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PERSPECTIVES INTERCULTURELLES

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InterCulturalia 2019

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Hybridity and diversity in language and culture. Issues of intercultural entrepreneurship § *Hybridité et diversité dans la langue et la culture. Les enjeux de l'entrepreneuriat interculturel*

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FOREWORD

When the noise of time is pandemic havoc and disruption, we write against it in a spirit of continuity and scholarly commitment inspired by the young students and researchers who participated in the third edition of the *Interculturalia* Symposium, a forum of lively exchanges of the latest ideas and theories in cultural studies, critical theory and literary studies, applied linguistics and translation studies and teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL).

Held on 9-10 May 2019 at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iaşi, the event was organised jointly by the English and French Departments of the Faculty of Letters, with the support of the City Hall of Iaşi, Agence Universitaire de Francophonie (AUF), Institut français, Centre de réussite universitaire of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iaşi (CRU UAIC), and the Iaşi Branch of British Council Romania.

The third edition of *InterCulturalia* gathered together symposium "veterans" who had participated in previous editions, as well as new participants of various backgrounds and study levels, from freshmen and sophomore to MA and PhD students coming from Iaşi or international students affiliated with the Alexandru Ioan Cuza Doctoral School of Philology, and from other universities in the country (Cluj-Napoca, Timişoara, Suceava). Aside from a selection of the best papers submitted by our participants, we welcome a paper written and submitted by an MA student from Bar Ilan University, Israel.[1]

Since its first edition in 2017, we have seen that this spirit of continuity and scholarly commitment has taken new forms every year, appealing to the students' and young researchers' most daring and

[1] The publication of this volume is supported by the "Student Entrepreneurship for a Competitive Economy" (ANTREPRENOR-STUD) Project.

eclectic research and study interests and also to their fundamental need to engage these interests in a dialogue across national, cultural and linguistic borders and confinements, more often than not breaking taboos and building *InterCulturalia* as a truly encompassing space.

The first section in this issue is all about culture, society, and art, and the intermingling and connectivity of the three, as well as the impassioned, academic debates they generate. In the spirit of such debates, the following papers consider various aspects of identity within a postmodern, consumerist culture.

Tackling Benjamin Fundoianu's intellectual and artistic endeavours, **Ştefana Gabriela Sîrbu**'s paper looks into the writer's miscellanea written in two languages and in two different countries (Romania and France), and thus portrays the figure of a writer who let his identity be shaped and reshaped by the cultures and languages he appropriated. Examining Fundoianu's case, the author of the paper probes into the way in which shifts in language bring about shifts in one's intellectual outlook, emotional disposition and artistic creativity. Furthermore, "dislocation, disorientation, self-division" (p. 103) and exile permeated the writer's later poetry, infusing it with "an exilic lyricism" (p. 105) but "it is through exile that his works achieve a sort of universal spirit" (p. 106).

Informed by the concept of the Other in philosophy, psychology and postcolonial studies, **Adina Dragoş** tackles its representations in two novels: *Heart of Darkness* written by the Polish-born novelist Joseph Conrad and published in 1899 and *In the Lake of the Woods* written by the American writer Tim O'Brien and published in 1994. In a remarkable feat of intercultural approach to cultural clashes, Adina Dragoş focuses her analytic skills upon the war as "an exercise in dehumanization" (p. 28) in virtually any setting and circumstances, and at any time of its occurrence. The author of the paper argues that the war is deeply engrained in Western thought, which has always projected an Other to showcase Western superiority. However, the Western sense of superiority is a double-edged blade: in the colonial situation delineated by Conrad's narrator in *Heart of Darkness* the Other, which is the African continent, is decked with the most negative marks of unfathomable mystery and terror; one century later, Tim O'Brien's character John Wade

echoes Marlow when he describes the land he sees as "dark and unyielding" (p. 31). Adina Dragoş concludes that in both novels the process of cultural othering morphs into a sense of alienation from one's psychological other, i.e. one's subconscious as an "impenetrable darkness" (p. 35).

"Luther, Erasmus... and Zombies" is another approach to literature largely informed by philosophy, an interdisciplinary intersection. The paper's author **Andrei Neguţ** engages his readers in an enthralling approach to the philosophic/theological sources of "undeath," a liminal state between life and death, underpinning "American post-apocalyptic (and even post-post-apocalyptic) narratives of all kinds" (p. 71). Poising them in the liminal space between determinism (rooted in Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio*) and free will (Erasmus' argument in *De libero arbitrio*), Andrei Neguţ analyses Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* and Walter Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* as literary instantiations of free will, and argues that Pat Frank's philosophical approach to the agency of destruction in *Alas, Babylon* is deterministic. This philosophical dispute leads the author of the paper to a tackling of the zombie archetypal characters in the corpus under scrutiny "as deterministic instantiations, due to their often rigid and arguably simplistic portrayal in contemporary narratives" (p. 77).

Evelina-Iulia Hreceniuc's paper "The Selfie Phenomenon and the Creation of a New Identity" is a necessary reflection on a narcissistically seducing, albeit alarmingly perilous social media fad. Drawing on a medley of theories that give her kaleidoscopic angles from which to look at the selfie phenomenon, Evelina-Iulia Hreceniuc knows how to ensnare us in her argument by starting it with a most relevant information: "selfie" was declared "the *Word of the Year* in 2013" (p. 61). As the author of the paper argues, the selfie epitomises a samsara of our addiction to an endless reproduction of images in the social media. Keeping herself as scientifically detached as possible from her object of study and relying on Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality, Evelina-Iulia Hrenciuc does not fail to show that these images lack authentic substance and significance, thereby posing a serious threat to our faculty for distinguishing between reality and simulation. From these psychological effects and implications, the argument zooms out to the larger picture of the "social

media as the Disneyland of the Internet" (p. 65) which puts a psychological compulsion in connection with a cultural addiction. At both a micro- and macro-level the effect is that of late we are more and more in the habit of creating a hyperreal world of endlessly reproducible images.

Baudrillard's concept of "hyperreality" also underpins **Tatiana Coțofan's** approach to violence and consumerism in J. G. Ballard's novel *Kingdom Come*, where the supermarket typifies Baudrillard's world of simulacra and simulation permeated by a spirit of consumerism, which is seen as a new religion and which creates a ground for fascism. Employing Bakhtin's notion of polythony and postcolonial approaches to liminality, **Baraah Abed Elhai** looks into the relationship between character and place in Eshkol Nevo's novel *Homesick*. Baraah shows that the novel builds an unfixed and liminal Israeli spatiality that problematically accommodates split and hybrid Jewish characters and Palestenian Others. Drawing on Bakhtin's concept of "chronotope" and theories of space and place, she argues that the "spatial and temporal intersections of the transit camp and the original site of the Arab village on top of which it was built condense and conflate, generating a destabilized and fluctuating Israeli contemporaneity" (p. 46).

Interrogating aspects of the "real" in a different fashion, **Raluca Stefania Pelin**'s paper tackles the issue of "spying" as a creative act which rewrites the narratives one builds around personal identity. Analyzing Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's 2006 feature film, *The Lives of Others*, Pelin argues that, through spying, one is able to modify the "text", be it literally, in the case of Nobokov's Kinbote, who wishes to be a part of his neighbor's poetic work, or metaphorically, in the case of Henckel's Gerd Wiesler, who changes the life of an artist he admires. In both cases, Pelin points out, the reader/viewer is "being thrown into a continuous act of spying in order to sort out the input from all directions" (p. 85).

Placing three forms of expression – poetry, painting and photography – at the center of a qualitative analysis, **Diana Pîșlac's** paper discusses the cathartic role of art in dealing with trauma, illness, discrimination, and prejudice. As she points out in her threefold investigation of some of their best-known works, what the three female

artists – American poet Maya Angelou, Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, and Spanish photographer Angélica Dass – have in common is their ability to use the purifying transformative power of art to assist post-traumatic healing (themselves and others) – process which includes emotional recovery and revaluation of the self.

The second section of the volume is dedicated to critical theory in literary studies, where certain culture-pinned aspects such as "hyperreality" and "posthumanism" are embedded within a more theoretical approach to literary works, examining critical orientations in literary theory and new methods of discursive investigation (Deleuze and Guattari's "rhizome").

Once more, the alluring and dehumanizing aspects of a consumerist aesthetic are sharply examined by **Laura Stoica** in her paper on Margaret Atwood's debut novel, *The Edible Woman*, wherein Stoica argues that the relationship between the female protagonist and her body is dictated by the hyperrealities of media products and the powerful dichotomies of gender roles. In describing the main character as a "consumer of fantasies" (p. 141), Stoica makes the case that the young woman struggles between the shame of Kristevan abjection and the desire to escape the confines of this gendered reality through abject processes of unfeminine degradation.

Florina Năstase's paper on Emma Donoghue's short story "The Last Rabbit" tackles a fictionalized historical case through a posthumanist lens: Mary Toft, the woman who claimed to have given birth to rabbits and confounded 18th century doctors, embodies the disorder and incoherence of motherhood, revealing our "inability to separate the human from the non-human in birth" (p. 126). Năstase makes the compelling case that the animal and the human are intimately connected within womanhood due to historical and cultural perceptions of women as not entirely "human". Observed in a deconstructive manner, Toft's gesture becomes a "mirror act, a posthuman expression of grief and loss" (p. 127).

The paper "A Rhizomatic Analysis of Poetry: Lawrence Ferlinghetti's 'The Airplane'" selects as a frame for Ferlinghetti's poem Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's idea proposed at the end of the 1980's, the rhizomatic system of discourse investigation based on the

metaphor of the rhizome, as presented in their work *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). **Constantin Ilaș** accounts for this methodological choice as an instrument for the analysis of Ferlinghetti's poem and points at the aptness and degree of freedom offered by this anti-traditionalist approach as applied to the literature that appeared in the wake of the 9/11 events. The preference for repetition as a stylistical device in *The Airplane* is set in relation to maladaptive behaviour resulting from trauma. Based (partly) on (quasi-)random Google searches, this method provides an interpretation comparable to those offered by more traditionalist critics, "showcasing the philosophy of its original authors: meaning doesn't exist on its own, but it forms in relation with everything else" (p. 120), as Constantin Ilaș convincingly concludes.

Opting for a more general outlook, **Cătălin Nicolau** gives us an overview of M.H. Abrams' classic scholarly work, *The Mirror and the Lamp, Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (1953), by analysing the four critical orientations in literary theory (mimetic, pragmatic, expressive and objective) which Abrams outlines in his book. Nicolau takes us through the stages of literary criticism and their famous proponents, ranging from Aristotle and Horace, to the neoclassical Samuel Johnson, to the romantic Wordsworth, and to the modernists of the 20th century, with a view to showing the various ways in which the text relates to the real world, its audience, the artist, and finally, itself.

The third section of our volume is dedicated to applied linguistics and translation studies, wherein our scholars debate not only linguistic, but also cultural and literary aspects of translation, as all three are indispensable within the practice of literary translations, in particular. Undertaking a linguistically-oriented comparative study of Vladimir Nabokov's autobiographical novels in English and Russian (*Conclusive Evidence*, *Другие берега* and *Speak Memory*), **Arina Chirilă** analyzes the subtle differences in language that an author operates with when he translates or modifies a very intimate novel about himself. Chirilă focuses, in particular, on the colour "blue" and its two Russian equivalents (*синий and голубой),* revealing that the process of translation is riddled with "meliorative" or "pejorative" connotations (p. 151), as the meaning of each nuance of blue shifts along with the author's subjective memory and impressions.

Alexandra Vrînceanu's paper investigates the impact of the translator in terms of ideology, as she analyzes the translation of a poem by John Donne and the translation of a short story by Anne-Marie Alonzo in an attempt to ascertain the translator's input. As Vrînceanu argues, "the translator is not a mere filter which the text goes through, but rather a creative presence" (p. 163), and therefore, the translator may perceive certain ideological slippages in the source text and modify them creatively. Writing from a feminist perspective, Vrînceanu skillfully reveals the biases of the translator, placing emphasis on the feminist translator's strategies of "aut*her*izing" (p. 163), underlining the feminine voice in a source text.

The final section of our volume concerns the strategies and overall epistemology of teaching English as a foreign language. While knowledge of the history of language and of etymology is not the first instrument considered by language trainers in teaching English, the paper "The Etymology of the English Language and the Latin Influence" by **Fellipe Soares** presents a fresh perspective on how it can be put to advantage by learners with a native language of Latin origin. Along with the suggestion that the teacher should anticipate questions related to the discrepancy between spelling and pronunciation which might confuse learners whose first language does not pose the problem (or at least not to the same extent – Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian) and should offer explanations from the stages in the development of English, Soares poses that the same strategy can be used, coupled with others, to help learners to deal with cognates or with the more elevated, more formal layer of the English vocabulary of Latin and French origin.

Jackie Teplitz, meanwhile, pleads for the importance of the interconnection of explicit linguistic knowledge and language proficiency in a TLA (Teacher Language Awareness) model, where the teacher is a "user" of language, an "analyst" of language and a "teacher" of language. The author of the paper argues that a combination of "these knowledge bases facilitate a teacher's developing UPK" (p. 182). However, this approach does not idealise the model; on the contrary, it also sees its limitations.

Rejoicing in the feast of the 2019 *InterCulturalia*, whose crop we harvest in this volume, we are projecting new editions of the students' and young researchers' incubator of ideas.

Dana BĂDULESCU
Florina NĂSTASE
Teodora GHIVIRIGĂ

CULTURE, SOCIETY, ART: CONTEMPORARY DEBATES

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CULTURE, SOCIÉTÉ, ART : DÉBATS CONTEMPORAINS

InterCulturalia
2019

Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

Culture, société, art: Débats contemporains

VIOLENCE AND CONSUMERISM IN J.G. BALLARD'S KINGDOM COME

Tatiana COȚOFAN*

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"The suburbs dream of violence", warns J.G. Ballard's novel *Kingdom Come* from the very beginning. Are we expected to believe it at once? Most probably not. Thus, J.G. Ballard drives us on the journey that begins on the highway M25, brings us to the Metro-Centre and ends in violence, shock and terror. A highway to hell, indeed.

J.G. Ballard, who is known for his science fiction novels, well-known for his autobiographical novel *Empire of the Sun* and best-known for his most controversial novel *Crash*, builds his last novel *Kingdom Come* as a detective story. The protagonist Richard Pearson, a former advertising executive, comes to Brooklands, where his father was killed in a shooting accident at the mall. He quickly gets involved in the events that in the end reveal the truth behind his father's death. He meets the other five key characters in the first part of the novel and each of them expresses their opinion on the Metro-Centre. This makes Richard begin a chain of events that would lead to a terrible denouement in the second part of the novel.

In order not to get lost in the countless clues and to make a less psychedelic analysis, I decided to follow a structure based on the three main ideas that I would like to bring into discussion: 1. Ballard's

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hypermarket as Baudrillardian hyperreality; 2. Consumerism as a religion; 3. Consumerism as a ground for fascism.

BALLARD'S HYPERMARKET AS BAUDRILLARDIAN HYPERREALITY

> These days even reality is meant to look artificial (Ballard 56).

The notion of *hyperreality* is described by Jean Baudrillard in his work *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981). In the Baudrillardian vision, what defines the postmodern world is not the production, but the reproduction of objects and ideas; this constant reproduction transforms them into signifiers without a signified. Therefore, objects and ideas, even feelings are exposed to an erasure of distinction between them and their representations or, as Baudrillard stated, "substituting the signs of the real for the real" (Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation" 4). This reproduction without the original meaning is nothing but a simulation. Furthermore, an experience provided by simulated worlds like TV shows, amusement parks, hypermarkets, etc. is more intense and real than reality itself. Jean Baudrillard states that "even the confusion of the reality principle […] is less dangerous than contagious hyperreality" (Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation" 17).

The obvious examples of hyperreality (besides Disneyland) are the hypermarkets. "Strange new objects" as Baudrillard describes them pointing out their futuristic sight, he compares the hypermarkets to nuclear power stations due to their ability to neutralize a territory, their main function being one of "the hyperreality of functional nuclei that are no longer at all functional. These new objects are the poles of simulation around which is elaborated [...] something other than a "modernity": a hyperreality, a simultaneity of all the functions, without a past, without a future, an operationality on every level".(Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation" 55)

J.G. Ballard was very well acquainted with Baudrillard's ideas. In an interview in 1991 he mentioned that "a lot of Baudrillard that" he had

tried to read (Sellars, O'Hara 261), in fact his vision of consumerist society is heavily informed by Baudrillard's reflections.

"There are no cinemas, churches or civic centers, and the endless billboards advertising a glossy consumerism sustained the only cultural life" (Ballard 34) remarks the narrator in *Kingdom Come* regarding the Metro-Centre. This self-sufficiency of the hypermarkets is mentioned by Baudrillard as an expression of a whole lifestyle in which town and country disappear (Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation" 55). It is worth mentioning that John Baxter, in his book about Ballard, describes *Kingdom Come* as a lament of the British values replaced by consumerism (Baxter 334).

In Ballard's vision as well as in Baudrillard's, the mall is a whole new reality with no historical or cultural basis which somehow tends to replace real life. One of the characters calls it "an imaginary world" and it is indeed, a world that is more accessible than the real one because reality here is meant to look artificial comparing to the simplicity of the acts of consuming.

That is why consumerism, as Ballard sees it, easily excludes any other cultural features, replaces them and "dominates" people's lives, making them look as if they were shopping whatever they are doing. Baudrillard points out that objects are no longer only commodities, "they are no longer even signs whose meaning and message one could decipher and appropriate for oneself, they are tests, they are the ones that interrogate us, and we are summoned to answer them, and the answer is included in the question". Indeed, for people of Brooklands the act of consuming "is an expression of the spirit of the tribe" as well as an expression of their personalities: "We think we need to buy or we fail" (Ballard 76). A failure in this case means inability to fit this glossy new world.

What Ballard calls "spirit of the tribe" is in fact a matter of socialization. From Baudrillard's point of view hypermarkets with their artificial environment offer new means of socialization. In the context of hypermarkets, we can talk of "controlled socialization". Baudrillard argues that "the role of the hypermarket goes far beyond "consumption," and the objects no longer have a specific reality there: what is primary is

their serial, circular, spectacular arrangement – the future model of social relations" (Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation" 56).

J.G. Ballard develops this idea by representing ethnic immigrants (Asians, Pakistani, Eastern Europeans, etc.) as socially marginal because of their inability to socialize through consumption, therefore exposing themselves to the threat of violence, suggesting that racial hate is not a matter of color or belief, which represent a façade that hides the true reason of hate, but most likely, one of economical nature.

CONSUMERISM AS A RELIGION

> 'It's more than just a shopping mall it's more like a…'
> 'Religious experience?'
> 'Exactly!' (Ballard 84)

The mall is often presented as a church even from the first pages: "The Metro-Centre […] a cathedral of consumerism whose congregations far exceeded those of the Christian churches". This idea of sacralization of the mall will be repeated and insisted on, making us see and understand consumerism more than a new culture – a new religion.

The Metro-Centre is also referred to as "temple" (Ballard 113) or "cathedral", and the shopping experience is described as a religious one. However, a sacred place is not exclusively about praying or worshipping, one of the main reasons of performing religious rituals is the one of saving the soul. Richard Pearson states that there are "more souls to heal" while reflecting on the benefits of consumerism (Ballard 145). Metro-Centre proves to be "a cathedral, a place of worship. Consumerism is the last refuge of the religious instinct" (Ballard 253).

Other objects of worship in Metro-Centre are three huge teddy bears – the mascots of the hypermarket. There are two episodes in the novel that depict the process of worshipping these figures, first we see teddy bears on the first account of the Metro-Centre right after the shooting episode in which Richard Pearson has lost his father. People bring "cards […], flowers, a row of miniature teddy bears […] and a dozen jars of honey" (Ballard 42) as gifts to these figures expressing their care and concern. During the assault of the Metro-Centre people start

praying to them "knelt on the floor, faces raised to the stuffed bears" (Ballard 283).

These objects that serve as totems or icons for the act of worship are invested with beliefs that have no ground, in fact they are signs without a referent, an illustration of the Baudrillardian concept of simulacra which denotes simulations of things that do not exist.

An absent father is often a symbol of an absent god; less literally speaking: a daddy issue becomes a god issue. For Richard Pearson, his father, with whom he had never been close, is an employer whose interview for the job of being his son he constantly fails (in his own mind, of course). Richard is a mirror of the world he had helped building, a lost, father/god-less society eager to be told what its desires are. He is also told of his desires by the people who, he would find out later, had helped in killing his father. There is a mention of Francis Bacon's paintings *Screaming Popes* (series of paintings on which popes' faces are screaming in agony, remade after Diego Velasquez's portraits of popes) and Richard claims that the popes are screaming at existence realizing that there is nothing in there, there is no god. Probably, Brooklands people would also scream (like the man on Munch's famous painting) if the Metro-Centre had not been there.

"Their lives are empty" claim various characters in Ballard's novel quite often, so for the empty lives of these people, consumerism is the only answer and meaning, a new kind of *soma*, as it were. Richard notices that and decides to play god himself, bringing on their TV screens a new Messiah, and he is pleased by the result as a former advertising executive.

In fact, Richard has never stated clearly what his new advertising politics are, he vaguely invokes "madness" and "punishment", mentioning that people "know that madness is the only freedom left to them" (Ballard 148). There is no clear message in his politics because: "Messages belong to the old politics […] the new politics is about people's dreams and needs, their hopes and fears" (Ballard 146).

A Ballardian Messiah is not one chosen by destiny or divinity, becoming a Messiah is only a matter of good advertisement. For this role Richard Pearson picks a not very successful actor who mostly played in commercials and at that moment was the presenter of the consumer

affairs TV programme – David Cruise. One of the reasons of this choice was that people do not want a "jackbooted fanatic ranting on a balcony". He knows that people want "a TV host […] talking quietly about what matters in their lives" (Ballard 145).

The new kingdom (a biblical allusion suggested by the title) is a promise of eternal consumption and joy. Richard Pearson creates an icon in pure Baudrillardian vision of simulacra, someone who will tell people what they want. But had he expected to be called a new Joseph Goebbels?

CONSUMERISM AS GROUNDS FOR FASCISM

> Consumerism creates needs that only a Fascism can satisfy (Ballard 136).

The outcome of Richard Pearson's actions was collective madness. What he had imagined to be a revolutionary selling campaign turned out to be an encouragement for Fascism. In order to sell more refrigerators and washing machines, he had appealed to an almost Orwellian statement: "Bad is mad, Mad is good". And then the violence unleashed. People indeed turned to madness, being bored by the consumerism. How did that happen?

A civilized world is a world from which the true need/instinct for violence is erased, isn't it? Sigmund Freud would rather disagree. In his book *Civilization and its Discontents* Freud describes human beings as creatures that "can count a powerful share of aggression among their instinctual endowments" and "as a rule, this cruel aggression waits for some provocation" (Freud 58).

What served as the provocation for people of Brooklands? There are the new needs, the false ones dictated by the endless spots of advertisement. There is also sport and sport clubs meant to redirect people's energy to something healthy and socially acceptable.[1] But what happens in fact is that a feeling of anxiety rises, which, with the help of Richard Pearson's selling campaign (a campaign dwelling on hate and

[1] In another interview given by J.G. Ballard he mentions that he picked sport because precisely in this book it would "facilitate a lot of quasi-fascist activity" (Sellars, O'Hara 458).

madness), leads to violence against the foreigners. The consumers start a sort of crusade against Asians, East-Europeans and Bengalis, only this time it is the mall that stands for god and it has to be worshipped and protected. They even distinguish themselves by wearing shirts with St George's cross, showing a certain form of uniformity among themselves.

This assertion of Englishness, of national/ethnic identity becomes itself a simulacrum. This enrollment under St. George's cross, represented on their "uniforms", signals only their devotion to the dominant consumerist ethos.

The manifestation of violence against people who are unable to fit the society of consumers wears "two costumes, farce and cruelty" (Ballard 126). On the one hand these gangs of football supporters pretend that they attack people because hooliganism is a commonly accepted form of manifestation of joy or disappointment among football supporters, on the other hand, these riots are manifested selectively, only against Asian supermarkets. Another episode caught by Richard Pearson involves a young man in a St George's shirt "dancing around a middle-aged Asian shopkeeper fallen to his knees," feinting and kicking (Ballard 74).

In one of his articles ("The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media" 1985), Baudrillard speculates on the idea that masses are eager to pass their powers of desire, choice and responsibility to those to whom they have "devolved the duty of taking care of all of these things" (Baudrillard, "The Masses" 579). Ballard seems to echo Baudrillard's radical interpretation, suggesting that this attitude is dangerous because in this way anything can be inspired to them and they will gladly accept it as long as they do not have to decide: a Fourth Reich or a cult of teddy bears.

In one of the interviews given by J.G. Ballard in 2006 (the year when *Kingdom Come* was published), he says that "there is something [in the novel] about consumerism and late capitalism that is too close for comfort to fascism. There are echoes" (Sellars, O'Hara 442).

CONNECTING THE DOTS

As I have already argued, Ballard's vision of the hypermarket and of the suburb in which it stands centralized and redistributed, with its time and practices being concentrated and rationalized, corresponds to Baudrillard's critique of consumerism. All the book clubs and other cultural activities in Brooklands were abolished once the Metro-Centre appeared.

> It was impossible to borrow a book, attend a concert, say a prayer, consult a parish record or give to charity. (Ballard 8)

The people of Ballard's Brooklands, like the masses in Baudrillard's vision, want to be told what to do and what to believe in. Their churches are substituted by the huge dome of the Metro-Centre and not so many people are alarmed by that, they are taught to destroy their neighbors' houses and shops, so they do.

Baudrillard contended that the hypermarkets illustrate the end of modernity, while Ballard sees them as the new means of Capitalism. Relating these visions to Marx's idea that Capitalism will end in a revolution started by the enlightened masses, it is obvious that what we have in fact is not the end of Capitalism, but a whole new vision of it; it is not about profit anymore, but about the education of the masses that will bring the profit.

Ballard portrays a society that turns to violence because it is bored, because its true needs cannot be satisfied with the false ones. Except that the true needs in Ballard's opinion are violence and disaster, which reminds of Freud's hypothesis. We cannot blame them, they both witnessed wars and saw the worst of what the mankind is capable of, so there is no surprise that they suspect it of dreaming of violence.

Certainly, in *Kingdom Come,* J.G. Ballard tends to exaggerate at certain moments, such as that of consumerism growing into violence. I believe that by the matter of exaggeration, Ballard tries to warn his readers of the danger of slipping into chaos with the help of the new technologies and cultural changes, as it happens in his novella *Running*

Wild, where a closed world of total surveillance, even in the name of love, can bring nothing but violence.

It is advisable to read Ballard's novel carefully and accept it not only as a matter of criticism of the consumerist society, but as a matter of warning, a cautionary tale.

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Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

Culture, société, art: Débats contemporains

"THE HORROR AND THE FLIES": VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTHER IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS* AND TIM O'BRIEN'S *IN THE LAKE OF THE WOODS*

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We called in gunships and air strikes. We brutalized. We wasted. We pistol-whipped. We trashed wells. We kicked and punched. We burned all that would burn. Yes, and these too were atrocities—the dirty secrets that live forever inside all of us (O'Brien 187).

John Limon states in the introduction to *Writing after War: American War Fiction From Realism to Postmodernism* that "the history of literature began with war and has never forsworn it" (3), emphasizing thus the inherent relationship between these two notions, and the fact that war continues to remain one of the most complex subjects in fiction.

Often approached with a particular attitude of disdain and moral repudiation by authors who attempt who use its brutality and ruthlessness as means of symbolic meditation upon the nature of man and humanity, enkindling through this very process a perverse fascination into the reader, it nevertheless remains one of the more divisive topics in a postmodern, postcolonial and global context. For the issue of war lies not necessarily in the fact that it is discussed in fiction,

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though even that tends to be contested to a certain degree, but rather in its portrayal. How do we talk about war? How *should* we talk about war?

It is, one might argue, purely a matter of cultural values and their evolution through history. In other words, what this means is that much of our reception of the topic is influenced by the socio-political climate that is contemporary to us. Thus, the manner in which war is discussed by writers in their works has a tendency to reflect these particular attitudes, for though we might consider it a repugnant, shocking or vile act, one may just as well make the argument that it ought to be regarded as a show of heroic willpower, of triumph over the evil and as the sole means of cultural preservation. One could even argue that war is necessary, that it speaks to the essence of humanity, or, and this might perhaps seem aggravating, that "war may sometimes be beautiful, but beauty is always bellicose" (Limon 3).

It is a rather unusual statement that Limon invites us to ponder upon, for it relocates war from the sphere of the carnal and the cadaverous to that of art and culture. What once was considered an expression of pure aggression mutates into a narration of cultural and ethical character, as it invites participants and spectators alike to redefine concepts through the prism of adversity. The resulting product comes to be characterized by its intercultural quality, for more often than not, armed conflicts can be seen as exchanges between different nations and countries whose main purpose is to proclaim one's superiority, whether moral or military, over the enemy. However, it soon becomes apparent that this type of cultural exchange imposes an unequal relationship between civilizations, whose implementation was a core feature of the policy of imperialism, an ideology that becomes a fascinating point of reference to both English writer Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and American writer Tim O'Brien's *In the Lake of the Woods*. For even though almost a century separates the two novels, their appraisal of the topic of war reveals with almost macabre glee the recurrent quality of cultural colonialism in such a particular context.

WAR: AN EXERCISE IN DEHUMANIZATION

To address a novel that explores the effect of imperialism and colonialism upon the human subject, we must first and foremost turn our attention to Western culture itself, or rather to Western thought. This is,

in part, what Robert Eaglestone suggests in his essay entitled "Postmodernism and Ethics against the Metaphysics of Comprehension," wherein, aided in part by some of his predecessors' works in the field of philosophy and ethics (amongst which we must reference Bauman, Derrida, Fanon and de Beauvoir as the most influential), he attempts to explain the appearance of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century by determining the problem to be in fact a side effect of what he deems an 'omnivorous philosophy'. Due to the Western tendency to conflate intellectual prowess with moral superiority it has created a system in which the value of what constitutes a human being is defined by its adherence to a rigid system, which, rather predictably, gives prominence to subjects that hail from the Western space. It is a delimitation which enforces what Eaglestone refers to as 'tradition,' or rather, a structure whose very exclusionary nature manages to undermine itself, as in order for it to function it necessitates an opposing force: an Other.

The other both is the foundation of western thought and also marks its limit. This putting into question or thinking of the limits can, however, happen only in the "conceptual language available . . . that of the Greek logos": for the West, no other conceptual language is easily to hand. To critique ontology, to critique the metaphysics of comprehension, the only language available is the language of comprehension. And this critique is begun by an encounter with the other (Eaglestone 203).

The Other has always been a point of interest to the Western writer, for, unlike any other subject, it manages to capture through its mere existence the very essence of Western culture. Others are necessary because they represent a means of comparative evaluation which a subject cannot achieve without the existence of a point of reference. In other words, Western culture is something we are aware of only if we have the opportunity to examine it in contrast to another. Herein, however, lays the main issue. For, as Eaglestone demonstrates, this very difference which makes possible our conceptualization of the world is also the primary victim of a philosophy which desires to comprehend the Other, through a means of eradicating them.

The 'I' of Western thought, or perhaps better said the Cartesian Self, is founded on a rigid ontological system in which all knowledge of the world around it is filtered through the subjective values of the West, leading to the creation of a classification in which all items are divided into either 'others' that exist inside the system and thus are known to the subject, or 'others' which exist outside it and are thus unfamiliar. It is the latter category which is considered the root of the issue, for it proposes not only the existence of an entity that evades the reach of our 'Self' but, more crucially, it undermines the validity of the structure itself. Thus, the aim of systems such as imperialism and colonialism is not merely to subjugate the Other and convince it (and themselves) of the West's superiority, but to integrate these foreign elements into its framework as a means of homogenizing them entirely. The Other is a threat to a rigid system only as long as it exists outside the perception of the 'Self', which is why its eradication through consumption is important, as it ensures that no other sociocultural ways of thinking present themselves as alternatives. The Western 'I' protects itself from the notion of plurality as it otherwise would have to hold itself accountable to its restricted means of constructing one's identity, yet it is always at the cost of alterity, for it cannot abide its existence. It all ultimately comes down to the individual, which is perhaps why war novels come to see the encounter with the Other as a means of self-reflection, in which the intercultural exchange is conceived in a manner that remains centred upon the Western subject. Yet what about the Other?

