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300127, ROMÂNIA, TIMIȘOARA
str. Lorena 2B, ap. 13
Tel.: +40 371 378 046
Fax: +40 372 251 386

E-mail: edituradiacritic@gmail.com

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(UN)REALITY INTENSIFIED

“A KNIGHT OF GHOSTS AND SHADOWS”: CORMAC MCCARTHY’S *ALL THE PRETTY HORSES* AND THE AESTHETICS OF ADVENTURE

ALEXANDRU BUDAC
University of Timișoara

***Abstract:** A typical American coming-of-age novel, “All the Pretty Horses” (1993) is Cormac McCarthy’s masterful way of dealing with universal topics such as boyhood, parents and children, violent passions, and friendship. Yet the mythical tonalities and crafted structure hide an intricate philosophical web, which brings adventure fiction codes and environmental issues together. My paper aims to highlight the relation between character and nature and to question the realism of the novel. I will also try to explain why Cormac McCarthy’s narrative style encourages allegorical readings, while subverting them at the same time.*

***Key words:** adventure literature, Cormac McCarthy, environment, mimesis, violence*

1. Introduction. A genre which never gets old

The adventure literature has always been very popular, yet the genre is often overshadowed by misconceptions. Definitely, adventure fiction has charms, but lacks prestige. It is labeled as “children literature” at best and sent off to the “escape literature” shelf at worst. However, this ancient genre with pretty conservative aesthetic principles – we might say they are as old as the first human urge to tell a story – has enchanted writers and readers alike and has proved prone to enduring all sorts of cultural fashions. If we think of the literary adventurous past, the first name that comes to mind is that of Robert Louis Stevenson. In the English-speaking world at least, the Scottish writer is not only an adventure fiction virtuoso, but also its best theorist. In the late nineteenth century, he was the one who rekindled the genre dimming luster. His novels and stories are not just the imaginative quest of a genius forced by his poor health to travel incessantly towards exotic lands. They are an aesthetic manifesto too.

Stevenson reacted against the “domestic novel’s” growing success and against the pretenses of authors such as Émile Zola, according to whom prose writings should be accurately scientific and socially involved. As he “passionately believed that the greater part of life was chance”, the Scottish author defended romance (Kiely 2005:26-29). In his letters and in his polemical essays, he claimed that adventure and human nature are both uncontrollable and that art should capture “the importance of event” (Kiely 2005:30). Stevenson wished to keep intact a certain “sacred purity” of adventure and did this by writing fictions in which the events had a flowing quality, because continuous movement links literature and life (Kiely 2005:30, 34, 40). As R.L. Abrahamson (2006:21) puts it, “being a good reader is like being a hero in Stevenson’s fiction.” An enthusiastic admirer of Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman, Stevenson shares with Mark Twain, another great writer of adventure literature, the belief that the hero, preferably a child or a teenager, must leave the domestic space in order to gain freedom (Fletcher 2009:42-43). More than a century later, Cormac McCarthy teaches us the same lesson. He is the heir of Faulkner and Melville, rather than the heir of Stevenson and Twain. Yet he shapes the aesthetics of adventure with similar zest.

McCarthy's heroes could be described as outcasts on the run. When they stop, troubles occur. Before dying, the nameless kid dismounts and meets judge Holden in a tavern at the end of *Blood Meridian* (1985), Llewelyn Moss rushes to his death soon after he gives a ride to a hitchhiker girl in *No Country for Old Men* (2005), but nowhere do we understand better the perils of slowing the journey down than in the Border Trilogy. The wind blowing through the prairie, the barking of coyotes, the rapping of hail, the hawks prowling in the sky, the blinding zigzags of thunderstorms, the red eyes of horses in the deep night reflecting both camp and celestial fires are the very signs from which we can decipher the characters' intentions. Keeping introspection in shadow, McCarthy accustomed us to the complex links between human action and environment. Trying to pin down his protagonists by enlisting them as literary archetypes seems like trying to explain natural phenomena by separating them from each other. Only when we apprehend changes holistically may we hope to understand the phenomena better. I will try to argue that, by rendering human movement and environment artistically in the first novel of the Border Trilogy, Cormac McCarthy reshapes adventure literature in a personal manner. By mastering a conglomerate of historical facts, charismatic figures, boyhood ethos, and philosophical puzzles, he blends the realistic novel and American mythology.

2. John Grady Cole. The portrait of a stoic cowboy

In 1949, sixteen year old John Grady Cole flees home in San Angelo together with his best friend, Lacey Rawlins, and crosses the Mexican border. On their way, they make the acquaintance of Jimmy Blevins, a mysterious kid riding a big bay horse, who has followed them from a distance. He is a remarkable shooter, yet a tenacious troublemaker. Blevins' company turns ill-fated rapidly when he loses his horse during a thunderstorm. After an attempt to recover the lost animal from a Mexican village, John Grady and Rawlins part with the boy for safety reasons. Soon, the young Americans arrive at Hacienda de Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción, where they find jobs as horse breakers and become very appreciated for their talents. Here, John Grady falls in love with Alejandra, the beautiful daughter of the *hacendado* don Héctor Rocha y Villareal, thus stirring the family's anger – a family whose generation history is the history of Mexico itself. John Grady and Alejandra are separated by force, and along with Lacey, the horse whisperer will be thrown in jail on accusations of theft and murder complicity with Jimmy Blevins. The Mexican Odyssey turns into a nightmare when the reckless kid is killed by local authorities and the two boys have to face prison dangers in typical McCarthy violent encounters. Despite western scenery, cowboy gunfights and Shakespearian love story, *All the Pretty Horses* (1993) belongs to a genre of its own.

Jay Ellis (2006) states that the “cowboy books” of the Border Trilogy bring forth the issue of life refinement through domestic comfort versus dangerous living according to the laws of nature in order to preserve one's authenticity. In McCarthy's earlier Southern novels, this issue simply existed as “stoicism without hats and boots” (Ellis 2006:201). John Grady's exceptional ability to tame mustangs seems to endow him with a deep understanding of the world. And he is a stoic indeed, although he prefers acting to philosophizing. The boy leaves home soon after his grandfather's death and after failing to persuade his mother to keep the old farm. Yet, he was already on the move before that. In the beginning, we see

him wandering the Comanche land on which the farm is built, like a warrior from the past. The novel ends symmetrically, when John Grady greets Indians near a pumpjacks field. Thus, McCarthy places him in a long chain of expert riders and introduces the teenager to us as a “dispossessed Comanche” (Morrison 1999:176). His wandering began long before any border had split the county and would continue probably long after the borders vanish. John Grady’s passion for horses is not that of an ordinary cowboy, but that of a young man capable of apprehending his heartbeats in perfect synchrony with the heartbeats of horses running “in that resonance which is the world itself and which cannot be spoken but only praised” (McCarthy 1993:162). The Nermernuh hunters from the north of Santa Fe were famous for their incursions into neighboring territories. We know these tribes by the name of “Comanche,” which was given to them by their enemies and which means “people who fight us all the time” (Mann 2011:123). Definitely, John Grady is a natural-born fighter and, at sixteen, one does not need a special reason to abandon school and flee home. The border is interesting only as long as it remains an obstacle. Where would the thrill of adventure be if there were no trespassing? Time does not concern the two boys. They have plenty. Their escapade begins like an illustrated epic:

They heard somewhere in that tenantless night a bell that tolled and ceased where no bell was and they rode out on the round dais of the earth which alone was dark and no light to it and which carried their figures and bore them up into the swarming stars so that they rode not under but among them and they rode at once jaunty and circumspect, like thieves newly loosed in that dark electric, like young thieves in a glowing orchard, loosely jacketed against the cold and ten thousand worlds for the choosing. (McCarthy 1993:30)

Unlike Lacey Rawlins, a typical bragging teenager eager to prove his will and his tough character, John Grady leaves on a quest. He is only partially revealed to us and his true intentions remain an enigma, at least until the *Cities of the Plain* (1998), the last book of the trilogy. But even there his personality remains cloudy. Although he behaves like any other boy of his age – especially when it comes to dealing with erotic issues – his features seem to have been forged in a mythical past. He does not learn too much from experience, as he trains himself in the development of both physical and ethical reflexes. John Grady whispers his will to horses and successfully passes all loyalty tests as friend and lover. Once on Mexican soil, he speaks the local language and feels comfortable among rural people, those anonymous yet hospitable women and men known for introducing themselves to strangers as “hombres de maíz” (“men of maize”) (Mann 2011:231). In the end, his life is saved by those “hombres del país” (“men of the country”), who punish Blevins’ killer and who, if Gail Moore Morrison (1999:190) is right, epitomize the Mexican revolutionary spirit. Very confident during the first stage of their journey, McCarthy’s hero and his friend discover later that, very often, indigenous unwritten laws cannot be fathomed.

For Robert Louis Stevenson, adventures were supposed to be chaste, emasculate, and, although this might be regarded as an aesthetic consequence of Victorian mores, the Scottish author was well known for his personal rejection of “aggressive masculinity” (Kiely 2005:35-36). Cormac McCarthy defends exactly the opposite principles. His protagonists are violent men, ready to pay dire consequences for their impetuosity, and their relationships with women prove

problematic no matter the hero's age. The adventure implies a proliferation of young male "fetishes" (Ellis 2006:229-233) – not only all sorts of weapons in the description of which McCarthy delves meticulously, but also hats, boots, saddles, bridles, ropes, a variety of farm tools and even trucks. Therefore, physical strength and skill are required. Yet, it is when John Grady rides that we can guess his true nature. Like any cowboy from a Golden Age almost forgotten after the war, he knows instinctively that the domestication of horses is a task only a few can fulfill. In his essay on cowboy codes in the Border Trilogy, Phillip A. Snyder (2001:211) states that the best cowboys understand why the breaking of horses must take into account "the prime directive of not 'breaking the horse's spirit'". There is a subtle bond between the value of a horse and the ethical principles of the horseman.

Wherever they go, McCarthy's wanderers follow the traces of ancient hunters and warriors leaving new traces on the old ones. Signs of humans who passed by like the scars on John Grady's face are the very proof that the past is real (McCarthy 1993:135). We may call him "a natural man", as we may call "natural men" other characters, such as the kid in *Blood Meridian* or Billy Parham in *The Crossing* (1994), only if we admit that they shape the environment to the same degree as the environment shapes their ethos. In McCarthy's fiction, the world is described as a living fire. This vision might concede a philosophical statement, a typical stoic principle, or it may be interpreted literally as a hint to the Indian custom all over the Americas to dominate ecosystems by setting them on fire in order to master "ecological succession" of both vegetation and fauna (Mann 2011:284-285). Cosmic fires, camp fires, gun fires, and heart fires are pervasive in *All the Pretty Horses*. It is the burning scale that makes the difference.

Although he is a majestic rider, one should not see John Grady Cole as an allegorical figure. We may compare him to the "knight of ghosts and shadows" invoked by the anonymous author of the seventeenth century popular ballad *Tom O'Bedlam*, yet McCarthy makes his character profoundly humane. He seems familiar to us as long as we tend to compare him to those charismatic and solitary men we usually encounter in books and movies. Along with the kid in *Blood Meridian* and Billy Parham in *The Crossing*, the second novel of the Border Trilogy, John Grady typifies an ancient belief expressed superbly by Michel de Montaigne (2003:1244) - "Our life is but motion". Barclay Owens (2000:66-67) sees Cormac McCarthy's young protagonists as images of an American Adam, an iconic presence throughout American literature from James Fenimore Cooper to Norman Mailer. "Unabashedly heroic", as Owens calls him, Adam's philosophy is self-reliance (an Emersonian concept) and his pastoral nostalgia always drives him towards conflicts with institutions and with those who endorse progressive views. A wanderer determined to revive an Eden that he, in fact, never knew, the American Adam shapes his character by roaming through wilderness and by taking part in blood rituals. Incapable of sharing a domestic space with Eve, he is both a mythical warrior and a prehistoric hunter (Owens 2000:69, 80). This kind of allegorical reading of McCarthy's prose, which brings together the Book of Genesis and the evolution theory, does not take into account some particular features of John Grady Cole and his peers which might seem to us profoundly unfamiliar.

When I speak of "unfamiliarity", I refer to the feeling analyzed by Ludwig Wittgenstein in *Philosophical Investigations* (2009:§596 164), a feeling which one cannot put into words well enough, because linguistic tools prove insufficient. We are often convinced that we recognize an object only because we succeed in

comparing two impressions thanks to our memory (Wittgenstein 2009:§604, 165). But, according to Wittgenstein, this means describing what we call a mental process rather than explaining what “recognizing” and the feeling of “familiarity” truly are. Thus, by using allegory to depict John Grady, one compares him to well-known literary icons which make a grand scale perspective on American history and American ethos easily accessible. The literary character works mainly as a means to illustrate a specific context. On the contrary, if we accept that John Grady, however uncanny, is foregrounded and that many of his actions remain shady, like those of a real person – Cormac McCarthy never allows the reader to scrutinize his protagonists’ intimate motivations – we return to the magic of fiction and we understand that, before being an Adam or a chivalric figure, the hero of *All the Pretty Horses* is an enigmatic teenager in search of adventures. By playing the “make believe” game, we prefer mimesis to allegory.

The most action packed sequence of events unfolds close to the end of the novel. Just ransomed from the Saltillo prison, banished from the *hacienda* (Alejandra forever lost), abandoned by weary Rawlins who went back home in a bus, John Grady returns to the Mexican village where he and his friends had tried to retrieve Blevins’ bay horse at the beginning of the journey. This time, he needs to retrieve not one, but three horses. Like a vigilante from a western movie, he takes the local police captain (Jimmy’s killer) hostage, threatens the sly *charro* (the captain’s acolyte) with a pistol, and sneaks into Don Rafael’ stables. After a shooting rampage and a narrow escape, John Grady spurs his horses over the plains, with the dangerous captive still lagging behind. The boy simulates an ambush in order to deceive his enraged pursuers and sears his wounded leg by improvising a gore surgical technique. The succession of events and the hero’s spectacular kinetics may seem far-fetched. Yet, if we remember William Blake’s (1998:77) proverb, “Everything possible to be believed is an image of truth”, we also remember that good literature lures our imagination with believable possibilities.

According to Aristotle (2006:65), a believable impossibility is preferable to an unbelievable possibility. I refer here not so much to the old Aristotelian book, but to A.D. Nuttall’s (2006:63,182) “new mimesis” which allows us to read *topoi* afresh and acknowledge the variety of both nature and literary interpretations. Nuttall (2006) states that a realistic work of art enhances the experience of a possible reality. He makes a distinction between “conceptual knowledge” and “experiential knowledge”:

Conceptual knowledge is increased by the addition and elaboration of propositions. Experiential knowledge is increased by deepening, by intensification. The historian, who may serve here as proponent of conceptual knowledge, does not merely record our present knowledge of the past; he extends it by research and reports his results in fresh narratives. The realistic artist, on the other hand, works by deepening our experience of the possible reality he presents. (Nuttall 2006:76)

Cormac McCarthy’s novels do not qualify as pure “realistic fiction”. His striking style blends the realistic detail and the improbable event magnificently. After cauterizing his wound using a red-hot gun barrel, John Grady seeks for his lost pistol in the night:

He hadn't known how stupid pain could make you and he thought it should be the other way around or what was the good of it. When he'd got the rifle loaded he picked up the wet rag of a shirt and used it to carry a brand from the fire down to the edge of the tank where he stood holding it out over the water. The water was dead clear in the stone pool and he could see the pistol and he waded out and bent and picked it up and stuck it in his belt. He walked out in the tank till the water was to his thigh which was as deep as it got and he stood there soaking the blood out of his trousers and the fire out of his wounds and talking to his horse. The horse limped down to the edge of the water and he stood in the dark tinaja with the rifle over his shoulder holding the brand above him until it burned out and then he stood holding the crooked orange ember of it, still talking to the horse. (McCarthy 1993: 275-276)

There are quite a lot of topoi here: the burning brand and the water, the fire in the wounds, the warrior talking to his horse. McCarthy makes us believe we hear them for the first time. The narrator describes the wild landscape minutely, then we watch the boy's movements revealing a full-fledged experience (not only horse breaking and gun fighting, but also medical performance and even a meditation on the consequences of physical pain). The first phrase confers a charming ambiguity to the entire scene. John Grady speaks to his horse because pain makes him confused. He thinks that it should bring about the ability of mind to focus in order to prove its biological (or maybe moral) utility. These are realistic details. But we have often heard the young cowboy whispering to horses tenderly before and we know that only heroes in old stories and fairy tales used to do that. This might be a fantastic hint.

3. Conclusion. Realism with a supernatural touch

When the realistic novel replaced romance during the second half of the nineteenth century, Robert Louis Stevenson believed that, no matter how entertaining and exuberant the plot and characters, "adventure, like art, is doomed to fail in its attempt to achieve a permanent ideal goal" (Kiely 2005:39). His conviction conceals both a metaphysical and an aesthetic pessimism. We do not know what Cormac McCarthy thinks about metaphysics, because, unlike Stevenson, he never talks about his art – this topic should be a matter of conjecture, since he admits in an interview that he has a particular interest in Wittgenstein's philosophy (Woodward 1992) – but one will notice easily that, in his novels, adventure is doomed to fail too. The protagonists of the Border Trilogy understand at some point that they cannot win. In *Cities of the Plain*, John Grady meets his death at the White Lake brothel, while the epilogue shows us an old Billy Parham at the dawn of the new millennium playing as an extra in western movies before wandering the plains for good. Adventure and life experience are synonyms in McCarthy's fiction, where violence and death set up a mesmerizing spectacle.

In the same paradoxical way, as the characters' flickering minds acknowledge an environment whose scale and origins they cannot fathom, the verisimilitude of their action undermines the mythical frame of the story. The myths of the South become believable possibilities through the author's impressive rendering of local vernacular and human behavior. The bond between language and landscape always proves tight. Philip A. Snyder (2001:223) states:

In McCarthy's borderlands, language bears the same weight of reality as do physical performance and natural phenomena, his style aspiring to achieve a tangible substance to match the reality of his plot and setting.

Yet, I believe that, despite the realism of the trilogy, McCarthy has never abandoned the supernatural aura of his earlier novels such as *The Orchard Keeper* (1965), *Outer Dark* (1968), *Child of God* (1973) or *Suttree* (1979). Written in the Southern Gothic tradition, these books are the very proof that McCarthy's urge to tell fantastic stories realistically (or the other way around) has been present since the beginning of his writing career. McCarthy, "the knight of ghosts and shadows", impresses the reader both as a pastoral vengeful rider and as a vulnerable sixteen year old boy. An Indian stoic with hat and boots, he learns a bitter lesson: unlike the game of chess, the horse cannot protect what is most valuable in life. The adventure in *All the Pretty Horses* is a quest for freedom, but, according to Harold Bloom (2009:8), John Grady discovers "that freedom in an American context is another name for solitude".

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**“THE DEVIL IN THE HOUSE”:
THE CHARACTER OF LUCY IN *LADY AUDLEY’S SECRET*
BY MARY ELIZABETH BRADDON**

ELISABETTA MARINO
University of Rome “Tor Vergata”

Abstract: The idealised image of Victorian womanhood was forcefully exemplified by Coventry Patmore in his poem entitled “The Angel in the House” (2006), featuring ladies characterised by innocence, submissiveness, self-abnegation, compliance with their traditional roles of nurturers and homemakers. This paper aims at analysing the controversial character of Lucy Graham (Lady Audley) who, despite her seeming perfection, subversively undermines this very model.

Keywords: female offender, gender construction, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, sensation novel, Victorian womanhood

1. Introduction. The *Angel in the House* and the female offender

In his 1864 lecture entitled *Lilies. Of Queen’s Garden*, John Ruskin (1865:90) provided his audience with a lucid and persuasive definition of the “separate [albeit complementary] characters” of gentlemen and ladies in Victorian society. In his view, male power was “active, progressive, defensive”; the mind of a man was designed “for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest”. Conversely, a true woman had to be “enduringly, incorruptively good; instinctively, infallibly wise – wise not for self-development, but for self renunciation: wise, not that she may set herself above her husband, but she may never fail from his side” (Ruskin 1865:92). While the outer world was his indisputable domain, her province was the domestic environment, “the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division” (Ruskin 1865:91). Positively excluded from the public sphere, the consecrated Vestal of the “temple of the hearth” envisioned by Ruskin closely resembled the ethereal heroine of Coventry Patmore’s highly commended narrative poem, significantly entitled *The Angel in the House* (2006, first published in 1854). Inspired by the spotless virtues of his wife Emily, Patmore’s literary creation, who was “all mildness” (Patmore 2006:18), “pure dignity, composure, ease” (20), epitomised the ideal of innocent, selfless, and submissive womanhood of the second half of the nineteenth century. In the poet’s words, “Man must be pleased, but him to please/ Is woman’s pleasure” (41). Apparently content in her gilded cage filled with costly commodities, the Victorian lady turned into the most precious ornament of her house: her rosy complexion, her refined garments as well as her slender, delicate body, unfit for any physical exertion, were privately exhibited in the household setting. As Thorstein Veblen (1994:90) elucidated in his essay on the leisure class, the Victorian lady was “supported in idleness by her owner. She [was] useless and expensive, and she [was] consequently valuable as evidence of pecuniary strength”.

The female offender, on the other hand, forcefully diverted from the above-outlined paradigm of womanly perfection: she usurped the male prerogatives of action, ambition and domination; furthermore, often acting as a life-taker, she rejected her *natural*, instinctive functions of life-giver, homemaker and nurturer, thus transgressing the socially sanctioned boundaries of her sex. Hence, following

in the steps of Charles Darwin and his evolutionary theory, Victorian criminologists, psychologists and physicians devoted their efforts to establishing that the distorted femininity of these abnormal women actually stemmed from “racial degeneration” (Pal-Lapinsky 2003:111). Cesare Lombroso, professor of hygiene and forensic medicine at the university of Turin, was convinced that women were less prone than men to violence and murderous acts, due to their inborn inertia and passive disposition. Nonetheless, as he argued in his 1893 seminal treatise entitled *La donna delinquente* (The female offender), an unlawful and immoral inclination was a hereditary taint, which could be reassuringly detected by observing anomalous bodily and facial traits (such as a cranial asymmetry, strabismus or a deformed nose), which varied according to the different misdeeds (Lombroso and Ferrero 1895:86). Moreover, the essentially *unfeminine* nature of delinquent women was betrayed by their stereotypically masculine attributes (above all, physical strength and mental agility, despite the evident folly of their deviant behaviour) or by their likeness to wild animals or primitive creatures (the monstrous and grotesque figure of Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre* is a stringent example).

This clear-cut distinction between sanity and perversion, between the angel protectively sheltered in the household sphere and the diabolic female criminal undermining social stability and customary gender roles, is strikingly blurred and problematised by Mary Elizabeth Braddon in her 1862 novel entitled *Lady Audley's Secret*. As this essay sets out to demonstrate, through the histrionic character of Helen/Lucy/Lady Audley, the disquieting *devil* in the house, whose immaculate, childlike looks artfully concealed her evil-minded intentions, the writer wished to expose the limits of the male-fabricated construct of Victorian womanhood. Following some preliminary remarks on the *sensation novel* (the popular genre Braddon's text can be ascribed to), this paper will outline the evolution of the controversial protagonist of *Lady Audley's Secret* who, as it will be shown, is eventually unmasked and punished, not for her despicable immorality but, as Jan Davis Schipper (2002:10) has pointed out, merely “to satisfy conventions.”

2. Sensation novels

Sensation novels were considered particularly disturbing by Victorian literary critics since they placed the most atrocious crimes in the sacred heaven of middle and upper-class domesticity (Tatum 2007:505). Besides, unlike Gothic narratives set in a remote past and in faraway countries, they featured contemporary, realistic settings, alarmingly close to the reader's experience (Zipfinger 2010:43). Even more, the conventional lady in distress, threatened by the dark villain of the tales of terror, was frequently replaced by an angel-like, seemingly harmless creature, who was actually the unexpected executor of savage acts of brutality: moral character and physical appearance were thoroughly dissociated (Talairach-Vielmas 2007:154) and, in spite of Lombroso's speculation, the mark of vice and corruption was virtually undetectable. Revolving around cases of bigamy, murder, arson and poisoning, sensation novels particularly appealed to women, offering them a safe outlet for their frustrations and innermost fantasies (Zipfinger 2010:47), as well as the possibility to blamelessly indulge in acts of “vicarious violence” (Ritchie 2006:1) and secret rebellion. The authors of these subversive plots, therefore, were often held responsible for fostering rather than

warning against transgression (Schipper 2002:25), and severely censored for the growth of juvenile and female crimes (Ritchie 2006:25). Among the experts in this genre, professional women writers, who had already trespassed the limits proper to their sex by invading the realm of literature, were regarded with even greater anxiety. Mary Elizabeth Braddon, whose reputation was not above reproach (she was a former actress, romantically involved with a married man, the publisher John Maxwell), was accused of polluting youthful minds, beside lowering the cultural standards of the nation, by “making the literature of the Kitchen the favourite reading of the Drawing-room” (Fraser Rae 1865:105); her novels, dealing with “revolting topics”, were dismissed as “one of the abominations of the age” (Fraser Rae 1865:104).

3. The character of Lucy in *Lady Audley's Secret*

Lady Audley's Secret is probably Braddon's most renowned novel. It tells the story of an enchanting twenty-year-old governess, Lucy Graham, who temporarily succeeds in climbing the social ladder by tying the knot with Lord Audley, a wealthy and distinguished elderly man. Lucy's real name is Helen and she already has a husband, the dragoon George Talboys, disinherited by his father for marrying below his station. A few months after the birth of their child, George had unexpectedly deserted his wife, looking for better opportunities in Australia. Three years later, he had returned a rich man, only to find out that his spouse had mysteriously passed away. Despite appearances, Helen was still alive: weary of her misery, she had abandoned her son and changed her identity to Lucy, thus beginning a new life. The plot unfolds following the strenuous efforts on the part of Robert Audley (Lord Audley's nephew, beside being George Talboys' best friend) to prove that Lucy Graham/Lady Audley is actually Helen Talboys, and therefore a bigamist and a vile impostor. After attempting to murder her first husband and setting fire to the inn where Robert is lodged, maddened Lucy is eventually unmasked and confined in a mental institution in Belgium, where she quietly dies a year later.

A former governess - in herself, a problematic borderline figure between social classes, constantly shifting from the public to the domestic domain (Wetzel 1994:80) - Lady Audley is introduced on stage playing the part of the quintessential Victorian icon. She is endowed with a delicate, almost “fragile figure” (Braddon 2007:43); “the innocence and candour of an infant” beam in her charming and cheerful face and “shine out of her large and liquid blue eyes” (43). Her golden ringlets gleam in the sunlight and make a “pale halo round her head” (9). She seems so pure that she “might have served as a model for a mediaeval saint” (171) while other times, she is compared to “a Madonna in an Italian Picture” (207). Fond of her piano, “happy as a child surrounded by new and costly toys” (43), this “babyfied little creature” (111) feels a strong aversion to reading and studying, while she enjoys society and being admired. Once settled into Lord Audley's lavish mansion, she immediately establishes herself “as the belle of the country, pleased with her high position and her handsome house; with every caprice gratified, every whim indulged” (43).

Nevertheless, the artificial (and therefore disquieting) fabrication of this model *angel in the house* is clearly stated in the very first pages of the novel, even before uncovering Lucy's secret past: Lord Audley's unexpected marriage proposal, which she explicitly accepts on the grounds of “the advantages of such an

alliance”, is bluntly and unromantically described by the aging patriarch as “a bargain” (Braddon 2007:11). As Jan Davis Schipper elucidates (2002:5), given the economical dependence of Victorian women on fathers, husbands, or even employers, many girls resorted to the conscious construction of an idealised self in order to secure the protection of an affluent spouse, ending up trapped in asymmetrical relationships which the scholar defines as “legalized prostitution”. Lured by the prospect of a wealthy life, newly-acquired Lucy willingly accepts to be considered an ornament in Lord Audley’s “Aladdin’s palace” (234). She is associated with and surrounded by dazzling and high-priced commodities that, while perfectly framing her beauty (the woman’s only asset), at the same time seem to suffocate her. Consequently, Braddon often lingers on the hyperbolic portrayal of her character’s fur coats (86), “silks and velvets” (303), expensive wardrobe (whose open doors reveal “the treasure within” [56]), “fragile teacups of turquoise china” (234), “ivory-backed hairbrushes” (56), “gilded mirrors, shimmering satin and diaphanous lace” (234). Yet, the atmosphere in the lady’s apartments is stifling, “almost oppressive from the rich odours of perfume bottles whose gold stoppers have not been replaced” (56). As the writer seems to imply, dualism and ambiguity are not just expressed through her devious villainess; they pervade the very core of Victorian society: the domestic hearth.

Lucy’s many-sided personality and her distorted nature, hidden behind a façade of seeming perfection, are hinted at throughout the narrative. Her image is symbolically multiplied into the many women reflected in the mirrored walls of her stately home. Her meaningfully unfinished portrait by a painter belonging to the *fleshy school* of artists discloses what is not normally “perceived by common eyes” (58), namely the devil behind the angel:

No one but a pre-Raphaelite would have so exaggerated every attribute of that delicate face as to give a lurid lightness to the blonde complexion, and a strange sinister light to the deep blue eyes. No one but a pre-Raphaelite could have given to that pretty pouting mouth the hard and almost wicked look it had in the portrait. It was so like and yet so unlike. ... My lady, in his portrait of her, had something of the aspect of a beautiful fiend. Her crimson dress, exaggerated like all the rest in this strange picture, hung about her in folds that looked like flames. (57)

A skilled actress, at ease in any part she performs, Lucy even recommends her maidservant Phoebe (who, notwithstanding a peculiar lack of colour in her face, actually resembles her mistress) to use cosmetics, in order to artfully improve her looks and effectively transform her appearance: “you *are* like me [...] with a bottle of hair dye, such as we see advertised in the papers, and a pot of rouge, you’d be as good-looking as I any day” (47). Over and over again, Lady Audley is compared to a deceitful enchantress, an “amber-haired siren” (224), “an angry mermaid” (255), the chimerical creature joining human and animal traits “who got poor old Ulysses into trouble” (30). Her unwomanly physical strength is highlighted when she manages to throw George Talboys into a well, in the vain attempt to rid herself of the burden of her first family (it should not pass unnoticed that, in a most unmotherly fashion, she had already forsaken her son). Finally, the adjective “unnatural” is repeated seven times in a few lines, in order to describe her criminal behaviour and altered facial features when she conceives her arson plan to murder Robert Audley (248-249).

As Nancy Knowles and Katherine Hall (2012:46) have underlined, the plot of *Lady Audley's Secret* “has two structural moments, destabilizing and stabilizing.” Hence, after unsettling the stereotypical figure of the *angel in the house*, mixing her (in)corporeal attributes with the shameful moral characteristics of the female offender, Mary Elizabeth Braddon somehow decides to provide a medical reason for Lucy's misconduct, thus reconciling her views with the assumptions of the Victorian society as well as partially validating (for obvious marketing reasons) the very values she frequently questions in her writings. Even if her physician, Dr. Mosgrave, is not fully persuaded by Lucy's explanation (given her deliberation and coolness in carrying out her schemes), the woman claims she has inherited the taint of madness from her mother and, for this reason, she cannot be held entirely liable for her actions. Moreover, she is not even *technically* guilty of any major offence, since George Talboys miraculously survived the fall and Robert Audley escaped from the fire. According to Jan Davis Schipper (2002:52), ascribing madness to women who rejected conventions was a powerful instrument often employed by men to exercise social control and to re-assert traditional gender prerogatives. It reassuringly denied the possibility that the weaker sex could intentionally perform acts of violence, prompted by rage, passion or even self-defence.

Playing her last part (that of the mentally deranged, insidious *other*), Braddon's devil is “buried alive” (303) in a madhouse, meaningfully located in a *foreign* country, more suitable to her snake-like personality and infectious disposition than *healthy* Britain: in Belgium, “the sibilant French syllables hiss through her teeth as she utters them, and seem better fitted to her mood and to herself than the familiar English she has spoken hitherto” (310). Even Lucy's dreams of social ascent are turned into nightmares in the mental asylum and, once more, commodities signify the dreadful change: her “costly mirrors” are replaced with “wretched mockeries of burnished tin”, and instead of the precious drapery and elaborate furniture adorning Lord Audley's mansion, she is surrounded by “the faded splendour of shabby velvet, and tarnished gilding, and polished wood” (309). Incidentally, before leaving to Belgium, she had tried to hide vases of Sèvres and Dresden, jewels, and golden drinking cups among the folds of her dresses, carefully packed in her trunk: “her mercenary soul hankered greedily after the costly and beautiful things of which she had been mistress” (304).

In the end, disclosing Lady Audley's secret also triggers the emblematic development of Robert Audley into a responsible and respectable Victorian gentleman, embodying all the virtues listed by John Ruskin in the above-quoted lecture. At the beginning of the novel, “Bob” is an idle, *un-English*, feminised barrister, who “has never either had a brief, or tried to get a brief, or even wished to have a brief” (27) in his life. He wastes his time reading French novels and smoking Turkish tobacco in his German pipe. As the story proceeds, however, the improvised detective undergoes an impressive transformation, while striving to preserve the social boundaries of sex and class: he dramatically changes his lifestyle and eventually marries George Talboy's sister Clara, an authentic *angel in the house*.

4. Conclusion. *Lady Audley's Secret* between acceptance and challenge

Mary Elizabeth Braddon concludes *Lady Audley's Secret* with a slightly moralistic remark, which captivates the sympathy of the most severe and

uncompromising reader: “I hope no one will take objection to my story because the end of it leaves the good people all happy and at peace” (355). Nonetheless, through the ambiguous character of Lucy, the charming, attractive, clever, cunning *fallen angel in the house*, she unquestionably succeeded in challenging one of the central assumptions of patriarchal power: the fabrication of Victorian womanhood.

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EDITH WHARTON'S FRANCE

ALICE BAILEY CHEYLAN

Université du Sud Toulon-Var

Abstract: *Edith Wharton lived much of her life in France. This short paper proposes to study her perspective on France and the French by comparing two of her books: "A Motor-Flight through France" (first published 1909) and "French Ways and their Meanings" (first published 1919). Both demonstrate Wharton's keen sense of observation and her passionate discovery of the French culture.*

Keywords: *American expatriate writers, cultural differences, Edith Wharton, France, travel journal, women writers*

1. Introduction

Edith Wharton lived a large part of her life in France. When she was a child, her family moved to Paris for several years. Later, she returned there to settle for much of her adult life, before moving on to Hyeres and then, eventually, to Saint Brice. A prominent member of the American expatriate community in Paris during the early twentieth century, she received and entertained Paul Bourget, Anna de Noailles, Andre Gide, Cocteau, and many other well-known artists, writers, and political figures. Many of her books are set in France, revealing a subtle knowledge and appreciation of the French. This short paper proposes to study the evolution of her perspective on France and the French by comparing two of her books which were separated by an eleven year interval: *A Motor-Flight through France* and *French Ways and their Meanings* (first published in 1919). First published in 1908, *A Motor-Flight through France* is a collection of essays inspired by three different trips through Wharton's adopted country. They demonstrate Wharton's keen sense of observation and her passionate discovery of France before the outbreak of World War I. *French Ways and their Meanings*, written, on the contrary, towards the end of World War I, is an attempt to analyze and explain the cultural differences of the French to Americans. Intended to be an informative book, it reveals Wharton's growing understanding of her new country.

2.1 Edith Wharton's discovery of the French landscape

The essays in *A Motor-Flight through France* were originally published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, in 1908. The first trip was the longest. It began in Boulogne and continued on to Arras, Amiens, Beauvais, Rouen, Fontainebleau, the Loire, the Indre, Nohant, Clermont, Auvergne, Royat, and Bourges before returning to Paris. It was taken with Wharton's husband, Teddy and coincided with her entry into the Parisian society in 1906. The second trip was taken in 1907, with both Teddy and Henry James. Beginning again in Paris, it continued on to Poitiers and then southward to the Pyrenees and Provence before returning once again to Paris through the Rhone Valley. The third trip was taken in the northeast of France, with Teddy, a few months later, in May 1907.

What strikes one most in reading *A Motor-Flight through France* are the elaborate descriptions of French towns with their churches and monuments and surrounding countryside. Edith Wharton was well read in French architecture, art, history and geography. She would see a village, a monument, or a landscape and

imagine it as a backdrop for the people who had lived there in the past. To give the reader a point of reference, she repeatedly used the same method: she would begin with a comparison to an English or Italian church, town or countryside, pointing out at first the similarities and then the singularity of the site.

The descriptions of her travels read like a narrative, slowly unfolding and developing at each new stop until the reader has a global picture of the trip. She begins her book with an elegy of the motor-car and how it has changed the traveler's perspective. The traveler no longer approaches towns in the same manner. He or she no longer arrives at the train station through "the area of ugliness and desolation created by the railway itself" (Wharton 1909:1). Now, the traveler can choose between various ways and angles of approach. The landscape is also different because it is accessible. The traveler can stop and explore those little villages which, before, were only a passing glimpse from a train window. This new approach gives new insight and underlines the author's role in the creation and choice of perspective of a trip which is similar to that of a literary text. Traveling is a way of perceiving; monuments of the past have a story. The Amiens Cathedral, one of her first stops on the first trip, is an example of northern art and is what she calls "anecdotic". Describing it is a way of story-telling.

For Wharton, the Amiens Cathedral inspired reverence, a certain awe and respect for those who lived before us. This theme will reappear and take on further importance later in her description of the French people. She continues on to Beauvais and Rouen, describing the impressions the towns give her and the thoughts they inspire. Beauvais is calm and aloof. She thinks of the Gothic spirit and sense of art and asserts that art should not be judged by saying it is good or bad, but should simply be described as Gothic or classic. The approach to Rouen reminds her of that to Orvieto and Wells, it is like poetry, but is interrupted by "sordid interminable outskirts" (Wharton 1909:18), like a descent into prose. Wharton is struck by the irony of how a prosperous town destroys its own beauty. In contrast, she admires the mixture of different eras. Renaissance and Gothic monuments appear together without destroying any of the other's charm. It is as if they were backdrops for unwritten stories, adding depth and complexity.

Continuing on from Rouen to Fontainebleau, she begins to describe the people who inhabit these towns. She is still an observer in her first book and there doesn't seem to be any interaction with the local population. She describes her impression that everyone has a place, a special niche in life, and this contributes to the French sense of universal form. She will develop this idea of pattern and place later in her descriptions of the French people as well as in her novels depicting the social structure of New York. Going on to the Loire and the Indre, she imagines the great artists and writers who lived in the region. Stopping at Nohant, she admires George Sand's house and garden, imagining the influence they must have had on Sand's writing.

Her first journey ends with a suggestion of what she would like to visit and explore on her next trip. The next time she imagines herself visiting what she has seen from afar but is, for the moment, unattainable: Orcival and the mountain next to the Col de Ceysnat.

Her second trip, which she took with Henry James and Teddy, starts in Paris from where she sets off to discover another view of France. She again begins with the description of a cathedral. This time, it is at Chartres and she describes how the Cathedral first attracts you and you do not notice the surroundings, but later, the surroundings become more detailed and more important, turning the Cathedral into

a blur in the middle of a beautiful town. From Chartres, they continue on to Blois and then to Nohant to see George Sand's house once again and imagine the life and artistic inspiration which reigned there during George Sand's life, before moving on to Poitiers. From Poitiers, they go to Angoulême, Bordeaux, and Pau, and then to Provence, before heading back to Paris through the Rhone Valley.

She analyzes why certain churches and monuments are charming and why others have lost their charm, situating them in their historical setting, imagining what life had been like at that moment. Passing through Auxerre, she compares it to the face of the French people; it is "one of those close-knit, individual old French towns that are as expressive as full of vivacity and character as certain French faces" (Wharton 1909:165).

On her third trip, with Teddy as her traveling companion, she again starts her journey through Paris, where she marvels at the role of aesthetics in city planning: practicality cannot be separated from beauty. She refers to a bond between thought and sense in French constructions. She then travels through Meaux to Rheims, where she again describes a cathedral. While she compares Meaux and Rheims to English settings, she describes the Cathedral at Noyon as though it were a transition between England and France. At Saint Quentin, she remarks the Flemish influence of the town and people on La Tour's painting.

It is difficult to conceive of the most expert interpreter of the Parisian face as forming his style on physiognomies observed in the sleepy streets and along the sluggish canals of Saint Quentin; and the return of his pictures to his birthplace if it has a certain historical fitness, somehow suggests a violent psychological dislocation, and makes one regard the vivid countenances lining the walls of the Musée Lécuyer as those of émigrés longing to be back across the border. (Wharton 1909: 188)

She praises the relation between a monument and the site chosen for its construction. The Notre Dame Cathedral in Laon, like the Church in Vezelay, is "worthy of the site it occupies" (Wharton 1909:192). She then continues to Soissons where she admires the great ruins of the Saint-Jean-des-Vignes Church before turning back towards Paris.

Thus Wharton has described a vast portion of France, her backdrop is complete, and she has now to people it.

2.2 Edith Wharton's discovery of the French people

Written eleven years later, Edith Wharton's book *French Ways and their Meanings*, had a very specific political purpose. It was written to explain France and the French to the American public during the First World War and make them sympathetic to the French cause. She no longer describes the French landscapes, but the people who inhabit them. Once again, she makes numerous comparisons between the English and American mentalities in an effort to demonstrate that there are surface differences, but the values of the French - justice and liberty - are also those of the English-speaking world. She supports her arguments with numerous examples and anecdotes.

Written in 1919, the book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter presents her first impressions of the French. The next four describe the traits she admired in the French: Reverence, Taste, Intellectual Honesty and Continuity. The

last two chapters are composed of articles she had already published in *Scribner's Magazine* and *The Ladies' Home Journal*.

At the beginning of *French Ways and their Meanings*, Wharton remarks that there are two ways of describing a people: as a traveler, a simple observer, or as someone who lives among them, sharing their lives. She surprisingly asserts that she prefers the first because it is more objective and less tainted by subtler interpretation. She begins by reminding the reader who is doubtlessly American that France and the French are very similar to the United States and the American people. The four years of German occupation have disrupted life in France, just as such an event would do in the States. However, the French manage to carry on, just as Americans would in the States if they were submitted to similar misfortune. The Germans, on the other hand, are not like the French and the Americans. She gives an amusing example of how the German emperor insists that women take off their cloaks at the Berlin opera; she herself refused, whereas a German princess saw no harm in this senseless order and immediately obeyed.

The difference is this: The German does not care to be free as long as he is well fed, well amused and making money. The Frenchman, like the American, wants to be free first of all, and free anyhow — even when he might be better off, materially if he lived under a benevolent autocracy. (Wharton 1919:15)

It must be remembered that the book was written for a political purpose and that, although Wharton described herself as an objective observer, she certainly had a message she wanted to pass on, and the message was anti-German.

The chapter on Reverence is an amusing explanation of French table manners and the art of conversation. She had already touched on the subject of French cuisine in her earlier book, when she noted that good food could be found in the most out-of-the-way places. She described the excellent food in a small auberge or gargote in Pr cy-sous-Thil on her second motor-flight. According to Wharton, the sophisticated luncheon dishes at this small inn could easily be compared to anything on a Parisian table; whereas such good food in such an unpretentious setting could never be found in an Anglo-Saxon country.

Born into a prominent and very wealthy New England family, Wharton was an elitist for whom social etiquette was very important. She knew well both American and French etiquette and managed to flawlessly describe the differences. According to her, the French have boundless and unquestionable respect for their traditions and are suspicious of and reticent about anything new. The chapter ends with an explanation of the importance of aesthetics to the French and suggests that the Americans have much to learn from the cultivation of the *useless*. This appreciation of the French sense of art and beauty easily provides the transition to the next chapter on Taste. For Wharton, taste is natural to the French, it is innate. She explains that, while the Americans are educated to appreciate art, the French were born with it. One of the so-called surface differences is that all social classes in France are capable of enjoying art and culture. Everyone in France, whatever their level of education, is able to enjoy Racine and Hugo, whereas in America, there are more people who have learned how to read, but they do not take advantage of this skill to read anything interesting.

She praises what she calls the “intellectual honesty” of the French, the courage to look at things as they are. She again remarks that the French are like the Americans, but the difference is that the former are more mature, more grown-up.

She continues pointing out surface differences between the French and the Americans, while maintaining that basic values, family feeling, and social virtues are the same.

The short chapter on Continuity praises the French artistic inheritance, whose origins can be traced as far back as the French Stone Age with the cave dwellers in the Pyrenees. Wharton concludes with the idea that France has something to teach the Americans who should also be proud of their cultural heritage and recognize the full value of English speech and English letters leagued to them by their forbearers. She has thus peopled the country which she so minutely described eleven years earlier.

3. Conclusion

To conclude, Edith Wharton's early trips in France were not really those of a novice. Although she had not previously visited all the places she wrote about, she was knowledgeable enough in French history and architecture to know what she wanted to see as well as how to appreciate new discoveries. As she traveled, she consciously chose to observe and not to judge. She would imagine the people who had lived in the places she saw and she would note the impressions which would linger on in her memory. She created a picture of France seen through three different angles, three different journeys. The observations in *A Motor-Flight through France* made her very well equipped to understand the French people. Although *French Ways and their Meanings* clearly served a political purpose, and is perhaps not as objective as Wharton claims, it is nevertheless a very insightful and skillful rendering of the French mentality. History, art, food, and language were not much valued by the Americans at that time. She managed to explain their importance to the French and to suggest that the Americans might have something to learn and that they should not judge a nation whose priorities were perhaps different from their own, but should try to understand the differences. Similarly to her description of the Chartres Cathedral, she at first focused on the French towns and landscapes. They could be reached by car and motor-flights made them easily accessible. Later, they became less distinct and only secondary to the French people. Wharton thus made the French people and countryside accessible and acceptable to the Americans and constructed a very complete narrative while doing so.

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“BACK TO THE FUTURE”: TECHNOLOGICAL SINGULARITY IN GIBSON’S SPRAWL TRILOGY

MOJCA KREVEL

Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana

Abstract: Ray Kurzweil’s concept of singularity as presented in his 2005 “*The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*” is based on complex calculations relying on the existing patterns of biological and technological evolution. His predictions about the course of future human development remarkably correspond to the worlds of the 1980s cyberpunk literature. The paper analyses William Gibson’s “*Sprawl Trilogy*” in the light of Kurzweil’s predictions for the future and explains its correspondence with the structural logic of postmodern reality.

Key words: cyberpunk, genetics, hyperreality, nanotechnology, robotics, singularity

1. Introduction

A few months ago, while randomly flipping through TV channels, my attention was caught by flickering trajectories of brain-computer interfacing and pulsing images of neurons firing to computer-generated data. The cyberpunk fan in me cheerfully acknowledged the familiar phantasmagoria of what seemed to be a yet-unseen documentary on 1980’s sci-fi avant-garde - only to find out that what I was, in fact, watching, was a film version of Ray Kurzweil’s 2005 best-selling *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Technology*. The resemblance between Kurzweil’s vision of the future and the worlds of literary cyberpunk, epitomized by those in William Gibson’s *Sprawl Trilogy*, was astonishing.

The astonishment was primarily owed to the fact that Ray Kurzweil is an award-winning inventor, mathematician, and one of the leading experts in computer and artificial intelligence. He is also a remarkably accurate - and hence influential - futurologist whose predictions have been based on existing trends in the development of technology and science.

William Gibson, on the other hand, is the most influential author of the 1980s cyberpunk movement. His early work provided the blueprint for what were to become the trademarks of cyberpunk writing: computers, computer(ized) environments and artificial intelligence. And yet, even while fuelling digital fantasies of thousands of aspiring computer geeks, Gibson wrote most of his *Sprawl* trilogy on a typewriter and consciously avoided using the internet well into the 1990s. His hi-tech literary worlds were admittedly inspired by Alfred Bester’s 1950s sci-fi serial “Tiger! Tiger!”, William Burroughs’s concept of the Interzone, and the down-and-out aesthetics of the “Velvet Underground” band (Gibson 1995:318).

In this paper, my intention is first to show to what extent Kurzweil’s informed and well-grounded projections coincide with the largely-invented motifs in Gibson’s 1980s *Sprawl Trilogy*. The analysis will be followed by an attempt to explain the correspondence in terms of the metaphysical structuring of the postmodern age.

2. Ray Kurzweil and the concept of singularity

Because singularity is a concept which not only means different things in different disciplines and to different people, but is also rarely encountered in literary criticism, a brief explanation is in order. In mathematics, singularity refers to a value that exceeds any final limitation (Kurzweil 2006:22), while in physics, the concept “marks a point where the curvature of space-time is infinite, or, in other words, it possesses zero volume and infinite density” (Hawking et al. 1997). Kurzweil’s use of singularity follows Vernor Vinge’s appropriation of the term to “describe the point in history where accelerating technological progress becomes near infinite and thus unknowable” (Vinge qtd. in Bell 2003:6). This definition refers to the explosion of intelligence, implicit in the functioning of Kurzweil’s theory of the law of accelerating returns, according to which the rate of evolutionary development is doubly exponential as each subsequent improvement takes less time and less effort.

Kurzweil (2006:14-21) divides the history of evolution in six epochs, which differ according to the complexity of information patterns. We are currently nearing the end of the fourth epoch. The state of singularity corresponds to Epoch Five of evolutionary development, in which the exponential growth will be so great that technology will seem to develop at “infinite speed” (24). This will result in the merging of the data in our brains with the non-biological intelligence of our technology. Epoch Six refers to the aftermath of singularity, in which the computational potential of the matter and energy in the universe will be employed for the spreading of intelligence once the computational potential of the Earth no longer suffices. Epoch Six is the last epoch with existing intelligence that one can imagine.

Kurzweil’s predictions rely primarily upon the development and the increasing synergies of three disciplines which have been the most vigorously researched and the most generously financed over the last twenty-five years: biotechnology, nanotechnology, and robotics. The advancements in biotechnology are principally focused on genetics - i.e. the reading and manipulation of the genome - and they started with the Human Genome project in 1990. The possibilities of interfering with genes thoroughly redefine the established notions of life, living, metabolism, age, heredity, illness, etc.

Nanotechnology, which is essentially about controlling matter at atomic and molecular levels, has been the fastest developing and also the most heavily financed scientific discipline since the 2000s. Understandably so, as the basic *modus operandi* of nanotechnology promises results that are nothing short of magical - imagine the implications of the possibility to transmit instructions from a centralised data store to molecular nano-assemblers (nanobots) which would build whatever is coded from the atomic level up.

Robotics primarily involves the development of a non-biological intelligence that exceeds human intelligence, the so-called strong artificial intelligence (narrow AIs are already used in air traffic control, medical diagnoses, etc.). A number of approaches and models have been developed over the last 60 years to create an intelligence that would be indistinguishable from human intelligence. Kurzweil clearly favours the reverse engineering of the human brain, which involves the usage of nanobots in coding all the processes in the human brain, providing a blueprint for the functioning of strong AI. The launching of the heavily financed international BRAIN project in April 2013, the goal of which is to decipher the

code of the human brain by employing the tools of nanotechnology (Kozmos 2013:13), may see results that come in well ahead of Kurzweil's 20-year estimate.

3. Kurzweil's singularity @ Gibson's *Sprawl Trilogy*

Kurzweil's predictions predominantly rely on possibilities offered by the technological and scientific discoveries of roughly the past 25 years. Prior to 1990, most of the propositions discussed in *The Singularity is Near* would have been unthinkable in terms of the possibilities offered by existing technology and science. Nevertheless, as I will show over the following pages, Gibson's 1980s novels *Neuromancer* (1984), *Count Zero* (1986) and *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (1988) - generally referred to as the *Sprawl Trilogy* - contain a number of concepts which are not only comparable but more often than not identical to those proposed by Kurzweil.

