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THE CONFLICT
BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION
IN JOHN UPDIKE'S *IN THE BEAUTY OF THE LILIES*

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Abstract

In 1996 John Updike publishes *In the Beauty of the Lilies*, a novel whose narrative structure covers the evolution of an American family over four generations. The protagonist of the first part, Reverend Clarence Arthur Wilmot, realizes that he no longer believes in God as a result of his philosophical readings. His decision to quit his position and the church will determine his and his family's inexorable fall within an abyss without either spiritual or material values. Therefore the main theme of the novel is the relation between agnosticism and atheism on the one hand and religion on the other hand. While philosophical thinking apparently provides a more reasonable perspective upon life and faith, the evolution of the Wilmot family shows that philosophy has no practical applicability and, instead of undermining religion, it actually reinforces its importance in everyday life.

Key words: American literature, philosophy, religion, conflict

Contemporary literature echoes trends in other domains which are part of the net entrapping life and which contribute to its newness in both form and content. Seemingly, John Updike's novel *In the Beauty of the Lilies*, published in 1996, encompasses aspects of the life of an American family. The end of the twentieth century is marked by 'the invasion of the social sciences – anthropology, sociology, psychology, history – into the study of religious systems' (Charlesworth 2), which may explain Updike's interest in focusing on the relationship between philosophy and religion in his novel.

Starting from the late-nineteenth-century clash between philosophy and religion, the author shows that life can be determined by people's

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decision to embrace the theories promoted by one or the other of the mentioned domains. John Updike's impressively constructed novel reestablishes, in its cyclicity, some commonsensical rules that should, morally speaking, assist man's evolution, which strengthens the ever growing contemporary interest in religion seen as what exists beyond the visible world.

In this approach philosophy is associated with reason, with what is visible and within the reach of human understanding and explanation and the novelist alludes to David Hume, Robert Ingersoll, Ernest Renan and Friedrich Nietzsche. Religion defies reason and crosses the limits of human understanding and perception, which makes it manifest through faith, frequently referred to in the novel, and intuition and includes the idea of the existence of God and the idea of ritual and prayer that eventually will be spiritually rewarding. While philosophy and its impact on faith are overtly discussed in the first chapter of the novel, references to religion and spirituality pervade the whole book.

John Updike showed his interest in religion as a theme in literature before writing *In the Beauty of the Lilies* and gathered these earlier lectures and essays on the topic and other critical works in the collection entitled *More Matter. Essays and Criticism*. In 'Religion and Literature' – a contribution to the volume *The Religion Factor: A Introduction to How Religion Matters* (1996) republished in *More Matter* – the author prefers a more neutral journey through literary works breathing spirituality in different cultural contexts at different times. His personal involvement is emphasized in the last paragraph where he praises a metaphysical union between religion and literature:

> […] it remains curiously true that the literary artist, to achieve full effectiveness, must assume a religious state of mind – a state that looks beyond worldly standards of success and failure. A mood of exhalation should possess the language, a vatic tension and rapture. […] The work of literary art springs from the world and adheres to it but is distinctly different in substance. (Updike 1999: 62)

Two years before writing *In the Beauty of the Lilies*, John Updike delivered a lecture 'on religion and contemporary American literature' at Indiana/Purdue University in Indianapolis (1994). This time he abandons the neutral tone for a more personal attitude towards the role contemporary and young writers assign to religion in their works as well as in their relation with their works. Despite a modest representation of religion that

he associated with Allen Ginsberg, Charles Wright, Philip Roth, Ron Hansen, and other contemporary writers, 'the point is,' he states, 'that for an averagely interested and distracted reader of *belles lettres* like myself, religion is not getting through.' (Updike 1999: 849) A virulent attack against those writers who stripped their fictitious world of the benefits that religious references would have brought, Updike's lecture eventually concludes with the 'religious sensation' of the artist's limited condition:

> This writer's most important asset is not wisdom or skill but an irrational, often joyous sense of importance attaching to what little he knows; and this is a religious sensation. (Updike 1999: 850)

By writing his novel *In the Beauty of the Lilies*, John Updike attempts to respond the 'religious needs' of his times and creates a world in the apparent absence of God where, despite Clarence Wilmot who obsessively voiced 'There is no God' (Updike 1996: 5-6), God's presence is, paradoxically, meant to be obvious. As the author mentions in a message he wrote for the First Edition of the Franklin Library (1996), the family saga 'in terms of God's dealings with four generations' (Updike 1999: 830) is a recontextualization of the 'tale of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers' (Updike 1999: 830). The novel is an overwhelming proof of a researcher's activity, as Updike rigorously constructed a century of American culture, and the details testifying the identity of a place or time are carefully documented and chosen. There are four major characters (Clarence, Teddy, Essie/Alma and Clark/Esau/Slick) around which and through which he tells the story in an omniscient narrative voice. The evolution of these characters is assisted by God, in Updike's intention: '… I was trying through this throng of identities to tell a continuous story, of which God was the hero. I invited Him in, to be a character in my tale, and if He declined, with characteristic modern modesty, to make His presence felt unambiguously, at least there is a space in this chronicle plainly reserved for Him, a pocket in human nature that nothing else will fill.' (Updike 1999: 831)

In the Beauty of the Lilies is a title of Biblical inspiration suggesting God's care for people and flowers alike, as Jesus says when he preaches to his followers in Matthew's Gospel (*The Book* 942). By associating the title with Christ's birth – the author says: 'The title has been long in my mind, as in its surreal sadness summing up a world of Protestant estrangement – *In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea*.' (Updike 1999: 830) –, the novelist makes the idea of spiritual rebirth emerge and

harmonizes the unrolment of the novel to construct a character free of earthly concerns, to eventually suggest Christ's sacrifice.

Not only the artistic purpose to attract the reader into the challenging debate between philosophy and religion, but also his attempt to rehabilitate religion made Updike begin his novel with the conflict between reason and faith. The protagonist of the first chapter, Clarence Wilmot, is the one who has to make a decision while being torn between his studies at the Princeton Seminary and his philosophical readings. Reverend Clarence Arthur Wilmot who used to preach in a Presbyterian Church and was much admired by his churchgoers simply loses his faith at the beginning of the novel. His loss is described as a physical sensation, faith acquires shape and colour and man has no power over it: '[he] felt the last particles of his faith leave him. The sensation was distinct – a visceral surrender, a set of dark sparkling bubbles escaping upward.'(Updike 1996: 5) The image of the upgoing religious belief reminds of St. Paul seeing faith as 'a dark and enigmatic way of knowing very seriously' (Charlesworth 66) and of Hume's atheistic friends creating the very concrete image of the 'religious belief [that] would shrivel up and disappear.' (Charlesworth 197).

Clarence's impressive education and former experience as a reverend do not help him to keep or regain his faith, which shows that the author, in the spirit of the Presbyterian Church, transmits the idea of the lack of free will in man's existence. Besides, as Charlesworth states in his analysis of Saint Thomas Aquinas' philosophy of religion, faith empowers a person 'to know, directly or indirectly, things that [the person] could not know by ordinary reason,' (Charlesworth 66) in fact faith makes a person 'will to believe propositions (since revealed by God) which do not seem to be true.' (Charlesworth 66) Clarence Wilmot is confronted with his new position – that of an atheist – and, by rummaging through his past and readings, he realizes that certain books had started undermining his faith a long time ago. The new perspective upon his past is quite contrary to what he thought in the past: as a student 'hungry for knowledge and fearless in his youthful sense of God's protection close at hand' (Updike 1996: 15) he decided to read books criticizing the Bible. This experience 'had given Clarence as a divinity student a soaring sense of being a trapeze artist to look down into these depths of dubiousness and facticity.' (Updike 1996: 15)

In his reinterpretation of the past, Clarence discovers his inner disunity and concludes that his present situation is based on a continuous erosion. The moments that he spends in his study looking at his books, seen

as pieces of his mind, eventually unveil to him the power of the words hidden by the apparently similar and innocent spines. The fragment can be read as a metaphor of the character's mind vacillating between the Bible and some philosophers' writings. By making Clarence Wilmot repeatedly mention Ingersoll next to Darwin, Nietzsche, Hume, etc., the author aims to promote the American philosopher. Robert Green Ingersoll, also known as the 'Great Agnostic', dedicated much of his time to write works like: 'About the Holy Bible' (1894), 'The Foundations of Faith' (1895), 'Inspiration of the Bible' (the early 1880's), 'The Brain and the Bible' (1881) in which he criticizes the veridicity of the events presented in the Bible as well as their morality, without forgetting to emphasize the extreme cruelty of a merciless God whose son was sent to bring fire and sword instead of peace. His arguments ranged from commonsensical statements to purely scientific demonstration, neglecting the artistic devices the authors of the Bible used to attract and impress their audience. For example, in 'The Foundations of Faith' Ingersoll shows that the age of the world was scientifically proved to be different from the one mentioned in Genesis and also that the creation of the universe could not have covered only seven days.

In 'The Brain and the Bible' Robert Ingersoll focuses on the relation between will and the brain aiming to demonstrate that the brain cannot be mastered by one's will as there are many involuntary stimuli that make it think. Besides, being a visionary able to anticipate the tendencies to historically and culturally contextualize and determine literary works, the philosopher states: 'Man is collectively and individually what his surroundings have made him.' (Ingersoll 2009:28)

To follow Ingersoll's demonstration of the way in which the brain reacts to external stimuli, it can be said that Clarence has deliberately exposed his faith to the challenges of reason and his brain has acted against his will to believe. His 'hunger for knowledge' weakened his faith, reminding of Adam's sin and his fall. The way in which Updike chooses to contextualize and build the frame for his saga, which is meant to exemplify the theories in the first chapter, makes the reader's mind identify similarities with the Bible which are different from those mentioned by the author in his message for the first edition. Both Clarence and Clark, the protagonists of the first and the last chapters, echo other characters in the Bible: as said above Clarence can be Adam, while Clark, despite his second name Esau, appears more like a contemporary Jesus, the saviour announced to be born 'in the beauty of the lilies' (Updike 1999: 830).

