauses (“The news that the team had won calls for a celebration.”), which Quirk et. al. call appositive clauses (1244). Examples of appositive postmodification by infinitive clauses are also provided: “The appeal to give blood received strong support.” (1271-1272). This particular distinction between verbal clauses which are reduced relatives and verbal clauses which are appositive is essential and, as it will be shown, can be used to solve the postmodifier versus complement terminological quandary.

In a study dedicated to phrases, Randolph Quirk considers complementation to be a special kind of postmodification and explains that some linguists prefer to use the term “qualifiers” to refer to the clauses embedded in a noun phrase, be they relative or nominal clauses, verbal clauses or even prepositional phrases: “Note that some authors also speak of ‘qualifiers’: usually after the head, used to describe it still further; realized not by individual words, but by embedded clauses and groups: as in ‘the unforgettable times that we spent together’” (Quirk 3). In *Collins Cobuild English Usage* of 1993 just the grammatical items that offer “more information about the subject of the clause” and those that “describe the object of a clause” are considered complements (145), and only “a word or group of words which comes in front of a noun and adds information about the thing which the noun refers to” are considered modifiers (403). Thus, “a word or group of words which comes after a noun and gives more information about the person or thing referred to” is defined as a qualifier

⁵ Here “for” is not a preposition but a subordinating conjunction and “Christians everywhere” is, thus, not a complement of preposition but the subject of the infinitive clause.

(556). Not only adjectives but also nouns can play the role of modifier: a noun modifier is “almost always singular” as in “the *car* door, a *football* player, a *surprise* announcement” (443) but noun modifiers can feature together, as in “*car body repair* kits, a *family dinner* party, a *Careers Information Officer*” and a noun modifier can be preceded by adjectives: “a long *car* journey, a new scarlet *silk* handkerchief, complex *business* deals” (444). Qualifiers can be expressed by prepositional phrases (“a girl with red hair/ the man in the dark glasses”), adverbs or adjectives (the dungeon beneath/ the individuals concerned/ the person responsible), adjective phrases (“machinery capable of clearing rubble off the main roads”), verbal clauses (“two of the problems mentioned above/ a simple device to test lung function”) or relative clauses (“The man who had done it was arrested.”); no mention is made, though, of nominal clauses following the head of a noun phrase (556-557). Instead, in line with the narrow-scope view of complementation, the entry dedicated to ‘that’-clauses details the use of these particular grammatical structures as complements after ‘be’ (“The important thing is that we love each other.”). It is then stated that they can be used after nouns “which refer to what someone says or thinks” but there appears no mention of noun complementation, only several examples: “I had a feeling that no-one thought I was good enough.” (708-709). Additionally, Angela Downing and Philip Locke seem to take a narrower view of qualifiers: arguing that the term postmodifier, “for which one can also use the term qualifier,” covers “all the experiential post-head items that are placed after the head noun and which, like the pre-head items, help to define and identify the noun referent still further,” they identify another element, different from the postmodifier, namely the complement, “realised for instance by content clauses,” as in “the fact that he left,” “the belief that peace is round the corner,” and then mention the fact that noun phrases “can also function in apposition to the head noun,” as in “the acknowledged master Edgar Degas” (404). Thus, Downing and Locke view complements as different from qualifiers and identify them with appositives. In my opinion, since these qualifiers can actually be accommodated under one of the already mentioned structural components, namely postmodification or complementation, there seems to be no obvious need to postulate the existence of a further sub-division of postmodification (Preda, *Synoptic Outline* 25).

Michael Swan explains, in his 1996 *International Student's Edition of Practical English Usage*, that there is “a wider sense” in which the word “complement” is used, so as “to add something to a verb, noun or adjective to complete its meaning” (127). Here are some of his examples featuring noun complements: “Does she understand the need for secrecy? / “Alan’s criticism of the plan made him very unpopular.” (127-128). Swan mentions, among the items he identifies as noun complements, “clauses (with or without prepositions)” and

gives several examples of nominal clauses but only one of a relative clause: “I admire your belief that you are always right./ There’s still the question of whether we’re going to pay her./ The idea that I might get married delighted my mother./The main reason why I don’t believe her is this.” (375-376). Nevertheless, some issues that point to the inconsistency of this approach may be identified. Thus, in these examples, “that you are always right” and “that I might get married” are, indeed, nominal clauses complementing the nouns “belief” and “idea”, yet “of whether we’re going to pay her” is a prepositional phrase complementing the noun “question” and containing as its complement of preposition the nominal clause “whether we’re going to pay her”, so this is an instance of noun complementation by a prepositional phrase, and the defining relative clause “why I don’t believe her” as we shall see, should be analysed as a postmodifier. Rodney Huddleston and Geoffrey K. Pullum view relative clauses as modifiers and nominal clauses as complements: “the guy who fainted” and “the book I’m reading” – they say, contain modifiers, whereas “the idea that he liked it” contains a complement (84). Complements, Huddleston and Pullum argue, “have to be licensed by the head noun” just like complements in clause structure “have to be licensed by the head verb,” whereas modifiers “are the default type of dependent, lacking the above special features” and several postmodifiers can co-occur in one and the same noun phrase: “a young woman from Boston who complained.” Thus, the noun phrases “the loss of blood” and “a ban on smoking” contain complements, whilst “a friend from Boston” and “people who complained” contain postmodifiers (83). The shorter postmodifiers will appear first, closer to the head, the longer ones being placed towards the end of the clause: “a guy from France who I was talking to last night” (Huddleston 264). Actually, complements can also co-occur in one and the same phrase (“his criticism of the book for its repetitiousness/ his purchase of the land from the Government for \$10,000”), although noun phrases “with more than one complement are generally rather infrequent” (Huddleston 261), and the two types of dependents can also appear together, with the complement, due to its stronger connection with the head, preceding the postmodifier: “a king of England_of considerable intelligence” (Huddleston 264).

Classification criteria at the syntactic-semantic differentiation interface

Even though the differences between them are difficult to point out, postmodifiers and complements are two different types of dependents and, therefore, using the term “postmodification” for all post-head elements is unwarranted. Instances of complementation, when they occur, need to be acknowledged. Care, however, must be taken, so as to properly identify noun

complements, avoiding confusion with adjective complements, for instance. Thus, one syntactic argument put forward in favour of singling out complementation inside the noun phrase is that it offers more specific information, with reference not necessarily to the head, but to a premodifier, as in “*Inspector Morse* is a *longer* series than we had anticipated.” Here, some grammarians would argue, the comparative “than we had anticipated” is a complement in the structure of the noun phrase even though it does not describe the head-noun “series” but, instead, complements its premodifier, namely the comparative adjective “longer”. Huddleston and Pullum, for instance, call such structures indirect complements, “because although they follow the head noun it is not the head noun that licenses them” (95). Huddleston and Pullum would argue that “than we had anticipated” does complement the head noun, despite being licensed by its premodifier, the comparative adjective “longer”. Indeed, if the premodifier is dropped, the noun phrase becomes ungrammatical: “**Inspector Morse* is a series than we had anticipated”. Yet, the head-noun “series” is not simply premodified by “longer” and complemented by the comparative clause. Instead, this is an instance of split modification of the head-noun “series” by a discontinuous adjective phrase.⁶ Thus, “longer ... than we had anticipated” should be seen as an adjective phrase whose syntactic function is modifier of the head-noun “series”. In the internal structure of this adjective phrase, the head adjective “longer” contains a comparative inflection that does, indeed, license a complement, realised by the comparative clause “than we had anticipated” but the mere presence of complementation in the internal structure of the adjective phrase should have no bearing on the analysis of the noun phrase (Preda, *Synoptic Outline* 25).

This does not, of course, mean that one cannot distinguish between postmodification and complementation in the structure of the noun phrase, even when the noun phrase itself is discontinuous, and the following two examples illustrate what the difference consists in: “A rumour is going around that politicians have lately been trying to advertise as fact.” versus “A rumour is going around that the cure for COVID-19 has been found.” In the first sentence, “A rumour ... that politicians have lately been trying to advertise as fact” is the subject, expressed by a noun phrase having the noun “rumour” as head, preceded by the indefinite article “A” as central determiner and followed by a relative clause as postmodifier. However, the postmodifier does not immediately follow the head-noun, being separated from it by a verb phrase functioning as the predicate of the sentence, so this noun phrase is split. In the second sentence, “A rumour ... that the cure for COVID-19 has been found” is the subject, expressed

⁶ For additional information regarding the complementation of adjectives see Alina Preda, “Modification versus Complementation in the Structure of English Adjective Phrases and Adverb Phrases.” *Philobiblon*, vol. XXV, no. 1, 2020, pp.105-123.

by a noun phrase having the noun “rumour” as head, preceded by the indefinite article “A” as central determiner and followed by a nominal clause as complement. However, the complement does not immediately follow the head-noun, being separated from it by a verb phrase functioning as the predicate of the sentence, so this noun phrase is split.

Another feature used to differentiate between postmodification and complementation is their degree of compulsoriness. Thus, modification is considered optional and always used to describe the head-noun, whilst complementation is regarded as compulsory and may complete the meaning of either the head-noun or of some other constituent in the noun phrase. As Randolph Quirk puts it, “heads are obligatory and modifiers are generally optional, but determination and complementation depend on the presence of some other element (usually the head) and are functions whose conditions of occurrence cannot be defined so simply (Quirk 3). On the one hand, modification is, by definition, a one-way dependency relation (Burton-Roberts 36) in which the modifier can only appear in the presence of the element modified (in our case the head of the noun phrase) so it is not only the determiners and the complementation items that depend on the presence of the head, but also the premodifying and the postmodifying constituents. On the other hand, complementation is a two-way dependency relation (Burton-Roberts 36), so it is not only the complementation item that depends on the presence of the head-noun, but the head-noun also depends on the presence of its complement, which it licenses semantically and, in some cases, even syntactically. As a result, there exists a mutual two-way dependency of complement and head.

This “degree-of-compulsoriness criterion” employed to distinguish between postmodification and complementation appears, thus, to be mainly semantic in nature: it pertains to semantic “satisfaction”, since it is suggested that omitting complementation items would leave the meaning of a preceding word “unsatisfied”. Quirk et al. argue that on the syntactic level complementation may be either compulsory or optional, yet on the semantic level it is compulsory. Nevertheless, since “the need for semantic ‘satisfaction’ is a matter of degree,” there seems to be no “straight choice between optional and obligatory elements of phrases” (Quirk et al. 66-67). There is, in fact, no shortage of examples showing that modifiers are not always optional. Consider the following: “The claim that vaccines cause autism should be dismissed as irrelevant.” where the nominal clause that vaccines cause autism (placed in apposition to the simple subject and considered to be a complement) is a compulsory element, because “*The claim should be dismissed as irrelevant.” makes little sense, as it does not express a complete thought. The sentence below contains a *premodifier*, “An *unfounded* claim should be dismissed as irrelevant.” but this element is compulsory, because “*A claim should be

dismissed as irrelevant.” clearly makes even less sense than “*The claim should be dismissed as irrelevant.”, although what was deleted from the former counts as a complement and what is missing from the latter is a mere premodifier.

And here is another example, which focuses on “The rumour that politicians have lately been trying to advertise as fact will be used to justify lifting lockdown measures.” versus “The rumour that the cure for COVID-19 has been found might have been created to justify lifting lockdown measures.” In the first sentence, “that politicians have lately been trying to advertise as fact” is not the rumour but provides additional information about the rumour, so this is a postmodifier expressed by a defining relative clause similar in function to an adjective, which would be a *premodifier*: “The *persistent* rumour will be used to justify lifting lockdown measures.” In the second sentence, “that the cure for COVID-19 has been found” is the actual rumour, so the nominal clause in restrictive apposition to the simple subject has the syntactic function of noun complement in the economy of the sentence and, inside the noun phrase, it complements the head-noun “rumour” by renaming it. In what regards the criterion of compulsoriness, the two subordinate clauses are of equal importance to the meaning of the respective sentences. If the subordinates are omitted, the remains are equally incomplete semantically, whilst being equally correct syntactically. “The rumour [...] will be used to justify lifting lockdown measures.” is just as (un)informative and as well structured as “The rumour [...] might have been created to justify lifting lockdown measures.” Neither subordinate can be considered more important than the other one to the formation of a grammatically correct statement that voices a complete thought, because both are needed to complete the meaning of the sentence they are part of.

Moreover, although relative clauses are postmodifiers and nominal clauses are complements, it is indisputable that, whether relative or nominal, all clauses appearing after the head-noun, as part of the noun phrase, are optional when realized by means of non-defining (non-restrictive) structures. In “My tutor, who admires you greatly, has invited us both to dinner.” there is a non-defining relative clause, postmodifier, whose presence was deemed optional by the speaker, and in “Her suggestion, that all the fees be doubled, was considered unacceptable.” there is a nominal clause, noun complement, in non-restrictive apposition to the simple subject, whose presence was not considered mandatory by the speaker, its content having probably been mentioned before. It can be concluded that, as Peter Hugoe Matthews shows, the criterion of “obligatoriness” is not universally appropriate in distinguishing between different types of dependency within phrases. (146-167). Of course, generally, it can be accepted that, more often than not, modification is a one-way dependency relation, whereas complementation is always a two-way dependency relation.