The theme that loosely connects the novels are the efforts of various AIs (e.g. Wintermute, Neuromancer, Continuity) to break free from human control and merge with extra-terrestrial AIs to create an intelligent universe very similar to the one of Kurzweil's Sixth Epoch. They pursue their goals by employing human operatives (e.g. Case, Molly, Turner) and personality constructs (e.g. Dixie Flatline, Colin, The Finn), whose task is to sabotage various corporations. These operatives are either completely dehumanised or run by ancient clans sustained by cloning and cryogenics, such as the Tessier-Ashpools.

For the analysis of Gibson's *Sprawl* novels in terms of Kurzweil's predictions in *The Singularity is Near*, I distributed the latter in seven categories based on the three disciplines discussed above and their combinations (see Table 1 below). I then searched for concepts corresponding to Kurzweil's proposals in the three novels. Employing such categorisation facilitated the organisation of the concepts analysed, while providing immediate insight into the extent of Gibson's innovation. The analysis resulted in roughly eighty concepts and phenomena that structurally and functionally correspond to Kurzweil's predictions. With some, it was impossible to determine whether their functioning relied upon the same factors as Kurzweil's, or whether a concept or phenomenon should be regarded novel or not. An example of this is the re-setting of Julius Deane's DNA in *Neuromancer* (Gibson 1995:20) and the rejuvenation of Danielle Stark in *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (Gibson 1989:185).

In any case, the quantity of corresponding concepts may well contribute to the impressiveness of the degree of coincidence, but it is rather trivial to the actual quality of correspondence, which is the main concern here. This is why presentation and evaluation is limited to key corresponding concepts, with an emphasis on those which had no grounding in the 1980s technological and scientific reality.

| | KURZWEIL | GIBSON | | |
|---------------------|---|---|--|-------------------|
| GENETICS | cloning | 3Jane Tessier-Ashpool | | |
| | gene manipulation | DNA manipulation | | |
| NANOTECH | intelligent textiles | mimetic polycarbon | | |
| ROBOTICS | human-like AIs | Wintermute | | |
| GENETICS / NANOTECH | bodily clean-ups, replacements | blood, pancreas replacement | | |
| | nanobot brain operations | addiction removal by chemopliers in the brain | | |
| | “growing” of organs | vat-grown organs / humans | | |
| GENETICS / ROBOTICS | AI diagnostics | AI’s instructions to reverse a handicap | | |
| NANOTECH / ROBOTICS | self-organizing swarms of small robots (military) | AI sent robots helping human operatives | | |
| GNR | 3D computation | | “the Aleph” | |
| | brain-computer interface | upload of skills and knowledge | “jacking-in” | microsofts |
| | | personality constructs | | ROM/VR constructs |
| | | mind expansion | | vévés |
| | human body 2.0 and 3.0 | | body augmentations | |
| | virtual reality | plugging into sensory beams of others | cyberspace | simstim |
| | | foglets | | Virek |
| | singularity (2045) | | “when it changed” (2030) | |
| | intelligent universe (epoch six) | | merging of AIs to form a transcendent intelligence | |

Table 1. Kurzweil – Gibson Correspondence Chart

The most obvious result of the advancements in the field of genetics is cloning. Kurzweil is mainly interested in the potential of cloning for therapeutic purposes. As clones occur regularly in sci-fi, the character of Jane Tessier-Ashpool, who appears as a clone in *Neuromancer*, is not exactly an innovation. On the other hand, Gibson’s motifs based on DNA manipulation are surprisingly close to what Kurzweil envisions - on the basis of science rather than literary imagination - as realistic possibilities offered by contemporary genetics. Kurzweil (2006:212) is primarily excited by the promise of life extension enabled by controlling the expression of degenerative genes and converting one’s skin cells into fresh versions of any other cell type to rejuvenate organs and tissues. The logic of resetting the code of Julius Deane’s DNA to prolong his life (Gibson 1995:20) is practically identical. Another example of gene manipulation close to Kurzweil’s predictions can be found in *Count Zero*, where a lesbian couple is parenting a biological baby conceived by means of DNA-splicing (72).

The next category comprises the correspondences related to the logic and functioning of nanotechnology, which first emerged as a purely theoretical proposal in Eric Drexler’s 1992 *Nanosystems* (Kurzweil 2006:228), a revised version of his 1991 doctoral dissertation in the field of engineering. It was therefore impossible for Gibson to be in any way familiar with the concept while

writing the *Sprawl Trilogy*. Nevertheless, the explanation of the functioning of a black sphere, which can turn from a sex-toy to intelligent hand-cuffs or a powerful explosive, as “something to do with the molecules” (1995:255) is synonymous with the manipulation of materials on molecular level, i.e. nanotechnology. As for the direct correspondence between Kurzweil’s predictions and Gibson’s motifs in terms of nanotechnology, let us mention multiple-function, intelligent textiles, which can adapt to the environment or serve various purposes (Kurzweil 2006:332), proposed by Kurzweil, and Gibson’s mimetic polycarbon clothes, which adapt to the environment (1995:74), or polycarbon exo, which adds to its carrier’s strength (1989:184).

Kurzweil’s human-like artificial intelligence (AI), produced by reverse engineering of the human brain, has a number of sci-fi predecessors - e.g. Hal from Kubrick’s (1968) *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Gibson’s AIs are not only able to converse, plan and predict, but also to “feel a compulsion” (1995:246), create a personality (1995:305) or write a book (1989:52).

The next category involves the probable outcomes of the synergies between genetics and nanotechnology. In *The Singularity is Near*, Kurzweil minutely explains the application of nanotechnology at the cellular and gene levels to perform clean-ups of bodily fluids and replacements of organs and tissues by inserting billions of computer-controlled nanobots into the bloodstream. From there, they can access target cells and cell-nuclei, performing their tasks (253-255). In *Neuromancer*, a very similar procedure is described when Case’s blood, spinal fluid and pancreas are replaced (44). We should also mention brain operations (Kurzweil 2006:307-309) which involve nanobots travelling to the specific region of the brain, mechanically “repairing” it according to instructions transferred by wi-fi. An identical procedure is described in *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, where chemopliers are used to pry drug addiction away from receptor sites in Angela Mitchell’s brain (18). Growing organs by transforming skin cells into other cell types by means of nanobots that manipulate cell nuclei and DNA is another of Kurzweil’s predictions within this category - one that has many parallels in Gibson’s trilogy, including vat-grown organs (cf. 1987:391), vat-grown humans (cf. 1995:94) and even vat-grown food (cf. 1995:62).

According to Kurzweil, the most important consequence of the synergy between biotechnology and robotics is AI diagnoses (2006:281-283), cross-referencing all the symptoms and evaluating them with regard to the patient’s medical history and immediate environment, while, at the same time, suggesting possible treatments. An identical procedure is found in *Neuromancer*, where Wintermute provides instructions to reverse Case’s seemingly irreversible handicap (44).

In the nanotechnology/robotics category, the most accurate match is Kurzweil’s prediction of self-organising swarms of small robots performing military operations (2006:330-373) and Wintermute-sent robots who kill Turing agents chasing Case in *Neuromancer* (196).

The category of the synergies between genetics, nanotechnology and robotics (GNR) is the one in which the semblance between Gibson’s imagination and Kurzweil’s informed projections is the greatest as well as the hardest to rationalise. Take, for example, the possibility of developing 3-D molecular computation by 2020, which would bring present 2-D chip computing speed close to the speed of light, enabling the creation of nanocircuits which would be self-configuring (2006:111-117). The functioning of such computers would be very

close to the functioning of the human brain, only infinitely faster and with a limitless memorisation capacity. In *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, Gibson introduces the Aleph, “one solid lump of biochip” (154) containing an infinite storage capacity, “an *abstract* of the sum total of data constituting cyberspace” (210). The Aleph encloses a universe to which ours - due to a far smaller computational potential - is subordinate.

The degree of correspondence is even greater when we observe the manner and the uses of brain-computer interfacing. The logic of electronically stimulating the neurons is identical. Let us compare the possibility of uploading skills and knowledge, for example. According to Kurzweil, such uploading would be enabled by using nanobots in the brain to translate the information from a data unit into electronic impulses stimulating the brain to perform the functions of memorising and learning (2006:198-201). Gibson’s protagonists upload skills and knowledge by inserting microsofts (cf. 1987:98) into sockets behind their ears.

The mechanism that enables uploading information into the brain also allows the downloading of information from the brain into a storage unit (Kurzweil 2006:200). Kurzweil thus predicts the formation of personality constructs which might be VR-based or appear in the physical reality as foglets (i.e. nanobot produced entities). The constructs populating Gibson’s worlds contain data downloaded from the human brain, embodied either as a hardware unit (cf. Dixie Flatline in *Neuromancer*), a virtual reality avatar (cf. Virek in *Count Zero*) or as a holograph-like entity in physical reality (cf. Colin in *Mona Lisa Overdrive*).

The most important aspect of brain-computer interface in terms of singularity is the possibility of mind expansion via nanobots in the brain functioning as the interface between virtual and physical reality, merging biological and non-biological intelligence (Kurzweil 2006:316-318). Gibson presents an identical concept, the so called *vévés* in the brain (cf. 1987:133), which allow Angela Mitchell to mentally connect to cyberspace and coexist in physical and virtual reality at the same time.

According to Kurzweil, the GNR technologies will radically alter the concept of the human body. Version 2.0 will no longer require most of the organs as their functions would be implemented by nanobots. The trend is to optimise the various functions the body is to perform. The largely non-biological version 3.0 will have a greatly expanded plasticity and will be subject to change at will in both virtual and physical realities (2006:310). Gibson offers similar examples of bodily augmentations. The most obvious example are characters with various implants (cf. Molly Millions in *Neuromancer*), characters with chemically conditioned organ functions (cf. Case’s liver and pancreas made biochemically incapable to react to drugs in *Neuromancer*), or characters whose bodies comply with Kurzweil’s human body 3.0 prediction (cf. Virek in *Count Zero*).

There are numerous parallels between the possibilities implicit in the functioning of the virtual reality of Gibson’s cyberspace. I will only concentrate on a couple of the more curious: the mechanics of plugging into sensory beams of others and foglets. Kurzweil (2006:316) explains the former as the possibility of “plugging into someone else’s sensory-emotional beam and experience what it’s like to be that person”. The sensory beam refers to nanobot projections of thoughts and feelings from one’s brain to virtual reality. Others connect to that beam via their nanobot interfaces. In *Neuromancer*, Gibson introduces an identical concept called *simstim*, which allows Case to participate in Molly’s break-in from behind his computer (71), while in *Count Zero* and *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, *simstim* is used

chiefly for cinema-like entertainment, which is also the main use of Kurzweil's concept. Foglets, "nanobots [...] that can connect themselves to replicate any physical structure" (Kurzweil 2006:33), have a direct correspondent in Wintermute's physical reality embodiments (cf. Gibson 1995:172) or in characters like Virek in *Count Zero*, who is just a cell-soup in a vat but who is able to create a body in a manner very similar to Kurzweil's.

In 2045, according to Kurzweil, the development of GNR technologies will ultimately result in the merging of biological and non-biological intelligence, which will create a society and culture advancing at unimaginable speeds in unimaginable directions. A comparable concept also appears in *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, where something very similar is referred to as the time "when it changed" (127), which took place fifteen years prior to the events in the book (i.e. between 2025 and 2030). The changing refers to the merging of Wintermute and Neuromancer in *Neuromancer*, which eventually resulted in the development of technology enabling the merging of biological and non-biological intelligence and simultaneous existence in physical and virtual reality (cf. Angela Mitchell's *vévés*). Furthermore, the initial merging of AIs, which set them free from human constraints, ultimately brought about the creation of an intelligent universe, which corresponds to Kurzweil's Epoch Six of evolutionary development, and which is described on the last page of *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (308).

4. Back to the future

All the major predictions Kurzweil suggests and justifies with the developmental trends in GNR technologies in his 2005 best-seller have parallels in the novels of Gibson's 1980s trilogy. The obvious question is how Gibson could predict the main directions of technological development with such accuracy, given that virtually none of the technological concepts Kurzweil employed in his projections existed prior to the 1990s.

My proposition is that Gibson did not predict the development but conditioned it. As ludicrous as such a suggestion may seem, it is, in fact, implicit in the structural logic of postmodern reality. The 1980s were the first truly postmodern decade, in which the effects of the paradigm shift becoming operable since World War 2 culminated at the level of experiential reality. Cyberpunk was, actually, the first literary movement to internalise the mechanisms implicit in the structuring of the new postmodern epoch, and contribute to the structuring of its reality (cf. Kregel 2012:179-182). Cyberpunk was thus the first literature to function as a medium in the postmodern sense - an information generator which, according to all the major theoreticians analysing the paradigms of the new epoch, provides material for the creation of postmodern reality. The governing mechanisms of postmodernity are, in my opinion, best summarized by Jean Baudrillard's (1994:121-127). description of postmodern reality as hyperreality comprised of third order simulacra.

Hyperreality is reality created from models. It is a reality which consists of systems of media-generated information, the stability of which relies upon the connectivity of data. Since before the actualisation as hyperreality, all data have the same value, the notions of real and fictive no longer apply. Literature, particularly fiction, which has traditionally been considered fictive, is in essence a medium: it generates data which contribute to the formation of hyperreal systems in which we live, i.e. it conditions reality. Let me illustrate my point with the late 1980s and

early 1990s cyberpunk subculture, which drew on the vocabulary, behaviour and attire of cyberpunk literary protagonists, or the aftermath of Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* publication.

From conversations with various computer and AI experts, I gathered that Gibson is an international cult figure in the world of computer science. That explains why he is frequently mentioned in scientific articles and books on computer, AI and nanotechnology development (Bell 2003, Rennie 2010:27, Stix 2008:56, Hayles 2005:140). It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that inventions and innovations in the field of computer and computer-related disciplines over the last twenty-five years have been fundamentally influenced by certain concepts and notions introduced by Gibson. Such a claim is also supported by the findings of probably the best *connoisseur* of the relations between literature, technology and science, N. Katherine Hayles, who pointed out that "visions of the future, especially in technologically advanced eras, can dramatically affect present developments" (2005:131).

5. Conclusion

Our projections, literary and otherwise, reflect our current desires and aspirations: less work, affluence, super intelligence, immortality, etc. It seems that, with the development of contemporary intelligent machines, dominating science fiction since the advent of literary cyberpunk at the beginning of the 1980s, and permeating our quotidian reality since the 1990s, we have finally designed the technology and a metaphysical foundation which allow us to come very close to achieving these goals.

The results of my analysis of Williams Gibson's 1980s *Sprawl Trilogy* in the light of Ray Kurzweil's informed projections of the future in *The Singularity is Near* confirm the above, and seem consistent with Vernor Vinge's explanation of the inevitability of singularity:

The dilemma felt by science fiction writers will be perceived in other creative endeavors. As we move closer to this point, it will loom vaster and vaster over human affairs till the notion becomes a commonplace. (qtd. in Bell 2003)

In view of that, perhaps our stories about the future should be more optimistic and full of hope. In this respect, Kurzweil's often-criticised optimism is rather reassuring, regardless of how utopian it may seem.

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SACRED VIOLENCE IN SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *THE LOTTERY*

TED BAILEY

University of Miskolc

Abstract: *The jarring juxtaposition of a biblical stoning in a mid-20th century North American village in Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" has baffled readers and led critics to numerous interpretations of the short story. This paper will briefly survey the range of criticism before applying René Girard's (1966) theory on violence, religion, and scapegoating to this tale of ritualized communal murder.*

Key words: *René Girard, Shirley Jackson, scapegoating, violence*

1. Introduction

Shirley Jackson's short story *The Lottery* (1949) is a text frequently read in American high schools and colleges, and one I myself have assigned many times to students in writing classes. Invariably, this text about a small North American community that comes together in late June every year to select one person, chosen by drawing lots in two stages, who is then ritually stoned by everyone else, provokes a strong reaction from students, much as it did upon its publication in 1948. At the time, the story sparked the largest number of responses from readers in the history of the *New Yorker*, the magazine that originally published it, with many outraged at the brutality it depicted and a few even requesting to know where the village was so that they could go visit it. The image of a peaceful, 20th century farming community employing the ancient, biblical-style punishment of stoning on a randomly chosen victim baffled many American readers, who were either unable to comprehend this juxtaposition or were offended by it.

This short story has also elicited a number of interpretations from literary critics and what I propose to do now is outline some of the responses before moving on to analyze the short story using René Girard's (1966) ideas on the relationship between violence and the sacred as a framework.

2. Critical interpretations

Randy Bobbitt (1994:8) identified three categories into which most interpretations of *The Lottery* may fall: it may be understood as a story about a) the power of traditions, b) an agricultural fertility ritual, or c) the tendency to scapegoat individuals. In the first case, the emphasis is usually placed on how the tradition of holding the lottery is perpetuated. For example, Old Man Warner stands in for the voice of the older generation who proclaim that what was once must always be - "*always* been a lottery!" the old man says loud enough for all to hear (Jackson 1949:215). He denounces anyone who would give up the lottery as "a pack of fools" who would lead the community back to pre-historic times. Indeed, Old Man Warner seems to even derive his sense of identity from having survived so many times. The placing of stones in Little Davy's hand so that he too has to participate can be seen as an element of perpetuating the lottery for future generations - not only are the young taught the rules of the game at an early age but now there is no way he can later back out of the tradition and claim that others had

killed his mother, for he too had joined in. The role of ritual is also mentioned as a way for individuals to distance themselves from any personal responsibility in the killing.

Old Man Warner plays the main role in discussions of the lottery as an ancient fertility rite. It is he who reminds everyone of the saying "Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon" (215), thus suggesting that, for whatever reason people do it now, the original purpose of the lottery was a sacrifice for a good harvest.

The scapegoating line of interpretation associates the stoning of a victim with the ancient Hebrew tradition of choosing a scapegoat to carry off the sins of the community at large and is often seen as a statement about man's inhumanity to man. Brooks and Warren (1971:74), for instance, cite the story as a tale about the "all-too-human tendency to seize upon a scapegoat", while others go back to Jackson's own statement about the story shortly after publication that "I suppose, I hoped, by setting a particularly brutal ancient rite in the present and in my own village to shock the story's readers with a graphic dramatization of the pointless violence and general inhumanity in their own lives" (qtd. in Kosenko 1985:27).

It should be noted that many of these categories overlap and, in choosing a particular critical approach, critics will often draw on elements of more than one of them. In a feminist interpretation, for example, the choice of a housewife as the scapegoat is invariably emphasized and attention is drawn to the similarity of the victim's name, Tessie Hutchinson, with the New England Puritan rebel Anne Hutchinson, who fought against the tradition of male authority in spiritual matters. Fritz Oehlschlaeger (1988:259) sees the ritual as "a patriarchal society's way of controlling female sexuality" and focuses on the dominant position of men both in the village life and in organizing the lottery every year, as proof that the tradition is a masculine one. He also sees a pattern of female resistance to the lottery, especially in Mrs Adams being the only one to outright question the continuation of the lottery.

In a Marxist reading of the story, Peter Kosenko (1985:31) also identifies the male-dominated power structure in the village, but sees the tradition as a mechanism "to reinforce an inequitable social division of labor". In Kosenko's view, the choice of Tessie Hutchinson as the scapegoat is linked to her late appearance at the ceremony and her death then understood by the villagers as punishment for her failure to adhere to the community's work ethic. The winners in all this are the village's business elite, Mr Summers, who owns the coal company, and Mr Graves, the postmaster, who both, as Kosenko points out, also organize and control the lottery.

What these feminist and Marxist interpretations share is an understanding of the ritual as a means of social control - albeit serving slightly different interests - and the belief that the choice of the scapegoat is not entirely coincidental. While the process of selecting a victim does certainly reflect social power relations - first, a family is selected with only the eldest male entitled to draw, with women assigned to the male households they marry into - the fact that the victim chosen is the appropriate one to the specific purpose appears at odds with the fact that everyone in the village takes part and draws a slip of paper. At this stage, critics are often grasping at straws to explain how the "correct" victim is chosen, with Oehlschlaeger (1988:264), for instance, arguing that a male victim could be chosen since "the lottery must appear to be fair" but ultimately claiming that the selection process must be somehow unfair, as Tessie states, and that "it is reasonable to assume that its lack of fairness would be evident only to the victim". Similarly,

Kosenko (1985:32) suggests that the lottery method used in order to choose the scapegoat is meant to give the appearance of democratic legitimacy to the outcome, but falls back in the end on a convoluted claim that the lottery is a metaphor for “the unconscious ideological mechanisms of scapegoating” and that “an arbitrary lottery [...] is an image of the village’s blindness to its own motives”. Other critics have examined the mathematically possible outcomes of the two-stage process of the lottery in order to assess whether it is truly fair or not, and Joseph Church (1988:11) contends that Jackson’s choice of verbs connected to the act of drawing a paper - everyone in the village “takes” a slip of paper, except the town’s elite, Summers, Martin, and Graves, who “select” a paper - is evidence that the lottery is rigged. And yet there is a way to account for the arbitrariness of the lottery without relying on verbal gymnastics, namely, René Girard’s (1966) theory on scapegoating and religion, and its requirement of choosing an arbitrary victim.

3. A Girardian interpretation

It should be noted that this is not the first attempt to apply Girard’s ideas to Jackson’s text. John Lamerson (2010:26) has seen Girard’s theory as explaining why the village chooses an innocent victim once a year as a human sacrifice - it is a way to “release pent aggression” that would otherwise boil over into infighting and rivalries. This ritualized violence allows the villagers to live in peace for the rest of the year, and explains why there is no mention in the text of “jails, criminals, or prisons”, “police force or sheriff”.

Unfortunately, Lamerson’s (2010:25) application of Girard’s theory to the story is very brief, and while he is correct when stating that “Girard demonstrates that a societal need to restore harmony within a community requires violence against an innocent individual, and it requires the violence to be performed in a ritualized/religious format”, he incorrectly identifies what Girard claims is the trigger for ritualized violence. It is not that “a lack of natural resources necessarily leads to a desire for violence” (ibid.), but an even more fundamental aspect of human psychology that incites violence - it is what Girard has termed “mimetic desire”. Here, a somewhat deeper analysis of Girard’s ideas will help provide clues for understanding Jackson’s text.

Girard (1977:81-86) conceives of violence as playing a generative role in the creation of human culture and religion. Violence, of course, can be a terribly destructive element, but if practiced in a smaller dose, it can prevent the later outbreak of larger scale violence that would destroy everyone. He theorizes an original murder in human civilizations, the killing of a surrogate victim, after which violence stops and the community gains the benefits of peace. To regain the effect, the practice is turned into a ritual and a ritual victim is chosen on a regular basis and sacrificed. In some cases, the victim is an animal, in others - a human being.

Central to this idea is the concept of mimetic desire, a theory Girard (1966:24) developed as a literary critic before moving on to apply the idea to the fields of anthropology, psychoanalysis, and religion. Moving a step beyond Aristotle’s definition of mimesis, which focuses on representations of reality or human thought that produce, for example, art or language, Girard proposes mimesis as a central motivating factor for human behaviour. An individual desires an object not because of its intrinsic value but rather because it is desired by another individual. The theory of mimetic desire thus provides a simple

explanation for social phenomena such as fashion and explains a central impulse behind the human drive to create social or cultural groups. Children growing up in any group instinctively imitate the behaviour they see around them and desire those objects that they see others around them already desire, and so common values and attitudes arise. However, since some objects are necessarily limited in number, mimetic desire will also necessarily give rise to rivalries and conflicts. Mimetic desire thus produces both a gravitational and a centrifugal effect that a culture needs to regulate or risk its own destruction.

The central mechanism that Girard identifies for avoiding what he terms a mimetic crisis is the scapegoat effect. Cultural order is based on a series of social distinctions that are designed to apportion who gets what in terms of material goods or marriage partners, for example, and thus prevent mimetic desire for coming to a head. From time to time, however, this system will break down, leading to a mimetic crisis where the signs are first a loss of distinction and then an outbreak of rivalries that threatens to engulf the society in a cycle of reciprocal violence as each individual or group claims what it believes is its due. Stability is restored through common agreement on violence against a particular individual or group, in other words, through the selection of a scapegoat. Thus the society's loss of unanimity brought about by mimetic rivalry is cured at the expense of a victim to establish a new "unanimity-minus-one" (Girard 1977:259).

In primitive and pre-Christian societies, Girard suggests, selecting a victim occurs as an almost unconscious process so that members of a group do not understand exactly what has happened; they only see that the death of the victim has miraculously led to an end to violence and resulted in peace and order in their culture. This leads to the sacralization of the victim, to whom magical powers are attributed, and the scapegoat is transformed into a saviour after his death. Thus, the scapegoat mechanism, Girard maintains, is the central principle underlying the function of all religions and a driving force behind the creation of culture. He compares and analyzes Greek mythology as well as religious and cultural practices from Scandinavia, Africa, South and Central America, and the Pacific Islands to come to this conclusion.

Practically, all the elements of Girard's theory can be found in *The Lottery*, which portrays a ceremony that can be understood as a ritualistic reenactment of an original murder upon which the village was founded. The mechanism of the lottery allows for the selection of an arbitrary victim whose innocence or guilt is totally unimportant to the process. What appears at first to be random violence both is and is not random. A victim is chosen arbitrarily, but this arbitrariness is, in fact, planned and necessary to prevent a greater future violence. The ritual itself and all its paraphernalia - the black box, the three-legged stool, the toneless chant - harken back to the original ceremony and allow the villagers to contain the unfettered violence that would break out if they did not carry out the lottery. The question of fairness, then, that Tessie so bitterly raises is not coincidental at all; for the lottery to be efficacious, everyone must take the same chance and must believe in the fairness of the selection process and its ultimately arbitrary outcome.

Of course, the parallels with Girard's theory on violence and religion are not one to one. Girard (1977:102) contends that "the surrogate (or original) victim comes from inside the community and the ritual victim must come from outside, otherwise the community would find it difficult to unite against it", yet in the lottery, it is always a member of the community, in this case Tessie, who stands in as a ritual victim. This discrepancy, however, can be explained by the effectiveness

of the lottery's rules: the villagers have come up with a method that allows for the totally random selection of a victim, a method that if they all accept as legitimate and fair absolves all individuals from any responsibility for the choice made, and, of course, the killing itself. In the end, the "unanimity minus one" is achieved even when choosing a victim from inside the community, and everyone, including Mr. Adams, who had earlier been the first to talk of other villages rejecting the lottery, joins in to throw stones on Mrs. Hutchinson.

Another aspect of Girard's analysis worth exploring briefly is the presence of mimetic desire in the text, for its presence would be the sign of an impending social or sacrificial crisis that could potentially unleash reciprocal violence in this otherwise seemingly peaceful village. However, mimetic desire - the triangle of one person desiring an object because another does too - does not come clearly to the foreground in Jackson's story as Girard, in his 1966 work *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, has shown it does in other novels, such as Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (first published in two volumes - 1605 and 1615) Stendahl's *The Red and the Black* (first published in 1830), or Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (first published in 1856). However, it is implicitly there in the children's play at the start of the story - where "the feeling of liberty sits uneasily on most of them [and] they tend to gather quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play" (Jackson 1949:211). Indeed, the very sentence suggests the children are as susceptible to a sacrificial crisis as the adults: unsure what to do with themselves when the shackles of a system are removed, they first sort themselves quietly into groups to assess one another before everything collapses into roughhousing. Mimetic desire is also implicitly there in the adults' tentative remarks about other villages doing away with the lottery and their own desire to do as the others are doing, but a desire shot down by lack of approval from other members of the group. The signs of building bulwarks against an impending sacrificial crisis and of regulating mimetic desire into acceptable channels are there in the spoken and unspoken social hierarchies they have constructed: women organize themselves according to households, first gossiping with other women but then going "to join their husbands" (211) and then collect the children around them. The internalization of these ranking structures is evident in remarks such as Mrs. Dellacroix's exclamation of "There goes my old man" (215) as her husband goes up to draw for the family. The entire codification of the ritual, with the great deal of fussing, the swearing in of an official, the small talk that had once been a ritual salute, the reading out of the rules although few people consciously listen, all of this shows an attempt to regulate human behaviour and to impose a form of social control. What I suggest, though, is that it is not social control necessarily in service of the patriarchy nor of an economic power elite, but the attempt to control violence in humans through the establishment of a quasi-religious ceremony.

4. Conclusion

I would conclude by saying that what is missing from the community in Jackson's story are not only jails, criminals, police, and a sheriff, but churches, priests, and ministers, at least in the traditional sense. The village needs none of those since what it does have is a priest in the form of Mr Summers, the organizer of the lottery, and an ancient and violent ceremony that fulfils the need of a religion and renders meaningless the construction of a church. What they have is the lottery.

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**“AND I CHOOSE NEVER TO STOOP”:
SUSPENSE AND UNRELIABILITY
IN
ROBERT BROWNING’S COMPLEMENTARY DRAMATIC
MONOLOGUES**

JANINA VESZTERGOM

Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest

***Abstract:** The present paper attempts to offer a comparative analysis of Robert Browning’s complementary dramatic monologues, “My Last Duchess - Ferrara” (1994) and “Count Gismond - Aix en Provence” (1994), from the point of view of narratology. After a discussion of the multifaceted significance of the titles, the first few lines of the poems are analysed with respect to their temporal references and the ways in which the strategy of suspense is employed. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that the intelligibility of the monologues is complicated by the unreliability of their narrators. This unreliability can also be connected to the auditors’ present in the respective dramatic monologues.*

***Keywords:** Browning, complementary dramatic monologues, silent auditor, suspense, unreliable narrator*

1. Introduction

When the name Robert Browning is mentioned, most people immediately associate it with the paradigmatic example of the dramatic monologue, *My Last Duchess - Ferrara*. However, few people seem to be aware that this particular poem was originally published together with *Count Gismond - Aix en Provence*, under the common title *Italy and France*, in the third volume of *Bells and Pomegranates* (1842) (Berdoe 1928:141). As a result, most critical analyses tend to focus only on the well-known *My Last Duchess* and completely disregard the examination of its companion piece. The present paper attempts to demonstrate that a comparative analysis of the two dramatic monologues not only leads to a better understanding of the individual poems, but also draws the readers’ attention to significant aspects of interpretation, which would otherwise remain unnoticed.

2. Suspense and unreliability

2.1 “An invitation to read twice”: the narrative strategy of suspense

In the comprehensive interpretation of a literary work, the title tends to be of fundamental importance. As I have mentioned in the introduction, the two poems under analysis were originally published under one title, *Italy and France - My Last Duchess - Ferrara* being *No. I. Italy*, and *Count Gismond - Aix en Provence - No. II. France* (Corson 2006:101). By 1849, however, the poems had been separated and given the individual titles that have been used in all subsequent editions since then (Tilton, Tuttle 1962:83). While, at the beginning, some critics conjectured about the reason for the poems’ original pairing, most of them approved of Browning’s revision, on the grounds that the two dramatic

monologues are patently dissimilar. Moreover, they also claimed that the narration in *Count Gismond* is too straightforward and mediocre to match the narration in *My Last Duchess*, the epitome of the dramatic monologue (Tilton, Tuttle 1962:83). As opposed to these deprecatory views, which attribute the modification of the title to Browning's acknowledgment of the "somewhat meretricious" relationship between the dramatic monologues (De Vane qtd. in Tilton, Tuttle 1962:83), I would argue that the poet's intention with the alteration was, paradoxically, to make the connection between the two poems more obvious. The first step in the formation of the new titles was to take out of the respective poems the characters of the Duchess and the Count, around whom the texts apparently centre. In addition to naming these characters in the main part of the titles, the poet also added the place names "Ferrara" and "Aix en Provence" as subtitles. Although this modification might seem to be a diminutive revision of the original, its significance cannot be overlooked. By the addition of the subtitles, Browning not only particularized the geographical settings, but implicitly restricted the historical periods as well. As soon as the readers are confronted with the place names, they associate them with the period of the Italian Renaissance on the one hand, and the French Troubadour era, on the other.

The significance of the paratextual elements lies not only in evoking the readers' frames of reference, but also in creating generic expectations concerning the poem they are going to read. On a first reading of the title *My Last Duchess - Ferrara*, readers might think that the poem is a lyrical one, a love song dedicated to a still living, beloved Duchess. In this interpretation, the possessive determiner "my" emphasizes the affectionate relationship, while the determiner "last", deriving its meaning from OE *latost*, means *the latest* or *the newest* (Hoad 1996:259). In this sense, the determiner designates the Duchess who comes at the end of a series; however, it does not necessarily imply that no more will follow. As opposed to this, if we consider the poem to be an elegy lamenting the death of a beloved wife, the determiner "last" gets a new meaning, namely that of *late*. In this sense, the Duchess is shown to be a deceased and beloved character. At the end of the reading process, however, none of these interpretations turn out to be correct. *My Last Duchess - Ferrara* is neither a love song nor an elegy, but a dramatic monologue in which the Duke, through portraying the Duchess, reveals his own character in a "sequential and fragmentary" way (Martin 1985:96).

A patently similar phenomenon can be observed in the companion piece, where genre expectations are evoked by the title and the first two lines of the poem simultaneously. Judging by the religious terminology used and the archaic conjugation of the verb *to save* ("Christ God who savest man, save most/ Of men Count Gismond who saved me!" (Browning, *Count Gismond* [hence CG] 1994:318, ll. 1–2), we might think that the poem is a hymn or an ode in praise of the eponymous character. This assumption is further strengthened by the multiple use of the same verb, which lends the sentence a refrain-like quality. Although the presupposition concerning the genre of this poem seems to be justified many times during the reading process as well, it is important to note that the religious references scattered all through the Countess's narration are used not merely for their "spiritual value, but for twisting and distorting" them to suit the narrator's own needs Harrold (1973:41)

Furthermore, the titles are problematic in terms of focalization as well. On the basis of the paratextual elements, readers most probably think that the poems they are going to read are centred round the eponymous characters. This

assumption seems to be often strengthened in the texts, too, yet the focal points of the poems are the narrators themselves. By talking about another person, the Duke and the Countess unconsciously unveil their own personalities.

Besides the paratextual elements, the first few lines of the poems also bear a striking similarity to each other. As a result of the fact that dramatic monologues are temporal fragments, their moment of narration, as Martin (1985:89–90) also claims, is always “indefinitely continuous with an implied extratextual past and future of unmarked extent”. In the case of *My Last Duchess*, the extratextual past is indicated by the two deictic expressions and the definite article at the beginning of the poem (Martin 1985:97). It is important to note, however, that these linguistic markers imply an immediate past relevant to the poem’s present “that is epistemologically shared by the sender and the receiver of the linguistic message” (Martin 1985:93). In addition to this “‘dramatic’ past”, as Martin (1985:97) also points out, a more distant narrative past is also signalled in these lines, although, on the first reading of the poem, this most probably escapes the readers’ attention. As I have already argued with respect to the title, the adjective “last” does not necessarily mean that the Duchess is dead. If we take this interpretation in the case of the first line as well, the phrase “[l]ooking as if she were alive” (Browning, *My Last Duchess* [hence MLD] 1994:318, l.2) simply means that for the Duke, who is an authentic connoisseur of paintings, the portrait of his beloved Duchess is so lifelike that he can no more distinguish between art and reality. However, when the narrated dramatic action reaches its climax in lines 45–46, it becomes clear that the Duchess was quietly murdered by order of her proud, soulless and arrogant husband (Harrold 1973:41). As a result, both the adjective “last,” and the phrase “[l]ooking as if she were alive” at the beginning of the poem must be interpreted as implicit gestures towards a relatively distant past in which the Duchess was still living. Although, on the first reading of the poem, the Duke’s love of art seems to be supported by the sentence “I call/ That piece a wonder, now:” (MLD ll. 2–3), a careful observation of its punctuation also excludes this possibility. As the colon is syntactically more powerful than the comma, the word “now” falls into the same intonational unit as the rest of the clause. Therefore, instead of a hesitation device, it must be interpreted as a temporal adverb, which suggests a past time, *then*, in which the Duke “did not esteem the painting (or the duchess) so highly” (Martin 1985:97).

In comparison with *My Last Duchess*, time references at the beginning of the other dramatic monologue are relatively straightforward to interpret. In the opening lines of this poem, there are neither deictic expressions nor a definite article that would signify “an immediately contiguous past out of which the poem’s moment grows” (Martin 1985:90). Although one might claim that the proper noun, Count Gismond, bears the definiteness that implies the immediate extratextual past, such names do not have a corresponding indefinite form. In other words, despite the fact that proper names are, by definition, definite, they do not necessarily imply shared past experience or knowledge (Martin 1985:93). Similarly to *My Last Duchess*, implications of the narrative past can be found in the first few lines of *Count Gismond*, too. However, as a result of the fact that, in this dramatic monologue, “the action of the original event has been transferred to a much later stage” (Sessions 1947:510), the Countess’s narration all through heavily relies on such preterites and other syntactic markers that signify completion.

In addition to connecting different time sequences, the analeptic references at the beginning of the poems exemplify another characteristic narrative strategy of the dramatic monologue. As Martin (1985:97) puts it, this is:

[t]he technique of provoking unanswered questions, delaying the useful information that answers them as long as possible, and then, while supplying that information, raising new questions to start the [reading] process all over again.

In the first few lines of *My Last Duchess*, as we have already seen, the two deictic expressions (“that”) and the definite article (“the”) refer backwards. However, it is not until the fifth line of the dramatic monologue, in which the silent interlocutor is addressed for the first time, that we can see that the event referred to by the analeptic references is an ongoing conversation between the speaker and the addressee. Moreover, it is not until the fifty-first line of this fifty-six-line poem that we can deduce that the silent auditor is the envoy of that woman’s father who is to succeed the last Duchess. Interestingly, the fifth line of the poem is significant not only because it offers the reader information about the ongoing discussion, but also because in itself it employs the strategy of delay, as it is inserted between two lines (3 and 6) in which Frà Pandolf is mentioned. In the third and the fourth lines, Frà Pandolf is introduced as an accomplished painter who, in a brief period, managed to capture the essence of the Duchess’s qualities. As we have already seen, even the Duke himself considers the portrait to be a “wonder”, and here he suggests its authenticity through referring to it by a personal pronoun used to denote females but not objects, which the Duchess is reduced to. In the sixth line, the painter’s name is repeated in a way that aims at calling the emissary’s attention to the distinctive style of Pandolf, observable in the portrait (“I said/ ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design”). Although at this point the assertion of the painter’s name coupled with the expression “by design” seems to be only an act of name-dropping by which the Duke intends to dazzle the emissary, lines 16-21 reveal that the painter’s unique style arises from the fact that he was most possibly one of the Duchess’s flatterers (Martin 1985:98). On the basis of the examples given above, it can easily be seen that delays are embedded in delays. As a result, readers have to read halfway through the poem before they can comprehend what its beginning means.

The same reading process has to be applied to *Count Gismond*, in which an apparent, significant delay, generated by the opening stanza, can be found in the subordinate clause in which the narrator offers suggestive but incomplete references concerning the circumstances of her accusation (“Count Gauthier, when he chose his post, / Chose *time* and *place* and *company*/To suit it” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 3–5)). Although fairly early in the poem we are provided with rather specific temporal and spatial references that indicate the time and place of Count Gauthier’s charge, it is only from the ninth and tenth stanzas onwards, in which the accusation is directly quoted, that we begin to realize that the narrator’s words in the first stanza are to be interpreted metaphorically. Instead of signifying an actual time and location, the Countess’s expression refers to the opportunity and stature that would have been provided for her if she had been crowned May Queen. Besides the temporal and spatial references, an allusion to the conspiratorial nature of Count Gauthier’s accusation can also be found in the narrator’s utterance. Although at the beginning of the second stanza this suggestion is emphatically strengthened (“And doubtlessly ere he could draw/All points to one, *he must have schemed!*” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 7–8)), not until the next verse are we informed

about the participants in the scheme. Interestingly, the narrative strategy of delay is employed in miniature even at this point, since the people referred to by the cataphoric reference “they” in the first line are identified only in the fifth:

I thought *they* loved me, did me grace
 To please themselves; ’twas all their deed;
 God makes, or fair or foul, our face;
 If showing mine so caused to bleed
My cousins’ hearts” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 13–17)

On the basis of the representative examples given above, one can see that the narrative strategy of delay plays a central role in these complementary dramatic monologues. However, as a result of the fact that suspense affects the narrations in their entirety, readers’ active participation is inevitable in order to make the texts mean something. As Caroline Levine (2003:80) puts it

Victorian suspense returns us to our hunches and suspicions, inviting us to revise and amend them each time we encounter new evidence and new experience. Its structure is itself an invitation to read twice: to note the laughter in the attic and then to come back to it, again and again, until it has become intelligible.

2.2 “The illusion of a definite affirmation”: the narrative unreliability

The problem of intelligibility in the case of the two complementary dramatic monologues is further complicated by the unreliability of the narrators. According to Chris Baldick (2004:268), an unreliable narrator is one “whose account of events appears to be faulty, misleadingly biased, or otherwise distorted, so that it departs from the ‘true’ understanding of events shared between the reader and the implied author”. In lines 6-12 of *My Last Duchess*, the Duke claims that all those “[s]trangers” who could not understand the expression of the Duchess in the portrait turned to him and “seemed” as if they had wanted to enquire about the justification of that “glance”. On the basis of lines 12-13, we might think that the silent auditor of the poem, similarly to the “[s]trangers” referred to by the Duke, has asked about the reason for the Duchess’ countenance (“so, not the first/Are you to turn and ask thus”). However, a careful observation of the eleventh line (“And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst”) renders this interpretation highly questionable. If we take the narrator’s words at face value, we are led to believe that although all “[s]trangers” appeared to be curious about the “depth and passion” represented in the portrait, none of them was brave enough to ask “[h]ow such a glance came there”. As a result of the fact that the Duke compares the emissary to other “[s]trangers” and insists that he is not the first to “ask thus”, it can safely be assumed that the envoy present in the palace does not ask anything about the portrait, however intrigued he seems to be. As we have just seen, the difficulty in observing the narrator’s unreliability lies in the insertion of the verb “seemed” into a sentence structure which, as Harrold (1973:48) points out, “carries the illusion of a definite affirmation”.

The narration of the Duke, as it can easily be noticed, encompasses various indications of oral discourse, such as questions (“Will’t please you sit and look at her?”, MLD l. 5), hesitations (“how shall I say?”, MLD l. 22) and interjections (“Oh”, MLD l. 43), which contribute to the naturalistic and smooth forward

movement of the poem (Byron 2003:14). As Harrold (1973:49) also points out, “the overall effect of an integrated flowing continuum” is further strengthened by the iambic pentameter lines, the abundant enjambments, and the lack of stanzaic divisions. Nevertheless, as a result of the fact that the narrator speaks in rhyming couplets, readers remain aware of “the artificiality of the speech act and the guiding hand of the poet” (Byron 2003:14–15). As a result, we are able to observe the discrepancy between the limited understanding of the speaker and the more encompassing awareness of the implied author. In the case of hesitations, for instance, it can be seen that they are employed primarily as part of the Duke’s rhetorical strategy by which he intends to render his speech more authentic. However, the abundance and the proximity of demurs (“how shall I say” in line 22, “I know not how” in line 32, and “(which I have not)” in line 36), as many critics have noted, can also be considered subtle indications of “insecurity and discomfort” (Hawlin 2002:158). According to Herbert F. Tucker (qtd. in Hawlin 2002:158):

when a skilled rhetorician [like the Duke] reaches three times in the space of fifteen lines for the same commonplace, especially for this one [i.e., the lack of skill in speech], the commonplace is no longer common but the expression of a private struggle.

As the critic goes on to argue, the Duke’s unease arises from the fact that, despite his attempts to control his wife, the Duchess’ joyful energy breaks into his discourse and challenges him even after her death (Hawlin 2002:158).

Similarly to *My Last Duchess*, examples of unreliability abound in *Count Gismond* as well. Throughout the narration, the Countess expresses herself in terms of falconry which, as Tilton and Tuttle (1962:85) point out, “are too numerous to be coincidental or meaningless”. Accordingly, besides being part of the idiom of an avid falconer, falconry terms are to be interpreted primarily as figurative expressions whereby the narrator’s personality and value system are revealed unconsciously (Tilton, Tuttle 1962:86). The fact that, in her system of values, the Countess conceives of both Count Gauthier and Count Gismond as falcons engaged in a bloody fight can be seen right from the beginning of the poem. In the first stanza, the narrator claims that Count Gauthier “chose his *post*” from which “he *struck* at length/My honour” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 3, 5–6). As Tilton and Tuttle (1962:86) explain, the accuser’s choice of “his post” refers to the careful selection of the post in the hawking field from which the falcon begins its flight. Moreover, the expression “draw/All points to one” (CG l. 7–8), at the beginning of the second stanza, alludes to that part of the hawking in which the bird, while hovering above its prey, waits for the opportunity to strike (Tilton, Tuttle 1962:86). Similarly, the unconscious comparison of human and falcon actions can be observed in Count Gismond’s representation as well. In addition to the word “struck” that has already been used to describe Count Gauthier’s act, the last three lines of the sixteenth stanza are also suggestive of the fact that the Countess considers Gismond to be a falcon, too (“Gismond *flew at him*, used no sleight/O’ the sword, but *open-breasted* drove,/Cleaving till out the truth he *clove*.” [emphasis mine]) (CG 94–6) (Tilton, Tuttle 1962:87). In addition, on the basis of the numerous minute details concerning the duel and the allusions to the comforting intuition about the outcome of the fight (e.g., “Till out strode Gismond; then I knew/That I was saved.” (CG ll. 67–8)), Tilton and Tuttle (1962:87) argue that,

instead of being the helpless quarry, the narrator “was herself a hawk observing the fight and awaiting the outcome when she could [...] grasp the opportunity which would best satisfy her needs”. The fact that the Countess unconsciously conceived of herself as a falcon is further supported by her claim that her cousins “made me stoop/Under the canopy” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 33–4). In this short passage, the verb “stoop” refers to the descent of a falcon on its prey, whilst the word “canopy” denotes that covering which shelters the hawk until the hunt begins (Tilton, Tuttle 1962:87). Thus, instead of conveying the image of the helpless prey over whom the two men fought, the Countess unconsciously depicts herself as a falcon who swooped on Gismond’s proposal without any delay and thereby secured her future.

On the basis of the fact that soliloquists reveal their innermost thoughts and emotions because they are under the impression that they are alone, it can safely be assumed that the speakers of dramatic monologues distort their narrations exactly because they are aware of the presence of an audience. Therefore, it is worth considering how the unreliability of the Duke’s and the Countess’s narrations can be connected to the narratees, whose presence is implied in the respective dramatic monologues. Although some critics suggest that the Duke is “witless” in being oblivious to the fact that he exposes himself as a murderer (Hawlin 2002:157), most critical analyses argue that, by consciously informing the emissary of the fate of his late wife, the Duke intends to communicate significant information concerning the kind of submissive behaviour he expects of his next wife. As Sessions (1947:510) points out, the narrator’s implicit warning is so overwhelming that readers (and most probably the emissary, too) get the impression that “if the next Duchess does not heed the Duke’s demands, there is likely to be an addition to the portrait gallery”. In addition to the self-revelatory half-sentence (“This grew; I gave commands” (MLD l. 45)) and the comments on the Duchess’s “pictured countenance”, the Duke’s domestic power and his expectations regarding the appropriate behaviour and deference required within his household are asserted in other ways as well. Although the parenthetical digression in lines 9–10 (“(since none puts by/The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)”) may simply indicate that the Duke considers his wife’s portrait as too priceless to be taken care of by anybody else (Corson 2006:105), the final outcome of the poem, as well as the fact that the Duke is the only one allowed to draw aside the curtain in front of the painting, strengthens the image of the Duke’s controlling character. It can be seen from this that the Duke attempts to intimidate the emissary, and through him his prospective wife, too, not only by his distorted narration, but by symbolic gestures as well. Therefore, it can also be safely claimed that the presentation of his late wife’s portrait is entirely premeditated on the Duke’s part.

As opposed to *My Last Duchess*, in which the Duke first addresses his silent interlocutor in the fifth line, it is not until the ninth stanza of *Count Gismond* that the Countess addresses her narratee for the first time. Although, considering the way the narrator refers to her silent interlocutor (“And have you brought my tercel back?/I just was telling *Adela*/How many birds it struck since May.” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 124–6)) and alludes to the intimate nature of their friendship (“though no word/Could I repeat now, if I tasked/My powers for ever, to a third/*Dear even as you are.*” [emphasis mine] (CG ll. 104–7)), it could be safely claimed that the relationship between the two conversational partners is informal, neither the reason for *Adela*’s visit nor the Countess’ introduction of her story gets sufficient explanation. As Harrold (1973:40) argues, the motivating force behind the Countess’s narration is most probably Count Gismond’s sudden return to the

castle, which is observed by the narrator through a window. Therefore, instead of being a purposefully planned act, like the Duke's, the Countess's speech can be considered an unconscious defensive reaction, which emerges every time the narrator catches sight of her husband, independently of the personality of the interlocutor present.

3. Conclusion

The primary aim of this paper was to demonstrate that a comparative analysis of Browning's complementary dramatic monologues does not only lead to a better understanding of the individual poems, but also draws the readers' attention to significant aspects of interpretation which would otherwise remain unnoticed. To that end, the titles of the poems were analyzed with respect to the thematic and generic expectations they evoke, and the first few lines of the monologues were examined from the point of view of their time references and the ways in which the strategy of suspense is employed. As expected, it became obvious that the intelligibility of the poems was complicated by the unreliability of their narrators, and by the auditors' presence in the respective dramatic monologues.

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EDWIN MORGAN AND CONCRETE POETRY

ISTVÁN D. RÁCZ
University of Debrecen

Abstract: *In my paper, I discuss Edwin Morgan, the Scottish concrete poet and make an attempt to define what concrete poetry is. While Morgan focussed on changes, transformation, and metamorphosis as the main targets of his representation, transformation is also the basis of form in his poetics. I will argue that his credo is based upon the conviction of all concrete poetry: there is no signifier that can exist without a signified.*

Keywords: *Bible, concrete poetry, inscription, performativity, reading, transformation*

1. Introduction

In a poem published in his volume *Cathures*, Edwin Morgan alludes to a well-known poem by Philip Larkin (2002:105):

The poetry of departures
Jolts, grinds, judders, whines, pounds, climbs –
And then you have, alone, to get on with your life.

Larkin's (1988:85) major poem, *Poetry of Departures*, written almost half a century earlier, makes this point:

We all hate home
And having to be there:
I detest my room,
Its specially chosen junk,
The good books, the good bed,
And my life, in perfect order

Is it Larkin's poem that "Jolts, grinds, judders, whines, pounds, climbs"? In Morgan's reading, it is. Whereas Larkin declares that he has no choice but to accept his own "hated" home and life, Morgan transforms himself into a demon and looks upon the human world from a non-human perspective, dislocating the Movement poet's "perfect order".

Morgan was born in 1920, which could indicate that he belonged to the Movement (or the Angry Young Man) generation but, as the two quotations indicate, his verse is very far from Movement poetry. Just like the Movement poets, Morgan also started his career in the 1950s (his first collection, *Dies Irae*, was published in 1952). This early book mainly contains translations and rewritings which, however, are also organic parts of his life work, anticipating that the main focus of the mature poet will be on change, transformation and metamorphosis.

This central role of translation in Morgan's poetry shows that his texts form an antithesis of Movement verse. As Ian Gregson (1996:150) remarks, the Movement poets in the fifties based their poetics on "ordinary language", whereas "Morgan's emphasis on the metamorphic [...] effectively calls into question the

Movement's insistent attempts to impose stability". Gregson hits the nail on the head: although the best Movement poets, Philip Larkin in the first place, were aware of a postmodern world in which fixed referentiality no longer existed, they still made the hypothesis that language was reliable, and this hypothesis formed the basis of their aesthetic principles. (Perhaps the best example of this duality is Larkin's major poem *Maiden Name*, first published in 1955). In Morgan's aesthetics and social views, everything is the opposite of stability.