THE LAND WAS A SECRET

As Conrad's narrator, Marlow, attempts to make his way into the 'heart of darkness' that is the African continent, he remarks that the journey in such a foreign land is "like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings. An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest" (Conrad 67). The image which he creates of the environment that he is currently traversing is infused with a feeling of dread and terror, which becomes justified for his vessel is soon set upon by the figures of the natives. Hidden from sight in the shadows of the flora, they merely

reveal themselves in order to cause several casualties, before retreating into the wilderness from which they apparently sprouted, obscured once again from the eye of the 'Self.'

This particular image, which is echoed in O'Brien novel as John Wade describes the land as standing "dark and unyielding" (O'Brien 46) with "booby traps in the hedgerows, bouncing betties under the red clay soil" (O'Brien 46), is one which functions primarily as a means of emphasizing the horrifying confusion with which the characters react to the unnatural situation in which they have been forced. The culture which they have been compelled to interact with does not welcome their presence there and this manifests itself on a subconscious level into the characters' perception of the environment itself. The land is not merely a place in which the cultural contact transpires, but an entity on its own which reacts in an antagonistic manner towards their presence. It has come to embody to its core the primal fear of the unknown which continues to stalk the rational mind of the Western 'I' even after its supposed banishment at the hands of civilization. And indeed, this might very much be the reality in a European cultural context for there is little need to confront one's subconscious in an environment that strives towards the enlightenment of the mind through the evolution of scientific method. However, this can no longer be the case once the 'Self' leaves its confines in order to 'devour' another culture through subjugation, as the culture which belongs to the Other refuses to become known to its invader.

The environment, the entity which the Self has come to encounter *in lieu* of the people, is in many ways a creation of its own mind due to the imposed narrative of the West, but to claim that it is entirely its own creation would be rather erroneous. The land is a conquered one in the case of Conrad and one under threat of becoming colonized in the case of O'Brien, and though it retains a dangerous mystique for its colonizers, or attempted colonizers, it remains in many ways just as much a manifestation of the people that inhabit it. "The silent papa-sans, the hollow-eyed children and jabbering old women" (O'Brien 46), all Vietnam natives, are in the eyes of Wade extensions of the domain they inhabit, coming to embody in their identities the very characteristics which cause the 'Self' to become terrified of their existence. It is for this

particular reason that the characters become unable to differentiate between them and the land which they attempt to conquer, as the Other had through their connection with their place of birth come to be transformed by the 'I' "into the wilderness itself, with an air of brooding over an inscrutable purpose" (Conrad 127). Marlow's natives who are blending into the bushes and Wade's ghosts who disappear under the cloak of darkness are not characters as a result, but rather tangible manifestations of the fear of the unknown.

It is an interesting thing to remark upon, for it is not certain how much their association with the land has led to them being stripped of their personal identity in order to be assimilated into the image of the environment which is being formed in the eyes of the 'I', or perhaps, more controversially, if there even was such a distinction in the first place. Needless to say, for the Western subject the Other is a necessary accessory to the act of war, but not a crucial piece, for the conflict is not between the people themselves, but between constructed cultural notions. It is for this very reason that the presence of these people becomes at a certain point superfluous to the characters themselves. Indeed, Marlow fears the natives for the bodily harm they might be liable to inflict upon him and Wade's reasons are similar, though he is also driven by a certain need to imbue them with the mysticism that he attributes to the land, but from a purely ideological point they have in fact never existed as anything more than necessary figureheads of the concept of the dangerous unknown:

> Q: What were they firing at?
> A: At the enemy, sir.
> Q: At people?
> A: At the enemy, sir.
> Q: They weren't human beings?
> A: Yes, sir.
> Q: They were human beings?
> A: Yes, sir. (…)
> A: I didn't discriminate between individuals in the village, sir. They were all the enemy, they were all to be destroyed, sir.
> —William Calley (Court-Martial Testimony) (O'Brien 84)

The objectification and dehumanization of the Other which has come to be considered antagonistic towards the value system of another culture, is portrayed by both Conrad and O'Brien as an identification with the environment in which the aggressive behavior is carried out. The seemingly alien character of the enemy is thus rendered as an extension of the imposing threat of death that the possible interaction with them could pose for the Western 'I', who unable to coexist with the 'savage' has come to conflate him with nature itself. Transformed thus into a seemingly mindless representation of the primal the Other is no longer a threat to the 'Self', for through this interaction and rationalization it has managed to systematically categorize him into a form which could be comprehended by the Western individual: the enemy.

However, as one might be apt to remark, if the Other and the land which they inhabit is in the eyes of the 'I' a manifestation of the fear of the unknown, does its existence not hinge upon the acknowledgement of the Western subject's need to give form to this phobia? To reduce the Other to the status of an object, is in many ways a process that an imperialist or colonialist, in these instances, might resort to as a means of absolving oneself from the responsibility of acknowledging their involvement in the eradication of another's humanity. It is a rather curious act for it is not merely one that can be implemented on an external scale, as Chris Hedges argues in his *War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning*, reflecting upon the tendency of war mentality to employ a system of extremes which reduces the other side to a symbol of aggression, but it is very much one which exists on an internal scale as well: "Boys are turned not into men, but beasts – beasts that will fight and destroy at a moment's notice, without any regard to what they are fighting or why they are fighting, but just fight" (Lifton 140-141).

Indeed, the emerging 'beasts' to which Robert Jay Lifton alludes are necessary for the implementation of the war mentality, but it is their role as a means of absolution that represents a much more crucial duty, for it involves a process of reduction to a primal state. The subject is no longer a Western 'I' in this context, but undergoes a rather surprising process of identification with the Other. Thus, when Marlow talks about the ferocity of the natives that he encounters, his fear stems partially

from the shock which he feels when faced with such foreign forms, but on a deeper scale he is in fact terrified by "the thought of their humanity— like yours—the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar" (Conrad 72). The Other does not horrify by its alienness, but by its similarity, which though it cannot be ignored, it cannot be accepted either for fear of realizing that our own identity might be in fact a mere fabrication. This is in fact the very horror which one is forced to acknowledge when they finally uncover the true nature of the 'heart of darkness.'

THE HORROR AND THE FLIES

"We are fascinated, all of us, by the implacable otherness of others. And we wish to penetrate by hypothesis, by daydream, by scientific investigation those leaden walls that encase the human spirit, that define it and guard it and hold it forever inaccessible," (O'Brien 178) is what the unknown narrator of *In the Lake of the Woods* ponders upon as he continues to examine the evidence collected by the police in the case of the disappearance of protagonist John Wade, whose enigmatic character remains one of the most contentious elements of the novel. In spite of the fact that the reader is given an account of his life starting from early childhood until the moment of his disappearance, this particular comment, hidden away in the footnotes of the chapter nonetheless, casts a dubious light upon the authenticity of the text itself. It is furthermore complicated by the fact that the main episode which the novel focuses upon is Wade's experience as a solider in Vietnam, and particularly his involvement in the massacre of Thuan Yen, an event whose own existence is erased by his conclusion that "this could not have happened. Therefore it did not" (O'Brien 67). Similarly, as Conrad's narrator returns to Europe after meeting Kurtz, a man whose haunting last words, "The horror! The horror!" (Conrad 145), remain the central focus of the protagonist's meditations, he refuses to divulge their existence to Kurtz's promised, a woman raised in the same sociocultural context as him, on account that they were "too dark—too dark altogether….'" (Conrad 162).

It is, indeed, this very darkness which envelops Conrad and O'Brien's novels, for much of the information that they provide for the better understanding of their protagonists' psyches is rather scare on account on their secrecy. Thuan Yen remains Wade's secret until his disappearance, much in the same way 'the horror' remains Kurtz's, and later Marlow's, on account of the three of them coming perhaps to a realization which both Conrad and O'Brien have been building towards: the monstrosity of the Other lies in the realization that their identity resides in a mirrored reflection of our own nature. To speak of the Other is in essence to speak of the Self, of our own underlying alienness, which though central is the 'impenetrable darkness' which we keep buried in our own subconscious.

Thus, 'the horror' which both novels have their protagonists face is in fact the realization of our own undeniable Otherness, whose full ramifications becomes apparent in the context of armed conflict. Though the Self attempts to position itself in contrast to the cultural environment which it attempts to usurp it not only succumbs to a process of identification with the cultural values of the enemy, but it also encourages such an act. We come to not only speak of the Other's objectifications as a tool of constructing identity, but of the Self's own objectification into a thing of 'darkness' and 'horror', for our self-realization is in fact dependent upon this very duplicity. Western thought is thus a manifestation of the need to keep this realization hidden away from the Self, in order to ensure its stability, yet its very nature struggles towards coming into contact with the chaotic Other, which then manifests as intercultural wars of domination. It is this 'truth' which drives the narrative of both novels, as they efficiently explore the complexities of human nature. The atrocities which they commit upon one another become acts of self-realization that must for the sake of the 'I' be reconstructed as bonds of secrecy, which must remain secret to such a degree that they stop existing altogether.

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Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

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BUILDING STORIES: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHARACTER AND PLACE IN ESHKOL NEVO'S CONTEMPORARY POLYPHONIC NOVEL *HOMESICK*

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PREAMBLE

Among the few scholars who acknowledge the literary thematic merit of Eshkol Nevo's 2004 novel *Homesick* is Rachel S. Harris, who includes Nevo in a group of what she defines as a 21st century transcultural generation of Israeli writers. Transcending the melting pot ideology, argues Harris, those writers draw on Israel's rich diversity of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds to "redefine Zionism and to create a new inclusive Israeliness" (3). This paper proposes that Nevo's narrative construction of a transcultural experience in *Homesick* lies in creating a counter-national narrative that defies the myth of the nation-state as monolithic and unitary and unravels its contested and liminal nature. *Homesick* as a counter-narrative of the nation utilizes the aesthetics of "space".[1] and formulates a thematic unity on the

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[1] Of valuable insight to this paper is the body of scholarship that investigates human perceptions of "space", "place" and "home". Gaston Bachelard, Ti-Fu Tuan and J. Nicholas Entrikin stress the

foundations of both multiple perspective narration and an interplay between character and space, all against the backdrop of tumultuous political events. Far from supplying a general backdrop against which actions take place, space in *Homesick* becomes an active participant in an intricate and ongoing process of feeding and highlighting fluid identities. Thinking beyond the constraints of mere fictional settings, Nevo seeks to re-conceptualize notions of home and homeland, and he doubtlessly raises political awareness towards the ambivalence particular to Israel as a nation-state.

Apart from contributing to the overall critical discourse about the aesthetics of "space" in literature, this paper offers a nuanced exploration of the theme of living spaces and the implications of endowing such places with human qualities in counter-national narratives. I argue that polyphonic[2] narration is an intrinsic element in constructing the thematic unity I investigate in this novel. In other words, I believe that in addition to bringing the interplay between character and place to the foreground, a narrational mode of polyphonic multiperspectivism enhances the counter-narrative of the nation.

Homesick is set in Maoz Ziyon, and specifically in a neighborhood where the novel's young couple Amir and Noa choose to initiate a collaborative project of home-building. Within the first two pages of the novel, the omniscient narrator presents the young couple and situates them in their new "mediatory" space, a rental apartment in Mevasseret, which is "a good compromise" (Nevo 3) between Tel Aviv, where Amir studies psychology, and Jerusalem, where Noa studies photography. Thus, laying foundations for the narrative's character-place thematic construct, the narrator soon withdraws, allowing what Monica Carter terms, a "cavalcade of characters" (qtd. in Harris 47) to engage in the act of polyphonic narration. This abrupt and direct access into multiple and alternating voices, seemingly overwhelming, draws the readers into the

centrality of human experience in the process of shaping, defining and drawing distinctions between aspects of "space", "place" and "home."

[2] I rely here on Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of polyphony presented in his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. See subchapter Polyphony and the Counter-National Narrative.

characters' psyche stirred and troubled by the experiences of their exterior spaces, both private and public.

The lovers' choice of an abode determines not only the physical proximity between their private sphere and those of others, but also sets the stage for a conflation of stories. *Homesick* then captures the dynamics of a shared built-space, which in this case, results in intertwined stories of four different homes. The first home belongs to Amir and Noa, whose apartment "clings like fungus on a tree" (Nevo 10) to that of the landlords – Moshe and Sima Zakian. Moshe's parents Avram and Gina live on the second floor of the same house. The third home is Saddiq's, the Palestinian construction worker who realizes that his childhood house, which his family abandoned in 1948 and where the Zakian family currently resides, lies across the street from the construction site. The fourth is the Avneris' – Nehama, Reuven, and their ten-year-old son Yotam, a bereaved family that has recently lost their eldest son Gidi, who was killed during his army service in Lebanon.

MAOZ ZIYON: THE ENTRY TO THE SPACE OF *HOMESICK*

The reader's entry ticket into the narrative space of *Homesick* begins with a half-page description of topography that emphatically immerses the reader in the specifics of the novel's site. The detailed account of the story's setting entails linguistic and semantic expressions that give narrative shape to "The Space" of the story. I would further propose that those defining linguistic and semantic manifestations govern every intelligible reading of not only the novel's spatial frames but also its other narrative domains (e.g. character, time). To put it simply, Moaz Ziyon functions as the main interlocutor controlling each and every narrative aspect of *Homesick*. The novel's narrative dynamics are held in thrall to a geographical entity that reads as follows:

> Topographically, we're talking about a saddle. Two humps, and between them a shopping mall that's common ground for all. The hump where the Ashkenazim live is a well-tended town called Mevasseret. It has an air of optimism and the residents share it. The other, once a transit camp for new immigrants from Kurdistan, is a welter of shacks and villas, daises

> and debris, tree-lined lanes and dirty streets. Its official name: Maoz Ziyon. Unofficially, it's called Castel, after the old army post on top of the hill where soldiers fell during the War of Independence. Now it's a memorial site visited by their descendants. When you get there, right after the traffic lights, you'll find Doga and Sons. A small market with not much to it. But if you have a question to ask, there's where to do it (Nevo 2).

THE ISRAELI VERNACULAR SPATIALITY

The novel's opening paragraph serves to define its "vernacular landscape," a term which, Karen Grumberg argues in *Place and Ideology in Contemporary Hebrew Literature*, was coined by the geographer John Brincherhoff Jackson to designate places "entirely remote from the larger world of politics and law" principled by "a way of life where identity [derives] not from permanent possession of land but from membership in a group or super-family" (qtd. in Grumbrg 4). Considering the complexities of the Israeli "vernacular landscape," Grumberg acknowledges a uniqueness particular to the Israeli situation, which compels her to modify Jackson's ideas. Henceforth, Grumberg states that "in the case of Israel, it would be difficult to argue convincingly for any place that is vernacular in the apolitical sense that Jackson proposes" (4). Rather, she maintains that "the Israeli spatial vernacular as it is presented and produced in literature not only complements the Israeli political landscape but is actually inextricably entangled in it" (5). Then, Grumberg distinguishes the Israeli "vernacular landscape" as a place of ordinary, everyday human experience and interaction seemingly neutral but verily burdened with ideological and political elements.

The quotidian quality recognized by both Jackson and Grumberg as an inherent feature of the spatial vernacular is manifest in the novel's concrete delineation of setting. The opening thus employs what Ruth Ronen terms "place-denoting nouns" (430), such as "street," "town," "notice board" and "market," which reinforce the setting's physical as well as functional properties. Maoz Ziyon then exhibits markers of mundane places teeming with habitual acts of everyday life and human experience, thereby upholding commonplace features of the "vernacular

landscape". However, pertaining to Grumberg's idea of the vernacular Israeli spatiality, Maoz Ziyon carries the burden of the State's ideology and politics.

MAOZ ZIYON AND MEVASSERET ZIYON – BIBLICAL NAMES

The opening description explores the Israeli spatial vernacular with its direct reference to Zionism revealed in the names of the two towns occupying the opposite humps of the geographical saddle, Mevasseret Ziyon and Maoz Zioyn. Evoking "Zion," both names invite the Jewish biblical narrative, wherein "the Jews as a people are defined by their religion which is distinctive among the world religions in its territorial focus on *Eretz Yisrael* the [promised] Land of Israel" (qtd. in Ben-Ari and Bilu 1). The name "Mevasseret Ziyon," which translates into "heralding joy to Zion," is inspired by the Book of Isaiah in the Hebrew Bible.[3] The act of assigning Hebrew and Biblical names to places reflects core principles of the Zionist project, which in its earlier phases undertook "the creation of Hebrewness (*Ivrut*) as an "authentic" local culture" (Harris 4). Following a common path of emergent nation-states, the Zionist state embarked on constructing, shaping and furnishing "national landscapes," which Don Handelman and Lea Shamgar Handelman define as "territorial contexts molded with meanings and sentiment through the interaction of ideological claims, historicist ethos, and political strategies" (86). That is to say, the State of Israel deploys national landscapes explicitly and materially in the service of the collective Zionist ideology, thereby promoting both its territorial manifestation as well as its goal to "forge a national identity through a unity of purpose, a sense of shared fate and history, and a common political vision leading to action" (Grumberg 10).

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[3] עַל הַר-גָּבֹהַּ עֲלִי-לָךְ, מְבַשֶּׂרֶת צִיּוֹן, הָרִימִי בְכֹחַ קוֹלֵךְ, מְבַשֶּׂרֶת יְרוּשָׁלִַם; הָרִימִי, אַל-תִּירָאִי, אִמְרִי לְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה, הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: 'Behold your God!' (Isa. 40: 9).

A further assertion of the politicized Israeli vernacular binds Maoz Ziyon and the novel's national public frame, Israel, by means of outward geographic markers that stamp the Israeli space as contested and conflictive. Histories of war and the erstwhile location of army encampments are imprinted onto the name of the town. The War of Independence (1948) is one of Israel's most crucial territorial contests marking the rise of Israel to the status of a nation-state and registering a pivotal moment in the history of the Jewish people. Nonetheless, according to Handelman and Handelman, the conflicted property of the Israeli landscape, which has been continuously contested by Israel and her Palestinian and other Arab neighbors, propels Israeli Jews to shape their space "with meaning and emotion in ongoing ways, to constitute landscapes that resonate with and unified by their claims of ownership and belonging" (86). They also argue that of central importance to the production of these claims is "the placement of death … especially that which is understood to have national import" (86). Hence, the memorial site "on top of the hill" (Nevo 2), which commemorates national sacrifice, simultaneously recalls the town's nationalist stance and appeals to the collective memory and identity of the Jewish people.

OFFICIALLY – MAOZ ZIYON; UNOFFICIALLY – CASTEL

While carrying a nationalist stance, Maoz Ziyoin also feeds a controversial undercurrent that runs beneath the State's efforts to maintain sovereignty over the land through variant measures and methods. Adding ambivalence to the political complexity pervading the space of Maoz Ziyon is the antonymy expressed by the grammatical, thus connotative, divide between the words "official" and "unofficial" in modifying yet another intricate linguistic and spatial marker, which is the name "Castel". This divide concretizes the enterprise of the Zionist narrative to authoritatively remold the space of what used to be an old Arab village known as "Castel" (or "Castal") by means of granting it a new Jewish and "legitimate" identity signifier explicit in the name "Maoz Ziyon". At the same time, the fact that Maoz Ziyon retains, though unconstitutionally, a past Palestinian cast affirms the clash between the Zionist and Palestinian national narratives and entertains

the possibility of an invalidation and repression, yet not an obliteration, of one by the other. Then again, signs and acts of naming and commemorating stand as a recursive reminiscent of a decisive moment in the historical record of two nations. To use Handelman and Handelman's words, such "transformations of absence into presence" (87) may conjure up, in the minds of some Israeli Jews such as Nevo himself, a commingling and coexistence of equally valid national narratives. Nonetheless, the Palestinian past that constitutes the still-present yields an interminably and irreversibly scarred collective identity. Sensibly then, the "War of Independence" finds a concomitant counterpart in the Arabic expression al-Nakba, meaning "the catastrophe," a term that sharply outlines the implications of the 1948 events in the context of the Palestinian national discourse. Ultimately, as Barbara Mann discerns, "in the case of Israel/Palestine, while the geography may be in some ways shared, each group remembers the landscape differently" (104), and I would add, ambivalently.

MEVASSERET AND MOAZ ZIYON – THE EUROPEAN (ASHKENAZI) AND EASTERN (MIZRAHI)

Mobilizing the topoi of the Israeli politicized vernacular is a forging internal dissonance that penetrates the core of the Jewish identity, a force that stretches a rough terrain for the Zionist ideology in cultivating and solidifying a national sense of what Benedict Anderson calls an "imagined community" (*Imagined Communities*). Appealing to the Israeli Jewish reader in particular, the scenic close-up portraying the locality of Mevasseret and Maoz Ziyon embodies a rift grounded in a juxtaposition of a topographical equity on the one hand and a socio-political stratification on the other. That is to say, Mevasseret and Moaz Ziyon, metonymically representing Jews of European (Ashkenazi) and Eastern (Mizrahi) descendance respectively, lay equal claims to the land, which in return exhibits topographical tolerance sustained by a balanced geographical placement of the two towns on both humps of the saddle. However, the network of nouns and adjectives employed in forming Mevasseret and Maoz Ziyon as distinct spatial frames hinges on a disclosure of a socio-political disparity rooted in the ideology that

prompted the Zionist Project at the time of nation building. Denoting demographical properties as well as social status and class, the ensemble of place-nouns and modifiers ascribed to the two spatial frames simultaneously cue a refined Mevasseret, which showcases a homogeneity of Ashkenazi residents sharing a totality of optimism, and a Maoz Ziyon characterized by a former concentration of new immigrants from Kurdistan and a current dualistic display of crudeness and cultivation discernable in its "welter of shacks and villas, daises and debris, tree-lined lanes and dirty streets" (Nevo 2). With this in mind, it is important to realize that the properties associated with the spatial frames are based on what Ronen explains as "social convention" (431), meaning that such properties draw on the Israeli consciousness in soliciting a dichotomizing Zionist discourse, which generates a spatial relation of hegemonic and periphery as well as inclusion and exclusion. This spatially-based perception centers around Zionism's melting pot ideology "adopted and realized by European (Ashkenazi) Jews, who came to monopolize the political and cultural apparatus that led the state" (Grumberg 10), and which aimed at "social homogenization, ethnic consolidation, and intercultural delamination" (Harris 1), encouraging along the way the suppression of identities outside the dominant national vision of the Ashkenazi elite.

THE TRANSIT CAMP (*HA-MAABARA*): A HETEROTOPIA OF DEVIATION

Zionism's hegemonic blueprint meticulously followed in designing the Israeli national space and culture finds material reification in the "transit camp," one of Maoz Zioyn's topographical layers brilliantly dug out and perfectly utilized by Nevo. An absent landmark in Israel's current spatial reality, the transit camp in *Homesick* remains a "spatio-temporally distant frame … constructed by the text beyond the spatial or temporal boundaries of the story-space or the story-time" (Ronen 427). Therefore, the legibility of the transit camp as a spatial frame is attainable only through the prism of contextual factors available exclusively, as pointed out earlier, for the Israeli reader. The unique situation that characterizes the Israeli transit camp emanates from a space-inmate

relationship ostensibly temporary and transient set up to localize those inmates by diminishing traces of their non-Israeli identity, thereby providing the means for their absorption in the State's larger social context pertinent to the European and Western cultural model. Though "physically" restrained from becoming an immediate surrounding of the novel's characters, the transit camp retains permanent imprint on and mental accessibility to the minds and consciousness of those who once lived within its premises, which in the case of Maoz Ziyon happen to be Jewish Kurds.

A means to an exertion of the State's unifying ethos, the transit camp congeals into a heterotopia of deviation where the State puts into practice its ideology of repressing what Homi K. Bhabha defines as cultural representations of difference. Drawing on the Foucauldian paradigm of heterotopias, the transit camp may be perceived as a spatial coercion upon individuals who, in relation to the mainstream Ashkenazi norm, exhibit deviant behavioral and cultural signs. Displaced in their natural, historical and mythical homeland, such subjects, under the pretext of alterity, are rendered liminal and in need of "normalization". Foregrounding Maoz Zioyn as a former site of the *maabara*, Nevo probes what Hannan Hever detects in the works of Shimon Ballas as an act of subversion, wherein the *maabara* "confers a permanent status on that which Zionist discourse holds precisely to be a paradigm of transience" (169). Hence, as Hever points out, the transformation of the *maabara* into a site where immigrants substitute one type of exile for another poses an antithesis to its official definition as a "passageway" to full absorption in the life of the country. Internalizing this exilic status not only rigidly and permanently fixates the transit camp as a heterotopia of deviation in the minds of its inhabitants but also incessantly stresses the liminality of those subjects, who remain constant reminders of Zionism's failure to overcome the nation's rich diversity of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds.

MAOZ ZIYON: A CHRONOTOPE OF FLUCTUATING ISRAELI CONTEMPORANEITY

Inspecting Maoz Ziyon through the lenses of Hever's insightful reading of Shimon Ballas' *Hamaabara* casts a revealing light on Nevo's utilization of space in weaving the novel's fictional narrative threads. Treading Ballas' path in emphasizing spatial representation, Nevo in *Homesick* engages, what Hever discerns to be, "a synchronic organization of the historical strata" (170) of Maoz Ziyon, one atop the other. With this in mind, Nevo's deliberate juxtaposition and navigation of the setting's historical layers in the course of national political unrest, rooted in internal and external territorial and ideological disputes and conflicts, inaugurates a fictional construction of a chronotope, whereby spatial and temporal intersections of the transit camp and the original site of the Arab village on top of which it was built condense and conflate, generating a destabilized and fluctuating Israeli contemporaneity. Explicitly, *Homesick* narratively constructs a multi-layered spatial continuum set in a background of tumultuous political action, integrating an amalgamation of frequent Israeli-Lebanese cross border raids, an escalating Israeli-Palestinian conflict inducting Palestinian suicide-bombing attacks within Israeli territories, and the assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin during a peace rally in Tel Aviv.

MAOZ ZIYON AND MEVASSERET: DEGREES OF IMMEDIACY

Examining the spatial arrangement of Maoz Ziyon and Mevasseret as frames of variant degrees of immediacy foregrounds Nevo's crafty strategic construction of the novel's liminal space. Categorized under Ronen's classification of frames according to their distance from the other elements of the story, "accessibility" remains throughout the narrative a distinctive and crucial signpost that differentiates Maoz Ziyon from Mevasseret. Whereas Maoz Ziyon functions as an actualized spatial frame invested with a high degree of immediacy as a direct surrounding of the fictional characters around which the narrative evolves, Mevasseret is denied the status of a setting, thereby rendered inaccessible a frame. Probing the accessibility of Maoz Ziyon invites a set of associations that not only stretch its dimension as a spatial construct but also facilitate its perception beyond such a scope. According to Yi-Fu

Tuan's informative reading of "space" and "place" through the medium of an experiential perspective, accessibility connotes openness, spaciousness and freedom. Thus, Maoz Ziyon, as opposed to Mevasseret, imparts susceptibility to change and movement, therefore an "ability to transcend the present condition" (Tuan 52). By the same token, Maoz Ziyon's liability to intervention, suggestive of simultaneously positive and negative implications, pinpoints its vulnerability to the threat of the unknown. On the other hand, Mevasseret, as a closed set, projects immunity and security against unpredictable thrusts.

Furthermore, testing Tuan's comparative analysis of "space" and "place" against the dualistic setup of both spatial frames unravels a challenging discursive national prospect. Due to its inaccessibility, Mevasseret, narratively impermeable, maintains a scenic abstraction amplified by a "beautification" imbedded in a pervasiveness of positivity and uniformity, which in tandem indicate the ethereal and the unrealistic. Hence, in contrast to the "well-tended town" (Nevo 2) resided by the optimistic Ashkenazim, Maoz Ziyon, rising against the anonymity of its counterpart, is granted a narrative transformation from undifferentiated "space" into a value-endowed "place". Firmly grounded in reality, Maoz Ziyon teems with a pluralistic inheritance manifest in a diversely ranged delineation encompassing residues of the transit camp, its shacks and Kurdish inhabitants, traces of the Arab village, and a body of modified constituents that blend with the old and indigenous.

MAOZ ZIYON: THE SPACE OF THE BEYOND

It is then first and foremost the continual fluctuation caused by the spatial representation of the novel's topographical focus that stimulates the narrative's fictional venture into the space of the "beyond". In other words, *Homesick* takes on a narrative logic, which hinges on a defiant spatiality that environs differentiation and fosters grains of change and transformation. In this case, and as Nevo continuously states in his interviews, the peculiarity of Maoz Ziyon as a fictional locale is inherent in its potential for an *osmotic* action, which enhances the transgression of cultural boundaries and the process of absorbing and diffusing features

of a controversial everyday existence between multiple and diverse entities. *Homesick* indeed constructs an imaginative spatiality that "proffers alternative mappings of Israeli identity: bound less by the walls, fences, barriers and borders that characterize the current political-spatial discourse in Israel" (Grumberg x). Maoz Ziyon's is a space that simultaneously precipitates the disintegration of the self and the reestablishment of its liminality, thus carrying it into what Bhabha identifies in *The Location of Culture* as the realm of the beyond, which is "neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past . . . [it is] the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (2). To put it in Bhabha's terms, it is by and large the space of the "in-between" and its liminal subjects that disrupt the access to an originary identity and feed the interstices whereby the "intersubjective and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated" (2). The narrative dynamics of *Homesick* thrives on a discourse that renders it pertinent to what Bhabha conceptualizes as "counter-narratives of the nation that continually evoke and erase its totalizing boundaries-both actual and conceptual-[and] disturb those ideological maneuvers through which 'imagined communities' are given essentialist identities" (300).

MAOZ ZIYON: THE NEIGHBORHOOD – SHARED BUILT-SPACE AND POLYPHONIC NARRATION

Constructed by a narrative logic that fuses temporal and spatial layers of a locale, the four homes are inspired by and immersed in the national ambivalence that permeates every nuance of Maoz Ziyon. The novel begins with the story of a new collaborative project of home-building initiated by the archetypes of the liberal Ashkenazi elite, the young couple Amir and Noa. In parallel with the story of this seemingly national mainstream representatives, Nevo captures a cast of largely proclaimed "social *others*" (Harris 45) through the narratives of the Kurdish homeowners and the Palestinian laborer. Interestingly, the stories of the periphery collide when Saddiq, the Palestinian construction worker realizes that his childhood house, which his family abandoned in

1948, currently shelters the Zakian family. Along the same lines, the household story of the Zakians as first-generation immigrants from Kurdistan resonates to the transit camp discourse, which tinges their being with poverty and ethnic marginalization. Finally, as Rachel S. Harris states, Nevo calls attention to the "heated rhetoric that seemed to divide the country between the peace camp and the religious establishment" (45) and directly explores the repercussions of this left-right debate through the presence of the Avneris, who have recently lost their eldest son Gidi for servitude of the State in its territorial disputes with Lebanon.

Situating Amir and Noa in their smallest and most private and intimate spatial unit and in close proximity to the other houses affects their immediacy as settings, albeit indirectly and through the novel's polyphonic narrative style. Given the *osmotic* spatiality and pluralistic particularity of Maoz Ziyon as a fictional entity that nourishes unfixed and multiple identities, it is only plausible that this dynamic locale raises multiple perspectives in recounting its shared built-space experience. As Wayne C. Booth argues in his introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, polyphony, being grounded in "a vision of the world as essentially a collectivity of subjects who are themselves social in essence" (xxii), stresses the dialogic nature of personalities who inevitably come into collision with their external environment. Thus, through his total utilization of space as a unifying thematic construct, Nevo, to use Bakhtin's terminology, dramatically juxtaposes and counterpoises stories of coexistence and interaction between personalities and spaces.

POLYPHONY AND THE COUNTER-NATIONAL NARRATIVE

Polyphony is central in advancing the line of argument made so far in examining the counter-national narrative of *Homesick.* As opposed to the nationalist discourse, which, as Grumberg rightly states, suggests that place is closed and static, polyphony as a social and dialogic concept demonstrates congruity with "the dynamic nature of place, and its resistance to closure and to boundedness," thus its function as "the nexus of human social relations" (qtd. in Grumberg 21). Correspondingly,

repudiating any binding force of a single narrative, polyphony as Booth puts it, evinces "human 'voices' that are not reduced into, or suppressed by, a single authoritative voice" (xxii) and that are equally "respected as full subjects, shown as "consciousnesses" that can never be fully defined or exhausted" (xxiii). Markedly then, not only does the conflating voices of the novel's cavalcade of characters reduce the omniscient narration to mere commentary but they also ridicule the narrator's rhyming mode, which conjures up the glory and harmonious unity of the national myth.