However, since there are several cases when modifiers are clearly not peripheral elements, one can merely distinguish between “completing” and “non-completing” constituents, regardless of the class that those constituents are said to belong to – the class of modification items or that of complementation items, respectively. Therefore, linguists like Jim Miller argue that the head provides essential information and “controls the other words in a phrase, the modifiers”, which offer additional information (3) and “fall into two classes – obligatory modifiers, known as complements, and optional modifiers, known as adjuncts” (4). Complements, Miller explains, complete the phrase’s head “with respect to syntax but also with respect to meaning”, whilst adjuncts merely append something and are “not part of the essential structure” (5). Nevertheless, adding the complement versus adjunct distinction to the description of noun phrase structure does little more than confuse terminology.

Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy make the terminological distinction between the two categories of post-head dependents in a more explicit manner. Thus, postmodifiers “specify which person or thing or type of person or thing is being referred to” and are mainly expressed by relative clauses but, even if expressed by a different part of speech, all the other postmodifiers “can be paraphrased by a relative clause”: “the house which is nearby/ the house nearby/ the girl who is wearing jeans/ the girl in jeans” (323). Complements complete the head-noun’s meaning and are expressed by prepositional phrases which “cannot be paraphrased with relative clauses” and which normally have as head the prepositions *to*, *of*, *in*, *for* and *with*: “her right to compensation/ government of the people/ your belief in his talent/ the relationship with neighbouring countries” (330). In Carter and McCarthy’s opinion, the following structures can also be complements in a noun phrase: *to*-infinitive clauses (“The decision to go ahead was not a popular one.”), defining *wh*-interrogative clauses (“That’s part of the reason why we bought it.”), *that*-clauses (“The fact that he was calm did not influence the jury.”) or *as to* + *wh*-clause (“There were a number of reservations as to whether they should be allowed to participate.”), the last two structures being more frequently encountered in formal writing (329). Although what Carter and McCarthy call “defining *wh*-interrogative clauses” are actually relative clauses and, thus, postmodifiers not complements, their description of noun phrase structure is less blurry than the other ones outlined above and comes closer to making a clear-cut distinction between the two types of post-head dependents.

Huddleston explains that semantically “complements generally correspond to arguments of a semantic predicate expressed in the head noun, while modifiers usually give properties of what is denoted by the head” (262) but admits that from a syntactic point of view “the distinction is a good deal more difficult to draw

than that between complements and modifiers (or adjuncts) in clause structure – and indeed it is much less generally drawn in grammars of English.” (263)

Both these elements are placed after the head and, even though most postmodifiers are optional, their presence may sometimes be mandatory – semantically, at least, if not syntactically as well, so a more straightforward analysis based on additional criteria is required. My proposal is to refer to noun phrase constituents by employing the term complement if they are in (partial) apposition to the head-noun, both the head and the complement designating the same referent from two different points of view or being “in some sense equivalent” (Huddleston 262). A distinction can, thus, be made between nominal clauses and appositive verbal clauses, which are complements and relative structures, namely finite relative clauses and verbal clauses that are actually non-finite (reduced) relative clauses, which are postmodifiers. Regrettably, it is not possible to draw such a sharp distinction in the case of prepositional phrases, though. But, as Huddleston pointed out, “the occurrence of a complement of a given kind” depends on the presence of a noun phrase head of an appropriate subclass, since complements expressed by prepositional phrases are obligatory with certain deverbal nouns and with certain nouns whose stems are derived in lexical morphology from adjectives that license complements headed by specific prepositions: “She relied on her father./ Her reliance on her father/ They believe in God./ Their belief in God./ He was eager to win./ His eagerness to win” (Huddleston 260-263). Thus, if we start from examples 1 and 2, containing finite clauses, since in such cases complements and postmodifiers are easier to tell apart, the distinction between 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, or 9 and 10, respectively, becomes clearer as well:

1. I resented the suggestion that the queen had overeaten.
2. I resented the suggestion that the queen had overlooked.
3. Her husband had been a king of Spain.
4. He had been a king of considerable intelligence.
5. My criticism of anti-vaxxers' behaviour stems from legitimate concern.
6. The criticism in my book stems from legitimate concern.
7. He chose a career counselling addicts.
8. Do you know the social worker counselling addicts?
9. The Queen's promise to help could not have come at a better time.
10. The next promise to arrive may be from the Queen herself.

In sentence 1, “that the queen had overeaten” was the actual suggestion and this is a complement in the noun phrase structure, expressed by a nominal clause in apposition to the simple direct object, whereas in 2, “that the queen had overlooked” is a relative clause, postmodifier, because it simply specifies which suggestion the speaker is talking about. Semantically, there is a two-place

predicate in sentence 3, expressed by the noun “king”, which requires the presence of two arguments: one appears in subject-position, namely “He”, and the other is the prepositional phrase “of Spain”, which complements this head-noun. The semantic relations in sentence 4, which can be rewritten, using a finite relative clause, as “He had been a king *who displayed* considerable intelligence.”, are different, because there are no longer “two arguments with a “king” relation between them” but simply one argument, “with the two properties of being king and of being of considerable intelligence” (Huddleston 262-263). Consequently, the prepositional phrase in sentence 4 postmodifies the head-noun, giving a property of the individual denoted by the noun “king”. A particular relationship can be identified between the head-noun and the prepositional phrase complementing it in certain noun phrases having as head a deverbal noun (criticise => my criticism of anti-vaxxers’ behaviour) or a noun whose lexical stem is morphologically derived from an adjective (eager to help => her eagerness to help). This relationship parallels that “between the predicator and its complements in clause structure.” (Huddleston 260) Thus, the prepositional phrase in sentence 5 is a complement in the noun phrase structure. We can, however, rephrase 6 as “The criticism *which can be found* in my book stems from legitimate concern.”, so this prepositional phrase expressing location can be recast as a finite relative clause. Therefore, it is a postmodifier. In sentence 7, “counselling addicts” was, actually, the career, so this appositional *-ing* clause is a complement, whilst 8 can be recast using a finite relative clause, “Do you know the social worker *who was* counselling addicts?”, so “counselling addicts” is a relative *-ing* clause, postmodifier. In sentence 9, “to help” was, in fact, the Queen’s promise, so this appositional infinitive clause is a complement, but since 10 can be rephrased to include a finite relative clause, “The next promise *which is bound* to arrive may be from the Queen herself”, “to arrive” is a relative infinitive clause, postmodifier.

Conclusion

In light of the examples above, it can be stated that providing a satisfactory account of the nature of complementation as distinct from postmodification in the structure of the noun phrase is an extremely challenging yet not an utterly impossible task. Since postmodifiers and complements are two distinct types of elements, it is not advisable to take the easy way out using terms like pre-head and post-head dependents, or to view complementation merely as a type of postmodification. There is also no immediate need to avoid having to distinguish between postmodification and complementation by resorting to the term qualifier. Nor is there any particular point in classifying all the elements that follow the head-noun as postmodifiers or in using the term modifier exclusively for

premodifiers and arguing that whatever follows the head-noun constitutes complementation. What is required, however, is an accurate description of phrase structure that allows for the distinction between postmodifiers and complements to be made not merely by leaning on positional terms and not simply by relying on degrees of compulsoriness: "It would be idle to suggest that such criteria can yield a sharp distinction between complements and modifiers: there is bound to remain a considerable area of indeterminacy – but this does not mean that we should simply abandon the distinction" (Huddleston 264). Thus, on the one hand, since adjectives are normally premodifiers, sometimes even postmodifiers, in a noun phrase, and given that relative clauses are the equivalent, in clause form, of this particular part of speech, relative clauses should be considered postmodifiers as well. And so should the prepositional phrases which can be rephrased as finite relative clauses, as well as the verbal clauses that are actually reduced relative clauses. On the other hand, appositive constructions, whether expressed by nominal clauses or verbal clauses, as well as prepositional phrases licensed by head nouns that require complementation, should be analysed as complements. And, finally, confusion with adjective complements can be avoided once one recognises that it is only in the internal structure of a discontinuous adjective phrase effecting split modification of a head noun that comparative clauses function as complements. In the noun phrase structure, however, the very same comparative clauses that feature after the head noun are not licensed by the head itself but actually by a premodifier and, thus, should be classified as postmodifiers.

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EXPRESSIVE ENACTMENTS OF ETHNIC MEMBERSHIP IN THE ROMANIAN-AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS FROM CALIFORNIA

RALUCA ROGOVEANU¹

ABSTRACT. *Expressive Enactments of Ethnic Membership in the Romanian-American Organizations from California.* Centered on the missions and repertoires of the Romanian ethnic organizations in California, this study analyzes how Romanian-Americans negotiate their Romanian ethnicity as individuals and as members of organized groups. While describing ethnic organizations as loci of ethnic awareness, founded on the expressive identification of Romanian-ness in the American space, my focus is on the heterogeneous discourses of the most visible Romanian ethnic associations in California. This study identifies ways of "encapsulating" Romanian ethnicity in ensembles of cultural practices which showcase ethnic culture through artifacts and cultural events as signifiers of ethnicity.

Keywords: *Romanian-Americans, California, ethnic organization/association, cultural practices, identity, representation*

REZUMAT. *Reprezentări expresive ale apartenenței etnice în organizațiile româno-americanilor din California.* Lucrarea analizează misiunea și reprezentările culturale ale organizațiilor etnice românești din California și pune în evidență modul în care româno-americanii își negociază apartenența etnică în calitate de indivizi și ca membri ai unui grup etnic. Organizațiile românești sunt descrise ca spații ale cunoașterii etnice, construite pe baza unei viziuni despre "spiritul românesc" în Statele Unite. Studiul analizează discursurile eterogene ale celor mai vizibile asociații etnice românești din California și identifică principalele practici culturale ale acestora care încapsulează cultura românească în artefacte și evenimente culturale, mărci ale etnicității.

Cuvinte-cheie: *romano-americani, California, organizație/asociație etnică, practici culturale, identitate, reprezentare*

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This study analyzes Romanian-American representations of collective identity negotiated in sites of collective interaction, by discussing the roles, missions and cultural repertoires of some Romanian ethnic organizations in California. While examining the multiplicity of interactions between Romanian immigrants in California and the American space, this study maps the construction of a new social and cultural imaginary found at the intersection of Romanian ethnic culture, its institutions (Romanian ethnic associations from California), and American institutional frameworks and values. Functioning as loci of political and cultural identification and American political legitimization, the practices of these organizations socialize Romanian immigrants by encouraging them to identify with the American society. At the same time, they also function as spaces of Romanian ethnic awareness which encourage the sense of emotional identification with Romania. My study identifies the opportunities provided by the Romanian ethnic organizations to the Romanian immigrants living in California in order to preserve their symbolic allegiance to their native land. The exploration of the new Romanian-American imaginary delineated by Romanian ethnic organizations in California is operationalized in the study of collective ethnic representations of ethnic identities within the framework of social practices articulated in the mission, goals, and projects of Romanian ethnic organizations.

Estimated at about 1 million people, the Romanian population in the United States has three areas of concentration: New York, California and the Midwest. Los Angeles features as the second top city of residence for Romanian-Americans. California – a state which has been an immigration state since the beginning of the gold rush – boasts of one of the most numerous Romanian community in the United States. Starting from 15-16 families back in 1912 (Alecse, n.d.), Romanians established in California represent 14.5% of the immigrants of Romanian origin living in the United States of America (Voinea 62). Latest statistics point to over 60,000 people of Romanian origin established in California, although this figure might be slightly unreliable, since it does not allow for the undocumented migration and/or the unwillingness of Romanian first, second or third generation immigrants to identify themselves of Romanian heritage in vital statistics surveys.

This study is based on my research of Romanian-American communities and organizations from Los Angeles conducted in 2013. I was then able to participate in Romanian ethnic community events and interact with first- and second-generation Romanian-Americans. The reflections compiled stem from interviews with the leaders of Romanian ethnic organizations in California and other Romanian-Americans. Given my short time with them, I acknowledge that my exploration of the Romanian community is only a limited way of seeing their world, a perception mediated by a subjective, interpretative discourse. This

article attempts to describe Romanian-Americans as hyphenated identities who acknowledge the specificity of their Romanian ethnic experience and recontextualize it in an ongoing mediation between allegiance to the United States and affinity for Romanian ethnicity. The Romanian-American identity is a formation which moves beyond the binarist notions of “here” and “there” to situate itself in the transnational space of multiple geographies.