Transformation, both as subject matter and as a mode of writing, has been particularly important in his poetry since the publication in 1968 of a volume entitled *The Second Life*. Roderick Watson (1997:191) suggested:

In every collection since *The Second Life*, in poems which have been playful or dark, experimental or lyrical, Edwin Morgan has explored a most fruitful fascination with changing messages and messages of change.

This attitude has resulted in a multiplicity of forms and styles in Morgan, while multiplicity itself is one of his central topics.

2.1 How clear is Morgan's Message?

A poem in *The Second Life*, entitled *Message Clear*, is an emblematic text (1982:140). On having a first look at the page (importantly, the poem does not run over one page), the reader will probably only perceive a chaotic heap of letters with lines like these:

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he r           o
h   ur        t
.....
a t   re           a d
a th   r       on       e

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The reader, however, will soon catch sight of the last line, since that is the only conventionally arranged sentence of the poem: "i am the resurrection and the life" (141) (sic: Morgan only uses small letters in this poem), a well-known quotation from John 11:25. All the other lines are variations of this sentence: selections of letters without the change of location (like in a place value table in mathematics). The same letters are always in the same position under one another. A further important self-made rule for Morgan was that the selected letters must always form meaningful words and that these words need to add up to meaningful sentences. In the excerpt above, we see the words *hero* and *hurt*, the two lexical items constructing a phrase which is elliptical, but it is easy to recognize the subject and predicate of a sentence: *the hero is hurt*. In the second excerpt, two lines of the quotation above the letters construct two simple noun phrases: *a tread* and *a throne*, which can be interpreted as two Stations of the Cross.

Reading the text backwards from the last line is only one strategy that we can apply to this poem. Roderick Watson (1997:175-176) recommends line-to-line reading; in this case, the reader will identify the speaker as Jesus only when hitting the last line. What links the two modes of reading (Watson's linear and my scanning method) is that, in both cases, it is the reader who needs to construct the

meaning of the letters. In some lines, it is difficult to find the borders between the words (“am e res ect” does not immediately reveal “a mere sect”, which was how Christianity was treated in the first century); some others can be interpreted in two ways (“a s t o n e” can either be “a stone” or “as tone”). Taking these difficulties and ambiguities into consideration, one can read the title of the poem ironically: the message of the Bible is anything but clear. The reason is that God’s messages sent to human beings are lost in a jungle of possible meanings. Although Jesus’ conclusion in the same verse of the Gospel (“he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live”) can be constructed on the basis of the text, this is only one of many possible readings.

The reader, however, may also argue that God’s message can only be decoded by humans, and the poem is an outline or pattern of this decoding. The reader of this poem can enter a dialogue with the text in a number of ways. This is the first line:

am i

As Watson (1997:175) remarks, in this line (as well as in other similar lines of the poem) the visual gap is a significant part of the meaning. What would be a simple question of identity becomes a meditative phrase. Morgan was conscious of using typographical gaps as meaningful constituents in poetry. In an essay on concrete poetry, he claims that typography is just as important in poetry as metaphors are. He also mentions an example of distorting editorial practice. As Morgan observes, Ezra Pound’s famous two-liner, *In a Station of the Metro* (published in 1913) is almost never printed in the way the poet intended:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd :
Petals on a wet, black bough :

Not surprisingly, Morgan has vitriolic comments on the editorial practice that ignores the visual shape of the poem designed by the author (1974:32). Of his own poems, it is particularly true that typography is a part of the meaning. The meditative question opening *Message Clear* can inspire a theological response. The question “am i” can be found in the Old Testament as an affirmative sentence: “I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:14). This is the voice of the Father. In Morgan’s poem, Jesus, born as a human being, asks whether he is identical with the Father. In other words: is he identical with the verb that is a source of all existence? This is one possible reading of the first three lines: “am i if i am he?” Of course, the text can also be read ironically or as a parody.

The only certainty among these controversial readings is transformation, the constant change of semantic structures. The element (or principle) that does not change is metamorphosis itself. The reader’s only chance to understand this postmodern paradox is by becoming an active participant of writing the text. Significantly, when Stanley Fish (1990:56) wants to demonstrate the activity of the reader in the reading/writing process, he mentions concrete poetry as an example. Only the reader can construct a poem out of Morgan’s heap of letters and create stanzas like this:

I am rent, I am safe,
I am sent, I heed,

I test, I read
 A thread, a stone,
 A tread, a throne,
 I resurrect.

This is only one of those innumerable combinations that can be constructed in the process of reading. What we should remember is that every combination, every meaning and aesthetic value is created by the reader, who is always aware of further possibilities.

2.2 Do we understand animals?

It is also the activity of reading aloud that makes Morgan's shorter texts poems. One of his frequently quoted pieces, *Siesta of a Hungarian Snake* (1982:156), is particularly interesting to Hungarian readers. It is a one-line poem:

s sz sz SZ sz SZ sz ZS zs Zs zs zs z

This snake is Hungarian because the combinations of letters are borrowed from the Hungarian alphabet. No other European spelling would refer to the hissing voice of the snake with the combination of *s* + *z*. Typography is also of primary importance here: this line shows a snake fully stretched out. It goes to sleep, since the hissing in the beginning is replaced by the voiced fricatives of snoring at the end of the line. By including this text in a volume of poetry in English, Morgan used elements of another language, this way ontologically enriching his universe. This is even more obvious in his poem entitled *Hortobágy* (1982) which only uses a Hungarian word (*ló*, meaning horse).

Morgan relates himself to foreign languages in a number of ways. *Chinese Cat* (1982) is a text gradually reducing the onomatopoeic line "pmrkgniaou" to the final line "mao", this way signifying not only a particular animal in a particular country but also one kind of hearing: the manipulated hearing of a person living in a dictatorship. What is important in human culture is not what a cat "says"; it is what a human being hears in it. Another poem, *Boats and Places* (1982) represents a variety of water crafts by also imitating the language of the people using that particular kind of boat. Although it is a hilarious text, it is not at all satirical, or even ironic, of other languages and cultures. It is much more a playful reconstruction of the relationship that we often recognize between a people, their language, and the objects they make and use.

Morgan's linguistic consciousness is closely linked to his Scottish cultural environment. Scottish culture exists at the crossing point of three languages: Gaelic, Scots, and English. The first is spoken only in a few villages today, but its elements are also extremely important for those who do not speak it: its lexical items are used as references to the past and as signifiers of national identity. The second, Scots, is basically the language used by Robert Burns in the 18th century. (It is typical that Irvine Welsh's postmodernist novel *Trainspotting* (1993) can well be read with the glossary that one finds in most editions of Burns.) It is a moot point whether Scots should be treated as a language in its own right or as a dialect of English. In either case, it is a version of the English language that is derived from British English and enriches the culture of the English-speaking world today (similarly to the languages/dialects used in Ireland, the Caribbean islands, or in

various African countries). The importance of the three languages for Morgan is well demonstrated by what Cairns Craig writes about modern Scottish poetry:

We do not live [...] within a language or a tradition, but between languages and traditions. It is those poets who have lived ‘in between’ who have made the most powerful contributions to the literatures of English in the twentieth century. (qtd. in Kimpel 1995:136)

Morgan’s poetry is “in between” in this sense also. His life work of literary translations has more than one layer: he is a translator *from* several languages *into* two languages (British English and Scots). He also makes use of linguistic multiplicity in his own poetry; for example, in *Glasgow Green* (1982), he contrasts English and Scots.

In an interview he said:

... translation would have some moments perhaps—if everything was going well—when you could almost see, feel, or sense the poem like a vision in front of you, and then just find the words from your own language to bring it down to you. (qtd. in Dósa 2009:53)

Although he added that this statement “may be a fantasy”, Morgan’s wishful thinking still reveals an essential factor of his attitude as a poet and translator. As I pointed out previously, he tends to view the world as largely determined by language (more precisely: languages); nevertheless, this statement suggests that there is something in poetry that is beyond language. He uses the word *vision* to denote this “something”, implying that the image in the poem is an autonomous entity and that there is always an element in it which is independent from language. This idea is the most important principle in his literary translations and becomes particularly spectacular in the translation of visionary poems, such as texts by the Hungarian poets Attila József and János Pilinszky.

Translation is also a manifestation of Morgan’s most significant life experience: *exploration*. This is apparent in his credo:

I think of poetry partly as an instrument of exploration, like a spaceship, into new fields of feeling or experience and partly a special way of recording moments and events, taking the ‘prose’ of them, the grit of the facts of the case, as being in our age extremely important. (qtd. in Thomson 1986:1)

This is why the image of the spaceship is one of his central metaphors. *Spacepoem I: from Laika to Gagarin* (1982) is a poem of exploration in more than one sense. Once again, Morgan uses onomatopoeia to represent (or imitate) Laika’s and Gagarin’s space journey, that is, the adventures of the first mammal and the first human being outside the gravity of the Earth. But the text is also a form of exploration. The lines of letters disorient and orient the reader simultaneously: one can interpret them as merely onomatopoeic combinations, but also as lexical units. The first line repeats the syllables *ra ke ta* seven times. The speaker is probably Laika, since the poem consists of two stanzas; consequently, the title can refer to Laika and Gagarin as the two sources of voices. The syllables of the first line may be read simply as a phonetic imitation of barking, but it can also signify that a dog is able to communicate with a human being. The opposite is also true: when Gagarin keeps on saying “putputputput...” at the beginning of stanza two, this is

not only the obsessive repetition of a verb but also an onomatopoeic word. The text is a form of exploration since it explores the world of letters and, through them, the world of sounds and phonemes while it also makes a journey into a universe of possible meanings. In addition, a part of this exploration is translation: Laika's words "star! spot! sput! stop!" have already been translated into human language (otherwise they could not form a part of this poem). The translator is probably Gagarin, since the syntax of the title (*from ... to*) refers not only to the history of space travel but also to the direction of communication.

2.3 Messages of the city

Apart from interplanetary space, another place of metamorphosis in Morgan's poetry is the city. He can rightfully be called a regional poet. Geddes Thomson (1986:7) points out his affinity with William Carlos Williams, "whose long poem 'Paterson' gives an affectionate account of his home town in much the same way as Morgan has done for Glasgow in a series of shorter poems." This was continued in his late poetry: his volume published in 2002 is entitled *Cathures*, which is Glasgow's original name. However, Morgan is also interested in Glasgow as a metonymy of the big city in general: as he writes in an essay in 1996, "it is both heaven and hell at the same time" (qtd. in Barry 2000:232). One can add: it is also a place of exploration and invention, which is in a state of eternal transformation by definition. The most obvious meanings of "heaven" and "hell" in a city are building and destruction, which also stand for order and chaos. His poem *London* (1982) consists of three parts, entitled "St. James's Park", "Soho," and "The Post Office Tower". This tripartite structure, first of all, signifies the route of a tour of London, but the elements of conventional landscape poetry become parts of an apocalyptic vision. In the first part, time ceases to exist; as a result, existence in history also disappears: "When we have lost time we have lost everything" (1982:239). In the second part, there are no temporal relations, only the chaos of the Soho. After a heap of words (mainly representing the world of advertising), the persona concludes:

But to wash London
 would take a sea
To want to wash it
 History (1982:241)

History, however, has disintegrated; therefore, neither purifying fire nor water exists. After descending in the inferno of the Soho, the speaker catches sight of the post office tower, a solid point of reference in the city. The tower is both a part of the city and an object separated from it. It is the city's *Doppelgänger*, which turns against the place that it has grown from:

There is no other life,
and this is it.
Gold bars, thunder, gravity, wine, concrete, smoke. (1982:241)

The post office tower transmits the messages of the chaotic reality that it grows from. Nevertheless, this construct is the only reality. In the closure of the poem, the only existing entity is a dynamic medium:

It is its own
 telegrams,
 what mounts, what sighs,
 what says it is
 uncountable
 as feelings moved
 by hair blown over
 an arm in the wind.
 In its acts
 it rests there. (1982:242)

This is a place of virtual existence in a world emerging from chaos; the tower is identical with “its own telegrams” and, as the last two lines suggest, it can take a rest only “In its acts”. This is a vision of a new creation after the apocalypse (like God resting on the seventh day). Time no longer exists, history has collapsed. The place of history has been taken by the media, which can be seen both as chaos and as order. The closing passage, quoted previously, constructs a duality: the short lines, read separately, seem to be parts of the chaos; however, they are also syntactically related to one another, this way forming grammatical order. The reader witnesses how order gradually grows from chaos. For example, the line “what mounts, what sighs” sounds at first reading like an instinctive exclamation, but the syntax of the next line makes these phrases grammatical subjects. Not only does Morgan represent the duality of chaos and order, he also constructs it in the text. Consequently, the sight of the post office tower emerging from the city is self-reflexive: it is a metaphor of the poem.

As Roderick Watson (1997:170-171) writes:

Morgan’s variations on the theme of message and change bring us to the roots of art itself, and in particular to that analysis of creativity which was redefined for our century by the Russian Formalists as ‘defamiliarization’.

He adds that “Morgan has declared an interest in Russian Formalism” (1997:171). In the term “defamiliarization”, Morgan probably recognized a basic feature of his own texts. In an essay (qtd. in Watson 1997:181), he offers some translations of the Russian term *ostranenie* (dislodgment, alienation, making strange) and calls it the most important element of creative imagination. Whichever English translation of the term we prefer, it is significant to bear in mind that the original word does not contain any privative modifier: it refers to a form of construction or creation. This is the point where Morgan deviates from the romantic tradition that recognizes the importance of undermining convention in literature. Although in Wordsworth’s, Coleridge’s, and Shelley’s theories “the film of familiarity” needs to be removed in the process of writing a poem, to these Romantic authors it means distancing and defamiliarization. Morgan, on the other hand, does not have any belief in the existence of another world beyond everyday reality, which becomes visible as soon as the veil has been removed. As opposed to the romantic and neo-romantic tradition (but also to John Betjeman’s light verse and the Movement), his basic conviction is this: an alternative world can only exist if the poet creates it. This is why language as a subject matter is so important to him: the problem of distancing is a linguistic problem (Jefferson and Robey 1992:28). This, however, also means

that Morgan is very conscious of withdrawing attention from the referential function of language. As Geddes Thomson (1986:10) put it:

Poetry, Morgan seems to be saying [...] is often sheer delight in language itself, in the sounds we humans make, and delight also in the arrangement of sounds and in playing games with language. Sense, which is usually so important, should sometimes take a back seat.

As the strange title of *Themes on a Variation* (1988) indicates, instead of writing variations on a theme, he writes themes on the topic of eternal metamorphosis.

It follows that he also recreates the persona in each poem: the only constant element of his speakers is transformation. Morgan is a characteristically protean poet: the voices that we hear in his regional poems about Glasgow, in his concrete poetry and in his love poetry (to mention three examples at random) are very different. When he was asked about a Hungarian poet who influenced him immensely, Sándor Weöres, he said:

Sometimes in writers workshops [sic] teachers will say: ‘well, you must find your own voice!’ I don’t agree with that. I think you can have many voices, well, I have many voices. I think Weöres also had many voices. (qtd. in Dósa 2009:51)

Instead of “finding his own voice”, which he does not believe in, he wants to find those objects and events that fit in his poetry. This is why Watson (1997:173) finds him similar to the Modernists. On the other hand, Ian Gregson (1996:136-137) is right when pointing out a difference:

Instead of staking out a carefully bounded poetic territory (like Eliot, Yeats, Stevens and Muir), Morgan has set out to be inclusive and to reflect as much of twentieth-century change as he can manage...

If we read Morgan’s life work as an organic whole, we find that the dynamism of transformation is the most spectacular signifier of his protean texts.

But when assessing his oeuvre, we also must reckon with a possible misreading: somebody could say that Morgan’s poetry is the realm of poetic forms, linguistic virtuosity, puns and self-constructed games, while humanity as an ontological and epistemological centre is missing. This, however, would be a superficial reading (or misreading); Morgan himself remarked: “Our poetry needs greater humanity” (qtd. in Gregson 1996:138). In his study on Morgan, Ian Gregson (1996:138-139) draws the conclusion:

[this statement] reflects a genuine belief that the work of twentieth-century poetry should be to explore the interaction between human sensibility and its changing environment—that the real point is in the interaction.

He is also a writer of transformations in this sense.

It is not surprising that his style and diction also keep changing (and, of course, the very term “diction” cannot always be applied to Morgan’s texts). As Gregson (1996:140-141) summarizes, there are two aspects of metamorphosis in Morgan’s texts. One is, to quote Morgan’s own words, “the quite real blurring, overlap, interchange, and evolution of forms which fast travel, cinema and

television, modern art, and newspaper and advertisement techniques have made a familiar part of experience”; the other is “most evident in the way that Morgan’s poems dismantle perception and representation, and so reveal that other perspectives exist alongside familiar ones”. The first means writing *about* change as an experience; the second signifies change as a basic *principle* of textual construction both in Morgan’s concrete poetry and in his more conventional lyrics.

3. Conclusion

Perhaps some readers will see Morgan as a basically conventional, classical poet who also wrote concrete poetry (possibly to relax or to expose the reader to a hoax). My reading is the opposite: I suggest that, as a concrete poet, he constructed a centre of his oeuvre which makes it possible for the reader to observe it as an organic whole.

As Julian Cowley (1994:197) writes:

From Dada, the concrete poets have taken an aesthetic base that is inscriptional and performative rather than expressive and symbolic.

The two poststructuralist terms, inscription and performativity, grasp the essence of concrete poetry and also signify that this kind of verse has much more affinity with conventional lyrics than most readers would think. On the one hand, concrete poetry undermines the tradition of poetic diction; on the other hand, it goes back to a tradition which puts the emphasis on the elaboration of the form instead of referentiality. The basic conviction behind this kind of poetry is that there is no signifier without a signified: concrete poetry always aims at finding order in chaos and constructing the meaning in a seemingly meaningless universe. It is inscriptive since it is non-referential: it always manifests the autonomy of the letter and the shape, in contrast with the humility of description. It is also “performative”; as the opposite of “constative” in John L. Austin’s terminology (qtd. in Kulick 2005: 122-123), instead of making a statement, it *does* something. Of course, these are also features that can be observed in many other poems, not only in concrete poetry. But concrete poetry is inscriptive and performative in a provocative way; as a consequence, it is a synecdoche of poetry in general.

I see this as the main reason why Edwin Morgan’s concrete and non-concrete poetry deserves our attention.

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APPROPRIATING OTHERNESS

THE REPRESENTATION OF SUPERSTITION AND THE OCCULT IN STEVENSON'S *THE BEACH OF FALESA* AND KIPLING'S *THE PHANTOM RICKSHAW*

ELVAN MUTLU

“Mehmet Akif Ersoy” University, Burdur

Abstract: *The aim of this paper is to examine how imperial settings result in superstition and witchcraft mania in two late Victorian stories: Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Beach of Falesa" (first published 1892) and Rudyard Kipling's "The Phantom Rickshaw" (first published 1888).*

Keywords: *colonialism, the occult, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, superstition*

1. Introduction

This paper aims to discuss how pressure on white men on the imperial frontier leads to superstition and the occult in two late-Victorian stories, *The Beach of Falesa* (first published 1892) and *The Phantom Rickshaw* (first published 1888). These two stories contain characters whose service for their government on colonial lands requires their absence from their home country. The competition over the financial means is the central reason of the witchcraft mania and of haunting spirits in both stories.

The supernatural was a significant part of Victorian life and there was a lot of interest in fairy tales and ghost stories as can be seen in the works of Christina Rossetti and Charles Kingsley. Other texts, such as *Wuthering Heights* (1847), *The Lifted Veil* (1859), *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) and *Dracula* (1897) contain references to second sight, dreams and premonitions. Eve M. Lynch (2004:67) argues that Victorians believed in the supernatural, which was considered terrible and fearful.

This developing interest in the uncanny and the modifications it occasioned in a traditional literary convention indicate a powerful desire, during the nineteenth century, to find some means of escaping from a depressingly materialistic existence. However, the characters in *The Beach of Falesa* (1981) do not believe in the supernatural but make use of it for economic benefits. They use superstition to defeat each other and make more trade on the island. And in *The Phantom Rickshaw* (2008), the main character is haunted by his lover's ghost, which always returns in an uncanny way. What these two stories have in common is that they both contain characters who are working hard for their government and their hard work puts a lot of pressure on them, which propels them to explore superstition and the occult. In both stories, terror is the key point. It leads to or engulfs them in the sublime, the immense, and the cosmic. The characters are, as it were, lost in the ocean of fear or plunge directly into it. Horror overtakes their soul from the inside and consciousness shrinks or withers from within.

Andrew Lang (1887:688) advocated the imperial adventures of Rudyard Kipling and Robert Louis Stevenson and defined romance as a masculine way of writing and as naturalistic fiction, which regards female nature as demonic and unholy. He accepted the fact that supernatural events are usual in the stories

specifically connected to indigenous cultures. As an anthropologist, he understands the occult as a “survival” practice from an earlier era; however, it was commonly viewed, he declares, as a negative source of supernatural phenomena. In his essay on *The Supernatural in Fiction*, Lang (1905: 279) asserts that “as this visible world is measured, mapped, tested, weighed, we seem to hope more and more that a world of visible romance may not be far from us”.

In the literature of the occult, the supernatural is more often associated with the powers of darkness. The reality at the centre of this kind of fiction is the power of the devil, which destroys the normal patterns of everyday life. Stories such as Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) and Stevenson’s *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) contain all these ambiguities of power and of the power of darkness. They take the dark protagonist towards what G. R. Thompson (1974:2) calls, in relation to Gothic fiction as a whole, his “metaphysical quest.”

In his book, *Rule of Darkness*, Patrick Brantlinger (1988:230) claims that “in the romances of Stevenson, Kipling, Doyle, and John Buchan, the supernatural or paranormal, usually symptomatic of individual regression, often manifests itself in imperial settings.” What Brantlinger suggests can be observed in *The Beach of Falesa*, in which Stevenson introduces to his audience a range of adventures the white men encounter far away from home and the superstitions they have to challenge. *The Beach of Falesa*, set on an island in the South Seas, is rich in supernatural events which make his hero, Wiltshire, to confront not only the natives on the island but also a white man coming from “home”.

2. Stevenson, colonial life and the supernatural on an island

Stevenson’s story, *The Beach of Falesa*, demonstrates how the economic interests of the missionaries and mercenaries come into conflict with the Polynesians’ native beliefs. It is a story about the fall of Case, who gets control of an island by applying trickery and trade, and about the victory of Wiltshire, who confronts Case’s tricks and defeats him in the end. Case rules the island by resorting to superstitions. He wants to get rid of Wiltshire because he is a rival trader in copra trade on the island. But Wiltshire destroys Case and his deceitful system. Case is an exploiter and refuses to rely on civilization policies to rule the island. Edward W. Said (1994:120) states that “all cultures tend to make representations of foreign cultures the better to master or in some way control them”. In the context Said suggests, a culture may use another culture’s beliefs or traditions to master them. Case does this successfully and is able to achieve power by using native superstitions. The Polynesians believe in demons and Case takes advantage of this to gain power. As a European, he uses his practical knowledge, and the locals’ irrational belief in demons makes it easier for him to dominate the island people.

Wiltshire is on the island in order to “make a fortune, and go home again and start a public-house” (Stevenson 1981:105). Yet, he is tricked by Case with a false marriage. As Case considers him a rival trader on the island, he plays on native superstitions and excites the fear of natives claiming Uma, Wiltshire’s native wife, has a taboo. The imperial romance contains references to those actions of male heroes in different settings, and as Richard F. Patteson (1981:9) explains, the hero “hates women because he has been betrayed by one of them at some time in the past.” In Patteson’s words, women are seen as a threat to men in imperial texts. They are mostly portrayed as the source of supernatural activities and men try to

defeat them, which leads to women's absence from the plot line. Yet, in Stevenson's story, it is a man who is using the supernatural. Therefore, his story differs from other texts, for example *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), as women are not responsible for their superstitions, but men are. *The Beach of Falesa* suggests that the supernatural is imported by a white man, so women are not absent in the plot line. Uma says, "I shamed... Taboo belong me... Now I go 'way, taboo he 'go away too. Then you get too much copra. Farewell, chief." (Stevenson 1981:126). To Uma's sacrificing offer, Wiltshire protests, "Hold on!". He is convinced that this is a trick used by Case to prevent him from making trade among the natives.

Wiltshire sets his mind on crossing the forest haunted by supernatural powers. As Case is the source of all the superstitions in the forest connected to his devil of a temple and the taboo on Wiltshire, which is the result of his marriage to Uma, he must be confronted and defeated in his tricky dark place in the forest. Local tales also invented the landscape surrounding Falesa with uncanny resonances. Unlike Case's productions, these stories effectively incorporate the natural, and thus acquire a strength that remains undiminished at the end of Wiltshire's narrative. As a native and haunted by the native stories and superstitions, Uma tries to prevent her husband from entering the woods by recounting traditional superstitions. Trying to make her silent, he asks: "'I will tell you what, then,' said I. 'You fish out your Bible, and I'll take that up along with me. That'll make me right'" (158). Wiltshire thinks that he can control Uma by using the tactics that white men use in the South Seas to claim their authority among the natives (Jolly 2004:39). However, he is defeated by Uma because he cannot provide any further explanation for their discussion. He does not believe in superstitions; but, when he takes a journey through the island's devil bush, it is clear that he is also vulnerable. He is fearful of the unknown and his imagination gets the best of him even if he does not believe in demons. He is so afraid during his journey that his fear of the unknown makes him very desperate, and he starts to pray.

Wiltshire is on the island to make money and he should remove all the superstitions imposed on him. Yet, he is also haunted by the native stories about devils that inhabit the forest:

... a bit of rush; but the breath jumped right out of me... It wasn't Case I was afraid of, I never thought of Case; what took me... was the old wives' tales – the devil women and the man pigs. (1981:169)

The incident with Wiltshire shows that no individual, whether white or native, can resist the power of superstitions.

Wiltshire defeats Case in his devil jungle, in the end. His confrontation with Case concludes with the destruction of his social authority as he has been using the native superstition as an "instrument" to control people (Reid 2005:63). Eventually, Wiltshire understands that native superstitions are not dangerous; the dangerous thing is the way they are used by the white men. Case's hunger for money and trade leads to his end and the revealing of the trick paves the way for Wiltshire to establish his own life as the only trader on the island. Therefore, violence is "between white men", with all its ugliness (Edmond 1997:173).

Thus, the notion of superstition is used by both copra traders for their own benefits. On the one hand, Case is using superstition to further the copra trade. He identifies himself with the natives and thinks that they will be more willing to make

trade with him. On the other hand, Wiltshire also realizes that if he is to trade on the island, he has to dispel superstitions. He thinks that he can do the locals good and teach that superstitions are made up, not real. In the end, he can build his trade station successfully. In other words, both traders, who work for the British colonial government, find a way to use superstition to pursue their trades. As they are rivals, they use different means of defeating each other and carrying on more trade on the island.

3. Kipling and “the white man’s burden”

As a result of the same economic concerns, in Kipling’s *Phantom Rickshaw*, Jack Pansay, the protagonist, works restlessly day and night, and falls victim of overwork. He starts to see and hear Mrs. Wessington, his beloved, after her death. Jack believes that Mrs Wessington’s ghost is haunting him. He hears her calling him and sees her riding in a rickshaw – an image which begins to torment him. It seems that only Pansay can see the ghost and he thinks that the woman’s appearance after her death is a punishment for all the pain he put her through when they ended their relationship. However, Pansay’s doctor, Heatherlegh, has another explanation for the hero’s illness. He attributes it to overwork:

He says that more men are killed by overwork than the importance of this world justifies. He maintains that overwork slew Pansay, who died under his hands about three years ago. He has, of course, the right to speak authoritatively, he laughs at my theory that there was a crack in Pansay’s head and a little bit of the Dark work came through and pressed him to death. “Pansay went off the handle”, says Heatherlegh, “after the stimulus of long leave at Home. He may or he may not have behaved like a blackguard to Mrs Keith-Wessington. My notion is that the work of the Katabundi Settlement ran him off his legs and he took too brooding and making much of an ordinary P. & O. Then he took a feverish chill and all that nonsense about ghosts developed. Overwork started his illness, kept it alight, and killed him, poor devil. Write him off the System that uses one man to do the work of two and a half men. (Kipling 2008:127)

Moore-Gilbert (1986:15) claims that “the extraordinary demands made by the state are everywhere apparent in Kipling’s writing”. Based on Moore-Gilbert’s opinion, it is evident that Pansay’s service for his country is very hard.

He works in a different country, which makes him believe in superstitions, in the end. The fact that nobody is able to see Mrs Wessington and the rickshaw suggests that Pansay was going crazy. He believes he is walking around with Mrs Wessington in Shimla and this does not seem to stop. The doctor protests when Pansay says that he is going crazy and suggests that what he need to get better is to take a break from work. Pansay is doing hard work in India not only because he is fulfilling the tasks set by the government, but also because he is trying to deal with a culture he is not familiar with. In a similar way, Lynch (2004:70) thinks that “fear of deranged spatial and psychological boundaries, feelings of desertion and isolation, ancestral longings and guilt... alienated from the traditional regulatory terms” may add to madness. This is what Pansay is suffering from. He is away from his country and his hallucinations, interpreted as something occult and mysterious, are the result of overwork rather than of his sense of profound guilt for having wronged someone.

Pansay is engaged to Kitty Mannering, and this engagement can be an opportunity for him to lead a normal life and be happy. Yet, he cannot avoid seeing Mrs Wessington's ghost, which causes gossip around Simla about his madness. Martin Green (1979:286) argues that:

British Imperialism in India, which Kipling knew the first and best, was quite different from imperialism in Africa; in India, England administered a highly structured and civilized society, and the cultural image of the Englishman there was Roman.

In the light of the words uttered by Green, it is clear that another burden weighs on Pansay's shoulders. As an Englishman, he is representing his country in India, and he tries to be careful not to create any bad image of his host land: "I, Jack Pansay, am in Simla, and there are no ghosts here" (43). He repeats this to himself to stay calm and stop hearing Mrs Wessington's voice. However, he cannot avoid hearing the supernatural voice, always saying: "Jack! Jack, darling! It's some hideous mistake, I'm sure. *Please* forgive me, Jack, and let's be friends again" (33).

Pansay's conversation with Mrs Wessington's ghost creates a bad image not only of himself, but also of the British in general. Noticing this, Dr Heatherlegh comments:

You've too conceited Brain, too little Stomach, and thoroughly unhealthy Eyes... I'll take a sole medical charge of you from this hour, for you're too interesting phenomenon to be passed over." (Kipling 2008:39)

Dr Heatherlegh urges him to get treatment as his health is deteriorating. He does not get better and, in the end, his engagement with Kitty is broken. After that, he strongly believes that he killed her and this is why he is suffering. The ghost seems to have succeeded in causing Pansay to break off his engagement to Kitty and he thinks this is the main reason why he is seeing the phantom rickshaw. Although Pansay cannot stop feeling that his illness is connected to his having caused Mrs Wessington's death, Dr Heatherlegh diagnoses his illness as "overwork".

Kipling believed in "the strong man", yet his characters often fall sick and die from "disease and overwork" (Gilmour 2002:79). Pansay fails to embody the author's belief in the strong man. Although he is reported fit for duty, he dies in the end. Superstition affects Pansay's life drastically. He cannot find the opportunity to get better and be strong both physically and psychologically. He says:

Heatherlegh... told me that I ought to send in an application for sick leave. An application to escape the *company of phantom!* A request that the Government would graciously permit me to get rid of five ghosts an airy rickshaw by going to England! Heatherlegh's proposition moved me to almost hysterical laughter. I told him that I should await the end quietly at Simla; and I am sure that the end is not far off. Believe me that I dread its advent more than any word can say; and I torture myself nightly with a thousand speculations as to the manner of my death. (Kipling 2008:48)

Pansay's wish of going back to England is a vivid example of how he suffers from the hard work he is doing for the government. The above quotation can make

the reader believe that the phantom is the creation of the work he is doing. However, Pansay's suffering is not understood and he is called back to work to wait for his death. His work in India puts a lot of responsibilities on his shoulders and a lot of pressure accordingly. Thus, his belief in superstitions does not stem from the idea that he can use them for his benefit, but rather from his constant stress. Although the story is short, it is rich in superstitions and the occult. Not surprisingly, the supernatural is represented by a female. Similarly to *The Beach of Falesa* and differently from other imperial romances, female characters are not absent from the plot line. And like in *The Beach of Falesa*, the prevalence of interest in superstitions and the occult is linked to the experience of the Empire. The supernatural is the result of all the hard work the Empire puts on Pansay's shoulders.

4. Conclusion

In *The Phantom Rickshaw*, we see the mechanism of self-destruction ironically contained in the heart of the system, the minotaur produced by the colonial system – the colonized mind that is the fragmented, all-too-human victim. To adapt Eagleton's (2006:133) colourful image of capitalism, colonialism "gives birth to its own gravedigger, nurturing the acolyte who will one day stab the high priest in the back". *The Phantom Rickshaw* represents superstitions and occult beliefs as nothing more than a psychological formation of the ghost borne out of the hard work the character is doing. What is interesting about this story is that Pansay thinks he is suffering from seeing Mrs Wessington's ghost, because he feels guilty for having left her. However, it is not his guilt but the guilt of the government, which does not "write him off the system", but reports him fit for duty. In *The Beach of Falesa*, the superstitious beliefs of the natives are used as a negotiating method for continuing the copra trade. The characters in both stories have a lot of responsibilities on their shoulders and these responsibilities bring a great amount of pressure in their life; as a result, they deal with superstition and the occult far away from their homes. Despite the common notion of Victorian stories that supernatural and superstitious events should be attributed to the devilish doings of women, it is the male heroes that are the sources of the witchcraft mania on the colonial frontier of India in Kipling and the South Seas in Stevenson. In both stories, we see that the every Englishman of the Empire is metonymically dark, self-destructive and unknowable.

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“HOME IN EXILE” IN LEILA ABOULELA’S FICTION

ILEANA SORA DIMITRIU

University of KZ-Natal, Durban

Abstract: *Postcolonial literature is becoming bolder in making visible previously marginalised longings for spiritual rootedness amidst social dislocation and rootlessness. The postcolonial subject’s search for spiritual belonging is shown to co-exist with the demands of late modernity, while traditional concepts of home are problematised to include home-in-faith. Based on select short stories and a novel by Leila Aboulela, this article addresses fictional representations of home and exile, of faith lost and found in the aftermath of major mass migrations to the North. It also challenges ossified perceptions of home as inescapably linked to a place of origin. I argue that, at the heart of various dislocations, there is the possibility of alternative forms of rootedness, with home-in-faith perceived as an antidote to a fractured life.*

Keywords: *dislocation, exile, home, spiritual rootedness*

1. Introduction

Scottish-Sudanese writer Leila Aboulela has become well-known in the English-speaking world as a cultural translator of “otherness” for a mainly Western audience. Herself an emigrée, she is now famous for the nuanced and non-stereotypical ways in which - in her fictional works - she has represented immigration, dislocation, and related searches for identity and belonging. Intriguingly, she avoids the sense of alienation that usually accompanies such situations, for her characters have the capacity to meaningfully reinvent themselves in the host country, while still drawing on their old homelands for inspiration. I shall illustrate Aboulela’s unusual depiction of what might be termed “alternative home” (“alternative rootedness”), by focusing on her best-known pieces so far: the short-story collection, *Coloured Lights* (2001) and the novel *The Translator* (1999), which have earned her prestigious prizes and wide recognition. I shall conclude by briefly pointing to her two other novels, *Minaret* (2005) and *Lyrics Alley* (2010).

But before I proceed, a few general comments on the notion of exilic identity as anchored in imagined “trans-national spaces”. I shall use this term in the sense suggested by Bill Ashcroft (2010), for whom the “trans-national” is not simply a synonym for the “diasporic” (the latter term being generally used in a more limited, sociological sense). Instead, “trans-nation” is pointing to the complexity of the subjective, individual experiences of journeying, to the spaces “in-between the categories by which subjectivity is normally constituted” (Ashcroft 2010:73). There is an increasingly powerful conviction in current debates on diaspora regarding the fact that critics need to go beyond the various orthodox dichotomies, such as home versus exile, in order to embrace a full and unbiased understanding of “otherness”. Such an understanding also challenges mainstream perceptions of identity as firmly associated to fixed categories or social/ national spaces.

If detached from the fixed, stereotypical understandings of belonging, the experience of exile need not always necessarily result in diasporic people being permanently scarred by dislocation and loss; rather, diasporic processes get a chance to be “translated” into “rootedness” through unexpected interpretations of one’s self. Furthermore, via such acts of cultural/ spiritual “translation” of life’s

challenges - as, for example, when drawing on one's creative capacity to re-invent oneself against all odds - individuals have the chance to discover a freshness of purpose and meaning amidst dislocation. According to Thomas Tweed (2006: 54), religion offers one way towards achieving this goal, by helping believers "make homes and cross boundaries" - in and through faith. This is an emotional/ spiritual journey whose final aim is that of building a mental space, a mental homeland, through a process that necessitates human inventiveness under extreme circumstances. It is an inventiveness that - as James Clifford (2000: 97) puts it - might require one "to rehook to one's tructure something that had either been blown off, forgotten, or had been taken off for tactical reasons", for example, certain aspects of tradition or religion. Such an orientation is particularly useful for making sense of recent writings that combine the theme of exile with religious articulations.

2. Fictional representations of home and exile

Aboulela's works - whether short-stories or novels - are coloured by a sense of melancholy, which inevitably accompanies dislocation in the diasporic experience. Yet, her fictional works simultaneously invoke the possibility of regaining some lost ground through re-assessing and re-inventing one's sense of identity and belonging, against all odds.

2.1 Home and exile in the *Coloured Lights* short-story collection

In *Coloured Ligts* (2001), Aboulela offers memorable representations of the exile's fractured identity when relating to people and situations in the host country. The experience of existential uncertainty is masterfully captured in the title story (*Coloured Lights*). While travelling in a London bus during the Christmas season and observing the holiday decorations with their extravagant display of "coloured lights", the protagonist recalls the coloured lights back home in the Sudan (Khartoum); more exactly, the tragic incident of an electrocution that killed her brother, Taha, on his wedding day. The symbolic value of this juxtaposition lies in the fact that, while in the normal course of things, multicoloured lights (like multiculturalism) suggest a positively coloured diversity of people and interests, in this story, they hint at mourning and loss: loss of the past, loss of a loved one far away. Although clearly mourning the death of her brother, the protagonist is also aware that her mourning is far deeper than that:

I was homesick, not only for my daughters or family, but sick with longing for the heat, the sweat and the water of the Nile. (1)

The theme of longing for the old country is present throughout the collection. In the story entitled *The Ostrich*, for example, the female protagonist, who now lives in London, feels like "a stranger suddenly appearing on the stage with no part to play, no lines to read" (45). The motif of traumatised life as "acting in the wrong play" is accompanied by another: the image of "life as hibernation". In the short-story *Souvenirs*, when visiting Aberdeen, the protagonist "hibernates" (sleeps

through the experience): “as if lost in the cold, [she] hibernated, slept and slept through the nights and large parts of the day” (18).

Although many of the short-stories in the collection touch on the suffering of exile and on the trauma of nostalgic recollection, Aboulela’s handling of melancholy goes beyond the fixation on pain. In several short-stories, she points to wholesome usages of nostalgia, to what Svetlana Boym (2001:49) would refer to as “reflective nostalgia”, which – in contrast to its self-obsessed, static and intolerant counter-part – is concerned with “the irrevocability of the past and human finitude [while reflecting on] new flexibility, not the re-establishment of stasis.” In the short-story *The Boy from the Kebab Shop*, for example, Aboulela illustrates how reflective nostalgia can help diasporic people/ characters re-connect with their lost ground. The story abounds in images of succulent North African food, symbolic of spiritual nourishment and re-anchoring of one’s self (through Islam). While the bitterness of Western dieting is shown to be a debilitating habit of mind, the female protagonist, Dina - through a new friend, “the boy from the kebab shop” - has the opportunity to re-articulate herself in the traditions (not only culinary) of “the succulent mystic life” (71) that she has left behind through emigration.

The central piece of the short-story collection is *The Museum*, which all by itself, in 2000 - before becoming part of the *Coloured Lights* collection (2001) - earned Aboulela the Caine Prize for African Writing. It is indeed the most complex story of all in that it offers a nuanced reflection on the trauma of dislocation, while at the same time, also suggesting a degree of relief through faith-based aspirations.

The story is set in Aberdeen and is focalised through Shadia, a graduate student from Khartoum, whose sense of strangeness, exclusion and insecurity in the host country is filtered through her interactions with a Scottish fellow-student, Bryan. The university is presented as a cold, inhospitable space for foreign students, who are expected unproblematically to conform to set ways of academic engagement. There seem to be two student bodies: the locals and the foreigners, “the ones who do well and the ones who would crawl and sweat and barely pass” (100). There is no possibility of negotiation - with knowledge production and assessment being based exclusively on rigid empirical systems - against a background of more or less explicit incidents of racism (101). As compared to some of the other foreign students, Shadia manages to get a better understanding of the Scottish academic scene through her budding, cross-cultural relationship with Bryan, who has an insider’s knowledge of the system.

Although well-intentioned, the couple are challenged by the various clichés they harbour about each other’s cultural backgrounds. In order to help the reader come to terms with “strangeness” in the novel, Aboulela makes use of a powerful metaphor, which will expose hidden assumptions of Western superiority in the colonial encounters of the past: a visit to the Scottish museum of African culture. While for Bryan, the various collections of tools and artefacts in the display cabinets are but naturalised traces of the past, for Shadia the soullessly and randomly juxtaposed objects are reminders that “this was Europe’s vision, the clichés about Africa: cold and old” (115). She feels humiliated by the triumphalist displays of Scottish travellers’ adventures in Africa (114-116). She also feels left out of the equation of history: the way the museum is organized excludes the complex histories of entire peoples and communities. She feels small in the museum and points out to Bryan:

They are telling you lies in this museum. Don't believe them. It's all wrong. It's not just jungles and antelopes, it's people. We have things like computers and cars ... (46)

Instead of bringing them closer to each other, the visit to the museum but emphasizes the unbridgeable, untranslatable cultural gap between them. Shadia now rejects Bryan, although he had expressed his desire to be close to her, immerse himself in Islam and accompany her on a pilgrimage to Mecca. However, even if the pilgrimage does not materialize in this short-story, Aboulela offers it to the reader's consideration as a potential, alternative space of inner re-articulation. The characters' spiritual aspiration is presented as a liberating force; this is a motif that will be pursued by Aboulela, in more depth, in her novels.

2.2 Home and exile in *The Translator*

In *The Translator* (1999), Aboulela offers an unusual reversal of power dynamics between her male and female protagonists, while also pursuing their spiritual trajectory more forcefully than in the short-stories. This is the story of Sammar and her husband, who arrive in Aberdeen as migrants propelled by professional interests. Sammar's aspiration for a better life in Britain, however, is stunted when her husband is killed in a tragic car accident. Although profoundly traumatized, she cannot face a return to her home-country, Sudan. Sammar attempts, rather, to locate herself in Aberdeen and works as an Arabic/ English translator for Rae Isles, a Scottish professor of Third World Studies. The title of the novel is significant in that it refers - beyond Sammar's occupation - to a more generalised exilic condition, described by H. K. Bhabha (1994:39) as a flux of "translation and negotiation". This is the story of a woman's barely surviving, later to transform, her socially sterile existence as a migrant.

Sammar's precarious life as a widowed translator in Aberdeen is encapsulated in the details of her daily life. After her husband's death, she started furiously to dismantle the home they had made together and is now living "in a room with nothing on the wall, nothing personal, no photographs, no books; just like a hospital room ... The whirlpool of grief sucking time" (15-16). Gaston Bachelard's "hostile space" comes to mind. For Bachelard (1969:5), the hostile space is embodied in the "corner", which is seen as "the most sordid of all havens, [a form that] tends to reject and restrain, even to hide life." Such is the place without texture or human touch in which the immigrant, Sammar, hides from the flow of life. Her entrapment in grief is also reflected in the way her senses relate to the weather, the colours and smells of the new country. In Scotland, she feels acutely uncomfortable with the misty weather and "the hostile water" (3) pouring from dark, heavy clouds. The author's insistence on the mono-colours of a wintry Scotland is symbolic of Sammar's mindscape, a mindscape emblematic of the migrants' "isolation and the obstacles they have to overcome to sustain day-to-day living" (Tolia-Kelly 2004:286).

This sense of being marginal, or outside of the flow of things, is all-pervasive. Her state of mind finds its resonant metaphor in the image of froth rising to the surface when boiling chicken:

It was granulated dirt the colour of peanuts, scum from the chicken that was better not eaten. Inside Sammar, there was froth like that. (7)

This is a vivid image of the existential pain tormenting those whom dislocation has “drained of the [world’s] colours, striations, nuances, its very existence” (Hoffman 1989:107). It is precisely the effort of overcoming a sense of drabness, of “translating” dislocation into rootedness, that becomes the thrust of this novel. However, Sammar’s trajectory is not one of easy assimilation into the new culture, but an inner journey steeped in the cultivation of her Muslim faith, as well as in her growing attachment to Rae Isles, the Middle East scholar for whom she works as a translator. Initially, the two life journeys run in parallel, but towards the end of the novel, they merge and culminate in Rae’s conversion to Islam.

Religious practice becomes a mainstay in Sammar’s life. During the time when her “grief was sucking time [...], the only thing she could rouse herself to do was pray the five prayers. They were the only challenge, the last touch with normality” (16). The references to praying are insistent in the novel:

... the certainty of the words brought unexpected tears, something deeper than happiness, all the splinters inside her coming together. (74)

Sammar is aware that, under her current circumstances, nothing but belief in a larger frame of reference could give her inner balance:

It now came as a relief, the reminder that there was something bigger than all this, above everything. *Allah akbar. Allah akbar.* (143)

for, “[t]o think otherwise was to slip down, to feel the world narrowing, dreary and tight” (73). For Sammar, identity is becoming more and more anchored in “the self-conscious adherence to the community of believers” (Harrow 1991:3) at her local Aberdeen mosque; the expressions of her faith being, at the same time, expressions of silent resistance and “counter-acculturation” (Nash 2002:30). Sammar’s increasing sense of rootedness in Islam ensures a slow recovery of her capacity to open up in the aftermath of her husband’s death. Drawing strength from her community of believers (8-9), she is now able to accept that not everyone is indifferent, or outrightly hostile, towards her. She becomes receptive to seeing Rae as someone who, unlike most Englishmen among whom she has lived and worked, does not interpret her as a “radical other”; on the contrary, he talks to her as if she had not lost anything, as if she were the same Sammar of a past time. By the same token, he too feels emotionally comfortable with her, in spite of what, on the surface, might have seemed insurmountable differences: “You make me feel safe. I feel safe with you” (64), he used to say. What draws Rae to Sammar is what he perceives to be her invisible rootedness (in faith), her inner strength against all odds. This is what, towards the end of the novel, finally mobilizes Rae to take stock of his own - up to now, unreflected - religious sensibility, an inner journey that will lead to the white man’s conversion to Islam.

At this stage in the narrative, the reader has already been prepared to accept such an unexpected denouement: Aboulela has Sammar and Rae embroiled in successive, lengthy dialogues on sensitive cultural issues, ranging from the West’s reductive perceptions of political and religious Islam to Rae’s progressive stance against Orientalist prejudice and academic stereotyping of the “other”. We thus enter Rae’s own emotional journey as he navigates between Western and Muslim lifeworlds (his ideas being in opposition to mainstream British opinion on the Islamic “threat”, 100). It is through such “like-yet-unlike” double perspectives that

Sammar and Rae manage to recognize each other as fundamentally similar in their interpretations of modern life when seen through a spiritual lense.

It is through sustained intercultural dialogue - between West and Middle East, on matters both secular and spiritual, as Aboulela seems to suggest - that cultures can become intelligible to one another. The meeting of minds between Rae and Sammar is most eloquently evoked in Chapter 4, which takes place on Christmas Day, symbolically suggesting the barriers between (Rae's) Christian and (Sammar's) Muslim cultural backgrounds. Although not together in the same space - Rae is celebrating with his family, Sammar is alone in her "hospital room" at home - they are together in a very involved, lengthy telephone conversation. Rae phoning her on Christmas Day takes Sammar by surprise (37), suggesting to her that there is, in reality, no gulf between them. The conversation takes place with Sammar sitting on the staircase, which again, symbolically, suggests her coming out of isolation, out of the dark corner to which she had retreated:

She ran up the stairs that she had often taken at a time, dragging her grief. Now the staircase had a different aura, a different light ... Where was she now, which country? ... Home and the past had come here and balanced, just for her. (41)

Sammar's "hostile space", her isolation in the stark "hospital room", is transformed from within, thus echoing Bachelard's reflections on space as moulded by the creative power of the mind (1969:141). Such a reading or interpretation may transform "the corner" into a "curved corner": "the curve that inhabits, inhabited geometry [...], the space that can be grasped" (1969:146; XXXI), the nest, the shell, the home - to use again Bachelard's suggestive images. This signifies the beginning of Sammar's process of translating the suffering of exile into creative meaning. Her cultivation of her Muslim faith proceeds along with the cultivation of her relationship with Rae, who, in turn, is drawn by her patient, faith-inspired resilience.

This is a story of faith made stronger in the face of adversity, stronger through a determination that will also serve as a catalyst for Rae's later conversion to Islam. As Rae's Arab/English translator, Sammar is increasingly able to "translate" - the novel's title now acquires its full significance - her own alienation into purposeful living. She reconstructs the mental space by "re-adjectivizing" her daily perceptions of English people's indifference/hostility into another set of insights, another set of "adjectives". She becomes fully conscious of her threadbare "hospital room": the ugly curtains, the faded bedspread, the scruffy shoes, frayed wools, the mouldy bread - all these are but external indicators of her state of mind. In shock, she tells herself: "I am not like this. I am better than this" (67), and proceeds to "rinse her life" (68) by throwing away everything that reminds her of her own self-neglect and isolation. With her mind so purified, she is able to relativize her culture shock and perceive the city and its inhabitants as familiar, or at least, as non-threatening:

Years ago, these streets were a maze of culture shocks. Things that jarred [men wearing earrings, women walking dogs, billboards, nightclubs housed in a former church]. Now, Sammar did not notice these things, did not gaze at them, alarmed, as she did years before. (70)

She has changed her attire to “wear[ing] a new coat, conscious of how clean it was ... [and] she felt like when she was young on the first day of the Eid, new dress, new socks, a new ribbon for her hair” (65). She gathers the courage to take driving lessons and is no longer tormented by nostalgia: “At night, she dreamt no longer of the past, but of the rain and grey colours of [Aberdeen]” (69).

However, Sammar’s recovery is short-lived, because - upon sensing Rae’s hesitation to commit to marriage according to Muslim precepts - she feels compelled to return to her home country, Sudan. Her departure, however, serves as a prelude to Rae’s soul-searching, which will lead him to his own “leap of faith”: from his secular, professional involvement with “other” cultures, to a more private commitment and immersion in faith. Such a struggle-in-denouement might be construed as Aboulela’s drift into the romance genre. The point of the novel, nonetheless, remains convincing in its story of the capacity of the exiled to root herself in alien ground, by learning how to translate the suffering of dislocation into meaning, and, in the process, to inspire another (Rae) to find his own spiritual path.

The significance of the religious experience is a key element of Aboulela’s fiction: “I can carry religion with me wherever I go, whereas the other things can easily be taken away” (Sethi 2005: n.p.). For her, Islam is a faith that is beyond the political, postcolonial discourse, a discourse that she acknowledges, but which does not paint the whole picture:

To me, faith is more than that, and, if modern-day, secular discourse does not have the language to explain it, then I have to make up this language or chart this new space. This is the biggest motivation I have to write. (Aboulela (2007: n.p))

Quiet and non-ostentatious, hers is an inner focus which is devoid of the purposes of political Islam. The religious sensibility supersedes any adherence to national identity affiliation. Aboulela’s focus, therefore, is on “the complexities of faith-based subject positions” (Ball 2010:122), as she resists a typically western homogenization of any Muslim community. She is a writer finely attuned to the nuances of cultural difference, and although she endorses faith, her writing on the whole resists religious formulae, especially doctrines that would put her women characters under the severe control of patriarchal structures. In *The Translator*, Sammar, for example, does not wish to remain in Sudan where, as a widow, her individual decision-making would be severely curtailed.