Polyphony in *Homesick* allows for a compelling narrative penetration that unmasks the intrinsic and intricate plurality of the characters' human psyche. A key point for illustration is that by virtue of their dialogic nature, humans, through the medium of a vast stretch of past and present social experiences, develop an internal polyphony that simultaneously contributes to an absence of autonomous individuality and to an oscillation between inner voices, which in turn feed and feature a personal liminality. Then, exemplifying the disintegration of the self, polyphony, as Booth maintains, compels our respect of the fact that "each of us is a "we," not an "I" (xxi). Still, it is important to make and stress the distinction that although collective, the "I" is far from unitary as it purports multiple voices, at times consensual, at others conflictual, thereby in perpetual negotiation. Not to mention cultural and sociopolitical conditions, such as ethnic marginality, minority, and post-coloniality, which add yet numerous layers of complexity to the concept of polyphony external and internal, the human condition, with respect to its intrinsic nature, is notably polyphonic.

HOME 1: AMIR AND NOA

At the heart of *Homesick*, the story of Amir and Noa epitomizes the birth of human coexistence in place. The outset of the couple's collaborative home-building project marks a superficially utopian interplay between character and place. Driven by a lovers' volition to share a living experience, Amir and Noa choose Maoz Ziyon as a compromise between Tel Aviv, where he studies psychology, and Jerusalem, where she studies photography at Bezalel. It follows that the couple engage in what theorists of space and place, such as Tuan,

Bachelard, J. Nicholas Entrikin and Barbara Mann, just to name a few, conceptualize as an enterprise of transforming the physical structure of a domicile into a home. Personalizing the space of the apartment, "itself . . . an architectural shell [inviting] signs of actual and metaphorical belonging" (Mann 82), not only do Amir and Noa set it up with their private artifacts and objects, but they also soon succumb to the power of its integration, whereby their thoughts, memories, and dreams comingle. In comparison with their previous dwellings, Amir and Noa's currently inhabited one grants them "power and enough room in which to act" (Tuan 52), leading in turn to a sense of freedom, which as Tuan proposes, is closely associated with spaciousness. To put it in Bachelard's terms, seized upon by the imagination with all its partiality, Amir and Noa's apartment with its asbestos roof, "a living room the size of a kitchen. A kitchen the size of a bathroom" (Nevo 3), romantically transforms into a palace and they into "a king and queen" (Nevo 7). Hence, the apartment's concrete narrowness gives way in their minds to a hyperbolic impression of an encompassing expansion and grandiosity.

Amir and Noa's story epitomizes a central theme in the novel as it tells their unconscious and spontaneous human stipulation to polyphony at its best. The couple's shared built-space prescribes a stance of unbounded mental and emotional fluctuation that interferes with their distinctive existence as indivisible entities. For Amir and Noa, this is a newly inscribed facet of living as a combination, manifest in the narrator's linguistic conjunction of their names – Amirandnoa/Noaandamirand – outspokenly expressed in Amir's articulation: "I was busy adjusting to the fact that I was a couple" (Nevo 57). In other words, Amir and Noa's domicile renders them amenable to "penetration," which is a case of affirming "someone else's "I" not as an object but as another subject" (Bakhtin 10). Taking this a step further, I would argue that Amir and Noa's is a rudimentary formative model pertaining to Bhabha's "Third Space" paradigm, whereby "the pact of interpretation is never simply an act of communication between the I and You designated in the statement. The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through [this] Third Space" (53). By the same token, I would add that acknowledging "penetration" and the Third Space as factual constituents of being,

generates the intelligibility of liminality as a general condition of human experience, which both Amir and Noa achieve at the end of the novel.

HOME 2: THE ZAKIANS

In addition to polyphonic multiperspectivism, which allows for the reader's invasion of the characters' private homes, the spatial adjacency between Amir and Noa's rental apartment and their landlords' further exposes home's ostensible privacy. According to Ronen, spatial relationships of this type are effected by means of arranging settings alongside their closely constructed background frames, defined also as "secondary". In this case, as Ronen elucidates, "the possibility of perceiving the secondary frame… is here a matter of a sentient accessibility through sounds which, for a moment, turn the secondary frame into a part of the spatial surrounding" (426) of the character. Extensively employed along the spatial continuum of the novel, the sensory flow across the dividing line between setting and secondary frame is achieved by the setup of a thin plaster wall that separates the two apartments and allows for a "leakage" through both spaces of the most delicate details of daily life. The intense and genuine feel of this experience is repeatedly frequented and expressed by the tenants as well as the landlords. Such domestic adventure of the neighbors' human intermix is delicately captured by the metaphorical story of the hole that Moshe Zakian drills through the plaster wall for the purpose of enabling the students "to switch on the water heater, which is in the landlord's house but heats the tenants' water too . . . so every time Amir and Noa want a hot shower, they first remove the piece of wood that covers the hole in the wall. Then they stick a hand into the home and lives of the other family, and then withdraw it quickly, as if it had never been there at all" (Nevo 15).

A feature of transparency, the dividing wall vividly imports a turbulent state of affairs, which originates at the Zakian's and, unsolicited, streams through to the adjacent spaces. The unsettling contestation that prevails in Moshe and Sima's household rests upon a

mode of increasing religiosity, which allows Nevo to bring to the forefront, through Moshe's character, "the hold that the religious establishment's rhetoric took within Israel in the mid-1990s" (Harris 45). Destabilizing the somewhat peaceful and harmonious quotidian quality of Moshe and Sima's life, their contested notions of religion instigate a series of fierce arguments that aggravate the tension in their home and eventually burst into the couple's first fight in eight years of marriage. In Sima's consciousness, religion is directly associated with a trauma entailed by a betraying religious father who, taking God as his first and foremost priority, renounces his matrimonial and filial obligations. For Moshe, on the other hand, religion is "a house," an intrinsic part of a life among ultra-Orthodox brothers. Thus, alienated, Sima fights single-handedly to forestall the impending religious invasion of her homely and familial space, which so far she maintained according to her secular beliefs and practices.

SIMA ZAKIAN: A CASE OF THE NATIONAL SUBJECT'S SPLIT

Apart from exposing religious estrangement, Sima's challenging position as a Zakian sets an exemplar of the indissoluble fragmentation that haunts the Jewish identity and readily shatters its seemingly solid national mold. Appended to the Zakians, who sustain Kurdish cultural practices and signs of identity, Sima, the daughter in law, exemplifies a typical juxtaposition of Ashkenazi-Mizrahi Jewish identities. Indicating her desire to adapt to, or even blend into, the cultural circle of the Zakians, Sima exhibits competence in their Kurdish language and cuisines. Therefore, she demonstrates active presence in their weekly "clan gatherings" (Nevo 11) despite the fact that she finds them rather disquieting. However, the futility of her efforts invites an inverted discourse of cultural inclusion and exclusion upheld this time by the marginal Mizrahi, wherein Sima emerges as the liminal. Taking this a step further, during the search expedition for Yotam, Sima elicits a latent chiasma within the Kurdish consciousness when she tells Amir that:

> people here are divided up into a few clans, depending on what part of Kurdistan their family came from. There are Dahuks, Amadis and Zakus,

> and each one thinks they're better than others. They're at each other's throats all year long, but when something like this happens, they put all that aside and come to help . . . but the thing is . . . that even when the pressure's at its worst, they never forget who's one of them and who isn't. I've been living here for six years, and they still consider me an outsider. Without even thinking about it, they sent me out to look with the only person here who's more of an outsider than I am. You. (Nevo 304)

This is unequivocally a case of the splitting of the national subject par excellence, whereby as Bhabha puts it, "once the liminality of the nation-space is established, and its 'difference' is turned from the boundary 'outside' to its finitude 'within', the threat of cultural difference is no longer a problem of 'other' people. It becomes a question of the otherness of the people-as-one" (301). Clarifying the situation at hand requires the employment of Bhabha's terminology utilized in his reinterpretation of Freud's "narcissism of minor difference" (300). Consequently, in the presence of Sima as "other," identifications of love bind the Kurdish community together as she becomes the object of their paranoid projections. In her absence though, identifications of hate haunt the Kurdish subject who ambivalently splits in the course of this narcissistic performance, characteristic to nations and communities alike. By and large, the Zakian household offers an epitome of the cultural fissure deeply rooted in the Israeli-Jewish consciousness.

HOME 3: THE KURDISH ZAKIANS AND THE PALESTINIAN ADANAS: A CONFLATION OF "STORIES OF OTHERNESS"

Sharing its inmates' narrative agency, the Zakians' domicile itself recounts and creates stories of "otherness," enhancing by that the interaction between character and place as interdependent narrative entities. An "architectural shell" (Mann 82) of the Castel, Avran and Gina's house brings to the surface the story of Saddiq Adana, an old Palestinian construction worker employed to renovate Madmoni's house, which lies across the street from the Zakians'. Perceiving that Avram and Gina's is his childhood house abandoned by his family in 1948, Saddiq's character summons up the contentious discourse charted in the

aftermath of the most crucial moment in the history of the Palestinian and Jewish nations, one which culminated in the counteractive occurrences of the Palestinian al-Nakba on the one hand, and the Israeli-Jewish rise to a Statist independence on the other. Thereupon, 1948 designates in the Jewish narrative a reconciliation between the idea of "The Land" and the geographical space that, as Smadar Shiffman puts it, "has been perceived and depicted as the center, the homeland of the Jewish nation" (61). However, in the national Palestinian context, the same moment of history bears the mark of a collective disaster that perpetually conjures up memories of dispossession and loss.

Counterpoised, both national narratives, like every other element in the story, are imaginatively revisited through the poetics of space and place, which in *Homesick*, amounts to the fountainhead of Nevo's literary creation. Correspondingly, underpinning the observation that home is where the political and personal merge indistinguishably, Barbara Mann remarks that both cultural contexts, the Israeli as well as the Palestinian, dissolve the distinction between "space" and "place". She explains that while in "English, house and home indicate a conceptual divide between the physical structure of a domicile and the affective condition created through its extended inhabitation, in Hebrew, the word *bayit* encompasses both meanings. In Arabic, too, the terms *beit* and *dar* suggest a comingling of physical and social space" (7). Therefore, as Harris suggests, "In *Homesick* the construction of *home* in the Israeli context simultaneously offers a reading of personal experiences and an allegory of the national homeland" (42). Yet, acknowledging the Palestinian narrative through the character of Saddiq, *Homesick* also relates the story of the "deconstruction" of the Palestinian "home". In this case, the novel proffers a showcase of a severance between the physical space of the house and the conceptualized notion of home as a personal place of belonging.

Enhancing this narrative juxtaposition, Nevo crafts a two-fold image of the builder as "other". In her "House, Interrupted," Barbara Mann maintains that the "the figure of the builder is embedded in Zionist culture as a progressive trope-in the words of the Hebrew folk song: "we came to the land, to build and be rebuilt," thus "the depiction of the house and its renovation capitalizes on the privileged position of

the builder within Israeli culture" (3). Therefore, the character of the Palestinian has been ubiquitously depicted in Israeli-Jewish literature as a menace to the divinely sanctioned Zionist nation-building project. In effect, Saddiq is perceived in the neighborhood as the "other," bespeaking threat and danger. Be that as it may, Nevo's narrative deployment of a Palestinian character as constructor of properties within the territorial premises of the "Strong Hold of Ziyon" not only undermines the tenets of the Zionist Project, but also endows the Palestinian with a narrative voice that recounts his personal and collective national story. Saddiq's character then features an arrested attachment to the ancestral home effected through acts of displacement and replacement by the "other" oppressive colonizer. Coming from a standpoint of a lawful landowner, Saddiq remonstrates with the police officer on the ground that this is indeed his house, and the Jewish family members that presently reside there are actually his guests, "they've been guests in my house for fifty years" (Nevo 190).

The rigidity of this double-edged controversy finds reification in a spatial aggressiveness aroused most strongly at times of national upheaval. Nevo's fictionalized renderings of the Rabin assassination, bus bombings, and territorial disputes with Arab neighboring countries, sets the tone for a sense of besiege to override spaces and bodies alike. It is such times of national unrest that fortify the subversive force of what Bhabha terms the condition of "unhomeliness," wherein "the borders between home and world become confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as undivided as it is disorienting" (13). Surmounting the human topophilic impression of the "space we love" (Bachelard 19), poetically conceptualized by Bachelard, "unhomeliness" (Bhabha 13) is given explicit articulation in Amir's delineation of the Judean Hills:

> I'd already reached Shaar Hagai, with the hills close to the road on both sides, which feels different. Sometimes it's like a woman's vagina taking you in warmly, and sometimes like today, it's gray and threatening and suffocating and you feel as if snipers from the Jordanian Legion from the War of Independence are standing on the hills. In another second, they'll

> shoot out your tires and you'll end up like one of those rusted tanks on the side of the road. You wonder where is the Burma Road. (Nevo 210)

Perennial in the Palestinian experience, "unhomeliness," under such turbulent conditions, is most manifest in the roadblock – *mahsom* – which restricts the movement of the Palestinian subject and obstructs his quotidian subsistence sought outside The Territories.

Nevo simultaneously releases the restrained subject under physical and political siege and challenges the sovereignty of the Israeli-Jewish individual by constructing a scene of provisional penetration. Acting upon his mother's exhorts, Saddiq ventures into Avram and Gina's house in an attempt to find and retrieve his grandmother's gold chain, which his mother left behind hidden in the house walls. Providing the means for Saddiq's entry into the Zakians', Nevo situates the Mizrahi (Arab Jewish) alongside the Palestinian Arab, creating a dense spatiality of cultural differentiation, transcended and negotiated through both shared built-space and a supernatural penetration, defined by Shimrit Peled as "biopolitical" (268). Hence, Avram merges with Aziz the Arab demon, and in a state of delirium mistakes Saddiq for his dead son Nissan. The penetration incident in which Jewish and Arab "bodies" intermingle is extended as it incorporates into the scene another act of spiritual annexation, involving this time Saddiq and Nissim, the Zakians' dead son. Teeming with ambivalence and confusion actuated by Avram's delirium, the comically set scene mildly "envisions a space in which identity barriers are easily broken down with no accompanying sense of threat" (Peled 267). Grandma Nadia's slim gold chain, which Saddiq pulls out of the interior wall of the house, is a token of the deeply-seated and largely repressed memory of Palestinian life within Israeli culture. However, its confiscation by the policeman and Saddiq's futile efforts to retrieve it denote a sealed Palestinian fate of detachment and homeliness.

HOME 4: THE AVNERIS

The last of the four houses features a severe case, whereby a complicated fusion of the "public" and the "private" invite a burgeoning

nostalgia for a dead son, which brings a perpetual affliction upon the family's felicitous space. Traumatized by the loss of their eldest son Gidi, who was killed in Lebanon in the course of his army front-line service, the bereaved Avneris recoil at the prospect of retrieving the slightest aspect of regular living norms, set instead by an extended condition of mourning. Harnessed to an elongated "*shivah*," their house literally transforms into a memorial site while their life yields to an existential anguish. Applying Ronen's terms, the Avneris' house is a spatial frame that demonstrates a peculiarity embodied in an association between a unique situation deviant from the norm and an irregular choice of location. In the Avneris' case then, Gidi's shrine violates an essential property of its frame, that is housing and binding the family members. Rather, their inept home completely fulfills the conditions required for what Handelman and Handelman term "successful memorialism," wherein "the absence of presence must be turned into presence of absence; the nullity of the dead transformed into feelings, topoi, and durations of their absence" (87). With this in mind, private home and national homeland allegorically analogous are bound by the condition of "unhomeliness" that accentuates their hostility and renders them both unbearable for the Avneris, who eventually choose to immigrate.

CONCLUSION

Eshkol Nevo's *Homesick* exposes a polyphonic Israeli spatiality, wherein even the "Strong Hold of Ziyon" defies any affixation to a single and unitary narrative. To that end, Nevo utilizes the dynamics of shared built-space in order to excavate and lay out Maoz Ziyon's multiple and conflating spatiotemporal versions. Adjacent and contained within the space of one neighborhood, the four houses invoked by the Hebrew title of the novel – ארבעה בתים וגעגוע – invite the reader into spaces which reciprocate and feed the complexity of the Israeli spatiality. Leading the way to the novel's literary excavation site is the story of home-building and mediation, which brings to the surface, among other things, the conflictive nature of the nation's space. Operating controversially, mediation, in this case, not only calls to mind the nation's rise to statism administered by connecting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, but it also stresses

the polarization that characterizes the Israeli political and ideological national discourse. Equally important, the nation-building narrative inevitably voices both the discourse of the other Palestinian as well as stories of commemoration and death. First and foremost, it is Nevo's polyphonic narrative style which engages the reader's active participation in a dialogic exertion that reveals the contested and liminal nature of space and character alike.

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InterCulturalia 2019

Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

Culture, société, art: Débats contemporains

THE SELFIE PHENOMENON AND THE CREATION OF A NEW IDENTITY

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The development of technology has inevitably altered the way in which we perceive communication, as well as our comprehension of ourselves, as individuals. To highlight the pervasiveness of this trend, I would like to mention that Oxford Dictionaries introduced *selfie* as the *Word of the Year* in 2013, which merely emphasises the growing popularity of the trend. But what are the main characteristics of this form of self-representation and what could be a potential explanation behind the cultural phenomenon of sharing selfies? This is what I plan to focus on in my essay; more specifically, I intend to analyse that in the light of Baudrillard's concepts of the hyperreal and simulation.

More or less, the appeal of the selfie is connected with the appeal of using social media applications, Instagram being the most popular one at the time being. In truth, the natural habitat for selfies is social media, and we cannot speak of one without mentioning the other. Instagram, in particular, offers numerous opportunities of customising selfies, adding specific filters, which further aim at altering reality as we see it. Although Facebook does not exclude selfies, Instagram, as a social media platform, focuses exclusively on imagery. It might be pointed out that this manner of self-representation is connected with narcissism. As specified by

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media theorist Marshall McLuhan, Narcissus did not fall in love with himself, what he did fall in love with was actually his reflected image (McLuhan 41). At first, Narcissus did not reckon his reflection as a continuation of the self, but as an entirely different person, which beguiled him. This is similar to the pervasive passion for selfies, this popular form of self-(re)presentation that enables the creation of numerous facets of an identity.

It could be that, due to the misrecognition between the signified and the signifier, people are attracted to the identities they illustrate in selfies. Social media act as a trap, which is incessantly tempting, creating the sense of addiction. According to Amy Nguyen's analysis of the selfie phenomenon, the larger the social network of friends, the higher the intensity of using such social media networks (Nguyen 41). As social media create the illusion of a community, the creator of selfies focuses on repeatedly reproducing his/her own image, yielding to the temptation of creating something different from what is real. In a similar way, Narcissus ignored the world around him and, instead, focused on his own image. And social media provide the perfect background for becoming mesmerised by one's own reflections. The activity of *liking* and *commenting* on selfies further encourages the perpetuation of a never-ending cycle of images, which, as pointed out by Brooke Wendt, makes one experience a combination of amplification and numbness (Wendt 22). Instagram, together with other social media networks, condition us to convey ourselves as surface objects (Wendt 24). Through the creation of surface images, which lack essence and significance, the evident distinction between the real and the simulated is threatened. One comes to identify oneself with the simulated image of the self, the person in the selfie, which is ultimately part of a hyper-real realm.

In essence, the ever-growing fascination and interest in the internet, more specifically in social media, appear to confirm Baudrillad's definition of the hyper-real. According to Baudrillard, our consumer society entails a conglomeration of signs and images, whose original meanings have been lost. In his work *Simulacra and Simulation,* he dwells on the idea that the postmodern society has substituted reality with such signs and symbols, the human experience in several forms being a mere simulation of reality. The creation of *simulacra* ultimately aims at blurring

the line between the signifier and the signified – or the original and replication. In *Simulations,* Baudrillard underlines the way in which America has created an imaginary representation of itself in the form of Disneyland (Malpas, Wake 152). Its role is to claim that America is authentic, masking the fact that it is also an imaginary, artificial space in which visuals and symbols hold supremacy. This is explained in the *murder of the real* by the image. Originally, the image would be a reliable reflection of reality. Notwithstanding, in the postmodern world, this is no longer applicable, due to the overflowing abundance of visual representations that dominate our daily lives. Simulacra and simulations, whose connection to a real-life referent has been lost, are predominant. In the postmodern world, the sign no longer corresponds to a real constituent and we are living in a hyper-reality. Jean Baudrillard argues in his work *Simulacra and Simulations* that there are four given phases of the image; primarily, an image stands for a reflection of a basic reality; secondly, it perverts or masks a basic reality; thirdly, it masks the lack of existence of a basic reality; and finally, it has no connection whatsoever with reality, being a mere simulacrum (Baudrillard 1988, 166-184).

Our world is ruled by imagery, and we have grown to prefer simulation to reality, as it showcases a different, perhaps an enhanced version of the world we live in. When we go on Instagram, for instance, we are overwhelmed by an overflowing abundance of filtered, perfectly-edited images that depict beautiful, perfectly-edited faces, majestic places, and so on. In what Baudrillard sees as the age of simulacra and simulation, the link between the signifier and the signified has been lost. And the selfie perfectly illustrates the way in which the signifier is no longer connected with the signified – namely the representation of the individual. The digital device used for taking the selfie performs a simulation of imagery, represented in the form of a numerical code, which furthermore accounts for a photograph. It could be argued that the selfie alters the very notion of photography, which entails two distinct roles –the observed and the observer. The photographed subject is not vulnerable anymore, but can use the technological device – namely the smartphone or the camera – to approach the most forgiving angle. To exemplify, there is a wide range of YouTube videos entitled *How to Take a Selfie;* these videos incorporate tips and tricks on how to take the perfect

selfie, what the perfect angle is, how to look at the camera, and how to look your best. According to Brooke Wendt, this is presumably why selfies are almost instantaneously associated with clichés, as they are linked with specific learned behaviours such as the popular duck face, among other parodies of human faces (Wendt 38). The preoccupation with this form of representation is simple: through each picture, a new identity can be created, which is alluring, a means of defying a mundane reality.

On a different note, the roles of the photographed and of the photographer are incorporated into a sole unit. This triggers a contradiction, if we were to assess the concept of the author, in the light of Barthes' and Foucault's theories. For Barthes, the author is dead in the sense that we should no longer resort to this notion, associated as it has been, with the idea of originality, truth, and authority. The real author is language itself (the text as "tissue of quotations" from innumerable centres of culture). Barthes defers the burden of making meaning, of attuning the signifier to the signified, to the reader. The author is actually in less control of his writing than we have been accustomed to think. Since the author dies in the act of creation and the act of photographing kills the creation, what makes the creation of the selfie possible? Does it escape the death cycle? Foucault indicates that the author pre-exists the text. In regards to the writing, it represents the creation of a signifier, which incorporates a range of given symbols. As Foucault puts it, writing is "*an interplay of signs, regulated less by the content it signifies than by the very nature of the signifier"* (Foucault 2). And, even if, in connection with his work, the author is dead, the name still plays a role in discourse. Hence, in an attempt to grant value to creation, the image of the author is constructed. Connecting these ideas with Baudrillard's simulacra theory, we may say that the author is a simulation, as the importance and subjectivity of the author becomes less significant in the creation process. In his essay *The Death of the Author*, Barthes decentralises the authority of the author, as the meaning in a work is no longer dependent on an authorial presence. That is because, outside the text, he is non-existent as an omnipotent entity. This makes the text open to numberless interpretations, as there are no limits whatsoever imposed by an authorial presence. In Foucault's terms, we could refer to an author as

being a *signifier* lacking a *signified* – as it does not have a profound meaning per se that confirms the importance and authority of the writer of a text. The author is essentially substituted from a signifier with a signified when he loses control of the writing. All these considered, a signifier lacking a signified is, in Baudrillard's terms, a simulacrum. We could apply the same concept to selfies. In each photograph, a different identity is portrayed. These images are linked to the image of the author – the creator of the selfie, without having any direct connection with the real person behind the photograph. Therefore, the author of the selfie is the person represented in it – which is actually an entity of the hyper-real that has lost control of the picture the minute after it is posted on social media.

SOCIAL MEDIA AS THE DISNEYLAND OF THE INTERNET

The act of viewing and analysing the reproduction of one's own image triggers feelings such as self-amplification and numbness, as pointed out by McLuhan (McLuhan 42-43). This grants relief from daily stress, anxieties and distress, a break from reality. Reality is rarely as we expect it to be, due to everyday challenges, which is why a simulated reality seems like a beguiling option, alluring the consumer of imagery. Considering Baudrillard's argument, the same way in which Disneyland provides adults with the unique chance of acting like children and fostering illusions in a simulated place (Baudrillard 1988, 172), social media offer instant relief and gratification, representing a conglomeration of illusions and phantasms. Social media could be understood as an alternative to reality, the same way in which Disneyland is associated with an alternative to what lies outside of the designated space. Concurrently, Disneyland fosters a sense of belonging to a crowd, a crowd comprising individuals whose purpose is identical – finding a remedy for solitude by engaging in the same activities. The outside is essentially synonymous with solitude, whereas the simulated realm of Disneyland is synonymous with society. What draws the numbers is precisely the illusion of belonging, of community. We could apply the same thinking mechanism to social media, which aim at imitating real life and real-life relationships, specifically through the

liking and commenting on photos. Furthermore, social media keep us engaged with our own images, further triggering our preoccupation with the production or, better said, over-production, of symbols and imagery. Hence, the same way in which Disneyland conceals a simulated reality, the internet masks the prevalence of the hyper-real.

Originally, photographs were used because they formed the illusion of stopping time, immortalising moments. However, the meaning of photography, which was conceived as being metaphysically transcendent, is lost. In the hyper-real realm of the internet, the image lives for a few minutes only, until it vanishes in other people's feeds, condemned to die shortly after its creation. This is what makes us consumers of imagery and symbols. We pay little attention to the images we see, due to their overflowing abundance. Photography is a means of constructing a different identity, representing an unparalleled force in consumer behaviour. At this point, in line with Jonathan Schroeder's analysis of visual consumerism, we cannot conceive representation being possible without the use of photography that ultimately shapes identity (Schroeder 51). Each photograph, or each selfie, is a representation; as John Berger states, *"an image is a sight which has been recreated or reproduced. It is an appearance, or a set of appearances, which has been detached from the place and time in which it first made its appearance (…) Every image embodies a way of seeing"*.(Berger 9-10). Selfies are different as they signal, first and foremost, the photographer's body (the craned neck, an outstretched arm, the struggle to fit everything into the frame), possibly displaying a way of enacting the self. This essentially mirrors the very fluidity of the term self, as well as the fluidity of identity in the online realm. As a viewer, you are challenged to perceive the very notion of identity as a constructed effect of representation pursued by the signifier. But simulated imagery, indeed, has a murderous capacity of killing or substituting the real via the creation of the hyper-real, which is more seductive and alluring.

What makes the image of the selfie so impactful is the editing. Selfies go through several stylising stages, which effectively modify the original, depending on what the signifier wants to construct. For one thing, through the addition of filters, one could aim at eliminating the inevitable signs of aging (Crouch np), thus dramatically changing the

aesthetic appeal of the image. We, as humans, have an innate desire to transcend the simple existence in our physical bodies, which is why we decidedly share selfies with the entire world via hashtags, which optimise visibility, but only for a few seconds. Basically, hashtags redefine our way of expressing ourselves on social media, showcasing the fascination to be seen, noticed, and liked by others in the hyper-real world. Hence, those that have a compulsive approach regarding the production of selfies might be searching for their ideal selves, through the analysis of the effects of different filters on their representation. Living in a world of exacerbated marketing, we are inevitably lured by images. Through selfie photographs, the consumer also aims at becoming a producer of imagery, while abiding by the imposed rules of a cultural market. According to Jonathan Schroeder, consuming imagery and symbols entails a continuous process of integration in a consumer culture ruled by visuals (Schroeder 47). This, once again, overlaps Baudrillard's definition of the hyper-real realm, as the real world has been substituted for a world dominated by signs.

Furthermore, the filter function might be identified as a commodified version of adornment: *"the filter function is an immaterial embellishment that enables the user to distinguish himself/herself before others, and to be the object of attention that others don't receive"*.(Simmel 206). Likes are perceived as compliments, they even replace compliments altogether, providing users with the idea of self-validation and self-affirmation. Women, in particular, are conditioned to prioritise their bodies over their physical capabilities or emotional state. Amy Nguyen argues that, as we live in an objectified culture, women embrace a self-policing behaviour, which is influenced by how others perceive their physical appearances (Nguyen 11). This results in the internalisation of the viewer's perspective, thus expecting that the *sight* of you will be appreciated by others. To that end, uploading selfies could also be understood as an expression of social affirmation, of assessing the sense of self-worth, or, conversely, as an act of empowerment, aiming at re-defining socially imposed beauty standards (Nguyen 15).

Marxist critic John Berger has outlined that, over the centuries, women did not have a say in the way in which they were represented. As Berger puts it, male dominated institutions have always portrayed

men both as ideal spectators and subjects, whilst objectifying women: *"Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. (…) Thus, she turns herself into an object – and most particularly, an object of vision: a sight"* (Berger 44).

To conclude, we have become accustomed with representing ourselves in an array of images, which showcase different versions of ourselves. The hyper-real world of selfie photography is alluring, as it provides a break from reality, a multitude of possibilities of re-creating ourselves over and over again. The same way in which Disneyland was created as a substitute for the real world, social media represent the Disneyland of the internet, masking the fact that the hyper-real has come to replace the real. Social media create the means of coming up with endless means of representation, selfies facilitating the construction of a different type of identity – an online identity, which is utterly detached from reality. When we go online, we see the same faces, with slight changes, over and over again as we browse social media platforms, and this leaves us cold, untouched and indifferent. That is basically because the selfie is a simulacrum, a symbol or representation whose original meaning and significance have been lost.

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InterCulturalia 2019

Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

Culture, société, art: Débats contemporains

LUTHER, ERASMUS... AND ZOMBIES

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Some argue that the need for freedom is part of human nature (Dewey) and even more so an American core value (Foner), and stories – narratives – have always been an avenue for cultural propagation, transformation and reaffirmation. As Wojcik (297) notes, the concept of apocalypse and cataclysm span most cultures, and are usually perceived as transformative, regenerative processes leading to a 'terrestrial paradise'. However, the Nuclear Age, especially post World War II, brought about much darker views on these processes, possibly influenced by the aftermath of the first nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and later by the ensuing Cold War. Indeed, literary works, such as Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, Isaac Asimov's *Pebble in the Sky* and Pat Frank's *Alas, Babylon*, although from different time periods, seem to reflect this trend of darkening perceptions upon the notion of a post-apocalyptic.

Interestingly, even though the intradiegetic grounds lie in stark contrast with the edenic, mythical post-apocalyptic ones from before the Nuclear Age, Foner's and Dewey's statements seem to hold stronger still, and American post-apocalyptic (and even post-post-apocalyptic) narratives of all kinds seem to be fertile soil for the expression of the meme (in its original sense) of freedom, and, even more, highly reflective of leading principles of their time. Yet there seems to be an immediate,

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though often avoided, obstacle in this cultural quest for freedom – the kaleidoscopic façade of theological[1] determinism. In a previous chapter I have attempted to demonstrate a connection between the events leading up to the Nuclear Age, and the resulting paradigm shift in the perception and representation of apocalypticism[2]. I will further argue that these perceptions have changed the expression of undeath[3] in certain narratives, and have nurtured the birth of the presently popular related literary forms of the post-apocalyptic and zombie apocalyptic.

This complex marriage between post-apocalyptic narratives and Abrahamic determinism may stem from the simple fact that there can be no post-apocalyptic without an apocalyptic (and, presequently, without a pre-apocalyptic). In the same logic, there can be no apocalyptic without an 'Apocalypse', or an apocalyptic event in a narrative.