Clarence's spiritual fall for the sake of knowledge is presented metaphorically so as to include the lack of divine help, which makes the reverend conclude that there is no God. The perspective upon Clarence's ability to influence his way of thinking may explain the metaphors with the entrapped or exposed insects and the metaphor of the study.

> Clarence's mind was like a many-legged, wingless insect that had long and tediously been struggling to climb up the walls of a slick-walled porcelain basin; and now a sudden impatient wash of water swept it down into the drain. *There is no God*. (Updike 1996: 5-6)

Such a metaphor may make more images and associations emerge: a reduced image of hell seen as an abyss where the insect, which can be a metonymical reference to man (brain), is meant to die by water; or the myth of Sisyphus who uselessly and relentlessly climbs up the mountain pushing his burden. The ambiguity of the excerpt can engage the reader in more interpretations. On the one hand, man is seen alone in his struggle for survival and ascent ('climb up the walls') within a deceitful world ('a slick-walled porcelain basin') and his efforts are not repaid and have no result as 'there is no God'. On the other hand, man's mind acquires negative connotations by being compared with a 'many-legged, wingless insect' – therefore doomed to crawl and fall – that struggles to climb up claiming more than it was meant to have, and that, lured by 'slick' ways, is punished by the merciless God of *The Old Testament*. The final sentence may suggest the existence of God and man's inability to control his evolution. John Updike reiterates the same idea in the metaphor of the spiders threatened to be sucked in by the flames of hell:

> Luther's terror and bile flavored the Reformation: Calvin could not reason his way around preordained, eternal damnation, an eternal burning fuelled by a tirelessly vengeful and perfectly remorseless God. The Puritans likened men to spiders suspended above a roaring hearth fire; election cleaves the starry universe with iron walls infinitely high, as pitiless as the iron walls of a sinking battleship to the writhing, screaming damned trapped within. (Updike 1996: 18)

To continue the sequence of metaphors, Clarence's study, 'his book-lined cave that smelled of himself, scented with the odor of his tobacco and of paper piled on paper, undusted books and yellowish magazines' (Updike 1996: 12), illustrates his inner collapse and

uncertainty: 'Here in his home study the disarray of death reigned, its musty surrender to chaos.' (Updike 1996: 12) Although he initially felt safe among his books, 'which had so much danger in them' (Updike 1996: 13), he now realizes that his response to their challenges has dragged him down: 'the spines of his books formed a comfortless wall, as opaque and inexorable as a tidal wave.' (Updike 1996: 15) Books written by his professors at the Princeton Seminary (*Apostolic History and Literature* and *Systematic Theology* and *What is Darwinism?* by Charles Hodge, *The Atonement* and *Popular Lectures on Theological Themes* by Archibald Alexander Hodge, *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* by Benjamin Warfield) share the same space with Darwin's *Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*, Ingersoll's *Some Mistakes of Moses*, etc. Similarly religious and philosophical ideas dwell in his brain, and his way towards freedom is blocked by the wall he has built with his readings.

John Updike relates Clarence Wilmot's 'hunger for knowledge' with two ideas promoted by the Presbyterian Church and derived from Calvinism: the idea of election and of predestination. A striking opposition appears between Reverend Clarence Wilmot and Mr. Orr, one of the Reformers attending his services. The latter is very anxious to know whether he will be among the elect or not, while Clarence has just discovered freedom from predestination and election:

> The clifflike riddle of predestination – how can man have free will without impinging upon God's perfect freedom? How can God condemn man when all actions from alpha to omega are His very own? – simply evaporated; an immense strain of justification was at a blow lifted. The former believer's habitual mental contortions decisively relaxed. And yet the depths of vacancy revealed were appalling. (Updike 1996: 7)

Clarence's sudden atheism comes as a rejection of ambiguities and absurdities in the religious writings but it means a terrifying projection into reality: if he abandons his job as a result of having lost his faith, he and his family will have no place to go and he cannot do anything else as '[h]is faith was what paid their way.' (Updike 1996: 11) The protagonist's choice not to preach is not only a result of his loss of faith, but it is also determined by the loss of his voice, which reinforces the idea of election and predestination. However, at this point Clarence understands his change as being a result of his failure and for which he has himself to blame, as

'faith is a force of will whereby a Christian defines himself against the temptations of an age.' (Updike 1996: 18)

The novel is very dense in the first part of the chapter entitled 'Clarence' while the other chapters focusing on the evolution of a family member of each of the four generations are intended to demonstrate the presence of God who attends to the family although several members have chosen not to believe. Clarence's decision, as he anticipated, has radically changed their life: he could not provide the family with the necessary money from selling *The Popular Encyclopedia*, they had to move to a poorer district and house, and his children could not attend the schools they wanted to as they had to earn their living. Although well-intended, Ingersoll's theories are not pragmatic: 'One of the first things I wish to do is to free the orthodox clergy. I am a great friend of theirs, and in spite of all they may say against me, I am going to do them a great and lasting service. Upon their necks are visible the marks of the collar, and upon their backs those of the lash. They are now allowed to read and think for themselves.' (Ingersoll 1879/2009: 16) Clarence regained his freedom to think, but he was not able to adjust to the newly discovered 'concrete' life. The protagonist's spiritual fall leads to physical degradation and isolation; he spends his time watching movies to escape the terrible reality: his fall in the social scale. Movies represent man's recreation of the world and, despite their being the evidence of man's evolution in both science and art, they are short and illusory revealing the limits of man's creation. He realizes: 'Robert Ingersoll had written stirringly of freeing the clergy; well, now he is free – free to sink.' (Updike 1996: 89)

The central character of the second chapter is Clarence's younger son, Teddy, who is the most sensitive and the weakest in the family and had to sell papers while trying to deal with his school. He silently and closely assists his father and chooses not to betray him by praying when he is in need. 'His father and he were two entirely different people bound together only by a name and unspeakable mutual pity.' (Updike 1996: 123) By refusing to pray, Teddy actually expresses his disapproval of what his father has to endure for having lost his faith and his attitude strengthens the idea of the existence of God. Teddy is his father's son: he enjoys learning and studies languages, enjoys watching movies although he is 'not quite the betranced moviegoer his father was.' (Updike 1996: 146) Teddy is invited to go to church by his mother whose Presbyterian friends help her to get more work than she can do, but the son refuses, remaining faithful to his father (152). Paradoxically, the Wilmots receive their support from the

church and God is always around: Teddy succeeds in getting a job at the Addison's Drug Store because his sister Esther has heard of it in church. His life is ordinary, but follows a sane course: he marries a girl Emily, has his own house and takes his mother with them. He eventually has a daughter Essie who resembles her father and would really like to be like her dead grandfather. Grandmother Stella makes the girl go to the Presbyterian church and embrace Christian religion, which is a step forward. Essie is a descendant of Wilmot and her interest in movies makes her become an actress and get a new name Alma. With each generation the Wilmots remain close to religion and God while one member keeps getting closer to the cinema.

The last chapter shows Alma's son, Clark, who is trying to find his own identity and way in life. While Alma is dedicated to her job and can hardly manage with her son, Clark grows up as a shy and fearful person, very much like his grandfather used to be in his youth. His mother considers him a loser, and he is aware of not being an ambitious person, which makes him change jobs and use drugs and change places without feeling the need to get involved in anything. He shows no interest in worldly values. His life eventually takes him to a 'supposed utopian commune, called the temple of True and Actual Faith' whose spiritual leader is Jesse Smith. The temple is both a sect and a small fortress spatially and socially isolated, functioning in accordance with its own rules apparently emerging from the Bible Jesse reads and interprets. Most of the people carelessly deal with everyday life, like lilies, as Hannah, one of the women in the community confesses: 'A number of men hold jobs outside. […] We try to live as the lilies, but we must eat, we must wear clothes. We're not angels, Clark; we're human beings waiting to be saved.' (Updike 1996: 385)

Clark adopts a new name when he settles down, Esau – a name taken from the Bible, although he does not find any resemblance with the character he is supposed to be. In time, because of Clark's position as a kind of PR assuring the communication with the authorities, Jesse starts calling him Slick. Clark indulges in a careless life within the community without really sharing their ideas. In the confrontation with the authorities, Clark's behaviour changes: he is active, self-confident and tries to find the best solution. The climax is reached when Jesse, the megalomaniac who acts as a prophet, speaks in God's name and asks his men to kill the women and children of the community in the temple. Clark kills Jesse, and instead of killing the women and children, saves them and commits suicide thus

turning himself into a hero. The moment he takes the decision is described as having been inspired by God, an experience that is remindful of Clarence's loss of faith: 'A flock of sparkling dark immaterial bubbles descend into Esau, and he knew what to do.' (Updike 1996: 484)

Updike's ambitious novel aims to retell the Bible within the twentieth-century American context as a proof of the reiteration of history. Although the beginning of the novel abounds in references to agnosticism and atheism persuasively presented to elicit sympathy in the reader, all the philosophers and their theories die with Clarence Wilmot, which shows that religion has a greater impact on people of all categories. It is obvious that Updike chose religion to have the upper hand in the conflict with philosophy, despite the initial victory of reason over Reverend Wilmot's way of thinking. The ideological density and complexity in the first chapter provide the guidelines for the evolution of the four generations, but philosophy gradually decreases in importance while the characters are regaining faith as, in Updike's opinion, it seems it cannot just inexorably fade away.