Thus, Aboulela presents Islam as a “trans-national” religion [to return to Ashcroft’s term] that straddles East and West, a realignment which, to quote Tweed (2006:64), is “translocative and transtemporal”. Hers is a “textual resistance to the reductive notion of Islam as a religion of the Middle East. Instead, she locates it as a global faith that speaks to many different forms of cultural identity and experience” (Ball 2010:120). In *The Translator*, this is illustrated, symbolically, in Sammar’s juxtaposing images of religious experiences in Aberdeen with religious experiences in Khartoum, a blending of locatedness with universalism: “Here in Scotland, she was learning more about her own religion; the world was one cohesive place” (108). Or, as Ball phrases it (2010:123), “faith is not necessarily fixed within a geographical space; it is a question of imagined geography.”

3. Conclusion

After *The Translator* and *Coloured Lights*, works through which she succeeded to establish herself as one of the leading contemporary British writers, Leila Aboulela has continued, in her subsequent fictional works as well as on the public platform, to present exile-cum-dislocation in the light of faith. In *Minaret* (2005) and *Lyrics Alley* (2010), for example, she has continued to write sympathetically about people who have faith: “I have always wanted”, she said, “to write about the challenges of practising one’s faith in the modern secular world” (2007:n.p.). While, in *The Translator*, spirituality is somewhat circumscribed by the significance attached to Sammar’s need for the security of marriage, in the later novel, *Minaret*, the protagonist, Najwa, pursues her faith despite the prospect of her living a solitary life. This is the story of another Sudanese immigrant to Britain, a young woman who is forced by a political coup in her home country to leave everything behind. Stripped of her material assets, exile becomes a catalyst for Najwa’s inner journey: a long, arduous journey from her cossetted life in her native Sudan to new challenges of being and belonging. Thus, the protagonist’s life becomes a reversal of the usual exilic story. Najwa is not one of the “wretched of the earth” in her home country (she comes from a privileged background); neither is hers a story of comfortable acculturation in Britain. Living in drastically denuded circumstances and disappointed by a love affair that left her suspended in uncertainty, she finds a spiritual home in her Islamic faith; paradoxically so, in a London mosque, far away from her home country. Aboulela’s latest novel, *Lyrics Alley* - although its setting is not contemporary (pre-independence Sudan of the 1950s) - is also deeply preoccupied with issues of dislocation and faith; of how individual characters move between and across cultural and political lifeworlds, between modernity and tradition, patriotic duty and individual freedom, while retaining their faith and dignity in the face of political and personal upheaval.

For all the existing differences between them, Aboulela’s short-stories and novels share a preoccupation with the religious dimension, which is a reality in the lives of many subjects, particularly those who experience forms of dislocation and loss. I have argued for the possibility of a nuanced understanding of home as a state of mind, that is, for Ashcroft’s utopian concept of the “trans-national”, which suggests going beyond the binaries of home/exile or reason/faith. By pointing to the unpredictable articulations in-between the categories by which subjectivity is normally constituted, the aim is to reveal alternative forms of rootedness, in which home-in-faith is perceived as an antidote to a fractured life. As faith-based trajectories, Aboulela’s fictional works may pose a challenge to readers and critics alike: we are all challenged to review our various theoretical positions, most of which tend to view non-secular issues as conservative, or even suspect. The challenge lies in being tolerant of various forms of experience and in expanding our critical inquisitiveness beyond the established categories of the well-trodden, mainstream debates. In the current times of political and religious turbulence and intolerance, it is important to nurture the realm of involved affective responsiveness, including its religious dimension.

In my concluding remarks, let me also highlight the fact that - as in the case of writers like Wole Soyinka and Ben Okri, who also invoke religious tropes and themes - Leila Aboulela is not an adherent of religious essentialism, or fundamentalism. And, although deeply preoccupied with things religious, she cannot be accused of any retreat from modernity. While firm in her belief,

Aboulela's faith is an expression of moderate Islam, which is alert to nuanced understandings of social complexity and global flows, being constructed around what is suggested as both a local and global mindscape, a kind of Islamic humanism. This mindscape suggests a "marriage between North and South" (Schultheiss 2009:205), an alternative modernity, in which Aboulela's position finds resonance with several theorists who have reflected on the integration of Islam into western critical enquiry, as suggested by, for example, Anouar Majid (2000) or Miriam Cooke (2000). Such an integration would encourage and enable the balancing of religious loyalties, specifically Islamic, with other allegiances, thus initiating new forms of conversation across cultural identities. These positions might involve moderate Islamic thought reaching out to a largely secular West, at the same time as we witness Western attempts to revisit the faith-reason dichotomy. Several prominent, Western-trained critics are increasingly concerned with the West's excessively bureaucratized secularism, a secularism that tends to marginalize and even demonize expressions of faith, especially the faith of "others". As Terry Eagleton (2009:141) suggests, the West is undergoing a profound collective identity crisis, as manifested in

the contradiction between the West's own need to believe and its chronic incapacity to do so [owing largely to] an unholy mélange of practical materialism, political pragmatism, moral and cultural relativism, and philosophical skepticism.

The debate, accordingly, should not be between "faith" and "reason" (141-48), but between faith-cum-reason and various forms of fundamentalism, whether religious or scientific. Or, as Roy Bhaskar (2000) reminds us, the debate should point to a synthesis of critical positions, towards a spiritualized humanism. As I have attempted to demonstrate, Leila Aboulela's works are a gentle nudge in this direction.

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THE COLLISION OF AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN CULTURES, A SITE OF METAMORPHOSES IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S *AFRICAN TRILOGY*

VALERIA DUMITRESCU MICU

“Carol I” National Defence University, Bucharest

Abstract: Achebe, the realist Nigerian novelist, made use of his “knowledges” and fulfilled what he felt as a deep duty: he made “his people” speak in some acclaimed and highly rewarded novels in order to tell Their Truth. Achebe was fully aware that “literary texts are one of the rare places where they might be heard”, as Foucault (qtd. in Loomba 1998:38) largely stated. Thus, readers of all times are able to perceive the metamorphoses undergone by both sides of the cultural clash in the process of colonisation. This paper traces how the profound mechanisms of change gradually affected large groups of indigenous people: the social fabric of the African villages started its perpetual disintegration, their languages were replaced by the British language, their institutions became ignored, minimized, and finally reduced to inefficiency. New people and new places were born.

Key words: Africa, change, cultural clash, language

1. Introduction

Chinua Achebe was not the first African writer, not even the first Nigerian novelist publishing in English. Cyprian Ekwensi and Amos Tutola had published their novels some years before 1958, but Achebe was the one “who blazed the trail for a generation of African writers”, as Appiah (2013, online) wrote for the millions of people who read his books and even studied them in school, in a short praising article issued shortly after “the father of African literature” passed away on March 21, 2013. In spite of Achebe’s modest refusal of such a title, Appiah and many other voices around the world bring as a solid argument the fact that he was the first to offer a model of how to write fiction in English about African life, for he knew how to mould the English language so as to convey the traditional life and even language of the Nigerian village people. He was very convincing in the interviews he gave, or in conferences he attended and lectures he gave to his students, while speaking about the high importance of writing, mentioning that any piece of writing should send an important message to the readers.

He also said that “literature opens magic casements” (1992:xvii) and we really have this very feeling while reading his books - of looking through a transparent window and watching a movie about tribal life naturally carrying on at different moments in time. Appiah brings some more reasons why Achebe succeeded in raising the interest of people beyond Africa’s borders: he did not bias the cultural information he offered about life in certain places of Nigeria, revealing some of its unknown shades, as well as favourable aspects of an old pre-colonial micro-cosmos. At the same time, he did his best to write according to European literary canons:

Achebe teaches us that the novel, a form invented in Western Europe, can be shaped by the creative intelligence and the local vision of a great writer outside of Europe into a medium of continuing universal significance. Perhaps this is the reason that

for so many readers around the world, it is Chinua Achebe who opened up the magic casements of African fiction. (Appiah 1992:xvii)

It is of paramount importance that Achebe wrote his fiction presenting tribal life from the inside because he was born and raised in the Igbo village of Ogidi by his converted Christian parents, who had personally lived the moments of the first encounter with “the white man”. He used the reality remembered from stories told by his own parents and many other witnesses of those times of colliding cultures, thus creating a diversity of characters: numerous native Igbos and some Europeans who are but samples of how the clash between the local tribal culture and the intrusive European one affected so many and so much of what was to become a new world and new people living in a new era. Related to this aspect, Neil Kortenaar (1995:33) makes a clear point that Achebe acquired the necessary knowledge so as to approach the intersection of African tradition and modernity in a realistic manner:

The problem with seeing two cultures as occupying the same world is that they can be measured against each other and one preferred to another as a reflection of that world. To measure them is to assume a scientific objectivity that allows the observer to stand outside both. In [Achebe’s] case, scientific objectivity is a mode of knowledge associated with one of the cultures to be measured.

Achebe does not try to embellish, to trim or to avoid real facts and true-to-life episodes of the tribal natural rhythm he came to know via dependable witnesses, some of them direct participants in those events.

2. *The African Trilogy*

Things Fall Apart published in 1958 was followed by *No Longer at Ease* in 1960 and *Arrow of God* in 1964. The order of publication does not represent a perfect sequence of events: *Things Fall Apart* is set at the end of the eighteenth century, when the first missionaries were making use of their faith, their knowledge, their human qualities and abilities to persuade the natives that the Christian God was the only one to trust and worship. In *No Longer at Ease*, Obi Okonkwo, the main character, is the grandson of Ogbuefi Okonkwo, the main character in the first novel, both novels covering a three-generation span. The third novel, *Arrow of God*, comes with a large display of characters, but none of them is connected with the ones in the first two novels, and the author gives some information to make his readers understand that he had something more to say about the period of time that he had left suspended between the first and the second novel.

These three novels were later put together in a single volume known as *The African Trilogy* (2010c), which is seen especially by the African young generation as a genuine picture of a changing process. They read it and get deeply impressed because, as young writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2010c: ix) confesses, they discover something “aching familiar, but also exotic because it detailed the life of [their] people a hundred years before. [...] [They] could not imagine with any accuracy how life had been organized in [their] part of the world in 1890”, not even in the first half of the twentieth century. After having read Achebe’s *Trilogy*,

Adichie (2010c: ix) felt “it was a glorious shock of discovery” because there she found the world of her ancestors, of her grandfather, of her parents’ youth:

Things Fall Apart was no longer a novel about a man whose exaggerated masculinity and encompassing fear of weakness make it impossible for him to adapt to the changes in his society, it became the life my great-grandfather might have lived. *Arrow of God* was no longer just about the British administration’s creation of warrant chiefs, and the linked destinies of two men – one an Igbo priest, the other a British administrator – it became the story of my ancestral hometown during my grandfather’s time. And *No Longer at Ease* transcended the story of an educated young Nigerian struggling with the pressure of new urban expectations in Lagos, and became the story of my father’s generation.

This paper focuses on the metamorphoses or the gradual changes caused by the mechanisms activated when two different cultures came into close contact, especially because one of them made use of all its tools to minimize the other, to intrude into its space at all levels, not by fierce fight, but by the help of shrewd strategies as Moses Unachukwu, elder of an Igbo village suggests in his wise way of talking, in *Arrow of God* (2010b:86):

I have traveled to Olu, and I have traveled to Igbo, and I can tell you that there is no escape from the white man. He has come. When Suffering knocks at your door and you say there is no seat left for him, he tells you not to worry because he has brought his own stool. The white man is like that. [...] As daylight chases away darkness so will the white man stamp out all our customs.

The African Trilogy displays a rich range of characters – most of them Igbo people, but Europeans as well – offering detailed descriptions of the traditional pre-colonial tribal life, of the colonial encounter and of what life, people and places have undergone during three generations. Each Nigerian character may be representative for any African with a similar life story, while the Europeans whose minds and acts are skillfully read through by Achebe may serve as genuine examples of missionaries, administrators and other British government agents.

2.1 Achebe’s metamorphosed language

When two different cultures meet, the only way towards harmonious communication is a common language. Language is a component of great importance of a people’s culture because it helps them tell their true stories, which then become their history, it is their main way of communication in all types of relationships within the borders of their land. Along centuries, Europeans did their best to learn different native languages and dialects in order to get closer to the indigenous tribes they discovered while travelling around the world. Totally aware of the possibility of controlling people by imposing one’s language upon them, the colonising powers used it as a powerful instrument upon the natives who felt as if “history has forced it down their throat” (Achebe 1975:3). The possible responses to such an attempt are either rejection or subversion (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1995:284). However, Achebe (1975:3) stated he was in a “position to appreciate the value of the inheritance [and not to resent] it because it came as part of a package deal which included many other items of doubtful value and the positive

atrocities of racial arrogance and prejudice, which may yet set the world on fire.” He also advised: “But let us not in rejecting the evil throw out the good with it” (1975:3).

There are many tribes and ethnic groups in Nigeria, each using a different language or dialect. Three main languages are spoken: Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, with more than one hundred dialects and about five hundred other languages being used across the country. This situation could be taken as the main reason for the Nigerian people to have accepted English as the official language of the country used especially by the administration and by the writers who attempt to enrich their national literature. It is the only way they could be read and understood by a larger number of people in their own country, while chances to have their voices heard abroad increase as well. Nigerians admit that, in spite of the fact that their country “was arbitrarily created by the British for their own ends [and] colonialism in Africa disrupted many things, it did create big political units where there were small, scattered ones before” (Achebe 1975:3). Achebe (1975:4) also explains that:

Nigeria had hundreds of autonomous communities ranging in size from the vast Fulani Empire founded by Usman dan Fodio in the north to tiny village entities in the east. Today it is one country.

Everybody knows that there are many other areas of Africa where colonialism facilitated contact between people especially because “it gave them a language with which to talk to one another.[...] Therefore those African writers who have chosen to write in English or French are not unpatriotic smart alecks with an eye on the main chance - outside their own countries. They are by-products of the same process that made the new nation-states of Africa.” (Achebe 1975:3)

Achebe argues that an African can learn and handle a European language well enough to use it in creative writing without attempting to write at native standards because “[the African writer] should aim at fashioning an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience” (Achebe 1975:7). Besides, he made a commitment: “I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home, but altered to suit its new African surroundings” (1975:7). According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995:284), his writing is thought to have accomplished its goals as it “displays a process by which the language is made to bear the weight and texture of a different experience. In doing so, it becomes another language,” or, as I suggested, a *metamorphosed language*.

All through *The African Trilogy*, the reader becomes aware of Achebe’s special way of handling words: a plastic rendering of Igbo proverbs, a plain, clear style to make Igbo people speak so as to transfer the exact message of traditional wisdom and universal truths devoid of futile linguistic ornaments, some proper African English, but also untranslated Igbo words like *ogbanje* - a malicious spirit, *egwugwu* - an ancestral spirit, or *osu* - the name given to a marginalized group of people whose only sin was to worship different gods. Kortenaar (1995:34) argues that such “foreign traces in an English text refer metonymically to a whole world that cannot be adequately translated, a world that Achebe implicitly shares with the characters he writes about”. It also testifies to his respect for the African oral tradition. Timothy Reiss claims that, for Achebe, language is a tool which “placed

between the observer and the world observed allows the observer to know the world as it truly is" (Reiss qtd. in Kortenaar 1995: 33).

2.2 Achebe's metamorphosed people

As I have already mentioned, the lack of a common language in an instance of contact of two different cultures may be the starting point for various mechanisms of change gradually affecting both sides of the cultural clash in the process of colonisation. Sooner or later the sides are supposed to learn the Other's language in order to approach any type of interaction. The indigenous people experienced enough unhappy situations to understand that learning European languages - English in our case - could bring them different advantages. This was quite a long process perfectly exemplified in Achebe's *Trilogy*, which shows precisely the road language pursued to become the "tool" Achebe used in order to fulfill the promised task. Moreover, it was the main element inducing profound changes at all levels of the indigenous society.

In *Things Fall Apart*, which is set in the pre-colonial Nigeria of the 1890s, we witness how the linguistic barrier made the first victim, a white "visitor" of the Igbo land, more precisely of Umuofia, the fictionalised name of a group of villages in southern Nigeria:

"What did the white man say before they killed him?" asked Uchendu.

"He said nothing," answered one of Obierika's companions.

"He said something, only they did not understand him," said Obierika. "He seemed to speak through his nose." (45)

At this first level of communication, we see how not understanding the Other's language becomes equal to "saying nothing", especially because the side which felt more powerful for obvious reasons - they were more numerous and they were on their ancestral land - did not really care to understand the Other. Instead, they solved the problem by simply eliminating the intruder, thus condemning the whole village to cruel revenge on the white men's side.

The white man does not bother to learn the tribe's language, because they have totally different plans:

[Okonkwo]: "Does the white man understand our custom about land?"

[Obierika]: "How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad." (57)

We can understand that some people from Umuofia, where the white man came, settled and also built his church, started to learn the new language and converted to the new religion. One of these people was Nwoye, Okonkwo's son, whose reason for the choice was first and foremost the incapacity he had always felt to accept certain cultural customs of his clan. He speaks about the absurdity of throwing innocent babies to die in the bush, or of estranging children from their tribe, eventually deciding to sacrifice them as a normal consequence of a kinsman's fault only because the ancestral gods invoked by the native priests pretend that this is the right way to deal with such issues:

There was a young man who had been captivated... It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. It was the poetry of the new religion, something felt in the marrow. The hymn about brothers who sat in the darkness and in fear seemed to answer a vague and persistent question that hunted his young soul - the question of the twins crying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed. He felt a relief within as the hymn poured into his parched soul. The words of the hymn were like drops of frozen rain melting on the dry palate of the panting earth. Nwoye's callow mind was greatly puzzled. (48)

Okonkwo cannot accept such a blow from his own son and prefers to chase him from home. The character he embodies is the most eloquent example of native resistance to change. He deeply despises his kinsmen, who are not capable of reacting properly by fighting the intruders, and, according to him, are "soft like women" (59). Consequently, a treachery like leaving one's own religion and customs behind coming from one's own son was too painful to bear.

Nneka is another peculiar example of an Igbo character who chooses to take the white man's way. She is the first woman of Umuofia who decides to join the Christian church in spite of being a prosperous farmer's wife. She had four previous twin child-births and was forced by the tribal unwritten laws to throw all her babies away. At the moment of her encounter with Mr. Kiaga, the interpreter in charge with the infant congregation, "she was very heavy with child" and was feeling threatened again by the ancestral customs. When her family found out "she has fled to join the Christians" they thought "it was a good riddance" (49).

The *osu* group of outcasts of the tribe are among the most motivated to make attempts to get close to the new religion. Because of being dedicated to a different god, their kinsmen had chased them to a special area of the village, cutting their possibilities to take any of the four titles of the clan, not accepting them to their assemblies or sheltering them under a regular Umuofia roof. They were supposed to bear this discriminating treatment forever together with their coming children and next generations. When they first get their feet into the new church, the previously converted folks "raise a protest and [try] to drive them out", but Mr. Kiaga stops them and says: "[they] need Christ more than you and I", adding a very convincing discourse which makes everybody change their behaviour. "The converts drew inspiration and confidence from his unshakable faith... [and] the outcasts shaved off their long, tangled hair, and soon they were the strongest adherents of the new faith" (51-52).

Arrow of God takes us to 1920s Nigeria in the early days of colonization, when the white man had already become a well-known presence, but the language was still a barrier between the newcomers and the people of Umuaro, another Igbo village, especially when serious matters were to be solved. Moses Unachukwu, an old carpenter, was the only villager who could speak the colonizers' language.

His reputation in Umuaro rose to unprecedented heights [because] it was one thing to claim to speak the white man's tongue and quite another to be seen actually doing it. The story spread throughout the six villages. Ezeulu's one regret was that a man of Umunneora should have this prestige. But soon, he thought, his son would earn the same or greater honour. (2010b:79)

At this level of *metamorphosis*, most of the Igbo people having understood the importance of acquiring the white man's language, admire their kinsmen when

they are capable “to take words out of the white man’s mouth for them” (79) and look for ways to get closer to his demands:

[w]hat a man does not know is greater than he. Those of us who want Unachukwu to go away forget that none of us can say ‘come’ in the white man’s language. We should listen to his advice. (86)

Ezeulu (*eze*=king; *ulu*=priest in Igbo language), the main character called the “Chief Priest” all through the novel, genuinely trusts his spiritual power and feels like being an arrow in God’s bow. This would be a plausible explanation for his rejecting attitude when the white man shows great appreciation and wants him to become a warrant chief. Ezeulu wants to stay faithful to his kinsmen and he applies what he reckons to be a wise move: he sends one of his sons to learn the white man’s way and language and, at the same time, to “see and hear” for him. He still hopes to be able to save his people from the imminent intrusion of the European religion and culture by fighting the white man back with his own weapons. Unfortunately, he proves to have underestimated the enemy’s strength for he chose the most inappropriate way of revenge against his people, by delaying the New Yam Feast invoking the Ulu’s will. The wise white man takes advantage of the situation and invokes the true Christian God to save people from famine in exchange for loyalty:

Their god had taken sides with them against his headstrong and ambitious priest and thus uphold that truth, for in destroying his priest he had also brought disaster on himself. [...] For a deity who chose a moment such as this to chastise his priest or abandon him before his enemies was inciting people to take liberties; and Umuaro was just ripe to do so. The Christian harvest which took place a few days after Obika’s death saw more people than even Goodcountry could have dreamt. In his extremity, many a man sent his son with a yam or two to offer to the new religion and bring back the promised immunity. (232)

Among the numerous indigenous characters playing on the Umuofia stage, there are some cases of negative behaviour manifested in the same context of cultural collision. Achebe obviously did his best to convey the whole range of human manifestations in an attempt to prove that his Igbo people, like Nigerians or like Africans, are like everybody else and not completely different. He implies that people act almost in the same way in similar situations and especially when it is about money, irrespective of their culture, race or nationality. We can see how quickly people change for the worst. In the native warrant chief system that the colonial administration was trying hard to implement, there were several cases of corruption, high-handedness, cruelty and authoritarianism:

Three years ago, they had put pressure on Captain Winterbottom to appoint a Warrant Chief for Okperi against his better judgement. After a long palaver, he had chosen one James Ikedi, an intelligent fellow who had been among the very first people to receive missionary education in these parts. But what had happened? Within three months of this man receiving his warrant, Captain Winterbottom began to hear rumours of his high-handedness. He had set up an illegal court and a private prison. He took any woman who caught his fancy without paying the customary bride-price. Captain Winterbottom went into the whole business thoroughly and uncovered many more serious scandals. (58)

In *No Longer at Ease*, which is set in the colonized Nigeria of the 1950s, some years before its independence, most of the Nigerians manifest high admiration for their co-nationals with good command of English. We can identify the interest for education at European standards as the third level of *metamorphosis*. At this moment of the colonial encounter, one of the main preoccupations of each community is to have as many children and young people educated in mission schools and even in Britain:

Mr. Okonkwo believed utterly and completely in the things of the white man. And the symbol of the white man's power was the written word, or better still, the printed word. (2010a:100)

Mr. Okonkwo is the symbol of change; he was Nwoye, son of Obuefi Okonkwo, the main character in the first novel of the trilogy, one of the first young men of Umuofia who had chosen the white man's way. He became a convert and he was given the Christian name Isaac. Meanwhile, more of his kinsmen understood that the written word meant power and set The Umuofia Progressive Union whose main goal was to save money for their sons and daughters' further studies in England. Obi, Mr. Okonkwo's son, is the only one who succeeds in acquiring a British college diploma and a job in the civil service once returned to Nigeria. In his new position, he discovers that many people working for the government were backhanders and corrupted, a reality he already knew and he had fought against by writing virulent articles while studying in Europe. He is highly idealistic about implementing successful western standards in his corrupted Nigeria. We can take this as the final stage of *metamorphosis* - a Nigerian indigenous person is completely imbued with European knowledge and values and he comes back home full of high expectations for his kinsmen and himself, hoping to be able to change a century-long corrupted system. He manages to resist the temptations to receive bribes himself, but the situation becomes more and more complicated and he changes for the worst. The novel starts with this new Obi, the one who, in spite of his change for the best, was pushed backwards only because he succumbed to temptation in a moment of great pain. When he first came back home, he was so very touched when he discovered "[his mother] had grown so old and frail in four years"...that "henceforth he wore her sadness round his neck like a necklace of stone" (44), whereas now he has become insensitive even towards his dying mother. His mother died and Clara had gone out of his life. "The two events following closely on each other dulled his sensibility and left him a different man" (2). Everybody was taken by surprise that he accepted to take a bribe, the judge himself is intrigued: "I cannot comprehend how a young man of your education and brilliant promise could have done this" (2), whereas Mr. Green, Obi's British boss, "[who] was famous for speaking his mind" (2) attempts an informal explanation for some people insisting on the same question the judge had rhetorically asked during the trial. He argues that:

the African is corrupt through and through" and the real facts are "that over countless centuries, the African has been the victim of the worst climate in the world and of every imaginable disease. Hardly his fault. But he has been sapped mentally and physically. We have brought him Western education. But what use is it to him?" (2-3)

Mr. Green's argument symbolizes the colonizers' opinion that they have brought only good things to Africa, but the Africans did not know how to use them to their own advantage. We can easily seize Achebe's irony and also his counterargument represented by Obi himself, who counted so much on education and its power to really change the situation in Nigeria. The novel comes with enough details to let us understand that the fault for the system of power relying on corruption and bribery was in the perpetual underestimation of the local people and their difficult access to high standards education caused by the continuation of colonial intrusion. Besides, this African trilogy shows that *metamorphosis* was a long, painful and complicated process at any level it worked. There is hope for the entire system, rotten as it is, to stick to the same track of change for the best, paradoxically helped by European education which was forcefully imposed on the natives at the beginning.

2.3 Metamorphosed places

Achebe gives such a detailed description of places that we can literally see them and visualize the huge difference between the native pre-colonial villages and the colonial locations. The action of *Things Fall Apart* unfolds in Umuofia, a very large and heavily populated place made up of nine villages in the Igbo land of eastern Nigeria. When important events took place, about ten thousand men gathered in the market place:

Umuofia was feared by all its neighbours. It was powerful in war and in magic, and its priests and medicine men were feared in all surrounding country. Its most potent war-medicine was as old as the clan itself. Nobody knew how old...so the neighbouring clans who naturally knew these things feared Umuofia, and would not go to war against it without first trying a peaceful settlement. And in fairness to Umuofia it should be recorded that it never went to war unless its case was clear and just and was accepted as such by its Oracle. (1995:3)

Each village has a clear setting of dusty roads heading towards the main directions: the river, the farming land, the Evil Forest. The inhabitants live in huts made of red earth and covered by thatched roofs built by themselves as large as their wealth allows:

[Okonkwo, the main character of this novel] was a wealthy farmer and had two barns full of yams, and had just married his third wife. [His] prosperity was visible in his household. He had a large compound enclosed by a thick wall of red earth. His own hut, or obi, stood immediately behind the only gate in the red walls. Each of his three wives had her own hut, which together formed a half moon behind the obi. The barn was built against one end of the red walls, and long stacks of yam stood out prosperously in it. At the opposite end of the compound was a shed for the goats, and each wife built a small attachment to her hut for the hens. Near the barn was a small house, the "medicine house" or shrine where Okonkwo kept the wooden symbols of his personal god and of his ancestral spirits. He worshipped them with sacrifices of kola nut, food and palm wine, and offered prayers to them on behalf of himself, his three wives and eight children. (4)

Okonkwo has also gained all the clan's titles and the full respect of his kinsmen, but his accidental shooting of a child is severely punished by the Igbo

tribe who ban him from the village for seven years. When he finally came back home he found a totally changed place where “the church had come and led many astray. Not only the low-born and the outcast but sometimes a worthy man had joined it...The white man had indeed brought a lunatic religion, but he had also built a trading store and for the first time palm-oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia.” (58) For Okonkwo it was difficult to accept:

Umuofia did not appear to have taken any special notice of the warrior’s return. The clan had undergone such profound change during his exile that it was barely recognizable. The new religion and government and the trading stores were very much in the people’s eyes and minds. There were still many who saw the new institutions as evil, but even so they talked and thought about little else, and certainly not about Okonkwo’s return...[He] was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned for the clan, which he saw breaking and falling apart, and he mourned for the warlike men of Umuofia, who had so unaccountably become soft like women. (59)

The changing process keeps its track and we discover new instances in *Arrow of God*, where Achebe speaks about the five Europeans living on Government Hill: Captain Winterbottom, the District Officer, Mr. Clarke, his Assistant, Roberts, an Assistant Superintendent of Police in charge of the local detachment, Wade, in charge of the prison, and Mr. Wright who was a Public Works Department man supervising the new road to Umuaro. Speaking about the new road, the author gives a very important detail, that “the road Mr. Wright was building [connected] Okperi with its enemy, Umuaro” (2010b:77), subtly hinting at the cruel and irrational way of cutting Africa into pieces using only a large map, at the Scramble for Africa moment, when the European powers did not take into account the natural borders of different tribes speaking different languages or dialects, while establishing the new provinces of the African continent meant to be “civilised” by them.

This list of British representatives and their duties show that the white men are in the most important institutional positions, but the course of events let us know that they are living hard times with the people of Umuaro who “had put up more resistance to change than any other clan in the whole province. Their first school was only a year or so old and a tottering Christian mission had been set up after a series of failures” (179).

No Longer at Ease is set in a modern large town, Lagos, the capital city of Nigeria, at the moment the novel was written, which compared to Umuofia or Umuaro described in the previous novels, represents the highest level of *metamorphosis* that a place of pre-colonial Africa could reach in about half a century. While Obi was still living in his native village of Umuofia, he was dreaming of the day when he would see Lagos with his own eyes. He had heard so many wonderful things about it from the soldiers passing through his village that “for many years afterwards, Lagos was always associated with electric lights and motor-cars in [his] mind” (2010a:11). Some years later, after having returned from England, he was waiting for his girlfriend, Clara, “in one of the less formidable of Lagos slum areas” and, for the first time, he saw the difference. “He had not thought places like this stood side by side with cars, electric lights and brightly dressed girls” (12). He realized that that was the real Lagos he couldn’t even imagine, with more poverty than he had ever seen in his village, with people living

in the streets in a total lack of safety those belonging to a family used to have in their traditional compounds. Children and old men were wrapped in cloths and used to sell anything for a living. As a matter of fact, there were two different city-scapes in Lagos: on the one hand, there was the bustling big city with bars, dancing places, restaurants and the European quarters where some Nigerian people like Obi, educated and working in important administrative places could live, on the other hand, there were the segregated neighbourhoods where poverty, squalor and sadness went hand in hand.

We can see how modernity and urban lifestyles have influenced people's behaviour - culture and traditions have almost been forgotten in town. Still, there are some aspects especially related to some ancient taboos which people cannot get rid of, irrespective of their education and social position. The most striking one is the interdiction to marry a girl with an *osu* identity, even for a young man having acquired British education.

3. Conclusion

Achebe's *African Trilogy* is a palpable evidence of a long and painful process of change taking place in one of the numerous places of Africa, but also of this world heading more and more clearly towards globalization, which some people consider only a different name given to colonization. The new wave of change, as it was perceived by the Igbo people in the books this paper deals with, was quite successful in sweeping away the old religions, customs and traditions as well as a good number of African languages and dialects, some of them disappearing forever, especially because of their oral status. European languages became the ones which facilitated larger contacts among different tribes of Africa and also communication with the world at large.

This trilogy, as well as many other African discourses written in European languages, proves that, paradoxically, these very languages became the tool which helped "the colonies write back" and bring important information to the world about the real Africa and Africans. Achebe was one of the writers who did his best "to reestablish the humanity of his Africans, insist[ing] that Africans live in the same world and are not absolutely other" (Kortenaar 1995:32). Achebe accomplished even more than that, as Obi Nwakanma (2013, online) was spotlighting in a newspaper article shortly after Achebe's death by mentioning some reasons why this writer "seems immortal and timeless":

After Achebe, Africa was no longer that "area of darkness" denuded of human consciousness. Achebe restored its coherent institutional fabric and its "universe of meaning and values". To put it quite simply, Chinua Achebe's importance is that he restored the dignity and humanity of the African, pillaged for over five hundred years in antinomic imagery and stories circulated across the world without the challenge of a counter narrative. It was a historic task and only a man of Achebe's genius and powerful introspection could achieve it. He wrote with crystalline power and authority.

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FAMILY CAUGHT BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT IN ZADIE SMITH'S *ON BEAUTY*

MILICA RAĐENOVIĆ

Faculty of Business and Legal Studies, Novi Sad

Abstract: *This paper analyzes the way a family, a basic social unit, is presented in Zadie Smith's "On Beauty" (2005) and how core values are lost in two opposing families, one very liberal and the other very conservative. Despite having a completely different set of values, both families are similarly functional and dysfunctional, showing us they are only different on the outside.*

Keywords: *campus novel, conservatism, family, liberalism*

1. Introduction

Zadie Smith's first novel *White Teeth* (2000) catapulted her into a media frenzy. She was praised not only for her writing skills, but also for her beauty, youth and ethnicity (Tew 2010:39-40). A celebrity-oriented world desires its writers to be fascinating individuals. Zadie Smith was presented as a British literary sensation, making her debut at the beginning of the new millennium. She was seen as the voice of a "New England" (Tew 2010:19). Smith herself was not pleased with the emphasis that was put on her mixed-race origin (Tew 2010:17-18). By the time she published her third novel - *On Beauty* (2005), she had experienced the enormous pressure which comes with public attention and scrutiny. *On Beauty* was not greeted with widespread acclaim; some even found reasons for this in her celebrity status (Tew 2010:42).

The plot of *On Beauty* unfolds in and around the campus of a fictional university in America. For this reason, Smith's third novel belongs to the genre of academic novel, a small subgenre of contemporary fiction. The world of universities represents a world unto itself. They are often small close-knit communities where everything is magnified, more obvious and more difficult to hide. What makes this world even more interesting is the fact that the individuals in such microcosms are distinguished members of the society. Smith decides to tell us a story about one campus through two completely different families, the liberal Belseys and the conservative Kippes.

The liberal Belseys are a dual-earner family, a type of family which has become more common in today's society (Perry-Jenkins and Turner 2004:155). The conservative Kippes are a traditional nuclear family. Their contrasting worldviews make them seem very different from one another. The Kippes are introduced through Jerome Belsey's emails written to his father. Jerome is doing an internship with his father's professional archrival, Monty Kipps, a Trinidadian who lives in London with his wife Carlene and children, Victoria and Michael. He is absorbed by the Kipps household because it is "the negativized image of our (Belsey's) household" (Smith 2005:4). The Kippes are seen as a perfect traditional family and the Belseys are a mixed-race family who live in Wellington, a fictional college town, outside Boston. Kiki and Howard have three children, Jerome, Zora and Levi. Both Kiki and Howard feel detached from their background. Kiki, an African-American, feels uncomfortable because another black woman is paid to clean her house (11, 49), whereas Howard, a butcher's son, can "no longer gauge the luxuries of his own life" (25). Howard has grown apart from his sons. Jerome

has become religious and silent (30), while Levi seems to be ashamed of his professor father (24) and speaks with a “faux Brooklyn accent” (11). The two families become neighbours when Monty Kipps starts working at Wellington. Despite their differences, these two opposing families are similar in many ways, because they face the same world and its temptations.

2. Family and family life

Family life and ideas of how a family should look have changed rapidly in the last decades. Traditionally, a family has been presented as a group of people who live together and are related by blood, marriage or adoption. In the 1950s, the ideal family became a nuclear family - the father, the breadwinner, lives together with his wife, who is a housewife, and their children. This idea excluded many families, who were subsequently seen as being less than perfect. Nevertheless, this type of family is still considered ideal by many people today, both in popular culture and in the academic world (McGraw and Walker 2004:176-177). During the ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s, many factors, such as the sexual revolution, the feminist movement and the fact that more and more women were working, changed the structure of marriage and family. The rates of divorce soared in the last decades of the 20th century and marriage was no longer “the pivotal subsystem within the family system” (Sabatelli and Ripoll 2004:79). Divorce, not death, became a reason why marriages ended (Sabatelli and Ripoll 2004:86). This drastic change occurred not because the marriages were better in the past, but because men and women have become less dependant on their marriages and because of the dramatic shifts that have taken place in society as a whole (Sabatelli and Ripoll 2004:87). As a consequence, families have become more diverse. Nevertheless, Smith decides to talk about two quite typical families. Through this, she makes us see the abnormal in what is accepted as normal.

2.1 Left and Right

Contemporary American politics is polarized, just like these two families and their worldviews. As Janoff-Bulman (2009:120) explains, Americans see each other as being on opposite sides:

We categorize ourselves as Left or Right, blue or red, liberal or conservative, and these labels provide a deep sense of both group identity and moral satisfaction. We are convinced of our own side’s superiority, viewing our positions as self-evident and eminently justifiable and the other’s perspective as unreasonable and ethically suspect.

Classical liberalism cherishes the idea of individual freedom. The only reason a person should obey external authority is his or her harming others. Freedom should not be sacrificed for the sake of obeying tradition (Coman 2006:60.) However, present-day liberalism believes that the role of the government is not just to provide freedom for individuals to pursue their own interests, but to take into account the interests of all individuals in a particular society (Cecil 1994:370). Conservatives strongly believe in objective moral order to which each individual should adhere. According to them, the existing social order should not be changed so easily because it is a product of long and difficult social struggle.

Conservatives believe we are all equal before God and before law, but inequality is something that cannot and should not be avoided (Coman 2006:61). For example, Monty Kipps believes rights are earned. He is against affirmative action which he thinks encourages a culture of victimhood (367-368). He wants to stop Claire Malcolm's practice of having students in her poetry class who are not enrolled at Wellington and who do not have any academic qualifications. Monty feels this gives these young people misleading expectations (365).

According to Janoff-Bulman (2009:121-122), the basic difference between political left and right is that liberals are motivated by the desire to provide, whereas conservatives are motivated by the desire to protect. For this reason, conservatives tend to focus on negative aspects such as danger and threat, while liberals focus on positive outcomes and gains. The former believe that individuals should rely on themselves, while the latter recognize that individuals do not live in the same circumstances and do not have the same opportunities. Therefore, it is no wonder that conservatives admire virtues such as toughness and liberals appreciate generosity. Liberals insist on social justice by fairer redistribution of income and wealth, while conservatives are strongly in favour of preserving social order by prohibiting a behaviour they perceive as threatening and damaging. Liberals emphasize that every person should have autonomy over their body, health and intimate relationships, whereas conservatives believe that an individual should have autonomy over wealth accumulation and distribution. If you are a conservative, you will expect of your group members to obey group norms concerning lifestyle and personal behaviour - thus it comes as no surprise that Monty Kipps is anti-gay and a fervent Christian. Liberals are united by the same objective, social justice, and not by group homogeneity. Janoff-Bulman (2009:126) concludes:

Protecting and providing are reflected in dramatic differences regarding how best to serve society and what is worth attending to - potential gains or possible losses, social justice or social order, and prohibitions that restrain personal behaviors or interventions that advance social welfare... In the halls of politics racking up another point for one's side often seems more important than the broader interests of society.

2.2 The Belseys and the Kippses

The novel is structured around the above mentioned opposites existing in America's political and academic life, embodied by the two families, the Belseys and the Kippses. Through mutual interaction, they change one another and the conflicting worlds are forced to recognize their own hollowness (Tynan 2008:75).

Monty Kipps and Howard Belsey have more in common than they would like to admit. Both are strongly opinionated and do not have a desire to acknowledge any perspective other than their own. Howard's career is at a standstill. After ten years at Wellington, he still does not have tenure and it looks like his book on Rembrandt is not going to be finished any time soon. He is trying to make amends with his wife, who is not too willing to forgive his infidelity. Inside his own household, he acts more like a conservative dictator than a tolerant liberal, since the whole family has to adhere to his principles and opinions. He is an art historian who rejects the concept of beauty and interprets art using the principle of deconstruction (Tew 2010:103). This is Howard's way to separate himself from his humble working class origins and its aesthetics, which is represented by his

father's admiration of the Mona Lisa (Anjaria 2008:44). Howard has tried very hard to break away from his background. After he was free of his own family, he lived in communes and squats. Today, he lives in his mother-in-law's house, which he coveted for a long time, and now sees himself as "a man hustled by circumstances into spaces that he rejected politically, personally, aesthetically, as a concession to his family" (Smith 2004:34). On the other hand, Monty Kipps has published a successful book on Rembrandt and has succeeded in publicly humiliating Howard by exposing a mistake he made while criticizing Kipps's work. Monty is more successful than Howard. He is one of those intellectuals who take part in public life and enjoy the limelight. Kipps stirs the campus with his conservative views. He wants to stop the practice of discretionary students and, because of this, finds himself in the opposite corner of Zora Belsey. Of all of Belsey's children, Zora is most like her father. She puts theories between herself and the world. As her mother notices, Zora lives through footnotes (70). She very passionately defends the rights of discretionary students, because she enjoys making a fuss, but also because she is in love with Carl, who attends poetry classes with her, even though he is not a student at Wellington. Zora and Howard dread people who are against affirmative action, like Monty Kipps, but both appear to be very uncomfortable around people who are not like them. Howard politely tells Carl he is not welcome at the Belseys's anniversary party just because of the way he looks (105). When Zora talks to Carl for the first time on her own, she is scared that he might steal something from her and her family:

Again Zora's paranoia got the better of her. She imagined for a moment that all these questions were a kind of verbal grooming that would later lead - by routes she didn't pause to imagine - to her family home and her mother's jewellery and the safe in the basement. (139)

When a neighbour suspects that Levi is dangerous just because of the colour of his skin and the way he is dressed, Zora angrily yells at the neighbour and wonders what is wrong with those people (83). She fails to see that she is one of those people. The "sea of white" (206), as Kiki describes Wellington, seems even whiter when compared to the strangest array of different people who come to pay their last respects to Carlene Kipps.

Two wives, Kiki and Carlene, start an unusual friendship. Both are married to intellectuals and, in many ways, live in their shadows. For most of their marriage, Howard imposes his point of view on Kiki without any trouble. She has dedicated her whole life to her family. When Kiki tries to justify her desire to befriend Monty Kipps's wife, she says to Jerome:

You have friends, Jerome. And Zora has friends, and Levi practically lives with his friends - and - Kiki followed the thought to the edge of the cliff and beyond - "well, we sure as hell know now how close your father is to his friends - and what? I can't make friends? Y'all have your life and I have no life?" (165)

Michael Kipps thinks their family is very close because they put the effort in and because his mother is a traditional figure who has dedicated her life to nurturing her children (35). Carlene does not regret that she has spent her life living for someone else, but Kiki is startled by these words and criticizes Carlene for thinking like that. Her words reflect her own life and now Kiki sees that the person

she has dedicated her life to is not worth it. When she argues with Howard, she admits this as she says:

I staked my whole life on you. And I have no idea any more why I did that... I gave up my life for you. I don't even know who I am any more. (206)

Both women find comfort in each other as they are both profoundly lonely. Kiki has been betrayed by her husband, whom she considered her best friend. Carlene has cancer and decides to hide this from her family. Both women are going through a crisis and doing it all on their own. After Carlene dies, Monty, shocked by Carlene's decision to leave a valuable painting to none other than Kiki Belsey, says:

Clearly in some way your mother felt close to Mrs Belsey. She'd been left alone a lot in the last few months, by all of us... She made this friend. (280).

Kiki finds out later that her husband has had another affair with the much younger Victoria Kipps. She is his student, was engaged to their son and attends the same classes as their daughter. It is also revealed that Monty is having an affair with a discretionary student who is doing an internship with him. His adultery appears even greater because this young girl lived with his family under the same roof in London. Thus, their unfaithfulness can be seen as complete disloyalty towards their families. The Kippses betray the woman who has dedicated her whole life to them by disregarding her last wish to leave the valuable painting to her friend, Kiki. They value the painting's economic worth more than the last wish of their mother and wife.

Victoria and Jerome have had opinions and beliefs thrust upon them for all their lives. They are trying to find out who they are by rebelling against what they know and what they have been taught. Jerome falls in love with the Kippses because they are completely different from his own family. He is fascinated by their worldview, mutual relationships and lifestyle, and Victoria just represents an embodiment of his infatuation with the whole family. During his internship in London, Jerome experiences the world far away from his parents. Something similar happens to Victoria, who travels for the first time on her own through Europe. Smith describes her as being "flush with social and sexual success of her first summer abroad without her family" (45). Her promiscuous behaviour is the exact opposite of her traditional upbringing. At the very idea that his sister is not a virgin anymore, Michael Kipps becomes furious and aggressive. Just like Jerome's, her behaviour is the exact opposite of what she has been taught for all her life. Disagreements between Victoria and her father are obvious when they arrive at the Belsey's party - she rolls her eyes when he speaks and reacts petulantly when he criticizes her interests (113 - 114). The man she chooses to be involved with can also be seen as a way of defying her father and her upbringing. Her short-lived relationship with Jerome seems like a cry for attention, just like Kiki believes Jerome is looking for his father's attention by doing an internship with the man Howard despises. This is followed by an affair with Howard. Her last love interest is Carl, a discretionary student. Monty Kipps thinks this young man is not good enough for Wellington, let alone for his daughter. For Ridout (2012:118), Victoria's character "remains a disruptive and problematic one throughout the novel". Because of her vulgar and provocative behaviour, Walters (2008:137) sees

her as a stereotype of a black woman defined by her sexuality, which, at times, seems overwhelming. Jerome tries to explain this to his sister:

She's not really that vain. She just hasn't settled into her looks. She's still young. She hasn't decided what to do with it yet. It's a powerful thing, you know, to look like that. (Smith 2004:241)

Victoria does appear to be ill-equipped for the power her body has bestowed on her. In tears, she says to Howard that her face, her breasts and her hips are the only things that anyone ever wants from her (390). She is overwhelmed by other people's perception of herself. Although her sexuality can be seen as something that defines her, she uses it as a way to rebel against the constraints of her upbringing. The narrow paths she has been given have made her desire the extreme routes. Monty Kipps fails to protect his daughter from the pitfalls of the outside world. His one-sided perspective pushes his daughter in the opposite direction, just like Jerome readily embraces the Kippses just because they are everything the Belseys are not. Howard fails to provide a healthy environment for his children where they can express themselves and be free individuals. Howard's narcissism is pointed out by Kiki, Jerome and Victoria. This self-centered nature makes him blind to the needs of others, which is the exact opposite of liberal ideals (Tew 2010:100).

Levi, just like Victoria and Jerome, tries to create his own identity, but he does this by reinventing himself. He makes up a character that has nothing in common with his true background, so he speaks with a Brooklyn accent and lies about where he really lives. Levi is a typical teenager, who still cannot fully grasp the world and its perplexing mechanisms but he recognizes the hypocrisy of his family. Levi steals the painting from Monty Kipps in order to give the money back to the Haitian people. He thinks it is unjust that people in Haiti live in such poor conditions, while their valuable art is taken from them. Ironically, it is the same painting that the Kippses decided to keep for themselves, despite Carlene's last wish to leave the painting to Kiki. Because of Levi's theft, Monty Kipps' dishonesty is exposed, despite his supposedly high-minded disposition. Levi also forces Kiki to see that the Belseys do not live according to the ideals they preach. He reproaches his mother that she is paying her cleaner only four dollars an hour, which would not be the case if she were from the States and not from Haiti. Levi sees the awful truth:

People in Haiti, they got nothing, right? We living off these people, man! We - we - living off! We sucking their blood - we're like vampires! You OK, married to your white man in the land of plenty - you OK. You doing fine. You're living off these people, man! (428)

Kiki eventually decides to sell the painting and give the money to the Haitian people just like Levi wanted. This act is an admission that Levi's words were the inconvenient truth she chose not to see.

3. Conclusion

On Beauty is about individuals who struggle to find their place in a bewildering world and use their political views as a shield and a distraction from

themselves and other people. It emphasizes the need for mutual respect, tolerance, loyalty and honesty. As Smith explains:

I'm really not interested in whether somebody is a conservative or not. I'm interested in what kind of human being he is when he makes various life choices. Sometimes that can be completely subsumed by politics and ideology, but I was interested in looking at two men who believe that their ideology is king, when actually it doesn't have impact on their day-to-day decision-making. (Tew 2010:92)

The beautiful old home where the Belseys live has one very interesting feature. The original windows are the most valuable part of their house and, for this reason, they are kept in a big safe in the basement. Nobody looks at the world through valuable windows for they are too precious to be used. The characters in *On Beauty* choose not to look outside themselves through things that are fragile, but which are the most valuable parts of their being. They avoid seeing the simplest truths and choose to look at the world through things that have little significance. When Jerome, Levi and Zora meet each other by accident, Jerome reflects on their relationship and its simplicity:

He did not consider if or how or why he loved them. They were just love: they were the first evidence he ever had of love, and they would be the last confirmation of love when everything else fell away. (236)

Such simple quiet love found in family is easily forgotten and taken for granted, but such love teaches us how to see and accept others, despite gaping differences.

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READING IN THE DARK: IRISH LITERARY IDENTITY

DRAGANA R. MAŠOVIĆ

University of Niš

Abstract: *The concept of literary identity is here used to emphasize the ways in which the author of a literary work can use the storage of the traditional techniques at his disposal to symbolically illuminate the social, historical, cultural and intellectual phenomena of his time. These techniques, which are part of the author's art, become the means of constructing his literary identity.*

The result is the profound expression of an individual experience of a certain social and cultural history. The novel "Reading in the Dark" (1996) by Seamus Deane illustrates such an experience.

Key words: *identity, Irish tradition, literary identity*

1. Introduction. Discussing literary identity

The present paper deals with two questions: What gives a certain literary work its distinct quality within the world of literature? and How can we know that the story is Irish (apart from relying on extra-literary data)? The answer to the latter does not focus on the "national" identity as constructed in literature (Powell 2004:3), but on "literature" as a set of tendencies that we relate to the Irish literary legacy. This implies forms, structures and modes created in the course of Irish literary history that surface in contemporary literary works such as the autobiographical novel *Reading in the Dark* (1996) by the prominent Irish author Seamus Deane.

2. Seamus Deane and the Irish literary identity

The expression "Irish literary identity" almost always means "the identity of Ireland or Irish people" as constructed in literature. Rarely does it deal with "a kind of literature as written in Ireland or by Irish people". The explanation for this partly lies in the overwhelming insistence on the ideological concepts of identity and its various sub-forms (national, gender-related, racial, political, colonial, local, etc.). In other words, social, ideological, political and cultural concerns have taken predominance over the literary. Thus, literature, for much of its history an *ancilla* to history, ideology or politics as well as a "construction worker" of identities, now is estimated as a too long, too demanding, or even too risky and dangerous kind of cultural programming, acceptable only in its shorter and ideologically (assumed) harmless forms. Therefore, its "identity" – its aesthetic quality - is much too often disregarded or pushed to the margin. In this paper, however, this identity is seen in terms of the peculiarities of the literary tradition in Ireland.

2.1 The concept of literary identity

If we accept the concept of literary identity as a set of tendencies which make one literary tradition distinct from others, we can then make another point:

our focus is on the concept of “tradition” rather than on “nationality”. More exactly, we presume that authors were born within a certain cultural and social ambience, that they have mastered their trade and ways of articulating their thoughts and feelings within a certain literary framework and that they have constructed their literary identity by using the features of their literary legacy. It is the legacy that they choose from and build upon. The act of choosing makes their literary identities an open, dynamic and “open to negotiation” literary creative space. Relying, as T. S. Eliot stated, on his “historical sense”, an author has not only “the whole of the literature of Europe”, but also “the whole of the literature of his own country” (Eliot 1973: 505) at his disposal. This can serve as a general framework, a map of literary history, a storeroom of impressions, phrases, images and experiences. It is the material for a new work of art (that will, following Eliot (1973: 506), in its turn, have an impact “on all the works of art which preceded it”). It begins to exist when the author starts a dialogue with his social, cultural, political, as well as literary inheritance.