The analysis of ethnic immigrant organizations enables us to make better sense of the complex and dynamic developments that take place within immigrant communities. The formation of ethnic communities happens on a continuum delineated by personal and institutional networks, whose role is to maintain an ongoing flux of information between home communities and host communities. The role and impact of migrant networks and institutions has been largely studied in the theories of chain migration and of human capital (Boyd 1989; Fawcett 1989; Coleman 1993). Murphy and Leeper (1996) distinguish four types of ethnic institutions which act as facilitators in the creation of such ethnic networks: the formal and the informal family and the community institutions; the religious institutions; the economic associations; and the cultural organizations. Such ethnic networks form a lattice of information and people that link former, current, and future migrants. They are instrumental agencies in disseminating information about means of entry, accommodation, employment and they provide newcomers with useful advice and strategies on how to adjust to the new environment (cf. Van Hear 60). Newcomers, whether visiting or studying, resort to such means of information for instant assistance and information. Ethnic organizations make up a field of communication meant to build and sustain collectivities within situated contexts (Andersen 1983, Anthias 2001, Barth 1962, Nagal 1994, Olzak 1992) by developing and promoting a shared sense of “we” through interactive participation. Ethnic activism manifested through participation contributes to the formation and maintenance of a sense of collectively shared ethnicity by delineating a symbolic public space, which creates affirming narratives of belonging. Ethnic organizations function as spaces in which people develop broad loyalties, spaces for political activity and citizenship practice. The diversity, number and size of ethnic organizations indicate the extent to which immigrants want to profile themselves as different, by stressing on their ethnic specificity (cf. Cohen 685, 693). In his article on the direction of the interpersonal relations of immigrants, Breton (204) identifies three sets of factors that stimulate the formation of ethnic organizations: cultural differences between the ethnic group and the native population, the level of resources among the members of the immigrant group and the pattern of migration. More than four decades after Breton published his article, migration and diaspora scholars add other variables to the list, such as the level of

resources and the pattern of migration. The new taxonomies feature three sets of factors: the migration process, the opportunity structure in the host society and the characteristics of the immigrant community.² My analysis considers Romanian ethnic organizations as collective agents which carve a new discourse of community by mobilizing a particular type of ethnic imagination and nurturing ethnic identity through cultural practices.

While going over the agenda, goals and missions of the organizational framework of immigrant associations, I will not focus on the influence of the host or home governments to support immigrant organizations. Policies facilitating the establishment and the persistence of community organizations, funding, technical assistance and normative encouragement, or the interest of home states in proposing a diaspora politics model of engagement will not be areas which this paper aims to address. My focus here goes on the actions taken by organizations to promote themselves, by using their own resources in establishing formal institutions.

The reasons of the little visibility of Romanian ethnic organizations in the United States may lie partly in the relatively small number of people claiming Romanian ancestry. Yet other reasons can be found in the inability of Romanian ethnics to mobilize around collectively-driven organizational projects of national impact and in their reluctance to engage in large-scale transformative projects meant to widen the context of the Romanian participation in American society. Although I concede that the activities of Romanian organizations in the United States might not have had ample national visibility, I argue that their projects were still indicative of a certain level of local activism, a strategy of “identity becoming” in which the acquisition of American political and cultural competence did not preclude the preservation of the symbolic identification with Romania through a shared sense of “we,” through interactive participation in political and cultural events. Although the practices of the Romanian organizations might have never been inflected by radical nationalism or inflammatory rhetoric, I argue that their ethnic activism has been channeled into generating cultural projects which contributed to the maintenance of a sense of collectively shared ethnicity and, in the long term, configured a new space of transnational engagement.

In an attempt to avoid both an “essentialized” reading of the Romanian communities in California and a prescriptivist approach to an alleged “Romanian linked fate”, this study investigates the Romanian ethnic organizations in California by delving into areas of commonality and dissensus altogether. This study therefore acknowledges the existence of a certain level of commonality which all organizations share. This commonality is derived from the sense of common

² For a more detailed taxonomy of the factors which determine migration see Marlou & Vermeulen 285.

place of origin and the common language, emotional and strategic instruments which provide people with a shared history and a sense of allegiance to Romania. At the same time, my interpretation uses a vocabulary and an ethos equipped to accept instability, conflict, and contestation as inherent aspects of the political and cultural effervescence within ethnic organizations.

Throughout this study, I shall use the term Romanian-American as an ethno-national identity category, an analytical construct useful for inquiry into how Americans of Romanian ancestry talk about their ethnic identity. My decision to use it stems from a practical consideration: the necessity of producing a functional term to refer to a vast community of immigrants who claim Romanian ancestry in the United States, a term which is also conceptually fluid enough to label a variety of ethnic identifications. This term serves the practical need of reducing the “infinite” number of types to workable proportions by focusing the discourse on a limited number of instances from the “Romanian-American” spectrum. The search for a term to designate, in the United States, the community with Romanian ancestry (first, second-generation immigrants) poses difficulties related their different degrees of acculturation, integration, and assimilation in the United States. The variable of mixed marriages or intermarriages may compound to the difficulty of ethnic identification. The scope of discussion can be broadened even further if one considers various subcategories (such as Jewish-Romanian or Macedo-Romanian immigrants). The difficulties embedded in such a conceptual undertaking hint at the slippery labeling, imprecise terminology, definitional conundrums, and ambiguous taxonomies which a researcher involved in this assiduous task confronts headlong. In this ongoing shuffling between the need to taxonomize and the baffling recognition that such taxonomies can never be complete, I have struggled to find an angle of research productive enough to generate some reasonable assumptions and inferences about the Romanian-Americans, generally construed as the United States-based Romanian immigrants and their descendants who acknowledge their affiliation to Romania.

In the early 20th century, ethnic organizations emerged organically on the territories with high concentration of Romanian ethnic population. Functioning as local-based fraternal societies, mutual benefit societies and cultural societies, such fraternal associations were instrumental in creating the premises of upward economic mobility by helping newcomers find jobs in the sprawling industrial factories such as textile, garment, and construction. At the same time, they functioned as spaces for the preservation of folkways and traditions and contributed to the assimilation of the Romanian immigrants into the American society, by effecting profound transformation in how Romanian-Americans came to understand themselves as American citizens.

If in the past the enforcement of ethnic solidarity in fraternal and mutual benefit societies was justified by a clear social and economic agenda, the importance of ethnic identity has declined over time. Though not meant to imply that Romanian identity survives as a response to instrumental goals of collective social and economic interests, we cannot easily dismiss this aspect which links the salience of ethnic solidarity with economic and social fulfillment. Present day organizations do not focus on improving social life in the communities; nor are they keen on the social betterment of the community, since economic goals are left entirely with the individual; their professed mission is that of representing the community, by offering visibility and prominence to the Romanian community. The dynamics of migration nowadays has changed the function of ethnic organizations: from economic centers, able to provide financial assistance and relief and aid integration into host-country culture, to cultural identity defenders and preservers which serve psychological, emotional, and social fulfillment needs.

Apart from changed roles and functions, present-day ethnic organizations display different membership and structuring patterns. They may function as part of a larger network or organizational cluster or as singular entities, unaffiliated to a larger network. Different Romanian organizations exhibit different modes of formation and engagement. More often than not, they seem to stem from coalitions of affinities; affinitive relationality is the foundation that makes these organizations coalesce.

The Romanian ethnic associations from California are registered non-profit organizations. Based on my online search of organizational websites, I have identified the following organizations posted on the official page of the Romanian Embassy in the USA: Viitorul Roman Cultural and Aid Society (Virgil Adumitroaie - President), Casa Româna (Romanian House), Mariana Cișmaș - President, World Romanian Council (Mihai Stan- President), Romanian American Council (Neculai Popa- President), The Union and League of Romanian Societies (Daniela Istrate - National President), Romanian Diaspora (Aurelia Năstase - President). The site of Holy Trinity Church Romanian Orthodox Church from California lists some other organizations: Romanian Community Center of Sacramento-Sacramento, CA (President Abigail Budak). Other internet searches produced two more results Romanian-American Coalition and Romanian-Greek Catholic Alliance (President Chris Terhes). Viitorul Roman Cultural and Aid Society professes to be “the premiere organization for promoting the Romanian cultural heritage throughout Southern California and beyond.”

Casa Română is the organization of the Romanian community in Northern California which focuses on organizing “socio-cultural activities for the Romania

community by supporting and organizing activities for the Romanian speaking Community, as well as for all people with Romanian affinities” (1)

The Romanian Community Center of Sacramento, Sacramento, CA (President Abigail Budak) identifies the following purposes for which this Association has been formed: “to affirm the cultural Romanian values, to present specific Romanian issues in front of the Sacramento authorities, to open up communication between Romanians in Sacramento as well as with other similar organizations within USA, to advise and aid the new comers in the area, to teach Romanian language and culture among the young people, to organize and support a Romanian newspaper, radio and TV programs for the Sacramento area, to develop different community programs (kindergarten, elderly care, nutritional programs, translation assistance, job search and career assistance, food and clothing collections and distribution to the needy, legal aid, counseling, library, etc.), to provide information regarding the Romanian communities as well as information about local and federal governments of USA and Romania” (1).

The mission of The Union and League of Romanian Societies (Daniela Istrate, President), a network of organization comprising Romanian fraternal benefit societies throughout Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, California, Minnesota, New York and Canada reads: “The mission of the Union and League is to provide help and support to its members, to allow for social interaction and to preserve the cultural identity of Romanian-Americans” (1).

The membership of these organizations is highly fluid and many of their projects rely heavily on the enthusiasm and voluntarism of their leaders (or founders) and their active contributors. Sometimes newcomers to the United States tap into such organizations by enlisting as members in organizational networks. Their goal is to learn information about job openings or other business-related opportunities. Their participation and contribution to organization has a practical component to it because they seek membership as a route to upward social mobility.

The recruitment of new members occurs when potential recruits express their intention of joining the group. The association then analyzes their credentials and decides on their eligibility. The induction of new members changes to a certain extent the structure of the group, which has a direct impact on the identity of the group as such. The responsibility of maintaining the group rests with all and each and every member of it and they need to determine the condition in accordance with which they are entitled to declare themselves members of a group.

With respect to the level of participation and activism in ethnic organizations, we can identify at least two categories of contributors: the active participants and the leaders. The active participants are the most invested in

the projects of Romanian organizations. They contribute to the staging of projects and derive a real sense of ethnic pride and fulfillment from their effort. Their activism becomes particularly visible in their effort to promote and cultivate the cultural practices of their communities. Participation in ethnically defined activities is occasion-dependent and devoted mainly to leisure-time, familial events and public gatherings where the affiliative component is particularly strong.

However, many Romanian-Americans shun organizational ties and tend to disengage from Romanian ethnic communities. Their choice reflects in many ways the priorities of many newly arrived migrants. Faced with the challenges of finding employment, learning a new language and adjusting to a foreign socio-cultural environment, they do not choose involvement in ethnic organizations as a priority on their list of adaptation pursuits. By turning their back to ethnic membership, they become the promoters of an alternative vision, in which ethnic communities do not foster but hinder individual development.

The presidents of the Romanian ethnic organizations rely upon membership contributions for the resources necessary to maintain the organizations. Such contributions can come in the form of annual membership fees paid by members, but in most cases, from the fees given by members attending an event. The leaders struggle to ensure the visibility of the organization which they represent and while looking for ways to ensure opportunities for the community they represent, they also attempt to become incorporated in elite spaces. Leaders benefit from enhanced status, within the community and get recognition from political actors inside and outside the United States, like ambassadors, and consuls.

Physical location (as characterized by proximity) is no longer a prerequisite for the practice of community-building and maintenance, as globalization of telecommunications facilitates the “interlacing of social events and social relations ‘at distance’ with local contextualities” (Giddens 21). Appearing outside the geographical confines of ethnic enclaves, such geographically-unbounded spaces of ethnicity include professional organizations, alumni associations, and religious organizations. The exchange of information between leaders and members within the organizations and between members and non-members occurs on the online forums. Most refer to job openings and business opportunities or remind readers of upcoming ethnic events and fund-raisers. Special vignettes of Romanian culture and history also feature, especially on festive days. Romanian ethnics use these networks to increase the frequency and intensity of their relations with each other and with the online community as a whole.

In the United States, such associations organize many ethnic cultural events, ranging from Romanian festivals, book clubs and heritage language classes after the church service in Orthodox churches, or exhibitions organized by heritage museums to picnic gatherings and celebratory events organized on

March 1st and March 8th, Christmas and Easter. Such cultural events provide a framework for the expression of the Romanian ethnic imaginary in terms of commonality and oneness through emphasis on common heritage. These events are self-referential, as they tell Romanian-Americans who they are and also function as markers of distinctions, differentiating “them” from “others”. They are also discursive strategies through which Romanian-Americans invent, reinvent, and reposition themselves in relation to an American political space, yet make rhetorical claim of identification and connection to Romania.