Irrespective of how convulsively agnostic theories distort Clarence Wilmot's way of thinking, within the economy of the novel the climatic episode with the loss of faith reinforces the position of religion by demonstrating the limits of reason. As Charlesworth states: 'the philosophizing of religious faith makes it into a kind of speculative assent, so that the practical or moral or personal dimension of religion is necessarily "objective" in the sense that it is concerned with impersonal truths that are available to all, and the "subjective" or "personal" or "inward" character of religious faith is neglected.' (Charlesworth 85) Therefore *In the Beauty of the Lilies* suggests a new perspective upon the relation between religion and philosophy according to which the latter emerges and evolves in an almost 'parasitical' form from religion which becomes its victim and its host at the same time. As if reiterating Hillis Miller's theory in 'The Critic as Host', John Updike has just made philosophy uphold religion, as by trying to strip religion of its mysterious and supernatural dimension, philosophy has become a way to promote it.

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THE EMPOWERMENT OF DETAILS IN JOHN CHEEVER'S FICTION

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the debated matter of details that will be discussed in John Cheever's modern fiction. By referring to Daniel Arasse's work, *Le Détail. Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture*, applying to plastic arts, two groups of details have been considered: "particolare," an element of adornment identified in the construction of fictional setting and atmosphere versus "detaglio," that enters into the functional grammar of the discourse.

The empowerment of details becomes a mark of fictional modernity both in John Cheever's short stories and in his novels. The author searches through memory to give a reinterpretation of the American myth and also by the use of details, the text foregrounds Cheever's innovation of the self.

Key words: detail, modernity, memory, myth, self.

The study of details in plastic arts has been significantly reconsidered over the past two decades mostly due to Daniel Arasse's study *Le Détail. Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture*. While reinforcing the idea that an accurate understanding of the creative process requires an increased attention to details, Arasse distinguishes between two types of details: *dettaglio* and *particolare*[2], the former representing the constitutive parts of a work of art, while the latter stands for the part the artist chooses to emphasize. The same principle can also be applied to literary texts and our intention is to do that by referring to John Cheever's memorable short story "The Swimmer" and his "prison novel" – *The* Falconer, while following the types of interpretation generated by such an endeavour: an objective, rational one and also a subjective one, which, as we will soon discover, cannot be strictly delineated.

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[2] Daniel Arasse. Le Détail. Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture. Paris: Flammarion, 1992, p.11.

Much of Cheever's fiction is built on a foundation of real life. His short stories and novels are filled with believable characters and draw on the author's own experience. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to say that Cheever's fiction is completely autobiographical, for in fact, he was more engaged in reflecting the moods of his times in writing rather than his actual personal experiences. Generally recognized as a follower of Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman, and Hawthorne for his allegorical stories and his preference for Christian and classical myths and symbols,[3] Cheever differentiates himself from his predecessors through his exploration of modern themes such as the duality of human nature, family drama, alienation, infidelity, all of these in the context of the American suburbia.

1. John Cheever within Neorealism

The 1960's brought about an urge to break away from all conventions, including the literary ones. The mimetic representation of reality, the pre-war conformism, the realist fiction that was bound to end with some sort of atonement seemed unfulfilling and completely *unrealistic* in a world tormented by rebellion, uncertainty and scepticism. And because "the novelist, in his ideal character, is the artist who is consumed by the desire to know how things really are, who has entered into an elaborate romance with actuality,"[4] a change in the narrative techniques had to be made. First, literary realism was challenged by modernism. Almost immediately the postmodern fiction came along and caught critics' attention, ignoring thus the modern fiction with neo-realist tendencies, as Malcolm Bradbury puts it:

In the more convenient histories of literature it often seems that the literary and artistic history of the twentieth century can be written in two large strokes: there was modernism, and then in due time there was postmodernism. It is a history that misleads and abbreviates, for throughout the century there has been, in the line of the novel, a sustaining and powerful history of realism, along with a

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[3] Brian Shaffer ed. *The Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century Fiction.* Vol. II. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2011, p.495.
[4] Lionel Trilling in a *A Gathering of Fugitives* (1956), quoted in Malcolm Btadbury. "Neorealist Fiction" in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliot Ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

sequence of persistent and various disputes with its veracity, its philosophical possibility, its relevance.[5]

Bradbury's claim is sustained by a series of technicalities such as verisimilitude, reportorial representation and occasionally mimesis, which are generally acknowledged as being representative for the realist novel, and yet they are also recognizable in the structure of the *nouveau roman*, or the "self-aware novel,"[6] which is in fact a reaction against realistic representations in literature. Moreover, the neo-realist tendencies of the American fiction come to fill the existential void caused by the lack of a mythological and historical basis. Authors such as Faulkner, Hemingway or Steinbeck had managed to explore the crucial aspects of the first part of the century, covering almost everything, from country to city, from mythic pastoral to modern irony, from national self-preoccupation to a larger awareness of international processes, constructing thus a modern, experimental tradition of American fiction. And yet, that kind of writing was no longer compelling in the aftermath of two World Wars, the war in Vietnam and recurrent race riots.

In a world governed by a "sense of historical disaster, of changed destiny, of nuclear threat, accumulating mass society, growing materialism, and technological transformation"[7] the American novel that followed the tradition built by Cheever's predecessors seemed too conventional, somehow dull and rather uninspiring. The age of modernity, of intellectual avant-garde seemed to have come to its end, and yet, a new age was about to begin. Just as the "Americans have entered an age of corporatism and conformity that required no avant-garde, expected no bohemia," so the American fiction writers started to ponder on "the hovering sickness of soul, the despairing contentment, the prosperous malaise of the postwar American spirit in a new time when the old anxieties of the age of the Great Depression were over, but the depression of the age of anxiety had begun."[8]

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[5]Malcolm Bradbury. "Neorealist Fiction" in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliot Ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. p.1127.

[6] Malcolm Bradbury. "Neorealist Fiction" in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliot Ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, p.1228

[7] Malcolm Bradbury. "Neorealist Fiction" in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliot Ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, 1131.

[8] Malcolm Bradbury. "Neorealist Fiction" in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliot Ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, 1131.

Cheever's short fiction is often based on common, everyday existence with its angst, disappointment, ambivalence and fears. He shows a world in which characters struggle to exist or co-exist, are in a permanent quest for social or emotional integrity and often plunge into besetting existential crises. Despite choosing to portray the American suburbanite, which is a part of the American social realities, he breaks away from the realist fiction by voicing "the inarticulate agonies that lie just beneath the surface of ordinary lives"[9] of contemporary suburban men and women. He differentiates himself as a writer not necessarily through the ideas he explores in his fiction, but by tackling the ordinary things and experiences that make up human existence and discovering in their platitude a pattern towards some sort of ancestral knowledge or some archetypal symbols or myths.

2. On Subjectivity and Crisis of Spirit

In his *Phenomenology* Hegel relies on speculative philosophy as a starting point for the demonstration of the absolute and assesses the importance of Greek tragedy in outlining "the path to the creation of a rational, political and social world for in Germany embodying Kantian principles of practical reason."[10] In his opinion, a people's religion was necessary in order to establish a rational, free-nation state built on Kantian ideals, for only some sort of religion would be able to "instil in the people a range of values, habits, and affects that accord with reason."[11] This assertion brings to light Hegel's fourth theme – the Hellenic Ideal – which might have led the philosopher to think of the sense of unity found in beauty and art as an archetype for the speculative unity itself[12] and which is also relevant for our present endeavour.

The Hellenic Ideal reasserts the supremacy of artistic beauty in Hegel's philosophical system. Accordingly, Hegel admits that an aesthetic act is the highest act of reason for it encompasses all ideals, and purports

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[9] Peter S. Prescott. *Encounters with American Culture (1973-1985)*. Vol. II. New York: Arbor House, 1986, p.188.

[10] Theodore D George. *Tragedies of Spirit. Tracing Finitude in Hegel's Phenomenology*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2006, p.9.

[11] Theodore D George. *Tragedies of Spirit. Tracing Finitude in Hegel's Phenomenology*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2006, p.10

[12] Theodore D George. *Tragedies of Spirit. Tracing Finitude in Hegel's Phenomenology*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2006, p. 11.

that "the philosophy of spirit is an aesthetic philosophy," but also that "the philosopher must possess as much aesthetic power as the poet."[13] However, Hegel's use of tragedy in his demonstration goes beyond the field of aesthetics, towards a philosophy of the tragic, which is to be found in Cheever's fiction as well, serving as a tool for the speculative unity of his fiction. And since the spirit can be defined through speculation, which normally articulates its essential characteristics, speculative thinking also provides the means of discovering unknown and ample aspects of human condition.

At this point, there were only a few steps from the Hellenic Ideal, which was only temporarily a part of Hegel's philosophical system, to the interest in the Hellenistic world. Starting from the idea that art is meant to represent the "things that most resist combination," Hegel concludes that the artistic expression should serve "not to reduce or exclude forms of otherness and difference, but to embrace and remain open to them, even to bear within it their resistance to integration itself." [14] Thus, Hegel opens the path towards the Hellenistic art, with its preoccupation with the Real, instead of the Ideal, with its equally valuable depiction of man, gods and heroes, with its exploration of daily life and emotions. If the Hellenic Ideal emphasized and glorified the outstanding achievements of human, the Hellenistic vision gave as much attention to the limits of human reason as well and extensively explored the consequences of surrendering to powerful passions.

Cheever, in his turn, seems to have taken a special interest in the Hellenistic world as well. Consciously or not, he infused his fiction with Hellenistic ideals, creating thus a work that can be placed at the threshold between modernism and postmodernism, because of the author's special interest in mythic patterning, which is in fact a trademark of many modern writers, with James Joyce in the front line. He takes ordinary people, he observes them in more or less ordinary situations, but he denies or excludes the banality of their lives by associating them to mythical characters or by explaining their sequential tempestuous manifestations through structures of myths.