2.2 Irish literary identity

In *Reading in the Dark* (1996), there is true wealth of fictional forms and tellers of tales. One of them is the narrator’s aunt, Kathie, the proponent of the original authentic oral storytelling skill. She is the one to delineate the main body of the identity framework, which has, in this novel, the form of a “labyrinthine plot” (Deane 1996:62). She tells the stories to her cousins, the children of the given family, but even when her listeners grow up, she would still tell stories of a different kind, like a true *seanchai*, a storyteller and historian in early Ireland, a prominent public figure and keeper of collective memories. Therefore, Kathie stands for the framework outline, a large set of stories which have found, in one way or another, their place in Deane’s novel, in itself a mixture of detective, Gothic, ghost, black humour, thriller, horror, grotesque prose genres. The novel is shaped to accommodate this variety: it consists of a series of vignettes, short stories and even shorter ones inserted in them, anecdotes and reminiscences, often given an enclosed form and ending with effective exit lines. The patchwork of stories is unified by the voice of the nameless narrator (“the boy”), who carefully marks the dates of the personal and communal events referred to in the novel.

The fact that the novel takes the form of connected yet short sketches, written in the first person, evokes an oral rather than written tradition; it resembles a set of storytelling sessions, with the narrator as a teller of tales. The modern *seanchai* tells us a story, let’s say, about his own growing up (*Bildungsroman*) in the atmosphere of the Troubles, in the Northern Ireland city of Derry. Only this time we are not sitting in a circle round him, but in our homes, holding his book in our hands, with the lights on. It would be, he claims, a completely different thing to try to read it in the dark.

2.2.1 Reading in the dark

Another thought-provoking aspect of Deane’s literary technique is suggested in the very title of the novel: “reading in the dark”. It implies an apparently impossible situation: the story is not meant for any “daylight reading”. The lights should go out – the way they go out for the narrator when his elder brother orders

him to turn them off and go to sleep – and the narrator finds himself “reading” the texts illuminated by the inner light of his curious and imaginative mind.

In the darkness, the daylight versions are doubted, explored, questioned. In the darkness, the mind begins its search for truth. In other words, the narrator intrudes into the treasury of *seanchai* or Aunt Kathie, gets involved in a labyrinthine plot, his family story burdened with family secrets (Ross 2007), and from there, he starts his search for a way out. His investigation is an archetypal quest for truth (or part of the Romantic tradition of self-discovery) (Ross 2007). By “reading in the dark” or interrogating the nature of the fictions gathering in and around him, the boy tries to get the primary cause or, symbolically, the Original Sin that had led to his family’s curse, deaths, losses and suffering – the final melancholy. In other words, he tries to find the Original Story most probably hidden in the maze of many versions.

2.2.2 Strange little alliances

Another important tendency present in Deane’s novel, concerning literary identity, is the following: the traditional framework with its labyrinthine structure is used here not only to block or captivate the process of getting to the truth/solution/exit of/from the story, but also to open up its numerous renderings and possibilities. Above all, it boastfully stresses its capacity to branch into numerous corridors, fables and fantasies. Thus, tradition is given a double sense – it is both a framework within which to articulate one’s personal experience and one within which one should start a dialogue with it.

The questions posed by the narrator show how many tales are just ornaments created by “strange little alliances” (Deane 1996:189) people make up in their heads, trying to assert their versions of reality in conversations and thus prove their points, pretending they are in the know). While “reading” the stories, the narrator detects superstition, delusion, falsehood, at places where the truth is wished for. His mother gives an explanation: much of what is produced as a story is stemming from the country people’s need to explain everything in personal terms, to always find some blame somewhere and to “storify” it.

Mother does it, too, in her construct of one family mystery, the death of the narrator’s uncle Eddie, an IRA member. Her story “cancelled all others” (217); with all the witnesses silenced or in exile or dead, the boy’s search for truth becomes a difficult endeavour. He has to revise his relationship with Mother as his cognitive process is unfolding and as he is trying to create logical connections between the many stories. This is an emotionally painful process, exerting pressure on the participants in the quest. It is filled with the iconography of the Roman Catholic dogma, with the dominant metaphor of infernal fire as punishment for sin, especially when it comes to the main actor of the family story, Mother. It is in her that the fire is most often “burning, burning, burning” (219)

2.2.3 Choice of pain

An intense religious experience shaping some of the stories could be seen as another marker of Irish literary experience. The boy can interpret his family past in terms of personal/collective fall, sin and remorse. Without it, he would not be able to “read” his mother’s story. He feels her pain, he recognizes in her wailing the same cries as in the mythical *banshee*, yet, he relentlessly proceeds with his search.

Instruction comes from the school assigned work on the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order. In meditating upon the assignment, the boy learns the importance – life-shaping and life-sustaining – of the concept of choice. But this is not an ordinary choice: it is the one we would make just before dying, the boy learns. In it, the boy feels, there lies the true meaning of adulthood, maturity and responsibility. In it, the boy concludes, the real pain awaits for him (as he puts it, the more he knew, the more trouble it took him to know). Thus, his search in a dither of light and dark becomes more adamant and troublesome.

2.2.4 “Bad history”

On his journey through the labyrinth, the boy would be occasionally seduced by the richness of tradition, led astray under the spell of a treasure of Irish stories and myths, fantastic stories about fantastic beings. The Irish national mythology, with the *Book of Invasions*, set up a pattern for some archetypes. Since they are too numerous to be listed here, we can name only a few that can rightfully be considered markers of Irish literary identity. For instance, no one ever dies in the story about the settlement of Ireland. Wave after wave of newcomers come and defeat the natives only to be themselves defeated by another wave of warriors. But none of them ever dies or ceases to exist in any way: they are merely transferred to another place, a mound, lake or river, where they continue to exist, as underground creatures, “good or bad fairies”, as Aunt Kathie calls them. Likewise, people mostly disappear rather than die. In the Irish legends about places, there exists the Field of the Disappeared, the place where all creatures, who dare step on it, disappear. Even the birds avoid flying over it. But, again, the fact that they disappear does not mean that they are dead. As ghosts or shadows, they haunt the living, coming from the mid-air. This is, as mentioned in the novel, because of the “bad Irish history.” By creating their strange alliances, country people have produced a plethora of heroes, martyrs, saints – romanticized victims of their whimsical, violent and cruel ways that translated facts into fiction, history into pseudo-history, and the actors into ghost-like creatures, protagonists of different stories. “Bad histories” easily lead to “cruel births”, a phrase that policeman Burke uses when talking about the Civil War and Northern Ireland.

In the narrator’s story, the “cruel birth” of his “bad history” refers to the chronologically first murder of an Irish journalist, killed by the police forces. He is symbolically named Neill, which is not only the name of the mythological founder of Ulster, Neill (of the Nine Hostages), but also of one of its most prominent dynasties, O’Neill. This marks the beginning of the sectional conflict and starts a series of violent acts as well as a series of stories.

Also haunting is the ghost of Eddie, who is never actually present in the story, but only takes the form of shadow gunmen, like IRA men in general. Symbolically, his story is alive, so much so that the boy is, at one point, almost labelled an informer, just like his uncle. And, in general, the stories about informers, betrayal and guilt, are archetypal for Irish prose.

Probably the most vivid example of a ghost-like presence is the story about the IRA executioner. On the surface, it is like a folk fantasy about the misfortune of a man named Larry, who suffered a sexual encounter with a she-devil in the form of a fox. She apparently destroyed his reproductive organs so that Larry is doomed to bachelorhood, loneliness and utter alienation from society. This is the “daylight

version” of the story about the “man who had sex with the devil” (130), fit to be considered a true folk fantasy. But the dark version reveals Larry as the executioner. He then appears as an embodiment of death-in-life, of the man standing in the street dressed like a dead body in the coffin – the assigned role of executioner prevents him from being either completely dead or alive (Deane 1996:173). Executions, killings, epidemics, conflicts, and many other elements of the “bad history” are shifting their shapes in the collective memory as stories and tales. The most prominent example may be another archetype taken from mythology, the shape shifter.

2.2.5 Shape shifters

Having undergone a story-telling treatment, an executioner may become a man possessed by a she-devil. A man who has been killed may turn into a ghost and go on living like a ghost. The transformation is made possible because, as mentioned above, country people create stories to avoid the truth that can destabilize their lives. This process involves covering up for their own wrong choices and mistakes which, when made in small communities, cannot possibly pass unnoticed. Instead, they affect everyone’s life, which makes it indispensable to shift their shapes into fiction. This is a devilish thing, the boy concludes. A shape disappears and reappears as a silhouette or a ghost, to haunt individuals or the whole community.

2.2.6 *Aisling* - Deane’s political-patriotic Oedipus

The book the boy is reading when ordered to turn off the lights is *The Shan Van Vocht*, written by James Murphy in 1889. Its subtitle is “A Story of the United Irishmen”. It introduces an incarnation of the mythical goddess also appearing in many Irish dream visions or *aisling*, one of the early mythological medieval forms in Irish literature. She is presented as a domineering woman - Mother or queen, maiden, hag (usually collective representations of Ireland) - calling upon young men to fight for her and thus restore her freedom and unity. The boy has such a dream vision of his own mother. Yet, the myth also has it that the demanding queen, Mother or Ireland, sends its young sons to death. She turns out to be destructive, manipulative and unforgiving. In the novel, Mother is the one who hides the truth, manipulates the lives of her family members and finally detaches herself from her own son when he discovers the truth. In many ways, this is an Oedipal story. Its main character also strongly reminds us of William Faulkner’s young man, Quentin Compson, who, similarly, tries to discover the truth about the fall of the American South. In Deane’s novel, as in Faulkner’s, the ancient myth is also read as symbolic of a collective rather than individual experience. Father dies in ignorance and shame, Mother preserves her family through secrecy and lies. Son finds out the truth but, following his mother’s wishes, he has to bury it, which is the most painful thing of all: his final decision concerns Father, who must never discover the truth. It would have destroyed his illusion about Mother (that is, Ireland), but it would have restored his dignity and helped him die honourably and in peace with himself.

That is how the novel ends, in silence, at the point where it starts, the landing on the family’s home staircase, a place of encounter with the family ghosts. There

is also a small window, through which one can see the sky and the cathedral in which the Father's body is lying in the coffin. Therefore, it is up to him to decide, after all, to spare his Father's troubled soul further pain.

3. Conclusion. Shape-shifting stories

Deane's novel is full of Irish markers: shape-shifters, prophets or paedophiles (Crazy Joe or "insane in the head", *illuminati*), *aisling*, *banshee*, informers and traitors, devils and executioners. In addition, they are subjected to critical revision, together with some well-known general European myths and their American counterparts. In Ireland, they take on a specific significance when understood in the context of the Irish literary and cultural tradition.

Carefully hiding her own guilt in the family tragic history and flirtatious with her choices, Mother (Ireland) prefers the world of lies, kitschy pathetic stories and fantastic fables, strange alliances made allegedly for her interests. This choice makes two of her "heroes", father and son, fail: one dies as a figure of shame, the other leaves home as a frustrated hero. All this takes place in even more frustrating circumstances: street fights in Derry, explosions and killings, police and counter-police actions, in addition to an already tense atmosphere in schoolrooms and churches. What the boy discovers at this moment of "bad history" is merely his own doom.

This discovery turns him into a mythical hero, this time a searcher for truth. He enters the labyrinth of fictional creations and tries to find a liberating truth or exit from the maze of the collective and personal stories, filled with all sorts of strange creatures which are obstacles to finding the truth; yet, they are the mounds that hide Irish never fully dead skeletons. They are Druid spells, the fantasies blurring the seeker's views, yet they are the guidelines showing him the way to the truth. They are the fields in which the living disappear into myths; yet, they are the places where they reappear as possible signs of hidden truths. They are fictionally incarnated as caves, fields or even the ancient throne of wishes as well as of assassinations; yet, they are the places where the hero, following their thread, leaves traces of himself and his own troubled questing soul. They are the great works in which the truth-seeker feels confused and scared yet, not failing to appreciate their beauty. This ambivalent attitude is, in essence, a test of his own initiation into manhood.

The truth-seeker, the boy, enters the labyrinth determined to question its iconography, mythology and fantasy. He gets out of it in silence, with a sort of religious feeling of leaving the innocent to God's care, and with the sympathy for the guilty cherished in his heart. Silence is a feature of ghosts and ghost-like cultures. His life, like that of so many others, is now buried in it. Even when the noise starts, the real noise of the Troubles given by street fights, bomb explosions, and media reports, the family silence covers up the truth. The mysteries are buried. The secrets are buried – the destroyed rose garden (also symbolic of Ireland) is paved to cover up the family feud. The only visible signs are shadows, silhouettes, "swellings inside. When the boy decides not to say anything to his father about his mother's sins, and her father's sins, he also turns into a ghost – another martyr, another manipulated young man, another silent son that Mother (Ireland) has given birth to.

Seamus Deane, the creator and interrogator of stories, enters the labyrinth taking on the voice of the boy, starting his long-day's-journey through the maze,

from the periphery of its literary, fictional and mythological aspect, to its core comprising a far more profound and universal view of man and his doomed community. In other words, he starts from his own initial digressions, insertions and wrong choices, becoming more and more sure of himself, of his own single story line, like his own hero, the boy. Also, like the boy, he incessantly poses questions and doubts and subverts the literary while, at the same time, creating it.

Yet, unlike the boy's, Deane's story confirms his refusal to remain silent very much in the manner of the old Irish bards, whose tongue was often virulent, sharp and lashing. In autocratic societies, this kind of talks was regarded as subversive and it was often severely punished. To avoid punishment, the bards were habituated to double-talking, relying on their wit, shrewdness and wisdom, to code their repertoire of poems and stories in rich allegories and extended metaphors. Building a story upon story, "opening their endless possibilities in the dark" whose "echoes and echoes" never really ended, they refused "gliding away into the darkness of absolute silence" (Deane 1996:221). The duality of their literary procedure, imposed by many years of oppression, colonialism and violence, or, in other words, the coded truth, is a significant legacy, creating painful, troublesome yet impressive works. To sum up, these tricks of imagination, this twofold use of tradition, of language and of the inherited literary expressions and techniques may be considered a prominent feature of the Irish literary identity as embodied in Deane's novel. For his characters as well as ancient bards, obviously, silence was not all. But talking was. So many other literatures, of other countries, of other authors, have yet to understand that.

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TECHNIQUES OF INDIRECTION IN TWO GENERATIONS OF POSTCOLONIAL POETS

IOANA ZIRRA
University of Bucharest

Abstract: *The protracted colonial consequences of Ireland's Troubles are made manifest in indirect, witty, baroque poems through which two generations of poets communicate intertextually: Seamus Heaney and Derek Mahon's generation connects with Paul Muldoon's. The intertextual complexities manifest in seven Northern Irish dialogic poems will be analyzed by adapting Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) novelistic image principles, to explain how contemporary poetry responds to the Joycean incentive of writing so as to transcend direct lyricism and be indirect (just as modernist fiction did when shunning straight narrative), in the progressive dramatic form, "wherein the artist presents his image in immediate relation to others" (Joyce 1992:232).*

Keywords: *dialogic poetry, intertext, cultural memory, postcolonial Belfast Group, remediation*

1. Introduction

To communicate, poetry juggles with memory in the public space, constructing and revisiting "sites of memory" (Pierre Nora's term in 1989), remediating them (bringing them to public attention in renewed memory broadcasts, as theorized in the cultural memory frame by Astrid Erll (2008:389-398).

I shall demonstrate how dialogic, intertextual indirection paradoxically works to bring the artist's image "in immediate relation to others" (Joyce 1992:232), by focusing on the communication between generations of poets who belong to The Belfast Group and on the techniques which allow them to share (inter)textual memories. Indirection disengages literal, lyrical statements, just as the novelistic image used by Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) to theorize about discourse in literature should be plucked out from the mimetic continuum to acquire its full significance. In this paper, I chart the way one is invited to move back from the poems of the younger and notoriously intertextual Irish jongleur, Paul Muldoon, to the familiar loci of Seamus Heaney's and Derek Mahon's poetry. My guide in addressing the obliquity of Irish poetic discourse has been Shane Alcobia-Murphy's *Sympathetic Ink: Intertextual Relations in Northern Irish Poetry* (2006).

This paper also addresses the shift from what John Wilson Foster (1991) still called "colonial consequences" in Irish literature to the emergence of Ireland as a postcolonial space, due to the last Irish Troubles that burst out in the wake of the international riot year - 1968. Nearly fifty years after the North became a post-war dominion and after the South became the Free State, in 1921 and, respectively, in 1922, direct rule from Westminster replaced the devolution of power to Northern Ireland in 1972, in response to four years of sustained Troubles caused by sectarian violence. The loss of autonomy and the militarization of Northern Ireland (which was turned from a governable dominion into a province), sectarian bombing, internment, street riots and protests made the population experience once again times of bitter struggle, just as on the eve of decolonization. It was then that the Belfast Group or Belfast Poets gained their place in the canon of contemporary

English literature. They made a difference and spoke about the wounds of the past, remediating them, in a war - embittered jargon that very few Europeans, who enjoyed peace, were prepared to understand. Traumatic indirection, in both the Protestant Anglo-Irish vein and the subaltern nationalist and Catholic tradition, drew upon the past to understand the present.

Derek Mahon's satires (for example, the anthological *A Disused Shed in County Wexford*, first published 1979, and here selected from his 1993 volume of poems) brought to the fore the sores of the Unionists, who felt abandoned after decolonization, since they had been successfully acculturated by British Englishness. Michael Longley's poetic reminiscences of the First World War poems written from the trenches were published as implicit comparisons with the Northern Irish urban theatres of operations in the 1970s. Seamus Heaney's conflict poems reached for analogies further and further back into pre-historical and mythical time circles, to chronicle the ongoing Troubles (which represented a regular civil war, though never really acknowledged as such).

Born twelve years later than either Michael Longley or Seamus Heaney, and only ten years after Derek Mahon, Paul Muldoon writes smart and increasingly complicated, always hesitant poems, which respond to famous poetic statements that preceded them by a short period of time; in this way, he establishes them as public landmarks, even monuments. When speaking about the Troubles otherwise than through allusions, Muldoon's reminiscing voice can be mildly sarcastic, closer to Mahon's, as in *The Boundary Commission* (1980). As it is one of Muldoon's simplest poems, *The Boundary Commission* will be used to introduce the accents of his voice. A versatile conversationalist, Muldoon oscillates in his poetry between nostalgic pieties and quizzical incursions into the recent past, where he meets and takes up the poetic strands of his predecessors in the Belfast Group of literary devotees. For example, *A Dent* (Muldoon 2012), a poem dedicated to Michael Allen, a lecturer at Queen's University, just as Seamus Heaney (and, again, as Heaney, one of the mentors of the Belfast Group after Philip Hobsbawm's departure to Glasgow) acquires its full significance once the witty intertextuality with Heaney's Irish (and peasant) ars poetica in *Digging* (1966) is acknowledged. The same holds true for Muldoon's intertextual interpellation of Derek Mahon's *The Last of the Fire Kings* (1975) and of Heaney's *The Tollund Man* (1972) in *Milkweed and Monarch* (1994). Dialogic compulsion prompts Paul Muldoon's indirect connection, through witty intertextualities, with his mentors' poems. He feels a need to return to memorable, more familiar poems, in order to give definitive form to his word-installations and figures. Sometimes, he returns to his own poetic statements to broadcast and establish them as familiar, public reference points.

I shall also refer to the intra-textuality connecting Muldoon's own *Milkweed and Monarch* with *Mushroom Gathering* (in the 1983 volume *Quoof*). In cultural memory terms, as explained by Astrid Erll (2008:389-398) and Ann Rigney (2004:345 and 2008:353), this means that Paul Muldoon remediates, makes public and more enduring through his poetic eloquence the sites of memory, calibrators or portable literary monuments in times marked as the age of the recent Irish Troubles. Foreign readers can be admitted to such times by paradoxically establishing a direct connection with some intertextual poems' indirection.

2. The poems

The demonstration of the intertextual, dialogic methods of indirect communication in Irish poetry will begin from the later poet's texts to evoke the earlier and more widely known poems. This will indicate techniques of indirection inherent in intertextuality and intra-textuality, which reveal the warring, dialogic potentials of discourses responding to each other from behind the stage. The role of the indirect poet, and of his critic, is to draw, as if in sympathetic ink, such discursive encounters.

2.1 *The Boundary Commission*

This poem's title refers to the Anglo-Irish Treaty Commission appointed to decide (for the better government of Ireland, as an earlier document of this name had stipulated) whether or not it was possible to establish an international boundary in Ireland and divide the country into two units with two separate parliaments, after the Anglo-Irish War. Eventually, two separate countries were established, on the advice of the Commission, as this was in the interest of the Irish Unionists, who held the real power and secured a separate, monarchical constitution in Northern Ireland with British help, although the Anglo-Irish War had been won arms in hand by the nationalist forces fighting for independence and creating the Irish Free State. Notice, therefore, the polyvalent aura of sarcasm surrounding the reminiscence of this event in Muldoon's poem:

You remember that village where the border ran
Down the middle of the street,
With the butcher and baker in different states?
Today he remarked how a shower of rain

Had stopped so cleanly across Golightly's lane
It might have been a wall of glass
That had toppled over. He stood there, for ages,
To wonder which side, if any, he should be on.

The dreamy, quizzical tone of the poem is due to the montage of the clever conversation that opens the poem and that continues as an anecdote touched by the miraculous. Notice the counterpointed reminiscing voices and personal pronouns of Muldoon's inherently dialogical poetry, overlapping the familiar with the fabulous in its witty processing the wider subtextual political threads. The challenge to the reader is to find out what bridges the gaps in this discourse that resounds with indirection in a field of forces which oppose attitudes and mix registers. The wall of glass is astounding, just as the Great Irish Elk taken out of the peat in Seamus Heaney's *Bogland* (1969); it makes the poem become memorable, always on second thought and from underneath the literal level, in a way that is the equivalent of an art installation which interpellates a virtual public with framed exhibits.

2.2 *A Dent*

The sonnet *A Dent*, in Muldoon's 2012 collection *Songs and Sonnets*, remediates the poem *Digging* by Seamus Heaney. That is, it returns compulsively,

as it were, and publicly to the earlier published text, making it function as a poetic site of memory and granting it memorability, in terms of the cultural memory analysts, Pierre Nora (1989), Astrid Erll (2008), and Anne Rigney (2004, 2008). The intertext, which the poem hides or inaugurates, proves this. Both poems explain the condition of the writer's mission, enacting it. Their meditation is on the legacy of generations turned into words that endure; their words are drawn from an agrarian scene, "a rural scene, sweet rural scene", as in the reminiscence from Hopkins's *Binsey Poplars* (1991). But whereas Heaney's title, *Digging*, is justified right after the first two lines, Muldoon's verse seems to simply ramble. *A Dent* begins with the description of a rare angle of vision: from "the height of one stall at odds with the next in your grandfather's byre/Where cattle allowed themselves to speak only at Yule". Next, it voices doubts about why someone addressed as 'you' "taught us to admire the capacity of a three-legged stool to take pretty much everything in its stride"—and then there follows an avalanche of reminiscences, about local paraphernalia, circumstances and lore: "the card-carrying Crow who let out a war-whoop" sighted from the perspective of a "now" when "your red pencil [the pen of the person who taught them to admire the three-legged stool's capacity, and other things - so, perhaps a local teaching authority] was poised above my calf-hide manuscript like a graip above a groop" The carefully poised red pencil above the calf-hide manuscript alludes to the stricter school, where the shade of "calligraphy that felt like home" in Seamus Heaney's *Alphabets* (1987) is evoked. Yet, in the same breath or sentence, there comes the comparison, made in dialect: "like a graip above a groop" (the "graip" is 'a three- or four-pronged fork used as a dungfork or for digging' and the "groop", in Hiberno-English, the Irish, Northern England and Scotland dialect, denotes 'a pen for cattle or a byre'). By now, the association with the resounding words of Heaney's *Digging* becomes unavoidable. In one of the sonnet's tercets -

the depth of a dent in the flank of your grandfather's cow
from his having leaned on his brow
against it morning and night

for twenty years of milking by hand

- the dent of the title surfaces, at last, and the sestina harks back to Heaney's *Digging*:

I look down [at his father digging]
Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills.

This calls to mind the poet's admiration for his father and grandfather:

By God, the old man could handle a spade.
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.

All the elements of Heaney's *Digging* are there in *A Dent*: the agrarian life exertions, implements and landscape - and the twenty years' span. But the connection between the deep dent and the distant land in Muldoon's final statement is more tenuous than Heaney's refrain about the squat pen that frames the poem. Unlike the squat pen, the deep dent "gave but little sense of how distant is the land/ on which you had us set our sights". And, since poems must perform what they state, *A Dent* extends beyond the limits of its scene and the apostrophizing of the younger by the older poet; in the resulting intertext, the transmission of tradition and a young poet's awakening to it in the proximity of generations are recorded with a difference.

In *A Dent*, digging becomes climbing (on the three-legged stool), and homing is replaced by the distant land projection; yet, the agrarian setting is the same and poetry neighbours on village life. In the indirect space of the intertextual stage, the reader responds to the differences in the setting and themes between the two poems. In *A Dent*, the filiation is not based on proximity, but on distance. As the direct dedication of the poem indicates, it is not blood kinship, but the transmitted, cultural mission that the mentor, Michael Allen, hands down to the younger man. Just as it is not the obvious, rasping sound of the father's spade hitting the ground, but the silent observation of the trace, the deep dent left behind that inspires Paul Muldoon's affiliation. In the poem's indirect script, in "sympathetic ink", as Alcobia-Murphy (2006:17) called it and in the poetry writing of the schools and courts of poetry in the Gaelic tradition, Muldoon doubles his avowal of the filiation energy by dedicating to Michael Allen a(n inter)text underwritten by Seamus Heaney's poems: *Follower* (1966), *Digging* and *Alphabets*. While avowing both his affiliation to the Belfast Group and to the bardic tradition, Muldoon looked into the distance, while Heaney declared that his energy came from the vicinity with the land and the potato drills and from his identification with his forefathers. Perched on the three-legged stool, Muldoon re-enacts in his poem the motif of the younger modernity dwarfs climbing on the shoulders of the elderly giants guarding tradition. But in the litotic height of the three-legged stool, one can hear an echo of Heaney's genial amusement at his father's "straining rump", which comes up "twenty years away" while digging.

The indirect dialogue in *A Dent* is not with the peasant forefathers, but with the poets and intellectuals in the "wooden O" of the university auditorium, as in Heaney's *Alphabets*. Maybe it is the marbled and minatory tradition that sombres down in *A Dent* the jocose tone of Heaney's tribute in *Digging*. What we hear is a suite of voices echoing into each other in the silence of the byre or groop and recalling the poetic speech of the bardic tradition. Muldoon's commitment to bardic verse was explicit in other poems in *Why Brownlee Left* (1980), entitled *Immrama* and *Immram*, though they staged Irish Argentinian and New York diasporic scenes. But the spirit of the (stricter, higher) bardic schools marks Muldoon's silent calligram of tradition in *A Dent*. It reaches us via Heaney's *Alphabets*, which was also read by the author in the Boston University Robert Lowell Memorial Lecture, in 2010, to illustrate and explain how bardic schools and courts of poetry worked in Old Ireland.

Muldoon's intertexts reach further, however, than the remediation (which is also a celebration) of Heaney's local poetic creed and deed. The younger poet is alternatively praised, and accused, for his compulsive habit of remediating famous poems. Neil Corcoran (quoted in Alcobia-Murphy 2006:25) even accuses Muldoon

of “finding his voice, ‘unexpectedly’, by initially sounding out through - impersonating - Seamus Heaney”.

To defend Muldoon from the accusation that he committed a sin by impersonating Heaney, it is worth remembering Mikhail Bakhtin’s directions, in *The Pre-History of the Novelistic Discourse* (in his 1981 collection of four essays), for the perusal of novelistic images by sensing what they enact and not what they depict; and it is useful to look at the way Seamus Heaney’s *The Tollund Man* is remediated with gaps, filtered and screened in Muldoon’s textual foreground of *Milkweed and Monarch* - in the volume *The Annals of Chile*. Might its title, one wonders, be jocosely evoking the Irish Annals of the Four Masters and the variously spelt name of Columcille, the master of the scriptorium that produced the Book of Kells and the founder of the Monastery of Iona? All this proves that Muldoon does not intend to ventriloquize other poets’ discourses, but is constructing his own image dramatically, as Joyce (1992: 223), recommended in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, in order to overtake the conservative lyrical or epic forms. Muldoon does not imitate but interpellates former discourses, while remediating (adapting) them. He tests in discursive acts the strengths of resounding poems by his predecessors and draws his own figures of their relatedness. Placing other poets in dialogue in his own verse allows Muldoon to advance in the distance described in *A Dent*. Dialogic art is dramatic art - but one should know how to play the game of indirection to appreciate it.

3. Conclusion

Since there is no room left for the complete demonstration of the way the method of dramatic indirection works in poetry-reading, one can only enumerate, by way of conclusion, its principles and some other cases where they apply.

The identification of the order of things that enter the intertextual game comes first. Peasant and poetic life transmission and transmutation, identification and filiation were seen at work connecting Muldoon’s *A Dent*, which was a declarative homage to Michael Allen and a covert relay race working backwards to remediate Heaney’s *Digging*, *Alphabets*, and *Bogland*. Muldoon’s *Milkweed and Monarch* evokes Wallace Stevens’s sublime and serious clowning with syllables on the sobering theme of death and finality, in *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (in his 1923 volume *Harmonium*), when launching the decisive invitation “Let the lamp affix its beam/The only emperor is the emperor of icecream”. Delving into the indirection of the Muldoonesque intertext with Stevens’s lines, one notices that the two poems handle the same objects. The sheet with embroidered fantails, in the dresser of deal, in the second stanza of the poem by Wallace Stevens, recalls “the hand-embroidered tablecloth” in *Milkweed and Monarch*. The dresser of deal, itself, is akin to the mushroom shed in *Milkweed and Monarch* - both becoming charged with meaning in the vicinity of death: Stevens’s embroidered sheet to be taken out from the dresser of deal is supposed to spread and “cover her face” and elude “her horny feet” if they protrude; Muldoon’s “mushroom shed is windowless” and “its high-stacked wooden trays” are to be “hosed down with formaldehyde”, the embalming, mercilessly life-annihilating chemical substance.

The next important step for engaging with indirect dialogic poetry is to identify the remediated components of the intertext. The poems/poets which *Milkweed and Monarch* also remediates (or returns to in a public gesture) are: two earlier poems by Muldoon himself, *The Boundary Commission* and *Gathering*

Mushrooms (in the 1983 volume *Quoof*), *The Tollund Man* by Seamus Heaney (1972), and Derek Mahon's *The Last of the Fire Kings* (1975) and *A Disused Shed in County Wexford* (1993). In *Milkweed and Monarch* rain "comes flapping through the yard/like a tablecloth that she hand-embroidered; these lines are followed by "My mother has left it on the line". In the context of the poem's intertextuality with Stevens's *The Emperor of Ice-Cream*, its dedication to his mother might express the son's reminiscence after she had actually died. This supposition is verified when one reads the following words in the middle of Muldoon's *Gathering Mushrooms*, another apparently rambling poem written by his parents' graves: "Milkweed and Monarch 'invented each other'"; it explains the title of the former poem (since *Gathering Mushrooms* was written eleven years before *Milkweed and Monarch*). This draws attention upon the third rule for reading indirect poetic discourses (as an equivalent to the Bakhtinian novelistic images in "The Pre-History of the Novelistic Discourse"): one has to read the difference which is created in the space of indirection between the earlier and the later occurrence of images/sequences in the texts and connect the poems' chief intentions. At this point, it becomes possible to discern, as in a mimic diagram, the direction and action of the poetic remediation. The traces of the rain, of the genitors' presence, of worlds and buildings that were once in place, but have disappeared into thin air - indicate what happens in each of the poems of the intertextual cluster. Most of the contributors to this intertext are laments: they evoke effete things and no longer valid states; or they conjure people over infinite, devastating distances in time. Because of the corroborated traces of death in Stevens's *The Emperor of Ice-Cream*, Muldoon's *Milkweed and Monarch*, and *Gathering Mushrooms* (which is an indirect obituary, in the form of a syllepsis, for Muldoon's parents grown indistinguishable from each other in death), the other poems broadcasting each other in this intertext can declare their intention against a similar background. Heaney's *The Tollund Man* deploys a pilgrim's reminiscences after touching with his mind the relic at the end (and climax) of his journey. Here, the returning man is torn between the avowal and withdrawal of the pilgrimage effects. He suggests he "could risk blasphemy", consecrating the cauldron bog as a national holy ground and praying that so many dead victims "germinate", sprouting their curses at the margin of a tell-tale history of violence in the midst of colonial havoc. In Mahon's (1975) *The Last of the Fire Kings*, the son categorically decides to be through with history - either way - rejecting the explosive link with "the fire-loving people" (a statement made between any two deceitful cease-fires in the Northern Irish intermittent civil war called The Troubles); he refuses to inhabit their "world of Sirens, bin-lids/ And bricked-up windows".

Since the last reading task is to determine the form that the poetic hypertext's action takes in its dialogue with its predecessors, one can ultimately say that Muldoon's poems prove ready to inhabit the no-man's land of danger repudiated by Mahon and to build figures of poetry here. He does this in both *Gathering Mushrooms* and *Milkweed and Monarch*. The latter is an indirect political poem, because of the structural analogy in it between the mushroom-crowded shed and Mahon's famous *Disused Shed in County Wexford* and because of any one of the further bouts of purging or sectarian bombing enforced, in *Milkweed and Monarch*, "on Barnett's fair demesne" or Malone House, which is sent "sky-high" with its "priceless collection of linen" by psilocybin bombs. Not too surprisingly, the dominant figure of *Milkweed and Monarch* obtains between the poles of "rain" rhyming with "domain". Because of the constant threat of

destruction and the unattainable goal of being in full possession of the land, the longing for, and postponement of peace, the speaker says at the end of the poem:

If we never live to see the day we leap
 into our true domain, lie down with us now and wrap
 yourself in the soiled grey blanked of Irish
 rain
 that will, one day, bleach itself white. Lie down with us and wait.

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UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE

WHY SOMETIMES *SORRY* SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD

MIHĂIȚĂ HOREZEANU

University of Timișoara and King Khalid University in Abha

Abstract: *The paper first looks at the internal configuration of the universal speech act of apologizing and discusses some aspects concerning its culture specificity in the light of negative and positive politeness theories. The second part is a descriptive review of the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices available in English and Romanian for the performance of an apology.*

Keywords: *apologizing, felicity conditions, negative/positive politeness, IFID*

1. Introduction

At a time when such accredited researchers as Goffman, Searle, Brown and Levinson or Borkin and Reinhart were writing specialist articles on apologizing as a remedial interchange, a ritualistic act or part of the politeness phenomena, a memorable song by Elton John was delighting audiences on either side of the Atlantic, proclaiming in the very title that “*Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word*”.

By the time I decided to write a paper on apologizing, I had begun contemplating the suitability of such a title for a larger academic enterprise. What prompted me all this was the realization of the inherent pragmatic ambiguity in the well-known title mentioned above. In other words, *why* and *how* does “sorry” seem to be the hardest word?

In my opinion, a fairly complete attempt at dealing with apology should be structured around five aspects or problems, which could bear elliptical headings, meant to complete the main title and solve the pragmatic ambiguity in it. These headings would be as follows:

- ...to say right;
- ...to sound sincere about;
- ...to accept;
- ...to say across cultures;
- ...to translate.

Only the first and the last two aspects will be dealt with in this paper.

In all these situations the word *sorry* and the expression *I'm sorry* are used in a generically apologetic sense, although other strategic uses masquerading as apologies will be mentioned as well.

2. ...to say right

In the light of the clarifications above, this section is about performing the speech act of apologizing in a pragmatically correct, i.e. felicitous way.

According to Austin (1962:152), apologizing can be included in a class which he calls, not without some reservation, “behabitives”, a miscellaneous group which is to do with attitudes, feelings and social behaviour. Also included here are

congratulating, commending, condoling, cursing and challenging. Although he does not refer specifically to apologies (but to promises in fact), I can think of parallel examples of infelicities, which Austin calls “self-stultifying procedures”, in the following cases:

- * I apologize but I did not do it.
- * I apologize but I will not behave accordingly.

or

- I apologize but I do not feel any remorse.

Austin (1962:161) does admit, however, that in the field of behabitives, besides the usual liability to infelicities, there is a special scope for insincerity. More interestingly, he finds obvious connections between behabitives and the class of commissives without, again, referring to apologies. Isolating this specific act, I could say that apologizing is indeed both about reacting to behaviour and committing oneself to a line of conduct.

It is also worth mentioning, in view of some later distinctions, that Austin indicates a weakening of the performative illocutionary force from *I apologize* (an explicit performative) to *I am sorry* (a half descriptive, impure expression) and finally to *I repent*, which he calls descriptive. This is indeed consistent with the notion that the expression *I'm sorry* often counts as an admission of sorrow rather than one of culpability, responsibility or guilt.

Searle (1979) includes apologies in the class of *expressives*, along with thanking, congratulating, condoling, deploring and welcoming, where the corresponding performative verbs “express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content” (1979:15).

In keeping with Searle’s felicity conditions for the class of expressives, I propose the following conditions:

1. the content condition: past act A done by S;
2. the preparatory condition: S believes that A is an offence against H;
3. the sincerity condition: S regrets act A;
4. the essential condition: counts as an apology for act A.

I shall only discuss the infelicities which may occur under the first two conditions.

2.1 The content condition: past act A done by S

The first condition has three implications for the felicitous configuration of an apology:

- S cannot apologize for something he has not yet done;
- S can only apologize for his/her own transgression, not someone else’s;

and

- The truth of the proposition expressed in the apology is presupposed.

2.1.1 S cannot apologize for something he has not yet done

The first implication remains valid even when the speaker knows that s/he will do the act in the more or less immediate but foreseeable future. Smith (2005:484) says that “The depth of our confusion in this regard can be found in invitations asking for ‘regrets only’, as if we could regret something we have yet to do and continue to endorse it.” He considers that this is a mere expression of *disappointment* rather than a true apology.

On the other hand, the only Romanian translation I can think of contains no elicitation of apology or even regret and renders it all fairly explicitly at some length: “Vă rugăm să răspundeți doar în cazul în care nu puteți să participați.” (i.e. literally, “Please reply only if you are unable to attend.”) or “În cazul în care nu puteți participa, vă rugăm să anunțați la...” (i.e. “If you are unable to attend, please call...”).

For an example in Romanian which is a violation of this rule, consider:

Îmi cer scuze încă de pe acum. (roughly, “I would like to apologize in anticipation.”)

2.1.2 S can only apologize for his/her own transgression, not someone else’s

As far as the second implication is concerned, this could be rephrased as follows: the speaker cannot apologize in someone else’s stead, no matter how sincere or empathetic he or she may be. Only the person responsible for the injury is authorized to issue an apology.

Again, however, social (but also political or diplomatic) practice provides examples of such infelicities with respect to apologies whenever parents, for instance, are quick to apologize for their offspring’s misdemeanours, when they should in fact apologize for a proximate causal link, such as failure in appropriate parental supervision.

2.1.3 The truth of the proposition expressed in the apology is presupposed

Finally, the third implication is that the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed since, according to Searle (1979:15), in expressives there is no direction of fit, i.e. the speaker is neither trying to get the world to match the words, nor the words to match the world; his words only represent himself in expressive, sometimes over-emotional terms.

The syntactic consequence is that the explicit performative verbs will not occur with *that*-clauses, but rather require a gerundial construction or a nominal element.

Thus one should not normally say:

**I apologize that I was such a fool.*
 but *I apologize for being such a fool.*
 or *I apologize for my foolishness.*

Smith (2005:481) believes that even a statement like *I’m sorry that...* carries a “muddled” meaning and a weak illocutionary force, as it appears to express sympathy more than wrongdoing.

2.2 The preparatory condition: S believes that A is an offence against H

Apologies which fail to comply with this condition can sometimes be heard in the form:

*I'm sorry if I have offended you.
Îmi pare rău dacă te-am supărat.*

where the speaker does not raise doubts so much about the existence of the act itself (which would constitute an infelicity of the type discussed under 2.1.), but rather about the offensive nature of the act.

Another routinized formula is:

*I am sorry you feel that way.
Îmi pare rău dacă asta crezi.*

or the somewhat dismissive:

Dacă așa crezi...îmi pare rău. (literally, “If that’s what you think...I’m sorry.”)

which signals disagreement rather than sorrow.

All in all “such statements merely express regret that the victim does not conform to the offender’s beliefs and reinforce the offender’s commitment to her transgression” (Smith 2005:480). Sometimes the speaker lays a part of the blame on the victim’s hypersensitivity. I can provide an example in Romanian, but I have yet to find one in English to match the formulaic character of the Romanian expression:

Măi, măi, dar sensibil mai ești! (roughly, “Well, well, aren’t you/we hypersensitive!”)

The tone is usually conciliatory but patronizing, even offensive, especially when the offence creates widely different expectations in the offended party.

3. ...to say across cultures

Apart from the intricacies of a felicitous apology mentioned above, apologizing can pose a whole new complex of problems both for the speaker and for the hearer. The classical speech act theory has come under close scrutiny and as far as the present topic is concerned, there has been a shift of focus from felicity conditions to the social functions of apologizing, “which is supposed to satisfy social expectations. Thus, the speaker acknowledges responsibility for committing an offence and the apology is successful when the hearer recognises his or her intentions of expressing regret” (Ogiermann 2009:46).

I think this comes close to the notion of communication as put forth by Grice (1969) and could also help us to reformulate Searle’s preparatory condition as follows: Both S and H know that A is an offence against H. Since social expectations are necessarily culture-specific, an apology will lose much of its social meaning in contexts where it is actually not expected or when the speaker does not believe that an apology is expected by the hearer. For an example, I can quote Mey (1993:166): “In Japan [...] it is not customary to say *Sumimasen*,

‘Excuse me’, when stepping on people’s toes in the subway; on the contrary, apologizing for such a (mostly unavoidable) social blunder will make people suppose that one had indeed had evil intentions.”

On the other hand, an apologetic *Sumimasen* can be heard in Japan as a reaction to an offer of a gift, compliment, or invitation, as an expression of the recipient’s modesty.

Moreover, Mey (1993:174) reports that in some parts of the world, such as West Africa, the use of an apologetic expression does not necessarily connote guilt or direct responsibility on the part of the speaker, as we might expect. For instance, if you happen to witness the mishap of someone falling off their bicycle in Ghana, it would make perfect pragmatic sense to utter *Sorry* or something similar, even though it wasn’t your fault that the rider had lost his or her balance.

While generalizations of such cross-cultural findings should always be taken with a pinch of salt, I can think of another example of what I might call “sneezing with a pragmatic accent”. Thus, in Romanian, it is not very common to hear someone who sneezes in the presence of others apologize (compare with *I’m sorry/Sorry* or *Excuse me* in English). Instead, *Noroc!* (“Good luck!”) or *Sănătate!* (“Gesundheit!”) is offered - sometimes eagerly awaited - as a response. As for an in-depth discussion of the difference between *Excuse me* and *I’m sorry*, the reader is referred to Borkin and Reinhart (1978), with *Excuse me* appearing to be the more formal of the two.

The social and psychological dimensions of apologies have been thoroughly analysed in studies conducted in cross-cultural pragmatics, sociology, social psychology and politeness phenomena. The standard theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) focuses on the hearer’s face and its restoration and so, apologies are seen as negative politeness strategies, i.e. strategies oriented towards the hearer’s right to non-distraction.

On the other hand, authors in the field of sociology and social psychology also focus on the speaker and his positive face needs. Some describe apologies as humiliating (Olshtain 1989:156) or a “painful experience” (Norrick 1978:284). This accounts for why in positive politeness cultures an offender can be more reluctant to apologize (for instance, when admission of guilt can be seen as a sign of weakness, which might lead to loss of personal prestige, etc.).

Ogiermann (2009:55) notes that while members of individualist cultures seem to view apologies as a post factum acknowledgement of the hearer’s right to non-imposition, in collectivist cultures future relationship seems to be central and desirable. The Romanian conciliatory expressions *Să lași loc de bună ziua* (literally, “leave or spare some room for good day”), often heard in the south, and *Eu vreau să rămânem prieteni* (i.e. “Let’s stay friends, okay?”), heard after some dispute settlement, might both just be a hint in this direction.

In the light of the social function of apologizing, perhaps we could find a sense in which the notion of ‘fit’ does apply to this expressive speech act after all. There is a restoration of the world’s equilibrium after a temporary disturbance in which the speaker and the hearer have been somehow involved. As Mey (1993:175) aptly put it “all social and psychological mechanisms are set back to normal and the green light is given for further, safe interaction at the unmarked level: ‘Business as usual’.” This approach also appears to be in keeping with the treatment of apologies in Goffman (1971) as remedial interchanges, in which the offender shows both admission of guilt and willingness to abide by the social norm he or she has infringed.

4. ...to translate

For the last part of my paper I will make some contrastive remarks on the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), conventionally associated with the speech act of apologizing in English and Romanian.

A major difficulty encountered in cross-cultural research on apologies is that “apologetic function may be assigned to an expression in one language because it serves as an apology in another” Ogiermann (2009:93). Moreover, the preference for expressions belonging to different IFID categories in two or more languages may be indicative of different, culture-specific behaviours.

4.1 Explicit performative

English: *I apologize.*
Romanian: *Îmi cer scuze.*

According to Austin (1962:79) *I apologize* is a pure explicit performative which is also the least ambiguous of all apologetic expressions, so that we know that once *I apologize* has been uttered, an apology has been made. However, this apology need not be sincere, according to Fraser (1981:261), and Thomas (1995:35) believes that the explicit performative has a weaker illocutionary force than the expression of regret, as in:

I said I apologize, I didn't say I was sorry.

while Ogiermann thinks that it is the formality of the English performative that seems to convey insincerity (2009:109). Out of 645 respondents in her survey, not even one used it in any of the fairly realistic every-day situations requiring an apology.

In Romanian, the corresponding expression *Îmi cer scuze* is far more frequently used and would be a quantitative equivalent for *I am sorry* as an expression of regret, although they belong to different semantic categories here.

The Romanian expression *a se scuza* cannot be used as a performative match for *I apologize*, as its meaning *in the first person singular* would be “find a pretext, make an excuse”. It can be used non-performatively as a report:

S-a scuzat pentru întârziere.
He apologized for being late.

It can also be that the reflexive voice in Romanian conveys the unpleasant idea of unreasonably exculpating oneself as in:

Cine se scuza se acuză. (a Romanian proverb borrowed from French: *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*, literally: “He who excuses himself accuses himself.”)

4.2 Offer of apology

English: *(Accept my) apologies.*
Romanian: *(Vă rog să primiți/acceptați) scuzele mele.*

The use of these formulae in both English and Romanian is restricted to situations in which the addressee needs to be informed about the offence (as in a letter) or even where there is disagreement as to the need for an apology.

4.3 Request for forgiveness

English: *Forgive me, Excuse me*

Romanian: *Vă rog să mă iertați, Îmi cer iertare, Iartă-mă*, etc.

Although Ogiermann groups the two expressions together, I believe there is a difference in illocutionary force between the two, the first being stronger. Smith (2005:479) explains the difference between being excused and being forgiven: “an excuse finds me morally innocent of the charge, while forgiveness pardons me after finding me guilty”.

Again, out of 645 respondents, only 3 used expressives belonging to this category in the survey mentioned above. One possible explanation could be that this strategy takes the form of an imperative which is felt as too direct in a language where apologies are performed in a rather indirect way.

In Romanian, the imperative *Iartă-mă!* (singular imperative equivalent of “Forgive me”) appears to be less of a directive in low social distance contexts as compared to the polite plural form *Iertați-mă!*.

Moreover, despite the structural resemblance of *Îmi cer scuze* (“I apologize”) and *Îmi cer iertare* (“Please forgive me”), I have assigned them to different categories (as shown above) on semantic grounds, with the latter, asking for forgiveness, obviously stronger.

The nominal elliptical expressions *Scuze!* and *Iertare!* also exhibit this difference in illocutionary force, as shown in their English translations: a casual “Sorry!” and a dramatic “Have mercy on me!”, respectively.

4.4 Expression of regret

English: *I am sorry* (+ intensifiers: *really, very, ever so*, etc.)

Romanian: *Îmi pare rău, Regret (cele întâmplare), Îmi exprim regretul [fml]* (+ intensifiers: *Îmi pare tare/nespus de rău, Regret nespus*, etc.)

The Romanian adverb *nespus* (i.e. “beyond words” or “more that words can say”) has a metalinguistic flavour which seems to be absent in the English pattern, and which could be glossed as: “There are not enough words to express my regret”.

The expression of regret is the most frequently used strategy for apologizing in English and, not surprisingly, the key definitional element in Searle (1979:4): “A person who apologizes for doing A expresses regret at having done A” (I have preserved the author’s emphasis). The very high frequency with which it is used in Ogiermann’s questionnaire also confirms its preferred status among other realisations of apology.

The expression of regret, however, does not imply acceptance of responsibility. *Sorry about that* may imply denial of responsibility (Aijmer 1996:92) or sound arrogant and rude (Cohen 1996:383).

In spite of all this, the expression of regret remains the preferred apologizing strategy in English because it implies a much lower degree of imposition for both

speaker and hearer. This is in accordance with the general assumption that contemporary English displays features of avoidance-based negative politeness.

In Romanian the expression of regret is far less frequently used than in English. Sometimes it can be perceived as an incomplete apology or a mere expression of sympathy. The statement from Thomas (1995:35) quoted above (“I said I apologize, I didn’t say I was sorry”) may find its culture-specific reflection in Romanian as follows: *Îmi pare rău, dar nu am de gând să îmi cer scuze*. Note that a structurally equivalent translation such as:

?? “*I’m sorry but I’m not going to apologize.*”

would be self-contradictory, since in English, an expression of regret already counts as the issuance of an apology.

4.5 Conciliatory expression

English: *I hope you are not angry.
Don’t take it amiss.
Don’t get me wrong.*

Romanian: *Sper că nu v-am/v-ați supărat.
Hai, nu fi supărat/nu te supăra.
Eu vreau/sper să rămânem prieteni.*

Conciliatory expressions are strategies aimed at restoring harmony. Politeness theorists believe that they are applicable to low D (i.e. social distance) contexts only and are oriented towards positive face needs, which accounts for their infrequent use in English, as compared to Romanian, for instance.

4.6 Disarming softener

English: *I’m afraid...
Unfortunately, ...*

Romanian: *Mi-e teamă că...
Din păcate, ...*

There does not seem to be a consensus among researchers with respect to this category belonging to apologizing strategies. They are both used to introduce dispreferred turns, accounts or apologies but cannot be considered independent apologies.

4.7 Foreign words

English: –

Romanian: *Pardon*
Sorry (spoken, rare)

Although the effect of novelty that the word *pardon* once carried in the language of Caragiale’s socialites may well be a thing of the past (e.g. “scuzați, pardon, bonsoar!”), Romanian appears to be more open than English to external influences. Examples could be provided not only for apologizing (e.g. *sorry*, sometimes heard in colloquial Romanian) but for other speech acts as well (*hello*,

bye, ciao, cheers). It is difficult to say, however, whether such fashionable uses are just a matter of transitory individual preference or they will some day make a difference, through conventionalization, in the Romanian lexicon.