One of the less explored features of the post-apocalyptic, and, in different ways, of the zombie apocalyptic, is the integrated polemic of free will, which stems, I argue, from the religious roots of the concepts that act as a scaffold upon which these literary forms are built. In fact, the debate on free will itself is over 500 years old, with the most prominent opponents being Martin Luther and Desiderius Erasmus, through their works, *De Servo Arbitrio* and *De Libero Arbitrio ('diatribe sive collatio')*, respectively (McSorley *passim*). While there are many less overt representations of either side of the debate, such as Cormac Mccarthy's *The Road* or Pat Frank's *Alas, Babylon*. In *A Canticle for Leibowitz,* Miller takes a more direct approach by portraying the Apocalypse as a cyclical, deterministic, but still manmade event. Determinism in its various forms is of great importance in the narrative portrayal of the post-apocalyptic setting as an entirely human, deliberate result, or as an overarching plan or chain of reactions, which would classify it as theological or causal determinism.

Determinism is a philosophical concept that can be situated in an indirect relation with the notions of freedom and liberty (detailed in their

[1] As defined by Feinberg (504).

[2] "Views and movements that focus on cryptic revelations about a sudden, dramatic, and cataclysmic intervention of God in history" ('Apocalypticism' in Encyclopædia Britannica).

[3] A liminal state between life and death; usually raised dead, or entities which return to life, may be considered undead (personal definition).

respective section), and can come in several variants, such as predeterminism, theological determinism, the many-worlds interpretation and more. For the purpose of defining and analyzing the anti-apocalyptic, theological determinism, causal determinism and free will shall be accounted for separately. The notion of 'determinism' may be approached în relation with all the previous philosophical ones exposed in this paper – from the eventfulness of an apocalypse and its seemingly predetermined nature, to the perversion of the possibility of theological determinism through man-made means, and the following subversion of the divine mandate. Additionally, the subversion of determinism may be presented in narratives in various contextual cues, from the freedom and liberty of a character within the post-apocalyptic context, or a fictional culture in an otherwise morally boundless intradiegetic landscape and, finally, to possible coping mechanisms and explanations for the traumatic events therein. In such cases, and due to its partway religious makeup, the analyzed subgenre of the post-apocalyptic will, more often than not, inherit a deterministic philosophical substrate that I believe warrants further exploration.

Theological determinism, which one might think would be the most prominently featured variety of determinism in post-apocalyptic narratives, seems to be used in a subversive, apparently ironicized manner, possibly as a function of the laicized nature of the anti-apocalyptic. In *A Canticle for Leibowitz, Alas, Babylon* and *The Road*, various forms of determinism may be observed – mostly as part of an ironic presentation, and most forms being related to the ending of the narrative: death of the Messiah and reversal to war in Miller's novel, the characters' refusal to abandon their newly built community in Frank's novel, and the Child's fate in McCarthy's work, respectively. This might indicate that there could be, in fact, either an inescapable, predetermined fate within the confines of the narratives, a fate that lies in contrast with the hardships the characters have to endure, or it could signify that the characters work against (or for) a fate that they perceive to be predetermined. This play between the power of choice (free will) versus a hard, deterministic view, which is implied by the religious roots or an intradiegetic device, is what this section will emphasize across this analysis. Determinism, in this context, is mainly teleological.

Logical and causal determinism are two varieties that adopt a rather anti-teleological stance with regards to the course of events, and seem to lend a greater amount of import to human agency. In other words, causal and logical determinism both assume a predetermined order of events, but instead of having a theistic point of origin, events are laid out based on either antecedents or the preexistence of a logical ruleset, and both abide by the rules of nature. For this reason, in defining the anti-apocalyptic, traces of deterministic discourse that conforms to these rules must be taken into consideration, as they are to theological determinism what the anti-apocalyptic is to the apocalyptic – a step away from the theological core. Additionally, these two forms of determinism may be considered to be standing in (partial) contradiction with freedom and liberty, which assumes a higher degree of individual volition than a preordained fate would possibly allow. In the anti-apocalyptic, such contradictions will be observed and discussed, which unfortunately means disregarding the stance of compatibilism[4] (Richards passim).

Free will, in the context of American post-apocalyptic and zombie narratives, makes up the third pillar of the philosophical triumvirate that underlies the target subgenres. Intuitively, free will might appear to make a lot of sense in the otherwise deregulated, chaotic diegetic worlds of the post-apocalypse – after all, it is not difficult to imagine the extended ability to exercise free will in a morally barren environment, yet narrative underpinnings have the potential to limit or highlight this aspect.

In *The Road*, for instance, the early suicide of the Mother might be interpreted as the ultimate exercise in free will, the exertion of the character's power over a seemingly inevitable ending (in that case, death), and so can the refusal to abandon the newfound life in *Alas, Babylon*. In what concerns zombie narratives, one might argue that zombies themselves are exempt from the entire framework of free will, or even perversion of it. From a more reductionist perspective, one could claim that if free will does not exist, then neither do liberty and freedom, which may annul the hypothesis of the post-apocalyptic as fertile

[4] "Compatibilism is the thesis that free will is compatible with determinism" ('Compatibilism' in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

grounds for the expression of either. For this reason, I claim that that the balance and depiction of the three philosophies as part of the greater whole of the post- and anti-apocalyptic literary forms are worth analyzing.

Yet in this seemingly subversive, anti-apocalyptic frame, patterns of determinism seem to become ever clearer when translated into the actual literary, and even transmedia contexts. Going further back in time, one of St. Augustine of Hippo's works, also titled *De Libero Arbitrio* (the same title as Erasmus' study), discusses the notion of free will as a distinct possibility within a solidly God-driven reality, in what is essentially an attempt to reconcile the existence of free will, redirecting any responsibility for evil to humanity, and an immaculate but otherwise predetermined ontological framework. In other words, Augustine suggests that free will exists in parallel with humanity's capacity for evildoing, and is equated to the possibility of straying from God's pure plan. This reconciliation between the two logical opposites would later break down into the aforementioned "rival" works of Luther and Erasmus, which have, as I argue, further developed into the post-apocalyptic and zombie discourse that seems to be ever so popular.

The three novels that make up the corpus of this paper have been selected in order to demonstrate the metaphorical continuation of the Luther *versus* Erasmus debate, not only due to the popularity of these novels, but also due to their respective approach to determinism. As mentioned before, possibly the most overt representation of the aforementioned philosophy belongs to Miller's *Alas, Babylon*, which features a post-nuclear community that struggles to rebuild, and recover a sense of normalcy. This society is ironically wrapped in monastic drapery (literally and figuratively), and tries to reintroduce technology to a highly technophobic population, in what can be compared to a new Age of Enlightenment. Across centuries, as the narrative runs its course, humanity would again reach the very same finale – a nuclear one, thus delivering the overt message of unavoidable disaster. It is perhaps no coincidence that the overarching theme of religion seems to dominate the interactions in the novel. In truth, I believe this theme is simply a front piece for the ampler allegory for humanity's inexorable path. One of the novel's final paragraphs seems to support this:

> Wherever Man goes, you and your successors will go. And with you, the records and remembrances of four thousand years and more. Some of you, or those to come after you, will be mendicants and wanderers, teaching the chronicles of Earth and the canticles of the Crucified to the peoples and the cultures that may grow out of the colony groups. (Miller 26.88)

This bit of dialogue hints towards humanity's possible continuity, which seems especially ironic, since the speech is delivered in the context of abandoning Earth in order to save whatever is left of the monastic order of Leibowitz and perpetuate humankind, with the characters appearing to be unaware of their race's propensity towards self-destruction.

It is precisely this way of framing the narrative, with overtly religious themes and a circular structure, that encourages, I believe, the exploration of Miller's work through the lens of determinism. It would be up to the critic, however, to decide whether this brand of determinism would fit into the theological or causal category, but I believe that given the subtly ironic portrayal of catechesis and ecumenism, the text better lends itself to a deliberately misshapen representation of the former, rather than the latter.

Published in the same year as Miller's novel, Pat Frank's *Alas, Babylon* takes a radically different approach to the same tropes presented in *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, while managing to maintain most of the same post-apocalyptic themes. One of the very first hints towards philosophical play can be found in the title itself, *Alas, Babylon*, which is a biblical reference to one of the sinful cities destroyed by God. Leaving other interpretations aside, it is to be noted that the destruction took place as a divine mandate, thus an enforcement of God's will over the course of events, which could be perceived as contrasting with the otherwise human cycle of building-destruction-rebuilding. In fact, in the novel, this title is bound to a similar act of destruction, being used as a codeword for the beginning of nuclear conflict, which, ironically, breaks out due to human error (which may or may not have been avoidable).

The way in which this human error is framed in the narrative seems to paint it as a marker of causal determinism.

Much like in *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, the irony and accompanying subversion of philosophical determinism culminate with the ending of the narrative. Throughout the story, the community survives the nuclear conflict and manages to thrive in its newfound life. However, in the final pages it is revealed that the Government of the United States still exists, and came out as the victor in the nuclear war against Russia. A reconnaissance helicopter belonging to the military offers the survivors the chance to be evacuated and brought back to safety, but the rescuers are met with refusal: "This was Randy's town and these were his people and he knew he would not leave them" (Frank 13.90). From the standpoint of, and within the framework of determinism, this refusal might be considered as a sign of harnessing free will, signalling defiance towards authority. While in the novel this authority is the state, given the title and initial presentation of the conflict, as well as the overarching theme of regaining control of and forging a new life without dependencies, I believe it is possible to view the community's act of refusal as a marker for the prevalence of free will over possible forms of classical determinism.

Returning to the notion of zombie narratives as an alternative to the post-apocalyptic archetype, one might lean on a different, deterministic theoretical lens as a critical tool when analyzing zombies as an event or as individual instances, instead of the consecrated approach of viewing them as a projection of slavery (Moreman and Rushton). To this end, I suggest a more direct approach, simply viewing zombies as deterministic instantiations, due to their often rigid and arguably simplistic portrayal in contemporary narratives. The method for this would be fairly straightforward: since zombies are traditionally projections of humans stripped of their freedoms, individuality and will, in this new framework they would act as a distillation of an overarching discourse on the existence of free will, especially in juxtaposition with characters struggling for survival and attempting to defy odds and, generally, to rebuild or retake what has been previously destroyed or lost.

The applications may not be limited to zombies and the aforementioned post-apocalyptic narratives. Instead, this paper recommends using this paradigm based on determinism as a starting point for further possible extrapolation into the larger umbrella of the post-apocalyptic, with the aim of highlighting the underlying discourse on the intricacies of the philosophical nuances of ontology that masterfully interweave with the cultural desire for freedom.

Firstly, however, a causal link between the conventional portrayal of zombies and post-apocalyptic narratives must be established, on the premise that both share an array of particularities. Among these particularities is the post-apocalyptic setting, since modern zombies are typically associated with an apocalyptic event, usually man-made, that is not unlike the apocalyptic events presented in some of the works discussed in this paper: a containment breach; biological warfare; unexplained catastrophe, etc. Another particularity would be the religious roots which also seem to be shared, such that zombies may be viewed as a perversion of the Abrahamic eschatology similar to how the apocalyptic events in post-apocalyptic fiction may be interpreted as a subversion of Abrahamic apocalypticism. Lastly and necessarily, the determinism underpinning these works seems to be present across popular narratives in various forms. The common grounds, or how the intradiegetic apocalypse seems to evoke philosophical undertones – in fact, returning to the aforementioned religious roots of both narrative forms, it may become apparent if one were to analyze the two (arguably) most impactful elements of Abrahamic eschatology: the apocalypse and the revival of the hallowed body. I argue that the former paved the way for current post-apocalyptic narratives, while the latter expanded them with the addition of zombies as an event, all within the philosophical framework of (subverted) theological determinism.

Furthermore, the influence of St. Thomas Aquinas' writings also seem to have contributed to creating the zombie archetype, since it appears to stand in direct contradiction with Aquinas' prototypical description of the "glorified body" (5102), which possesses three qualities: impassibility, agility, subtlety, and clarity. Each of these refers to immunity from death and pain, obedience to spirit with relation to movement and space (the ability to move through space and time with

the speed of thought), freedom from restraint by matter, and resplendent beauty of the soul manifested in the body, respectively. Typically, the contemporary face of undeath, the zombies, take up a subverted, or perhaps perverted approach to the "glorified body," often acting as sluggish, pained, mindless roadblocks or decaying masses of feral, instinctive enmity (Lauro).

This subversive representation of life beyond death, combined with the zombies' portrayal and the emphasis on physicality as opposed to spirituality, as well as their seemingly unguided existence, devoid of time, space and purpose, may reinforce the claim that zombies might be, in fact, the opposite of default Abrahamic eschatology. If one were to accept the nature of zombies as opposites of "glorified bodies", I believe that one could then link post-apocalyptic narratives with the development of the contemporary zombie archetype. After all, such a transition from divine to profane does seem to be the logical step that results from the perverted/subverted Apocalypse, and leads into perverted/subverted afterlife.

The argument above leads to the third, final and what I believe is the most complex narrative from the selected works – Cormac McCarty's *The Road*. I deem that the novel's complexity stems from its clever intertwinement of all aforementioned features pertaining to the nature of the post-apocalyptic and afterlife. This is, perhaps, partly due to its comparatively modern approach to the topics at hand, having taken into account its relatively recent publishing date, 2006. Firstly, the novel refrains from providing a clear explanation for the state of its setting or the characters themselves, leaving the cause and effects of the apocalypse to the reader's imagination. Instead, the focus shifts onto the characters' interactions with the hostile world, and their perilous quest for survival. As mentioned before, one of the characters, the Mother, chooses to commit suicide early in the narrative:

> Sooner or later they will catch us and they will kill us. They will rape me. They'll rape him. They are going to rape us and kill us and eat us and you won't face it. You'd rather wait for it to happen. But I can't. I can't . . . (McCarthy 29)

By justifying her suicide, not only does she confess her belief in an unavoidable, seemingly predetermined conclusion, but also signals an attempt to end her life on her own terms, as a testament of free will. The Father too seems to try and bend destiny to his own will, first by attempting to convince his wife to carry on, and afterwards by fighting against all odds in order to reach safety. Throughout the ordeal, the Man occasionally questions the existence of a God, resorting to begging and even threatening the deity in hopes of breaking the sense of abandon. This could be interpreted as a desire for order, or for a clear path to focus on, which ties in with the title – *The Road* – a predetermined path.

Additionally, I argue that McCarthy manages to subtly insert the zombie archetype in the structure of *The Road*. At various points in the narrative, the two protagonists are met by "bad guys," who are simplistic enemies, almost possessed by a will to overcome and overtake and serve as little more than narrative devices, seemingly existing outside the logical boundaries of the intradiegetic mechanism. Perhaps the most telling of this portrayal would be the moment when the Man shoots one of the "bad guys" in the forehead, which is one of the more common zombie tropes. Even though the pair hope to encounter "good guys," they barely do, yet the child seems to remain hopeful. Ironically, the boy ends up being adopted by a family of "good guys," not unlike his departed parents, which could possibly dispel his father's almost irrational, haunting distrust of fellow survivors. It is precisely due to the child's unceasing reliance on his father's vision and guidance that even he himself could be considered a form of zombie, since he often appears to display no will of his own, instead almost acting like a proxy for the father's perception of the world.

These patterns do not end here. After all, there is a large gap between the two most representative works in the genre, Miller's and Frank's novels, analyzed hereby, and the third, McCarthy's, and there are many variations in what concerns the portrayal of post-apocalyptic settings and zombies across media. I believe it can be said, though, that there is enough cohesion across works belonging to these literary forms to warrant exploration in a more philosophical direction. For this reason, readers are encouraged to do so, utilizing this chapter not as an elaborate example of such research, but merely a starting point as there is, to the

best of my knowledge, no similar work at the time of its writing. For the sake of brevity and due to space constraints, these three, carefully chosen examples would hopefully deliver the message of this section with enough clarity so as to spur analysis in similar works, such as the highly acclaimed *The Walking Dead* TV series and comics, *Night of the Living Dead* film, as well as virtual narratives such as *Fallout*, *Wasteland* and many others belonging to the literary forms of post-apocalyptic and zombie apocalyptic, which are especially interesting in the cultural context of the American conception of freedom.

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SPYING AS AN ACT OF SELF–DISCOVERY IN VLADIMIR NABOKOV'S *PALE FIRE* AND FLORIAN HENCKEL VON DONNERSMARCK'S *THE LIVES OF OTHERS*

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The act of spying can assume many shades of manifestation and may lead to various outcomes. Nonetheless, its main purpose is that of finding out some truth about someone or someone's acts and as such it is perceived as a mainly blamable and reprobate act. Under certain circumstances, spying can result in paranoia when the spy reaches a level of involvement and identification with the life of the spied to the point that one wants to direct and manipulate the thoughts, actions and even the artistic creation of the surveyed person so that the boundaries of the separating selves may be completely erased. The present paper aims at presenting a comparative perspective on Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and the film *The Lives of Others* directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck which may be revelatory with regards to the power exercised by literature and writers on the life and way of thinking of those who are intentionally keen observers of the life and work of the creating minds. The fervent act of spying ends in *Pale Fire* with a merging

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of the spying Self with the life and especially the written work of the poet he spies on, whereas in *The Lives of Others*, the spying Self turns from an active observer into an active actor in the life of the stalked writer, culminating with the spy's courageous act of saving the artist's life.

The two works of art meet on the common ground of writers and artistic production and the effect these may produce on those who are intent on observing them closely. Nabokov's spy is a creating Self in search of the best means of expression possessed by the Self of a poet he intensely admires. Charles Kinbote, a literature professor that develops a peculiar attachment to another literature professor, John Shade, who is also his neighbour and whose life and Poem in Four Cantos exercise a mesmerizing influence on him, throws himself "in an orgy of spying which no considerations of pride could stop" (Nabokov 64). His spying is a double intended act: he spies on the poet and his family in order to understand more about the poet's life, while at the same time desperately desiring to infuse Shade's poem with his own fantastic story of Zembla and its runaway king, who looms as a reflection of his own Self. The spy wants the focus to be on him, he wants to be the object of the act of spying and the subject of the work of art that may ensue as a consequence: "Kinbote seeks to impose his ego on the world and on his neighbor's poetic work" (Boyd 261). The overlapping of fictional and reality planes, with all the hints to similarity of names, life courses and intrusions of characters from one world into another, create a bewildering sensation of being caught in a puzzling game of mirror and window reflections, which bestows on the reader the responsibility of finding the right place of each puzzle piece in the great design intended by the author.

Nabokov plays with the Selves of the characters involved to the point that the readers are no longer sure who is who and who is spying on whom. The book starts with a Foreword followed by a poem in four cantos entitled *Pale Fire*, a Commentary on the poem, and an Index. The Foreword, the Commentary and the Index are the creation of Kinbote, who admits to being committed to the fervent act of spying, and are meant to shed more light on the creator of the Poem, John Shade, and on the various sources of inspiration that have exercised a stronger or a feeble influence on the final version of the poem. If Canto One is John

Shade's creation, then the declared practice of Kinbote was either a shared passion with John Shade himself or the proof that Kinbote took control over the poem itself:

> I was the shadow of the waxwing slain
> By the false azure in the windowpane;
> I was the smudge of ashen fluff – and I
> Lived on, flew on, in the reflected sky.
> And from the inside, too, I'd duplicate
> Myself, my lamp, an apple on a plate:
> Uncurtaining the night, I'd let dark glass
> Hang all the furniture above the grass (Nabokov 16)

The reader is found in a state of confusion regarding the identity of the person who is actually spying, since Kinbote himself admits in his notes that he has been spying on Shade and not the other way round. The readers themselves are being thrown into a continuous act of spying in order to sort out the input from all directions. A tricky aspect regards the critic, Kinbote, and writer, John Shade, swapping positions so that the readers are caught between the imperative of establishing the roles of each of them and the impact on their perception. The fact that the act of perceiving the literary text seems to be dictated by the critic, who may or may not have interfered with the text, leaves the reader less freedom of interpretation. Moreover, the act of writing explanatory notes on certain lines from the poem, notes that constitute themselves fictional material, adds to the ambiguity of the text and the puzzlement of the reader, who has to decipher the codes and the meanings. The fervent spying and incessant effort of making sense of all the incongruous elements turns into a sort of paranoia–one resembling the phenomenon existing in real life in certain historical moments, like the one depicted in the film *The Lives of Others*.

In *Pale Fire* the window as the spying place offers a very cinematic rendering of the reality on each side, as if the game of spying were best pursued especially when the sun allows for it. The concept of the Sun itself is a profound unlocking of meaning since shade is only possible if there is a sun, and "pale fire" is Shakespeare's way of naming the light the Moon takes from the Sun in Timon of Athens, Act IV, Scene III (678)–

both stars being meaningfully hinted at along John Shade's poem. In this baffling play of perspectives, the reader must be aware of who pretends to be the Sun giving the light over the text of the poem and over the life of the author and who carries a pale fire.

> Although I realize only too clearly, alas, that the result, in its pale and diaphanous final phase, cannot be regarded as a direct echo of my narrative (of which, incidentally, only a few fragments are given in my notes – mainly to Canto One), one can hardly doubt that the sunset glow of the story acted as a catalytic agent upon the very process of the sustained creative effervescence that enabled Shade to produce a 1000-line poem in three weeks. There is, moreover, a symptomatic family resemblance in the coloration of both poem and story. I have reread, not without pleasure, my comments to his lines, and in many cases have caught myself borrowing a kind of opalescent light from my poet's fiery orb, and unconsciously aping the prose style of his own critical essays. But his widow, and his colleagues, may stop worrying and enjoy in full the fruit of whatever advice they gave my good-natured poet. Oh yes, the final text of the poem is entirely his. (Nabokov 58)

The madding desire to infuse John Shade's work with stories regarding his own Self has led him to intruding freely into the subject matter of the poem and making it signify whatever his intentions please. The reflections of the possible author of the poem add meaning to the game of spying from the view of the writer. He himself sees writers as spies that are caught in an enthralling process of observing everything that may later become one's subject matter. The first lines of Canto Four attest to it:

> Now I shall spy on beauty as none has
> Spied on it yet. Now I shall cry out as
> None has cried out. Now I shall try what none
> Has tried. Now I shall do what none has done. (Nabokov 42)

These lines are a testimony that Kinbote, the spy, may have intruded in the artistic creation as well. The roles are switched and a possible reconciliation can be attained only by using the clue given by

the window: the two reflected worlds and the two creative forces are one. The fact that Kinbote sees himself as two people existing on each side of the window, with one taking great pain and pleasure in spying on the other part of the Self may be disclosed by the following verses in the last canto:

> My best time is the morning; my preferred
> Season, midsummer. I once overheard.
> Myself awakening while half of me
> Still slept in bed. I tore my spirit free,
> And caught up with myself – upon the lawn
> Where clover leaves cupped the topaz of dawn,
> And where Shade stood in nightshirt and one shoe.
> And then I realized that this half too
> Was fast asleep; both laughed and I awoke
> Safe in my bed as day its eggshell broke (Nabokov 44-45)

Kinbote's entire espionage scheme is devised to offer pleasure to his Self, satisfy his consuming curiosity till it reaches heights of insane agitation when the channel of spying is obscured either by nature or by the intervention of Shade's wife, naturally suspicious of the persistently intruding neighbour. His hysterical attempts to see whether the fictional material he has offered the poet in all their friendly discussions has found a place in the poem are sometimes left unanswered. His notes in the commentary attest to his despair of being part of the life of the poet and of the pleasure he takes when he is in this one's proximity. The ease with which his struggling artistic Self devises plans for extending one's influence in the future creations is a testimony that the games with Selves and Shades is the master skill of artists:

> Yes, better stop. My notes and self are petering out. (…) My work is finished. My poet is dead.
> "And you, what will you be doing with yourself, poor King, poor Kinbote?" a gentle young voice may inquire.
> God will help me, I trust, to rid myself of any desire to follow the example of two other characters in this work. I shall continue to exist. I may assume other disguises, other forms, but I shall try to exist. (Nabokov 283)

Since the poem and the book seem to be written by the same author, it may seem plausible that Nabokov indulges in a sort of reconciliation of all the split sides (real or imaginary) of the Self of the narrator. He is thus trying to literally reconcile the shadows of his own past with the reality of his present: "By demonstrating this predilection for continual self-invention, Kinbote follows the pattern of previous authorial aspirants in Nabokov's work. One stage on the road to becoming an authentic *auctor* involves the creation of a literary character out of oneself" (Connolly 223). The spying Self has wittingly made use of any means in order to make oneself part of the artistic work of art.

In close connection to the zealous spying of the literary character, the film *The Lives of Others* offers another perspective on how a spy committed to find out the truth is confronted with the reality of writers who want to take the truth beyond the limits imposed by a totalitarian regime. The cinematic perspective takes the act of spying from the level at which the spy is in complete control of all the surveillance devices involved in stalking the life and acquaintances of an appreciated playwright from East Germany, Georg Dreyman, to the point in which the initial commitment to repress any kind of distracting emotions is shattered and transformed into a gesture of redemption. Gerd Wiesler, the secret police agent, has not contemplated the possibility that the passionate search for something that will classify the writer as an enemy of the state will culminate in moments of revelation, self-discovery and ultimately, self-redemption and redemption of the writer from the fate the secret police had decreed for state dissidents. The spy is attempting to confirm his theory regarding traitors and his suspicions related to the main protagonist, the writer. Although his suspicions prove to be right, the viewers no longer follow a spy devoted to catching the traitor, but one who is deeply taken in by a world of writers and the books they read–such as the fragment from Bertold Brecht's *Memory of Marie A.* – a completely different, segregated world in which the real freedom of thought throbs and gains a voice in written texts. The lives of others in the film, and more precisely the lives of writers in an age in which the freedom of expression was harshly challenged, exercise on the spy the shaking force of bringing down all the defence walls he has built around

the Self, provoking thus the core of the spying Self to a profound enlightenment:

> Individuals can change when circumstances change. They remain individuals; they are not genetically programmed, and thus can re-evaluate their lives. It is, essentially, this view of individuality that is at the heart of *The Lives of Others*. It is undoubtedly the case that there were individuals in the GDR ready to make a stand against the party's monopoly on power, despite the personal risk they ran of prosecution and repression. (Wilke 57)

The film is an attempt to highlight this obvious truth about the power of literature and of writers' life and discourse on the Self of their witnesses: that of acting as a mirror in which the protagonist reflects himself and has the chance of transforming his Self through an exercise of self-reflection combined with a keen self-awareness and a profound awareness of the others. The spy turns thus into an accomplice of the writer who manages to write a mind-boggling article on the rate of suicides in the GDR, among which many artists who could no longer face the repression of truth and the censorship on their creations, an article which surprisingly appears in a extensively read publication, *Der Spiegel*, in West Germany. The spy becomes therefore a powerful link in the daring act of bringing to light the truth about the victims of a system he is progressively refusing to be a representative of.

The reason why the Self of spies can be transformed in the act of spying may be clarified by the manner in which psychologists perceive the self in its struggle to define oneself and gain stability. Kate C. McLean, Monisha Pasupathi and Jennifer L. Pals speak about the tendency of the self to make sense of one's own essence and potential and link it to the background on which the others live. They see the Self as comprising two aspects: "self-concept" and "the life story" (263). Self-concept is "defined as conscious beliefs about the self that are descriptive or evaluative" (Kernis & Goldman; Markus & Wurf, qtd. in McLean, Pasupathi, Pals 263) and "concepts such as self-esteem, beliefs about one's skills, and typicality of self-relevant events" are seen as "aspects of one's self-concept" (McLean, Pasupathi, Pals 263). The "life story"

comprises the knowledge derived from "personal experiences and interpretations of those experiences that provides unity and purpose to the person" (McAdams qtd. in McLean, Pasupathi, Pals 263). The spies in both the novel and the film seem to be caught in this fervent act of seeking the meaning of oneself as a unitary, upright being, as in *The Lives of Others*, and of the other as a potential reflection of the self, as in *Pale Fire*. The beliefs of both spies, as a meaningful part of the self-concept, are challenged and redefined in confrontation with their own selves, the events they go through, the evaluation they make of their positioning towards their own lives and those of the others. The Selves of the writer as a spy and of the spy of the writer are defined by the "life story" each brings in the act of spying. The mark of the individual Self is in the way one is capable of interpreting events due to the previous experiences and skills developed all along the interactions with others. Since "the development of self-understanding (both self-concept and the personal meaning of events) is linked to the socialization of autobiographical reasoning processes in storytelling practices" (McLean, Pasupathi, Pals 266), Kingbote's favoured tactics of intercepting and interfering in the act of writing is the undertaking through which he attempts to discover himself and his creative potential. He has embraced the practice of story-telling on various levels so that his final recount is a multi-layered narrative of fictional and realistic events from his life and the life of the poet he spies on, realistic events which are turning into fiction in the very act of writing about them.

The spies in the novel and the film are captured in moments of intense living and are challenged to reflect upon all the factors and beings involved in the events so as to make sense of their own positioning. Since research "has consistently found that the kinds of events that are deemed the most personally meaningful and important are more emotionally negative" (266), it becomes more evident why the Selves in the two works of art are depicted in those particular circumstances. In Nabokov's book the distance seems to create a sort of false perception and enlarge the gap between what is desired by the spy and the reality itself, creating a sort of negative pressure in the spy. In the film, however, the distance seems to create a sort of closeness and merging of the spy into the reality of the spied to the point in which the

writer's ideal becomes the spy's ideal and the writer's worries are taken care of by the spy himself.

Spying as a willing act of the Self to be involved in the life of others has revealed two distinct facets of the power of literature on the spies. In *Pale Fire*, Kinbote, the spy, tries to interfere with the spied world in order to bring some brilliance to the creation of the one he spies on. In the process he reveals many aspects of his Self and even goes as far as voicing his thoughts in every part of the final work of art. In the film, the spy reaches a point in which what he claimed to be truth is confronted by the truth that resides in the spied world, the world of those who choose to cling to it even when the circumstances are dire and menacing. Literature and writers consequently represent a tremendous force that may lead those who witness them to an intense process of self-awareness and self-analysis which may culminate in a life changing self-discovery.

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Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

Culture, société, art: Débats contemporains

CAGED BIRDS WHO SANG: VISUAL AND POETIC WAYS OF DEALING WITH SOCIETY-IMPOSED CONSTRAINTS

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INTRODUCTION

The comparative approach is applied in the present paper at three different levels. The first level will comment on Maya Angelou's black feminism in her poetic work; the second level will illustrate the way Frida Kahlo's paintings help her overcome her physical and mental illness, and the third level will analyze Angelica Dass' cross-racial portraits. The intended purpose is to underline the cathartic function of three several types of art while fight the anxiety resulting from society's negative value judgements. This research is qualitative, not quantitative, with the researcher reserving the right to select certain pieces of work to illustrate the thesis statement accurately.

From a sociological point of view, one of the most significant challenges humanity had (and still has) to deal with is *discrimination*. This term refers to positive or negative behavior towards a social group and its members. Prejudices, stereotypes and social labels are often encountered, and their use is usually conducive to injustices, negative socializing and even wrath towards the targeted groups.

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Feminism is defined as *"the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men"* (The Oxford English Dictionary). Derived from the Latin word *Femina*, which means *woman*, it is used to describe a movement centered on supporting women deal with their issues encountered in a society dominated by men.

Since society is divided by genders, races or religions, we must also reckon with *black feminism*, which focuses on the problems black women struggle with exclusively. "Black" usually meant black men, "women" often referred to white women, which led to black women often treated as invisible. Collins (1998) shows that this group have a double disadvantage: the first one refers to racial discrimination and the second one targets gender issues because men usually exploited women. Black feminism was particularly popular in the United States due to the country's dark past of racial discrimination which began in the 17th century with the enslavement of African people, but which was encountered all across the globe given the Trans-Atlantic trade. The paper will go on to compare the artistic output of three women of color who faced different obstructions and have found their liberation in art, making it part of everyday life.

MAYA ANGELOU'S POETRY (ANALYSIS)

The ax forgets.
The tree remembers.
Maya Angelou, quoting an African proverb in *Even the Stars Look Lonesome*, 1997

Marguerite Annie Johnson Angelou (April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014) was an American author, actor, screenwriter, dancer, poet and civil rights activist. Also known as Maya Angelou, she wrote poetry, autobiographies, essays, cookbooks, children's books, plays, and movie scripts thus proving her versatile nature.

In order to analyze her poems, one must take a look at Angelou's childhood. A high school dropout, teenage mother, dancer and singer, polyglot, successful writer, Maya went through every stage, from struggling to earn enough for her new-born son to being worldwide

famous. She read *On the Pulse of the Morning* at President Bill Clinton's inauguration in 1993, she was a close friend of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and President Barack Obama admitted she was *"a brilliant writer, a fierce friend, and a truly phenomenal woman"*. In *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* Angelou recalls herself reading contemporary Afro-American writers. She later gave credit to writers like Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, James Baldwin and many others for having influenced her.