The notion of tragedy plays an essential role in Hegel's philosophical system, as well as in Cheever's fiction. Nevertheless, if in

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[13] Theodore D George. *Tragedies of Spirit. Tracing Finitude in Hegel's Phenomenology*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2006, p. 11.
[14] Theodore D George. *Tragedies of Spirit. Tracing Finitude in Hegel's Phenomenology*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2006, p. 13.

Hegel's *Phenomenology* tragedy is used as a guidepost for inquiries into fundamental problems in philosophy and as a tool in the analysis of the "forms of discontinuity and limit that spirit encounters in the course of its development,"[15] for Cheever tragedy constitutes a model for the speculative spiritual crisis that appears to have taken over humanity in the course of the second half of 20th century. And yet, Cheever's fiction is not completely tragic, despite its pessimistic tone. Comedy and tragedy often blend to bring to light the duality of human nature, the longing and desires that are the very root of life itself, proving Cheever's trust in the power of the human virtue.

3. Cheever and the Short Story

Critics have often discovered in Cheever's short stories a Chekhovian cleverness in portraying the small tragedies of the upper-middle-class suburbanites. Middle-aged men trying to hold on to youth, individuals caught in moral dilemmas or struggling to maintain appearances, wailing women bickering about some emotional truths known only by them, fractured families, neglected children, a seemingly lack of rationality, stories that happen, but affect no one except the ones living it, characters living in an ordinary suburban milieu overwhelmed by extraordinary emotional states, Edenic pastoral landscapes in which everything turns out to be upside down, they all fill up the pages of Cheever's short stories, professing the spiritual and emotional emptiness of domestic life.

The iconic short story "The Swimmer" encompasses many of the themes generally known as Cheever's trademarks. Set in one of the important suburbs of New York, the story opens with what we may call a Cheevaresque phrase – "one of those" – some sort of writerly tic denouncing both the category of people that are to become main characters in Cheever's story and the audience to which he addresses:

> It was one of those midsummer Sundays when everyone sits around saying, "I *drank* too much last night." You might have heard it whispered by the parishioners leaving church, heard it from the lips of the priest himself, struggling with his cassock in the *vestiarium*, heard it from the

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[15] Theodore D George. *Tragedies of Spirit. Tracing Finitude in Hegel's Phenomenology*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2006, p. 3.

golf links and the tennis courts, heard it from the wildlife preserve where the leader of the Audubon group was suffering from a terrible hangover.[16]

The reader is immediately introduced to the fancy lifestyle of a middle-aged man who spends his Sundays lounging at a friend's pool in a hot summer day. Partying, drinking, golf, tennis courts are the words that reflect the initial tone of the story. The whimsical Neddy Merrill, the main character who strives to maintain his youthful vitality and charm despite his age, decides to go back home by swimming across all the public and private pools he finds in the eight miles that lie between his friend's house and his.

The reader realizes right from the beginning that the protagonist is a narcissistic snob who prides himself on his perfect family and on his social position and who surrounds himself only with people who belong to the same social class or to an upper one. He is one of the privileged in his community and he is faced with no serious troubles:

> Then it occurred to him that by taking a dogleg to the southwest, he could reach his home by water. His life was not confining and the delight he took in this observation could not be explained by its suggestion of escape. He seemed to see, with a cartographer's eye, that string of swimming pools, that quasi-subterranean stream that curved across the county. He had made a discovery, a contribution to modern geography; he would name the stream Lucinda after his wife. He was not a practical joker nor was he a fool but he was determinedly original and had a vague and modest idea of himself as a legendary figure.[17]

His starts his journey with enthusiasm, he is greeted by his friends and neighbours, he has a drink at each of them and then he plunges into their pools and moves to the next neighbour. But something changes along the way. The hot summer day seems to turn into a rather cold fall day, the leaves turn yellow and red and he is no longer welcome by some of his neighbours who used to be beneath him in social status. He hears about someone's misfortune and money trouble, but at no point he realizes that people were talking about him. The atmosphere becomes darker as he moves from one swimming pool to another and he starts to lose any notion of time. Although his adventure had only lasted a few hours, it becomes unclear how much time had passed and for the first time in his life he feels

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[16] John Cheever. *The Stories of John Cheever.* New York: Alfred, A. Knopf, 2000, p.603.
[17] John Cheever. *The Stories of John Cheever.* New York: Alfred, A. Knopf, 2000, p.605.

miserable, tired and bewildered. As the surreal atmosphere takes over, he fails to understand what happened and, when he eventually arrives home, he finds out that his family and the life he has built for himself were gone:

> Going toward the house, he saw that the force of the thunderstorm had knocked one of the rain gutters loose. It hung down over the front door like an umbrella rib, but it could be fixed in the morning. The house was locked, and he thought that the stupid cook or the stupid maid must have locked the place up until he remembered that it had been some time since they had employed a maid or a cook. He shouted, pounded on the door, tried to force it with his shoulder, and then, looking in at the windows, saw that the place was empty.[18]

The protagonist's swimming across every pool in the country turns out to be an allegory for a journey through his life. At the end of the journey he finally steps out of the self-induced state of denial and discovers he was all alone. The years of ignorance, shallowness, infidelities and alcohol abuse have destroyed everything that made up who he was, and since he was unable to define himself without the things that were most important to him – his family, his youth, his wealth, his social position – he has chosen to live in a distorted reality for as long as possible.

4. Adjusting the space and the text pulsating from within

From wealthy and privileged characters forced to act and react when faced with despair and disaster, we move on to a character that gave voice to Cheever's biggest fears, addictions and homosexuality. Ezekiel Farragut, the protagonist of *The Falconer,* Cheever's last novel and possibly his masterpiece, is a university professor who is sentenced to prison for murdering his brother in a moment of drug-induced rage. We are dealing here with an "all too human"[19] character who begins to acknowledge the gap between his public image and his inner self, a character who borrows some of his creator traits without becoming a perfect representation of him.

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[18] John Cheever. *The Stories of John Cheever.* New York: Alfred, A. Knopf, 2000, p.612.
[19] A. M. Homes. "Introduction" to John Cheever's *The Falconer*. London: Penguin Classics, 2005, p.viii.

In most of his fiction Cheever created a psychological subjective space in which characters become self-conscious and are given the possibility to liberate themselves, to escape physical and psychological isolation and to make small advancements toward morality in their quest for meaning and values:

> Confinement has been one of the principal themes of my work, whether in a small New England village, a prison—or one's own passions. I've often found my self confined by my intellectual and physical limitations. But I believe that discovering the liberties one can enjoy within the confinements of one's own mortality is basically the nature of life on this planet.[20]

Cheever's fiction can be regarded as a biographication – the writer's way to solve the contradictions in his own life. Like him, his characters seem to be caught in a "search for self against an illusory, insubstantial, background,"[21] are governed by obsessions that find their roots in the past, vacillate between anxiety and hope, between "moral righteousness and lapses into an easy tolerance of amorality."[22] As mentioned before, details of Cheever's life history can be recognized in his fiction. Hammer, for example, the protagonist of *Bullet Park*, poses as a respectable member of a community, hides his homosexuality, and resents his father for trying to convince his mother to have him aborted and for neglecting him, as in Cheever's case. Farragut, in his turn, the protagonist of *The Falconer*, is a genteel professor, a father and a husband, but also a latent homosexual, who murders his brother for reminding him that he was never meant to be born.

The issue of fratricide explored in the novel might also be the result of Cheever's own hostility toward his older brother, as Schneidermann suggests. This speculation may be reinforced by the fact that Cheever never really manages to disconnect himself from his character. He doesn't instil in him any sign of guilt or remorse for killing his brother, but instead he makes him regret having lost the moral form generally accepted by society.

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[20] Cheever, John. "Fiction Is Our Most Intimate Means of Communication." U.S. News & World Report 21 May
1979, p. 92.
[21] Leo Schneiderman. *The Literary Mind. Portraits in Pain and Creativity*. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1988, p.118.
[22] Leo Schneiderman. *The Literary Mind. Portraits in Pain and Creativity*. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1988, p. 125

Despite being in prison, Farragut is not really in danger because of his fellow conmen, but because of his own obsessions, his self-complacency and self-pitying. He is sentenced to life in prison, but Cheever almost miraculously breaks him out only to make him realize that the greatest disappointment of his life is the loss of his younger homosexual lover who remains in prison.

5. Conclusion

Cheever's greatest strength as a writer of fiction is the tragicomic vision exhibited in his short stories and novels, and his unique perspective on human moral values. The symbolic richness of his stories, the disturbing pictures of a faulty society, the struggle to maintain a moral identity, the social and religious topography, the many forms of confinement and liberation, the pairing of the sacred and the profane,[23] the Socratic questioning of what should be considered normal, moral and decent, the recurrent mythical patterns assigned to ordinary activities, the extensive use of myths (Adamic, Pastoral, American, etc.) which, like in the Hellenistic world, create a unity in beauty and art, they are all details that can be easily recognized in Cheever's fiction and they all contribute to the magnificence of his short stories and novels.

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FILLING THE VOID OF IDENTITY IN GLORIA NAYLOR'S *MAMA DAY*

SORIN CAZACU[1]

Abstract

The emphasis on issues of identity stems from the fact that the enslaved history of African-Americans made arguments of black identity, self-awareness, and self-knowing pervade for centuries. With their bodies, minds, and their very names legally owned by slaveholders, blacks had little opportunity to discover their personal, social, cultural, or sexual selves. Black women have doubly suffered from this lack of identity in that they were circumscribed not only by race but also by their gender, which limited them to narrow, stereotypical social roles. In addition, black identity has to be forged in a country that historically either marginalizes or co-opts the Other, so that black women writers have had to mediate between two dueling responses by the black community: mainstream assimilation or radical separatism. For all these reasons, questions about the absence, creation and establishment of identity dominates the novels of Gloria Naylor and especially *Mama Day*.