5. Conclusion

In this paper I have attempted to show that issuing an apologetic utterance is not always easy to perform in a felicitous manner by strictly complying with the conditions set in the standard speech act theory. However, even when all the requirements pertaining to the internal configuration of apologizing are met, the relevance and effectiveness of this speech act are best evaluated in the socio-cultural context in which it occurs.

I shall conclude, therefore, by stating that, although apologizing appears to be a universal speech act in languages around the world, its actual realization through particular strategies is culture-specific and subject to different conceptualizations of social responsibility and guilt. I believe that this general finding both accounts for translation issues in a theoretical sense and presents intriguing challenges for translators and interpreters alike.

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HOT ON THE TRAIL OF DEADLY CRIMINALS: CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS EMPLOYED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

MAJA STEVANOVIĆ
University of Belgrade

***Abstract:** This paper aims to shed light on some of the most common conceptual metaphors employed by law enforcement officers in detailing the investigations of true crimes. Drawing on a corpus of over 250 metaphorical expressions, the paper presents a neat classification and analysis of metaphors conceptualising CRIME and other target domains relevant to the framework of crime investigation.*

***Keywords:** conceptual metaphors, metaphorical expressions, source domain, target domain*

1. Introduction

The publication of Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors we live by* in 1980 is considered to be a significant landmark within the cognitive linguistic paradigm, as it advocates a cognitive approach to the understanding of metaphors. It proposes a departure from the understanding of metaphors as linguistic embellishments, mere figurative uses of expressions the aim of which is to conjure up or convey a new complex image. Moreover, Lakoff and Johnson (2003:3) argue that metaphors cannot be typically viewed as "characteristics of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action". Therefore, many metaphorical expressions which would traditionally fall within the sphere of metaphorical language are now viewed to be primarily a matter of thought which is reflected in language. Since one of the central tenets of Cognitive Theory of Metaphor (henceforth CTM) is that our conceptual system is "[...] fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff and Johnson 2003:4), the way we perceive, define, create or alter our realities depends largely on how we reason about these realities. Language thus represents just another area where our thoughts and reasoning are reflected and where the nature of our conceptual system becomes apparent.

Further evidence supporting the claim that metaphors are a matter of thinking and reasoning rather than a matter of language itself is the distinction that CTM makes between conceptual metaphors and metaphorical expressions. As opposed to the traditional treatment of metaphors where such a distinction was not made, metaphorical expressions are now seen as linguistic realizations of conceptual metaphors which are present at the level of reasoning. Since conceptual metaphors find their "surface-level expressions in language and other semiotic modes of communication" (Koller and Semino 2009:12), the analysis of conceptual relations in our mind necessitates the study of metaphorical expressions as well as the identification and analysis of metaphorical relations or mappings between conceptual domains. Conceptual metaphors, as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (2003) as well as Kövecses (2010), represent a simple equation between two domains – CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (A) IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (B) (Kövecses 2010:4). Meaning is construed here through conceptualisation - abstract, unfamiliar or poorly delineated areas of experience (target domains) are conceptualised in terms of those which are more concrete, familiar and well-delineated (source domains). Closely related to the process of conceptualisation

and metaphorical mappings is the concept of metaphorical utilisation proposed by Kövecses (2010). The extent of metaphorical utilisation depends on the choice of source domains, since only some aspects of the source domain (B) can be mapped onto the target domain (A). Therefore, the nature of metaphorical mappings is said to be only partial, it brings into focus only some aspects of the target domain while it conceals all other irrelevant aspects.

Against the background of CTM, this paper aims to identify and analyse the conceptual metaphors employed by law enforcement officers in detailing the investigations of violent crimes. Moreover, since the broader domain of crime includes other constituent sub-domains as well (e.g. evidence, cases, suspects, criminals, punishment, etc.), the paper also explores the way in which these mental representations are structured via conceptual metaphors. More generally, the overall objective of the paper is to highlight the metaphorical expressions instantiating the underlying conceptual metaphors found within the discourse of law enforcement officers which may reflect “discourse systematicity [which] applies when particular uses of metaphors are characteristic of certain genres or discourses” (Semino 2008:34). Even though each crime investigation is carried out differently and focuses on different crimes and violent acts, the analysis of metaphorical expressions in my corpus indicates that law enforcement officers employ the same conceptual metaphors in recounting the details of various violent crimes.

2. Data selection

Since this paper does not focus on the public discourse about crime but rather on the authentic discourse, we turn to the transcripts of metaphorical expressions which were taken from four series (*Forensic investigators*, *Crimes of passion*, *Deadly sins* and *Crime stories*) broadcast on ID (Investigation Discovery) channel from September 2012 till March 2013. These series offer insight into the genuine discourse of law enforcement officers, as they profile the crimes they have investigated and the cases they have solved. All four of these series have a similar format and story structure – each begins with the description of a crime, followed by the collection of evidence, the identification of possible suspects, the process of solving the crime based on the evidence linked to a potential suspect, and ends with the law enforcement officers reflecting on the appropriateness of the punishment the perpetrators have received for their crimes. The corpus for the analysis draws on over 250 metaphorical expressions which were noted down during the course of each of these series and thus represents an invaluable insight into the extent to which the discourse of law enforcement officers is metaphorical.

3. Crime – a sociological perspective

From a sociological perspective, crime is defined as “an integral part of all healthy societies” which becomes “dysfunctional (harmful to society) when its rate is unusually high or low” (Haralambos and Holborn 2008:322-323). Within the framework of CTM, society is personified via the ontological SOCIETY IS A PERSON metaphor thus receiving a more delineated status and becoming more coherent in our conceptual system. Kövecses (2010:122) illustrates this metaphor by providing the following example:

- (0) The politicians are being blamed for the *ills* of society.

Further proof that a society can exhibit signs of an illness is offered by the examples from my corpus, where the detectives and investigators talk about crime in general and conceptualise it via the source domain of DISEASE, instantiating the CRIME IS A DISEASE metaphor:

- (1) In the late 1990s, our society was *suffering* from what seemed to be a juvenile *crime epidemic*.
- (2) My job as a detective was to inform the public about the *crimes* which were increasingly *plaguing* our society.
- (3) At that time, our local police department was trying to *diagnose* and prioritise local *crime* issues.
- (4) This rapidly spreading *epidemic* of hate *crimes* continues to *poison* our society.
- (5) It is vital that we show that our society will *suffer* as long as *crimes* like these ones continue to *spread*.
- (6) Our team of investigators tried to assess the most effective *crime prevention* methods.

The examples given above suggest that, apart from all other *ills* that can pose problems to an otherwise healthy society, the unusually high crime rate seems to be particularly harmful - a society, here personified via the SOCIETY IS A PERSON metaphor, can be *poisoned* or *plagued* by crime or it can *suffer* from a *crime epidemic*. Moreover, discovering the cause of crime is understood as *diagnosing* the source of a disease the onset of which can be forestalled by means of effective *prevention* methods. All the linguistic realisations of the CRIME IS A DISEASE metaphor presented in the examples above suggest that crime can negatively affect the otherwise healthy society.

Moreover, in providing their final argument regarding the cases they have investigated, the detectives usually refer to the devastating psychological consequences of crimes. In doing so, they rely on the PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF CRIME ARE PHYSICAL INJURIES (TO A SOCIETY) sub-metaphor:

- (7) This murder has *victimized* all members of our society and the *wounds* have yet to *heal*.
- (8) We, as a society, remain deeply *scarred* by this vicious crime.
- (9) This heinous crime leaves a *deep scar* on our society.
- (10) We have to try to *heal the wounds* of our society and do what we can to stop sexual crimes.

When “the shared values and moral beliefs of society, the so-called collective sentiments” (Haralambos and Holborn 2008:322), become affected by crime, society is *victimized* by the negative effects these crimes have left in their wake. Once again drawing on the SOCIETY IS A PERSON metaphor, the detectives now assume the role of ordinary members of the public who reflect on the physical injuries caused by unnecessary crimes. Their choice of linguistic realizations of the sub-metaphor, such as *wounds* and *scars*, suggests that every loss of life through crime inevitably leaves a long-term psychological effect on the society, i.e. a *wound* which will eventually *heal* and turn into a *deep scar*, a visible reminder of the negative effects of crime.

4. Other key target domains

Since the metaphors presented in the previous section are employed by detectives at either the beginning or the end of the series and therefore focus on crime as a complex sociological phenomenon, we now turn to their accounts of individual crimes. The following sub-sections present some of the key target domains identified within the framework of numerous investigations of various violent crimes. Regardless of the fact that each series focuses on different crimes, we would like to argue that target domains common to crime investigations are conceptualised in a similar way by law enforcement officers and therefore represent an invaluable insight into the extent of the metaphorical nature of their discourse.

4.1 Evidence

As each crime investigation begins with the collection of evidence, we shall also begin by giving metaphorical examples from our corpus, centering on the target domain of EVIDENCE. In describing their efforts to expose the vital pieces of evidence left by the perpetrators and thus begin their investigation, the detectives employ the RECOVERING EVIDENCE IS FINDING A HIDDEN ENTITY metaphor:

- (11) Even though he tried hard to *cover up* the evidence, the police *uncovered* an important clue.
- (12) They thought they had *hidden* all the evidence that could eventually lead the investigators to *finding out* the truth.
- (13) I am sorry to say that the investigation has initially failed to *uncover* a vital piece of evidence.

Even though the forensic evidence referred to in the examples above is not physically hidden, the linguistic realisations of the metaphor suggest that the perpetrators hope to remain unexposed by performing various actions in the wake of their crimes, for example disposing of the murder weapon or destroying the paper trail which may be linked to them and the victim during the investigation. All of these activities are perceived as efforts to *cover up* or *hide* the evidence, which then the detectives try hard to *uncover*. The metaphor illustrated above also functions as the sub-metaphor of the UNKNOWN IS INVISIBLE metaphor, which implies that the entities which are unknown to us are conceptualised as being covered or hidden from our view. Therefore, in order for the detectives to become aware of the existence of the less obvious physical evidence which may not be present at the crime scene, it has to be *uncovered* and made visible.

Closely related to the RECOVERING EVIDENCE IS FINDING A HIDDEN ENTITY metaphor is the metaphor exploited by detectives in recounting the extent to which their investigation into particular crimes was time-consuming or labour-intensive. The following examples illustrate the SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE IS DIGGING metaphor:

- (14) The investigators had to *dig deeper*.
- (15) As investigators *dig for evidence*, they discover that this brutal murderer may be a family member.
- (16) Even though the investigators *dug deep*, no evidence *surfaced*.

As painstaking as it may be, the act of *digging* here implies a time-consuming process which involves a meticulous search for evidence. Since the previously mentioned RECOVERING EVIDENCE IS FINDING A HIDDEN ENTITY metaphor highlights the nature of the less obvious evidence (i.e. the fact that it is perceived as being concealed), this metaphor, by extension, draws on the act of *digging* as the most likely way in which the evidence will *surface*.

4.2 Cases

Another important target domain around which most of the metaphorical expressions in our corpus centre is that of CASES. Following their search for evidence, the detectives focus on linking the recovered clues to potential suspects, with the aim of preparing a plausible case for the prosecution that would ultimately lead to a conviction. In adhering to this highly structured framework of investigation, the detectives employ the CASE IS A BUILDING metaphor:

- (17) We *were building* a strong, circumstantial case against him.
- (18) Just as the detectives were able to predict the likely suspect, a new revelation *rocks the foundation* of the case.
- (19) Without *solid evidence*, the detectives will have to *build this case over time*.
- (20) One particular type of evidence *cemented the case* against Elliot.

The examples above suggest that collecting *solid* evidence in a methodical way is metaphorically represented as *building* a case, and that evidence deemed particularly telling has the power to *cement the case* against a suspect. Nevertheless, the discovery of a new piece of evidence which seems inconsistent with the present findings may *rock the foundation* of a case, in the event of which the detectives are required to re-examine the clues and restructure the course of their investigation.

Further examples from my corpus highlight another important aspect of this target domain. In describing a crime which has remained unsolved for a long period of time, the detectives refer to a *cold case*, a term well-established in the criminal justice system; here are some examples:

- (21) Jane's murder had become of the *cold case* files.
- (22) The case *went cold again*, until some ten years after when another suspect appeared.
- (23) Since so many years have passed without any promising leads, the case *went cold*.

What is more important for my analysis are the following examples that emphasise the manner in which the detectives extend the basic meaning of 'cold cases', drawing on the CASES IN THE PROCESS OF BEING SOLVED ARE HOT metaphor:

- (24) With no leads, 21 years pass before investigators get a stunning phone call that turns the case *red-hot*.
- (25) The *ice-cold* case of Jackie W. was finally *heating up*.
- (26) Her case once again *turns hot* and sets the investigators on the trail of one of the most prolific serial killers in the U.S. history.

Relying on the already well-delineated mental representation of unsolved cases as being *cold* and thus of low priority in comparison to other cases which have to be solved as well, the detectives now turn to the other extreme when describing the renewed high priority of cases previously classified as being *ice-cold*: cases which are *heating up*, are *red-hot* or have *turned hot* are conceptualised as close to being solved and once again of high priority, due to the emergence of new leads and clues.

Finally, following the meticulous collection of evidence, the very process of solving cases is metaphorically construed as fitting all the pieces of the puzzle together, thus yielding the SOLVING A CASE IS SOLVING A PUZZLE metaphor:

- (27) His DNA sample added a scientific proof and helped the detectives to *put all the pieces together*.
- (28) We are missing a big *piece of the puzzle*.
- (29) That could provide the *piece of the puzzle* the detectives had been looking for during the past three years.
- (30) Very quickly, *the pieces of the puzzle were falling into place* and we knew we had to arrest him.

Like any other problem-solving activities, the act of solving cases is here metaphorically represented as *putting all the pieces (of the puzzle) together*. It is only when all the pieces neatly *fall into place* that the detectives are sure that the case has been correctly reconstructed and that all evidence has been linked to the suspect in the appropriate manner.

4.3 Crime

As opposed to the CRIME IS A DISEASE metaphor, which has previously been used for conceptualising crime from a sociological perspective, the following metaphorical expressions highlight another aspect of this target domain, this time from the perspective of the detectives who have directly participated in the investigations of the crimes in question:

- (31) The suspect provided a probable *scenario* for the sequence of events.
- (32) The suspect was able to provide a plausible *scenario* of what had happened.
- (33) Using that evidence, the investigators carefully *reconstructed the likely scenario*.
- (34) Now the detectives were able to predict the likely *plot of the crime*.

By taking statements from potential suspects or by simply relying on the evidence, the detectives exploit the CRIME IS A MOVIE metaphor by attempting to *reconstruct the likely scenario* of crimes. The *plot of the crime* is here metaphorically understood as a structured pattern of events which led to a particular crime being committed. On the other hand, a *plausible scenario* refers to the dynamic storyline of crimes, which is revealed when the suspects recount the story of how the seemingly ordinary events took a tragic turn.

By extension, the CRIME IS A MOVIE metaphor once again becomes instantiated through the sub-metaphor whose target domain are the SUSPECTS themselves:

- (35) Each suspect altered his *role* in the crime.
- (36) During the interrogation, our suspect *cast* himself the *main role* in the crime.
- (37) He became the *key actor* in this senseless crime.

Following the standard procedure of interrogation, the detectives are left to reflect on the likely structure of events which took place, by reconsidering the degree of involvement of each of the suspects. In attempting to illustrate the degree of responsibility that each suspect bears for his actions in the crime, the detectives rely on the SUSPECTS ARE ACTORS (IN A MOVIE) metaphor, by assessing the importance of the *role* of the suspects in the crime. Based on our common knowledge about actors and main roles, the *key actors* who have been *cast* in the *main roles* are those who are featured heavily in a movie and therefore foreground the prominent events of the scenario. Similarly, the suspects who have been identified as key actors are the ones who bear most of the responsibility for the crime, since their “performance” as actors is in this case measured in terms of the severity of the punishment they should receive for their crimes. The more prominent a role, the harsher the punishment they should receive for the crimes they have committed.

Another important target domain identified in the analysis of the examples in my corpus is that pertaining to criminals. In describing the violent acts of criminals, the detectives exploit the VIOLENT CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR IS VIOLENT ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR metaphor, which is illustrated by the examples given below:

- (38) The anonymous *predator* was *on the hunt*.
- (39) The perpetrator said that *the thrill of the hunt* was what had motivated him to commit all those crimes.
- (40) When the sun goes down, *predators lurk in the shadows* waiting to make a night on the town turn deadly for the unsuspecting fun-seekers.
- (41) The detectives had to *spring the trap* in order to catch the murderer quickly.
- (42) The murderer was *trapped*.

By describing criminals as *predators who lurk in the shadows*, the detectives emphasise the fact that most criminals are suspects who lie in wait in order to commit a premeditated murder. As *predators*, the criminals derive much pleasure from the very act of hunting (*the thrill of hunting*) but their violent behaviour must be sanctioned and repressed by law enforcement officers who have to *spring the trap* and stop their murderous sprees.

4.4 Punishment

In the last minutes of each of the series, following a thorough investigation, the long hours spent in identifying the suspects and finally seeing them convicted in the court of law, the detectives find it particularly rewarding to reflect on the severity of the punishment the criminals have received for their acts:

- (43) He *owes a debt* to this society and now he has forty long years *to repay* this *debt*.
- (44) He has *to pay for* this senseless crime and it was nice to see that the jurors had sided with our account of the events.
- (45) They are going *to pay for* the crimes they have committed.
- (46) People who have committed such a heinous crime have *to repay their debt* to the society.

Once again drawing on the SOCIETY IS A PERSON metaphor, the detectives reflect on the appropriateness of the deserved punishment by instantiating the DOING IMMORAL DEEDS IS ACCUMULATING DEBT: TAKING MONEY FROM SOCIETY metaphor, whereby the criminals either *owe* or have *to pay* or *repay* their *debt* to the society by serving time in prison. Haralambos and Holborn (2008:323) cite Durkheim's words when he argues that "[...] punishment serves to heal the wounds done to the collective sentiments" In other words, the purpose of the punishment is to remedy the harm done to the collective sentiments, which are the basis of social order.

5. Concluding remarks

By applying CMT to the analysis of metaphorical expressions identified in the authentic discourse of law enforcement officers, I have hopefully demonstrated that the conceptual metaphors which are "discoursally systematic are particularly significant since they can be seen as the reflection of the shared set of beliefs and assumptions" (Semino 2008:34). My analysis has highlighted the conventional key target domains of the highly structured framework of crime investigation and has confirmed that these shared mental representations are structured via conceptual metaphors whose source domains are exploited by the detectives who draw on their background knowledge related to particular experiences or phenomena. Moreover, my paper reveals that, regardless of the nature of the crimes and of the various investigative techniques employed, the target domains are understood via common source domains and therefore yield the same conceptual metaphors which can be considered as central to the discourse of law enforcement officers.

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AMERICAN ENGLISH IDIOMS: SEMANTICS AND CULTURE

YURIY KOVALYUK

Bukovyna State University of Economics and Finance, Chernivtsi

***Abstract:** It has long been acknowledged that the meanings of idioms cannot be read from the meanings of their individual constituents. Despite this approach, there have been certain advancements to dismiss this well-established stereotype by turning to the cultural aspect of a language. Hence, the semantics of idioms can be read from the cultural models and metaphors they implicitly incorporate. The present paper aims to investigate the relationship between idiom semantics and culture-specific metaphors in American English.*

***Key words:** American English, culture, idiom, metaphor, semantics*

1. Introduction

Traditionally, idioms have been treated as multiword units whose meanings cannot be decomposed from the usual meanings of their constituent elements. However, contemporary cognitive linguists argue that most idioms are semantically motivated rather than opaque. Motivation hereby refers to the speaker's ability to accurately establish a relationship between the actual and the literal meanings of an idiom. This process is achieved when speakers associate the meaning of an idiom with a conceptual system encrypted in the metaphors, metonymies, symbols or prototypes of a certain language:

Idioms are typically used to describe - and implicitly, to explain - a recurrent situation of particular social interest (becoming restless, talking informally, divulging a secret,) in virtue of its resemblance or relation to a scenario involving homey, concrete things and relations - climbing walls, chewing fat, spilling beans. (Nunberg et al. 1994:493)

It is commonplace now that idioms are cultural signs for recurrent social situations and contexts. Furthermore, Maalej (2005:215) points out that:

native language idioms and set phrases can blend together ethno-specific concepts pertaining to the world view of its speakers, to their national character, as well as their traditional social relations, thus becoming an embodiment of national dispositions and spiritual values. They are presented metaphorically indirectly and figuratively, which is why culture-specific metaphors produce idioms that have no corresponding counterparts in another language.

According to D. Dobrovol'skij, "a considerable number of idioms are internally structured on the basis of emblems" (Langlotz 2006:124). Emblems help render culturally relevant information, which, in its essence, directly influences idiom's motivation. Consequently, the more recognizable the emblem is, the more semantically-driven an idiom becomes. A. Langlotz (2006:124) argues that "the degree of transparency of an emblem-based idiom therefore depends on the degree of cognitive entrenchment and transparency of this conceptual substructure"

The present paper aims to investigate the relationship between idiom semantics and culture-specific metaphors in American English.

2. Idioms denoting Success

The data for analysis is derived from approximately 200 American English idioms denoting success. This particular word-field has been chosen because success is considered to be core concept in the system of traditional American values. On that account, success is an abstract concept, hence most of these idioms can be expected to represent basic metaphorical models.

Besides individualism, self-reliance, equality of opportunity, competition, material wealth and hard work, it is the notion of success which, along with prosperity, contributes to what is referred to as the American Dream. Linguistically, as Merriam Webster Dictionary and The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language corroborate, success is defined in terms of favorable outcome, wealth, favor, eminence, fame, achievement, and gain. These definition identifiers attribute a specific aim to each aspect of a successful activity. For example, the aim of a wealthy person is to make money in order to be successful, the aim of a famous actor, singer or athlete is to perform at their best in order to maintain their fame, record, success etc. As a result, the level of activity or performance of a person becomes pivotal in evaluating how successful he or she is. Furthermore, according to Langlotz (2006:144), success “can therefore be said to evaluate result, state, performance or external circumstances of an activity relative to its inherent aim”. Consequently, the literal scenes of most idioms denoting success in American English can be related to three general domains: UPWARD MOVEMENT, GAME, and EXPLOSION. Thus, we can maintain that idioms denoting success reproduce the following general metaphoric models:

1. SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS UPWARD MOVEMENT
2. SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS A GAME
3. SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS EXPLOSION

The above given metaphorical models are complex conceptual systems consisting of subordinate metaphorical models, which represent and develop it. The further analysis of each metaphoric model will help identify its relevant cultural background conceptualized by idioms of success.

A considerable number of idioms representing the SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS UPWARD MOVEMENT metaphor is related to career advancement, as in *top of the tree*, or to people with the highest rank in an organization, e.g. *top dog*, *top banana*.

G. Lakoff and M. Johnson (1980: 300) maintain that “the most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture”. The orientational metaphor HIGH STATUS IS UP, deeply embedded in American culture, is conceptualized in the following idioms: *have the world at your feet*, *come/move up in the world*, *on the pig’s back* etc. Flying is an ultimate activity which humans have always tried to imitate by building airplanes, helicopters, spaceships, rockets etc. Therefore, to be able to fly means to be successful, as in *on the up and up*, *high flier*, *with flying colors* and *get off to a flying start*.

The majority of idioms under analysis imply a prototype derived from sporting activities and games, as in the SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS A GAME metaphor. These are bat-and-ball sports, surface water sports, boxing, running, riding, gambling and card games. Baseball, which is one of the most popular sports

in America, has proved an extensive source for success-related idioms. Hence, these idioms literally read certain successful scenes (frames) from a baseball match. They are target-oriented and a player should do his best to perform and achieve a good record for the team. For instance, the rules of baseball state that a batter who hits the ball into the field must drop the bat and begin running toward first base, at which point the player is referred to as a runner. A batter-runner who reaches first base without being put out is said to be safe and is now on base. The following idioms denoting successful actions/performance of a person are based on this game and represent the SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS BASEBALL metaphor.

- (1) *to get to first base* - "to achieve the first step towards your objective"
- (2) *to bat a thousand* - "to do something extremely well and better than you had hoped to do it"
- (3) *to cover all the/your bases* - "to deal with every part of a situation or activity"
- (4) *to hit a home run* - "to succeed with something"
- (5) *in the catbird seat* - "in a dominant, advantageous, controlling position"

By analogy, the lexeme *innings* in the idiom *to have had a good innings* exemplifies a division of a game (originally, cricket) during which each team has an opportunity to score until three outs have been made against it.

As a result, baseball- or cricket-scripts can be substituted with the names of other sports. Hence, boxing-script is metaphorized through successful actions of a boxer against his opponent, as in the *to win some rounds* idiom. Additionally, horse riding-script is conceptualized through *win hands down* and *front runner*. Thus, when one wins hands down, it means he or she is as sure of victory as a jockey who lowers his hands in the closing stages of a race and relaxes his hold on the reins, ceasing to urge his horse forward. In politics, a successful candidate, who is certain to win, resembles a horse which is ahead of the pack.

In sailing or windsurfing, a performer must be extremely determined, concentrated and courageous to get on top of the wave. This knowledge is contained in the idioms which correlate the act of skillfully riding a wave with that of being successful:

- (6) *on the crest of a wave*
- (7) *to ride the wave*
- (8) *to ride high*

Competition is an inherent feature of any game or sport. In a card game, the successful player is the one who uses the cards most intelligently. In order to win in a card game, a player must have trump cards and aces. Furthermore, *trump* is an alteration of *triumph*, which was once used in card games in the same sense. Semantically, trumps, aces and winning hands conceptualize the following domains: resource, information, advantage, plan, asset, performance, outcome, opportunity etc. The exemplified lexemes all pertain to the concept of SUCCESS. The idioms below are prototypes of an advantageous position or an act of winning in a card game:

- (9) *have an ace up one's sleeve*
- (10) *to hold all the aces*
- (11) *to hold all the cards*
- (12) *come up trumps*

- (13) *to hold the trump card*
 (14) *to hold a winning hand*
 (15) *play one's cards right*

As mentioned earlier, the explosion-domain also relates to the successful activity of an individual. Generally, loud sounds, bangs, and blows are known to attract public attention. Being well-heard means being successful. In the target domain of successful activity, a sudden, explosive noise caused by a person is consistent with certain metaphors. Thus, the lexical representation for the target domain manifests itself through success, profit, and excitement in the following idioms: *to go with a bang*, *go down a bomb*, *do a roaring trade/business*, *to go great guns*, *to bring the house down*, *smash hit* etc.

3. Conclusion

There are several points emerging from this analysis. First, the overall meaning of an idiom is decomposable, contrary to the traditional views holding that it cannot be understood from the literal meanings of its constituents. In this instance, motivation is of major importance. Being able to trace semantic links between the idiom meaning and its motivator makes it possible for the speaker to understand and use it competently. Second, idioms are key cultural elements in American English, which embody culture-specific metaphors, like SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS UPWARD MOVEMENT, SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS A GAME, and SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITY IS EXPLOSION. Third, decoding links between the source and the target domains of the aforementioned metaphors gives one the authority to maintain that Americans tend to associate success or successful activity with an upward movement, games (sports) and loud sound.

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THE EXPERIENCER IN VERBAL IDIOMS OF EMOTION IN ENGLISH AND GERMAN

CAMELIA BEJAN
“Ovidius” University, Constanța

Abstract: *Idioms encompass a wide variety of phrases, divergent in meaning and structure. Conceived as a contrastive study, this paper focuses on verbal idioms that render emotional states in English and German. What is characteristic about this class of idioms is that they always encode an Experiencer in their thematic grid. We provide an examination of the thematic roles assigned by the verbs to the NPs in such idioms, in an attempt to put forth a typology of emotion idioms based on the position of the Experiencer in their thematic grids. We also identify verbal idioms of emotion in which the Experiencer occurs either as an argument or as an adjunct.*
Key words: *emotion, Experiencer, idiom, thematic grid, thematic role*

1. Theoretical background

Idiomatic expressions are generally understood as multi-word chunks consisting of components which are bound together lexically and syntactically. Idioms are characterised by three main features: lack of lexical variability, low literalness and syntactic frozenness. Being highly divergent in structure and meaning, idioms have always been a matter of debate among linguists.

This paper is concerned with idiomatic phrases headed by a verb, also known as verbal idioms. Verbal phrasal idioms have been divided into compositional and non-compositional. Compositional or decomposable idioms (e.g., *spill the beans* - ‘to disclose a secret’) can be decomposed into components that have identifiable meanings contributing to the meaning of the whole (cf. Wasow et al 1980:90). In contrast, non-compositional idioms cannot be decomposed, the meaning of *kick the bucket*, for example, is associated with the global interpretation of *to die*. They are syntactically frozen, while compositional idioms show more syntactic and semantic flexibility. Nunberg, Sag and Wasow (1994:496) argue that the majority of phrasal idioms are semantically compositional and that the phenomenon of idiomaticity is fundamentally semantic in nature.

An examination of the semantic properties of idioms (see Kovecses 2000) is helpful in accounting for the thematic roles assigned to the noun phrase components in an idiomatic phrase. We assume that verbal idioms are of three types, as shown in Krajka (2000:221):

a) phraseological idioms with the structure V + NP, such as *kick the bucket* or *bite the dust*. They can be understood both idiomatically and literally, for example *kick the bucket* as ‘die’ or as ‘strike the pail with one’s foot’; or, *bite the dust* understood as ‘die’, ‘fail’ or as ‘fall face down’ in its literal meaning, commonly associated with scenes of gunfights in American Western movies.

b) phrasal verbs like *go down* (e.g., *His speech went down very well.*) with the structure: V + part, whose meaning is non-compositional and cannot be derived from the senses of the parts. Such idioms can be decoded in two ways, either literally or idiomatically, e.g. *go down* as ‘fall to the ground’, or idiomatically, ‘get a particular reaction from sb.’, ‘swallow food with difficulty’, or ‘get depressed’.

c) primary verb idioms, V + NP constructions, with a primary verb like *do*, *make*, *get*, *let*, *keep*, *give*, etc., as in *let the cat out of the bag*, *get the sack*. The primary verb, a frequently used one, possessing multiple meanings, occurs in one of its senses (e.g. *let* in *let the cat out of the bag* with the meaning ‘allow sb. to do sth.’). The idiomatic construction arises from the unexpected combination of the primary verb with the rest of the phrase.

Krajka (2000:229) argues that there are varying degrees of compositionality inside these classes of verbal idioms and proposes a scale of verbal idioms, reflecting the degree of syntactic frozenness and the compositionality of meaning. The scale points to a continuum of idiomaticity from the most idiomatic type, the phraseological idioms, whose aggregate meaning is almost totally uncompositional, going on with phrasal verbs whose meaning is less obviously compositional, and with primary verb idioms that are more compositional in meaning, since the primary verb contributes one of its usual meanings to the composite structure.

2. The thematic roles of NPs in idioms

In non-idiomatic configurations NPs function as arguments and are assigned thematic roles by the verb. However, in idiomatic constructions the argument status of NPs has been a matter of debate among linguists. Components like *bucket*, which do not carry any individual meaning, have been called quasi-arguments with a non-referential function (Chomsky 1981). In contrast, components of decomposable idioms like *the beans* have been considered to carry some individual meanings, which are not the literal meanings of the parts but rather their figurative meanings. Therefore these components qualify for an argument status and are assigned thematic roles by the verbs.

O’Grady (1998: 292-310) suggests a restriction of the thematic roles of the NPs in idioms, which is formulated as follows: those arguments which are internal to the idiom must be lower in the thematic hierarchy (Agent, Theme, Goal/Location) than the arguments outside the idiom. He predicts the thematic grids in verbal idioms in English:

Transitive verbs

- <Agent, Theme> (1) a. *kick the bucket*, *draw the line*, *save the day*
<Agent, Location> b. *skate on thin ice*, *knock on wood*

Intransitive verbs (stative verbs)

- <Theme, Goal/Location> (2) *be in hot water*, *go down in history*

Ditransitive Verbs (with a Prepositional-Object)

- <Agent, Theme, Goal> (3) *carry x to extremes*, *feed x to the lions*
keep x under one’s hat, *wrap x around one’s little finger*
<Agent, Theme, Location> (4) *pull the rug out from under x*, *set eyes on x*

Ditransitive verbs (in Double-Object constructions)

- <Agent, Recipient, Theme> (5) a. *teach x a lesson*, *lend x a hand*
<Agent, Theme, Recipient> b. *feed x to the lions*

His proposal groups verbal idioms according to the type of verb around which they are built and to the thematic roles assigned to their arguments.

3. The Experiencer as an argument in emotion idioms

In what follows, I will apply O'Grady's analysis to the verbal idioms of emotion in English and German and focus on the thematic role of Experiencer that is assigned to the NP component in these idioms. The Experiencer is the thematic role of the human participant, emotionally involved in a relationship with some Theme.

I propose a typology of verbal idioms of emotion based on the position occupied by the Experiencer argument. We rely on Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) division of psych verbs into two main classes: verbs such as *admire*, *like*, *love*, with the Experiencer argument in subject position, and verbs like *astonish*, *amaze*, *entertain*, with the Experiencer role assigned to the NP in Object position. As with psych verbs, the Experiencer argument in verbal idioms of emotion can appear in subject position or in object position, hence the division of idioms denoting emotional states into: Subject Experiencer idioms and Object Experiencer idioms.

3.1 The Experiencer in English idioms of emotion

The main thematic grids associated with the verbal idioms of emotion in English are the following:

3.1.1 Subject Experiencer idioms

a) with simple transitive verbs:

<Experiencer, Theme>

- (1) a. *have a fit* (= suddenly become very angry)
get the blues (= become sad)
let off steam (= get rid of anger)
fly off the handle (= suddenly get very angry)
 b. *lose one's cool* (= become angry)
blow one's top (= suddenly become very angry)
flip one's lid (= suddenly become very angry)

<Experiencer, Goal>

- (2) *hit the roof/ ceiling* (= suddenly become very angry)

b) with intransitive verbs:

<Experiencer, Location> (stative verbs)

- (3) a. *be all over oneself* (= be happy)
be in good heart (= feel happy and confident)
 b. *be/feel down in the dumps* (= feel unhappy)
be on top of the world (= feel extremely happy)
be over the moon (= be very happy)

<Experiencer, Source> (non-stative verbs)

(4) *(nearly) jump out of one's skin* (= suddenly move because of fear or surprise)

c) with ditransitive verbs: (in oblique object constructions)

<Experiencer, Theme, Recipient/Beneficiary>

(5) *give/lose your heart to sb.* (= come to love sb.)
have a soft spot for sb. (= continue to like sb.)

d) with complex transitive verbs:

< Experiencer, Theme, Goal>

(6) *take sb./sth. to one's heart* (= like sb./sth very much)

In idioms with simple transitive verbs, as illustrated in (1b), a possessive adjunct is co-indexed with the Experiencer subject. In patterns with stative verbs like (3a), the Experiencer him/herself is understood to be the location of emotion. In emotion idioms like (6), a noun with the semantic feature [+part of the human body] takes a possessive (*one's*) which is co-referential with the Experiencer subject.

3.1.2 Object Experiencer idioms

a) with simple transitive verbs:

<Agent, Experiencer> --

b) with ditransitive verbs: (in double object constructions)

<Agent, Experiencer, Theme>

(7) *give somebody the creeps* (= make sb. feel slightly frightened or nervous)

c) with complex transitive verbs:

<Agent, Experiencer, Goal>

(8) *drive sb. up the wall* (= annoy sb. continually)
drive sb. round the bend (= annoy sb.)

<Agent, Experiencer, Source>

(9) *drive sb. out of one's mind* (= make sb. feel very annoyed)

As far as Object Experiencer idioms are concerned, it is interesting to note that there are no available idioms with simple transitive verbs, i.e. there are no idioms with the form *verb - Experiencer*. This gap can be accounted for in terms of

Nunberg et. al (1994:527), who propose that there is a tendency for idiomatic NPs to have inanimate literal meanings. Since Experiencers have a [+human] semantic feature and literal meanings, they cannot occur with dyadic verbs to yield idioms with figurative meanings.

3.2 The Experiencer in German idioms of emotion

Verbal idioms of emotion in German can also be grouped into Subject Experiencer and Object Experiencer idioms. For the sake of clarity, we provide for each example in German a word for word translation into English, followed by a semantic equivalent in a non-idiomatic form:

3.2.1 Subject Experiencer idioms

a) with transitive verbs:

<Experiencer, Theme>

(1) *die Puppen tanzen lassen* (= let the puppets dance; 'get very angry')

b) with intransitive verbs:

<Experiencer, Location> (stative verbs)

(2) *im siebten Himmel sein* (= be in the seventh heaven; 'be very happy')
in Harnisch sein (= be in armour; 'be very angry')

<Experiencer, Goal> (non-stative verbs)

(3) *in Harnisch kommen/ geraten* (= come/get into armour; 'fly into a rage')
in Fahrt kommen (= come in journey; 'get angry')
in die Wolle geraten (= get into the wool; 'get angry')
in Hitze geraten (= get into heat; 'get angry')

<Experiencer, Source> (non-stative verbs)

(4) *aus der Pelle/ Haut fahren* (= come out of the skin; 'become very angry')
aus der Tüte geraten (= come out of the bag; 'become angry')
aus dem Häuschen geraten (= come out of the little house; 'become angry')

c) with complex transitive verbs:

<Experiencer, Theme, Goal/ Location>

(5) *etwas zum Herz nehmen* (= take sth. to heart; 'become upset')
jn. im Herzen tragen (= carry sb. in the heart; 'love sb.')

3.2.2 Object Experiencer idioms

a) with simple transitive verbs: -

b) with ditransitive verbs:

<Agent, Experiencer, Theme>

- (6) *jm. das Herz schwer machen* (= make sb. Dat the heart heavy; 'make sb. sad')
jm. böses Blut machen/verursachen (= make/cause sb. Dat bad blood; 'upset sb.')

c) with complex transitive verbs:

<Agent, Experiencer, Location/ Goal>

- (7) *jn. in Harnisch bringen/jagen* (= bring/ hunt sb. to armour; 'annoy sb.')
- jn. auf die Palme bringen* (= bring sb. up a palm tree; 'make sb. angry')
- jn. auf Touren bringen* (= bring sb. to speed; 'make sb. flip his lid')

<Agent, Experiencer, Source>

- (8) *jn. aus dem Häuschen bringen* (= take sb. out of the little house; 'drive sb. berserk/ make sb. angry')

Just as it has been noted for English in the previous section, in German there are no Object Experiencer idioms built around a simple transitive verb. The simple combination of a verb with an Experiencer does not give rise to an emotion idiom, because the Experiencer always has a literal meaning.

The typology of emotion idioms put forth in these two sections has shown that the thematic grids on which these idioms are built are roughly similar in the two languages. However, the frequency of emotion idioms associated with a certain thematic grid varies; while some thematic grids are well illustrated, others are supported by single examples.

4. The experiencer in idioms with body part nouns

In both languages there are verbal idioms in which one component denotes a part of the human body that is typically associated with an emotional state or is affected by it. Such idioms very often include the body part nouns *heart* and *blood*.

In English, the Experiencer has a non-argument status, being realized as a possessive adjunct attached to a [+part of the human body] noun that occurs in subject position, as in (1), or object position as in (2):

- 1) *One's heart is in something.* (= one is enthusiastic about sth.)
One's heart bleeds for something. (= one pities and feels sorry for sth.)
One's heart goes out to somebody. (= one feels compassion for sb.)
One's heart/ blood freezes with fear. (= one is very frightened)
One's heart is in one's mouth. (= one suddenly feels very afraid)
One's heart is in one's boots. (= one is very unhappy)
One's blood is up. (= one is extremely angry and determined to do sth.)
One's hackles rise. (= one begins to feel very angry)
- 2) *break somebody's heart* (= upset greatly)
warm the cockles of somebody's heart (= make sb. warm and happy)
curdle somebody's blood (= frighten sb.)
raise somebody's hackles (= make sb. angry)
get/put somebody's back up (= annoy sb.)
get off somebody's back (= stop annoying sb.)

Several emotion idioms are built around the primary verb *make*, occurring in its causative sense. The idiomatic construction arises from the unusual combination of this primary verb with a body part noun:

- 3) *make somebody's blood boil* (= make sb. extremely angry)
make somebody's blood run cold (= fill sb. with fear and horror)
make somebody's blood freeze (= fill sb. with feelings of fear and horror)
freeze somebody's blood (= affect with terror or dread)
make somebody's flesh/ skin crawl (= scare and revolt sb.)
make somebody's flesh creep (= scare and revolt sb.)
make somebody's hair stand on end (= terrify sb.)
make somebody's hair/ toes curl (= make sb. feel shocked and embarrassed)

There are also Subject Experiencer verbal idioms in which the possessive adjunct (*one's*) modifying the body part noun is co-indexed with the Experiencer occurring as an argument in subject position:

- 4) *eat one's heart out* (= be very sad)
have one's heart in one's boots (= feel very gloomy and depressed)
tear one's hair out (= be extremely worried and agitated about sth.)

In contrast, in German verbal idioms of emotion, the Experiencer never occurs as an adjunct, it preserves its argument status. The set of body part nouns usually includes: *Herz* 'heart' as in (5) and *Blut* 'blood' in (6), and only rarely the nouns: *Kopf* 'head' and *Augen* 'eyes' as in (7), *Leber* 'liver' as in (8), *Galle* 'bile' as shown in (9), *Knochen* 'bones', *Glieder* 'limbs' as in (10). For the following German idioms we provide the word for word translation into English:

- 5)
 SubjExp.: *sich (Dat) etwas zum Herz nehmen* (= take sth. to heart; 'worry about sth.')
- jn. ins Herz schliessen* (= to close sb. in the heart; 'love sb.')
- jn. im Herzen tragen* (= carry sb. in the heart, 'love sb.')
- ObjExp.: *jm. das Herz schwer machen* (= make sb. Dat the heart heavy, 'upset sb.')
- Es wird ihm enge/ schwer ums Herz.* (sentential idiom)
 (= it is him. Dat narrow/ heavy around the heart; 'His heart is heavy.')
- 6)
 ObjExp.: *jm. schießt/ steigt das Blut ins Gesicht/ in den / zu Kopf* (sentential idiom)
 (= the blood shoots/ rises sb. Dat in the face/ the head; 'one's blood rises to one's head')
- jm. böses Blut machen/ schaffen/ verursachen* (= make/ cause sb. Dat bad blood; 'upset sb.')
- 7)
 SubjExp.: *sich (Dat) die Augen aus dem Kopf schämen*
 (= shame sb. Dat the eyes of the head; 'be deeply ashamed')
- ObjExp.: *jm. ein Dorn im Auge sein*
 (= be sb. Dat a thorn in the eye; 'be a thorn in one's flesh/side', 'annoy sb.')
- 8)
 ObjExp.: *jn. sticht es in die Leber* (sentential idiom) (= it stings sb. in the liver; 'annoy sb.')
- der Kummer/ Zorn/ Ärger frisst jm. an der Leber* (sentential idiom)
 (=worry/ fury/ anger feeds sb. Dat at the liver; 'worry/ fury/ anger feeds on one's liver')

In addition to these patterns, German has special semi-idiomatic expressions in which the Experiencer in the dative may have the interpretation of possessor in relationship with the Subject NP of the sentence. In such structures, both the Subject and the locative phrase are realized by a [+part of the human body] noun, while the causative phrase expresses the state of mind or the emotion that affects the dative-possessive Experiencer of the sentence:

13)

Das Blut steigt/ schießt mir in die Wangen/ ins Gesicht vor Zorn.
 The blood rises/ shoots me.Dat to the cheeks/ to the face because of anger
 [+part of body] EXP./LOC [+part of body] CAUSE

Das Blut kocht/ stockt/ erstarrt/ gerinnt/ friert/ mir in den Adern vor Schreck.
 The blood boils/grows stiff/ coagulates/ freezes me.Dat in the veins of scare.
 [+part of body] EXP./LOC [+part of body] CAUSE
 ‘Blood boils/stands still/grows stiff/coagulates/freezes in my veins because of fear’

The Experiencer argument occurs with a clear Locative meaning in the following semi-idiomatic constructions in German:

14)

Das Blut kocht/ siedet in mir vor Wut.
 The blood cooks/ boils in me.Dat because of fury.
 [+part of body] EXP/ LOCATION CAUSE

As already shown in section 4, unlike German, English does not allow the Experiencer to appear in an argument position. The only indication of the person experiencing the emotion is the possessive adjunct of the [+part of the human body] noun in Subject position:

15)

My blood froze in my veins with fear/ surprise/ horror/ fright/ dismay.
 [+part of body] CAUSE

My heart froze with fear.
 [+part of body] CAUSE

The parallel examination of semi-idiomatic verbal expressions in the two languages has shown that they are structurally similar. Both languages allow one or even two body part nouns to co-occur with an Experiencer in rendering an emotional state. However, the Experiencer assumes a different status: it is an argument in Object position in German or a possessive adjunct in English. Additionally, the Experiencer argument may have a locative meaning in German.

6. Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been on verbal idioms of emotion whose main semantic feature is that they allow an Experiencer in their thematic grid.

We have provided a typology of emotion idioms based on the position of the Experiencer argument. Thus emotion idioms in English and German have been

grouped into Subject Experiencer and Object Experiencer verbal idioms. The parallel analysis of the thematic grids of emotion idioms has also revealed the absence of Object Experiencer idioms with simple transitive verbs in both languages.

Furthermore, the examination of emotion idioms with body part nouns has shown that the Experiencer appears in adjunct position in English, while in German it occurs in argument position. Finally, the Experiencer can be conceived as a 'container of emotions' or as the location of emotion in semi-idiomatic expressions in both languages.

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(UN)RELIABLE ADVERTISING: AN INSIGHT INTO THE ART OF HEDGING IN ENGLISH PRINT MEDIA

IRENA ALEKSIĆ
University of Belgrade

Abstract: *The paper analyses the extent to which advertisements in English print media exploit hedging with a view to making a product more appealing than it really is. The research is corpus-based and it provides quantitative results, i.e. the percentage of advertisements in the corpus that contain hedges. However, it also provides an analysis of certain examples for the sake of illustration.*

Keywords: *advertisements, English, hedging, print media*

1. Introduction

What initiated this research was the fact that consumers appear to be oblivious to the effect advertisements have on them; they often fail to notice the hedges present in the ads, which represent a warning that they might not get what they wish for or what they are promised. My aim in carrying it out was to establish the percentage of advertisements that contain hedges, with a view to prevent the customers' dissatisfaction and complaints. The corpus I used was made up of 139 print advertisements collected from four magazines in the English language - *Elle*, *Vogue*, *InStyle* and *Cosmopolitan*, published in Great Britain and the USA from January until April 2013. Epistemic modality, lexical units and fine print have been analyzed here in terms of hedges.

2. Hedges in advertising

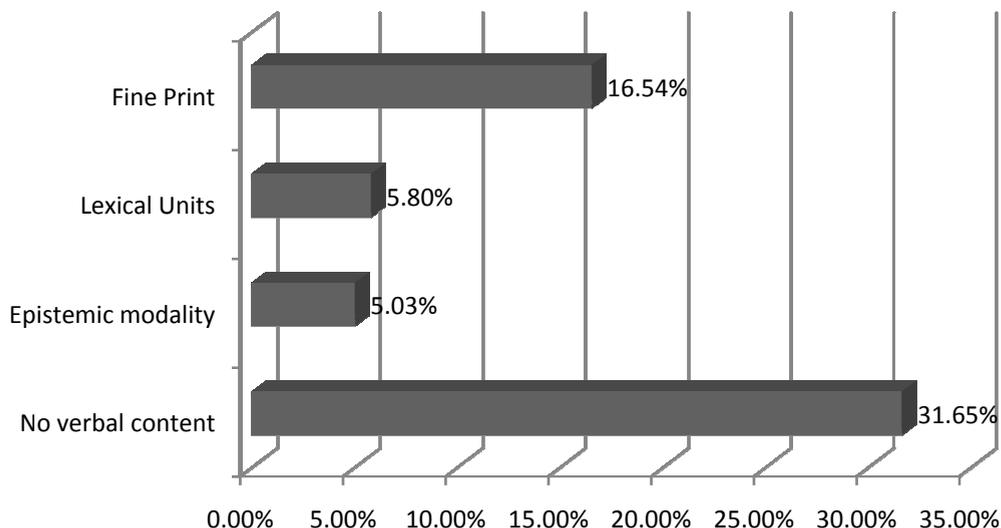
The fact that “the term *advertise* is an etymological metaphor derived from the Latin word *advertere*, which means *turn towards*” (Semino 2008:168), epitomizes the elusive nature of advertising. Therefore, hedging is utterly important in the world of advertising. Advertisers skilfully use them in order to avoid infringement lawsuits or dissatisfied customers or clients. According to George Lakoff (Lakoff 1973:458), natural language concepts have vague boundaries and fuzzy edges, which results in natural sentences being characterized neither as true, false, nor nonsensical, but rather true to a certain extent and false to a certain extent, true in certain respects and false in other respects. Furthermore, hedges are items which mark the writer's reluctance to present or evaluate propositional content categorically (Fuentes-Olivera et al., 2001:1299). In advertising, copywriters resort to hedges to make indirect reference to the qualities of the goods being advertised or they opt for using them as probability markers; moreover, hedges assure addressees that copywriters do not intend to infringe on their freedom to act (Fuentes-Olivera et al. 2001:1300-1).

3. Results and analysis

The corpus analysis has proved that only 38 advertisements (27.34%) do contain some sort of a hedge. The fact that a high percentage of advertisements

containing verbal messages (40.98%) do not encompass hedges can be attributed to potential customers' low purchase intentions, as some authors argue (Bušljeta Banks and De Pelsmacker 2012:10). Figure 1 shows the representation of epistemic modality, lexical units and fine print within the corpus.

Figure 1



3.1 Epistemic modality

The corpus analysis has shown that print media advertisements exhibit a certain propensity to apply epistemic modality (5.03%). Furthermore, epistemic modality concerns an estimation of the likelihood that (some aspect of) a certain state of affairs is/has been/will be true (or false) in the context of the possible world under consideration (Nuyts 2000:21-22). In this way repercussions of explicitly stating that a product is the best or that it most certainly helps in a particular way are avoided. The following examples illustrate the notion of epistemic modality present in print media advertisements:

- a. For skin that won't stop making oil a cleanser that *won't* stop absorbing it. (Clean & Clear, Cosmopolitan)
- b. It *will* bend backwards for you. (Windows 8, Cosmopolitan)
- c. And it *won't* damage skin. (Bioré, Cosmopolitan)
- d. Haircolour *will* never be the same. (Olia, Cosmopolitan)
- e. You *'ll* look like you've had a great night's sleep. (Clinique, Cosmo)
- f. You *'ll* remember the days you wear it. (Downy infusions, Elle)
- g. Other body washes *can* be harsh enough to strip your skin of essential nutrients. (Dove, Cosmopolitan)

Some of the examples above can be interpreted as cases of epistemic modality per se, and therefore, as hedges. However, there are some problematic cases with the verb *will*, which can be perceived as a form of volition which is generally regarded as dynamic modality, as in a., b. and c. If these examples are regarded as cases of epistemic modality, then they can be characterized as epistemic prediction (Hyland 1998:115) present in the examples d., e. and f. On the other hand, the verb *will* can even be regarded as a persuasive device or *pledge*, which is more likely to result in consumers' buying the product (Bušljeta Banks and De Pelsmacker 2012:10).

However, in the example g., the primary meaning of *can* is root modality, which brings us to the implicature that not all other body washes are harmful, thereby creating a hedge and not blatantly offending other competitive products.