In the poem called *Ain't That Bad?* Maya uses negative words with a positive connotation in order to highlight the fact that African-Americans should not be overlooked since they have proven themselves worthy of praise. This poem shows how people usually associate skin colors with bad temper, being slightly repulsed by anyone who is unlike them. The notion of *bad* is also seen in a different manner: a storm bringing traces of heaven on earth, and solar heat: "Bad as the sun burning orange hot at midday/Lifting the waters again". Another stanza completes the painting by showcasing their exotic ethnicity mixed with their colorful lifestyle:

> Dressing in purples and pinks and greens
> Exotic as rum and Cokes
> Living our lives with flash and style
> Ain't we colorful folks? (Angelou)

The last stanza is a mirror of the fifth, with one exception: Maya no longer uses *they*, but *we,* showing that the spotlight falls on herself now. The emphasis on community and on the self are usually altered to highlight the identification within the group (Lupton). At this moment, the message becomes noticeably clear: she identifies with her folks, and she is proud to be one of them, whether the person in question is Stevie Wonder or an ordinary man.

The poet was an enthusiastic social activist. Maya always rooted her activist work in her origins and beliefs, encouraging women of color to embrace their uniqueness and to find comfort in "*the motherhood blackness*". Although she is not beautiful enough to be a model, she considers herself a *Phenomenal Woman.* She changes other people's way of grasping beauty by reformulating the standard of the ideal woman:

confident in her body, with sparks in her eyes, glowing as she smiles – thus, she shatters the axioms of beauty. Her naturalness and fearlessness are what makes her attractive to men, without having to perform or to embellish her behavior (such as shouting or jumping around) to get attention. The focus of this poem is about a woman's place in the world, but it also carries themes such as self-confidence, inner beauty, and strength.

Undoubtedly, Maya Angelou is one of the most important black women ever to write memoirs because she no longer writes from a position of marginality and places herself in the center of her universe. This self-centered vision is recurrent in her poetry too: *"she inscribes her resistance to racism, sexism, and poverty within the language, the imagery, the very meaning of her text"* (Braxton). She is positive and confident about her lifestyle and clothing and the particularities that would be normally seen as stereotypical render Afro-American women and people in general as more unique and admirable: "Wrappin' up in Blackness/ Don't I shine and glow?".

FRIDA KAHLO'S PAINTINGS (ANALYSIS)

> *They thought I was a Surrealist, but I wasn't.*
> *I never painted dreams. I painted my own reality.*
> Frida Kahlo, quoted in *Time* Magazine (27 April 1953)

Magdalena Carmen Frieda Kahlo y Calderón (1907, July 6 – 1954, July 13) studied art at a very young age, but she didn't consider it as a career until a bus accident in 1925 immobilized her in bed for three months. When her therapist suggested she use painting as a way of improving her self-esteem, she began projecting her way of seeing the world and herself in her works. The influence fellow painter, Diego Rivera, had on her art was a substantial one. He directly influenced her art not only by inspiring romantic themes in her drawing due to their personal relationship but also by familiarizing her with the Cuernavaca style, which came in contrast with her surreal drawing style.

Despite having a notebook in which she expressed her thoughts, Frida also enclosed biographical details in her art: "Like the diary that

functioned as a record of her thoughts and worries, Frida's small canvases were fragments of an internal life that complemented the outer politics of the Mexican men and women portrayed by Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros" (Schaefer). One of the most iconic paintings about the conflict between the old generation and the new is *The Bus* (1929). Six riders sit on a bench, each one with a different social position, age, and personality. The transition from traditional to modern lifestyle is suggested in the landscape, too, as the buildings gradually replace trees. The intolerance of the society can be seen in her *Wounded Deer or the Wounded Doe* (1946), in which one can recognize Frida personified as a hunted animal pierced by arrows. This was two years after she had painted *The Broken Column* (1944), inspired by her fractured spine; in the painting, her skin is pierced by nails, her cheeks are watered by tears and her heart is perforated by a spike.

Frida's relationship with Diego was illustrated in several of her paintings, but the most evocative are, in my opinion, *Diego and I* (1944) and *Double portrait Diego and I* (1949). The first represents an evocation of Diego as something she always carries with her. She was haunted by her love for him, even when they had divorced or were far away from each other. The mixed feelings for Diego were illustrated by her hair wrapping around her neck, protecting her and choking her at the same time. The *Double Portrait* is made up of half of Frida's face and half of Diego's. He is slightly feminized in this diminutive version of his large head, but she retains her distinctive features. Their faces morph into each other to emphasize the fact that they are not two individuals, but a single entity and that they are meant to complete each other no matter what obstacles they might face. Despite her strong feelings for him, Diego had several affairs that had an enormous impact on Frida's mental health: "Kahlo once said that she was visited by two catastrophes in her life, the first being when she was hit by a tram, the second catastrophe being Rivera" (Alcántara).

ANGÉLICA DASS' PHOTOGRAPHS (ANALYSIS)

> *All kinds of beliefs, gender identities or physical impairments,*
> *a newborn or terminally ill. We all together build Humanae.*
> Angélica Dass, *The beauty of human skin in every color*

Angélica Dass is an award-winning photographer from Madrid, Spain. She is acutely aware of how slight differences in skin tone can swell into large misconceptions and stereotypes about race, therefore she is the creator of the *Humanae Project*, a collection of portraits that reveal the diverse beauty of human colors.

First, she photographs her subjects on a white background. Then, picking an 11-by-11-pixel sample from each subject's nose, she matches the sample to the internationally used Pantone palette of colors. After finding the corresponding color in the existing 1.867, she colors the subject's background. Below each photo (and there are over 4.000), Dass prints the Pantone number: her own is *7522 C*.

With her work featured on broadcasts and media outlets such as the BBC, CNN, Daily Mail, Time, The Independent, The Guardian, *visualnews.com*, *news.artnet.com*, her project has become globally known. It was exhibited at *Thessaloniki Museum of Photography* in Greece, *The Daelim Museum* in Seoul, South Korea, *The Uribitartre Promenade* in Bilbao, Spain, *The Migration Museum* in London, Kingsport, Tennessee, *The International Photography Festival in Israel* and many more. Angélica has had workshops in 37 countries, reaching over 75.000 students worldwide. One of the most powerful ways she made her work public was her TED Global Talk on February 2016, which has more than 2.300.000 views.

The Humanae impact has been a far-reaching one, changing the way students and natives see diversity. They have come to realize how deeply rooted some stereotypes can be in society and that it is necessary to reflect on them with understanding, making efforts to drop racial preconceptions and to overcome intercultural boundaries.

CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

Roland Barthes acknowledges the difficulties encountered trying to classify photographs: *"What the Photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the Photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially"* (Barthes). What Dass pursues in this project is to capture human nature's beauty and to use it as an efficient way of

accepting herself, her family and others and to change the way modern people look at racism nowadays. By exhibiting distinctive photos in the same display, she portrays the way their remarkable variety of physiognomies visually shocks normalized ideas of what *black* and *white* look like.

The purging function of reading was discovered by Maya Angelou after she was raped by her mother's boyfriend. As a result of this trauma, she imposed mutism on herself, and was not able to speak for five years, which time she spent mostly reading and memorizing Shakespearean sonnets. Her struggle was tenacious because *"such women are twice victimized, first by the actual rape (…). But they are victimized again by family members, community residents, and social institutions such as criminal justice systems which somehow believe that rape victims are responsible for their own victimization"* (Hill Collins). Her poetry clearly shows and resists two constraints: racism and sexism, both trying to numb the voice of African-American women. The poetic devices she frequently uses are free rhyme, rhythm, repetition, and descriptions. She blends vocal, oral and written aspects in her poetry. All these together create images of beauty, grace, and femininity mixed with confidence, self-esteem, and strength.

Gunderman and Hawkins state that 55 of Frida Kahlo's 143 paintings are self-portraits. The main themes she represents are love, pain, and identity. She uses each element to illustrate the difficulties she is experiencing in her own life. Unlike other artists, she mainly painted for herself and she used art as a way of coping with disappointment, sadness, anger, and pain. Frida creates her own radiographs through which we can easily see her insights on the society she lives in. *"She directly describes her own pain, it does not render her mute, her scream is articulate because it achieves a visible and emotional form,"* Carlos Fuentes says in the Introduction to *The Diary of Frida Kahlo: An Intimate Self-Portrait.* She began by saying that she had been born later, in 1910, the year in which the Mexican Revolution began (Herrera). She changed the spelling of her name because she didn't want to be associated with Germany (Hererra). Her diary is filled with colorful scribbling and doodles that become a way of working out her pain, especially after she has been cheated on by Diego: *"In some ways, the paintings and the diary are*

mirror images of one another: the first a face for others to contemplate, and the second a private face for when emotions got the better of her" (Schaefer).

A meticulous analysis reveals similarities in the purifying use of poetry, painting, and photography in order to shatter society's outlines and restraints. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle theorizes *catharsis*, the rational control of irrational emotions. This concept is used by Sigmund Freud in psychoanalysis for people who experience deep emotions that have been repressed or ignored and need to overcome the negative effects of inadequately expressing them. Maya, Frida, and Angélica explored the cathartic effects of art as an aid in emotional recovery. To conclude, all three women made use of art to overcome their frustrations and displeasures and triumphantly managed to alleviate certain traumas through their creativeness and fortitude, which is illustrated in this paper.

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Culture, society, art: Contemporary debates

Culture, société, art: Débats contemporains

BENJAMIN FUNDOIANU – CULTURE AND SHAPING ONE'S IDENTITY

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When discussing the case of Benjamin Fundoianu, one may find himself facing many difficulties, most of which are related not only to the fact that his activities were spread over relatively large numbers of different domains of intellectual and artistic endeavor, but are also related to the fact that his poetry and his articles, essays, and books were written in two languages and in two different countries: Romania and France (Finkenthal VII). Describing him as a Romanian author who wrote in French would not do him justice; an interesting approach which supports the idea of a duality of the individual which occurs in exile seems more appropriate: B. Fundoianu is a well-known Romanian poet, while Benjamin Fondane is a French poet and philosopher (Finkenthal VII).

B. Fundoianu/Benjamin Fondane was born in Jassy in 1898 and died in Auschwitz in 1944. He was the son of Itzchak and Adela Wechsler, a moderately prosperous Jewish family. At the time, almost forty percent of Jassy's population was made up of Jews; due to the fact that Jassy had been the capital of an independent Moldavia until Moldavia's incorporation into Romania in 1862, the town was a vibrant cultural center (Fondane, *Existential Monday*). The author spent his yearly adulthood up to the age of 25 in his native country, after which he

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moved to France. Before moving to France, he lived in Bucharest for a period of time, during which he finished high school and then studied law (Fondane, Ex*istential Monday*). Parallel to his studies he pursued literature, a pursuit born as much of tradition as of the avant-garde as he collaborated with many publications of that time and even attempted to open an avant-garde theatre which shocked the audience with the performances they put up on stage. Aside from that, Fundoianu also contributed to a number of Romanian Jewish periodicals dwelling on on subjects such as Jewish religious thought, especially the mysticism of the Cabala, as well as Jewish literature and folklore (Fondane, *Existential Monday*).

He was known in his home country for his writings, especially for his poetry and essays and he is considered to be one of the best critics of his generation, one who significantly innovated the Romanian poetic language and a great modern literary theorist. During his stay in France he became a renowned philosopher and aesthetician preoccupied with the problem of consciousness (much of his theory can be found in a book called *The Unhappy Consciousness*). His early writings target an ethnographic, religious and cultural recognition of the Jewish world marketed especially to the Jewish. This desire to affirm his (Jewish) identity is characteristic to his first creative stage, his "Romanian period"; his creative maturity, reached during his "French phase" (this is when he "became" Fondane), is marked heavily by the linguistic change and the challenges this entails, especially from a creative perspective (B. Fundoianu – Benjamin Fondane 61). Although he had a reading knowledge of French, his principal literary output remained in Romanian between 1923 and 1928. During this time he worked as a Paris correspondent for Integral and other Romanian avant-garde periodicals (Fondane, *Existential Monday*). This shift in language and the propensity to write literary criticism or essays, even philosophy, rather than poetry in the new language marks an interesting change in the individual and raises questions about poetic language. Some of these aspects were already queries that preoccupied Fundoianu before his departure from his home country, but they were quickly brought into focus by the intellectual atmosphere of Paris – "the troubling questions related to the nature of an art limited by the ability of words to express a reality

perceived more and more as being radically different from that expressed in the old ways" (Finkenthal 25-26).

There are many different circumstances surrounding individual migration, and the political or cultural contexts within which this takes place can have enormous repercussions on the psychology of the individual; it involves dislocation, disorientation, self-division. These can be reflected in the various words we use for those who leave one country for another and at the same time this points to distinct kinds of social, but also internal, experiences: refugees, émigrés, emigrants, and expatriates. The use of these terms shows a tendency to compress many situations under its heading; it matters greatly, for starters, whether exile is one's choice or a matter of circumstance. It matters also whether you can expect some sort of safety net, if someone can provide for you and protect you (Hoffman).

Fundoianu's departure from Romania was a choice but it came at a cost which felt like a crisis – loss of his native culture, language, traditions, customs in favor of those belonging to the adopting country and the confrontation with a radically different reality. One of the unexpected consequences that this entailed was the ability to see two or more places at the same time which in turn lead to an ambiguous form of a culturally conscious self (Hoffman). Perhaps this is one of the reasons why he was a thinker for whom every limit, every border served as "a torture and a spur" (Fondane, *Existential Monday*).

When he debuted, Benjamin Fondane pursued a double orientation – he published symbolist poetry and translations (German and French especially). During the same period of time, he also published Yiddish translations and became very interested in the possibilities of using Yiddish as a literary medium. In parallel with all these he became steadily more interested in Romanian literature to the point that he began discussing authors such as Eminescu, Cosbuc, and Caragiale, among others, at a high school literary club. He also attended meetings which discussed Haskala and frequently encountered Zionist ideas (Finkenthal 9).

During his youth, more precisely in 1919, he confessed feeling closer to his grandfather through the works of Groper, from which he got a sense of purpose and tradition. This came from a need to be anchored

in a tradition. As a result, his focus turned to the holy teachings, to what it meant to be Jewish in favor of Zionism. His interests were manifold, from the discussion of the literature of the future to Jewish themes which were abundantly present and discussed (Finkenthal 10) in a long series of articles entitled *Judaism and Hellenism* (which were published in the journal *Mântuirea* in 1919). He was especially interested in establishing the differences between the Jewish and Greek spirituality, at an aesthetic level; the emphasis falls upon morality, the meaning of history, the quest for truth and the message contained in art, all in all elements which seem to him to be characteristics of Judaism.

In his writings dating to around 1920, Jewish themes are not directly evoked but are indirectly suggested. He wrote on the Bible on the occasion of the publication of a new translation in Romanian and described it as a work that has stimulated his literary curiosity, like Greek mythology, and he expressed the conviction that it is not a revealed book, but rather a collection of thousands and thousands of Oriental tales (Finkenthal 31).

In the only collection of poems published by Fondane in Romania (*Priveliști*, 1930), images of a mythical childhood constantly reappear under the protective gaze of his grandparents.

Fondane's preoccupation for philosophy manifested itself long before his encounter with Shestov in 1924. This meeting with the Russian émigré would prove decisive for Fondane as it was Shestov who guided and helped Fondane acquire the tools to develop an irrationalist philosophy of "the impossible" (Fondane, *Existential Monday*). Even before this encounter, some of his early ideas appear to be "Shestovian" to later critics (Finkenthal 35). Although they met in 1924, it was not until two years later that Fondane became one of Shestov's acquaintances.

All that he wrote from that point onwards, philosophical essays, studies of aesthetics, even his poetry in French, to a certain extent, would bear the mark of Shestov's influence but Fondane's philosophical work proper begins in 1929 with his essays (Fondane, *Existential Monday*). The period of Fondane's philosophical apprenticeship covered approximately three years, during which Shestov taught him the thought and philosophy of the philosophers of the day (Finkenthal 51).

In parallel, Fondane would begin reading his mentor's works as well. He began publishing his first philosophical articles around 1929 (the very first one was an essay on Shestov) (Finkenthal 51). Following the line of Nietzsche, Dostoievski and Kirkegaard, but with a strong biblical imprint, Shestov, like his disciple Fondane, are philosophers of mystery and metaphysical anxiety, of the suffering of the individual and of the conflictual dialogue between man and God (Volovici 24-25). If Shestov continued on the path of religious thought rooted in the Old and New Testaments, Fondane remained more firmly attached to the Jewish spiritual identity. Moreover, Fondane's philosophy has an eclectic approach that defies simple categorization. While influenced by Leon Shestov, his work does not follow a systematic approach and it does not fall neatly into a philosophical school (Acquisto, 69) and "a careful consideration of Fondane's later writings uncovers a strenuous effort to overcome the often purely deconstructive aspects of Shestov's philosophical thought" (Finkenthal 57). The language used by Fondane is effusive, lyrical, tragic and charismatic at the same time; his poetry is "defiantly and triumphantly rooted in the Jewish predicament of exile and wandering" (Fondane, *Cinepoems and Others*).

He was a faithful disciple of the old philosopher and their intellectual friendship continued with the same spiritual and emotional intensity for fifteen years until Shestov's death in 1938 (Volovici 23). After his death Fondane found himself alone and terribly lonely, however, he was set on his own philosophical path: the creation of a new existential philosophy (Finkenthal 57).

Fondane's tragic existentialism finds its literary expression in the image of the isolated and lonely Jew, in his own destiny as a poet. There is an exilic lyricism that permeates Fondane's later poetry. The poems *Ulysses* (1933) and *Titanic* (1937) are dominated by the songs of the solitary individual and permeated by the eternal migrant's sense of alienation. The poet is a "Jewish Ulysses" wandering here and there, tortured by internal conflicts, threatened by a hostile and chaotic universe (Volovici 28). The elements taken from the Bible and Jewish mystics are integrated into a modern poem; they are not conceived as variations on biblical themes, nor as "Jewish" or "religious" lyric poems, but rather as the lyrical testimony of the tragic consciousness. Being

"Jewish" becomes during Fondane's maturity a metaphor for the human condition (Crăciun 61):

> Being deframed, so to speak, from everything familiar, makes for a certain fertile detachment and gives one new ways of observing and seeing. It brings you up against certain questions that otherwise could easily remain unasked and quiescent, and brings to the fore fundamental problems that might otherwise simmer inaudibly in the background. This perhaps is the great advantage, for a writer, of exile, the compensation for the loss and the formal bonus—that it gives you a perspective, a vantage point. (Hoffman)

It is this context in which literature starts acting like a weapon against dislocation, and the artist ends up "translating" one cultural code from one culture to another, assimilating differences and continually changing the reference system between different spaces, identities and cultures, and finally reaching universality.

In one of his last essays, published one year after his death, Fondane speaks of the existentialist thought directly related to prophetic thought and seen as a philosophy of "freedom, possibility, absurd" (Volovici 27). Fondane transforms Shestov's conceptions into an attitude towards life and a form of artistic knowledge but it is through exile that his works achieve a sort of universal spirit.

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CRITICAL THEORY IN LITERARY STUDIES AND BEYOND

■

LA THÉORIE CRITIQUE DANS LES ÉTUDES LITTÉRAIRES ET D'AUTRES DISCIPLINES

InterCulturalia
2019

Critical Theory
in Literary Studies
& Beyond

La théorie critique
dans les études
littéraires et
d'autres disciplines

A RHIZOMATIC ANALYSIS OF POETRY: LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI'S 'THE AIRPLANE'

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The rhizomatic interpretation is a product of postmodern theories. It detaches itself from traditional norms by linking the words of the poem with elements that would normally be far outside its sphere of influence. It is no longer concerned with finding a general meaning of any given text. Stemming from the ideas of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, who believed that reaching an objective, singular truth in any situation is virtually unachievable, this approach asks a different question:

> With this literacy practice, the reader does not seek to form a singular interpretation of the poem itself exactly. This is because the reader's interpretative performance is across a series of connections between the poem and a number of things outside of it. This web-based engagement with a poem involves stylistic analysis in order to lead to an interpretative performance of it – I refer to this approach as performance stylistics. (O'Halloran)

Kieran O'Halloran adapted their approach to poetry, by presenting us with a method of analyzing poems using Deleuze's and Guattari's

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ideas. It is no wonder that this approach ended up being used in interpreting the most subjective part of literature: poetry. It is a very deconstructionist approach that assumes no fixed meaning exists anywhere, encourages the interpreter to build his own web of multiple meanings, while also giving him a large degree of freedom in doing so. There are no restrictions or any sort of subservience to any traditional norm. There are a number of benefits to this: firstly, it greatly increases the number of connections between a word and its meanings, not only because there are no imposed restrictions, but also because the Internet is such an expansive tool. Stylistic analysis is also employed, so as to give a starting point from which the branches of the poem can connect to the Internet. In this way, the readers are free to interpret the meanings of the words as they see fit, while also being confined to the words of the poem.

At this point, one might ask oneself: why should we bring unrelated topics from a Google search into analyzing poetry? To give a short answer, this philosophy is much more expansive, and in no way limited to the study of literature. It is part of a much greater deconstructionist movement that gained traction in the second part of the 20th century, with the aim to show how fickle and unbalanced our conceptions of truth, language and tradition are. Mainly related to language, it postulated that there might be much more to interpreting meaning than simple linguistic messages. Every little linguistic message is also related to other cultural factors:

> On the contrary, not every trait in a rhizome is necessarily linked to a linguistic feature: semiotic chains of every nature are connected to very diverse modes of coding (biological, political, economic, etc.) that bring into play not only different regimes of signs but also states of things of differing status. (Deleuze and Guattari 7)

The approach is also anti-traditional in it its scope and purpose. Tradition is characterized by structure, stability, and a strict set of rules. The rhizomatic interpretation's key tenet is a lack of rules, and a very high degree of freedom. There are no boundaries or walls, and, most importantly, there is also no center. A rhizomatic interpretation can start with a definition of a psychiatric disorder, move on to explaining a civil

war, and end up with an analysis of an apple. The possibilities are endless. This comes into conflict with virtually all of the previous canon of Western thought, which has, time and again, attempted to re-unite vast amounts of knowledge into a sort of coherent structure, to impose limits and order, and to attempt to form a tripartite structure, made of "a truth that depends on a stable, knowing and observing subject, a fixed and knowable object and a neutral system of representation. Yet these stabilities are an hallucination" (Mansfield 143).

For Mansfield, this type of traditional structure takes the form of a tree: it has a definite start, it is firmly rooted, and while its branches can spread out quite a bit, their possibilities of expansion are limited. How stable is this aforementioned tripartite structure? Postmodern theories have shown us that both speech and writing are far less stable than previously thought. Our main method of categorizing and structuring information, the written word, is just a small cog in an infinite machine of meaning that can shift in any direction. Even a small overhead analysis of Derrida's basic tenets is enough to prove this. Moreover, language itself is not linked just with other linguistic elements: there are multiple cultural, political and economic levels to take into consideration as well. With this is mind, it is much easier to make an analogy with the rhizome as a good representation of human knowledge and experience that with the tree. The rhizome, by botanical definition, is characterized by endless possibilities of ramification, in any direction.

> A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and. . . and. . . and. . . " (Deleuze and Guattari 25)

Even a simple Google search is rhizomatic, as it offers no definitive conception of truth, but a myriad of different products, opinions and websites. For example, a word such as "apple" will not only yield the different types of fruit, but also products and concepts related to it, like apple juice, the apple of Eden, where to find magic apples in a video game or the famous tech company who adopted the apple logo. A

keyword is the seed from which multiple interrelated topics sprout for the interpreter, but they can never take the form of a tree; it is impossible to limit a word to its basic meanings, without taking into the account the way it relates to the rest of the world. Without this relation to the wider world, the word would be pointless.

So how does this apply to reading literary texts? Just like with any other piece of human knowledge, applying the rhizomatic concept to it is simple: once the reader is finished with the text in itself, he should understand that it is a mere cog in a massive machine (represented by the world's literary canon or even by the entirety of human knowledge) and that potential connections are everywhere, including but not limited to literature alone. Thus, mere representation is just the starting point, and it can offer no new knowledge, unless the reader goes beyond the context present on the paper and explores other links related to it. From this point of view, literature becomes capable of forming infinite rhizomatic links, and can therefore unlock access to a wealth of information and knowledge that can be used to give entirely new interpretations of the literary text. This approach has numerous benefits for the reader; whether he is a specialist or not, he will gain new knowledge about words and go way beyond their simple representation in the text. Even a single poem stanza can lead to reading a few dozen pages of rhizomatically-related information, which can eventually translate into even longer interpretations. This goes to show how little information a simple representation actually brings, and also reveals how the real thing can be linked to a virtually endless number of adjacent meanings. All representation brings is the most general meaning, which is incomplete and doesn't take into account the reader's opinions. Rather, it expects him to adhere to specific norms:

> The elementary concepts of representation are the categories defined as the conditions of possible experience. These, however, are too general or too large for the real [...]. The fault of representation lies in not going beyond the form of identity, in relation to both the object seen and the seeing subject. (Deleuze 68)

However, simply limiting one's self to the information found on the web is not enough, lest one steers too far from the text itself. If one limits himself just to this, he might end up being swallowed in the endless ocean of information that the Internet provides, and arrive nowhere. There has to be a balancing element, to keep the rhizome from expanding too much in just one direction. According to O'Halloran, working with a language corpus and searching for unusual language can be very productive. Poetry in itself is a medium that promotes a rhizomatic attitude towards the possibilities of language. A very rare collocation, that is found in only a few other places in the corpus, is an obvious carrier of new, original meaning that can add to the overall interpretation. The information gathered on the Internet is now mixed with the rarest collocations found in the corpus:

> That said, in using a large corpus to discern common collocates for a particular word, one can often find collocation which would have been difficult to predict. When a corpus search leads to unpredictable results, this discovery process could be construed as rhizomatic. (O'Halloran 2012)

In order to give an example of this sort of interpretation, I have chosen a poem that relates very much to events from the real world, more specifically from the cultural trauma of September 11, 2001. Written by Lawrence Ferlinghetti, a San Francisco poet, *History of the Airplane* presents a historical perspective of the plane, which slowly degenerates into more and more advanced forms of bombing, and finally culminates in the fiery retribution that took place on 9/11. It is not unusual for some categories of 9/11 poems to enumerate vast amounts of information related to history, war, bloodshed, American exceptionalism, etc.. Thus, they offer a great potential for rhizomatic interpretations, depending on the avenue one chooses to pursue. Right from the first word, the text provides us with an obvious route of interpretation. One key element of the poem is the constant, compulsive repetition of 'and then', 'and so then', at the beginning of each stanza. Given the background theme of this poem (a terrorist attack with no precedent in history which has been categorized as a cultural trauma), I started searching the world wide web

for mental disorders that involve a compulsive desire to repeat the same words. I have found that 'repetitive maladaptive behavior of traumatic origin is characterized by defensive dissociation of the cognitive and emotional components of trauma' (Bowins 2010). In other words, it is a coping mechanism that the brain employs when something is too traumatic to process, and it happens in such a way that the person who does it is completely unaware of it, making it a common trope of trauma literature. It's a classic consequence of a trauma that is repressed, then bubbles up to the surface without the victim's knowledge or approval. The complete lack of punctuation also gives off the effect of a fevered repetition. Extrapolating to Ferlinghetti's poem, all the heroes that had a part to play in the development of the airplane were repressing the idea that the airplane would one day kill millions of people. Nevertheless, this happened, as inventions whose first purposes were peaceful were refashioned into deadly weapons. Thus, for the poet, this amazing invention was an embryo for future trauma from the moment it was created. The initial inventors' name, Wright, most commonly enters in a collocation with their invention, the 'flying machine', with a frequency of 7% (according to data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English), which is also the case in this poem. In the case of very common collocations, there isn't really much to push the interpretation forward. They can be used, however, to make comparisons with the least common collocates related to the words involved. What is altogether alien are the collocations 'kingdom of birds', followed by 'parliament of birds', which show rarely, if at all, in the corpus. Normally, 'kingdom of' is followed most commonly by the words 'God' or 'Heaven', followed then by the names of the nations who are still kingdoms from a political and administrative point of view. The former doesn't show up at all, whereas 'parliament of birds' only shows up in four instances, one of which is the poem itself. This can steer the interpretation towards the idea that man's ideas and language do not belong in the domain of birds at all, and that what he does is unnatural and frowned upon by nature. It indirectly criticizes the industrial and exploitative turn that our civilization took since the advent of the Industrial Age. The assembly of birds 'was freaked out by this man-made bird and fled to heaven' (Ferlinghetti). Nature does not have any desire to accept our metal birds into their fold.

Moreover, 'heaven' enters most commonly in collocation with 'earth', forming a well know opposition that separates the celestial from the mundane. This is a suggestion that the two should not mingle and that it's unnatural for something from one world to go in the other one. What is above does not belong below, and vice-versa. Heaven is a refuge for birds, but not for human-made birds. Moreover, heaven is unreachable with man-made wings. Thus, we have multiple suggestions related to the unnatural behavior of man, the inaccessibility of the heavens, and the disapproval of nature towards our ever-increasing technological ambitions. Further extrapolating to the initial compulsion of repeating, we can also infer that the traumas we create are ours and ours alone and nature is a simple collateral victim. Even before the military planes, the jets and the bombers show up in the text, nature can already foresee what is to come.

Furthermore, there are multiple instances in the poem in which birds actively hide themselves and refuse to be seen as symbols of peace. In the second stanza, 'doves of peace' is actually the most common collocation for the two words, according to the corpus. The fact that they refuse to show themselves further adds to the 'unnatural' interpretation, and also alludes to the fact that nature sees no connection between airplanes and peace, hinting to their dark future as advanced machines of war. Further in the poem, as planes become more and more advanced and mankind perpetuates its traumas of war, the 'the pacific doves were frighted by this strange amphibious bird and hid in the orient sky' (Ferlinghetti). The collocation 'orient sky' is altogether unique, with no mentions in the corpus, and it is the last time when the birds of peace are ever seen in the poem. Due to the tendency of the corpus to consider 'orient' as a verb, I have attempted to search for the most common collocation of 'oriental', and the word 'rug' was the result. Extrapolating on the collocation 'oriental rug', and taking into account the fact that we need to find something related to flight, we can immerse ourselves a little in folklore and think about the magical flying rugs from the Arab stories. They are little more than a myth that people once imagined, but which has been rendered obsolete. They have long disappeared from the orient skies, and so have the birds of peace. From this point of view, the interpretation takes a turn towards a progressive increase in technology

that slowly stifles myth, nature, and tradition. As technology increases, we seem to steer further and further away from the principles of natural order.

We have now reached a step in the poem where the aforementioned traumatic repetitions morph from 'and the'/'and then' to 'and so'. The fifth stanza has a different message to convey right from the start, because the semantic weight of 'and so' leans more towards something that comes after an inevitable conclusion, whereas 'and then' is an enumeration which hints to a story still in progress. In other words, it can signal a sort of point of no return, the end of a chapter and the beginning of another. It is no coincidence that this imprecation comes after the verse 'but the birds of peace were nowhere to be found before or after Hiroshima' (Ferlinghetti). Planes have become too useful and advanced not to be used in war, and the incipient trauma that was subconsciously present throughout the poem has now started to show its face, starting with the World Wars and culminating with the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After humanity split the atom, we were indeed set upon a course of exponential technological advancements that is still ongoing today. It indirectly states that nature loses its influence and disappears in the wake of modern technology. The semantic shift also points out to the fact that the embryonic traumas of the previous ages have now started to manifest across the world, as what started as a peaceful invention slowly transformed into one of the scariest weapons of the modern age. The repressed trauma of the inventors (their nightmares about what these flying machines can become) has now been passed on to those who suffer under the bombardments of modern war planes that 'began to visit their blessings on various Third/Worlds all the while claiming they were searching for doves of/peace' (Ferlinghetti). In general, American expansionism and the questionable ways in which some wars were carried have been constantly criticized by intellectuals all over the world. It is easy to see why some of them blamed the catastrophe of 9/11 on America's own foreign policies.