Key words: identity, African-American literature, black women writers, the Other

The search for identity was defined by Ralph Ellison as "the American theme" and in the case of African-American writers this quest assumes an urgent and critical importance. Indeed, as Gay Wilentz points out, "from DuBois's 'double self' to Ralph Ellison's 'invisible man' the question of identity in a hostile and antagonistic world has been paramount" (Wilentz 1992:86) for the African-American community. In her turn, Toni Morrison addresses the same issue when she says in an interview:

> If you come from Africa, your name is gone. It is particularly problematic because it is not just your name but your family, your tribe. When you die, how can you connect with your ancestors if you have lost your name? That's a huge psychological scar. (LeClair 1994:126)

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This is understandable as black women have suffered from a dual lack of identity in that they were circumscribed not only by race but also by their gender, which limited them to narrow, stereotypical social roles. In addition, black identity had to be forged in a country that historically either marginalized or co-opted the o*ther*, so that black women writers have had to mediate between two dueling responses by the black community: "mainstream assimilation/accommodation or radical separatism" (Wilentz 1992:86). Questions about the creation and establishment of identity dominates the novels of many black women writers, such as Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day*.

At the heart *Mama Day* resides the struggle between George Andrews and Miranda Day for the life of Miranda's grandniece, Cocoa. This epic struggle for Cocoa's life actually becomes the struggle for her soul between dual and dueling value systems. What makes the fight over Cocoa's souls so important is the fact that Cocoa is the last in the line of women in the Day family. As the youngest living descendent, only Cocoa has the ability to restore and rewrite the tragic family history of the Days, a history shaped by its broken-hearted men and their fleeing women. Also, in her personality and character, Cocoa is a throwback to Sapphira Wade, the "true conjure woman" who is the head of the Day dynasty and is the spiritual mother of Willow Springs. Miranda acknowledges that despite her supernatural powers, she and her sister Abigail are pale imitations of Sapphira Wade, "but the Baby Girl brings back the great, grand Mother" (48). Even George, through his layers of skepticism and rationality, admits that his wife "could have easily descended from that slave woman who talked a man out of a whole island" (219). Mama Day knows that despite Cocoa's light complexion she is "pure black . . . The black that can soak up all the light in the universe, can even swallow the sun" (48). Indeed, Mama Day has always considered Cocoa to be the proper spiritual descendent of both herself and Sapphira Wade. Long the matriarch of the family, Miranda is now ready to turn her family knowledge and history over to Cocoa: "The rest will lay in the hands of the Baby Girl – once she learns how to listen" (307).

It is not as if Cocoa does not know how to listen. Like Mama Day, Cocoa has the intuitive ability to hear and see things that others cannot. She acknowledges that the folks in Willow Springs "say that I was gifted with a little bit of Mama Day's second sight" (14). For instance, on the day she takes George for a walk through the Day family plot, she hears "silent whispers" (223) that tell her that she will break George's heart. But Cocoa

ignores this unpleasant warning. She is not yet ready to trust her intuitive powers as Mama Day does, not yet ready to accept the heavy mantle of carrying on the family tradition of possessing supernatural powers and existing comfortably in alternative worlds and realities.

Indeed, there is something unsure and undeveloped about Cocoa's identity. Mama Day herself comments on this when she thinks, "Baby Girl did have something lost to her but she weren't gonna find it in no school" (150). Part of the problem is that Miranda and Abigail have long tried to shelter Cocoa from her tragic family history. When we first meet her, Cocoa is a person with one foot in the secular, rational, commercial world of New York and another in the folksy, matriarchal, and spiritual world of Willow Springs. She is suspended between two opposing cultures, so that although she believes it is impossible for her ever to live again in Willow Springs, she is still a stranger to New York after seven years of living there. Willow Springs provides her with a certain degree of reassurance, the "knowing that as long as the old survives, you can keep changing as much as you want without the nightmare or waking up to a total stranger" (49). New York scares her precisely because it lacks that consistency – "nothing's just black and white here like in Willow Springs. Nothing stays put" (63). Yet, Cocoa has never immersed herself completely in the culture of Willow Springs or in the history of her own family. For instance, when George asks her why she puts moss in her shoes before entering the graveyard, Cocoa does not know the reason for the family tradition. Her only answer is, "Then ask Mama Day, she'd probably know" (218). Indeed, George soon realizes that Cocoa is unable to provide him with much information about the island: "The refrain was familiar by now – ask Mama Day" (225).

One revealing sign of Cocoa's unformed identity is her obsession with skin color. In New York, Cocoa had slipped into the habit of referring to people as food – Cherry Vanilla, licorice, milkshakes, fudge sticks, bonbons. The habit is an indication of Cocoa's insecurity about skin color. She justifies this to George as a defense mechanism against the overwhelming multi-racialism or New York, where there is "a whole kaleidoscope of people – nothing's just black and white like in Willow Springs" (63). But Cocoa's hyper-awareness of color dates back to her childhood, when her obsessive displeasure with her light complexion started. This self-consciousness is symptomatic of the problems of identity she faces. Despite the fact that her fair skin is valued on the mainland, on the Afrocentric island of Willow Springs, uncorrupted as it is by the

American obsession with white skin, Cocoa's color was the source of much agony for her: "It was awful growing up, looking the way I did, on an island of soft brown girls, or burnished ebony girls with their flashing teeth against that deep satin skin. Girls who could summon all the beauty of midnight by standing, arms akimbo, in the full sun" (232-33)

In fact, her very nickname, Cocoa, is ironic, because it was given to her by Miranda to add some color to her pale body. Miranda recalls the time Cocoa had nearly cut off her middle finger with a butcher's knife out of fear that "she really had the white blood she was teased about at school – she wanted red blood like everybody else" (47). Cocoa's prickliness about her color is something George has noticed: "You were always sensitive about your complexion, going out of your way to stress that you were a black woman if someone was about to mistake you for a Spaniard or Creole" (219).

On their walk through the Day family plot, George intuits that Cocoa is ashamed to think that her pale skin may be the legacy of Bascombe Wade, the white man who was the husband and slaveowner of Sapphira Wade, that Cocoa "hated to think about the fact that [she] might also be carrying a bit of him" (219). The irony, of course, is that those close to Cocoa understand that she is, "in spirit at least, as black as they come" (219).

Interestingly, it is this acute self-consciousness about her complexion that leads to George and Cocoa's "worst fight ever" (232), which in turn leads to Cocoa's near-fatal illness. On the eve of the party held in George's honor, Cocoa prods George into admitting that her make-up is too heavy and dark, thereby igniting Cocoa's barely suppressed insecurities about her light skin. It is this lover's fight that gives Ruby's husband, Junior Lee, the opportunity to flirt with Cocoa, which in turn paves the way for Ruby to perform her voodoo on Cocoa. Interestingly, the spell that Ruby casts on Cocoa while she braids Cocoa's hair in her beauty parlor is linked to Cocoa's appearance, so that as she looks at the face in the cracked mirror she finds herself "clutching that stringy flesh in front of me" (276).

In this way, Ruby is exploiting Cocoa's deep-seated insecurities about her self and her physical appearance. Virginia Fowler points out that Naylor "uses the mirror as a motif. . . Coca's illness is most evident to her when she looks at her reflection" (116), as if her illness is intimately connected to her lack of identity. The crack in the mirror, which the unsuspecting Cocoa earlier thinks is the reason for the "gross

disfigurement" of her face, has of course existed ever since her fight with Mama Day years earlier, when the old woman had plotted to prevent her niece from attending a concert with Junior Lee and others. Miranda had done this to spare Cocoa Ruby's wrath and jealousy. But Cocoa had disregarded the older woman's caution and in her fury at being tricked had broken the mirror. Thus the cracked mirror is "evidence of Cocoa's own willfulness as well as of her ignorance about the existence and power of evil" (Fowler 1996:116).

Cocoa's illness thus has both a physical and mental dimension and is a symbol of her confused identity. Her latent self-doubts are now literally feeding on her body. As Bonnie Winsbro points out, although much of what Cocoa sees is hallucination, at some point she stops believing that she is hallucinating. For instance, Cocoa mistakes the red welts on her body for worms that invaded her. "As soon as Cocoa begins to believe that the worms are real, they become real; and as George soon discovers, her body is truly infested by worms" (Winsbro 1993:122).

As mentioned earlier, Ruby's voodoo essentially take advantage of Cocoa's lack of identity. Cocoa's identity is personal rather than cultural, tied up as it is with her obsession with her skin color, her physical body, and the impression she makes on others. It is this self-absorption that has made her vulnerable to Ruby in the first place. The irony is that during Cocoa's previous visits to Willow Springs, Mama Day had tried to cultivate Cocoa's cultural and tribal identity, had tried to prepare her for inheriting her rightful place within the Day family. Miranda wants Cocoa to understand her debt to her ancestors, to realize that "all that Baby Girl is was made up by people who walked these oak floors, sat and dreamed out on that balcony" (278). She had attempted to connect Cocoa to her legacy by taking her out to the ancestral home and calling her for the first time by her real name, Ophelia. Here, she had explained the tragic history of the Day family to its last descendent: "Ancient eyes, sad and tired: it's time you knew. An old house with a big garden. And it's seen its share of pain" (152). But Miranda did not have to tell Cocoa any of this in words. She had simply cast her walking stick like a magic wand over the things she wanted Cocoa to remember, such as "Butterflies and hummingbirds. And the wisdom to draw them" (152). Thus, Miranda had begun the important ancestral task of passing on the wisdom and tribal memory of one generation to the next.