Many Romanian ethnic organizations do not construe themselves as political organizations promoting a political or partisan ideology, but as associations focusing on preserving a Romanian cultural identity. The leaders’ attempts to depoliticize the agenda of the Romanian ethnic organizations become obvious in the way in which these organizations’ mission is expressed. As their ethos predicates on the idea that culture transcends ideology, most organizations profess their apolitical nature and describe the core of their mission as developing around cultural events. A close look at the projects organized by these ethnic associations is indicative of their emphasis on cultural events, at the expense of their commitment to social and political issues. Organizations are eager to promote Romanian ethnicity and the cultural strands of a shared history, language, and ancestry, and they encourage the transnational ties for such objectives, but goals related to political demands have been, and are, rarely expressed publicly. There is a wide variety of ethnic activities carried out through such organizations, ranging from art exhibitions to book clubs and informal business meetings. Their main manifestations: ethnic choral and dance ensembles, language and cooking classes, athletic activities, dinners and dances, and various festivals.

The student organizations activating in California are the Romanian Club at UCLA and the Romanian Student Association at Stanford. In its statement of purpose, the former pledges to promote Romanian culture and provide support to the underprivileged Romanian community in Southern California. Its Facebook page bears witness to the campus activities they put together, mainly featuring traditional folk art and cuisine. The Romanian Student Association at Stanford professes to “advertise Romanian and its culture in the Stanford community and to guarantee a small community for Romanian students at Stanford”. From 2012 onwards the group seems to have entered a period of latency, as their latest recorded events date back to 2012.

The American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences (Ruxandra Vidu-president) is an institution “dedicated to the analysis, study and dissemination of Romanian contributions and accomplishments” (1).

A more transformative approach seems to be undertaken by Romanian-American Coalition and The Romanian Catholic Alliance. The main goals of The

Romanian-American Coalitions are: "to collaborate with other organizations, companies and individuals so as to promote Romanian community all over the world, to help people in need in Romania, to promote democratic and free-market principles, human rights and transparency in Romania" (1). Both the main and the specific goals of the organization (to strengthen the relationship between the USA and Romania, to promote Romanian business in the US) seem to center more on Romania rather than on the U.S.-based Romanian diaspora.

The Romanian Greek-Catholic Association is a non-profit charitable organization that advocates for the end of discrimination of the Greek-Catholic minority in Romania and the full restitution of the religious properties confiscated by the communist regime in Romania. Both this organization and the Romanian-Greek Catholic Alliance (President Chris Terhes) have a more politically-oriented agenda and see themselves as active contributors to the democratic transformation of their country of origin. Their mission (less corruption, increased respect for civil and human rights) seems to be part of a political repertoire which shows that the members learnt "the American way" policies and they attempt to transfer the newly acquired skills to democratizing struggles in Romania.

One of the cultural manifestations organized by *The Union and League of Romanian Societies* is *La Sequa*, a monthly literary event. This community-based initiative meant to construct a collective memory of the common event is the result of collaborative efforts of local ethnic communities. The meetings take place in private residences. The club rotates discussants each month: sometimes it is the person who selects the book or the one hosting the reunion. Outside facilitators (Romanian officials or academics in transit in USA) are invited to bring their contribution and insight into the book under discussion. The selected visuals (maps, photos, paintings) are meant to stimulate after-reading discussions. An authentic site of cultural production, *La Steaua* provides a platform through which national and ethnic identities are negotiated, and function as a multivocal cultural field in which different voices express claims of recognition. It also provides a context in which narratives of the past are substantiated by invoking cultural imaginaries which address the nature of nationhood, the role of ethnicity, and the sense of belonging to an imagined space. Romanian ethnic culture is showcased by "native clothes", dance, food, icons, and pottery items. These miniature tropes which reconfigure the sense of "Romania" function as symbols and markers of community building. Such artifacts or practices may, at times, dilute, exoticize, or commodify the sense of ethnic identity, but are nevertheless an effective strategy of evoking familiarity and the sense of communal cohesion. The discussions during the event spin tales of ethnic continuity, which reconstruct the spaces "here"/"there" and legitimize a discourse of attachment to the land and patrimony they left behind, while at the same time providing

insights into their self-making into the new world. The discussants' speeches involve equal amounts of remembrance (of some cultural elements), oblivion (of other elements), and imagination (expressed and invoked by the creative alteration of specific features of identities). The bias, the inconsistencies and discontinuities of personal narratives are embedded in their discussions about historical events which mobilize memories and subtly guide the participants' imagination in ways that influence their perceptions and interpretations of that event. Such discussions about the remote or the recent past occasion no single story to tell, but multiple ones. The act of reminiscing sometimes leads to idealized reconstructions of the personal and communal past, coupled with nostalgia for some diasporic locations or claims to cultural distinctiveness in particular times and places of Romania.

Such cultural events are passionate, performative, and familial they and lend familiarity, immediacy and a certain sense of intimacy to a collective event. The participants are sometimes expected to contribute a small amount of money in the form of a donation to the Romanian ethnic organization. Depending on the event, there is free participation (in festivals) or by invitation, (when the event takes place indoors). Sometimes members of Romanian consular offices attend the event and give opening speeches. Their presence lends legitimacy and prestige to the event and is considered a personal success for the organizers of that event. The information about the organization of events and their media coverage appears on various sites. Sometimes, such manifestations have their own Facebook page or appear on the site of Romanian consulates, on E. cultura.info (a cultural media platform), and on the site of Uniunea Ziaristilor Profesioniști din România.

The common denominator of these organizations is the heavy emphasis on cultural identification and cultural issues in public events. Intended as revisitations of canonical literature, such cultural events emphasize the bonds between members through expressive enactments of membership. They reimagine Romanian ethnic identity by extolling the virtues of a shared indigenous past. In such encounters, ethnic identity is recreated through the use of ethnically-charged items like icons, pottery, folk blouses, which function as expressions of group identity with intense symbolic significance. These ethnic objects have historical, political and social implications, as they contain a double narrative: the narrative of the home and of migration.

There is a variety of Romanian ethnic associations in California, ranging from large and well-established, to small and short lived. Not all of them are exceptional in terms of social, political and cultural involvement, or in terms of their ability to mobilize resources to benefit Romanian communities in the United States. Yet, they are still important for understanding ethnic, diaspora

and transnational processes, because the extent to which Romanian-Americans cluster in organizations and their willingness to contribute to the creation, development, and sustenance of such organizations are critical indicators of the salience of Romanian ethnicity in a global world. While dealing with similar essences, similar values, California-based Romanian ethnic organizations have their own discourse on ethnicity, construction of homeland and national ideology. Yet, they are united in the creation of a similar cultural imaginary which consecrates the sense of simultaneous belonging and allegiance to the Romanian and American spaces. Romania ethnic organizations are collective agents which carve a new public discourse through a particular type of ethnic imaginary, which recreates and re-imagines community in a new American space. They mobilize the imagination of ethnic communities through programs and initiatives which contribute to an enhanced sense of empowerment and identity among the Romanians in California, while preserving and connecting them to their Romanian heritage.

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BOOKS

Maria Șlehtițchi, Mihai Șlehtițchi, Lucia Țurcanu, Ivan Pilchin, Maria Pilchin, *Literatură, reprezentări, negocieri* [*Littérature, représentations, négociations*], Chișinău, ARC, 2018, 190 p.

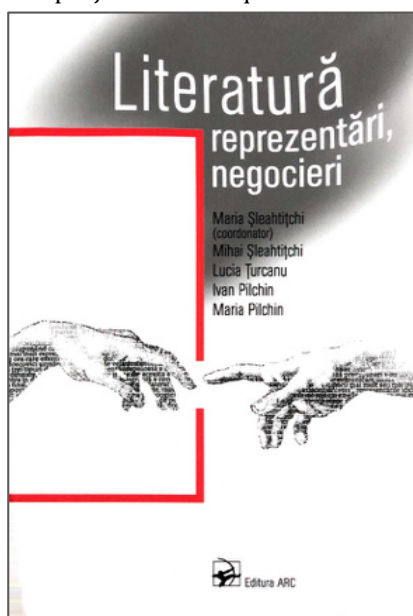
Littérature, représentations, négociations (Chișinău, ARC, 2018) est un volume collectif qui valorise le projet institutionnel *La littérature dans l'espace des représentations: entre Orient et Occident*, avec la participation d'une équipe de chercheurs dirigée par Maria Șlehtițchi.

Partant de l'axiome de la *mimésis* aristotélicienne selon lequel la littérature est un corpus de représentations individuelles de la réalité, les nouvelles orientations de la recherche élargissent le champ des investigations pour révéler des représentations appartenant à d'autres domaines, justifiant l'ouverture plus fréquente à l'inter- et à la transdisciplinarité, de même qu'aux approches de la sociologie, de la psychologie ou de l'anthropologie etc., exploitées dans l'analyse du fait littéraire.

L'enjeu de la recherche a été de poursuivre la dynamique des transferts des représentations individuelles du créateur vers des représentations « du groupe, d'une communauté plus large, devenant de ce point de vue aussi des représentations sociales ».

En ouverture, le texte de Mihai Șlehtițchi, *Représentations sociales*, esquisse le cadre théorique général, retraçant l'histoire d'un phénomène ébauché pour la première fois en 1961 dans le volume de Serge

Moscovici, *La psychanalyse, son image et son public*, qui se voulait une analyse de la manière dont la psychologie freudienne avait pénétré l'esprit du public français. On assiste à la naissance d'un concept qui « dépeint le type de construction cérébrale qui reflète largement les bouleversements de la société contemporaine et qui, implicitement, permet de connecter les individus à ces bou-



leversements ».

Les deux contributions suivantes – *Représentation de Ion Creangă dans le canon littéraire de Bessarabie: contributions à une histoire possible de la réception*, respectivement *Réception d'Eminescu en Bessarabie*, réunies sous le titre *Représentation générique et manipulation pendant le totalitarisme*, les deux étant signées par Maria Șlehtițchi – en offrent des illustrations, montrant comment deux grands écrivains roumains – Creangă et Eminescu –

sont devenus l'objet des représentations sociales d'une nature très particulière, dans le contexte où « la réception critique et l'histoire littéraire [...] sont les plus sensibles aux interférences idéologiques et politiques, surtout dans le cas des systèmes totalitaires ». La promotion de certains auteurs, la négociation de leurs images au détriment des autres, l'imposition d'un profil anonyme de l'écrivain au détriment de la vérité historique sur la personnalité concernée, se répercutent au niveau des représentations individuelles et sociales. Dans la période de l'après-guerre, dans la littérature de la rive gauche du Prut, les écrivains roumains classiques avaient été progressivement inclus dans le circuit des valeurs, mais avec une visée assez précise : légitimer le régime communiste, à travers un processus généralisé de manipulation idéologique.

Il s'agissait donc d'un cadre géopolitique spécial, celui de l'ancienne République de Moldavie de l'ex-Union Soviétique, pendant les cinq ou six décennies du siècle dernier, et dans ce cadre-là les figures de Creangă et de Eminescu, des classiques moldaves de la littérature roumaine, ont été manipulées et perverties selon les intérêts de la politique du moment.

Dans le cas de Creangă, l'histoire commence avec I.K. Varticean qui publie dans le premier numéro de 1945 de l'annuaire *Octobre* une étude intitulée *Ion Creangă, le classique de la littérature moldave*, spéculant, sur le schéma de la propagande stalinienne, les données suivantes : de sa naissance, Ion Creangă est moldave de la Moldavie historique ; par sa langue, il est un écrivain de langue moldave ; il a des origines « saines », provenant d'une famille de paysans ; au niveau de ses thèmes, il est un écrivain « *narodnic* » ; au

niveau de son idéologie, il adopte les « bonnes » attitudes critiques envers le monde bourgeois-latifundiaire.

La rigidité de ces positions diminuera progressivement avec Vasile Corban (1959) et ensuite avec les textes publiés par Nicolae Corlăteanu (1964) et Constantin Popovici (1967), pour arriver à éviter l'endettement idéologique dans les contributions de Mihai Cimpoi (1982).

En ce qui concerne Eminescu, après l'intégration de la Bessarabie à l'URSS, le poète et son œuvre avaient été mis à l'index pendant une décennie. L'ouverture s'est produite en 1954, avec la publication du volume Mihail [sic] Eminescu, *Poésies [Poezii]* (double préface d'A.T. Borșci et Ramir Portnoi), « un événement culturel et éducatif exceptionnel, décisif pour l'évolution future de la littérature », par son impact sur « la qualité du langage de la poésie des années 60, considérée comme une génération d'or de l'après-guerre en Bessarabie ».

Tout comme dans la Roumanie stalinienne, sur la rive gauche du Prut, la « mesure autorisée » du lyrisme d'Eminescu a été également donnée par la poésie de la révolte sociale, par l'inspiration folklorique et par « l'autorité » de certaines voix critiques, surtout celle de Ramir Portnoi. Le changement de perspective se produira en 1974, avec la publication de la monographie de Constantin Popovici, *Eminescu. Vie et œuvre* (Chișinău, Cartea Moldovenească).

Un autre groupage de textes, réunis sous le titre *Création et négociation des représentations pendant la transition*, appartient à Lucia Țurcanu et examine, cette fois, les transformations qui se sont produites dans la représentation de la poésie roumaine en Bessarabie.