All in all, it is easy to justify an interpretation based on the psychological disorder of repetition compulsion and trauma repression even before reaching the critical point of the poem. The inevitable backlash takes place soon after, on a 'fine day', on the day when the

World Trade Center was struck down. It is worth noting here the speed with which the last large stanza develops, like a long, cacophonous enumeration that is meant to encompass all the pain and shock of that day into a few dozen words. What does the corpus say about some of the collocations here? At the end, it is said that America became part of the 'scorched earth of the world'. 'Scorched earth' is a rather common collocation according to the corpus, most commonly appearing into the structures such as 'scorched earth policy' and 'scorched earth tactics'. Most of its collocations are related to war and strategy. It is an amazing way to indirectly signify that America has experienced some of the harrowing effects of war carried out with modern technology on its soil. However, on the other hand, 'Skyscraper' does not really collocate with 'America' as no results are shown for the first one hundred entries. If we apply the rhizomatic perspective here, it is as if a very privileged and blue-blooded environment ('Skyscraper America') got hit with something reserved only for the poorer and less privileged environments from around the world, becoming 'scorched earth' just like them. It is a sort of karmic reversal, but the poem does not attempt to lay blame or criticism towards the end. After the impact, it takes a subtler tone, presenting a last, generalized tableau of destruction and suffering. The poem ends with the word 'everywhere', nailing down the generalized feeling of sadness and despair.

To sum up, what have we managed to gain as readers from interpreting the poem this way? We have learned about a psychological disorder, studied the history of the airplane, starting with the Wright brothers and ending with September 11, 2001, and we have also managed to come up with an interpretation that is not that far off from the more 'official' versions: a desperate Third World inflicting chaos and destruction on a culture that is alien to them and constantly wages war on them and exploits their countries. Adding to this, however, we have our own version of a repressed trauma that started with the Wright brothers and was unleashed upon the world in the modern age (the thought that these flying machines would one day inflict great destruction), while also evincing the growing conflict between nature and technology, with the former constantly losing ground to the latter. It's a very creative and expansive type of interpretation that is fun,

educational and limitless in potential, while also showcasing the philosophy of its original authors: meaning doesn't exist on its own, but it forms in relation with everything else.

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Critical Theory in Literary Studies & Beyond

La théorie critique dans les études littéraires et d'autres disciplines

POSTHUMANISM IN *THE LAST RABBIT* BY EMMA DONOGHUE

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"For a month I had been nothing but a body," reflects Mary Toft, the protagonist of Emma Donoghue's short story "The Last Rabbit", and the historical figure who also gives name to Donoghue's collection, *The Woman Who Gave Birth to Rabbits* (2002). Toft's story plays out like an eighteenth-century farce: a simple woman with little to no education manages to trick a bevy of well-reputed doctors (including the royal surgeon of King George I) into believing she has given birth to rabbits. As a result of her attempt to dupe the medical eminences, she becomes an experiment, a freak of nature, "nothing but a body" (Donoghue 21) that requires thorough examination and study until the secret of her monstrous births, or rather miscarriages – all the rabbits being born dead – is revealed. Donoghue's short story shows how Toft's stratagem took on a life of its own, in no small part because women's bodies, and the act of giving birth, have always been connected with deviance and bodily dysfunction. As Mary's sister-in-law reminds her:

> Weren't there a child born a few years back with dog's feet, because the woman was frighted by a dog in her sixth month? And another only last year born with all its organs on the outside, that I myself paid a penny for a look of? (Donoghue 12)

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Therefore, a woman giving birth to fully fledged animals is an image that can be easily integrated in the childbearing imaginarium of past centuries. This paper aims to explore the abject and *in*human aspects of giving birth (as theorized by Julia Kristeva and Patricia Yaeger) that disrupt the woman's articulation as a subject and challenge our notions of personhood, engendering an "animalist" view of the female body and a posthuman perspective on identity and the body. The paper will also try to show that the birthing woman decenters the ideal representation of the human being and supports the proliferation of multiple "humanities" in the posthumanist paradigm.

The case of Mary Toft was infamous enough that it divided public opinion at the time, revealing certain anxieties about the integrity and stability of the human body. As the *Mist's Weekly Journal* reported in 1726 of the case:

> People after all, differ much in their Opinion about this Matter, some looking upon them as great Curiosities, fit to be presented to the Royal Society, etc. others are angry at the Account, and say, that if it be a Fact, a Veil should be drawn over it, as an Imperfection in human Nature (qtd. in Haslam 30-31)

There was, therefore, a sense of collective shame about the affair, precisely because the public was split between regarding the phenomenon as a scientific oddity beyond their understanding and seeing it as an "imperfection", a monstrous deviance that should be hidden away. In that sense, Mary Toft is emblematic of the aforementioned anxiety still entertained about the human body and the construction of the individual in the Age of Enlightenment, an anxiety which finds its echo in the postmodern and posthuman age. The notion of the human being as the center of creation and the Protagorean measure of all things, what Nikolas Rose calls the "unified, coherent, self-centered subject" (6) was cemented by the humanist ideals of the Renaissance wherein the individual was singled out as the standard of nature, the zenith of creation, the Vitruvian Man (Braidotti 13), different

from animals because he could exercise the faculty of reason in order to meditate on his divine origins (Hankins 148).

Man's divine origins are brought into question in the Age of Enlightenment. Michel Foucault notes that there is an underlying tension between Enlightenment and humanism (44), because the former is suspicious of the romance of the latter. By employing reason and doubt as its instruments, the "enlightened" mind questions whether the ideals of humanism are truly reflected in the human being's formation of the self. Humanism, Foucault argues, tends "to color and to justify the conceptions of man to which it is, after all, obliged to take recourse" (44), whereas Enlightened Reason operates on a "principle of a critique and a permanent creation of ourselves in our autonomy" (44). In other words, the Age of Reason believes in proving the supremacy of man on the basis of free reasoning and not divine inspiration. Yet therein lies the problem; if the human being is placed under such scrutiny, the project of his special individuality becomes tenuous to uphold. Mary Toft's contemporaries were compelled to justify human singularity in the face of growing evidence to the contrary, namely the animalist incoherence of the human subject. As Foucault points out, human individuality is artificially *made* to be coherent through a process of examination and categorization:

> The examination as the fixing, at once ritual and "scientific" of individual differences, as the pinning down of each individual in his own particularity (…) clearly indicates the appearance of a new modality of power in which each individual receives as his status his own individuality (…) It is the examination which, by combining hierarchical surveillance and normalizing judgment, assures the great disciplinary functions of distribution and classification (…) the fabrication of cellular, organic, genetic and combinatory individuality (204).

The "project" of individuality becomes more apparent in the Age of Reason. Individuality is produced at a cellular, organic level: the body and mind are subjected to the same practices of surveillance and classification in order to arrive at a category. Similarly, in "The Last Rabbit" Mary Toft is subjected to examinations from the doctors in order

to classify and correct her particularity, reintegrate her within the correct category, or assign her a new one:

> He felt my belly and remarked that it was barely swollen. Then he reached into my dress and squeezed my nipples to see what would come out […] Mr. St. Andre shook back his three rows of lace to the elbow before he reached into me. The rabbit came out on the first tug. It lay in his hand, the skin hanging loose […] He kept feeling my pulse, looking at my tongue, even examining the water in my pot for stains (Donoghue 16, 17, 18).

The examination also operates as a kind of contamination: the royal physician's "lace" cuffs are counterpointed with the grotesque dead animal coming out of the woman's body – a meeting of the eminently civilized and human with the violently unstable and non-human – yet the two spheres often overlap, as the physician's actions are complicit with and heighten the monstrosity of the "births". We are told that Mr. St. Andre's wig "slipped sideways" (Donoghue 17) as an indication that he cannot maintain his professional detachment and that his worldview is being tested. These intrusive examinations also modify Mary's sense of body and self: "I was sore inside from strainings and pokings, and bled more than I had before. I couldn't sleep at night for visions of fields full of rabbits" (Donoghue 19). Soon enough, as a result of the doctors' treatment, she begins to feel animalic and her stratagem becomes a reality: "When I woke up my face was as hot as a coal and there were cramps in my belly like the grip of fingernails. My lies had infected me, I supposed. My counterfeit pains had come true" (Donoghue 22). Such biological overlapping is possible precisely *because* Mary Toft is a woman, and as a woman, she represents a puzzling liminal category for the men of science who surround her. Her individuality is not as easily classified as that of a man, because her "humanity" is historically fraught with inconsistencies.

The very idea of the "human" is an ongoing process that has suffered modification throughout history, being "contingent as to values and location" (Bardotti 24). The word "contingent" carries a particular weight here: the idea of "Man" is not a God-given, natural law; it is

dependent on circumstance and operates as a social construct (24). Therefore, the eternal supremacy of the human over other forms of life must be re-evaluated in the postmodern age, where a poststructural critique aims to "[de-link] the human agent from this universalistic posture, calling him to task, so to speak, on the concrete actions he is enacting" (Bardotti 23). The human being stops being the ultimate standard of life, but becomes one of many standards and one of many possible iterations of sentient existence. As Donna Haraway points out, "organisms possess heterogeneous sets of mental tools, complexly and dynamically put together from genetic, developmental, and learning interactions throughout their lives, not unitary interiors that one either has or does not have" (qtd. in Wolfe 41). As such, there is no coherent unitary interior that legitimizes one's humanity, yet these "unitary interiors" have historically been deemed as absent in people of different genders or race (Braidotti 47).

Mary Toft's case presents such a queer dilemma precisely because the condition of the woman undermines the idea of a "unitary interior", the woman's biology being rife with unstable and heterogeneous processes that blur the divisions of 'human/animal' and 'human/monster' (Creed 27). For a long time, women's "humanity" was called into question because it did not adhere to the humanist vision of the human being: complete, unitary, divine. Women were believed not to have souls, to be of base character, connected to the earth, the animal and the abject (Creed 309). Therefore, women are placed in a position not of reclaiming their humanity, but rather of exposing the "human" as a multifarious construct of plural possibilities. It is within the process of birthing that the woman disarticulates and rearticulates meaning and identity. As Julia Kristeva posits, mothering carries with it a powerful form of abjection because it encapsulates "our earliest attempts to release the hold of the maternal entity even before existing outside of her" (13). The womb signifies the abject as "a vortex of summons and repulsions" (1), a primeval and pre-human space where meaning breaks down as "a new life form [passes] from inside to outside, bringing with it traces of its contamination – blood, afterbirth, faeces" (Creed 190). In other words, the maternal is a site of opposition and attraction which bridges existence and non-existence and offers a liminal state of pre-being. It reconstructs

the "human" as fluid and abject, contaminated and undifferentiated from the organic processes that made him/her/it. The mother undergoes a similar process of disarticulation; as Patricia Yaeger argues, "women splinter the concept of personhood; they become the wound in humanity, for they encounter the world both as speaking and as reproductive beings" (qtd. in Kutzbach, Mueller 152). The mother contains and proliferates pre-human forms of abjection, while remaining a speaking, human subject. Mary Toft experiences the same liminal vulnerability in a more radical fashion as she begins to identify with the rabbits she is supposed to birth:

> At that I began to roar again, as if the pains were doubled. The doctors ran to the bed. I pushed and pushed so my eyes bulged; I could feel the mangled rabbit beginning to slide out (…) My acting grew more desperate, like a strolling player trying to be heard over a crowd. I curled up my fingers, rolled my eyes, and whined like something dying in a trap (Donoghue 17, 21)

Mary enacts outside the body the incoherent processes within the body: by curling her fingers, roaring, rolling and bulging her eyes she enters an animalic state which cannot be divorced from her status as a mother and woman. The grotesque act of having to stuff parts of a dead rabbit inside herself in order for the trick to work only further underlines the breaking down of boundaries, the contamination of the abject, and the inability to separate the human from the non-human in birth. As she recounts at a later time, she begins to feel real cramps that simulate birth, but she likens them to "the grip of fingernails" (Donoghue 22), a recurrence of claws that seek to rearrange her insides. The woman is infected by her own fabrications, revealing them to be truer than she had expected: "My lies had infected me, I supposed. My counterfeit pains had come true" (Donoghue 22). The actress does not need to pretend to be a deviant body, for she already embodies womanhood, the "monstrous-feminine" (Creed 309). As Mary's sister-in-law argues at the beginning of the story, "no man could bear what women must" (Donoghue 12).

The real Mary Toft spoke in her confession to the authorities about suffering multiple miscarriages of children and of rabbits. The inchoate child is indelibly linked with the animal remains of the rabbit. As the real Toft recounts, "I was delivered of a furie monstrous / Birth. The liver and gutz came away first' (qtd. in Harvey *Pain, Touch and Power* para. 1). The description, though referring to rabbits, can easily apply to the defunct child. The birth and miscarriage of dead rabbits therefore is a mirror act, a posthuman expression of grief and loss. Emma Donoghue begins the story with a pregnant Mary Toft who tries to play a prank on her husband, telling him "Tis my time come early, Joshua" (12) only to take out the rabbit she was cooking for lunch from under her skirt. This episode of domestic playfulness is counterpointed later on with a feeling of loss, as Mary contemplates childbirth and expresses frustration and sadness at the inability to give birth to something substantial: "With my last boy I was three days in labour, but at least there was a real child to bring forth, not like this hollowness, this straining over nothing" (20). Mary is subjected to a form of prolonged labor by the relatives and doctors who are waiting for her to deliver the rabbits, and the episode inevitably reminds her of a miscarriage, a "straining over nothing", carrying a body within her only for it to be snatched away at the last moment. The same experience is laconically described in the beginning of the story: "I miscarried of that baby some weeks after, while I was shovelling dung on the common" (Donoghue 12). The abjection of "shovelling dung" cannot be divorced from the later image of "shovelling" rabbits inside herself, replacing one grotesque emptiness with another. Yet, as we have noted above, Mary begins to identify with the rabbit-child inside herself, complicating the traditional articulations of personhood and humanness, forcing the reader to entertain multiple manifestations of the human, across gender and species. Ultimately, the rabbit births do not offer Mary Toft comfort, but rather a physical release from the previous embodiment of miscarriage, allowing for a complex expression of grief and fragmentation. The hoax starts out as a game, a "prank" on her husband, then becomes a deception for pecuniary gains, only to be ultimately transformed into an ambiguous gesture that uproots and redefines the identity of the human woman.

William Hogarth's famous engraving, *Cunicularii or the wise men of Godliman in consultation* (1726) ridicules the famous case, portraying Mary in the parodic position of a Virgin Mary, attended by the "wise men", the Biblical Magi who celebrate the miraculous birth. "Godliman" is also a pun on Mary Toft's town of Godalming and "Cunicularii", though a Latin term referring to "miners" or "those who burrow like rabbits", also alludes to the genital "cunic" and the "cunning" of Mary Toft. Yet, the parody also signals something about the "miracle" of birth: that its sacredness is rooted in the mystery of abjection, of dislocation and disarticulation. A virgin giving birth is just as tenuous as a woman giving birth to rabbits, and yet both speak of the larger, multifaceted Otherness involved in the fact of physical transmutation, the split of creation. In that sense, both the Virgin and Mary Toft offer a glimpse into the posthuman.

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M.H. ABRAMS' CRITICAL MECHANISMS

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This paper is intended to be a brief survey of M.H. Abrams' view on the history of literature and critical thinking. It is true that ever since Plato there have been countless approaches to art in general and to literature in particular, but when in a particular scientific field are gathered a significant number of phenomena to be studied, then it becomes useful, even necessary, I would suggest, for researchers to try to organise or to group them in one way or another. As far as literary criticism is concerned, such a person is M.H. Abrams. What we are specifically interested in this survey is the way(s) in which the essence of literature and the role of the author are understood.

M.H. (Meyer Howard) Abrams was both a professor and literary critic and, as such, he has had a significant influence on the recent scholars. He came from a family of Russian Jewish immigrants but he studied at Harvard University. He began teaching at Cornell University in 1945 and among his former students were such intellectual figures as the novelist Thomas Pynchon and the critic Harold Bloom.

We are traditionally accustomed to referring to various approaches to art with reference to the artistic or cultural movement that they are associated with. This is the case of such methodologies as neo-classic

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criticism, Romantic criticism, structuralist criticism, psychoanalytic criticism and so on. Abrams thought about this and found it useful to come up with a new way of grouping the various approaches to artistic products. It is a more technical way and it is based on the privileged relationships established among the components of the artistic act (Abrams 6). More specifically, an artistic act comprises four essential constituent elements. The first and the most important one is, of course, the artistic work, *the text* itself, the object of any critical endeavour. Second, the work is the achievement of *an artist*, who focuses on and is inspired by some certain portions of reality; this is what Abrams calls *the universe*, a rather misleading term in my opinion. And, finally, there is *the audience*, the people that will respond to the text.

Each of the last three elements is related to the artistic work and it is each of these relationships that constitutes the basis of the four critical theories or orientations that Abrams distinguishes: *mimetic theories* (focused on the relationship between the artistic work and reality), *pragmatic theories* (concerned with the interaction between the text and its receiving audience), and *expressive theories* (relating the artistic product to the artist). Besides these three approaches, there is also a fourth one, represented by the *objective theories*, dealing with the relationship between the text and itself. So, each theory focuses on the nature and value of the artistic work by relating it to one of the other three elements and each theory, consequently, grants each of these elements various degrees of importance and relevance in the process of understanding (and assessing) the artistic product.

The mimetic theories illustrate the orientation that explains the artistic work as an imitation of various aspects of reality. The name comes from the term *mimesis*, which is the Greek word for "imitation". The mimetic conception of literature is "the most primitive aesthetic theory" (Abrams 8) and was created by the founders of Western philosophical thought, Plato and Aristotle. It is based on the understanding that literature is an imitation of reality, which has become a sort of commonplace in many books of art criticism and theory. However, this formulation is extremely imprecise and may lead to an incorrect understanding of the way in which literature functions. If we look up this word in a dictionary, we are likely to find that it means "to

duplicate, to copy, to reproduce, to follow as a model". Now, which of these meanings is the right one/ one applicable here? The answer is to be found in a passage in Aristotle's *Poetics*, where the ancient theoretician distinguishes between a historian and a poet: "the difference is that the one [the historian] tells of things that have been and the other of such things as might be" (Aristotel 76). Therefore, a writer does not narrate real events nor does he evoke real characters; this is the historian's task. Instead, a writer creates plot lines and characters that might exist in real life. Thus, he imitates the way in which life actually functions: how people feel, how they interact, how they react to various circumstances, etc. In essence, according to Aristotle, what a literary text contains should be characterised by verisimilitude, the characters and their actions should be plausible, believable.

The second critical orientation identified by M.H. Abrams is that which is illustrated by what he calls pragmatic theories. These theories are focused on the relationship between the artistic piece and the audience receiving it. First of all, we should say that pragmatic criticism corresponds to the neo-classicist understanding of art. The term *neo-classical* as it is used with reference to the history of English literature means the New Classical. The neo- (or new) classical theorists are the ones that admire the artistic achievements of the classical world, they try to understand, to systematize and to imitate the elements, the rules, and the reasons why the classical works were so great and so influential. This is a deliberate and self-conscious act. According to M.H. Abrams, the series of neo-classicist theoreticians begins with the Roman Horace (1st century BC) and the Greek Longinus (1st century AD), they continue during the Renaissance with Sir Philip Sidney and then in the British Neo-classical Age with Alexander Pope, John Dryden, and Samuel Johnson. All these people look back admiringly to the artistic and theoretical works of the ancient Classical Age.

M.H. Abrams believes that the coordinates of pragmatic criticism find their origins in the classic theory of rhetoric. Rhetoric is oriented towards the effects that a text is meant to achieve on its readers/ listeners. So, it is directed to the same text-audience relationship that we are interested in here. Horace's *Ars Poetica* is considered the classical example of rhetoric criticism on poetry (Abrams 16). Here the poet is

instructed on how to maintain the reader's attention and how to please the audience. According to Abrams, Horace stresses three effects that a text is supposed to have on its readers: *prodesse* (to teach/ to instruct), *delectare* (to please), and *movere* (to move, to stir emotions). The importance of these functions varied in time and from one theoretician to another. For Horace, pleasing is considered more important than the didactic value. A few centuries later, for most Renaissance critics such as Sir Philip Sidney, the moral function becomes of primary importance, whereas producing delight and pleasure were seen as secondary (Abrams 16). However, starting with Dryden and through the 18th century, creating pleasure became the chief end, followed by the didactic one.

In the neo-classical aesthetic theory, the understanding of art as imitation is still a basic principle. One of the important theoreticians of the Neo-classical Age, Samuel Johnson makes this extremely clear in his writing, particularly in his text *Preface to Shakespeare*, which is considered a monument of neo-classic criticism. In his evaluation of Shakespeare's plays, the mimetic criterion is the most important one. "Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of *general* nature. (Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied)… Shakespeare is above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature, the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirrour of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world" (qtd. in Abrams 20). Thus, Shakespeare's plays have passed the test of time because they contain "just representations of general nature", in the sense that they sampled human feelings, passions, tendencies that are recognisable in man in all historical periods. Shakespeare held up his mirror to what essentially defines human nature.

The pragmatic attitude was the main aesthetic attitude for several centuries, from the time of Horace up to the 18th century. In ancient times it aimed at educating the speaker so that he could have the desired effect upon his audience. In time, it gradually took into account some elements of the speaker. In the 17th century, for instance, Hobbes and Locke focused on the psychological constitution of the artist. The stress was

little by little shifted from the imitation of the external world to the artist's "natural genius, creative imagination, and emotional spontaneity" (qtd. in Abrams p. 21) to the detriment of his reason and his art's rules and constraints. The audience was gradually moved into the background and the poet was brought into the foreground.

The third orientation is illustrated by the expressive theories and corresponds to the Romantic understanding of the nature of art and the role of the artist. In the *Preface* to *Lyrical Ballads* (the Romantic manifesto), William Wordsworth defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (598). Nearly all Romantic critics thought of the literary work in relation to the writer, so the artist becomes the major generator of art. According to the expressive theory, the creative process is dominated by the artist's emotions, which are expressed in the artistic work. The external reality is basically left aside. However, when aspects of the external world are evoked, their image is either used as a generator of a particular inner content or it is moulded by the artist's emotional state. In the same *Preface*, Wordsworth states that poetry "proceeds whence it ought to do, from the soul of Man, communicating its creative energies to the images of the external world" (qtd. in Abrams 22). Therefore, in Romantic criticism the main source of poetry is an internal one, it's the poet's emotional material, unlike in the case of the neo-classical understanding. We may also notice that the content of the artistic piece becomes personal, the focus is shifted from the general to the particular, from what is generally possible to what the individual artist is experiencing.

John Stuart Mill in an essay written in 1833, entitled *What Is Poetry?* defined poetry in a similar way: "the expression or uttering forth of feeling" (qtd. in Abrams 23). He also abolishes several great commonplaces of the critical, classical and neo-classical tradition. Thus, according to Mill (qtd. in Abrams 23), a first element that is subject to change in Romanticism concerns the poetic genres. More specifically, Mill reinterprets the classic and neo-classic rankings of various literary genres. While Aristotle considered tragedy as the highest form of poetry with the plot as its core, the later neo-classic critics viewed "epic and tragedy" as the king and queen of poetic forms (Abrams 24). However, with Mill these literary types are "overthrown" and replaced by lyrical

poetry, whose subject matter is made up of human emotions. Consequently, the epic (narrative) poem is considered non-poetic, as it can only serve as a frame to some lyrical passages. According to him, poetry should only be used for lyrical pieces, i.e., for texts that convey emotional material. Another element that is reinterpreted in Mill's theory is the external world. Thus, Mill rejects poetry intended to evoke external reality: poetry is not meant to be descriptive. The only accepted descriptions are those that convey feelings, or when the described object appears as the projected equivalent of an inner state. So, reality is not important in itself, it is elevated to the rank of symbol that suggests an emotional content, a practice which anticipates symbolist works. The audience, too, is seen in a new light, different from the neo-classical perspective. As already stated, in the neo-classical aesthetic theory, the audience was an element that the text was meant to influence or to act upon in some way. In expressive theories, the audience is eliminated and the only receiver of the text is the poet himself. According to Mill, if a text is intended to convey ideas or feelings to other individuals, i.e., to produce effects upon other persons, this text is to be disqualified as poetry and merely becomes a piece of rhetoric. So, the expression of feelings in a text is seen as an end in itself.

Wordsworth stated in his *Preface* that "Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men" (608) and that each poem "has a worthy purpose", which is "to produce excitement in co-existence with an over-balance of pleasure" (609). Percy Bysshe Shelley, on the contrary, compared the poet to a nightingale singing in the dark "to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds" (Shelley, 680). So, Wordsworth, as a poet belonging to the first period of Romanticism, still retains from neo-classicism the attention to the pragmatic effect of literature to its audience. Shelley, on the other hand, illustrates a later Romantic phase, by anticipating the modernist disregard of any pragmatic intention of the artist.

The fourth critical orientation refers to what M.H. Abrams calls objective theories. If the previous approaches look at literary texts and assess them in relation to various components of the artistic act (the world, the audience, the artist), the objective theory considers the text in isolation from any external element and looks at it in relation to itself. The artistic piece is understood as a self-sufficient entity, made up of a

number of constituent parts, which are interrelated: each of them is seen as having a certain function within the containing whole. Each part is judged according to the role it has for the entire text to function properly and convey meaning.

Historically and aesthetically, the objective orientation corresponds to the modernist understanding of art. Modernist theoreticians believe that a text is to be explored as a heterocosm (an alternative universe), as a self-sufficient universe, independent of our world, whose end is no longer to instruct nor to please, but simply to exist (Abrams 26). The American writer Edgar Allan Poe stated in the theoretical essay *The Poetic Principle* that if we could take an honest look into our souls, we might see that a "poem which is a poem and nothing more—this poem written solely for the poem's sake" (qtd. in Abrams 27). We look at a poem *per se*, for the poem's sake. We basically deal here with what is commonly known as "art for art's sake". An artistic work is understood as having no practical utility, no practical end; it is not meant to convey any moral or political idea. On the contrary, its production and reception are disinterested, which means that it is seen as autonomous, in isolation from both external causes and ulterior motives/ ends. Autonomy is also the aesthetic value: the value of art is essentially aesthetic, which is separated from any moral or political intention.

The artistic work is also autonomous, cut off from all the other external elements in the sense of its focus. It is scripto-centric (Cuţitaru 180), i.e., focused on itself, on its creation or on its own various component elements. Literature becomes thus "narcissistic" (Bădulescu 34), symbolically, of course. This modernist aesthetic perspective is subtly incorporated in James Joyce's masterpiece *Ulysses*. As we know, the novel is focused not on the epic plot, as traditional literature is. Aristotle in particular, one of the greatest voices of tradition, drew our attention to the importance of the plot. *Ulysses*, however, disregards the epic element and focuses instead on the stylistic dimension. Thus, we are interested here not in "what" is narrated, but in "how" this is done. The novel seems primarily concerned with this structural element, i.e., one of its inner components, instead of the mimetic attention to reality, which is external to literary art.

I will conclude this brief survey by saying that M.H. Abrams was one of the people that contributed significantly to our understanding of literature. First of all, he came up with this new way of understanding the various critical orientations throughout the centuries through this interesting classification. Secondly (maybe even more important), he also facilitated our access to the literary text itself, because he was the founder of what we have today as the *Norton Anthology to Literature*. So, we owe him quite a great deal.

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"FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE WAS A CANNIBAL, YOU KNOW": HYPERREALITY AND CONSUMING BODIES IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S *THE EDIBLE WOMAN*

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In many of her novels, Margaret Atwood explores the possibility of fulfillment within a solipsistic system underpinned by the endless reproduction of its own norms. In her first novel, *The Edible Woman* (1969), consumerism signals the many ways in which power relations and norms are "packaged" so as to exert societal control over the individual. Framed as a Bildungsroman of young womanhood in 1960s Canada, the novel foregrounds consumption and consumerism as metaphors for the construction of female *Body* and *Identity* in postmodern contexts. This paper focuses on the protagonist, Marian, and her attempts to negotiate her relationship with the consumption of *Body* and body-related representations. The deconstruction of Marian's consumerist practices will draw on feminist and cultural theory, focusing on the *Abject*, *simulation* and *hyperreality*, and *symbolic violence*.

In her 1982 work, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Kristeva posits the Abject as the repellent *Other* ("object") one must reject in order to "define oneself as subject" (Gross qtd. in Kriebernegg 57). This process

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whereby "the subject must disavow part of itself in order to gain a stable self" (Gross qtd. in Kriebernegg 57) is likened to the child's independence from the mother's body, and the shift from the symbiotic to the symbolic realm (McAfee 48). *Abjection* is in turn defined as the destabilization of boundaries between the subject and the object, between "I" and "the Other": "It is thus not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" (Kristeva 4).

In *Embodying the Monster: Encounters with the Vulnerable Self*, Margrit Shildrick uses Kristeva's theory to reinforce the idea of *the Female Body* as site of abjection: "Women's bodies, paradigmatically, and by elision, women themselves, exemplify an indifference to limits evidenced by such everyday occurrences such as menstruation, pregnancy, lactation . . . and are [thus] out of control, uncontained, unpredictable and leaky: in short – monstrous" (31). The *abject* inherent in the Female Body is further amplified by the contradictory expectations placed on women's bodies by patriarchal gender roles, as desirable femininity is defined as both "thinness and spirituality", and "sexuality and motherliness" (Rainwater 86).

In this context of flawed womanhood, simulative practices offer versions of enhanced femininity that are to be consumed in an attempt to attain the "clean, proper body" (Kristeva 11). Drawing on Guy Debord's theory of postmodern society as "an accumulation of spectacles" (Debord qtd. in Baudrillard 22), Baudrillard sets forth the emergence of a third order of simulation – *hyperreality* (83). Assessing post-war society, Debord noticed a growing interest in *watching* rather than *doing* things. Likewise, Baudrillard underlines those mimetic representations of reality which become more satisfying than reality itself. This form of enhanced reality is buttressed by violent incentivization. Coined by Bourdieu in the 1970s, *symbolic violence* implies hegemonic, non-physical forms of violence perpetrated upon the individual by means of reproduction of social norms (Bourdieu qtd. in Adkins 7). Symbolic violence seeks to maintain normative representations of gender and class, and its reliance on the unconscious repetition of norms renders it indisputable to its subjects (Bourdieu qtd. in Adkins 7).

By lamenting repugnant dentistry as early as the first lines, characters lay claim to *abjection* as a primary mode of female expression. The rhetoric of deeply disturbing bodies (and body parts) may be steeped in profuse physical detail ("soggy", "abscess", "drool") (Kriebernegg 56), but characters do not fail to acknowledge their reliance on fantasy and imagination: "'You have no idea how soggy it is', she said, 'having to go through twenty conversations about the insides of people's mouths. The most reaction I got out of them was when I described an abcess I once had. They positively drooled'" (Atwood 3).

Remarkably, the abjectifiable *Body* (Mason 17) is constructed within the realm of consumerist spaces, such as Marian and Ainsley's rented house. Marian's choice of words paints the 1960s home as a space for negotiating hostility between women, and as such, it articulates Marian's anxiety over female abjection: "We get along by a symbiotic adjustment of habits and with a minimum of that pale-mauve hostility you often find among women...By such mutual refraining...we manage to preserve a reasonably frictionless equilibrium" (Atwood 8-9). Marian's representation of ideal womanhood is also fuelled by her vicarious, simulative consumption of mass media images, meant to reinforce the dominant "system of representation" (Schroeder 8). Ironically, Marian's idea of becoming a "temperate", *non-abjectifiable body* involves the consumption of *abject* imagery, thus highlighting the dichotomical nature of female gender roles (Hekma, Giami 17):

> At the age of ten I wrote a temperance essay for a United Church Sunday-school competition, illustrating it with pictures of car-crashes, diagrams of diseased livers, and charts showing the effects of alcohol upon the circulatory system; I expect that's why I can never take a second drink without a mental image of a warning sign printed in coloured crayons and connected with the taste of tepid communion grapejuice. This puts me at a disadvantage with Peter; he likes me to try and keep up with him. (Atwood 9-10)

As the novel seems to indicate, women seeking self-agency in the 1960s were confronted with a paradoxical situation, as the job market and the domestic sphere often intersected. Marian herself works for a company specializing in food marketing and consumer response

(Atwood 12), and her ambiguous job description allows her an insight into consumerist practices: "A squashed housefly was scotch-taped to the bottom of the letter. . . The main thing, I knew, was to avoid calling the housefly by its actual name" (26). Significantly, Marian uses such practices in order to reframe the abjection of physical abuse (nonconsensual sexual intercourse in a bathtub) as a romantic experience: "But the bathtub? Possibly one of the murder mysteries he read as what he called 'escape literature' . . . The bathtub as coffin . . . 'Suicide', they'd all say. 'Died for love.' And on summer nights our ghosts would be seen gliding along the halls . . . clad only in bath towels" (69). Furthermore, Marian transfers the consumerist logic subject/object to her relationship dynamics so as to shift the master/servant duality and tackle gender inequality: "He was treating me as a stage-prop; silent but solid, a two dimensional outline. He wasn't ignoring me, as perhaps I had felt. . . he was depending on me!" (82).