But Miranda's patient education is interrupted when Ruby performs her voodoo on Cocoa. The earlier task of saving Cocoa's soul, of

connecting her with her African, tribal history, is now superseded by the more urgent task of saving her life. Since it is her quarrel with George that had led up to this chain of events, and since Cocoa's identity is now tied to the battle to save Cocoa. Fowler makes a similar observation: "That Cocoa's insecurities about her physical appearance and her identity, both connected in turn to her relationship with George, are what Ruby exploits is evident" (116). Miranda comes to this same realization when she says, "Baby Girl done tied up her mind and her flesh with George, and above all, Ruby knew it" (265). Ruby has essentially exploited the rift between George and Cocoa, so that while Miranda can easily purge Cocoa's body of the physical poison, "cleaning her mind of the mental poison requires understanding that mind and all of the past events that have contributed to its makeup" (Winsbro 1993:121).

For all these reasons, Miranda needs George's help. As she explains to Abigail, "He's part of her, Abigail. And that's the part that Rube done fixed to take it out of our hands" (267). Thus, Miranda must reach out to George in the fight for Cocoa's life. But Miranda believes that she cannot directly ask for George's help – instead, "we gotta wait for him to feel the need to come to us" (267). George must approach Miranda of his own free will, must willingly put "his hand in hers – his very hand – so she can connect it up with all the believing that had gone before" (285).

But to get to that epiphany, to that moment of knowing how she and George together can save Cocoa's life, Miranda must first revisit her own past, to make stronger her "unconsciousness sisterhood with Sapphira" (Andrews 1996:296). After Miranda finds Bascombe Wade's old ledger with Sapphira's bill of sale, she struggles to decipher the name of her foremother. She needs to know this name in order to save Cocoa's life, in order to link Cocoa to the long line of Day women. The voice in her dreams that finally reveals her name, the voice that calls Miranda "daughter," is the same voice that tells her "that she must go out and uncover the well where Peace died" (283). It is only after Miranda reopens and stares into the bottomless pit of the well her father had nailed shut, only after she has stared downs and faced the sorrow of the past, only after she hears the voice that tells her to "Look past the pain" (284), that Miranda knows how to help Cocoa. As she explained, "I had to stay in this place and reach back to the beginning for us to find the chains to pull her out of this here trouble" (294). Fowler notes that it is only now that Miranda knows that "the spiritual and emotional sources of Cocoa's illness, which have

been maliciously set in motion by Ruby, require spiritual and emotional cures" (117.)

George believes no such thing. With his wife fighting a mysterious, horrendous illness, George calls into play his mechanical, engineering knowledge to reconstruct the bridge linking Willow Springs to the mainland, the bridge that has been knocked down by the storm. But he is thwarted in his attempts to rebuild b the residents of Willow Springs because he collides with the island's Africanist idea of time and destiny and comes to believe that "no one was working fast enough, no one was working long enough" (273). Cocoa recognizes this when she says that George just wasn't "with this type of patience found in Willow Springs. Time, for its own sake, was never a major factor here" (281). When George thinks of the bridge, he thinks of the wooden one connecting Willow Springs to the mainland of doctors, hospitals, and scientific medicine. When Miranda things of bridges, she thinks of George's hand joined with hers – the joining of the forces of scientific belief with the forces of supernatural irrationality – so that "together they could be the bridge for Baby Girl to walk over" (285). Mama Day sees her hands as recipients of family wisdom, hands that need to hold George's, "even a fingertip to touch hers" (285), hands that need to connect with "the belief buried in George" (285). If George sees his hands as powerful and solitary as a hammer, Mama Day sees her hands and powerless alone because they are merely a link in a chain. George refuses to believe Dr. Buzzard when the old man says that self-reliance is "where folk start, boy – not where they finish up" (292).

But ultimately, confronted with a dying Cocoa, George decides to give Mama Day's seemingly irrational way a change. She hands him Bascombe Wade's ledger and John Paul's cane – artifacts that connect him with the two other self-reliant, possessive men in the Day family – and directs him to the back of her red hen's nest for whatever is hidden there. George is to return to her with whatever he finds there. The ledger, which contains Sapphira Wade's bill of sale, is a symbol of Bascombe Wade's ineffectualness before the power of the conjure woman. The wooden cane, hand-carved by John-Paul, is also a symbol of powerlessness because although John Paul could carve beautiful, life-like creatures out of wood, he could not bring his own wife and child back to life. The two objects are reminders of the limits of self-reliance, and Miranda believes that as long as George carries them, they will protect him from his own destructive beliefs.

When George finally agrees to follow her instructions, Mama Day can see "he'd been beaten down to believe" (299), a fact that gives her no pleasure. But when George reaches the hen coop, he stumbles and falls and the ledger gets stuck between two rocks. Thus, he has already lost part of his ancestral protection. Fighting with the brooding hen who pecks him mercilessly, and finding nothing in the coop except his "gouged and bleeding hands" (300), George suddenly snaps. All his doubts about Mama Day's "talking in a lot of metaphors" (294) and her "mumbo-jumbo" (295) surface again. His disbelief in Mama Day's way and his possessiveness of Cocoa rise as he refuses to allow that Miranda actually wanted only his hands: There was nothing that old woman could do with a pair of empty hands . . . All this wasted effort when these were my hands, and there was no way I was going to let you go" (301). George, after all, has spent his entire childhood being told to rely only on his own two hands. His disappointment and disbelief allow George to unleash unimaginable violence on the hens in the coop as he raises John-Paul's walking can and "brought it down again and again" (301) until the cane breaks. George's willfulness, his way of doing things, has resulted in destruction, violence, and ultimately his death. For as he leaves the coop and heads toward Cocoa's house "because I was not going to let you go" (301), George's congenitally defective heart gives out and he dies, literally of a broken heart. Thus, George joins the long line of broken-hearted men in the Day family. He has been unable to break the cycle of possessiveness and self-reliance that doomed the other Day men.

Ironically, it is George's sacrificial death that, by allowing Cocoa to live, gives her a chance to complete her quest for identity and wholeness. George's death has reversed the course of Day's family history. Beginning with Sapphira Wade, it was the women who left their possessive husbands and the men who stayed behind to mourn them. But George's death marks the death of the self-reliance and possessiveness that had doomed the Day men. It is Cocoa who is left behind to mourn his loss. For a long time after his death, Cocoa remains the self-absorbed young woman that she was prior to his death. As Mama Day notes, even her grief is selfish because she mourns for herself and not for her dead husband. But as Cocoa continues to visit Willow Springs and begins to communicate with George, who is buried on the island, her narrow sense of self expands so that eleven years after George's death, Cocoa finally learns how to grieve for someone else. Cocoa also learns the transcendent nature of love, so that not only does she now accept the fact that she has no photographs or other material reminders

of George, but she comes to believe that "it's a lot better this way, because you change as I change" (310). Winsbro makes the insightful observation that her posthumous conversation with George teach Cocoa "that physical separation does not preclude spiritual connection; she learns, as her ancestors never did, how to let a loved one 'go in peace.'" (130). The supernatural conversations also keep Cocoa connected to a cultural tradition older than herself and reintroduce her to Willow Springs' Africanist concept of the living-dead. This makes possible the transformation that helps Cocoa develop a cultural identity and move closer to her destiny as the true descendent of Sapphira wade.

One of the ways in which Cocoa stays connected to George is by relocating from New York to Charleston, which allows her to visit Willow Springs much more often than before "and to stay connected to its values" (Fowler 1996:114). Winsbro and others have noted that living in either New York or Willow Springs would have been dangerous for Cocoa, the former because it would have disconnected her from her roots, the latter because she would have kept herself under the sheltering, protective gaze of Abigail and Miranda Day. New York would have encouraged Cocoa's former, selfish identity, while Willow Springs would have prevented her from defining herself in ways other than as a member of the Day family. "Living in Charleston allows Cocoa to reclaim her belief in herself . . . while simultaneously allowing her to supplement that belief with beliefs in external powers, powers retained from her childhood" (Winsbro 1993:128). Also, after she remarries, Cocoa has two children, thus ensuring the continuing lineage of the Day family. In these ways, Cocoa escapes the fate of Jadine, the "unattached and childless" heroine of Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*. Peter Erickson notes that there exists a rich and distinct tradition of the black mother as artist and that the fact of motherhood secures Cocoa's place within the tradition: "Cocoa begins as a potential Jadine, but through Mama Day's intervention ends by carrying on the family line, on which the inheritance and survival of Willow Springs depend" (245).

Because Cocoa has begun to redefine herself in cultural and tribal terms, Miranda is now prepared to die because she knows that Cocoa will carry on the family line and that she is up to the task of being Sapphira's spiritual descendent: "The rest will lay in the hands of the Baby Girl – once she learns how to listen" (307). The ancestral mother figure in the novel is ready to pass on her supernatural powers and tribal history to the next generation. "The novel's conclusion leaves no room for doubt about Cocoa's commitment to Mama Day's legacy", as Peter Erickson claims

(Erickson 1994:144). Indeed, at the novel's end, we learn that Cocoa's spiritual transformation, her search for identity, now has a physical manifestation. The insecure, unconfident woman who was once plagued with self-doubt has finally found an elusive peace: "It's a face that's been given the meaning of peace. A face ready to go in search of answers, so at last there ain't no need for words as they lock eyes over the distance" (312).

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DISREGARDED DETAILS IN SHAKESPEARE'S *OTHELLO*

MIHAI COŞOVEANU[1]

Abstract

Othello is a reputable soldier, paying much attention to every detail on the battlefield. Unfortunately, his behavior as a civilian is deeply influenced by words, by things unseen, and by false images. He cannot feel the poison Iago continuously pours into his mind. Emilia, on the other hand, is aware of a possible betrayal of her husband, but disregards the details she notices. The lack of clairvoyance leads, unavoidably, to a tragic end.