La rhétorique « sămănătoriste »-idyllique du non-romantisme sentimental, le pathos civique, les structures prosodiques traditionnelles, tout ce qui a fait que, jusqu'aujourd'hui, le lyrisme moldave soit « désynchronisé de la littérature écrite entre-temps en Roumanie, qui avait parcouru à travers le XX^e siècle l'expérience du modernisme et à partir des années 70 avait commencé à expérimenter des versions du postmodernisme » (Mihai Iovănel) – laisse progressivement la place à une nouvelle vague d'écrivains, qui seront anthologisés par Eugen Lungu dans le volume *Portrait de groupe. Autre image de la poésie bessarabienne* (1995), « anthologie manifeste » ou « anthologie promotionnelle » qui réunit une vingtaine d'auteurs de cette nouvelle génération qui rompt avec la tradition de la poésie bessarabienne.

Les deux dernières contributions du volume, assumées par Ivan et Maria Pilchin, traitent des traductions (la traduction comme forme de réception et de représentation de la littérature). La première étude aborde des questions de nature théo-

rique, établissant deux catégories de représentations, « l'une sociale, cumulative, l'autre individuelle, atomistique, autonome », cette dernière étant celle qui génère « son propre système d'images et de symboles », faisant de l'acte et du produit final de la transposition « un processus créatif », et souvent concurrent de l'original.

Sous le titre *(Al)chimie des traductions dans le laboratoire de la dictature*, Maria Pilchin se concentre sur l'activité de traducteur du chimiste Ion Vatamanu, sans oublier de rappeler une vérité qui risque d'être perdue ou oubliée, à savoir que « les traductions en URSS ont été une forme de défoulement littéraire, une possibilité de dire dans ta langue ce que, pris dans les courrois de la censure et d'une esthétique réaliste-socialiste, tu ne pouvais pas dire autrement ».

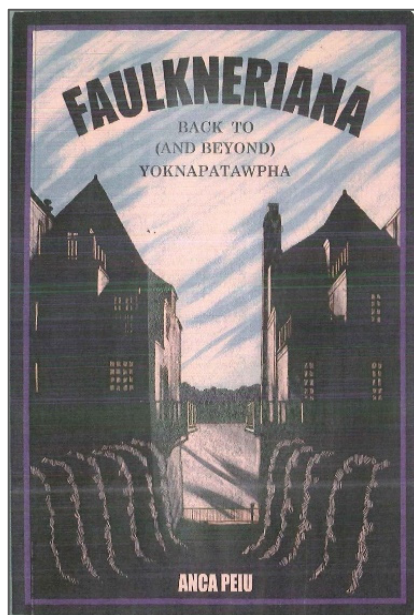
Au total, les contributions rassemblées dans les pages du volume prouvent le sérieux d'un travail d'équipe mené sur trois ans, un effort dont les résultats n'ont pas tardé à devenir visibles.

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BOOKS

Anca Peiu, *Faulkneriana. Back to (and Beyond) Yoknapatawpha*, București, C.H. Beck, 2019, 266 p.

To discuss William Faulkner in any capacity that could be considered relevant is not an easy task. As one of the most evocative authors of the American South, his novels and short stories have come to be regarded as the quintessential example of what one might call Southern literature. Moreover, his work has been spared no criticism or analysis from literary theorists and fellow authors worldwide, most of whom have made great efforts to untangle the web of themes and motifs Faulkner had become known for exploring. The translation of his work into other languages had been very significant as it had caused the resurgence of various critics and writers' interest in Southern literature. Romania is no exception in this respect. For instance, in 1969 Sorin Alexandrescu published his study *William Faulkner*, Virgil Stanciu's *Orientări în literatura sudului American* (1977) briefly, yet expertly delves into the Faulknerian fiction, and Mircea Mihăieș published *Ce rămâne: William Faulkner și misterele ținuțului Yoknapatawpha* in 2012.



Alexandrescu's study impresses through its meticulous approach to Faulkner's work, as it takes into consideration the writer's initial reception by the critics and the many interpretations his novels have been subjected to. It provides an extensive look into the writer's narrative along with a structuralist analysis of the typological structures Faulkner employs when it comes to his characters. Moreover, Alexandrescu also examines the writer's life as he focuses on several important events whose influence can be observed in many Faulknerian novels.

Mihăieș also focuses on Faulkner's life, as he presents a psychological, moral, and aesthetic portrait of the writer. He investigates the literary mechanisms which Faulkner employs in order to properly understand how a provincial writer managed to attain international renown. Mihăieș forgoes any attempt at a chronological approach, preferring instead to focus on the novels themselves and how they compare to one another.

Stanciu gives considerable attention to the Faulknerian microcosms. According to Stanciu, Faulkner has managed to bring the Southern life and mentality to the attention of the world beyond the American sphere. The pivotal theme of Faulkner's novels is the human being who respects and understands the Southern traditions. Stanciu considers that Faulkner's works have, in fact, managed to recreate and transcend beyond the limits imposed by a certain geographical reality.

To talk about Faulkner in Romania today would be, of course, impossible without mentioning these scholars. But the number of literary critics and American study specialists from Romania who wrote studies about Faulkner is much higher. We must, at least, briefly mention: Ion Biberi's *Microcosmosul lui Faulkner* (1982), Anca Mureșan's *The stylistics of literary translations: William Faulkner* (2019), Ioan Sava's *Narrative techniques in William Faulkner's work* (2004), Gabriela Dumbravă's *The southern short story from Faulkner to Styron* (2004), Teodor Mateoc's *Encounters with blackness: re-reading race and identity in William Faulkner's fiction* (2005), Ana-Karina Schneider's *Critical Perspectives in the late Twentieth Century: William Faulkner* (2006), Iulia Andreea Milică's *Literary representations of the Southern plantation* (2013).

Anca Peiu's interest in Faulkner goes back to her thorough stylistic study *Trecutul timpului perfect: de la Thomas Mann la William Faulkner published in 2001*. Her latest Faulknerian publication is *Faulkneriana: Back to (and Beyond) Yoknapatawpha*, published in 2019, a study which follows suit Alexandrescu, Stanciu, and Mihăieș. Peiu's research is a compelling approach to Faulknerian criticism. She considers not only the work of Faulkner in its context, but also the influence the

writer has had upon the evolution of literary representations of the American South in literature. Though it could be considered similar to other critical studies published before by virtue of approaching the same subject, it nevertheless provides an intriguing perspective upon some of the writer's most well-known novels and short stories, as well as the carefully constructed world of Yoknapatawpha County.

The 23 chapters of Peiu's monograph tackle different aspects of Faulkner's work. It also provides the reader with a chronology of the author's life, interlaced with several events of his contemporaries' lives, as well as two maps of Jefferson, Yoknapatawpha County. Each chapter acts as an individual study, rather than a cohesive unit, which facilitates Peiu's efforts to properly delve into the themes and motifs of the novels, as each chapter will present a new perspective upon a matter which was previously discussed. The reason is that, according to Peiu, Faulkner "defies any didactic effort at categorization" (238).

Nevertheless, Peiu's focus is clearly Yoknapatawpha itself, and its county seat, Jefferson, which she eloquently describes as a "live metaphor" (33). The significance attributed to this particular spot in the Faulknerian literary universe is quite understandable given the author's own fascination with places and their influence. Peiu even explains that with Faulkner spaces are rarely ever just spaces, but rather a 'kaleidoscopic enigma' which symbolizes "more than just the Old South: it is a fine fictive microcosm often representing the entire United States of America" (112).

Peiu acknowledges that Faulkner tends to associate the Old South not necessarily with the idea of a single coherent

and unitary setting, but rather with a set of conventions and traditions. "'We the People:' Townsfolk of Jefferson, Yoknapatawpha", "Poor White Trash of Yoknapatawpha: The Bundren Clan (*As I Lay Dying*, 1930)", and the "Out of Yoknapatawpha" sections in Peiu's work show that, in Faulkner's fiction, the county of Yoknapatawpha tends to occupy a far greater place than perhaps any of the characters themselves, who are all ultimately formed by its customs and traditions. Peiu remarks upon "the Old Southern social tensions stemming from inter-racial intolerance" (168) and "the permanent loss of an idyllic American wilderness" (186), as they ultimately reinforce the idea that the county might exist without its inhabitants, though they themselves are unable to escape it. In fact, the question that Peiu places much emphasis on is whether there is "actually any way *out* of Yoknapatawpha - for this writer and his readers" (197)? According to Peiu, the answer to this question is uncertain. Most of the novels that she analyses, especially those focusing on the Bundren and the Snopes clan, often reveal that there is no escape from the South, whether physically or psychologically. Exploring the flawed and perverse characters that populate Faulkner's novels, Peiu comes to the conclusion that Faulkner imbues his characters with certain Southern values, such as chivalry and honour, which are always considered a result of their genealogy. Or at least this seems to be the case of the women he writes about. Females are always in danger of mothering the often weak-willed men that surround them. Annie Bundren, one of Faulkner's most memorable heroines, is, thus, given considerable attention, especially in the chapter "Addie - The Return of the Letter A."

On the other hand, families and family stories are not neglected either.

Peiu also delves into matters related to Faulkner's own perception of art. The Southern writer equates art to a form of survival that paradoxically has no inherent merit, but rather "is born from this particular 'oratory of solitude'" (208) which his narrative often embodies. In chapters such as "Between Traum(a) and (Meta)Fiction: Lost Cause Letters, Hunger and Parties in Modern Prose - William Faulkner's *Absalom! Absalom!* And Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*", Peiu comments that Faulkner expresses a certain reservation towards the notion of words and their performative function, which could be construed as rather ironic given the oral quality of his novels. "Words are safe no more" (76) is the conclusion Peiu ultimately arrives at. She explains that Faulkner often ascribes a certain inadequacy to words which, in his vision, often transcend life and fail to capture it properly and entirely. It seems that the appeal of Faulkner's fiction lies in the fact that the readers are often seduced into imagining that it is only they who can understand and become aware of the messages hidden in Faulkner's fiction.

This is the very point of Peiu's study as well. Though she remarks that Faulkner might have been concerned merely with ensuring that people are made aware of his prowess as a unique "writer of the world" (66) through his work, this study chooses to focus not so much only on deciphering his novels and short stories, but on bringing awareness about the reception of Faulknerian studies in the Romanian literary scene.

As a translator, Peiu is acutely cognizant of the international impact of Faulkner's work: "translating Faulkner into any

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other language means so much more than translating from American English ... [I]t means translating from all these languages involved in a Faulknerian idiom of an exquisite metaphorical richness" (195). Indeed, as Peiu states at the end of her study there is a certain difficulty in truly

and exhaustively researching Faulkner and his work. Yet this knowledge is precisely what makes him so compelling as a subject: we are not entirely aware of him still. Though, it could be argued we are perhaps one step closer now as another monograph has been published.

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BOOKS

Simona Jiša, *Questions de filiation littéraire*, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, coll. « Romanul francez actual », 2018, 215 p.

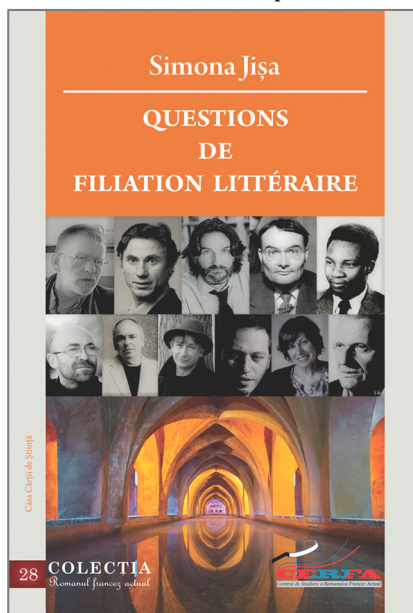
L'une des tendances de la littérature française contemporaine est de multiplier les récits de filiation. La critique littéraire suit de près ce mouvement, en essayant de dépasser une thématique un peu trop focalisée sur la figure de la mère/ du père ou la fratrie, afin d'arriver à une réflexion plus généralisante, capable de définir le concept de « récit de filiation » et d'opérer des catégorisations utiles comme grilles d'interprétation applicables aux divers textes littéraires.

Dans le paysage français, c'est Dominique Viard qui attire l'attention des critiques envers un récit penché sur l'antériorité et la famille (voir, par exemple, *La littérature française au présent. Héritage, modernité, mutations* de 2005). Laurent Demanze continue cette réflexion, en l'appliquant à des auteurs tels Pierre Bergounioux, Gérard Macé, Pierre Michon (*Encres orphelines*, 2008), réaffirmant que ces récits donnent une interprétation à part de ce qui se nommait jusqu'alors, de façon générale, « autobiographie ». La majorité des articles à

subsumer à la filiation vise des cas particuliers, analyse un auteur/ une œuvre ; la Canadienne Évelyne Ledoux-Beaugrand fait un pas dans la généralisation de ce phénomène littéraire s'intéressant aux écrivaines dans *Imaginaires de la filiation. Héritage et mélancolie dans la littérature contemporaine des femmes* de 2013. En même temps, des colloques et des volumes collectifs étudient les aspects intergénérationnels invitant la psychologie et la sociologie à une lecture transdisciplinaire.