Likewise, the abjection of food consumption in relation to female identity permeates workplace rhetoric. Marian uses the female *Abject* to describe the overt use of her appetite towards economic purposes ("Ah, Marian, you're just in time. I need another pre-test taster for the canned rice pudding study, and none of the ladies seem very hungry this morning") (Atwood 11), the condition of female *Others* ("[The ladies] squatted at their desks, toad-like and sluggish, blinking and opening and closing their mouths") (11), and her own position as a woman within the workforce ("The company is layered like an ice-cream sandwich, with three floors: the upper crust, the lower crust, and our department, the gooey layer in the middle") (13).

The ambiguous relationship with non-cosmeticized versions of womanhood and motherhood reflects the fetishization of the abject *Other* as part of the construction of the *Self*. Upon visiting her high school friend (pregnant with her third child) (Atwood 29, 37), the protagonist reminisces over Clara's former "image", and reveals her own fantasies of femininity (Howells 44): "[She was] a tall fragile girl who was always getting exempted from Physical Education. In that classroom full of oily potato-chip-fattened adolescents she was everyone's ideal of translucent perfume-advertisement femininity . . . I had thought of her in connection

with the ladies sitting in rose-gardens on tapestries. . . I've always been influenced by appearances" (Atwood 36).

Since Marian and Clara meet within the consumerist confines of Clara's home, it is only natural that Marian use consumption metaphors to describe her friend's new "image". In order to render her disappointment with Clara's lack of femininity, Marian needs to use language that conveys Clara's *otherness*, and therefore resorts to non-human metaphors. The picture is one of perverted, monstrous motherhood (Shieff 224): "[N]ow in her seventh month she looked like a boa-constrictor that had swallowed a watermelon . . . [She looked] like a strange vegetable growth, a bulbous tuber that had sent out four thin white roots and a tiny pale-yellow flower (Atwood 30-1). Clara's is an abject consumption, one that cannot be inscribed in *motherhood* gender roles unless assigned to the mythological stereotype of the Devouring Mother (Neumann qtd. in Creed 105). What Marian uses to resist this abjection is yet another stereotype perpetuated by "visual consumption" (Schroeder 5) – the nourishing mother (also enclosed in the nurse advert): "I stared for a long time at an advertisement with a picture of a nurse in a white cap and dress. She had a wholesome, competent face and she was holding a bottle and smiling. The caption said: *Give the Gift of Life*" (Atwood 121) (Baker 628).

Marian's perpetual reliance on mass media for the negotiation of body image posits her as a *consumer of fantasies*. Faced with the prospect of marrying her partner Peter (and with a gender role that requires her to be at once sexual and modest, active and passive) (Rainwater 86), Marian needs to find the embodiment that resolves these dichotomies, and she finds it in the construction of a fantasy world where she can become a consumable object (Rutherford 82). Nevertheless, the consumption of female, as opposed to male corporeality, is culturally regarded as a deviant appetite, as women's bodies themselves are unstable, "monstrous and leaky" (Shieldrick 31). This dichotomy leads to Marian's choice of hyperreality (Baudrillard 17), and is best rendered by her depictions of female and male corporeality:

> What peculiar creatures [these women] were; and the continual flux between the outside and the inside, taking things in, giving them out,

> chewing, words, potato-chips, burps, grease, hair, babies, milk, excrement, cookies, vomit, coffee, tomato-juice, blood, tea, sweat, liquor, tears, and garbage . . . she felt suffocated by this thick sargasso-sea of femininity . . . she wanted something solid, clear: a man; she wanted Peter back in the room so that she could put her hand out and hold on to him to keep from being sucked down. (Atwood 206)

It is clear that Marian needs to find a space which both circumvents female abjection and allows her to objectify herself without undergoing any of the abject biological processes she associates with "femininity" and eating ("chewing", "burping", "vomiting", defecation) (Warin 151). Like all consumerist spaces, hyperreality provides her with a solution to abjection – Marian initially survives without responding to the "abject" needs of her body, and only by means of "clean and proper" (Kristeva 11) images of her corporeality. As such, hyperreal versions of the body, purged of biology and its abjections, give the impression of self-containment and stability: "Marian gazed down at the small silvery image reflected in the bowl of the spoon: herself upside down, with a huge torso narrowing to a pinhead at the handle end. She tilted the spoon and her forehead swelled, then receded. She felt serene" (Atwood 179).

Hyperreality as a representational mode relies on the loss of originals (Baudrillard 54), and as such, it enables Marian to indulge her fantasies and replace what she perceives as "unclean" corporeality with "clean" representations of femininity, such as dolls (Howells 43): "She saw herself in the mirror between [the dolls] for an instant as though she was inside them, inside both of them at once, looking out" (Atwood 275). As she advances into hyperreality, she starts equating herself with "objects" of consumption, thus echoing her desire to cater to Peter's interest in hunting (Atwood 79) and to become the object of "male preoccupation" (Rutherford 73): "These days however he would focus his eyes on her face, concentrating on her as though if he looked hard enough he would be able to see through her flesh and her skull and into the workings of her brain" (Atwood 182).

However, Marian's abjection of hunger does not merely reflect the anorectic's mimicry of a cultural ideal of femininity (Brain 304); it can

also represent a redemptive performance whereby she acknowledges her own complicity in an unequal relationship built on fantasy and silence. Her own body becomes a testament to this form of "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu qtd. in Adkins 7): "He raised the camera and [adjusted] the lens, getting her in focus… Her body had frozen, gone rigid. She couldn't move, she couldn't even move the muscles of her face as she stood and stared into the round glass lens pointing towards her, she wanted to tell him not to touch the shutter but she couldn't move…" (Atwood 291). This act of consumption can be characterized as fluid and impossible to be contained in the consumed/consumer opposition (Palumbo 22). Marian's attempts to trace the original nature of consumption result, at best, in the deconstruction of the prey/predator dichotomy: "Marian was further confused by the fact that she didn't exactly know whether an early Christian was being thrown to the lions, or an early lion to the Christians" (Atwood 148).

The protagonist's contradictory attitude towards consumption resists resolution – she is by turns disgusted and tempted by the abjection of consuming bodies. She first finds the ways of human consumption repellent ("Marian was watching Millie as she stowed away her steak-and-kidney pie, methodically, like putting things in a trunk") (Atwood 135), then contemplates the idea that "with lots of careful research, they'll eventually be able to breed [cows] . . . so that they're born already ruled and measured" (185), and eventually becomes invested in the abjection of consumption. As a female consumer/consumed, she comes to the realization that what she took to be the abject fluidity of "femaleness" is the fluidity of all matter:

> [The sink] was full of unwashed dishes . . . vestiges of things that had ceased to look recognizable [they were] spotted with bluish mould . . . She did not want to disturb anything for fear of discovering what was going on out of sight . . . She had a sudden urge to make a clean sweep, to turn the taps full on and squirt everything with liquid detergent; her hand even moved forward; but then she paused. Perhaps the mould had as much right to life as she had (271).

The question arises as to whether Marian has managed to integrate (rather than resist) abjection (Probyn 125) as part of her identity struggles. If hyperreality is a heightened form of reality, then Marian manages to produce a hyperreal version of her body. Marian's final self-representation resonates with the woman-as-dessert stereotype (Hines 145); her cake replica (Patterson 2) represents the safe edible that invites the consumption of female bodies by stripping off their sexuality (Barthes 85):

> She set about clothing it, filling the cake decorator with bright-pink icing . . . She kept extending, adding to top and bottom, until she had a dress of sorts. In a burst of exuberance she added a row of ruffles around the neckline, and more ruffles at the hem of the dress. She made a smiling lush-lipped mouth and pink shoes to match. Finally she put five pink fingernails on each of the amorphous hands (…) Her creation gazed up at her, its face doll-like and vacant. (Atwood 341-342)

All things considered, it would seem that hyperreality cannot "purge" physicality without further reinforcing it. Upon meeting with Peter's refusal to consume her in hyperreal form (Atwood 344), Marian embraces abjection and consumes herself (Atwood 345). This form of self-cannibalism (Wijnants 13) seems to reimagine abjection as empowerment, on the one hand, and consumption as cyclical and self-reflexive, on the other hand. Lastly, the consumer/consumed barrier deconstructs itself, acknowledging the arbitrariness in hierarchies of bodies, power, and consumption (Adams 50).

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NABOKOV'S PALETTE: BLUE AND ITS SHADES IN THE WRITER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PROSE

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS

The present paper is centred around the artistic prose of one of the best-known 20th-century writers, Vladimir Nabokov. We have subjected to our analysis three of the author's pieces of writing, and namely his autobiographical novels "Conclusive Evidence" (the first English version published in 1951), "*Другие берега*" (its self-translation into Russian, 1954) and "Speak, Memory" (a longer, revised English version, 1967). The reason for the decision to include all these novels into our analysis, turning it into a comparative one, is not difficult to see: Nabokov's texts differ to a large extent. They can undoubtedly be called three separate works, three variations on the same topic. The first English novel constructed a carcass for narration, amplified in the second English version which offers plentiful details and presents a thorough research of Nabokov's past. As far as the Russian text is concerned, it is remarkable for its numerous divergences as compared to its English counterparts – the writer both adds and eliminates whole passages, even chapters, and artistically processes and edits the English text when translating it into Russian. Nevertheless, the fact that the three novels follow the same

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narrative lines and their content corresponds more or less strictly allows us to perform a comparative analysis of these versions, bringing into the limelight the changes Nabokov made, along with the factors causing them.

In what follows, a few remarks should be made in reference to colour terms in Nabokov's artistic prose. As has already been demonstrated in several papers in the field (see, for example, Бакуменко 2006; Булавина 1993; Чеснокова 1989; Козловская 1995; Носовец 2002; Прокофьева 1992; Шульмействер 1989), the author's writings abound in words denoting colour. It is also important to mention that the colour terms encountered on his pages are far from being ordinary and uninteresting. An extremely powerful tool that adds to the expressivity of the text, they also represent one of the key elements that shape and mould narration. It follows from what has just been said that a detailed analysis of Nabokov's colour words contributes to a better understanding of the author's purport, as well as reveals more about how he perceived the world around him.

As far as the present paper is concerned, we have chosen to carry out a detailed analysis of the terms denoting blue and its shades – one of the most important colours in both English and Russian cultures that has acquired multiple associations in course of history. Thus, the first step of our endeavour would be to carry out a lexicographical analysis of the terms denoting blue in order to compare and contrast the way they are perceived by the native speakers of English and Russian to the way Nabokov sees them.

BLUE AND ITS TINTS IN THE ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

As our recent comparative lexicographical analysis has shown (see Polozova 2013), the colour blue is equally important for both English and Russian speakers. The connotations its terms have acquired are both meliorative and pejorative. In English, colour terms denoting blue and its tints tend to be perceived both positively and negatively – they are usually associated with the sky, beauty, purity and, at the same time, with depression, disease or dark mystery. As far as the Russian language

is concerned, a substantial difference is bound to arise: English has just one basic colour term for this part of the spectrum, whereas in Russian there are two – one for the darker and one for the lighter shade of it. Thus, the word for the darker tint – *синий* – has proved to possess not only meliorative, but also pejorative connotations (when it describes cold, illness and defects); it develops both positive and negative cultural associations. As for the word for the lighter tint (*голубой*), it is a more poetic term which has acquired predominantly meliorative connotations, being associated with positive phenomena.

BLUE AND ITS TINTS IN "CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE", "ДРУГИЕ БЕРЕГА" AND "SPEAK, MEMORY": A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In what follows, we are going to turn to the above mentioned novels and present the list of all colour terms denoting blue in Nabokov's palette in both English and Russian, as well as the number of occurrences of each particular lexeme or word combination. Such organization of the table is accounted for by the fact that there is no way to establish a strict correspondence between English and Russian terms in the three novels. Therefore, our goal here is to reveal the variety of all direct and indirect terms denoting blue and its shades in "Conclusive Evidence", "Другие берега" and "Speak, Memory" rather than to present the way they correlate.

Table 1. The list of colour terms denoting blue in "Conclusive Evidence", "Другие берега" and "Speak, Memory"

List of terms in "Conclusive Evidence"			List of terms in "Другие берега"			List of terms in "Speak, Memory"	
blue	29		Синий	20		blue	36
navy-blue	3		Голубой	16		navy-blue	4
pale-blue	3		Бирюзовый	4		azure	4
bright-blue	2		темно-синий	3		pale blue	3
dark-bluish	2		черничный	3		iris	3
inky	2		бледно-голубой	2		pale-blue	2

bruise	2		синева	2		light-blue	2
lilac	2		синеватый	2		dark-bluish	2
sapphire	2		голубизна	2		bright blue	2
bluish	2		лазурь	2		bluish	2
misty-blue	1		синяк	2		sapphire	2
light-blue	1		ирис	2		lilac	2
purplish-blue	1		пышно-синий	1		bruise	2
china-blue	1		снежно-синий	1		ink	2
dove-blue	1		влажно-голубой	1		inky	2
dark-blue	1		облачно-голубой	1		columbine	2
fish-blue	1		нежно-голубой	1		blue-and-yellow	1
purple-blue	1		бледно-голубой	1		dark-blue	1
cobalt-blue	1		нежно-голубоватый	1		blue-papered	1
blue-papered	1		серебристо-голубой	1		blue-coated	1
blue-white	1		светло-голубой, цвета молочной чашки	1		blue-nosed	1
blue-and-yellow	1		шелковисто-лазоревый	1		blue-windowed	1
blue-nosed	1		сине-желтый	1		blue-white	1
blue-black	1		синеющий	1		purplish-blue	1
blue-coated	1		синеный	1		snow-blue	1
turquoise-veined	1		синеоконный	1		china-blue	1
sky-colored	1		васильковый	1		dove-blue	1
sea-bright	1		сиреневый	1		misty-blue	1
pale blue	1		чернилосный	1		fish-blue	1
light blue	1		посиневший	1		purple-blue	1
silvery blue	1		молочный	1		sky-colored	1
sickly blue	1		лазоревый	1		sea-bright	1
ink stained	1		аквамариновый	1		acquamarine-	1

						eyed	
dim, dreamy blue	1		ультрамариновый	1		turquoise-veined	1
bruised black	1		сапфирный	1		*nouveau-riche* blue	1
sea water	1		черно синеть	1		bloated blues	1
turquoise	1		синеть	1		light blue	1
azure	1		нездоровый синий цвет	1		sickly blue	1
glaucous	1		синие морские (глаза)	1		cobalt blue	1
indigo	1		синева	1		dim, dreamy blue	1
blueness	1		синька	1		silvery blue	1
ink	1		просинь	1		indigo blue	1
bruising	1		морская синь	1		turquoise	1
iris	1		синяя голубизна	1		*bleu*	1
blueberry	1		синяк кляксы	1		indigo	1
columbine	1		кубовая окраска	1		blueness	1
campanula	1		чернила	1		glaucous	1
bilberry	1		море	1		bruising	1
scabious	1		гортензия	1		bruised black	1
bluebell	1		васильки	1		blue palemonium	1
cornflower	1		скабиоза	1		ink stained	1
whortleberry	1		колокольчик	1		blue-black nymphalids	1
hydrangea	1		аквилия	1		blue libellula	1
huckleberry	1		васильки	1		campanula	1
Campbell's bluebird	1		голубика	1		*dimny iris*	1
pate tender of an impeccable sky	1		голубянка	1		bluebottle	1

	с фиалковыми темнотами	1		whortleberry	1
	pate tender (род фарфора) безоблачного неба	1		bluebell	1
				scabious	1
				bilberry	1
				blueberry	1
				hydrangea	1
				thundercloud	1
				huckleberry	1
				cornflower	1
				Campbell's Bluebird	1
				pate tender of an impeccable sky	1

These lists clearly demonstrate the fact that numerous colour terms denoting blue stand out in the analysed novels not only due to their frequency, but also due to their variety. Thus, the number of colour terms used in "Conclusive Evidence", "Другие берега" and "Speak, Memory" is 56, 58 and 67 respectively – figures that reflect the increase in the overall length of the above mentioned texts. As for the typological aspect of the colour terms included in Table 1, there are both direct and indirect colour terms, simple and compound lexemes which belong to different parts of speech such as adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs and participles (for more details, see Chirilă, 2015). As has already been mentioned, it is hardly possible to establish a correspondence of any kind, identifying the pairs of counterpart colour terms. Major divergencies reveal themselves not only in the cases when they are perfectly justifiable (for instance, when the English text is translated into Russian), but also in the re-writing and re-elaboration of the English original: Table 1 points out that the number of the occurrences of the

same terms in the two English versions does not remain constant when the author revises his own writings.

In order to illustrate the impossibility to establish a strict correspondence between the terms from "Conclusive Evidence" and "*Другие берега*"[1], in what follows we will introduce another table presenting Nabokov's way of choosing solutions for translation for some chromatic adjectives that constitute direct colour terms, as well as the respective nouns and verbs.

Table 2. Correspondence between colour words denoting blue in "Conclusive Evidence" and "*Другие берега*"

English version / Russian version	Blue	pale-blue	sapphire	bright-blue	navy-blue	dark-blue	dark-bluish	sea-bright	turquoise	blue-black	light-blue
синий, синева, синеный, мокрая синь, синеть	14	–	–	1	–	–	1	1	–	–	–
голубой, голубизна	6	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
бирюзовый	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–
лазурь	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
бледно-голубой	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
васильковый	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
сапфировый	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
изумрудный	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
иссиня-чёрный	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	1	–
светлый	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
заиндевелый	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
темно-синий	–	–	–	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	–

As can be seen in Table 2, the process of translation of colour words from English into Russian is neither simple, nor random in the self-translation process conducted by Vladimir Nabokov. The table shows that in the majority of cases the writer tends to establish correspondence between different terms in the two languages, offering more or less obvious solutions for the same lexeme. The most representative example in this respect is the English word *blue*. The possible variants of its translation in "*Другие берега*" include the

[1] The novel "Speak, Memory" is not included in Table 2 since the process of self-translation took place when Nabokov translated his first English novel into Russian.

following: *синий* (and its derivatives), *голубой* (and its derivatives), *бирюзовый*, *лазурь*, *изумрудный*, *светлый* and *заиндевелый*. At the same time, there are also several situations in which Nabokov chooses to use a constant counterpart (for example, *navy-blue* = *тёмно-синий*).

Another important aspect highlighted in Table 2 is an inherent problem which appears in course of the translation of the texts from English into Russian and vice versa, and namely the presence of two basic colour terms[2] in the Russian language (*синий* and *голубой*) that correspond to one such term in English (*blue*). This discrepancy is bound to create major difficulties for the translation of an artistic text, especially in Nabokov's case, when each lexical unit was elaborated and carefully chosen by the author, performing a certain role according to the writer's purport. The data offered by the two tables introduced in this section of the paper allow us to conclude that the Russian term *синий* has a higher frequency in "*Другие берега*" than *голубой*, with a stronger correspondence established between *синий* and *blue*. Moreover, it has to be mentioned in this connection that the total number of the occurrences of the colour term *синий* is superior to that of *голубой*. The latter, in its turn, proves to render a higher degree of poetization to the word combinations in which it appears in the pages of the novel.

COLOUR TERMS DENOTING BLUE AND THEIR ROLE IN "CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE", "*ДРУГИЕ БЕРЕГА*" AND "SPEAK, MEMORY"

The last aspect of our analysis tackles the role the colour terms under discussion play in the novels, as well as the way Nabokov perceives them in both English and Russian. Our first stept would be to ennumerate the contexts in which colour words denoting blue appear in the three autobiographical novels. They include:

- blue as part of a characters' potrayal
- blue as part of the description of interior
- blue as part of the description of nature
- mystical blue

[2] The notion of *basic colour term* was introduced by Berlin and Kay in their famous study *Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution* (1999).

- blue as a symbol of happiness
- blue expressing sadness
- blue expressing fear
- blue expressing cold

As can be seen from this list, there is a large variety of contexts in which Nabokov chose to use colour words denoting blue. It also follows from what has just been said that the connotation the terms acquire are both meliorative and pejorative in both English and Russian texts. However, in the vast majority of contexts blue is perceived in a positive way, not infrequently being adopted as a symbol of happiness experienced by Nabokov in his early years. In what follows, an important remark has to be made in this connection: the use of the two Russian basic colour terms *синий* and *голубой* is clearly differentiated – the word for the darker tint can acquire both positive and negative associations, whereas the words for the lighter one is always perceived in a positive way. Interestingly enough, such perception corresponds to what we have mentioned in the second section of the present paper – it is the way *синий* and *голубой* are generally perceived by Russian native speakers.

As far as the expression plane is concerned, the colour terms denoting blue play an active role in the procedures Vladimir Nabokov uses to embellish his text, making it more colourful, original and even extravagant (for more details on this, see Chirilă 2015; Chirilă 2019). The most prominent procedures have proved to be alliteration (for example, as in ***bl****ue vo****l****uminous* ***bl****inds*) and nonce words / occasional syntagmatics (such as *blue-coated*, *blue-windowed*, *синеоконный*). It can be therefore concluded that colour words denoting blue are of special importance for Nabokov not only as a symbol or a word rendering a certain emotion, but also as a means of increasing the expressivity of the text.

CONCLUSIONS

The present paper has clearly shown that colour terms denoting blue play a highly important role in Vladimir Nabokov's autobiographical novels. First, we have demonstrated a great variety of lexical units that render blue and its shades in the pages of the volumes

under discussion. Second, the variety and originality of these terms, fortified by the typological complexity of the colour terms used by the writer, are bound to create a colourful picture in the reader's mind – an all-important aspect in the case of an autobiography, when the writer recollects and cherishes his memories, inviting the audience to join him in his musings.

As for the connotations of the colour terms denoting blue, we have observed the dominance of the meliorative ones, when blue symbolizes happiness of Nabokov's early years. However, there are also some pejorative connotations acquired by the color words under discussion. In these cases, the term used in the Russian language is *синий* – the one that refers to the darker tint of blue. As for the cases when blue is negatively perceived by the author, these include the associations with cold, sadness and fear.

Yet another important role of colour words denoting blue in the pages of the novels is their active role in the tools Vladimir Nabokov uses to increase the originality and expressivity of his texts. The colour terms we have analysed take an active part in elaborating such artistic devices as nonce words, alliteration and metaphor. It can therefore be concluded that the colour words denoting blue actively participate in the realisation of the author's purport and, given their special significance in the pages of the novels, have to be carefully studied by the specialists in the field.

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FEMINIST IDEOLOGY AND MISOGYNISTIC UNDERTONES IN TRANSLATED LITERATURE: JOHN DONNE'S *SONG* AND ANNE-MARIE ALONZO'S *RITUEL*

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INTRODUCTION

Given the poignancy of gender matters in our society nowadays and with worldwide movements aimed at gender equality, pay equality and ending sexual harassment gaining momentum, the aim of this paper is to analyze the manner in which misogynistic and sexist undertones and imagery in a poem were rendered in translation, as well as the ways in which feminist ideology was translated from French into English.

The strategies the translators use testify to a certain preference that has an impact on the message and imagery (whether this is the translator's intention or not). The translator plays a creative part, and he/she is far more than a mere 'filter' through which the message passes to the other side (Simon 37), hence the idea that the translator acts as a mediator, for "[…] translation implies both linguistic and cultural mediation" (Dimitriu, Theories and Practice 71).

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Another aspect of importance in my analyses is the model of translation ethics observed by the translator. Thus, I examine whether he/she observes the ethics of representation (faithfulness to the source and therefore the author), or a model of norm-based ethics (in that the translator strived to meet the readers' expectations).

THEORETICAL APPROACH

Brief History (or Herstory) of Feminism

Feminist thought has constantly looked for changes, ranging from the right to vote, legalizing abortion, to gender equality, women's right to education, or equal pay for equal work across industries. One of the notions that goes in tandem with feminism nowadays is equality: be it gender equality or pay equality, women in all industries and walks of life are rising against the tide (sexual harassment, battery, deprivation of certain choices and rights) (Kelly et al. 3).

Another facet worth noting is the fact that feminist thought goes beyond the individual, veering toward the inequities that women in the entire world are facing, and that are a reflection of the power dynamic in society as a whole, as "the personal is political" (Kelly et al. 3-4). Due to the fact that most feminist scholars believed that language itself presented restrictions when it came to representing women's experiences and perspectives, said language being patriarchal and manipulative, it became an important issue of investigation (Flotow 8-9).

Contemporary Ideas and Theories

Chief among the highly-debated notions in the contemporary feminist discourse are pay and gender equality, the eradication of sexual harassment in the workplace, the woman's right to make decisions in what concerns her own body. Feminist scholars such as Barbara Godard also place emphasis on the emancipatory facet of feminist discourse.

The contemporary idea is to take this patriarchal language and cleanse it, strip it of the alienations and phallic imagery and add the missing gender and its realities (Gagnon qtd. in Goddard, "Theorizing Feminist Discourse" 43). Another prevalent idea is the dual dimension of feminist discourse. According to Sandra Harding, given the fact that

women have been marginalized and disconsidered for centuries, they (akin to numerous minorities) harbor multiple perspectives of the world, as well as "the view from below" (Harding qtd. in Goddard, “Theorizing Feminist Discourse” 44).

FEMINISM IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

Tandem of Feminism and Gender in Translation

In the 1970s, as the budding discipline of Translation Studies was beginning to develop, so too was feminist theory. Barbara Godard postulates that, despite its negative connotation in translation, the concept of "difference becomes a positive one in feminist translation" (“Theorizing Feminist Discourse” 50). In her vision, the translator is unafraid to let it be known that she "womanhandled" the text, that she manipulated it (50). The translator is not a mere filter which the text goes through, but rather a creative presence (Bassnett 70). What feminist translation strives to achieve is a redefinition of the concept of "fidelity": directed neither at the author, nor at the reader (which brings to mind Schleiermacher's sole two options: bringing the reader to the writer or vice-versa), but rather at the translation itself viewed as a "project" requiring that both parties participate (Simon 2). The concept of equivalence is rejected by feminist scholars such as Godard, who claim that it overshadows the differences and hinders attention directed at the work performed by women translators (Godard, 1990 qtd. in Dimitriu, The Cultural Turn 168).

Feminist Practice and Translation Strategies

In her translations of Brossard's work, de Lotbinière-Harwood coined a series of new terms in order to speak "in the feminine", to feel "auth*e*rized" to emphasize the feminine, the freedom granted to her both as a woman and as a translator, "auth*e*rizing" being the term used for the process of working in close collaboration with the auth*e*r (Conacher 255). De Lotbinière-Harwood took it upon herself to make the female voice heard in translation, despite the fact that it is demeaned in the text.

A prevalent question for the purpose of the paper at hand is how sexist and misogynistic imagery has been preserved or altered in

translation. How does the translator react to blatant misogyny: does he/she follow suit or intervene – and, if so, to what extent? In theory, as translators (and women) we can say that, whenever we encounter such negative depictions and portrayals of women in the texts we are given for translation, we will certainly fight back and make our voices heard, combat the sexism using various feminist and interventionist strategies. However, in practice, the translation market tends to veer away from such idealism, and the translators are not usually allowed such freedom by the editors. As translators, we may not always agree with some of the ideas expressed in the work, but are we really entitled to alter what was said? Should the readers not be allowed to read for themselves and assess whether the text carries a misogynistic or sexist undertone in its portrayal of women, and by changing this kind of imagery is the translator not depriving them of this kind of interpretation? Or are we, as translators, held to a moral obligation to not contribute to silencing those who try and change the power dynamics, but to join them?

CASE STUDIES

What follows is a brief presentation of the case studies dealt with in this paper. In order to highlight the sexist and misogynist undertones that have always been present in English literature irrespective of the period, I have chosen a poem by 17th century English poet John Donne, *Song (Go and catch a falling star)* and its Romanian translation. Another significant analysis is that of feminist writings and their translation, in the form of a short story written in French, featured in feminist journal *Tessera* (*Rituel* by Anne-Marie Alonzo) translated by Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood, in order to showcase both the feminist ideology disseminated, as well as the translation strategies employed by a feminist writer and translator. In a broader sense, I have chosen a male and a female author, who obviously display different women-related ideologies and whose works are confronted with their translators' strategies and reactions.

My case studies will thus consist in translation criticism performed across two different genres (poem, short story). Another aspect worth noticing is the different readers' profiles these texts address. The short

story is aimed at a niche audience, who is interested in feminist discourse and ideas. It condemns the patriarchy-made prison that cages women and tries to silence them, but they never cease to attempt to break free through their writing. The poem by Donne was not widely read at first, but gained subsequent popularity over the next centuries, due to the themes of love and religion. A final aspect to notice is the variety of the translators' own profile, and the contexts in which their translations were published: Ștefan Avădanei, the translator of Donne's *Song/ Cîntec* is a university professor translating for a literary journal and feminist translating feminist in the form of well-known Canadian translator and professor Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood's translation into English of Anne-Marie Alonzo's *Rituel/ Ritual*.

Methodology

Throughout my analysis, I will use translation scholar and theorist Antoine Berman's method of translation analysis and criticism, as presented in *Toward a Translation Criticism: John Donne (Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne)*, translated by Françoise Massardier-Kenney (2009). This method comprises three steps: translation reading and rereading, readings of the original, and in search of the translator (49). The culmination of these stages is **the** '**confrontation**', the analysis itself, wherein the two texts (translation and original) are compared, and the translation solutions and strategies are commented upon. In the case of the paper at hand, I will only engage in the final stage, that of the confrontation.

Throughout my analyses, I will also use the classification of translation strategies provided by Andrew Chesterman in his 1997 book *Memes of Translation*.

TRANSLATION FROM JOHN DONNE

Song (Goe, and Catche a Falling Starre)

Performing translation criticism according to Berman's model: The Confrontation

The poem, *Song* or *Goe, and catche a falling starre,* was published posthumously, in the first edition of John Donne's *Poems* in 1633. The

translation was published in a Romanian literary journal, *Poezia*, and it belongs to professor emeritus at UAIC and translator, Ștefan Avădanei. It was published in the first ever issue, in 1995, in Iași. In this particular case, my main concern is to answer the following question: how were the sexist undertones rendered by the Romanian translator?

There are two main instances in this poem wherein Donne expresses misogynistic notions, namely in the second and third stanzas. The third stanza delivers the central idea of the poem, the fickle and inconstant nature of women: "If thou find'st one, let me know,/[...]Though she were true when you met her,/And last, till you write your letter,/Yet she/Will be/False, ere I come, to two, or three". In translation, this is rendered as "De găsești vreouna spune-mi,/[...]/Bună la-nceput de-o fi,/Ține doar cît o scrisoare/Și va fi/Deșartă iar/Pîn' ce-ajung la două-trei". The sixth line refers to how long the woman's faithfulness will last, namely as long as it takes the man to write a letter ("Ține doar cît o scrisoare "); the translation strategies employed are both syntactic, in the form of ellipsis, as well as semantic, in the form of distribution change and modulation (the verb 'till you write' is rendered by using the relative pronoun 'cît'). The last short line and the end line undergo both syntactic strategies (structure change, as well as cohesion change) and semantic ones (distribution change, the term 'false' rendered as 'deșartă' is inserted into the last short line). There is also an emphasis change due to the insertion of the conjunction 'iar'. I must add that most critics claim that Donne refers to the fact that, during the time that it takes a man to write a letter, the woman will have already been unfaithful to two or three other men. However, the translator interprets the line to refer to the number of letters written ("Pîn' ce-ajung la două-trei "), rather than to the men she 'sins' with; if this is a deliberate strategy, then it could be regarded as an attenuation of the original and therefore less misogynistic.