In my corpus there are some sporadic occurrences of modal verbs such as *can*, *may* and *might* which explicitly express uncertainty and doubt about the characteristics of the advertised product/service. Those are instances of epistemic modality as well:

- a. Vitamin supplements *may* benefit those with nutritionally inadequate diets.
(Perfectil, InStyle)
- b. A beneficial effect *can* be obtained from a daily intake of 200mg.
(Pregnacare, InStyle)

Apart from modal verbs, epistemic modality can be expressed by other lexical entities. In the following example, *believe* is used in order to express the copywriter's attitude towards the truth of the proposition, and also has an epistemic value, just like *should*, which stands for weak obligation.

- a. We *believe* self-indulgence *should* be embraced and explored. (Elle spa, Elle)

3.2 Lexical units

Apart from epistemic modality, other lexical devices (5.80%) are applied to serve the purpose of hedging. Here are some examples:

- a. It's *just* for sleeping soundly. (Zzzquil, Cosmopolitan)
- b. She's *just* No7. (No7, InStyle)
- c. Now, discover this super-potent serum with anti-pollution technology to help *significantly* inhibit the appearance of visible damage from environmental assaults. (Estée Lauder, Elle)
- d. Olay Regenerist's advanced innovation instantly reduces eye-puffiness, and *significantly* improves the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles around the eyes. (Olay, Cosmopolitan)
- e. Get *up to* 8 weeks of gorgeous Nice'n Easy tones and highlights.
(Nice'n Easy, Cosmopolitan)

In example a., the copywriter used the adverb *just* to limit the scope of the pill's effectiveness and prevent possible misuse; whereas in example b., the same adverb is used as a hedge implying that in the photo of a lady no artificial techniques were used to make the model look more appealing but 'No.7' solely. In the examples c. and d., the adverb *significantly* is used to limit the truth value of

the proposition; whereas in the last example the preposition *up to* means that it is possible for the product to last eight weeks or less, but no more than that.

3.3 Fine print

The last category to be analyzed in terms of hedges is the fine print in advertisements. As Bušljeta Banks and De Pelsmacker (2013:300) state, some authors (Erickson et al., 1978; Wright and Hosman, 1983) argue that certain expressions, such as *9 out of 10*, *85 percent of* etc., are used to weaken the impact of a claim by allowing for exceptions or avoiding total commitment. These are usually to be found in fine print. Nevertheless, further research on such instances is required, since some people could perceive them as means contributing to strengthening the impact of a claim due to its apparently scientific tone. However, this research has revealed that 16.54 percent of the advertisements in my corpus contain this kind of hedge:

- a. *So powerful that more than half of women* considering a cosmetic procedure said they would delay it*.
*Tested on 113 women considering lasers, fillers and peels. (Lancôme, InStyle)
- b. 80% of women considering a laser treatment would delay it*.
*Consumer test 245 women aged 40 to 65. (L'Oréal, Vogue)
- c. Hydrates to instantly reduce the look of fine lines*.
*Results not equal to cosmetic procedures. (Olay, Cosmopolitan)
- d. Iams has 50% more animal protein and never adds gluten*.
*Versus best-selling adult formula of leading brands. (Iams, Cosmopolitan)

4. Conclusion

My research has shown a rather moderate level (27.34%) of hedge use in print media in several British and American magazines. I agree with some eminent authors (Erickson et al. 1978) that this is due to the fact that the language which contains hedges is powerless and that copywriters have to resort to such strategies to sell the product or service advertised. Furthermore, my research has pointed out the devices used as hedges: epistemic modality, certain lexical units, and fine print. Taking into account that 31.65% of my corpus did not contain any verbal messages, further research based on an even larger corpus will be well-advised.

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THE CANONICAL STRUCTURE OF WRITTEN ADVERTISEMENTS

SIMONA ŞIMON

“Politehnica” University of Timișoara

Abstract: *In order to achieve a communicative purpose, the discursal categories are organised in a genre-specific order. The typical regularities of content organisation specific to a particular genre, in this case to advertisements, form the canonical structure. The present paper analyses the canonical structure of 84 written advertisements and highlights some concluding remarks.*

Key words: *canonical structure, superstructural categories, written advertisements*

1. Introduction

Any communicative event, i.e. any piece of discourse, has a communicative purpose which is achieved with the help of the discursal categories arranged in a genre-specific order:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. (Swales 1993:58)

The typical regularities of content organisation form the *cognitive structure* of a genre:

The communicative purpose is inevitably reflected in the interpretative cognitive structuring of the genre, which, in a way, represents the typical regularities of organization in it. These regularities must be seen as cognitive in nature because they reflect the strategies that members of a particular discourse or professional community typically use in the construction and understanding of that genre to achieve specific communicative purposes. This cognitive structuring reflects accumulated and conventionalized social knowledge available to a particular discourse or professional community. (Bhatia 1994:21)

Bhatia (1994:32) points out that the *cognitive structure* is similar to the generic superstructure of a discourse, also called *canonical structure*, and that the rhetorical moves of the cognitive structure correspond to the superstructural categories of the canonical structure from the schema theory. The terms *cognitive structure* and *rhetorical moves* are usually associated with the more standardised professional genres, like scientific articles or newspaper articles, while the terms *canonical structure* and *superstructural categories* are mainly used to describe more flexible genres, such as advertisements and poetry (van Dijk 1992:153-155, Superceanu 2000:129, Şimon 2007:171-172).

2. The canonical structure of written advertisements

An advertisement is the result of the action of advertising, and advertising is, according to The American Marketing Association, any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor (Baker 1994:369). Taking into account this definition, eighty-four written advertisements promoting various ideas, goods and services have been analysed in order to identify a recurring pattern in their structure. This, however, has proved to be a very difficult task, because advertisements stand out by the very fact that they are innovative, dynamic and rule-breaking. Nevertheless, I have hypothesised the existence of a canonical structure of written advertisements made up of six superstructural categories:

a) Identifying a need

The advertisers refer to the needs of the target group, implying that the advertised product/service/ issue/ person can fulfil these needs. In this respect, the advertisers try to capture the readers' attention by using an outstanding *title*, sometimes followed by a short description of the need in the *sub-title*, or by the *slogan* (e.g. the slogan of the Philips company: *Let's make things better!*). The slogan of print advertisements may be placed at the beginning/ top or at the end/ bottom of the advertisement.

b) Introducing the offer

This superstructural category consists of *essential, positive detailing of the product/service/ issue/ person* being advertised in order to persuade the addressee to act in a certain way. Sometimes the offer is reinforced by the slogan.

c) Establishing credentials

Credentials are established by pointing out that *extensive research* had been done and many persons/ animals had been *tested* before the product was put on the market, by recourse to *seals of approvals, recommendations* made by specialists or role models, by mentioning that the product/ service is a *trade mark* (™), a *copyright* (©), or *has been registered* (®), and by suggesting the *expertise of the company*.

d) Offering incentives

After the product or service has been introduced to the prospective purchasing population, incentives are offered by means of a *discount or a comparison* with other products or services (e.g. the typical negative comparison used in the detergent advertisements), by giving an example of a *model user* (e.g. for years Claudia Schiffer was the model user of the L'OREAL products) or *claims* about the exceptional qualities of the product.

e) Using pressure tactics

The difference between offering incentives and using pressure tactics lies in the fact that the former are used to persuade people to buy a product/service, while

the latter to push the potential customer into taking an immediate decision (Bhatia 1994:55). A common pressure tactic used in advertisements is giving a *time limit* for purchasing a product/service.

f) Soliciting feedback

A feedback is implicitly solicited: on the one hand, by giving *the name of the company, the internet address / website, telephone numbers and sometimes the place where one can purchase the product/service*, so one knows exactly what and where to look for, and, on the other hand, *by offering a demonstration of the way in which the product functions or should be used, a test drive, by advising the potential customers to use the product or service*, etc.

This ideal structural model has been tested on eighty-four written advertisements in the manner indicated below. The advertisement chosen here for exemplification promotes a type of mascara and it reads:

New defining lengths. (P1)

Brush, comb. Create. With High Definition Lashes Brush Then Comb Mascara. Brush-side coats with dramatic, long-wearing colour. Comb-side separates to perfection.

Transforms each and every lash with extreme length and definition. (P2)

Allergy Tested.

100% Fragrance Free. (P3)

www.clinique.co.uk (P4) (“Good Housekeeping”, September 2006)

In this advertisement, the need for long lashes is identified in the title, and the mascara with a special brush-side and comb-side helps the addressees transform *each and every lash with extreme length and definition*. The addressees are given precise directions how to use the advertised product in order to *create perfection*. Moreover, credentials are established: the product had been tested and proved to be *100% fragrance free*. If the addressee needs further information, she may visit the website.

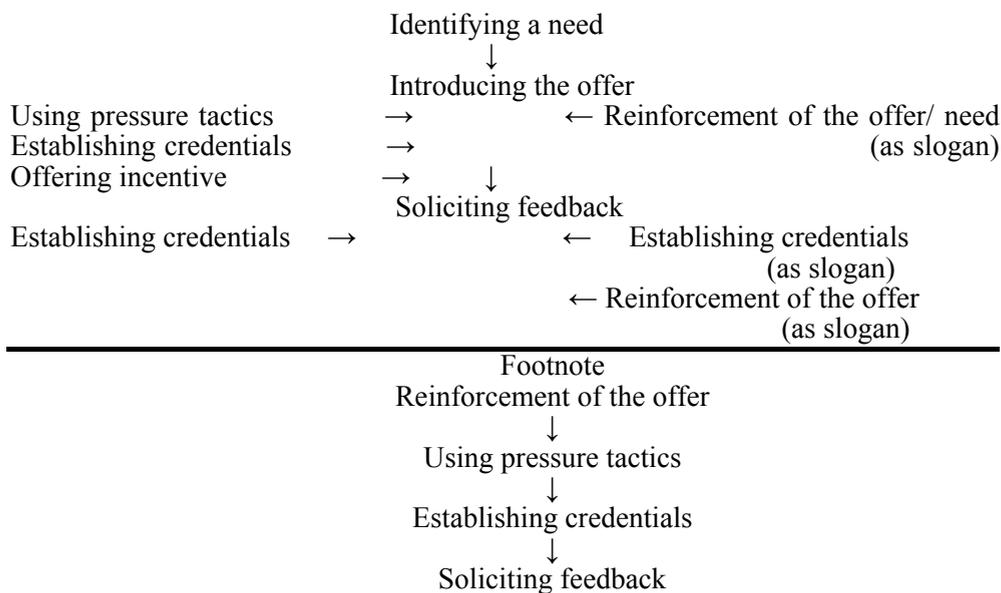
In other words, in this advertisement, the superstructural categories are arranged as follows:

| Paragraph | Superstructural category |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| P 1 | Identifying a need |
| P 2 | Introducing the offer |
| P 3 | Establishing credentials |
| P 4 | Soliciting feedback |

One can easily notice in the example above that not all of the superstructural categories mentioned in the hypothesised canonical structure of written advertisements have been observed. This is not an isolated case, as the analysis of the eighty-four written advertisements has shown.

The most frequent canonical structure identified in the written advertisements of my corpus is made up of the following superstructural

categories: *Identifying a need – Introducing the offer – Soliciting feedback*. Credentials are usually established before and/ or after soliciting feedback. Incentives are also offered before and/ or after soliciting feedback. If both credentials are established and incentives are offered in the same advertisement, then this usually happens in this very order. Pressure tactics are always used after introducing the offer. The slogan comes to reinforce the offer or the need, and rarely to re-establish credentials, before or after soliciting feedback. All these superstructural categories may be reinforced several times, but they usually observe their most typical position in the canonical structure. Moreover, if the advertiser decides that further details about the offer have to be given, then s/he resorts to a footnote which observes this sequence: *Reinforcement of the offer – Using pressure tactics – Establishing credentials/ Re-establishing credentials – Soliciting feedback*. Rarely do all these superstructural categories appear in the footnote of one and the same advertisement; usually only one or two of them are used. The diagram below presents this general canonical structure



The sequence of superstructural categories in the middle column is most frequently used, while the superstructural categories mentioned in the right and left column are used from time to time, representing optional superstructural categories.

3. Conclusion

The cognitive and canonical structures mirror the typical content organisation of a genre-specific piece of discourse. Taking into account the definition of advertisements given by The American Marketing Association, eighty-four written advertisements have been selected to build my corpus, and were subsequently analysed. Then I have hypothesised the existence of a canonical structure of written advertisements made up of the following superstructural

categories: *Identifying a need – Introducing the offer – Establishing credentials – Offering incentives – Using pressure tactics – Soliciting feedback*. These superstructural categories are characterised and identified in a written advertisement, selected to exemplify the way in which the analysis of the whole corpus has been conducted. The results of my analysis reveal that the hypothesized canonical structure is an ideal structural model and that not all component superstructural categories are used at the same time in an advertisement or in the same order. However, they may be reinforced several times in the same advertisement, or may be combined in the same paragraph or even sentence. Copywriters exploit them creatively, depending on the purpose of the advertisement.

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DEONTIC USES OF *SHOULD* AND *OUGHT (TO)*

JELENA PRTLJAGA

Teacher Training Faculty, Belgrade
Preschool Teacher Training College, Vršac

Abstract: *The first part of the paper outlines contemporary views on the notion of deontic modality as well as the senses of the deontically used modals should and ought to; it also discusses the difference between the two modals. The second part of the paper presents the results of a contrastive analysis of the English and the Serbian modals expressing deontic meanings.*

Key words: *deontic modality, English language, modal verbs, Serbian language*

1. Introduction

When Dealing with deontic modality, one has to admit that it is a rather problematic domain since there is an ongoing discussion about what it should be called and how it should be defined, as well as what modal meanings and uses it actually encompasses. Nevertheless, regardless of the various terms the authors dealing with modality use when referring to it, i.e. whether deontic (Lyons 1977; Palmer 1989; Palmer 1990; Huddleston & Pullum 2002; Van der Auwera and Plungian 1998) or root (Coates 1983), intrinsic modality (Quirk et al. 1985), speaker/agent-oriented (Bybee et al. 1994), non-epistemic, modality of event (Palmer 2001) or motivational (Zvekić – Dušanović 2011), all linguists agree that there is a type of modality enabling the speaker to influence the behaviour of his/her addressee, imposing an obligation on him/her, or giving him/her permission to undertake an action. In other words, deontic modality is related to obligations, orders, rights, duty, promise, exhortation, permission, threat, suggestions, offers, requirements, etc.

In the appraisal theory (Martin and White 2005), deontic modality is classified under the category of entertain locutions, on the basis of its basic feature of entertaining dialogic alternatives. In other words, Martin and White (2005:111) classify the deontic meanings of permission and obligation within the system of engagement, i.e. the category of entertain locutions. On the other hand, they also note that “modulations of obligation can be related to lexicalized judgements of propriety”: e.g., *you should go, you're supposed to go* (Martin and White 2005: 55). Prototypically imposing a course of action on the addressee, deontically used modals also make dialogic space for alternative possibilities. By using a deontic modal, the speaker often allows the addressee not to take the proposed course of action, acknowledging the speaker's role as a participant in a dialogic exchange.

As the above glimpses into a vast amount of literature on modality suggest, there are various views on deontic modality – on both its range and subtypes. Due to the absence of a consensus on what deontic modality is, as well as to the quality of indeterminacy in modality markers in general (cases of ambiguity and merger may occur - Coates 1983), the paper will take a prototype approach to modality. Deontic modality should be viewed from the angle of prototypes or fuzzy sets through graduation (or gradable attitudes). It seems that such an approach offers an

excellent framework for it. Graduation operates across two axes of scalability – that of grading according to intensity or amount (force), and that of grading according to prototypicality and the preciseness by which category boundaries are drawn (focus). Under focus, values are graded on a scale between ‘core’ and ‘marginal’ membership.

Having in mind all the dimensions interweaving in the case of deontic modality – the source, the aim, i.e. agent and the meaning strength, it seems that it can be determined according to the following criteria: performativity, interactive relationship between those participating in communication act, subjectivity, deontic aim – endpoint, deontic source – initiator, authority of the source of obligation, permission, advice, threat, protest, promise..., strength of the deontic meaning (on the continuum between weak and strong) and desirability (whether the proposed action is desirable from the standpoint of the speaker or the addressee).

According to prototypicality, graduation operates as phenomena that are scaled by reference to the degree to which they match some supposed core or exemplary instance of a semantic category. In other words, the greater number of the above stated criteria the expressed meaning fulfils, the closer it is to the core of the deontic modality set. Furthermore, all the criteria are in an interactive and interdependent relation. It seems that both the domain of deontic modality in general and the meanings of individual deontically used modal verbs in particular can be assessed according to the same criteria. The two modals in question will be considered according to the above outlined criteria.

2. The deontically used modals *should* and *ought to*

Both investigated verbs are weak obligation markers, *should* being a core modal verb (Carter & McCarthy 2006:639) and *ought to* a semi-modal (Carter & McCarthy 2006:657). It is usually suggested that the English language makes no distinction between the two verbs - they are virtually identical in meaning (Coates 1983: 81), have synonymous use (Quirk et al. 1985:227), seem to be largely interchangeable (Palmer: 1990:122;), or *should* is a more common alternative to *ought to* (Leech 1971:100). Huddleston and Pullum (2002:186) state that one difference between *should* and *ought to* is that only the former is normally used in issuing indirect directives, such as instructions (e.g. *The right-hand column should be left blank*). According to Carter and McCarthy, when used to refer to an ideal or desired state of affairs, *ought to* is very similar to *should*, but is far less frequent (Carter & McCarthy 2006:659). However, the stated authors do not explain why they are not the same, but just very similar.

Dealing with the dilemma whether the two modals are the same or not, it is worth noting that there are authors who are inclined to make a difference between them (Sweetser 1990:53; Myhill 1997: 8-11; Papafragou 1998:26). Comparing *ought to* to *have to* and *need to*, Sweetser (1990: 53) points out that *ought to* seems to be less strong than the others and to have moral overtones, or at least to indicate that the obligation is one socially agreed upon between the imposer and the doer. Furthermore, drawing a parallel between the two modals discussed in the present paper, the same author (Sweetser 1990:56) concludes that whatever a speaker is willing to assume responsibility for (*should*) is also something the speaker might conditionally agree was morally appropriate or obligatory (*ought to*). Arguing for a monosemantic approach to modality, Papafragou suggests that by using *should*, the

speaker simply reports what is entailed by the norms/expectations of a social group's behaviour, but is manifestly not in agreement with those norms, so that s/he will not use his authority to enforce them (You should be back by midnight, (?) although it's fine by me if you aren't). On the other hand, using *ought to* (You ought to be back by midnight, although it's fine by me if you aren't), the speaker utters a mere statement concerning what ideals or duty entail, which can differ substantially from what the speaker is prepared to accept in practice. Having analysed American plays over a period of time, Myhill (1997:8-11) argues that there is a clear distinction between the two modals, with *should* expressing individual opinions and *ought to* emphasizing a common opinion regarding the obligation in question.

As for their frequency, apart from *will/would* and *can/could*, often used in formulaic expressions, the modal verb *should* is one of the most frequent modal verbs in the English language, expressing both subjective and objective deontic meanings of medium strength. On the other hand, the modal verb *ought to* is relatively rare (Quirk et al. 1985:227) and "is reaching the end of its useful life" (Leech 2003:236).

3. The poly-functional potential of *should* and *ought to*

Taking into account the graduation criteria described above, a corpus has been compiled, consisting of approximately 100 sentences in the English language and their equivalents in the Serbian language; they were excerpted from David Lodge's trilogy *Changing Places*, *Small World* and *Nice Work* and their translations into Serbian. There are 80 sentences that contain the modal verb *should* and 20 sentences with the modal verb *ought to* in the corpus. Depending on the criteria fulfilled by the utterances containing the two modal verbs, the deontic meanings of the verbs may range from strong, medium to weak, i.e. from low, median to high focus.

There is a whole range of meanings expressed by the modal verb *should* and some of them depend on the type of utterance (affirmative, negative, interrogative or negative-interrogative) in which it occurs. Other elements present in the context also contribute various shades to the meaning of the modal. An analysis of these meanings expressed by the modal verb *should* can be found below.

The analysed examples that contain the modal verb *should* displaying deontic modality are the following:

- (1) a) You *should* make an effort. (Lodge 1993:770)
 b) *Morao bi se potruditi*, Vic. (Lodge 1990:209)
- (2) a) Just a note in haste to say that I *should* think very carefully before you take this girl of Zapp's into the house. (Lodge 1993:120)
 b) Nemam mnogo vremena i hoću samo da ti kažem da *bih* ja dobro *razmislio* pre nego što primiš ovu Zapovu devojku u kuću. (Lodž 1996:168)
- (3) a) I think you *should* give Brian a chance to adjust. (Lodge 1993:752)
 b) *Morali biste mu dati* vremena da se prilagodi. (Lodge 1990:189)

Example (1) fulfils all the criteria established for deontic modality. It is in the centre of the fuzzy set, i.e. in the core of the semantic domain: it is performative, uttered in an interpersonal exchange implying an interactive relationship between those participating in the communication act, it is subjective, addressed directly to the addressee and it is desirable from the standpoint of the speaker, rather than of the addressee. It can be said that it expresses strong deontic meaning, having in mind that it is an utterance used by a wife to address her husband who has been absent, nervous and neglecting her and his family lately. Thus, the modal verb also involves an element of moral obligation. The only criterion left which is not fully met is that of authority; however, certain respect is expected between spouses.

Even though it does not meet the criterion of deontic aim, since it has a first person singular subject, Example (2) undoubtedly expresses a strong deontic meaning. It is a modulation of obligation, imposing and anticipating obedience on the part of the addressee. According to Martin and White (2005:242), modulations of obligation can arguably be read in each instance as attitudinal and are classified within the judgement propriety. Furthermore, it seems that, rather than expressing tentativeness, the meanings of locutions like *I think you should do* (see sentence 3) or *I should do* (sentence 2) have a “deliberative” function, expressing authority (Martin and White 2005:108). As a consequence, they express even stronger deontic meanings than utterances addressing someone directly (*you should do*). The strength of the Example (2) is further reinforced by the adverbial of manner *very carefully*.

By using adverbs like *maybe, probably, perhaps...*, the speaker weakens the strength of the deontic meaning of the modal verb. In this case, the authorial voice represents the proposition as one of a range of possible positions – it thereby *entertains* or invokes various dialogic alternatives, allowing the addressee not to take the proposed course of action:

- (4) a) Maybe you *should consider* it seriously, it might be useful when your job runs out. (Lodge 1993:823)
- b) *Razmisli* o tome, moglo bi ti dobro doći kad izgubiš posao na fakultetu. (Lodge 1990:266)

There are 10 similar sentences in the corpus, usually uttered in delicate situations, when the proposed action is not desirable from the standpoint of the addressee, but it is necessary because of objective circumstances and the speaker wants to point it out, inviting a reaction of the person in question. The majority of the utterances are in the middle of the fuzzy set, not implying moral or any other kind obligation, but advice (example 5) or a suggestion (example 6):

- (5) a) You *should sleep on it*. (Lodge 1993:895)
- b) *Ti bi morala prespavati* ovakvu odluku. (Lodge 1990:345)
- (6) a) Perhaps we *should get on*. (Lodge 1993:660)
- b) *Morali bismo već krenuti*. (Lodge 1990:89)

There are also negative judgements, i.e. criticisms:

- (7) a) Matthew *should be ashamed* of himself. (Lodge 1993:287)
 b) Metju *bi trebalo da se stidi sebe*. (Lodž 1992:76)
- (8) a) I don't think you *should have done* that. (Lodge 1993:406)
 b) Mislim da to *nije trebalo da učinite*. (Lodž 1992:207)
- (9) a) You *shouldn't read* other people's private prayers. (Lodge 1993:364)
 b) *Ne bi trebalo da čitaš* tuđe privatne molitve. (Lodž 1992:162)

Sentence (7) is not in the core of deontic domain, since its deontic aim is not the addressee and it is not performative, but descriptive; however it seems to be a strong moral judgement due to the adjective *ashamed*. Examples (8) and (9) illustrate the speaker's disagreement with what his addressee has already done or is doing at the moment.

Except when asking for advice or instructions (5 sentences), rarely is the interrogative form with the modal verb *should* a real question; it usually has some other connotations (10 sentences):

- (10) a) Why *should* decent people *have to put up with* this crap?
 (Lodge 1993:619)
 b) Zašto pristojan svijet *mora podnositi* takve gadarije?
 (Lodge 1990:24)
- (11) a) If a lady sees a man with his fly open, *should* she *tell* him?
 (Lodge 1993:24)
 b) Ako jedna gospođa ugleda da je nekom muškarcu otkopčan šlic, da li bi to *trebalo da mu saopšti*?
 (Lodž 1996:32)

Example (10) is a pseudo question expressing a protest, rather than a question requiring an answer. Such use is typical of negative-interrogative sentences where the modal verb is preceded by the question word *why*. In example (11), the speaker actually a way warns the addressee about a delicate matter, introducing a bit of humour when using the word *lady*.

Utterances expressing the weakest deontic meanings, positioned at the periphery of the deontic fuzzy set, refer to general statements, instructions (example (12)) simply state that something is a good idea.

- (12) a) Flashbacks *should be used* sparingly, if at all. (Lodge 1993:161)
 b) Retrospektivno pripovedanje *treba upotrebljavati* s merom, ako ga uopšte i *treba upotrebljavati*.
 (Lodž 1996:207)

Unlike the modal verb *should*, *ought (to)* does not have such a variety of meanings. It should also be noted that, in my corpus, the sentences with the modal verb *should* significantly outnumber those containing the modal verb *ought (to)*.

The modal verb *ought (to)* usually refers to what is right, morally acceptable in the given circumstances and in accordance with the norms of behaviour (example (13)) or what would be ideal, or socially just (example (14)):

- (13) a) You really *ought to write* home, you know. (Lodge 1993:152)
 b) Znaš, stvarno *treba da napišeš* to pismo. (Lodž 1996:196)
- (14) a) We *ought to get rid of* the security men and the barriers at the gates and let the people in! (Lodge 1993:777)
 b) *Morali bismo otpustiti* čuvarе, srušiti ograde i pustiti ljude da se slobodno kreću ovim prostorima. (Lodge 1990:216)

4. Comments on the translations into Serbian

As already mentioned, my aim is to carry out a contrastive analysis of a small-scale corpus, consisting of approximately 100 sentences in the English language and their translations into the Serbian language. Even though the sentences making up the corpus have been taken from written texts (novels), they are actually part of a direct dialogical exchange of the main protagonists. The analysis is carried out according to the tertium comparationis – deontic meanings expressed by the English modal verbs *should* and *ought (to)*. A variety of means are used in Serbian as equivalents of the modal verb *should*, ranging from those typically having a strong deontic meaning to those that do not belong to the deontic domain at all. They are as follows:

| Serbian equivalents | Share in the corpus | Comment |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Modal verb <i>trebati</i> | 32,5% | both formal and semantic equivalent of the modal verb <i>should</i> |
| Modal verb <i>morati</i> | 30% | formal equivalent of the verb <i>must</i> |
| potential, i.e. conditional form of the lexical verb | 12,5% | modal verb omitted |
| imperative | 6,25 | monoglossic, not allowing the possibility of alternative actions |
| The modal verb <i>smeti</i> | 6,25 | formal equivalent of the modal verb <i>dare</i> |
| Performative expression <i>Da + present</i> | 6,25 | |
| other | 6,25 | |

Table 1. Serbian equivalents of the English modal verb *should*

According to the table, it is obvious that the two languages differ significantly in their ways of imposing an obligation, offering a recommendation, making a proposal or a suggestion, giving advice or an instruction. Apart from the expected modal verb *trebati*, the Serbian modal verb *morati* is frequently used to express the deontic meanings typical of the English modal verb *should*; it is used mainly for those utterances in the core of the fuzzy set. In almost all the cases, *morati* is used in its potential form, playing the role of a distal form and decreasing the illocutionary force of the modal.

The conditional form of the lexical verb may also appear as an equivalent of the modal verb *should*, when used with the first person singular as subject of the sentence, while the equivalent modal verb *smeti* is limited to the negative forms of the modal verb *should*.

As for the modal verb *ought (to)*, it is translated either by the modal verb *morati* (14 times – 70%) or by the modal verb *trebati* (6 sentences - 30%).

5. Conclusion

English and Serbian differ significantly in their ways of expressing deontic modality. Strong obligation markers are frequently used in Serbian to convey the meanings of the two English modals examined. The modal verb *morati* appears increasingly as an equivalent of the English modals in the core fuzzy set. In almost all the cases, however, it occurs with its potential meaning, playing the role of a distal form and decreasing the illocutionary force of the English modal. Furthermore, one can also notice that the use of the English modal *ought (to)* has declined sharply and has become rather marginal, having reached the end of its useful life (Leech 2003:236). Such changes have important implications for English language learning and teaching to learners whose mother tongue is Serbian.

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SYNESTHESIA – A LINK ACROSS THE SENSES IN ACHIEVING BUSINESS EXCELLENCE WITH NLP

CRISTINA-MIHAELA ZAMFIR

“Ovidius” University of Constanța

Abstract: *When we think about how our senses work, we imagine them operating individually. However, it is more complicated than that. Our senses mingle more often than we realize, collaborating to help us make sense of the world more easily. The paper analyses several synesthetic metaphors, created by associating various sensory modalities. Most evidence for crossmodal perception comes from linguistic studies into intermixing sensory experiences to form examples of 'visual-kinesthetic', 'auditory-kinesthetic', 'auditory-visual' synesthesias. By identifying synesthetic sequences that lead to specific outcomes, we can replicate any behaviour, whether that of a businessman, scientist, teacher, or of anyone who does something well.*

Keywords: *business discourse, mapping, NLP, overlap, representational systems, synesthesia*

1. Introduction

Widely explored from two main perspectives, psychological and linguistic, synesthesia deals with the *overlap* between representational systems. In other words, synesthesia patterns evoke a person's innate capability to simultaneously link sensory processes and representations in a causal relationship. That is to say, creating synesthetic metaphors by using various sensory modalities accounts for intermixing sensory experiences to form, in more technical terms, *see-feel, hear-feel, see-hear circuits*.

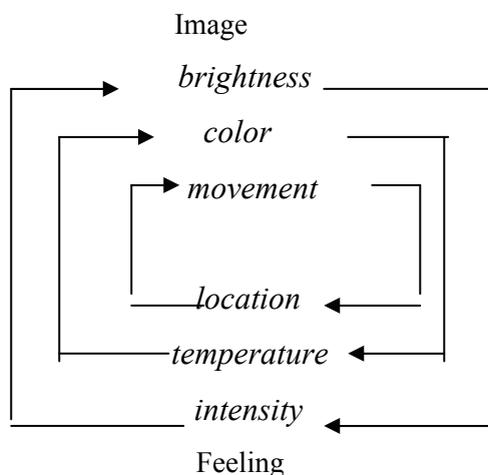
The term synesthesia has a Greek origin, i.e. *syn* is the equivalent of “together”, and *aisthesis* has the meaning of “perception”. As pointed out by Shenn (2008) and Dann (1999), *synesthesia* refers to the involuntary experience of a cross-modal association. According to Shenn (2008:107), “the stimulation of one sensory modality reliably creates a perception in one or more other senses, such as seeing a particular colour every time you hear a particular sound”.

In neurolinguistic programming (henceforth NLP), these circuits are also called “fuzzy functions”. Bandler and Grinder (1976:36) were the first to define them in this way when referring to: “Any modeling involving a representational system and either an input channel or an output channel in which the input or output channel involved is a different modality from a representational system with which it is being used”. One can describe how one sees or feels the sounds one hears. For example, a person can feel relaxed when hearing an even-toned voice. Hearing a low tone (associated with the auditory input channel) and feeling calm and comfortable (associated with the kinesthetic representational system) is characterized as a “fuzzy function”, since the sound overlapped onto the feeling (the physical and the emotional sensations).

2. Synesthesia and the directionality of mapping

Dilts and DeLozier (2000:906) state that the term *overlap* is used in NLP “to indicate the interconnection between two or more senses. We can ‘overlap’ images

and sounds, for example, such as when, for example, we see internal pictures as we listen to music. Sounds or images may also be overlapped onto feelings, producing ‘see-feel circuits’, in which a person derives feelings from what he or she sees (e.g., feeling panic when looking over the edge of a tall building), and ‘hear-feel circuits’, in which a person gets feelings from what he or she hears (e.g., feeling soothed by a particular tone of voice)”. Consequently, synesthesia as a cognitive process links every NLP submodality to a certain extent. Images and feelings interconnect, significantly changing the quality or the intensity of an experience. On the one hand, the brightness or dimness of an image often leads to a stronger or weaker feeling of comfort - discomfort, friendliness - unfriendliness, warmth - coldness, hence a shift in intensity. On the other hand, the colour (metallic green or lilac) / size (large-small) / focus (clear-fuzzy) of an image may provoke/trigger the temperature of a feeling. Therefore, mapping across the senses automatically generates new and resourceful responses due to the permanent shift in perception as it is obvious in the following diagram:



(Source: Dilts and DeLozier 2000:1369)

O'Connor (2001:61) argues that overlapping evokes the NLP techniques of pacing and leading through the sequence of representational systems used. This is commonly encountered in presenting and selling products, and is characterized by the move from one sensory system to another, inviting people to have clear images, hear sounds, or have strong feelings which may influence their internal impulses. Moreover, O'Connor distinguishes between strategy and synesthesia, pointing out that “Synesthesias happen naturally and are the basis of artistic and creative work. They are different from strategies. *A strategy is a sequence of representations. In a synesthesia the representations occur simultaneously*” (O'Connor 2001:62, emphasis added).

From a linguistic point of view, synesthesias mediated through language involve our lead system and our preferred system of representation. In this respect, the *directionality of mapping* plays the highest role in creating synesthetic metaphors, i.e. certain modalities are more likely to be mapped onto others

(Ullman 1957, Day 1996, Shen 1997). To put it differently, on a hierarchy/scale ranging from a lower to a higher structure, synesthesias in which mapping goes from lower to higher sensory modalities are the most frequent and natural. According to the Directionality Principle, the *highest modalities* (i.e. *sight* and *sound*) become the *target domains*, whereas the *lowest modalities* (i.e. *smell*, *taste*, *touch*) are associated with the *source domain*. Cognitively, the principle “Mapping from a more concrete concept onto a less concrete one is more natural than the inverse” holds valid in Shenn’s (2002:223) opinion.

Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) judgements for synesthetic metaphors are in accordance with Shen’s in that mapping from a more accessible concept onto a less accessible one is more natural than the inverse mapping.

The lower senses of touch and taste are assumed to be more “concrete” and therefore more accessible than the senses of sight and sound, which are considered to be less “concrete”, and hence less accessible (Lakoff 1987; Sweetser 1990).

The unidirectional pattern (i.e. the “lower-to-higher” structure) is mainly found in poetic discourse, but it is also a *mark of the business discourse*, especially of selling and advertising. As O’Connor (2001:62) states “*Synesthesias are the metaphors of the senses* and we have to use literary metaphors to describe them. Poetry and good writing evoke synesthesias by the language used” (emphasis added). He offers the following examples when he crosses the boundary from the poetic discourse to the language of advertising:

- e.g. The smooth taste of strawberry jam...
A sparkling drink that slides down like velvet...
The latest hot sounds...

in which tastes and sounds evoke feelings: *smooth taste* (tactile/touch + taste), *hot sounds* (tactile + auditory), or *sparkling drink sliding down like velvet* (visual + tactile).

The use of synesthetic metaphors in business language is widespread in the following patterns:

- Adj. + N: *sweet fragrance* (taste + smell); *frosty stare/look* (touch + sight); *frosty tone* (touch + sound); *cool look* (touch + sight); *cool response* (touch + sound)

- N + prep. + N: *scent of sound* (smell + sound)

e.g. *Studies like this are helping psychologists redefine our understanding of the metaphor scent of sound which otherwise seems to form an unlikely pairing.*

- N + V/Phr V/ Collocation: *feelings echo* (feeling + sound); *appearance tunes sb out* (sight + sound); *words send shivers down one’s spine* (sound + touch)

e.g. *The feelings of this moment echo through these chambers.*
Your gloomy appearance tunes me out.
His words send shivers down my spine.

- N + Idiomatic Phrase: *warmth rings true* (feeling + sound)

e.g. *The warmth of this room rings true with our purpose.*

- V + Adj.: *feel clear* (feeling + sight); *appear icy* (sight + touch); *sound sour* (sound + taste)

e.g. *What is it that tells you that you're feeling clear?*
I want to share my success with you, but you appear too icy.
Your comments sound sour to me.

- Adv. + past participle: *clearly presented/stated/argued* (sight + sound)

e.g. *Her intention was clearly stated during the negotiation.*

- Adj. + Adv. + Adj. + N: *soft brightly-coloured materials* (touch + sight + touch)

e.g. *The interior of the car was made of soft brightly-coloured materials.*

In a context like

e.g. (1) *The sweet fragrance of the garden flower perfumed the air of the office.*

the metaphorical expression *sweet fragrance* (taste + smell) of the flower is the result of mapping the source domain of taste onto the target domain of smell. The adjective “sweet” represents the source and the noun “fragrance” represents the target of the mapping. Another example could be:

e.g. (2) *The sweet scent of raspberries / the scent of the soft sweet red berries spread into the air.* (taste + smell / smell + touch + taste)

We talk about *scent*, which belongs to the olfactory domain, in terms of *sweetness*, which belongs to the domain of taste.

Other contexts in which *sweet* has the feature [+ pleasant] with reference to smell or sound can be found in the following examples:

- e.g. (3) *The actress playing in the musical has a sweet singing voice.* (taste + sound)
 (4) *The real estate agent managed to sweet-talk the customers into buying the property.* (taste + sound)
 (5) *The sweet smell of success made him sell his records in millions of copies.* (taste + smell)

In sentence (3), the new semantic feature of the adjective *sweet* is [+ pleasant to listen to]. The expression consists in a “low to high” mapping (from source to target), in which the source term, i.e. the adjective *sweet*, belongs to a lower modality (taste) than the target noun *voice*, which, given the hierarchy, reflects the higher modality (sound).

Similarly, in sentence (4), the adjective *sweet* refers to one’s thoughts and emotions, preserving the same semantic feature [+ pleasant], since a *sweet smell* of success makes one feel pleased, happy, and satisfied.

The occurrence of the adjective *sweet* with the noun *talk* in (5) achieves a different meaning, i.e. *convince*. The synesthetic metaphor refers to that instance when a salesperson makes customers buy something by talking to them nicely and

making them feel good. Due to the extension of meaning, the most appropriate semantic feature for the context would be [+ persuade]. As O'Connor (2001:62) puts it, one creates feelings on the inside and feels good about them, so one "will buy the product which has come to mean buying the feeling".

Other synesthetic metaphors have a more technical meaning. For example, *smelling salts* means a type of chemical substance that is formed when an acid is combined with a base, as in the following "smell + taste" combination:

e.g. *He reached consciousness again after he was administered smelling salts.*

Or they may have amusing or even sexual connotations, as in *salty jokes / language* (taste / gustatory + sound / auditory), denoting a joke that is amusing or refers to sex.

A "taste + sight" configuration may be represented by the pair *sour look / face*:

e.g. *The manager was short and fat, with a rather sour look.* (a sour-faced manager)

In this example, the adjective *sour* has the semantic feature [+ unfriendly], and can be replaced by synonymous adjectives such as *unfriendly* or *bad-tempered*.

When *sour* collocates with the noun *note*, a word that refers to the higher modality of sound, it is attributed a different meaning. If a relationship or plan *turns* or *goes sour*, it becomes less enjoyable, pleasant, or satisfactory:

e.g. *The deal was finished on a sour note with the other party declining our proposal.* (*sour* = taste + *note* = auditory)

Other interesting collocations include the adjectives *icy*, *frosty*, *chilly*, *cool*: *an icy remark* (touch + sound), *an icy stare* (touch + sight), showing that you feel annoyed with or unfriendly towards someone:

e.g. *She welcomed him with an icy stare.* [+ iceness]

A common pattern is: K + V (kinesthetic/body sensations + visual) → *a frosty stare / look, a cool look*; K + A (kinesthetic/body sensations + auditory) → *a frosty tone, a cool response*:

e.g. *The customer complained in a frosty tone.* (K+A; meaning: *unfriendly*)
My recommendation met with a cool response. (K+A; meaning: *responding in a way that is not as friendly as you expected*)

The existence of the ordered sequences of representation "presupposes interconnected networks of activity at the neurological level" (Milliner 1988:8). The following examples illustrate crossover connections between representational system complexes and their responses, which match the overlap of representational systems:

e.g. *Listening to the manager's orders sends shivers down my spine.*
 (auditory + kinesthetic/body sensation)
 Response: *Sounds as though it's a tingling experience.* (sound + feeling)

I'm hot on the scent of the solution. (kinesthetic + olfactory)

Response: *Don't cool off until you sniff it out.* (touch + smell)

This perspective gives me a firm grip on the company's situation.
(visual + kinesthetic)

Response: *Clarity often gives one a firm footing.* (sight + feeling)

This customer's complaints leave a bitter taste in my mouth.
(auditory + gustatory)

Response: *This customer sounds sour to me.* (sound + taste)

A link across the senses is common in the use of the adjective *bitter*, in expressions like *bitter argument / dispute* (taste + sound), *bitter cold* (taste + touch), even *bittersweet smell* (taste + smell):

e.g. *The corporate raiders are locked in a bitter argument / dispute for taking over the oil company by launching/placing the highest bids.* (involved in a long, serious argument with someone)

The skier had to fight against the bitter cold of the Finland winters so he could see the breathtaking alpine scenery. (unpleasantly cold)

The mountain poppy has a unique bittersweet smell. (a smell which is both sweet and bitter at the same time)

According to Viberg (1984), a distinction should be made between experiencer-based and object-based sensations. Following this distinction, lower sensations like touch, taste, smell are experience-based sensations.

Other adjectives frequently used in synesthetic metaphors are *hot* and *cold* in nominal collocations like *hot topic/issue*, *hot gossip*, *cold light*, *cold call*:

e.g. *Signing the contract was a hot topic for both the supplier and the buyer.*

Hot topic (touch + sound) represents a subject that causes a lot of disagreement, with the source domain of touch mapped onto the target domain of sound.

e.g. *They held the iron in the fireplace until it became white hot.*

The metaphor *white hot* accounts for the visual and the tactile representations and has the meaning “extremely hot” and the semantic feature [+temperature].

The following highly creative synesthesia involves three sensory domains, i.e. taste, touch and sound:

e.g. *I don't taste the latest hot / juicy gossip about the CEO's intention to resign.*

The low-to-high mapping, i.e. from touch (*hot*) to sound (*gossip*), is the target of the entire sentence whose source is *taste*, the lower sensory term.

The adjective *cold* can be used both in its literal meaning and in a metaphorical way:

e.g. *The investigation conducted in the cold light of a fluorescent tube made the financial trader reveal his most hidden plans.* (touch + visual)

The expectations for promoting the new teenage sporting line became optimistic in the cold light of day. (touch + visual)

In the first sentence, the denotative meaning of *light* is that of a “cold colour or light”, whereas in the fixed phrase *cold light of day* (touch + visual) the connotation is “to think or see something clearly”.

Mention should be made that specific to the language of marketing is the collocation *cold call / cold-calling* (touch + sound):

e.g. *The customer seemed less tolerant of the cold call, feeling that it was intrusive.*

In this context, the metaphor has the meaning “to telephone or visit someone you have never met before and try to sell them something”.

Other expressions include the word *light* functioning both as a noun and an adjective. The patterns are “touch + visual” → *warm light*, “visual + auditory” → *light voice*, “visual + touch” → *light slap*:

e.g. *The new buildings were shining like ivory towers in the warm light of the sunrise.* (*warm light*: the energy of the sun that allows you to see things; the semantic feature is [+ energy])

She spoke in a light voice of her doubts about the seller’s honest proposals. (*light voice*: a light sound has the semantic feature [+ quiet])

His words were really a light slap. (rebuke, touch a sore point)

The word *feeling* as an adjective which modifies the noun *look* has the meaning “a belief / opinion about something, especially one that is influenced by emotions”:

e.g. *The entrepreneur has a feeling look on investing overseas in the long term.* (kinesthetic + visual)

Two further examples illustrate similar patterns:

e.g. *The tan leather interior of the car matched with its black paint exterior.* (visual + touch + visual)

Screaming semi-dark silhouettes were used in the commercial of the video game. (auditory + visual + visual)

3. Conclusion

Intermixing sensory experiences is used purposefully to enhance an event. It is this connecting together of information from the different senses that makes creativity possible. In NLP, this connection between different sensory representations called *synesthesia* literally means “a synthesizing of the senses”. Such mixtures of visual, auditory or kinesthetic predicates generally add to our enjoyment of life through creating more memorable and moving experiences. Since the linkage of the senses is so strong, experiences which involve synesthesias are

usually richer and more powerful than perceiving something through a single sense alone.

The outcome of understanding the process of overlap between the senses is to help to form cognitive strategies in which sensory processes and representations are linked together in a particular sequence.

From the NLP perspective, since synesthesia is one of the fundamental building blocks of our world experience, it is useful to develop it as a skill. Practicing various synesthesias helps us to have more choice about how we perceive our life experiences and to develop and strengthen the connections between our various sensory modalities.

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WHAT A DOWAGER COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM WOULD HAVE REALLY SAID: A LINGUISTIC INSIGHT INTO PERIOD DRAMA

GAŠPER ILC

University of Ljubljana

Abstract: *The paper examines the format of the British period drama series Downton Abbey from a socio-linguistic perspective and discusses to what extent the authenticity of the historical period is preserved. By using various linguistic and culturomic tools, the script analysis shows that, at least from a linguistic perspective, the modern period dramas should be seen as simulacra of simulation in terms of Baudrillard (1994) rather than authentic representations of the historical period.*

Key words: *culturomics, lexico-grammatical analysis, period drama, simulacra, sociolinguistics*

1. Introduction

The last decades have seen a great revival of British period dramas which portray the golden age of the British Empire, the very core of Britishness as it seems. These TV productions offer spectators an escape of sorts from their quotidian lives, which also explains their popularity. The present paper claims that these productions may appear to represent historical periods authentically, but in reality they correspond to Baudrillard's (1994) concept of simulacra of simulation. To support this claim, the paper first addresses the system of simulation and simulacra as developed by Baudrillard (1994). From this theoretical frame, the discussion moves to the linguistic analysis of the popular TV period drama series *Downton Abbey*, season 1 (2010), henceforth DA. By using three different linguistic and culturomic tools – the Flesch Readability Tests, Compleat Lexical Tutor, and Google Ngram Viewer – the paper analyses the script of the first three episodes of DA and shows that the authenticity of the period drama in question is dubious, at least language-wise.

2. Basic theoretical tenets: simulation, simulacra and the hyperreal

In his seminal work *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard (1994:3 et passim) claims that in postmodern society, the traditional divide between the real and the imaginary is no longer clearly noticeable. What our contemporary consciousness perceives as real is, in fact, hyperreal. We live in a system that is itself a “gigantic simulacrum”, a simulacrum that is constructed by media-generated information. Modern media simulate and create the real in such a way that there is no distinguishable difference between real/imaginary and true/false. In Baudrillard's (1994:81) system of simulacra, the type of simulacrum that no longer dissociates the real and the imaginary is known as the third order simulacrum. It is typically produced in a hyperspace by means of combining various miniaturized cells, matrices, and memory banks into larger models of the hyperreal. These building blocks of the hyperreal are signs/symbols that seem to be real objects, but in truth they are copies without the referent, bits of information yet to be confirmed in hyperreality.

Since the focus of the present paper is the analysis of a TV production, let us illustrate this by briefly examining a popular cinematographic production, *The Hunger Games* (2012), henceforth the HG. From a traditional, i.e. pre-postmodern perspective, the story of the HG is understood as science fiction: a futuristic, imaginary world with imaginary events, dissociated from the real world. The pre-postmodern consciousness perceives the HG as the first order simulacrum (cf. Baudrillard 1994:81). However, since the postmodern consciousness no longer separates the real from the imaginary, it understands the story of the HG in terms of the third order simulacrum: it is a simulacrum of a simulation, a cybernetic game in a hyperspace. As Potts (2013) points out, the HG is a “pure simulation of what we have lost in our telematic screenal existence [...]. A simulacrum of nature and the real, of material scarcity, and of pre-Leviathan Hobbesian survivalism.” This can perhaps be best observed in Katniss and Gale’s attempts to forage the woods in order to feed the starving inhabitants of District 12. This example, however, is not the only case in which the HG model of simulation draws on the elements from the memory bank of the Western world. Additional examples include: the 13 Districts (cf. 13 British colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America), the Capitol (cf. the central seat of power, be it Roman or American), the relationship between the Capitol and the Districts (cf. First vs. Third world countries), and the concept Hunger Games itself (cf. Reality Television, Olympic Games).

The question may arise at this point why these historical allusions, quasi-historical references, play such an important role in modern simulations. A possible answer may again be found in Baudrillard (1994:7-10), who argues that postmodern society is obsessed by the need to produce and reproduce history. Hyperreal humans must “require a visible past, [...], a visible myth or origin, which reassures [them] about [their] end”. One of the modern media that has excelled at reproducing and refabricating history is cinema. In its attempt to make perfect reproductions of the past, cinema has re-used and recycled its own models of the past rather than the past itself. The “real” past is gone, and it has been replaced by the hyperreal past: a perfect third order simulacrum. The result of this process can be well observed in the popular TV production *Downton Abbey*.

DA is a modern TV period drama, which has been written exclusively for the television, and has been very well accepted by the audience. It has also gained critical acclaim and won several awards and nominations, including *Prime Time Emmy Award Golden Globe Reward* and *BAFTA Award*. DA takes place in Edwardian England between 1912 and 1914 and presents the life of the aristocratic Crawley family and its household. From a historical perspective, it presents the culmination of that type of British TV production that aims to reproduce and glorify the British Empire. Similar to the HG, DA strongly draws on the elements present in the spectators’ memory bank. It idealizes Edwardian society and glorifies the superiority of the Empire. As pointed out by Krevet (2012:52), a human participating in hyperreality (the “postmodern subject”) is structured like hyperreality and may therefore be defined as “a network system of differential signs that can be arbitrarily manipulated according to [...] media-transferred trends.” For a hyperreal human, the Edwardian period *is* the time of sumptuous summer parties and luscious Christmases of the upper-classes. The harsh conditions of the working classes are frequently banalised or dealt with light-heartedly. This image, simulacrum, is far away from the historical reality, though. As James (1994:319-333) points out, the Edwardian period is marked by huge social differences, and the endeavours of the establishment to propagate the virtues,

uniqueness and superiority of the Empire, which was in fact shattered by military campaigns and rival superpowers.

The cinematographic glorification of the Edwardian period has been omnipresent in the British period drama production from its very beginnings in the 1970s (e.g. the series *Upstairs, Downstairs*), through the Merchant-Ivory Productions of the 1980s and 1990s, up to the Julian Fellowes productions of the 21st century. These TV productions have all tried to perfect the simulation of the past, and have resorted to the permutative use of the same elements to feed the hyperreal, so they recycle and reproduce their own models of the past rather than represent past reality. For instance, they, by and large, select the same stereotyped characters that have, over the years, become ever more highly predictable. Let us just briefly mention one such character. Oscar Wilde's Lady Bracknell embodies negative traits of the Victorian upper-classes – power, repression, conservatism and affectation. A Lady Bracknell-ish character has re-appeared in virtually every TV production portraying Victorian/Edwardian times, and has very often even been played by the same actress. The reinvention and reproduction of the same character has gradually altered the character and what it originally stood for. The reinvented Lady Bracknell (now by the name of Lady Grantham, Lady Trentham, and other -hams) still represents a conservative, omnipresent and overpowering upper-class individual, yet she has become the symbol of a long lost relative from the past, an old aunt, a Grandmamma whom a “lost” and nostalgic hyperreal human would cordially embrace. Lady Bracknell and the period she signified have thus turned into the nostalgic, hyperreal past.

In what follows, the paper uses three different linguistic and culturomic tools to analyse the structure of DA. The linguistic analysis confirms the claims presented herein that modern TV period dramas are hyperreal simulacra rather than authentic reproductions of the historical past.