Paru en 2018, le livre de Simona Jiša intitulé *Questions de filiation littéraire* est un recueil d'articles, se constituant en une tentative d'explorer ce concept à travers plusieurs romans appartenant à la littérature française, roumaine, africaine, belge et suisse.

D'une analyse fine et pertinente, ce volume représente une excellente introduction dans la sphère du récit de filiation, car l'auteure envisage d'examiner plusieurs romans, à travers un schéma qui regroupe différentes catégories de récit de filiation.



Le volume contient onze études précédées d'une introduction dans laquelle l'auteure esquisse une possible définition de la filiation. Selon elle, un récit de filiation « suppose l'existence d'un fils/ d'une fille et d'un père/ d'une mère – d'une verticalité temporelle instituée dans des rapports de cause-effet, d'un héritage désiré ou non » (p. 8). La catégorisation opérée ensuite par Simona Jişa distingue trois types de filiation : la filiation directe (maternelle et paternelle), de proximité (les grands-parents, les beaux-parents, par exemples) et spirituelle (symbolique).

L'autre point fort de ce livre est la cohérence de l'ensemble donnée par une structure tripartite et un langage très clair qui aide le lecteur à se familiariser avec les concepts proposés. Le premier chapitre du livre, celui qui est le plus ample, est dédié à la filiation maternelle et paternelle qui supposent, évidemment, l'existence, dans une ligne généalogique, d'un père ou d'une mère. La perspective complexe concernant ce type de filiation réside dans l'esprit synthétique de l'auteur. On retient comme symptomatique pour ce chapitre et, implicitement, pour ce genre de catégorisation du récit de filiation, le nom d'Hervé Bazin, auteur français, et celui de Marius Daniel Popescu, auteur roumain émigré en Suisse. Dans le cas du roman d'Hervé Bazin, *Vipère au poing*, Simona Jişa insiste sur l'influence néfaste qu'une mère, connotée avec le symbole de la vipère, peut avoir sur le comportement de l'enfant, puis de l'écrivain qu'il deviendra. À l'antipode, il y a l'analyse du roman de Marius Daniel Popescu, *La Symphonie du loup*, où, en suivant la ligne de la psychogénéalogie, l'auteure met en évidence le mobile de l'écriture, c'est-à-dire la mort

du père de l'écrivain à l'âge fragile de quatorze ans et tous les souvenirs et sentiments que le deuil a faits (re)naître.

Quant au deuxième chapitre, l'analyse des romans est encore plus minutieusement élaborée, car il s'agit de la filiation de proximité, un type de filiation qui peut s'étendre jusqu'aux cousins, (grands)-tantes et grands-parents. Ce qui est à remarquer dans ce chapitre est l'association du concept de filiation à des romans qui ont comme thème fondamental la guerre, implicitement le déplacement dans un temps révolu. De cette perspective, l'analyse comparative des romans *Les champs d'honneur* de l'écrivain français Jean Rouaud et *Amère patrie* de l'écrivain belge Armand Henrion, met en lumière la liaison inébranlable entre la « petite histoire familiale » et « la grande Histoire ». Le voyage dans le passé, à la rencontre des grands-pères et grands-mères, permet aux personnages de reconstituer leurs identités et de rendre hommage à ceux qui sont morts à la guerre.

En ce qui concerne les rapports entre les frères, illustratifs pour la filiation de proximité, ils sont mis en évidence par l'analyse de deux romans, celui de l'écrivain français Paul Guimard intitulé *Les faux frères* et celui des écrivains roumains Filip et Matei Florian dont le titre est *Băiuțeii*, tous les deux apportant une perspective différente sur la fratrie. À remarquer aussi l'étude consacré à *Un roman français* de Frédéric Beigbeder. L'intérêt pour ce roman est lié au fait que l'écrivain « réalise son autobiographie et enquête sur la manière dans laquelle la famille (les parents, les grands-parents et les frères) influence notre vie, modifie notre comportement et manipule nos choix » (p. 91). Dans la panoplie des écrivains déjà cités, on ajoute

le nom de l'auteur guinéen Camara Laye dont le roman *L'enfant noir* revisite l'enfance dans l'espace traditionnel africain.

L'objet du troisième chapitre est la filiation spirituelle qui apparaît, tel que l'auteure le soutient, dans le cadre d'une formation intellectuelle. De cette façon, les liens de sang, indispensables pour la filiation de type biologique ou pour celle de proximité, ne sont plus nécessaires. L'exemplification de ce dernier type de filiation se réalise par l'intermédiaire de l'œuvre de l'écrivaine française Pascale Roze qui permet à l'auteur de s'interroger sur la figure du professeur et de révéler la liaison maître-disciple. Le rapport « maître-disciple » est nuancé aussi par l'analyse consacrée à *Scrisori către fiul meu [Lettres à mon fils]* de l'écrivain roumain Gabriel Liiceanu où Simona Jișa insiste sur la figure du père-maître, celui qui contribue à la formation morale, intellectuelle et spirituelle de son fils par des conseils et par le « testament » qu'il lui laisse.

En fin de compte, le recueil d'articles de Simona Jișa constitue un point de repère pour tous ceux qui veulent avoir un regard globalisant et synthétique sur

les « questions de filiation littéraire » dans des textes qui appartiennent à des espaces géographiques et culturels différents. La complexité du volume est prouvée par la diversité thématique des romans et par le fait que l'auteure complète les réflexions sur le récit de filiation avec des commentaires concernant la genèse de l'écriture. D'une manière symptomatique, le dernier article du recueil intitulé « *Préhistoires ou l'Artiste des origines* », envisage de révéler « la problématique de l'Artiste de nos jours » (p. 197) et, en même temps, de remarquer que, par l'incursion temporelle, l'écrivain Jean Rouaud se conçoit comme fils spirituel de la grande famille des artistes. Par conséquent, aux trois types de filiation théorisés s'ajoute encore un qui est la filiation littéraire.

Le livre de Simona Jișa invite les lecteurs à lire et relire les textes où les écritures du moi se placent dans une chronologie familiale avec un regard nouveau, offrant des définitions et des segmentations pertinentes aux « indécidables » de la littérature (Bruno Blanckeman), tout comme aux classiques du genre (auto)biographique.

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BOOKS

Dana Percec, Dan Negrescu, *Excerpte veninoase și onirice. Eșeu despre doi frați*, Timișoara, Editura Universității de Vest, 2018, 237 p.

In 2018, Dana Percec and Dan Negrescu published the ambitious *Excerpte veninoase și onirice. Eșeu despre doi frați* [*Venomous and oneiric excerpts. An essay about two brothers*], an elaborate study on the cultural history of poison and dreams. This publication is a fine display of Percec's storytelling talent and analytic skills. The book contains excerpts from Pietro d'Abano's influential *De venenis eorumque remediis* (1472) and from Dionysius Lazarus' seminal *Tractatus de somniis* (1623), translated for the first time into Romanian by Dan Negrescu, who also added several annotations and explanatory notes to the selected fragments.

Starting from an ancient Greek proverb, according to which sleep and death are brothers, the authors set out to examine "another forbidden story" (13)¹ by reconstructing the cultural history of poisons and dreams in a European context.

¹ In 2017 Dana Percec and Dan Negrescu published "Periplu prin malefic. Un eșeu lucrat pe surse", an eclectic and interdisciplinary book in which the authors explore the controversial topic of witchcraft. The present volume, as

The in-depth investigations incorporate perspectives from a variety of disciplines, including history, philosophy, medicine, psychology, botany, religion, criminology, sociology, pharmacology, toxicology, and literature. The book contains several illustrations, which not only serve to visually enrich the content matter, but enhance the overall reading experience.

In the introductory section, Percec applies the main idea of d'Abano's treatise—namely, that poisons are everywhere—to a variety of disciplines. This section also entails a brief account on the history of oneirology, laying emphasis on Lazarus' *Tractatus de*

somniis as a key reference in the development of dream studies. An important segment of this section engages in a transhistorical exercise concerning the ancient Egyptian belief in dreams as future omens, contrasted then with Freud's and Jung's approach to dream interpretation.

Percec mentions in the introductory part, is intended to be a sequel to their earlier published "forbidden story" (13).



The first part, *Hortus conclusus*, is an incursion into the medieval roots of modern horticulture and explores the symbolism of gardens and plants in European culture. Percec expands the critical spectrum of the study by including a religious dimension, and constructs a complex analogy between the history of poisons and the garden of Eden. The symbolic implications of the garden imagined as a feminine space, a gendered stereotype deeply embedded in the cultural imagination of medieval Europe, lies at the core of this section.

The next section of the book forays into the paradoxical nature of toxins. Starting from Paracelsus' remarks, Percec analyzes potentially lethal poisons, such as arsenic, digitalis, phosphorus, ricin, lead, chromium, Calabar, belladonna, mala mujer, and datura. The most interesting postulation appears at the end of the chapter, namely that a human being can become poisonous after consuming toxins.

The next part is a historical account on famous poisonings. Cleopatra's suicide by self-poisoning is the starting point of the investigation. By tracing the cultural history of poisonings back to ancient Egypt, Percec reveals how poisons have fascinated the human imagination since times immemorial. The detailed historical insights into the lives of (in)famous poisoners are enriched with literary representations and cultural myths. Special emphasis is put on the Borgia and the Medici families notorious for eliminating enemies by resorting to arsenic.

"From venoms to drugs" offers a plethora of perspectives on the cultural his-

tory of opium. Employing an interdisciplinary approach, Percec traces the origins of opium back to the ancient Sumerian culture and explains how opium consumption became a widely spread cultural phenomenon.

"Medicine and alchemy" is a comprehensive historical survey in which the author investigates how early alchemy texts influenced the evolution of modern medicine.

One of the most interesting parts of the books is a complex case study: the frequent use of poisons in the modern detective novel, particularly in Agatha Christie's fiction. The study opens with some general remarks on the detective novel and is an excellent introduction to Agatha Christie's biography and lifework with special focus on her expertise in poisons. Quotes from Agatha Christie's personal notes and poem offer an in-depth insight into the mind of one of the most celebrated detective fiction writers of all time. Percec enumerates a wide array of famous poisons used in Agatha Christie's novels and offers detailed descriptions of their effects on humans.

"Stepbrother" moves from the realm of poisons to the second major theme of the book. An extensive part is dedicated to the Freudian and the Jungian dream analysis. By contrasting the beliefs of ancient cultures on dreaming with the modern psychoanalytical perspectives, Percec exposes the historical shifts in the Western perception on oneirology. In order to illustrate the cultural aspects of dreaming and to engage the Romanian reader more deeply, Percec uses "The Romanian Book of Dreams. Traditional interpretations"².

² Cartea românească de vise. Tălmăciri tradiționale. București, Editura Călin, 2008, edited by E. Mihăescu.

“Of the dead, [say] nothing but good” offers a deeper insight into d’Abano’s life, the circumstances of his untimely death and his famous treaty on venoms and poisons. Percec approaches the topic from a quantitative and qualitative perspective and she describes remedies which are still used in modern medicine.

The last part written by Percec investigates the oneiric imaginary of medieval Europe. Dedicated to Lazarus’ *Tractatus de somniis*, this chapter highlights Lazarus’ substantial contribution to oneirology. He is famous for his statement “dreaming is an act in us”³ (133).

The next part contains excerpts from d’Abano’s *De venenis eorumque remediis* (1472), translated and annotated by Dan Negrescu. The on-point translations denote Negrescu’s familiarity with the terminology and his expertise in cultural history. The paratext helps us better understand d’Abano’s writing and the sociocultural circumstances of his life.

The last segment of the book contains fragments from Lazarus’ *Tractatus de somniis*. Negrescu’s notes offer extra

information on several names and substances that appear in the original text.

The book is not just a historical overview, but a complex interdisciplinary study. Of special interest to literature enthusiasts is the chapter on Agatha Christie’s murder mysteries, but literary references are scattered all over the book, converting the study into a valuable resource for scholars interested in the representation of poison and dreams in the European literary tradition.

Blending academic precision with easy-to-understand language, Percec forays into the cultural history of poison and oneirology to reveal how such practices have always shaped human imagination. Percec combines wit, humour and academic rigour. The book is not only a valuable contribution to the ever-expanding field of cultural studies, but a compelling reading for the Romanian readers interested in the fascinating, curious and colourful history of the “two brothers.”

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³ “visul este un act în noi” (133).