Following the translation criticism performed, the sexist meaning was accurately rendered in translation without any significant changes (safe for the choice of synonyms and distribution changes, as well as structural changes with respect to the rhythmic pattern). The translator was faithful to the author (unlike the beautiful inconstant women in the poem) and did not intervene or correct overtly or covertly. The model of

translation ethics observed by the translator is that of ethics of representation ("representing the source, the Other, loyalty to the author") (Chesterman, 2001). Nida's dynamic equivalence is reached here, as the Romanian target reader will react (and will take away the same ideas) to the poem in the same way as the source-readers.

TRANSLATIONS FROM ANNE-MARIE ALONZO

This is a short story in French by Egyptian-born Canadian writer Anne-Marie Alonzo titled *Rituel*, published in the Canadian feminist journal *Tessera* in 1986, and translated by feminist translator and writer Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood (both were published together).

Rituel by Anne-Marie Alonzo, 1986 (Ritual, translated by Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood, 1986)

The short story reads as a lesbian love letter from the narrator to her lover, while tackling themes such as migrant consciousness, as her background and country are referenced, her childhood in a war-torn land wherein men abused women.

Performing translation criticism according to Berman's model: The Confrontation:

Firstly, as regards the short story (and its translation), the fact that it is written in an experimental fashion is immediately striking, in that syntactical fragmentation is employed and the author makes heavy use of disrupted sentences. I will focus on the most striking aspect of the piece, namely the part where the auth*e*r references her background growing up in a war-ravaged country, where women were subjected to violence at the hands of men.

Upon CONFRONTING the translation against the original, it was plain to see that the translation is very faithful to the original, highly source-oriented, and Harwood does not stray from Alonzo's words save from a few exceptions.

In the paragraph wherein the narrator strives to tell her love about her past, the war-ravaged land she originated from, Harwood intervenes in the case of "souviens-toi des pays autres pauvres *pays de lames*"

(rendered as "poor other countries *countries of cutting edges*"), employing the pragmatic strategy of explicitness change (toward more explicitness), as well as the semantic strategy of distribution change, as more elements are added.*'Countries of cutting edges'* is an intervention that refers to the tools used in some African countries (including Egypt) to perform clitoridectomies on women (Gentzler 60). The translator employs emphasis as well, in terms of punctuation, at the end of the sentence, using an exclamation point that is not present in the original.

All in all, this being a feminist text written by an auth*e*r for a feminist publication and translated by a feminist, it is no surprise that Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood kept very close to the source and to the auth*e*r's words. As Alonzo's text speaks in the feminine, de Lotbinière-Harwood rendered everything faithfully, with the notable exception of 'pays de lames' translated as 'countries of cutting edges', where she felt the need to intervene and employ explicitation, perhaps feeling that 'blades' ('lames') did not encompass the painful history and behind the word. The model of translation ethics observed by the translator is clearly that of ethics of representation (faithfulness to the source, to the auth*e*r) (Chesterman, 2001).

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this paper was to analyze how misogynistic undertones and feminist ideology and imagery were rendered in translation (from English into Romanian and from French into English).

In the case of John Donne's metaphysical love poem, I concluded that the sexist meaning was accurately rendered in translation without any significant changes. That being said, it must be emphasized that such changes (however slight and subtle) do add certain nuances in translation or even distort the misogynistic message irrespective of the translator's intent (the number of men she sins with as opposed to how many letters it takes the lover to write).

In the case of *Rituel*, the feminist text written by auth*e*r Anne-Marie Alonzo, it came as no surprise that Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood kept very close to the source and to the auth*e*r's words. Given the fact that the original text speaks in the 'feminine', disseminating feminist ideology

and imagery, de Lotbinière-Harwood rendered everything faithfully, with the notable intervention in the case of 'pays de lames' translated as 'countries of cutting edges'.

To sum up, the goal of this paper was to examine how misogynistic undertones and feminist ideology and imagery were rendered in translation. I analyzed the translators' preference for certain translation strategies and the effect in translation, the (slight) distortions and nuances sent to the target readers. These preferences, as my case studies have attempted to show, provide subtle insights not only into the authors' underlying perception of women, but also into the translators' gender-related ideology.

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL)

■

ENSEIGNER L'ANGLAIS COMME LANGUE ÉTRANGÈRE

InterCulturalia
2019

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Enseigner l'anglais comme langue étrangère

THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THE LATIN INFLUENCE

Fellipe SOARES*

INTRODUCTION

The research to be discussed in this text covers interesting aspects that both professionals and students may be curious about regarding philological aspects of the English language. The topic is approached from a diachronic perspective, passing through the Latin influence, to a more contemporary format of language. Nonetheless, the pedagogical purpose in using it as a learning strategy tool is not disregarded. In other words, the *Etymology of the English Language and the Latin Influence* can be suitable for individuals who are interested in fields such as teaching, lexicography, philology, phonetics & phonology, literature, linguistic corpora, etc. The results bring up questions and questioning which may involve some controversy in the learning process such as the inconsistency between pronunciation and spelling. Therefore, this text can be useful for those who are willing to learn more about the history of the language as well as some learning strategy to expand vocabulary.

QUESTIONING ON SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION IN LITERACY

Different from languages such as Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian and Italian, the process of literacy of English may address a more evident discrepancy between spelling and pronunciation. Considering a student

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that has a lower degree of literacy, he or she may be faced with difficulties in assimilating what is spoken to what is written, especially if this learner is not a native speaker.

According to Robert McCrum, William Cran and Robert MacNeil, it can be said there is not a specific attributive rule for spelling based on pronunciation with the "rebirth" and "rescue" of English from Anglo-Saxon to "a crafty hybrid" (46). In other words, a possible view of the English etymology was already stated adequately by the authors above as "Roman-Saxon-Danish-Norman English" – clarifying to some extent the existence of many unstable word forms.

This way, students need to be warned about the fact they should not associate or assimilate every single sound to every single letter or word in writing. For instance, words such as "tint" and "mint" may coincide with their respectively phonetic forms /mint/ and /tint/ whereas "write" and "like" coincide neither with /rait/ nor /laik/ in spelling. As a consequence, a learner of English who has a Latin first language like Portuguese may have problems spelling "I like my name like this" by writing "Ai wrait mai neim laik this".

To answer the question which may be brought up by some students concerning why spelling is different from pronunciation, a teacher may firstly clarify that learning is a process. As a strategical tool, it can be described as a process of expanding student's knowledge and opening their minds. In other words, it means "thinking out of the box" by making learners alert to the fact that "detaching structures" from mother tongue which were previously "fixed" in their minds is fundamental and useful. Thus, a teacher may come up asking whether one has ever wondered why he or she does not really "say" or "speak" what he or she really "writes" or "spells". Asking such question before having students question teachers in class may avoid further doubt about non-existing pronunciation and spelling rules in English which may only exist in their first languages.

QUESTIONING LATIN BASED COGNATES

A question some students may raise either in class or simply in their own minds is why English has many Latin words in spite of being a

Germanic language. The response to an ESL or EFL audience may not come straight to the point as explaining the whole etymology at once may confound minds even more. Nonetheless, these groups can firstly be presented words such as "domestic", "comfortable", "echo", "factual, "satisfaction and "liberty" – before being told about their history – and then be asked about possible cognates in their mother tongues.

This first touch upon the topic about language similarities may provide learners with a wider view of linguistic strategies. Consequently, assimilating some English vocabulary to the one citizens already master in their first languages facilitates the learning process by reducing difficult and boring repetitive memorization exercises. It means spending less time on things one may simply "assimilate", and gaining more time for further topics which may in fact require a more time-consuming yet enriching analysis.

In addition, it is also crucial to emphasize the fact that not all apparent cognates are identically or equivalently parallel to all Latin language forms. It means that words such as "pretend", "embarrassed" and "actual" – respectively similar to "pretender" in Portuguese, "embarazada" in Spanish and "actual" in Romanian – do not coincide. This way, "pretender" being equivalent to "intend" is misunderstood as "pretend", "embarazada" being equivalent to "pregnant" is misunderstood as "embarrassed", and "actual" being equivalent to "real" is misunderstood as "current".

Secondly, instructors may finally explain briefly to students how Latin roots were added to English a long time ago. The history of the language may function as a tool to clarify questions which may seem unanswerable or confusing. As a matter of fact, it can be said the "Norman victory at Hastings changed the face of English forever" (McCrum, Cran & MacNeil 72) since William the Conquer invaded Britain in 1066. As a result, the Latin influence brought by the Church as well as the French language now imposed on the land began affecting the format of Medieval English not only by adding or adapting new words, but also by modifying pronunciation. However, certain Latin roots which English would receive from that time on have suffered semantic changes since then for some unknown reason, causing the false cognate effects explained previously. From everything said above, it is

possible to state that only translating to the letter every single word may not be helpful as a whole. For this reason, this paper does not exclude possibilities to aggregate other learning strategies.

FROM OLD ENGLISH TO MODERN ENGLISH

The history of the English language bends on coming from heroic ages of the 5th century – after the Anglo-Saxon and Jute invasion – to the development of Modern English from the 16th century onwards. After the Romans were defeated, the Anglo-Saxon language – or Old English – would soon be stablished as the language of "Britannia" by the Viking folk. Simultaneously, words from Old Norse (as found in Oxford advanced learners 8th edition – OAL) such as "dirt" and "blunder" were added.

The territory of the current United Kingdom had already suffered a transition of settlers of Roman and Anglo-Saxon extraction, passing through Norman French influence until a clustered Norman-Anglo-Saxon form appeared. The name of the land Britannia may be said to transcribe its history as a whole since English remained mostly Germanic, but retained Latin and French contributions. In other words, according to David McDowall, "Britannia" comes from a mispronunciation brought by Romans of the Greco-Roman word "Pretani" for "inhabitants" as "Britain" (8) to an Anglo-Saxon form as "the land of Angles" in "England". From all that, it can be understood that languages parallel their geography.

Although Old English was primordially represented in writing by runes, the format would eventually be adapted to the Roman alphabet (according to OAL – 8th edition). As examples of literature, it is possible to mention works such as *Beowulf* and *The Wanderer* as historic classics. Nonetheless, the English language would be affected by the coming of the Normans in 1066. Old English would now be influenced by Norman French eventually leading to what is known as Middle English from the 12th century on.

Middle English develops its structures as it replaces the widely spoken Norman French since French and Latin were the languages of government and law as well as Christianity and literature until the Battle

of Hastings. Before William the Conqueror's invasion, English would mainly be spoken by lower class people who were not actually educated in Latin or French as aristocrats were. Notwithstanding, English would eventually be reinstated as a literary language and be used in a way in which new words such as "liberty" would function as a synonym for the Anglo-Saxon word "freedom".

In the book *The Story of English*, modifications in the language in words can be detected such as "much" in Modern English that used to be used as "mycel" in Old English and "muchel" in Middle English. The examples portray the effect the "y" sound change which is pronounced in French as an "u" in some Old English structures. 216 purely French words and 83 Latin words can be found in the OAL– 8th edition. Even though the pronunciation is very much affected, words from the Latin language are still present in English. Additionally, it is crucial to remember that the French words also come from Latin, making English vocabulary even more "latinized".

However, Early Modern English would then be established as societies become more and more "sophisticated". One of the major and most evident factors of transformation was the change in the vowel sound named the "Great Vowel Shift". The change would consist of modifying a phoneme like /i:/ into a diphthong like /ai/. The "Great Vowel Shift" is the name given to the change of most vocalic sounds, which occurred approximately between the middle of 15th century until the 18th century. As an example, a word like "bite" as /bait/ in Modern English used to be pronounced as /bi:t/ in Old English and then /beit/ in Middle English. That is an evident example of the great vowel shift previously explained.

If we consider the role of Early Modern English as an actual sophisticated form, it is crucial to mention Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) as the "guard" of English language's rebirth. Through literature and in history Chaucer would be the person who "symbolizes the rebirth of English as a national language" (McCrum, Cran & MacNeil 83) on England's territory. Furthermore, it is fundamental to mention William Caxton (1422-1491) due to his contribution in the publication and printing of Chaucer's works in the 15th century and as the introducer of the printing press to England. To favour English readers, Caxton used

the actual English language rather than French in printing. He then realized that there were various "vocabularies" which would likely not be understood by common people. Consequently, Caxton began reproducing what English people mostly spoke regularly in the London area as a way to contribute to mastering the language . Due to factors like the one previously described, it is possible to tell why English today has many apparently inexplicable rules in spelling and pronunciation.

Moreover, it is also crucial to mention William Shakespeare (1564-1616) as a contributor to the enlargement of English vocabulary, not only for his excellency in writing as a poet, but also for his "audacity" in his role as a precursor of adopting Latin words such as "assassination" and "dislocate" in the Folio, for example (McCrum, Cran & MacNeil 98). Other examples mentioned in *The Story of English* are "accommodation", "obscene", "pedant", "reliance", "premeditated", "submerged" and "dexterously" (98).

In spite of the fact that Latin had gradually become a dead language – and today it is in fact dead, no longer used worldwide – as was French in England, the degree of formality related to words from Latin or French was and has still been preserved. For this reason, it can be said that the more Latin one uses in one's writing, the more formal one's tone may become not only in literature, but also in any academic paper. That is why it is possible to verify the "Latin impact" of words even on 19th century classics such as *Great Expectations* in England and *The Awaking* in the United States.

Parallel to that, one may opt for words of Latin origin even in Contemporary English to enrich short essays, summaries, synthesis, abstracts, dissertations, etc. As a matter of fact, speakers of Romanic languages benefit from comprehensibility, clarity and have an advantage in finding accurate word choices. Naturally, it becomes much easier for a Brazilian, Spanish, or Romanian speaker to associate "liberty" – rather than "freedom" – to "liberdade" (Portuguese), "libertad" (Spanish) and "libertate" (Romanian) respectively.

From the 19th century on, a significant change in Modern English can be noticed, as it became considerably more similar to Contemporary English if one compares it with earlier formats. One evident effect of linguistic change is the discrepancy between spelling and writing..

Furthermore, examples of change of use in either frequency or preference are words like "converse" (v.) and "perambulation" (n.). Although both were used by Charles Dickens in *Great Expectations* and Kate Chopin in *The Awakening* in the 19th century, Contemporary English mostly avoids them. In "When we had conversed for a while, Miss Havisham sent us two out to walk in the neglected garden" (Dickens 223), it is possible to verify the morphology of "converse" as a verb and Dickens's choice for "walk" rather than "perambulation". In "Edna and her father looked very distinguished together, and excited a good deal of notice during their perambulations" (Chopin 68), "perambulation" requires a more literary analysis bending on some irony possibly implied through different perspectives by Chopin. However, the word "conversed" has been replaced by "talk" and is rarely used nowadays. Similarly, "perambulation" has been replaced by "walk" and is contextually specified by OAL 8th edition as either humorous or formal.

However, it is important to state that neither the Latin influence or possible variations in pronunciation do not make English a Latin language. Instead, it can be said that English is a Germanic language with Latin influence in its vocabulary. Nonetheless, it is still possible to verify the presence of Latin words such as "exercise", "abdomen", "spiritual" and "student" as very frequent words used in the routine of speakers.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, it can be understood that knowing about the history of English as well as how Latin has influenced the language even after having fallen into disuse, one may open one's mind to various kinds of language structures. The present text also clarifies the fact that learning is always infinite as languages undergo transformation in each century, year, month, week and day. Thus, students may finally be able to have their questions on etymology answered if the trainer questions why they are asking about certain topics. In conclusion, individuals may learn how to become independent learners by reading about the learning strategies based on language similarities.

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Enseigner l'anglais comme langue étrangère

TEACHER TRAINEE METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS: AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF TEACHER LANGUAGE AWARENESS

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INTRODUCTION

This mixed methods action research examines the importance of teacher trainee personal metalinguistic awareness as an essential component of Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) (Edge 9-13; Andrews, Teacher 287-98; Lindahl 1-198). Within a TLA theoretical framework, usable professional knowledge and its interconnection with personal metalinguistic awareness is investigated. Firstly, metalinguistic ability refers to an individual's "capacity to use knowledge about language as opposed to the capacity to use language"(Bialystok 124). Hence, metalinguistic awareness is an individual's ability to pay attention to explicit knowledge about language. In the context of an emergent metalinguistic awareness methodology for teacher trainees in a preparatory course for beginning literacy education, personal metalinguistic awareness (PMA) is presented as the interface between declarative and procedural knowledge that develops into usable professional knowledge (UPK). This research investigates the need to

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place more emphasis on PMA at the phonemic level than is given in the current theoretical models, current research and in teacher education programs today.

The TLA model focuses on a teacher as a 'user' of language, a teacher as an 'analyst' of language and the teacher as a 'teacher' of language (Lindahl 15; Andrews and Svalberg 219). TLA is a metacognitive construct that requires teachers to reflect on their own language proficiency and knowledge of language in order for them to be able to teach literacy to English language learners effectively (Andrews, L2 Teacher 4; Andrews, Teacher 287). These three interfaced knowledge bases facilitate a teacher's developing UPK (Andrews and Lin 1853). The Literacy Teacher Professional Growth model (Snow, Griffin and Burns 201) presents PMA as one important construct of a literacy teacher's expertise and is explicitly defined over the five stages of a literacy teacher's professional development. This model complements TLA by highlighting the declarative and procedural dimensions for literacy teachers from the teacher trainee stage of their career to the targeted expression of expertise as a master teacher for PMA.

By linking the two models and furthering them with the supposition that PMA is the component that will facilitate the proceduralization of teacher trainee declarative knowledge, I advocate for an intervention program which fosters PMA at the phonemic level in teacher education.

GAP IN KNOWLEDGE

Reading research in first language (L1) highlights the importance of scientific research-based teacher education courses for developing teacher content knowledge for effective instruction of reading. It also links the importance of phonemic awareness in beginning reading (Adams 70; National Reading Panel 20); and the mutual relationship between reading and spelling (Moats, How spelling 12). Research exposes teacher trainees and in-service teachers with performance below minimum standards (Spear-Swerling, Brucker and Alfano 289). This then exposes a basic lack of understanding of the language constructs needed by teachers to teach reading and spelling effectively (Bos et al. 18; Moats

2019). L1 and international research has also shown low personal metalinguistic knowledge among teacher trainees and in-service teachers (Purvis, McNeill and Everatt 56). Extant reading research in an additional language also shows Israeli English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers as displaying weak teacher content knowledge of English orthography (Goldfus 215; Kahn-Horwitz, Organizing 626; Kahn-Horwitz, Providing 162; Roffman 206) mirroring L1 research results and showing no significant improvement on their phonological awareness as seen in their spelling results (Kahn-Horwitz, Organizing 626; Kahn-Horwitz, Providing 162). Few studies have looked at the efficacy of intervention programs which include a personal meta-linguistic aspect in the coursework (Purvis, McNeill and Everatt 57; Westerveld and Barton 100; McNeil 28). Coursework in Israel EFL teacher education has not included a PMA component to the intervention research.

TEACHER TRAINEE AS LEARNER: EMERGENT PHONEMIC AWARENESS, ELUSIVE PHONOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

The question that remains to be answered is why the journey of emerging UPK at the phonemic level is so difficult thus far. The disconcerting results may be connected to a teacher educator's own UPK on the phoneme level, a teacher educator who may exhibit sometimes-deficient knowledge about linguistic constructs during course instruction. The phenomenon is referred to as the 'Peter Effect' in the literature (Binks-Cantrell et al. 526; Joshi et al. 400). Another reason may be linked to research that has shown that phonemic awareness skills in literate adults decline in adulthood and adults may lose their ability to segment a word into its individual sounds (Scarborough et al. 117). Hence, phoneme counting becomes more difficult because of the emphasis on the orthographic representations in the mental lexicon as beginning reading and spelling is taught. Another factor for certain groups of teachers can be found with research conducted by Shankweiler and Fowler (506) and Moats (The Missing 99) who stress the need to refresh the implicit metalinguistic awareness of teacher trainees. Yet, in my experience it may be that the development of PMA of teacher

trainees is simply not developed to its fullest and low PMA may not need to be refreshed but rather developed in order to obtain stable second language (L2) phonological representations. This could be a result of teacher trainee's prior literacy experiences as learners themselves known as the "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie 66). For many readers of English, reading was not taught on the sub-lexical level and spelling was not taught at all. Yet, holistic reading was acquired. Unfortunately, this will not be an efficient approach for instruction and teaching reading since research has shown that phonemic awareness is important for beginning reading (Adams 70; National Reading Panel 20).

A theory of phonological representation development is taken that links the quality and structure of phonological representations to be dependent also on articulation (Roberts 601; de Gelder and Morais 470). Developing phoneme awareness and the distinctness of phonological representations is an emergent process. The process of lexical restructuring is based on the quality of phonological representations, known as the Lexical Restructuring Model (Metsala and Walley 89). As the mental lexicon grows, it shifts from a holistic view to a more fine-grained segmented view of words, thus illustrating the sensitivity to smaller units of phonemes in individual words through a process of comparison between similar words. This emergent approach views the understanding of the phoneme features as a process that is clarified as vocabulary knowledge grows (Ainsworth, Welbourne, and Hesketh 999).

Since EFL teacher trainees from L1 consonantal-based orthographies (Hebrew or Arabic) may have partial or low quality L2 phonological representations (Saiegh-Haddad *Linguistic Constraints* 617; Kahn-Horwitz, Schwartz and Share 139; Russak and Saiegh-Haddad, 439**;** Schwartz, Ibrahim, and Kahn-Horwitz 1311) they may need support in isolating novel vowel L2 phonological representations that are not part of their personal L2 phonology. Or they may find it problematic to differentiate L2 phonemes that are phonetically alike yet distinct from L1 phonological representations (Flege 323; Baker et al. 319).

A learner becomes aware of metalinguistic knowledge through the detailed linguistic knowledge of a language. Hence, metalinguistic knowledge is a prerequisite for metalinguistic endeavors (Roehr-Brackin 338). One way to view this is on a continuum where practices are

evaluated for the level of metalinguistic awareness (Bialystok 130). Most researchers agree that there is a distinct difference between implicit and explicit knowledge yet disagree in the conceptualization of the relationship between the two constructs. Explicit knowledge can oversee L2 language proficiency when implicit knowledge is absent. It is fundamental to have an understanding about the connections between explicit knowledge, instruction and implicit knowledge (Ellis and Shintani 11-13) since teacher trainees will need to verbalize explicit knowledge and model awareness to teach about explicit linguistic aspects of the target language on the phonemic level.

In summary, scant L1 research points to low PMA of teacher trainees and teachers as a possible factor in the challenges of the application of UPK in the field. Looking through the lens of TLA and the literacy teacher professional growth model it may be that declarative linguistic content knowledge has difficulty to transform into situated can-do procedural knowledge because of a teacher trainee's low PMA as a direct result of low-quality phonological representations. A teacher trainee's ability to access and enact on their own personal explicit metalinguistic knowledge of language structure constructs for explicit instruction at the phonemic level may be hindered as a result of a teacher trainee's low-quality phonological representations. The factors that facilitate knowledge transfer in language education must be grounded in understanding the path to UPK at the phonemic level.

THE CURRENT STUDY

This research adopts a mixed method action research design and includes quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting evidence. This article will discuss the first of three research questions of my doctoral thesis. The aim of my research is to investigate the impact of an academic intervention program on developing UPK at the phonemic level. As a teacher educator-researcher I have identified the instability of EFL teacher trainees' phonological representations as a possible factor in low PMA. The first research question asks how a yearlong academic intervention course impacts EFL teacher trainees' developing usable professional knowledge.

THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

A total of 109 EFL students took part in this study. There were 26 first year B.Ed. students, 46 re-training teachers, and 37 first year B.Ed. students in the control group. At post-test 89 of the students were available. The semi-structured interviews were conducted two months after the post-test with 21 teacher trainees. For the follow up 42 students were available.

THE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The intervention program provides linguistic knowledge with an emphasis on the language-specific aspects of L1 and L2 phonology. It is based on a structured literacy program that views phonological representations as developing from the Speech to Print Method (Moats, Decoding 3-5). Teacher trainees may need an 'anchor' to scaffold, identify and retrieve the phonological representation so to articulate the isolated abstract phoneme. The intervention program is designed to develop explicit phonological and orthographic knowledge and the metalanguage of teacher trainees.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
RESEARCH TOOLS

For the first research question the Teacher Knowledge Survey was used. It is an adapted survey that has been used with L1 teacher trainees and teachers and EFL teachers in Israel (Kahn-Horwitz, Providing 164-67). The survey looks at knowledge and awareness of sub-lexical items such as syllable types, phonics, phonemic knowledge and awareness, morphological knowledge and awareness, and phonological awareness.

The semi-structured interviews were piloted with two teacher trainees. Following revision another 19 teacher trainees were interviewed. The teacher trainees were purposely selected according to type of intervention group, mother tongue and spelling ability. Pre-designed activities and questions were used to prompt explicit

demonstrations and verbalization of explicit linguistic knowledge at the phoneme level of the interviewees and to gain insight into perceptions of teacher trainees' emerging PMA as a learner and as a teacher.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Post-intervention results on the Teacher Knowledge Survey show significant time by group differences. This means that the total score for the multiple choice questions on knowledge and awareness improved significantly as a result of the intervention. Knowledge and awareness were significantly higher at post-test for the first year intervention group (67.33) and for the academic intervention group (67.67) as compared to the control group (37.21), controlling for the initial differences. Thus, the current study largely supports the hypothesis that teacher trainees will show improvement on their linguistic knowledge and awareness following the intervention academic coursework. Yet, if we compare pre- and post-scores for specified knowledge and awareness into subcategories (phonics, phonemic, morphological and phonological) the comparison of the results is not as encouraging on the phonemic level. The scores for the subcategory phonemic knowledge show significant change for both intervention groups (first year intervention group (82.84), the academic intervention group (85.09) as compared to the control group (37.21). Yet the subcategory for phonemic awareness reveals scores that are still low despite the intervention program. The scores for first year intervention group (38.05), the academic intervention group (45.67), and the control group (24.74) reveal a more complicated state of affairs. See Figure 1.

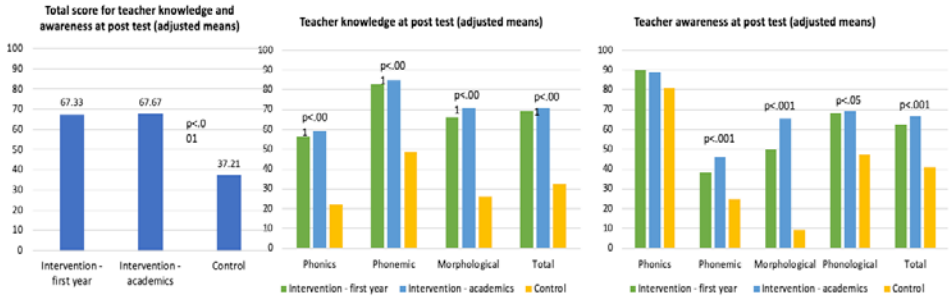

Figure 1

THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS

The content analysis of the twenty-one semi-structured interviews exposes a continuum of eleven categories relating to the perceptions of evolving UPK for literacy instruction at the phonemic level. of the eleven categories, eight categories pertain directly to the first research question. These categories open a window into the teacher trainees' cognitions about the proceduralization of declarative-situated knowledge on the phonemic level.

DISCUSSION

The impact of the intervention program mirrors literacy research in L1 (Moats, Hard Words; Purvis, McNeill and Everatt 68; Westerveld and Barton 106; McNeil 38-9) and L2 Israeli EFL settings (Goldfus 215; Kahn-Horwitz, Organizing 626; Kahn-Horwitz, Providing 162; Roffman 206). Data findings in this research also show significant gains in knowledge and in awareness but results for the subcategory of phonemic awareness, although improved, are still considered low. Hence as a researcher I might question the impact of the intervention program on the phonemic level but as a researcher I might also suggest that the results reveal an emergent state.

It is known that EFL teacher trainees do not leave higher education with a readymade 'toolbox' of knowledge and awareness to teach English for the duration of their career. Rather, a teacher's professional knowledge and awareness transitions over their career and is based on a teacher's changes in knowledge, experience, and responsibilities. The model's first two stages target the transition from the declarative-situated knowledge base on the phonemic level to a situated, can-do procedural knowledge base where an apprentice teacher begins to apply gradually developing usable knowledge in the field. Figure 2 illustrates UPK on the phonemic level according to this model.

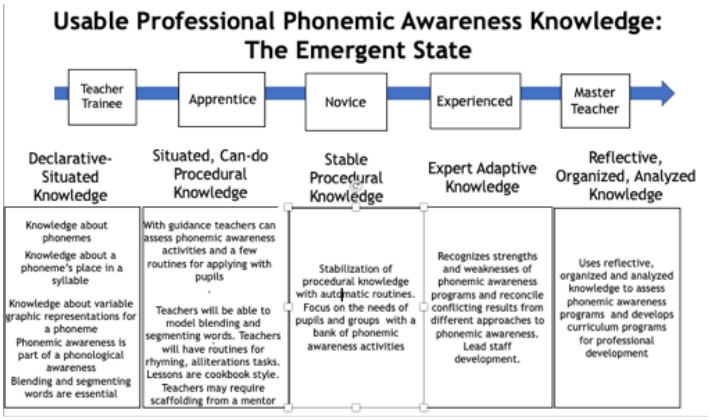

Figure 2

As a researcher I can make a fine-tuned observation of the documentation of the emergent state of the phonemic level for teacher trainees of beginning literacy utilizing the results of this mixed methods action research. By centering the first research question through the lens of Teacher Language Awareness model and the Literacy Teacher Professional Growth model I can explain the emergent state and the disparity between phonemic knowledge and phonemic awareness results for the intervention groups. Consequently, it is possible to explain the results as data charting the emergent state by which a significant change for the intervention groups in knowledge and awareness is possible. By employing both models, the eight categories can be mapped out across the three competencies (teacher as a user of language, teacher as an analyst of language and teacher as a teacher of language). These eight categories emerged from cognitions teacher trainees had 1. about language proficiency and underlying implicit knowledge *"The stuff that you know, but you don't know why"*. 2. about personal metalinguistic awareness from the perspective of a teacher *"...this is getting me into the head of being a teacher..."*. 3. about explicit knowledge within the context of prior literacy instruction and experience *"I never broke down a word before"*. 4. about L2 theory knowledge cognition transfer *"…the stuff works, and I've seen it"*. and 5. about situated usable professional knowledge *"I feel so lost now because I wasn't thinking about how"*. 6. about the emergent L2 phonemic level *"It started sinking in"* 7. about emerging proceduralization of explicit knowledge *"Confidence and*

knowledge, this is all of it". 8. about evolving usable professional knowledge within the context of diverse linguistic backgrounds *"…it's very important to acknowledge the L1 of the specific student".*

CONCLUSION

An emergent metalinguistic awareness approach for teacher trainees along their professional career is suggested as the interface between the declarative and procedural domains towards the goal of usable professional knowledge on the phonemic level for effective literacy instruction. To understand the disparity between gains in phonemic knowledge and improved but continuing lower s.cores with awareness at the phonemic level the Teacher Language Awareness model along with the Literacy Model of Professional Growth illuminate the emergent nature of phonemic awareness. The models offer an important theoretical basis for language education and literacy. The first research question and results reveal the synergetic relationship between phonemic knowledge and phonemic awareness.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

While EFL teacher trainees are presumably proficient in English this in itself does not indicate their level of linguistic awareness of the abstract phoneme. A teacher trainee's PMA as an emergent state may need refreshing, refining and may need instruction and practice but for sure can never be assumed. Future research will need to look at teacher trainees' phonemic awareness in depth since there are many levels of phonemic awareness which have not been explored in this research. The ability of a teacher trainee to segment and isolate phonemes and thus reveal the stability of their phonological representations is essential in understanding how to improve an intervention program and facilitate the emergent state of phonological representations and usable professional knowledge on the phonemic level. Future research will need to further investigate the models presented since they do not describe "how to act on the educational process" so as to facilitate teacher trainee learning, enactment, assessment and reflection activities in a teacher

education program. The models do not describe what guidance is needed in the practicum and how it is supported by theory in the preparatory course. The models do not describe what is involved in facilitating the development of UPK. A preparatory course will need to encourage a teacher trainee to be aware of their own personal metalinguistic awareness. The goal is for teacher trainees to verbalize their explicit knowledge and model their PMA at the phoneme level and, thus, develop UPK to effectively teach literacy based on a phoneme to grapheme relationship along their professional career.

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