3. Linguistic investigation

The analysis focuses on the sociolinguistic investigation of the first three episodes of DA. For the purposes of the analysis, the scripts of the episodes in question were obtained (<http://scriptline.livejournal.com/>) and manually checked for inconsistencies. Since the focus of the analysis was spoken language, the irrelevant text (stage instructions, characters names, etc), was deleted, resulting in a final version of the master corpus (henceforth: DAMC) containing 18,740 words. The main focus of the investigation was not the obvious anachronisms. For instance, characters make reference to Istanbul and Beecham's Powder, though in 1912, at the time of DA, Istanbul would have most likely been referred to as Constantinople - the name Istanbul appeared in BrE in the late 1920s - and Beecham's Powder was launched only in 1926. The same applies to colloquial or slang expressions produced by DA characters which cannot be found in Edwardian texts, for example: *get knotted* ('go to hell'), *get shafted* ('be treated unfairly'), *when push comes to shove* ('when the situation gets more active or intense'). Instead, the investigation focuses on the authenticity of a linguistic expression in a given historical and social frame. Since the main interest of the investigation lies in the difference between the language used by the upper-class and the working class characters, the DAMC was further divided into two sub-corpora: (i) the DAMCUp for the upper-class characters, and (ii) the DAMCDown for the working class characters.

3.1 Flesch–Kincaid readability tests

For the purposes of determining the readability difficulty levels, the analysis employs the Flesch Reading Ease Test and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Test. The Flesch Reading Ease test rates the text on a 100.0-point scale: the higher the score, the easier to comprehend the text. Average readability score is between 60.0 and 70.0, whereas texts with the scores 30.0 and below are considered to be at the level of a university graduate. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Test translates the results of the Flesch Reading Ease test to the USA grade level. The Flesch Reading Ease and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Tests are available in many different word processing programmes, including the Microsoft Word programme. Both corpora were analysed by using the Flesch-Kincaid readability tests tool as provided by the Microsoft Word programme (setting the tests: *File>Options>Proofing*; select *Check grammar with spelling* and under *When correcting grammar in Word*, check *Show readability statistics check box*; running the tests: *Review>Spelling and Grammar*). The results are presented in Table 1 below:

| Corpus | Flesch Reading Ease Test | Flesch-Kincaid GL Test |
|----------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| DAMCUp | 89 | 2,6 |
| DAMCDown | 94 | 1,7 |

Table 1. The results of the readability tests

The data presented in Table 1 clearly show that there is no significant difference between the two corpora, only 5 points on the 100-point scale, or less than 1 grade in terms of the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Test. What we can conclude is that the language used either by Daisy, a scullery maid, or Lady Violet, Dowager Countess of Grantham, displays almost the same complexity, and could be easily understood by an American second grader (7-8 years).

The result is surprising if we take into consideration that Edwardian society had a rigid class system (James 1994:319-333). Undoubtedly, the class divide was also present and noticeable in the language usage. For example, if we analyse a 1,700 word text from the book *Prisons and Prisoners* (1914), written by Lady Constance Bulwer-Lytton (1869-1923), who had a comparable social position to the fictitious Lady Violet, the Flesch-Kincaid readability tests results are 48.1 or 12.5 grade. A legitimate objection to the comparison of the DAMCUp and the text from the *Prisons and Prisoners* is that the former belongs to spoken and the latter to written language. Halliday (1993:65) points out that the difference between the written and the spoken language occurs only in “their preferred patterns”, that is, spoken language is typically characterised by lower lexical density but a higher degree of grammatical intricacy, and written language by exactly the opposite. Since the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Tests do not take lexical density into consideration, but only the number of syllables, words, and sentences, the difference between the written and the spoken language should not affect the results of the Flesch-Kincaid Readability tests significantly. It is also noteworthy that these readability tests are frequently used to analyse spoken discourse, for example, political speeches (cf. Grose and Husser 2008).

To conclude, the results of the readability tests show that all characters, regardless of their social position, employ almost the same language complexity,

which is modified in such a way that it is comprehensible to a wide audience. It cannot be claimed, however, that the dialogues reflect the Edwardian language use.

3.2 Lexical analysis - VocabProfile

For the purposes of lexical analysis, the programme Compleat Lexical Tutor (available online: <http://www.lextutor.ca/>) was used. The application VocabProfile analyses lexical items not in terms of their lexical complexity (cf. Halliday 1993), but in terms of a 20-frequency band scale. The scale corresponds to the word list frequency levels set by the British National Corpus. Level K1(1,000-word level) contains basic and frequently used words, whereas Level K20 (20,000-word level) contains low frequency words. Before the VocabProfile test is applied, the text has to be checked for spelling errors, saved as a text file (.txt extension), and then copy-pasted to the on-line application (<http://www.lextutor.ca/vp/bnc/>), which automatically analyses the lexical items. The VocabProfile test was conducted on both corpora and the results are presented in Table 2 below:

| Freq. Level | DAMCDown | | | DAMCUp | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | Tokens | Coverage (tokens)% | Cum% | Tokens | Coverage (tokens)% | Cum% |
| K1 | 7247 | 89.58 | 89.58% | 7076 | 87.97 | 87.97% |
| K2 | 267 | 3.30 | 92.88% | 335 | 4.16 | 92.13% |
| K3 | 107 | 1.32 | 94.20% | 155 | 1.93 | 94.06% |
| K4 | 53 | 0.66 | 94.86% | 70 | 0.87 | 94.93% |
| K5 | 41 | 0.51 | 95.37% | 33 | 0.41 | 95.34% |
| K6 | 25 | 0.31 | 95.68% | 25 | 0.31 | 95.65% |
| K7 | 13 | 0.16 | 95.84% | 23 | 0.29 | 95.94% |
| K8 | 8 | 0.10 | 95.94% | 13 | 0.16 | 96.10% |
| K9 | 5 | 0.06 | 96.00% | 12 | 0.15 | 96.25% |
| K10 | 8 | 0.10 | 96.10% | 2 | 0.02 | 96.27% |
| K11 | 20 | 0.25 | 96.35% | 11 | 0.14 | 96.41% |
| K12 | 7 | 0.09 | 96.44% | 9 | 0.11 | 96.52% |
| K13 | 4 | 0.05 | 96.49% | | 0.00 | 96.52% |
| K14 | 2 | 0.02 | 96.51% | 1 | 0.01 | 96.53% |
| K15 | 5 | 0.06 | 96.57% | 2 | 0.02 | 96.55% |
| K16 | 4 | 0.05 | 96.62% | 2 | 0.02 | 96.57% |
| K17 | 1 | 0.01 | 96.63% | 4 | 0.05 | 96.62% |
| K18 | 1 | 0.01 | 96.64% | 1 | 0.01 | 96.63% |
| K19 | | 0.00 | 96.64% | 1 | 0.01 | 96.64% |
| K20 | | 0.00 | 96.64% | | 0.00 | 96.64% |
| Off-List: | 272 | 3.36 | 100.00% | 269 | 3.34 | 100.00% |
| Total | 8090 | 100% | 100% | 8044 | 100% | 100% |

Table 2. The results of the VocabProfile test

Table 2 shows that in the DAMCDown there is a slightly higher percentage

of tokens in K1, and that there is a slightly higher proportion of tokens in categories K2-K4 in the DAMCUp. However, in categories K5 and above, the higher proportion of elements oscillates between the two corpora. In fact, in the remaining 16 categories ((i.e. from K5 to K20), there are seven categories – K5, K10, K11, K13, K14, K15 and K16 – in which a higher number of tokens is found in the DAMCDown. The DAMCUp, however, has one token in the highest but one category (*Andromeda* – K19). For illustration, tokens in K18 are *termagant* (DAMCUp) and *britches* (DAMCDown). All in all, the facts presented in Table 2, confirm the conclusion in section 3.1 that there is no significant difference in the language use of different social classes.

There is, however, one linguistic feature that is employed throughout the series to differentiate social classes, and that is the use of dialect. While the upper-class characters, with the exception of the Americans, use RP, most of the servants resort to the local, i.e. Yorkshire, accent. It seems, though, that the selection of the accent is again suited to the present-day audience rather than to the Edwardian reality. As claimed by Trawick-Smith (2012), the RP used by the upper-class characters is “slightly more contemporary”, and the Yorkshire accent is modified for the purposes of better understanding.

3.3 Google Ngram Viewer analysis

So far the analysis has focussed on comprehension and lexical complexity. With the Google Ngram Viewer Analysis (<http://books.google.com/ngrams>), I have checked the authenticity of the linguistic expressions used in the DAMC. The Google Ngram Viewer is a special application that charts words, phrases and other combinations as they appear in digitalized books. It allows the filtering of the data with regard to the time period (from 1500 to 2005) and the text genre or language variety (e.g. BrE, AmE, British fiction, etc.). The application can be used both for lexical and culturomic analyses (e.g. token frequency, diachronic cultural trends, etc.). By applying the Google Ngram Viewer analysis, I have tested to what extent the linguistic expressions in the DAMC reflect the socio-linguistic reality of the late Edwardian period around 1912. The search parameters have been set for BrE (language variety) and 1890-1930 (time span). Special attention has been paid to the following linguistic categories, which display noticeable diachronic variations: (i) phraseological units, in particular the nominations consisting of idioms and collocations in terms of Cowie (2001), and (ii) morpho-syntactic variation.

3.3.1 Phraseological units

The Google Ngram Viewer analysis shows that we can classify the nominations from the DAMC into three categories. In the first category, we find phraseological units that were relatively frequently used in the Edwardian period, for example, *be up to sth*, *get the hang of it*, *to be picked up*. The analysis has also identified three items: *chatterbox*, *hold your tongue* and *an ill wind*, which have all been in decline for years now: *chatterbox* showed an even distribution between 1900 and 1945, then the occurrences peaked in the 1960s, and have been in decline ever since. The idioms *hold one's tongue* and *an ill wind* have both been in gradual decline since 1900.

The second category comprises phraseological units that can be found in the Google Ngram corpus; however, their usage is not typical of the Edwardian period. For example, the expression *get started* had a low frequency rate up to 1905, and then underwent a slight increase between 1905 and 1920. During a ten-year span between 1930 and 1940, its frequency rate tripled, and has been in continuous increase ever since. A similar situation can be observed with the item *drop us a line*, the use of which became more frequent after 1925; however, its frequency rate has fluctuated over the years.

Multi-word verbs also belong to this category. The DAMC contains numerous examples of multi-word verbs, which is to some extent expected, since multi-word verbs are typical of spoken English (Sinclair 1990, Biber et al. 1999). All of the multi-word verbs in the DAMC also occur in texts from the Edwardian period; however, the Google Ngram Viewer analysis shows that they occasionally appear in a form which is not typical of Edwardian texts. For example, the non-separated combination *put on the lights* was considerably more frequent in Edwardian texts than the separated combination *put the lights on*, which appears in the DAMCDown. This usage directly reflects the present day usage: ever since the 1980s the separated combination *put the lights on* has been more frequent than the non-separated combination *put the lights on* (see Diagram 1).

Google books Ngram Viewer

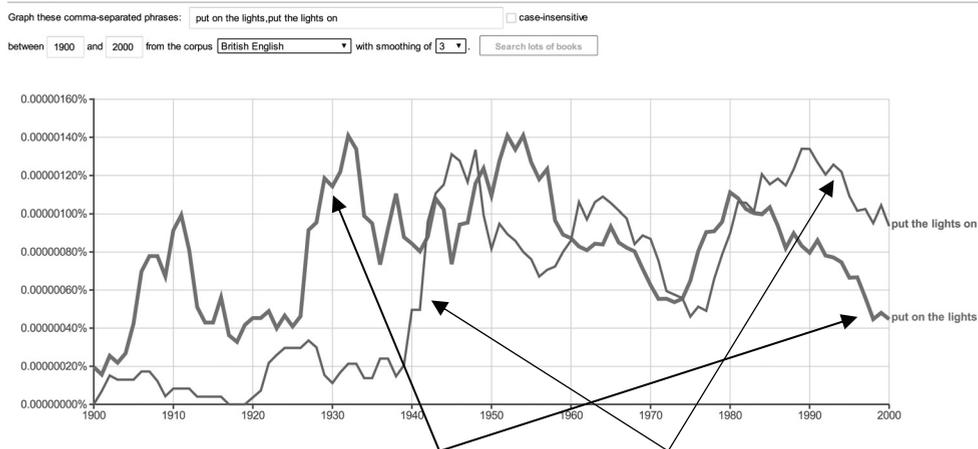


Diagram 1. Frequency rate of *put on the lights* and *put the lights on* from 1900-2000

In the third, and last, category there are phraseological items that are non-existent (fewer than 40 hits) in the Google Ngram digitalized corpus. For example, in BrE, the idiom *spot the bother* first appeared in 1929, and the idiom *end up behind the bars* can be found only in texts published after 1954. There are also combinations that are atypical of BrE, but can be found in American English (e.g. *stretch belief*).

3.3.2 Morpho-syntactic variation: the choice of tenses

Huddleston and Pullum (2008:1152) claim that depending on the intended meaning, the subordinators *as if* and *as though* may select three finite verbal forms:

irrealis *were* (i.e. the past subjunctive), the modal preterite, and the indicative present tense. The authors (2008:1153, ft.37) also point out that the use of the irrealis *were* instead of the modal preterite and the present tense has been stylistically preferred, and is considered as a sign of hypercorrectness. The Google Ngram Viewer shows that in the time span between 1890 and 1930, the form *as if I am* is almost non-existent, and the form *as if I were* is the most frequent one. In fact, if we compare three possible forms: *as if I am*, *as if I was* and *as if I were*, the last has twice as many occurrences as the first two together. Thus, it is safe to conclude that the occurrence of the structure *as if I'm not broken-hearted* that appears in DAMCUp is rather atypical in the Edwardian setting. In fact, this occurrence again reflects the present day usage, in which the increase of the present tense can be observed ever since the 1960s.

From a diachronic perspective, the use of the progressive aspect has been in constant increase, replacing the indefinite aspect also when the event is presented as a whole rather than temporary, in progress or incomplete. This process is especially noted in spoken English and American English (Biber 1999:463, Dennis 1940, Leech 2004:18). Frequently cited examples of this trend include *I was recently reading about an invention ...*, *Paula was saying that Eddie was going to be promoted* (Leech 2004:32). The DAMC contains several examples of this modern usage, for instance, *Thomas, take Mr Bates to his room and show him where he'll be working*, and *I won't be doing you a favour in the long run if it's too much for you*. The Google Ngram Viewer data show that such structures became more frequently used after the 1920s. On the other hand, the Google Ngram Viewer clearly shows that the use of the progressive form to describe persistent or continuous activities in combination with adverb of frequency (Leech 2004:34) has been on the increase after 1900. Some examples of this particular use are also found in the DAMC: *She is always making trouble* and *my mother's always telling me, "Never put anything in writing"*.

4. Conclusion

Building on Baudrillard's (1994) theoretical frame, the present paper has examined the level of authenticity as observed in the period drama *Downton Abbey*, Season 1 (2010). Three different linguistic tests - the Flesch Readability Tests, Compleat Lexical Tutor Analysis and Google Ngram Viewer Analysis - lead to the same conclusion: from a linguistic perspective, the period drama under analysis does not reflect the linguistic reality of the Edwardian period, but should be seen more as a reflection of the present-day linguistic situation. It offers a perfect simulacrum of a hyperreal simulation, which is created to give its spectators entertainment and a refuge from their daily lives. The small-scale analysis presented herein has also shown that Baudrillard's (1994) claims on simulation and simulacra can be empirically proven.

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FROM SILENCE TO READING BETWEEN THE LINES: ON SELF-CENSORSHIP IN LITERARY TRANSLATION

ÁGNES SOMLÓ

Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Piliscsaba

Abstract: There are countries where censorship is officially declared by a censorship law, but there are others where this law is missing (even officially denied as it was in Hungary), yet censorship is still present in a hidden form. To avoid any kind of trouble as a consequence of breaching a non-existent law, self-censorship is used as an effective form of prevention. The paper will try to demonstrate that self-censorship in literary translation works in various ways and on many different levels.

Keywords: censorship/self-censorship; rewriting/manipulation; external and internal constraints; intellectual freedom; political, sexual and religious self-censorship

1. Introduction

“If a translator allows ideology to color anything he or she translates, the profession suffers. And when translation is stifled either by repression or self-censorship, entire nations are deprived of a glimpse into the mind of the Other” (Landers, 2001:86). This statement seems to present a dream, an ideal situation, a kind of ‘neutral’ socio-cultural environment devoid of time and place, which is non-existent, as all translators live in a particular society, and translate for certain target readers, who represent a group of people speaking the same language and sharing, by and large, the same cultural environment at a certain place and time. Thus, inevitably, there will be some kind of external and/or internal constraints referring, among other things, to “social taboos, political taboos, religious taboos” (Xi Chuang, qtd in Higgins 2012, par.10) that may lead to the rewriting and general manipulation of a text. At the same time, translation itself is rewriting and the process of translation moulds the source text into a target text that should fulfil some requirements or accepted norms of the target reader; it follows then that the text will be manipulated or even self-censored by translator, editor or publisher. The sensitivity of different texts is one of the most crucial elements when dealing with translated literature:

The publication of a translation is a very special form of exposure. Like any other exposure or revelation of things hidden from view[...], the site, the timing and the purpose of the exposure as well as its extent and the company in which it takes place are crucial factors in determining what can and what cannot be exposed. (Holman 1997: 280)

Before elaborating on the possible forms of and reasons for self-censorship in literary translation, I would like to bring together some likely definitions, explanations and approaches to censorship itself, and see what impact they may have on culture and, consequently, on translators. According to a free online version of Encyclopedia Britannica, censorship is “...the changing or the suppression or prohibition of speech or writing that is deemed subversive of the

common good” (EB), which seems to be the classical definition found in almost all reference books. Among its other forms, obscenity, for example, is considered to be a type of subversion of “the common good”, decency in this case, which is an aspect of the long-established moral structure of society. More complex is the definition of Sue Curry Jansen (1991:221), who describes censorship as “all socially structured proscriptions or prescriptions which inhibit or prohibit dissemination of ideas, information, images and other messages through a society's channels of communication, whether these obstructions are secured by political, economic, religious, or other systems of authority”. On the other hand, Bourdieu’s approach (1998: 15-16) is slightly different, because he basically divides modern censorship into three categories: 1. political censorship, 2. self-censorship and 3. economic censorship, while Al-Quinai (2005: 496) states that there are traditionally four grounds for it: “sedition, blasphemy, obscenity and libel which can be paralleled to a quartet of state, religion, decency and individual privacy”, and that “[t]he potentiality of a given text to be sensitive depends on its content, context and target readership.” Bourdieu’s categories seem roughly to correspond to Jansen’s “market censorship”, a concept of which she examines the origins, development and limits and which “points to practices that routinely filter or restrict the production and distribution of selected ideas, perspectives, genres or cultural forms...[and] ... refers to the conditions of production and consumption that produce cultural hegemony” (Jansen 2010:13, 14).

According to another general categorization (merriam-webster.com/), we have two types of censorship: one that is “pre-emptive (preventing the publication or broadcast of undesirable information) [and the other is] punitive (punishing those who publish or broadcast offending material)”. There are countries where censorship is officially declared by a censorship law, but in most cases such laws are absent, yet during periods when there is a crisis or political instability, a lingering opposition to a newly founded totalitarian regime or in wartime, in short, whenever the State (or power) is rather vulnerable or is afraid of becoming exposed, open censorship, or some forms of censorship of printed matter becomes usually more severe, irrespective of whether or not there exists a law. For example, although there was no censorship law in Hungary under the communist regime, and the existence of censorship was officially denied, it was still present in a hidden form; in order to avoid any kind of trouble resulting from breaching a non-existent law, a kind of self-censorship functioned as an effective form of defence.

To evade censorship under authoritarian political regimes, translators encode hidden oppositional messages that they know can be deciphered by their educated readers. In doing so, they bolster their own as well as their readers’ cultural capital and their claims to cultural leadership, and further create a common group defined by its intellectual skills and oppositional mood. (Baker 2010: 97)

Following the 1956 revolution, which was an inevitable response to the harsh dictatorial regime of 1949-1956, the reinvented much softer regime gradually introduced a new and revised cultural policy; instead of maintaining a system that either suppressed or supported the works of particular Hungarian writers, it introduced the so called “three Ps” system: *promoting*, *permitting* or *prohibiting* the work of certain authors, which meant that, besides supported and suppressed writers, a new group of merely tolerated writers appeared. Consequently, it is quite clear that one does not actually have to be censored: fear of being censored in one

way or another is sufficient to stimulate self-censorship¹, which, in this case, might be called a kind of “conditioned” censorship.

One must therefore make a distinction between external and internal constraints in both censorship and self-censorship. On the whole, we might say that basically all forms of censorship, except self-censorship, seem to result from external pressures, i.e., pressure from an outside source. Yet, among the causes of self-censorship, we may also find external pressures, such as political (death threats, imprisonment etc.), religious (enforced by religious authorities such as the Inquisition) or economic (e.g. threatening one’s livelihood) as well as internal pressures or considerations, based, among other things, on conscience, taste, education, social or religious background, general atmosphere etc. Part of the complex nature of the problem is well demonstrated in the following example:

...an eighteenth-century Portuguese translation of *Robinson Crusoe* omitted considerable material, notably the parts where Robinson explains to Friday what is wrong with the Catholic religion. Explanation is [...] in the biography of the [...] translator Henrique Leitão, who had problematic relations with the Inquisition and thus engaged in self-censorship. By omitting the most contentious passages, the translator quite probably saved his skin. (Pym 2006:7)

This case is further analysed by Anthony Pym, who detects censorship at three levels: “the observed omissions in the translation, the biography of a self-censoring translator, and the European struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism” (7) that he compared to “concentric circles”.

To describe the presence of internal as well as external pressures manifested in art (or translation), let us look at the possible causes of, for example, the silence of the artist. When a writer remains silent, it can be intentional (internal) or an imposed (external) state of muteness; thus, on the one hand, silence might be a kind of resistance or radical speech, and, on the other, a kind of punishment imposed on the artist by an outside force – we may perhaps compare the difference between the two to that between “exile” and “self-imposed exile”. In her article on the functions of silence in modern Spanish literature, Janet Pérez (1984:115) describes some instances when Spanish writers used “literary silence as a reaction” to Franco’s regime and ideology. To further expound this picture of silence, let us observe what Susan Sontag (1983:183) claims: “Silence is the artist’s ultimate otherworldly gesture: by silence, he frees himself from the servile bondage to the world, which appears as patron, client, consumer, antagonist, arbiter, and distorter of his work.” In other words, the artist actually frees himself from political or ideological censorship in the first case and from market censorship, as Jansen calls it, in the second, because in artistic communities “success in capitalist art markets is frequently equated with ‘selling out’, ‘prostituting’ one’s talents.”(2010:20) It was in fact due to the rise of modern capitalism at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that “control over the production and distribution of ideas and cultural artefacts was industrialized, and commodified and concentrated within private hands.” (Jansen 2010: 19) And later Curry Jansen adds that “Most forms of market censorship are more elastic, but also more resilient, than religious or political censorship: that is, market censorship is a leaky system, but one that is easily repaired.” (idem., 24)

1. Translation can be a dangerous job; some translators such as Étienne Dolet or William Tyndale even paid with their life for it in the 16th century; or a more recent case, the murder of the Japanese translator of Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*.

2. Self-censorship and literary translation

When we turn our attention to self-censorship, which is an indirect form of censorship, and, in particular, to its working in literary translation, we may say that the translator who performs it has a variety of causes, reasons and aims. Generally speaking self-censorship may denote

...the creative decisions individual cultural workers make: decisions in areas where they have the autonomy to make choices to include some things and exclude others, or to use one approach or genre rather than another. Such decisions may reflect the individual's personal moral, rational, aesthetic or emotional preferences; they sometimes even express individual courage or temerity. (Jansen 2010:13)

According to Toury (1995:278), self-censorship can be defined as censorship “activated during the act of translation itself though, inasmuch as the translator has *internalized* the norms pertinent to the culture, and uses them as a constant monitoring device.” The same is echoed in the conclusion of Al-Quinai's (2005:523) article stating that, on the one hand, “the translator cannot be exonerated from his role as a censor/mediator”, while target text readers, on the other, “may impose their own expectations on the translator who modifies the TT to conform to established sociolinguistic constraints”.

Also self-censorship can roughly be divided into three major fields: political, religious and sexual. Any of these and their subfields present in a text may be the cause of its becoming sensitive; the translator himself may be “already politicized [and] may take offence at texts that are unpalatable or politically unacceptable.” (Al-Quinai 2005: 489) Or, on the other hand, as the translation of a literary text is mostly commissioned by a publisher, who in turn wishes to sell the final product, the translator might receive explicit instructions to pay attention to certain political or religious topics or simply to respect the target readers' sensitivities, and so, in spite of all our independence, courage or freedom, as soon as we write or translate to earn our living, self-censoring our words and work becomes imperative, because “[o]nce creators take their creations to market, they are subject to its disciplines”. (Jansen 2010:13) In the case of a literary translation, there is always the possibility of either refusing to publish a certain piece or of deliberately interpreting the source text so as to create a different image in the minds of the target language reader.

2.1 Political (self)-censorship

Publishing was heavily subsidised in Hungary during the Kádár-regime, since the leaders of the State “were firmly convinced of the educational power of literature in the process of building Socialism; [thus] literature [...] was given an almost exaggerated significance” (Gombár, qtd in Czigányik 2011:225). Consequently, official cultural policy created a demand for translated literature as well as for educated and well-qualified translators. Traditionally, Hungarian writers often turned to translation for a variety of reasons, one being the silence imposed on them: “writers silenced by the regime, needed work to make a living. While translation offered the possibility of congenial employment, it was not a steady or full-time job, only an occasional contract, so politically ‘unreliable’ individuals could get away with taking it on from time to time.” (Somló 2003-2004:320-321)

At the same time not only Hungarian, but also foreign writers were ‘silenced’, i.e. their publication was not advised for ideological reasons, therefore at first only “[w]ell-known and ‘harmless’ eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels were retranslated” (idem, 321); later, from the late 1960s and ‘70s on, contemporary literature was also translated, but the choice for publication was ideologically directed by way of pre-emptive self-censorship.

The system of censorship throughout the Kádár era rested on two pillars. One was the firm conviction of the morally and intellectually constructive influence of literature (which is why pessimism or decadence was seen as a major argument against the publication of a book). The other pillar was the exclusion of political taboos, the most important of which were the following: criticism of the Soviet Union or the one-party system, anti-Marxism, and ironically, the existence of censorship. (Czigányik 2011:228)

As we have seen, suppressed (‘prohibited’) or merely tolerable (‘permitted’) writers were to turn to translation because it offered the possibility of occasional employment as well as a hidden way of expressing their thoughts and views by way of ‘interpreting’ the message of a foreign writer. For example, silence in the text, be it an omission or some consciously created hiatus, etc. along with various allusions – most probably understood mainly by intellectuals – ensured that, by reading between the lines, the reader would decipher the conveyed message; thus a form of intellectual freedom was maintained primarily by translated literature. As Al-Quinai (2005:495) says “we depend far more on the connotations of words [...] than on denotations. [...] It follows that no text is sensitive by itself, but the interpretation of its connotations makes it so.” Thus silence, which is an integral part of the text as well as a language in its own right, has as many interpretations and roles in the translated text as any other parts of the source text; it thus urges associations that helps one read between the lines.²

After a time publishers became trapped between translators and the State, more precisely the authorities, and duly tried to neutralise the translators’ ‘intellectual game’ and, most certainly, to escape any possible retaliations, therefore they employed readers, so called ‘literary advisers’, to read foreign books before commissioning any translators. The role of these readers was to read the book and tell the publisher if it was worth publishing in Hungary. The manner in which a reader’s suggestion was written was the following: s/he summarised the content of the book; said something about the writer; wrote a critical assessment pointing out the merits and drawbacks of the piece (which also meant paying attention to any politically or otherwise sensitive passages), and finally suggested the possible range of readers and stated whether publication of the book was recommendable or not.³ Each book was read by two people, and, in the case of

2. Self-censorship can also be considered a form of preventive censorship to avoid a/ trouble, b/controversy, c/ offending the audience, d/ economic boycotts, e/ lawsuits (e.g., libel, invasion of privacy torts, etc.), f/ official censorship (self-imposed ratings to avoid government ratings) - see survey by J. Senat for his students at Oklahoma State University (<http://journalism.okstate.edu/faculty/jsenat/censorship/defining.htm> [accessed 2013, May 30]).

3. See an explanation given by reception theory on the presence of stimulating blanks and gaps: “The discontinuities of the textual segments trigger synthesizing operations in the reader’s mind because the blanks lead to collisions between the individual ideas formed, [...] These colliding ideas condition each other in the time-flow of reading” (Iser 2006: 66).

conflicting opinions, a third reader was asked to do it and settle the dilemma. By the beginning of the eighties, the importance of the reader's role must have declined, because, fresh out of university, I was entrusted by one of the most prestigious publishers to write such reports on books, and mostly make an aesthetic evaluation. I had to write primarily on African pieces, but sometimes I received Australian, American and even English novels or plays as well. This distinct change in the strictness of control could probably be explained by the course of events: there was a gradual softening of the regime that had earned Hungary its nickname - the most comfortable barrack in the Soviet camp. This was also observed by Czigányik in his essay:

From the mid-1970s until the end of the 1980s increasing financial problems forced all participants in publishing to take economic considerations more seriously, which meant that the demands of the market were also taken into consideration. [...] the potential success of a book was also calculated, and it was with a view to its commercial potential that the otherwise despised popular culture also appeared on the market. These factors together led to the easing of political control over the publishing industry (or to the diminishing effectiveness of political control) by the 80s. [...] The slackening of ideological control is reflected in the fact that in the late 70s and early 80s editors often tried to publish books that had been rejected in the 60s. (Czigányik 2011:227)

Despite the lessening pressure, well embedded and conditioned reactions such as self-censorship remained active at certain levels of management for a long time. Let me present a telling example from my own career. As a freelance translator I often worked for the Hungarian Radio, namely the Radio Theatre during the nineteen eighties. I was mostly commissioned to translate African plays that I was also allowed to select thanks to one of the dramaturges I had been working with for a long time. Following some successful productions, I ventured to suggest a radio play with a more universal topic, yet politically imbued - *Full-Cycle*, written by Gordon Tialobi. In it a general is tried for war crimes committed by soldiers under his command or so it seems. General Maga, awakened in the middle of the night by armed Man and Girl, is totally defenceless. He has no real choice: either he acknowledges his guilt or they kill him. Following a senseless or senselessly meaningful trial, which finally turns out to be a nightmare when Maga wakes in the morning, the play leaves open the question whether he was guilty or just the victim of a fabricated case, because he lies back for a minute and dozes off and the whole thing starts all over again. It is a "full-cycle", and so we do not really know whether it is reality or another nightmare. The dramaturge also liked the play, considered it worth producing, and submitted the Hungarian version to be reviewed by the Dramaturgic Council led by the head of Radio Theatre. But even translated texts were sometimes refused, as was the case with my translation. Although the dramaturge kept on submitting it, the manager of Radio Theatre kept on refusing it, with the excuse that he "did not like it so much"⁴. The emphasis is on 'so much', meaning he did not feel like taking the risk that some powerful people might also be able to read the message between the lines.

4. Certainly, by knowing the rules of the game, publishers' readers were able to write a recommendation shaped to fulfil the requirements of the authorities, but at the same time make sure the book they wanted to "pass" would pass. Or at least they often tried to do so.

As I have already mentioned, the message of this Nigerian play “was rather universal: who is to decide or judge the individual’s historical responsibility at turning points; and what is the nature of power in such cases?” (Somló 2010:137). The text described the working of “the senseless administration of faceless power over the individual, so typical of dictatorial, totalitarian regimes.” (ibid.) However, the Hungarian audience was familiar with the problem discussed in the play as well as with the feelings it evoked, “as the so called ‘conspiracy cases’ of the 1950’s - when innocent people were forced to plead guilty and when the state police could appear and take people in custody in the middle of the night - were still clearly remembered.”(ibid.) Hence the meaning read between the lines was quite clear and this, I suppose, might have been the real cause of “silencing” the Hungarian version of the play. Thus, self-censorship (now on management level), yet again, took its toll.

Having seen an example of translation “silenced” due to self-censorship, I will offer yet another instance of political self-censorship in translation. This time it is a novel, *Survive the Peace*, written by another Nigerian author, Cyprian Ekwensi. The narrative is set during, or rather at the end of, the Biafran war, which in a way, similarly to many other ‘minor’ clashes of the period all over the world, served as a kind of test of strength between the two super-powers, the USA and the Soviet Union. The main character, a radio-journalist, is fleeing across the country trying to reach his family. On his way he meets various people and survives difficult situations, finally to die at the hands of armed robbers when the war is over and when he is full of hope. We see the real face of war, the suffering of people, and there is nothing heroic about it. There are two instances in the novel that were considered sensitive by the official ideology: at one point there is an aircraft attack on the people on the road and someone exclaims that those Russians should take their planes back home. The fact that both powers had sent arms was an open secret; we all knew how it worked, and so I decided to cut the word Russians from the text: that would not affect people’s insight, but might blur the vision of the authorities and help to get the novel through. In the end, the novel was not published, because at some other point, someone refers to the Hungarian revolution of 1956, saying that in fact no one had really cared about that either, because the world and its politicians had had more urgent problems to deal with and simply let it be crushed. Now this was something I was simply unable to change or leave out, and thus the text managed to touch upon one of the cardinal taboos of the Kádár-regime: 1956.

2.2 Sexual self-censorship

Another field of self-censorship in translation covers sex-related themes and scenes, as well as linguistic elements such as swear-words or other fairly naturalistic descriptions of the human body or of sexual intercourse. In short, topics considered pornographic or obscene will all fall into this category. In these cases, self-censorship would make use of: “deletion or dilution of taboos or offensive material on religious, ideological or social grounds [and] compensation is conducted by way of using euphemistic expressions” (Al-Quinai 2005:511-512).

Following the change of the political regime, Hungarian publishers mostly lost all financial support and had to turn towards fulfilling the requirements of the

market. As the Hungarian market is relatively small, aesthetic considerations became secondary. Among other things⁵, a number of pornographic as well as rather more directly sex-related books appeared on the market. As a result, some of the main forces guiding the work of translators became taste and decency, predominantly based on linguistic, literary and cultural traditions of the target culture.

For example, much of what Henry Miller says in his *Tropics of Cancer*⁶ has lost the power to shock the average American reader the way it did when the books were first published. Yet the same 'semitaboo' material is still considered extremely obscene in Spain or South America where translators are expected to sanitize the ST by exercising self-censorship and decorum. (Al-Quinai 2005:496)

In Hungarian we have yet another problem: the language of sexuality – sexual organs, sexual intercourse etc. It is quite difficult to translate a quasi-standard, delicately erotic text, because we have at our disposal either the scientific names, mostly of Latin origin or, at the other end of the scale, a really rude and coarse vocabulary, so that finding some way of describing sexual intercourse in detail using standard Hungarian calls/called for much creativity. "Translating is always a struggle to reach a compromise between one's ethics and society's multiple constraints—and nowhere can we see this more clearly than in the rewriting(s) of sex-related language" (Santaemilia 2006:246). It was especially difficult in the case of the historical romances that I was often commissioned to translate in the 1990s. Sexuality in printed matter used to be (and still is to a certain extent) an extremely sensitive area. As Santaemilia concludes:

Sexual language is a privileged area [...] a site where each culture places its moral or ethical limits, where we encounter its taboos and its ethical dilemmas. [...] we cannot prevent a certain degree of self-censorship, along the lines of an individual ethics and attitude towards religion, sex(uality), notions of (im)politeness or (in)decency, etc. (2008: 246)

During the translation of some of these historical romances, I found far too many meticulously described, 'hot' sex scenes that tested my linguistic ingenuity. After the first book had been edited, I saw that some of those scenes had been deleted by the editor, and when discussing the final version, we both agreed that Hungarian readers (mostly women in this case) were not prepared to face the same passages of sexual scenes so many (more than 6) times. Both the situations as well as the surroundings seemed to be repeated over and over again, so we considered at least half of them superfluous. By cutting these erotic scenes - which were intended to serve their own ends, without adding anything new to the story or to the characters' development - we managed to create a more dynamic narrative and a softer language that was more palatable to our readers at that time. When next commissioned to translate a historical romance, written by the same or another

5. Grateful thanks to Márton Mesterházi for sharing and revealing the truth behind the rejection of this play.

6. Anything prohibited during the Kádár-era surfaced, and, with a few exceptions, aesthetic value became secondary. Therefore public taste, as well as a number of political memoirs and the emergence of pulp-fiction, became central to generating demand on the market.

writer who used more or less the same style and language, I was asked to adapt the translation to meet the taste, expectations and requirements of the prospective readers of such books. “This strategy seeks to increase the book’s appeal for the average reader[...] Under such circumstances, the translator assumes the image of a traitor who commits a deliberate act of rewriting, adapting and censoring an original which is deemed not fit for publication in the receiving culture in its ST form” (Al-Quinai 2005:516).

2.3 Religious self-censorship

The third main category of self-censorship I am going to consider is that involving religious topics. Religious connotations, moreover, religious texts are perhaps the most sensitive and “the translator's intervention to censor the text becomes mandatory. For instance, a derogatory reference to religious characters is strictly forbidden in an Islamic culture” (Al-Quinai 2005:502) and would cause great upheaval in deeply religious, Christian communities as well. Actually, here we have to face the special sensitivity of religious communities as well as the culturally laden intertextuality of such texts, which make the task of translators more difficult. Intertextuality is of course present in all texts, as “no text can ever be completely free of those texts that precede and surround it” (Bassnett 2007:82); yet religious writings, such as the Bible in our western culture, have an important effect on a great variety of other texts and interpretations.

Hungary is part of the Christian world and the majority of the population is Catholic, but Protestant Churches are also strongly represented by a large minority. In her essay, Aurelie Hagstrom says that “a dominant religion [might force] limitations on less prevalent ones” (2003:150). While the Catholic Church has passed through and gradually ended its period of severe censorship “most dramatically by abolishing the Index of Forbidden Books in 1966” (idem, 151) at the same time “the Church maintains its right to judge culture based on its own Christian values” (ibid.) It is especially true in the case of popular culture and a good example for the working of this kind of “self-censorship”, or rather a kind of dialogue between different communities and their different sensitivities, might be “the announcement before a TV show that warns viewers that some language, violence, or material may be offensive to younger or sensitive viewers” (idem, 154).

A literary translator in the middle of Europe will inevitably come across quotations from the Bible or biblical allusions in a foreign text that he has to translate by using and relying on a target language version of the Bible. All its vernacular versions carry the common cultural memory and intertextuality of Christianity, as well as those of the target culture and of interpretations of the Bible in that culture.

Thus a biblical allusion in a foreign text is not precisely rendered by an allusion to the same passage from a Bible translation in the translating language. The allusion in the foreign text may well construct an intertextual relation to a version that, given the cultural importance of the Bible, has accumulated meanings, values, and functions which cannot be recreated merely by inserting an allusion to a Bible translation in a different language. (Venuti 2009: 161)

Venuti further elaborates on this by comparing the impact of Luther's version on German culture and of the King James Bible on the English language and culture and, besides pointing out similarities, he emphasises some significant differences. "Luther's version was instrumental in developing modern High German into the standard dialect and the literary norm, whereas the King James Bible is cast in early modern English, a phase of the language that grew obsolete by the nineteenth century" (2009:161); thus any quotations from or allusions to the King James Bible in an English text would carry different cultural connotations from the German allusions to the Luther version in its German translation.

I faced such problems when translating *Elizabeth* by David Starkey. Here I had to tackle not only the problem of the different Catholic and Protestant translations of the Bible, but also differences in the liturgy as well as in the wording and style of prayers – in short, I had to show a marked difference between the style and milieu of the Catholic reign of Queen (Bloody) Mary and the Protestant rule and Court of Queen Elizabeth I. It is the story of Elizabeth's early years, her 'Apprenticeship' and, as David Starkey is a renowned historian, the book is certainly based on thoroughly studied and analysed sources and methodically selected historical surveys and documents. Following her younger brother's short-lived Protestant rule, Queen Mary re-established Roman Catholicism that was changed after her death by Elizabeth. Concerning his sources on Elizabeth, Starkey (2001:327) says: "Other great influences, on both Elizabeth's thought and her language, were Cranmer's English Prayer Book⁷ and the English Bible. I have used both frequently."

Generally, when Hungarian literary translators have to use one of the versions of the Hungarian Bible translations of King James Bible, we are lucky to be able to turn to a beautiful Protestant translation, published in 1590. Its language is mostly understandable, yet slightly archaic, and thus it suits our purpose; it is perhaps the most famous in the series of Protestant Bible translations that were followed by Catholic translations, and by a good deal of polemics in the 17th century. The difference between the Karoli Version and the King James Version is not so pronounced as that between Luther's Bible translation and King James Bible. Certainly when Mary uses certain words or alludes to the Bible, I turned to a Catholic Translation of nearly the same period (1624). My real problem started when I had to make a distinction between the really subtle liturgical differences of the Anglican and the Protestant form used in Hungary, and when I had to find the right Hungarian wording corresponding to certain parts of the Book of Common Prayer quoted in the book. Unfortunately, none of the Hungarian prayer books of the reformed churches were of any use here, and I was not able to use any of the Roman Catholic prayers either, because what I had to reveal was the difference. Finally, I decided to create the language of these beautiful prayers in Hungarian by drawing some pivotal words from an early 17th century master of high-flown and powerful prose, Cardinal Pázmány. I used his correspondence and debates with protestant preachers in order to convey as much of the beauty of the language of the Book of Common Prayers as possible. At the same time, I managed to touch upon a very sensitive area, because both religious communities use their distinct wording in religious texts (this sometimes meaning only the change of a single letter) so I had to be very careful in my choice of words and try to navigate towards a more general and slightly archaizing usage. This kind of "self-censorship", rather

7. A telling fact is that it was not published in Hungarian until 1991! â

than the manipulation of the target text, tries to respect the sensitivity of deeply religious groups as well as of the majority of the less pious by balancing on the verge of acceptability and, at the same time, by trying to convey the cultural and aesthetic message of the source text.

3. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to clarify some notions of censorship, especially self-censorship in general, paying special attention to the different types and methods of self-censorship in literary translation. Simple definitions have not proven satisfactory because the issue of (self)-censorship is manifold and fairly complex. We have seen that one of the main points of categorization is that censorship is mostly the result of some outside force, while self-censorship is rather self-imposed and indirect. At the same time, both may be initiated by external or internal pressures. We have seen various approaches to censorship and self-censorship, dealing with different aspects, and although I have briefly examined some of them, the classical triad of political, religious and sexual as basic categories seemed to serve as a logical starting point for the examination of self-censorship in literary translation. Yet again, I have made a distinction between two basic forms in all three categories; due to its underlying motivation, self-censorship can be internal or external. External pressures are produced by various outside constraints threatening the translator's physical being, livelihood or freedom etc.; we even might say that, in this respect, self-censorship is a vital means of self-preservation. On the other hand, internal constraints originate in the translator's personality: his preferences, education, social surroundings, in short, any considerations within: "self-censorship is an individual ethical struggle between self and context. In all historical circumstances, translators tend to produce rewritings which are 'acceptable' from both social and personal perspectives" (Santaemilia 2008:221).

Severe censoring characterises totalitarian regimes or any authorities (be it the State, or the Church etc.) that are afraid of losing power, or feel vulnerable at some point in time. Bourdieu's economic censorship or Curry Jansen's market censorship are more difficult to capture, yet as soon as any artists – among them, in particular, literary translators⁸ – take their work to the market, they must accept the conditions dictated by it. (cf. Jansen 2010: 13) Thus translators have to take into consideration such external constraints as the expectations of readers, target norms, i.e. poetological and ideological norms of the TT culture, as well as inner conditions, such as the translator's own interpretation. Eventually all these are in connection with the special reading of translators at a given time and place. We always have to examine the above conditions in order to be able to answer questions like: what taboos, what religious or political considerations had the translator to accept in order to be able to publish his translation; and what were the directives that he would not or should not have accepted.

We have to make a marked difference between translators' self-censorship in democratic and in totalitarian or quasi- totalitarian regimes. In the former, self-censorship is a kind of freedom of interpretation as well as responsibility towards the reader of the target text as well as the author of the source text. It is the latter that requires ideological – mostly political – self-censorship, and it is this kind of

8. a.k.a. Book of Common Prayer.

self-censorship that Péter Esterházy referred to in an interview for *Der Standard*: “Self-censorship is like melted snow. It will seep under your collar”⁹ (April 9, 2011); this kind of self-censorship may lead to a spiral of silence, for it is fear of isolation (social, even physical in certain cases) that triggers this phenomenon of silence. At the same time, we have seen that silence has a manifold meaning as well, because silence is also a means of communication. Silence is part of the text or the silencing of a text is part of the discourse as well.

I shall conclude by saying that self-censorship in literary translation may mean restriction or indicate freedom in interpretation, but it is never free of the impact of the time and the place in which the translator lives; therefore, although generalizations may be helpful, each case should be examined on its merits.

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9. Literary translation is an ephemeral art; the „there and then” is conveyed by translators “ here and now” consequently they want to have their work published and publishers are players in a capitalist market, governed by the regulations of that market.

10. “Selbstzensur ist wie geschmolzener Schnee, der in deinen Körper einsickert, da im Genick.“ 2011. <http://derstandard.at/1301874201357/Interview-Ich-bin-ruhig-behaepte-ich-unruhig> [accessed 2013, June 17].

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NOTES ON THE AUTHORS

Irena Aleksić is currently a doctoral student at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, Serbia. She holds a Master's Degree in English language and literature. Her current field of interest is discourse analysis, with advertising discourse being of prevailing importance.

Ted Bailey has been teaching courses in writing and American literature and culture at the University of Miskolc, Hungary since 1994. He completed a PhD in American Studies at the University of Debrecen, with a dissertation on 19th century African American literature.

Alice Bailey Cheylan teaches English at the Université du Sud, Toulon-Var, France. She is a member of the Babel Research Laboratory, Université du Sud and an associate member of the CREA, Université de Paris 10, Nanterre. She is interested in bilingualism, expatriate writers, feminism, surrealism and translation and she has recently published articles on Lawrence Durrell, Gertrude Stein, and Amy Lowell.

Camelia Bejan is Associate Professor at "Ovidius" University, Constanța, Romania. She has a PhD in Philology (University of Bucharest, 2005) with a thesis in linguistics: *Nominalizations in English and German*. She teaches English syntax, the history of the English language and lexical semantics. Her research interest lies in the field of emotion verbs and nominals in English, German and Romanian.

Alexandru Budac teaches comparative literature and aesthetics at the West University of Timișoara, Romania. He is the author of *Byron în rețea sau Cum a rămas liberă canapeaua doctorului Freud* (Humanitas, 2009) - a study on Thomas Pynchon's fiction and cognitive science. His main research interests are literary criticism, the philosophy of mind, and aesthetics.

Valeria Dumitrescu Micu is a graduate in English and French from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at the University of Bucharest, Romania. She has been a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Foreign Languages at "Carol I" National Defence University, since October 2004. Her PdD research (in progress) focuses on colonialism and post-colonialism in Africa, as depicted in some representative fictional and non fictional books.

Mihăiță Horezeanu is a Senior Lecturer in the English Department of the West University, Timișoara, Romania, and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Languages and Translation at King Khalid University in Abha, Saudi Arabia. He holds a PhD in linguistics from the West University of Timișoara, with a thesis on English and Romanian intonation. His main research interests lie in the fields of phonetics, discourse analysis and intercultural pragmatics.

Gašper Ilc is Associate Professor of English linguistics in the English Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. His research interest lies in the fields of English syntax, contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, and language testing.

Yuriy Kovalyuk, PhD, is Assistant Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages for Natural Science Faculties, Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine.

Moja Krevel is Associate Professor of literatures in English in the English Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her research is focused on those phenomena in recent Anglophone fiction which correspond to the hitherto established

paradigms of postmodernity. Her areas of interest are contemporary fiction and digital literatures, critical theory, new media, cyberculture and posthumanism.

Elisabetta Marino is a tenured Assistant Professor of English Literature at the University of Rome “Tor Vergata”, Italy. She has written three monographs, published a translation into Italian with an introduction, and edited five collections of essays. She has published extensively on the English Romantic writers (especially on Mary Shelley), on Italian American literature, and on Asian American and Asian British literature.

Dragana R. Mašović is full-time Professor at the University of Belgrade, Serbia. Her major fields of expertise are American and Irish studies. She is the author of several books on cultural studies and literature, as well as editor of several journals and a certified translator.

Elvan Mutlu is a Research Assistant in the Department of English Language and Literature, Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Burdur, Turkey. She holds a BA in English language and literature and an MA in Victorian literature. She is currently working on her PhD in English literature at the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK.

Jelena Prtljaga is Associate Professor at the Teacher Training Faculty in Belgrade and the Preschool Teacher Training College in Vršac, Serbia. She is a graduate of the University of Belgrade and holds a PhD from the University of Novi Sad. Her research interests include English language teaching methodology and English linguistics (especially modality). She is a member of ESSE.

István D. Rácz is a Reader in the Department of British Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary and Director of the Institute of English and American Studies. His main field of interest is 19th and 20th century British poetry. He is currently working on a monograph on Philip Larkin’s poetics.

Milica Radenović is a PhD student at the Faculty of Philosophy, the University of Novi Sad, Serbia, where she studied for her Bachelor’s and Master’s degree. She is currently teaching English at the Faculty of Business and Legal Studies. She is interested in ESP and contemporary British and American literature.

Maja Stevanović received her MA degree in Applied Linguistics from the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade. She is currently a PhD student and works as an English language teacher at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Serbia. Her research fields include applied linguistics, ESP and cognitive linguistics.

Ágnes Somló, a graduate of ELTE Budapest, has been teaching at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Pilicsaba, Hungary since 1997 and is head of undergraduate and postgraduate translation programmes. Besides literary translation (nearly 50 published volumes), she is the author of two radio plays and several literary essays as well as articles dealing with translation studies. She was a reader for *Historia* quarterly and a freelance translator of literature as well as editor for various publishing houses and for the Hungarian Radio. In 1988, she completed a Soros Foundation programme in American Civilization at the University of Pennsylvania, USA. She is an active member of various professional associations, such as EST, the Association of Hungarian Literary Translators, the Hungarian Writers’ Association, etc.

Simona Şimon is a Teaching Assistant at the “Politehnica” University of Timișoara, Romania. She holds a doctoral degree from the University of the West, Timișoara. Her research interests are in the field of applied linguistics, genre studies, advertising and teaching.

Janina Vesztergom is currently completing her PhD in English literature at the School of English and American Studies (SEAS) at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest, Hungary. Her doctoral thesis aims at the critical reappraisal of Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*. Her MA thesis was awarded the ELTE SEAS "Outstanding Thesis Award" in 2011.

Cristina-Mihaela Zamfir is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages at the "Ovidius" University of Constanța, Romania. She holds a doctoral degree from the University of Timișoara. Her research interests include language studies, psycholinguistics, ESP, NLP and communication. She is an NLP practitioner, certified by ITANLP Timișoara in March 2008. She has published numerous articles in the fields of ESP and English lexicology and semantics in national and international journals.

Ioana Zirra is Associate Professor in the English Department, The Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, the University of Bucharest, Romania. Her interest in Irish literature and culture, the theory of literature, British twentieth century and Victorian literature as taught subjects is coupled with the general cultural studies and theory of modernity methodology applied in her PhD research and in various articles she has written for national and international publications. She is currently working on the new annotated edition of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, contributed to the chronology to *T. S. Eliot. Opere poetice, 1909-1962*, and translated from Saul Bellow, Peter Brown and the poets Dylan Thomas and William Carlos Williams.