BOOKS

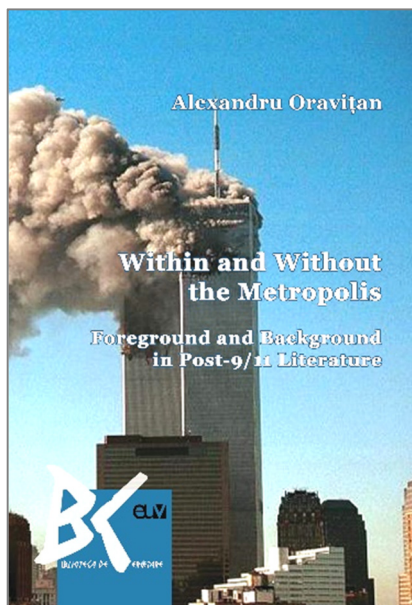
Alexandru Oravițan, *Within and Without the Metropolis – Foreground and Background in Post-9/11 Literature*, Timișoara, Editura Universității de Vest, 2019, 394 p.

Alexandru Oravițan's book, *Within and Without the Metropolis – Foreground and Background in Post-9/11 Literature*, discusses a topic about which both academics and the layman know plenty: the 9/11 terror attacks are often considered to be a changing point in American history, a paradigm shift in American art and culture, and an event which shaped not just the American, but the global views about international politics, cultural differences, the ideals of nationalism and more. 9/11 is no easy task to discuss: there are many incredibly delicate details to consider, from the purely emotional to the exceedingly complicated socio-political arguments. Such a visual tragedy, with scenes that could easily appear in an action flick, is bound to be recognized, discussed, and analyzed by everyone who has seen the images and video footage of the Twin Towers' collapse.

Oravițan does not intend to focus on too many political aspects of the tragedy, even though this cannot be completely omitted; the events of September 11, 2001

are inherently political. However, the author is interested in the many ways literature has been able to “deal with” such a complex and profound subject. In the first chapter, Oravițan introduces the notions of foreground and background, tools which help one identify context and central elements when interpreting a work of art or literature. These devices are often used to frame narratives with different perspectives by bringing to the forefront some aspects of it and hiding others in the back. However, as Oravițan explains, the background “is a deeply unstable element, in constant change with regard to the manner in which it is received. Moreover, it is a shaky groundwork from which the foreground will ultimately rise” (23).

In the literature discussing 9/11, Oravițan identifies the foreground as the Western self in most cases, while the background is defined as Other, but he stresses the fact that these two opposing sides are not clearly defined. By implementing a third space between foreground and background,



the author points out that there is no clear boundary between them: what we call the Western metropolis is not homogenous; it is not contained in a bubble, as it interacts with and engulfs a great many cultures. Thus, the so-called background shifts to the center, creating hybridity – which is prevalent and identifiable in post-9/11 literature. Oraviṭan's book carefully leads the reader through the theoretical framework he uses to determine and analyze this hybridity, a notion from post-colonial studies, whose tools Oraviṭan uses to discuss what he calls the dual trauma: the loss of First Worldism and displaced Otherness (cf. 380).

One of the book's key points is that post-9/11 literature cannot be viewed only in the literary context. Oraviṭan explains the necessity of observing extra-literary implications and trends which cannot be overlooked when reading the fiction about the terror attack. The American "Center" and the "Other" societies is examined in the second chapter, where the author also discusses the reasons why the Twin Towers were such a symbolic landmark of the Western world. Their existence and demise are viewed as both the shrines of the United States and the trauma of the Others, who resort to terrorism in order to gain a pseudo-advantage over the oppressive Center. Oraviṭan explains that due to everchanging aspects of the foreground and background, critical theory must accept "new" cultural notions such as hybridity.

Oraviṭan applies the cultural notion of the hybrid to literature: he discusses the vast and dynamic works of literature in this light, with expressed attention to intertextual and even extra-literary elements in many cases. His methodology includes tools such as close reading, deconstruction, and the post-colonial critical approach,

which serves to contextualize the cultural landscape which surrounds the literary works.

Based on carefully contemplated criteria, Oraviṭan chose to analyze seven novels (which include bestsellers such as *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer and *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo), by American authors or by authors outside of the country (e.g. the United Kingdom, France). He concludes that the trauma that followed 9/11 is not restricted to the American citizens, it affected the First World as a whole. Still, many of the European novels dealing with 9/11 are classified as failures "as they are incapable of conveying or verbalizing the exact nature of the trauma surrounding the fall of the Twin Towers" (89). One could argue that part of this critique comes from the ever-present American exceptionalism, which has become more palpable after the 9/11 attacks. Oraviṭan argues that this shared trauma is a result of the Americanization through globalization. Due to the crumbling borders in the online space, this discourse is becoming more and more interconnected; thus, the distribution of this trauma and its analysis is increasingly shared.

The final chapter shifts focus to the "Other," to writers such as Dan Stanca and Mohsin Hamid, who redefine 9/11 as a global event with voices all over the world reflecting on it. While most works of fiction that come from the Center (be it the United States or the First World) tend to identify the perpetrator-victim binominal, novels such as Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* point out that this overly complicated issue cannot be compressed into such simple archetypes.

Oraviṭan establishes a robust and well-researched theoretical framework which helps the reader contextualize the

novels with the tools of background, foreground, and the newly introduced notion of the hybrid. However, for the most part, Oravițan seems to steer clear of political discussion and focuses on the cultural outputs of this tragedy. I find this to be the soundest solution for the sake of a scientific discourse. Nonetheless, his political bias is noticeable due to the post-colonial critical approach, which was mentioned as a drawback by Mircea Mihăieș in the Foreword. In my view, Oravițan avoided the pitfalls of the political fanatic and treated the subject of post-9/11 literature with a very specific field of study in mind: his book gives insight into the many ways authors tried to work with such a world-shattering event that from the very

first days has been calling into question the survival of arts and literature in the United States. As Richard Gray explained, “nothing to say became a refrain” for a while after the terror attack. The term “post-9/11 literature” became widespread quickly, even though this “genre” has been contested and questioned many times. Oravițan succeeds in explaining why this is not only a viable but a dynamic and impactful part of both American and global literature. The author proves his points with well-researched and detailed analyses of novels picked from both the “Center” and the “Other.”

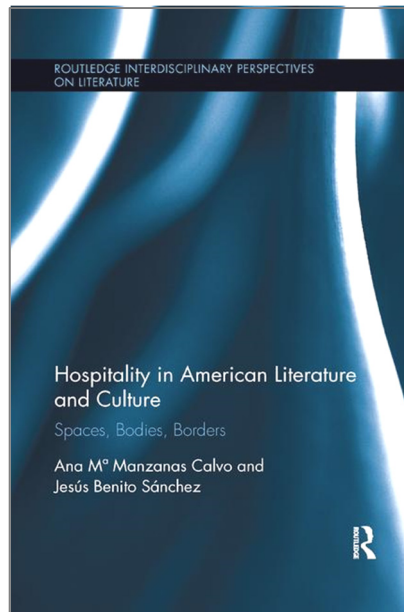
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BOOKS

**Ana Maria Manzanas Calvo and Jesús Benito Sánchez (eds.),
Hospitality in American Literature and Culture: Spaces, Bodies, Borders,
Routledge, 2017, 214 p.**

Despite the bewildering diversity of labels that have been attached to the first two decades of the new millennium, a critical examination of the contemporary socio-economic and political realities confirms that *globalisation* is one of the major forces that govern our lives and shape the face of the predictable future. Its effects are visible in all spheres of human activity, from the interconnectedness of regional markets or the unsettling growth of consumerism to the unprecedented mobility and exchange of people and information. Yet, as recent realities have shown, globalisation is far from a utopian destination: the election of populist governments, economic protectionism, escalation of the tensions between East and West are just a few visible signs indicative of a backlash against the globalist ideal, emergent in the wake of growing concerns that it may lead, if left unchecked, to the loss of identity and even freedom. Paradoxically, globalisation carries within itself the seeds of its own potential destruction.



It is precisely one of the ostensible effects of globalisation, the stronger interdependence between migration, identity and citizenship, that serves as motivation for Ana M^a Manzanas Calvo and Jesús Benito Sánchez's compelling study of hospitality in American literature and culture. The relevance of the chosen subject is supported by statistical data. Thus, the centralised information available through the Migration Data Portal (migrationdataportal.org) indicates not only a significant increase in the total number of international migrants (from 153 million in 1990 to 280.6 million in 2020) but also the constancy of the United States as the country with the largest migrant stock. Against such a background (as well as the longer, though less precisely quantified American historical tradition and cultural trope of the haven or "hospitable" space), the authors set out on an ambitious journey, whose main objective is to examine a number of manifestations of the dialectic between hosts and guests in the United

States. This thoroughly documented critical and interpretive exercise, while most closely grounded in the field of immigrant studies, attests to a more comprehensive, interdisciplinary perspective, artfully blending the methods and objectives of border studies, gender studies and post-colonialism, as well as the discourses of literary criticism, cultural studies and philosophy.

The main objective of the study, we are informed in the Introduction, is to explore the meanings, conditions and the “new players” of hospitality in our times (5). It is a fundamental question, with both ethical and legal implications, since the history of hospitality has demonstrated the metamorphic nature of the concept. From the biblical example of the Good Samaritan to the symbolism of the Statue of Liberty, or the case of modern-day asylum seekers and migrant workers, hospitality is illustrative of a dialectic of related, yet sometimes disjunctive terms. We are reminded at this point of Derrida’s notion of “hostipitality” (which will resurface at other points of this research), a form of “aporetic hospitality that deconstructs itself” and reconceptualises antinomical elements such as “guest” and “ghost”, “incorporation” and “expulsion”, “inside” and “outside” (3). The introductory segment serves, therefore, both as a basic theoretical anchor for the in-depth discussion and analysis that will unfold over the following chapters and as a brief excursion into the origin and possible meanings of the term. As the authors admit, their interest is not so much in “felicitous or welcoming spaces” but in the “hostile spaces that accommodate the Other” (7). This choice rests on the acknowledgement of an essential disparity between the original and the present-day valences of hospitality. From a sacred duty and civic obligation or an unflinching reverential attitude

towards guests in the ancient world (as in *The Odyssey* or the Bible), nowadays hospitality is mostly a “mark of weakness in the face of the need to secure a stable national narrative, which most often correlates with border security” (6).

Indeed, along the seven chapters of the book, the authors offer a close examination of the ambivalent and paradoxical nature of modern hospitality in light of such key-notions as “borders”, “otherness”, “belonging”, “rejection” or “incorporation”. The first chapter, aptly titled “Re-Placing Hospitality: (In)hospitable Sites in American Literature” is somewhat peculiar, in that it does not focus on a specific text (or on a limited selection of thematically related works). Rather, it elaborates on the genealogy of hospitality, extending the scope of the investigation beyond the space of American culture and literature (despite the narrower suggestions of the title). The demonstration draws on a variety of sources and authors (The Old Testament, John Winthrop, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Immanuel Kant) and is indebted mainly to Derrida’s argument about the centrality of the threshold in any hospitable encounter, which places host and guest at an equal distance from the house, or the space of private possession (23). This liminality of the hospitable encounter as a threshold experience and the subsequent “displacement” of the involved parties is fundamental for understanding how hospitality shifted from a sacred gesture of welcoming and the acceptance of the otherness of the guest to a politicised notion occasioned by the birth of nation states, whereby the guest is seen as a potential threat to the host, consequent on which laws are imposed for the protection of the latter’s interests. In the course of history we are

witness to a “relocation of hospitality to the site of the nation” or a form of “conditional hospitality” that is “contingent upon the presentation of legal documents, and the analysis of the returns of the hospitable act”, as suggested in Kant’s idea of “Perpetual Peace”, a proposal that contributed to the establishment of a legal framework for international hospitality (39-43). In fact, one of the major problems of our world, the authors suggest, is precisely the inability to extend unconditional hospitality of the biblical sort to the modern-day “wanderers” (refugees, diasporans, migrants, etc.) (55).

Most of the remaining chapters of the book are devoted to examining the condition and treatment of various categories of displaced people within the perimeters of a series of “acquired” and “regulated” communal spaces. Chapter 2 looks at two contemporary “non-places”, the terminal and the hotel, in which the wandering subjects are “positioned simultaneously under the law and abandoned by it” (68), as in E. E. Hale’s parable “The Man without a Country” (1863), which serves as a preamble to the investigative act. The main figures examined in this chapter are the stateless person and the undocumented migrant, as illustrated in Steven Spielberg’s *The Terminal* (2004) and Stephen Frear’s *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002). Both films showcase stateless characters, who have been displaced from their original countries and turned into non-citizens – “superfluous bodies” akin to “ghostly exceptions” (66). Both the terminal and the hotel are situated outside the borders of the nation state, the former as a threshold space and the latter as an entity that parallels the structure and logic of the nation (70). At the same time, they are also complementary, characterised by heightened visibility, respectively, invisibility (72).