Key words: soldier, detail, betrayal, unseen, poison

A.C. Bradley, a reputable representative of Shakespearean criticism at the beginning of the 20th century, stated: "Of all Shakespeare's tragedies, [...] *Othello* is the most painfully exciting and the most terrible. From the moment when the temptation of the hero begins, the reader's heart and mind are held in a vice, experiencing the extremes of pity and fear, sympathy and repulsion, sickening hope and dreadful expectation". (Bradley 1905:175). According to Bradley, the reader must expect to be confronted with scenes of extreme tension, caused by a social situation, which, nowadays, is no longer capable of triggering such consequences. The play relies on many details which have to be known by the audience in order to fully understand the end of it. Iago, the character the play cannot exist without, is both the collector and the treasurer of these details. He is convinced that, sooner or later, all the details, sometimes disregarded, should have terrible consequences on someone's life**.**

What do we learn about Othello? From a hero he turns into a murderer. The reason: he simply disregards details. Had he been attentive to Iago's deeds and words, he would have avoided the tragic end and they would have lived happily ever after, like in a fairy tale.

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Is the union between a black man and a white woman considered as normal? Today, yes, but in those times it was a rather monstrous thing. For Iago, this kind of relationship represents "foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural" (3.3.233)[2]. For Othello, there are two things that matter: his love and his honour. The sexual union between individuals with different skin is just a detail, which he disregards. This is the beginning of his fall.

Iago wants to punish those who disregard old traditions and customs; Othello, for daring to change the normal course of the Venetian social life and Desdemona, for daring to betray the citizens of Venice, by marrying someone who did not belong to their level of culture and civilization. Because she is considered a perfect woman, Desdemona must not be permitted to err. Iago takes advantage of the fears, prejudices and ignorance in society to influence people's feelings and reactions.

In a time when love was not seen as a requirement for a relationship or a marriage, in a time when parents decided upon the future husbands and wives of their children, Shakespeare makes desperate efforts to change this wrong perception, "Romeo and Juliet" being the best example.

The audience learns, in the beginning, about the presence of Othello not by his name but by the way the others speak of him, in terms of racial epithets. First of all, Othello is "the Moor" (1.1.57) for almost everybody. Then, since he is an outsider, both from the citizenship and the colour of the skin points of view, he receives other names, such as "the thick-lips" (1.1.88) and "old black ram" (1.1.113). One might say, therefore, in the introduction of the play, that Othello is a minor character, not taking into account the title of the play.

For Iago, the temptation is more than enough to launch his plans. Once started, a simple idea turns to unbelievable scenarios. Iago uses details to construct his devilish plan; at first sight, we could speak of insignificant chance words, meetings or questions. But these questions, apparently with no consequence, can deeply influence the individuals involved in the play, depending on their personality which is known so well by Iago.

Based on the innocent mistakes the other characters make, Iago develops his evil personality, fully aware of it. His sole concern is to concentrate on his actions, taking into account the reactions of everybody he knows. Iago proves to be a complex individual since he is able to weigh every move and response, and give the proper answer. Everything is built

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[2] All *Othello* citations are to *The Complete Works of Shakespeare,* ed. Peter Alexander

on Iago's knowledge on the others' characters. Iago's first soliloquy is a brilliant example:

> Cassio's a proper man, let me see now,
> To get this place, and to make up my will,
> A double knavery ... how, how? ... let me see,
> After some time, to abuse Othello's ear,
> That he is too familiar with his wife:
> He has a person and a smooth dispose,
> To be suspected, fram'd to make women false:
> The Moor a free and open nature too,
> (1.3.390-397)

It is a generally accepted idea that *Othello* is a tragedy of jealousy. Several characters are the prisoners of the monstruous feeling, which makes the play more interesting to follow. Emilia is the one who really explains its origin, mentioning that it is rather impossible to get rid of it, being an innate feature of some human beings:

> But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
> They are not ever jealous for the cause,
> But jealous for they are jealous: 'tis a monster,
> Begot upon itself, born on itself.
> (3.4.159-162)

Othello can be regarded as displaying one of the most painful stories, triggered by sexual jealousy. The play is generally characterized by terrible moments, caused by evil plans. The audience experience, at the same time, fear, shame, sadness, fascination towards the power exerted by Iago, pity for the beautiful and innocent Desdemona.

Roderigo is blinded by jealousy and is not able to see what Iago plans and the fact that Iago's only goal is to take advantage of people. For Iago it is easy to convince the others that he is just a victim, and moreover, a victim of a Moor.

At the beginning of the play, he feels happy to announce Brabantio the terrible news on his daughter which is delivered as a total catastrophe:

> Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
> Look to your house, your daughter and your bags!
> Thieves! thieves!
> (1.1.81-83)

Nevertheless, Iago is so cunning that he provokes Roderigo to be the first to tell the news, teaching him what and how to say:

> Call up her father.
> Rouse him. Make after him, Poison his delight,
> Proclaim him in the streets. Incense her kinsmen,
> And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
> Plague him with flies. Though that his joy be joy
> Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
> As it may lose some color.
> (1.1.70-75)

Roderigo is clearly manipulated and he is not aware of it. One by one, the characters in the play will turn into Iago's victims.

On the other hand, Iago's language is rather obscene when referring to Othello: "[A]n old black ram / [I]s tupping your white ewe" (1.1.91-92). Then he shouts, "[Y]our daughter / and the Moor are making the beast with two backs." (1.1.121-123)

Iago uses merciless words and statements when warning Brabantio on the danger the union between Othello and Desdemona may represent: "you'll have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse, you'll have your nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for cousins, and gennets for germans" (1.1.111-13).

Most characters believe that Desdemona embodies all the features that make a woman perfect. Her father strongly believes that it is not his daughter's fault; he accuses Othello that he used witchcraft and magic to determine Desdemona to fall in love with him:

> To fall in love with what she fear'd to look!
> It is a judgment maim'd, and most imperfect,
> That will confess perfection so could err
> Against al rules of nature....
> (1.1.98-101)

When Brabantio comes to the Duke of Venice, claiming that his daughter was stolen and bewitched by Othello, the Duke somehow disregards the gravity of this event because he needs the services of the Moor. If it had been for another person, he would have probably sentenced him to death for this offence, given the fact that Brabantio was an important statesman in

Venice: "We lack'd your counsel and your help tonight". (1.3.57). In spite of this, Othello is given the right to defend himself and to bring witnesses to prove his innocence.

Most literary critics considered Othello the main victim of the play. Actually, Desdemona is the true victim, taking into account that she is far too innocent and pure to suspect anybody of evil thought. And, yet, she will have to pay for the others' extreme feelings. She is "the beauty" and Othello and Iago are "beasts", who have no chance to be tamed. From the religious point of view, she must pay for the others' sins.

Little by little, Iago succeeds in entering Othello's mind. Thus, he acquires a double function: he is both an inner and an outer character. From the internal point of view, Iago pours poisoned details into Othello's ears, with the Moor not even being aware of. On the other hand, we must take into consideration the fact that Othello is no longer the man he once used to be. He became famous for his decisions, for his strong will and determination. The play is about an ageing hero who can be influenced by other voices rather than his. Iago takes advantage of this detail, which is ignored by others. For all the citizens in Venice, Othello represents the key to victory against enemies. For them, there is no reason to consider him a weak person. But, the reader can notice that Othello is no specialist in human relationships and it seems that Iago knows it. His love for Desdemona is not ready to fight against the feelings of envy and jealousy stirred by Iago. First of all, we are talking about an unusual relationship between two people of different races. Then, Iago decides to use a detail which had no real significance for that period of time: the age difference between Othello and Desdemona, which was not an abnormal thing. Cassio is the perfect tool to interfere in their relationship: he is young, brave and handsome and Iago proves his ability to let Othello learn about it, and thus considering him a dangerous rival.

Iago has the capacity to define Othello: he is, undoubtedly, a passionate man. Iago foresees Othello's reactions and he can tell the consequences of every single deed performed by the other characters. Some things are nothing but details, from Othello's point of view. A deadly detail is the appointment of Cassio instead of Iago. Othello disregards the fact that Iago will find it quite offensive and will feel the need to revenge. According to Harold Bloom, "In Iago, what was the religion of war, when he worshipped Othello as its god, has now become the game of war, to be played everywhere except upon the battlefield. The death of belief becomes the birth of invention, and the passed-over officer becomes the poet of

street brawls, stabbings in the dark, disinformation, and above all else, the uncreation of Othello". (Bloom 1987:437) The hero of the play takes things quite simply; he is a straightforward man, with strong beliefs and no hidden thoughts. On the other hand, Iago is exactly the opposite.

Iago is swallowed by hatred which gives him the power to fully exploit other people's weaknesses. Therefore, Othello becomes easy game for such a skillful hunter. No matter how "brave" he is, no matter "how noble and valiant general" (2.2.11) he proves, Othello cannot fight the same way Iago does. He is against useless violence, showing so many times his precious self-control: "Keep up your bright swords for the dew will rust them" (1.2.58) Nevertheless, Shakespeare demonstrates that even the most considerate person can fail the beloved persons, when unstoppable evil forces interfere.