Chapter 3, “Cannibalistic Hospitality. Alex Rivera’s *Sleep Dealer*” develops upon an idea announced in the previous chapter, the incorporation of migrants into the host country. The authors’ interest is in the etymological meaning of the word and its subsequent implications – the “consumption” or total absorption of the migrants into the production machine of the host country, as an example of “cannibal or parasitic hospitality” (83), echoing Baudrillard’s claim that cannibalism may be regarded as a “radical form of hospitality” (*The Transparency of Evil* 144, qtd. 83). In Rivera’s mockumentary “Why Cybraceros” (1997) and his film *Sleep Dealer* (2008) immigrant workers are treated as “abject guests” (93), since the capitalist production machine fully absorbs the workforce (or rather, its potential energy) within a cyberspace that simultaneously incorporates and rejects that which is alien to the system. As the authors point out, Rivera “deconstructs the image of mobility as utopia” (103), for the apparent freedom of the virtual reality is, in effect, a means to deny the migrants physical access to the host country. In other words, “cannibalistic hospitality” separates “work from worker, space of spaces from space of flows, the power elite from cyber workers” (104).

The fourth chapter, “‘We the People of the International Hotel’ and the Hotel State. Karen T. Yamashita’s *I Hotel*”, returns to the trope of the hotel, investigated now as a possible “desti-Nation”, the polar opposite of the sovereign nation state that defines itself through territoriality (115). Yamashita’s hotel is populated by characters existing in a continuous liminal state, being placed at a “perpetual threshold”. It does, however, possess a latent potential, as a heterotopic entity that can ensure a communal space for former exiles. Within the well-delimited boundaries of the hotel,

new identities inevitably emerge. Like other related enclosing spaces, such as the internment camp or the prison-island, the hotel grants its occupants an “experimental membership” (115) and “the right to have rights” (127-128). The “hotel-state” envisaged in Yamashita’s novel proves that inclusion is ultimately possible within exclusion and that a home can be found in a non-home (107).

Chapter 5, “Between Hospitality and Hostility. Junot Díaz’s ‘Invierno’”, discusses the fragile nature of hospitality, as exemplified in this narrative of a guest turned oppressor, focusing at the same time on the question of linguistic identity and the control exerted through manipulation of the host language. In Díaz’s story, the head of the family emerges as a tyrant who keeps his wife and son in a state of subservience by denying them the benefits of speaking English. Formerly an unwanted guest, Ramón becomes a despotic host, an embodiment of the violence inherent in hospitality (130). For the members of his family, the apartment, a “microcosm of the United States” (130), turns into a miniature internment camp. The authors convincingly demonstrate in this context that Díaz’s story also illustrates the fundamentally male character of the acquired cultural capital, employed in this case by the pater familias for keeping the mother in a state of perpetual bondage. “Invierno” is thus an example of the interrelatedness of space, language and hospitality, also corroborated by the symbolic connotations of the landfill, the squalid extension of the “diseased and infectious” neighbourhood, in its own turn, a “spatial stereotyped for unwanted guests” (143).

The sixth chapter of the book, “Between Hosts and Guests. Ernesto Quiñonez’s *Chango’s Fire*”, deals with another in-between space, that of the Barrio, examining

in further detail the relationship between hosts and guests from the perspective of cultural hegemony, symbolic ownership of the neighbourhood and displacement. *Chango’s Fire*, we are told, is an eloquent “example of Barriocentricity, an aesthetic and political choice that reconceptualizes the narrative of place and its spatial practitioners” (148). The Barrio is a site of “evictions, allocations and relocations” (148) which evolves in the course of time from a slum to a genuine neighbourhood (149). There is a certain theatricality associated with the Barrio, as ethnicity turns into a spectacle with the arrival of new potential inhabitants, whose whiteness “violates the previous coloniality” of the place (153). In the wake of gentrification, the Puerto Ricans are transformed into reluctant hosts, once the “global city” starts to encroach upon their turf. Yet, as in “Invierno”, language is an empowering force and the sign of an emergent identity: in the end, Spanglish, “the language of the new race” (162), makes it easier for the inhabitants of the Barrio to “repossess space” (161).

With the last chapter, “Guest/Ghost Object in the Garden. George Saunders’s ‘The Semplica Girl Diaries’”, the authors’ attention shifts from the *machina oeconomica*, whose logic, we may argue, has informed the previous manifestations of the guest-host dialectic, to the *socialis machina*, an equally important factor in understanding the implications of hospitality. With Saunders’s story, we return to the common etymology of “guest” and “ghost”, already invoked at the outset of this investigative exercise. The “exteriority” of the guest, seen as a stranger that might threaten the harmony and security of the host’s domain, points toward the “ghostly” or “spectral” side of the guest. In the post-industrial world of the story, the Semplica Girls represent the final stage of what Marx has

decried as “insatiable and vampiric capitalism” (167). These migrant workers are the supreme example of the reification of the individual by market economy and consumerism. Unlike the cyber-workers in Rivera’s *Sleep Dealer*, whose vital energy is perpetual fuel for the production system they serve, the immigrant women in this story are wholly devoid of economic utility, being used, instead, as mere garden ornaments in a grotesque display of their hosts’ rank and status. In the American context, their state of suspended animation, the authors explain, exemplifies a “sanitized form of slavery” (172). In this scheme, the house of the host family is a sort of “neo-plantation”, where the guests are immobilised in a prolonged liminal condition, transformed into “givers” or the ultimate “gifts”. However, their eventual escape is also indicative of the poisonous potential of the gift, as their act leads to the financial ruin of the host family.

Profound and intriguing in its insights, reliant on carefully chosen and edifying examples and consistently convincing in its argumentation, Ana M^a Manzanos Calvo and Jesús Benito Sánchez’s study of hospitality is an indispensable resource for those who wish to understand not only the centrality of hospitality in American culture and literature but, more importantly, the complex nature of human interaction in an age in which borders are simultaneously questioned and reaffirmed, with profound implications for the whole realm of individual and communal experience.

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BOOKS

Adrian Papahagi, *Providence and Grace: Lectures on Shakespeare's Problem Plays and Romances*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2020, 221 p.

On the bright side of the notorious pandemic, passionate scholars may feel that now is the time to focus or rearrange one's efforts onto the subjects which are closer to their heart or have long been postponed. Such is the case with Adrian Papahagi's Shakespearean hat-trick of 2020, spread over two different editorial projects, in two distinct languages, reunited by the same research focus.

Out of the three books on Shakespeare published by the professor thus far, *Providence and Grace* is the most voluminous one. It is a series of lectures, most of which can also be found online as they were read on camera,

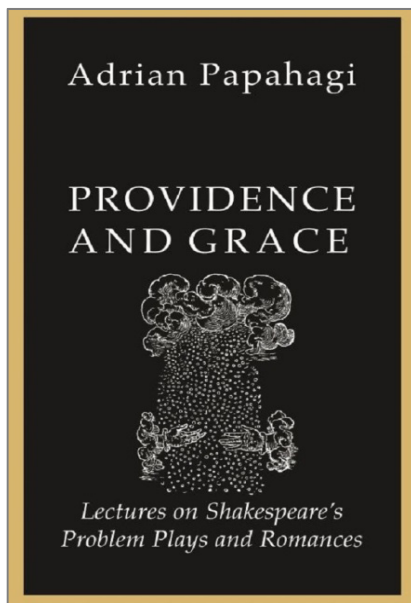
concerning the bard's three problem plays and four of his late romances. The central theme of the volume and that which provides the conceptual focus of Papahagi's lectures are Grace and Providence, which point toward a Christian cropping. However, the scholar is careful not to exaggerate the role of the Christian meditation in the works of Shakespeare, nor does he ever call the playwright a Christian writer.

The reader is faced with a serious and involved researcher who is trying to enter a line of critics that spans from the likes of Samuel Johnson to W.H. Auden,

Northrop Frye, Giorgio Melchiori or Harold Bloom (to name only a few). As expected from a professor who has mastered the subject of Shakespeare for many years now, the lectures are a fine display of erudition, leaving the impression that Papahagi possesses a zoomed-out view on all who wrote on Shakespeare. This enables him to compare critics against each other in order to find answers when controversy arrives. Romanian critics are invited

to the Saraband as well, although the author of this book naturally reads Shakespeare only in original and his attention to the smallest details and differences between folios, editions and manuscripts pays off when engaging with other exegetes.

For those unfamiliar, the "problem plays," first called so by Frederick Boas in 1896, are the three peculiar texts written



in the years between *Hamlet* (1600/1601) and the other mature tragedies, such as *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus* (1604-1608). The problem plays “are neither tragedies nor comedies, neither histories nor romances” (13) as if the nihilism, fascination with death and “sex-nausea” (a term borrowed from John Dover Wilson) of *Hamlet* still fester in the world of Shakespeare. However, Adrian Papahagi labels them *dark comedies*, and he observes a *crescendo*, as the three plays have increasingly happier endings, due to the acts of providence and grace. These three dark comedies are the following: *Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*, each play being given its own chapter before diving into the late Shakespearean romances.

Before being able to observe the touch of grace, however, one has to start from the absolute lowest (not qualitatively, of course), as *Troilus and Cressida* proves to be a smaller and more grotesque *Iliad*, a story of “a whore and a cuckold,” quoting Thersites, worst of the Achaeans. Adrian Papahagi retraces the historical biography of the story of *Troilus and Cressida*, one of the most famous stories of the West, first told by Benoît de Sainte-Maure, translated into Latin by Guido delle Colonne and then adapted into Italian by Giovanni Boccaccio, from where it is intercepted by Chaucer. Meanwhile, after 1598, installments of Chapman’s famous translation of *The Iliad* are being published. “Shakespeare was thus able to [...] toy with two immense yet already decrepit traditions: Homer’s ancient heroic epic, and Chaucer’s medieval courtly love romance” (16). In Shakespeare’s Trojan War, nobility dies and disgrace survives. There is no marriage and no tragic *catharsis*, as Auden puts it, not *a world* but *the world*.

Compared to Cressida, the heroines of *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure* are increasingly pure. Whereas, compared to Troilus, their lovers are increasingly vile. However, when reading Adrian Papahagi’s lecture on *All's Well That Ends Well*, one cannot help but notice a combative touch of irony. When comparing Helena obtaining Bertram with Richard the III’s wooing of Lady Anne, the scholar writes: “Helena is not wooed, but wooing, not won, but winning, not the object of masculine desire, but devoured by masculine ambition and desire. But I leave this argument to my feminist friends” (49). Here and in other passages of *Providence and Grace* a certain kinship is to be noticed between Adrian Papahagi and Harold Bloom. The Romanian author clearly shares some of the feeling Bloom has towards what he coined as “the School of Resentment”.

However, that does not imply that a master-apprentice relationship is to be found between the two. The lectures do not fear to disagree with the author of *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* whenever necessary. For instance, one of the main points of the lecture on *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare’s most explicitly religious play, is proving Bloom wrong for calling Vincentio “half-crazed”: “This is what Harold Bloom misses. The ways of providence are inscrutable, and sometimes they look like madness” (68-69). There are no angels and demons in Shakespeare, Professor Papahagi writes at some point. *Measure for Measure* is a play which pleads for the shift from the Leviticus kind of justice to the New Testament one. But most of all it pleads for life: “This is the Christian backdrop of *Measure for Measure* a play about justice, grace, mercy, love, and atonement” (86). Moreover, Papahagi discerns a resemblance between Vincentio and

Prospero, between Shakespeare's "farewell to comedy" and Shakespeare's "farewell to theatre".

The author believes that the providence and grace that emerged from Vincenzo, the rejuvenated omniscient, "set the trend" for the romances, written between 1608 and 1611, a period considered Shakespeare's creative peak. The late romances that Adrian Papahagi discusses are *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* and there is no point in summarizing all of them here. The scholar makes an interesting case, however, regarding the underrated *Pericles*, which, due to its being written in collaboration with George Wilkins and having the least memorable lines in the Shakespeare canon, is often brushed aside easily. In Papahagi's analysis, *Pericles* is a preparatory work for *The Tempest*. Quoting Northrop Frye, Papahagi agrees "there is no break in structure corresponding to the break in style," the craftsmanship of *Pericles* remaining Shakespearean. Providence functions as an *ex machina* in the "mouldly medieval" tale of *Pericles*: "The fateful tempest that destroys Pericles' ship and washes him ashore is the way in which providence leads him to his future wife" (121). In the other romances, grace arrives via humans.

The book presents plenty of polemical appetite, especially towards the types of reading that Bloom would have a problem with too. Even so, Adrian Papahagi chooses his attacks carefully and, most of all, he seems to despise reductions. Such is the case with the chapter on *The Tempest*, where Papahagi stands his ground, defending Shakespeare's farewell to theatre against those who find examples of colonial discourse in the play. Papahagi's main weapon here is Caliban, "a savage and deformed slave," the last decades of criticism having focused on the monster's last attribute. Papahagi's analysis of Caliban is rich and impressive, spreading over many moving pages. "Critics who reduce Caliban to the lame ideological cliché of the native oppressed in a colonial world fail to understand the concomitant dignity and abjection of the monster's character, his irreducible complexity and his ambiguity. [...] In the confrontation between ideology and irony, irony invariably carries the day" (207).

Scholars interested in Renaissance studies will find in *Providence and Grace* a pleasant and well documented, even revelatory dive into the work of Shakespeare.

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