Iago's ambition, closely related to evil, and Othello's jealousy are the two ingredients to turn human nature into chaos. According to D.R. Godfrey, "the close association between evil and jealousy is a dominant issue in *Othello,* almost what the whole play is about: until we are left with the conclusion that there can scarcely be an evil act for which envy or jealousy is not in some degree or wholly responsible". (Godfrey 1972:220)

In his last speech, Othello offers some details we should take into account if we want to consider him a tragic hero. Thus, he delivers his ultimate story, a kind of will, providing us with an explanation for losing his wisdom. He is totally aware of the deadly sins he committed against the true values and dignity, he used to praise so much:

> I pray you, in your letters. When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
> Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate.
> Nor set down aught in malice: then, must
> you speak
> Of one that loved not wisely but too well;
> Of one not easily jealous, but being
> wrought
> Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose
> hand. Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
> Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued eyes.
> Albeit unused to the melting mood,
> Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
> Their medicinal gum. Set you down this;
> And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
> Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk

Beat a Venetian and traduced the state.
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him, thus.   *(Stabs himself)*
(5.2.340-56)

Even if he foolishly sacrifices his pearl, Othello remains an unmatched hero with an unmatched grandeur: "he is the hero with all the magnificent helplessness of the animal, or all the beauty and ultimate resignation of the god". (Lewis 1955:196)

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DETAILS OF THE SELF IN MILLER'S WORKS

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Abstract
Arthur Miller's plays bring forward issues, which are closely connected, to social and moral ideas, being intertwined with knowledge gained from the author's personal experience. Most of the American playwright's creations have at least one element, which derives from his biography. Such details, even though at first unimportant, can emphasize the stages of personal and career development in building a personality that could face critics and audience alike.

Key words: biography, development, influence, personality

Christopher Bigsby started his study on Arthur Miller with the statement: "This is the story of a writer, but it is also the story of America".[2] In addition, he was completely right, as Miller is thought to be one major symbol of 20th century American, and his impressive career has proved it repeatedly, through the recognition his work has received over the years, both in the U.S.A. and abroad. His personal relation with his native country, which is explored in the majority of his works, is what created him as a writer. Text, stage and performance are blended together as Peter Mudford mentioned in *Making Theatre. From Text to Performance*, hinting at the fact that

> Spatially and temporally, the stage mirrors the processes of consciousness. Between birth and death, waking and sleeping, consciousness is like an illuminated space, pained, humorous, joyful, questioning. Every minute consciousness presses against the ceiling of self-knowledge, trying to

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[2] Bigsby, Christopher. *Arthur Miller*. London: Weidenfeld&Nicolson, 2008, p. ix.

make 'sense', find 'pathways' of whatever sort, and is limited by closed doors through which it cannot pass.[3]

Throughout his entire career, Arthur Miller insisted on appealing to an intelligent adult, who can watch his creations and start thinking about what is the moral choice one should follow. The right decision he/she should make, so as not to disturb the social order, the impact people's actions have on others and, finally yet importantly, morality and ethics in general are subjects, which concerned Miller. There exists absolutely no play Miller wrote that did not hint at social structure, responsibility and need for change. His dedication to both political and economic fields comes as an additional element to the already social structured plays. The McCarthy era is one of the major inspirations that the author related to, as his career was jeopardised because he refused to inform the HUAC about the communists they believed to be infiltrated in the U.S.A. He was considered to be connected with similar views, but his refusal made some people change their mind about such claims. The author's boldness to maintain his integrity attracted admiration and appreciation. He wanted to write without constraint, and expresses his ideas in a personal manner this imprinted his personal style upon the work of art.

Miller's desire of handling his plays in his own way, even though he found inspiration in Shakespeare, Chekov and some of his contemporaries, did not stop him from *playing* with words and sequences.

When one takes a closer look at the mixture the playwright exposes on the stage, one cannot feel but overwhelmed by all the symbolism his drama intakes. Numerous scholars prefer analysing Miller's texts as they search for yet another connection to society and nationality. His moralist style made Miller one of the most appreciated names in the theatre, because it provided him with distance from the ones who criticised him and his work and with deep appreciation from the ones who admired both his personality and plays.

The seriousness that the playwright portrayed triggered the interest about the way he used his work to *play* with styles and with the audience. Alongside Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neill he offered the U.S.A. a rebirth of the national drama, stating the beginning of a new age. David Sievers is the one who most adequately analyses the playwright describing

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[3] Mudford, Peter. *Making Theatre. From Text to Performance*. London: The Athlone Press, 2000, p. 9.

him especially in comparison to his rather more poetic oriented contemporary fellow writer, Tennessee Williams

> Arthur Miller, the author of what many consider to be the most important drama yet written by an American, brings to a climax the psychological drama thus far in the twentieth century. By comparison with Tennessee Williams, Miller is more objective, more sociopolitical in his orientation, less poetic, better able to depict men than women, and more systematic than intuitive in his play construction. From his plays and the comments on his questionnaire it would seem that Miller, of all American playwrights, comes the closest thus far to illustrating Freud's prediction that ultimately writers will assimilate psychoanalysis.[4]

As Miller was concerned with achieving moral insights, which needed certain tools of interpretation, there can be noticed a clear revelation of the subjective process. Leonard Moss explained in his study *Arthur Miller* that "the plays and essays testify to a persistent artistic dilemma; Arthur Miller's effort to unify social and psychological perspectives has been the source of his accomplishments and his failures as a dramatist."[5]

The accomplishments can be regarded as the elements that vibrated into the normative expectancies of appraisal. The overall argument is not, according to Gadamer, that the artwork one analyses cannot be reduced to intention, material or convention but that every single one of these elements comes into its own place when taken up in what can be called the practice of the art. The playing pulls with itself the spectator, the player, the intention, the equipment and the convention unifying them in a singular event.

Miller's theatre brought him the label of social dramatist, but critics did not manage to specifically demonstrate his belonging to the Marxist or to the humanist tradition, because of his liberal views and he enjoyed his personal political and economic analysis. This mixture of voices in the author's work leaves place for interpretation. What is most obvious about his work is the fact that Miller most certainly criticizes the way in which capitalism developed in the U.S.A., claiming that all sorts of close reading would point to hidden evil and avoided social responsibility. While this is the most prominent point of view, there are other elements, which fit together projecting into the new, contemporary world of interpretation. As

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[4] Sievers, David. *Freud on Broadway: A History of Psychoanalysis and American Drama*. Hermitage House, 1955, p. 388.
[5] Moss, Leonard. *Arthur Miller*. Twayne Publishers, 1980, "Preface".

Derrida situated his subject Miller also splits parts of its personality, in the end leaving room for a plurality of shadows in the psychoanalytical approach. As so, by situating the characters one has to also observe the differentiations in race, gender, class, sexual orientation and ideology. The social transformations were the ones that gave an over projection of the individual such as the author himself stated that he had been impressed by

> the powers of economic crisis and political imperatives which bad twisted, torn, eroded, and marked everything and everyone I laid eyes on. […] So that by force of circumstance I came early and unawares to be fascinated by sheer process itself. How things connected. How the native personality of a man was changed by his world, and the harder question, bow be could in turn change his world. […] You can't understand anything unless you understand its relation to its context.[6]

Even though Miller's work has been at times questioned by the critics, shortly after his death, in the *New York Times* article praising the author's work, Robert Falls, the director of the revival of *Death of a Salesman*, spoke, in a very expressive way, about the impact Arthur Miller's work has had on generations of Americans and on the national theatre in itself "I think Arthur was one of the last giants to stride the earth, alongside Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neill; they created the serious American drama. Broadway has changed, of course, but I think he's one of the three giants, and the last one saying this is serious business and must be taken that way."[7]

This type of business that Falls refers to represents not only art in itself, but also the position of the subject. Miller is regarded as a writer dedicated to the masculine figure, himself declaring that he was unable to handle the feminine emotions as the masculine ones. Luce Irigaray underlines the fact that the theories about the subject are always related to the masculine, but nevertheless a clear type of male figure – white, western, bourgeois and individual. Even though Miller does not have any bourgeois character as his protagonist he can relate to many of the other characteristics.

In his work Miller pointed an accusing finger against a society, which encourages people to pursue their egoistic aims and forget about the

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[6] Miller, Arthur. 'The Shadow of the Gods' in *The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller*. Eds. Stephen Centola and Martin, Robert, USA: Da Capo Press, 1996, p. 181.
[7] McKinley, Jesse. "Miller Recalled as The Last of Giants" in *the New York Times*. 12th February 2005.

image of interrelations. He strongly believed that society changes men, but that men also have the ability of changing society. However, it cannot be omitted that capitalism encourages business and companies have had no problem with depriving good workers of secure futures by discarding them when their services were no longer needed. The issue of injustice roots very deeply in his plays and essays and the playwright focuses on a way of eradicating it. Miller did not look straight to the political and social aspects, although they are a very important part of his work, he analysed the human being in itself.

As it is often the case, Miller believed that the unchanging environment annuls in a way the positive feelings of human beings, leading them step by step to the tragic situations they end up in. Due to the fact that the author started working on his plays in a difficult period from the economic point of view, namely the Great Depression and the Civil War, he noticed the ruining of the social structure. His first hand experience, his desire to expose flaws and find a way in which people could deal with problems and continue living were the major elements in his creation. Many of his critics have tried to search for clues regarding his complete intentions concerning his work and his message.

While studies have been developed around the world Norman Holland is the one who notes that "the psychoanalytic study of literature has progressed from a one-sided preoccupation with the writer's unconscious to an appreciation of the writer's ego functions or adaptive strivings, and ultimately, to an understanding of literature as providing reader and critic with symbolizations of themselves."[8]

Miller started writing at a rather young age and he had some personal preferences and influences, which transgress his work, imprinting it with a mixture in style. He pointed out to the authors that had influenced his development as a playwright, but also as a human being. He deeply appreciated Fyodor Dostoevsky, whom he believed was a genius for writing in such a manner that "any fool could understand" and Henrik Ibsen, who was a kind of guide in Miller's tracing of the social issues he intended on explaining, firstly to himself and later on to others. He found in Ibsen that type of writing which had nothing that was detailed in too many words, nothing that was out of place, everything just fit. Even though Miller does not move so much towards naturalism his plays are clearly

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[8] Quoted in Schneiderman, Leo. *The Literary Mind. Portraits in Pain and Creativity*. Eastern Connecticut State University, 1988, p. 14.

hinting at a copy of reality. His admiration extended to another dramatist, from the Russian background, namely Anton Chekhov. For Miller, the style of the Russian authors, who wrote with the passion of interrelated human beings, was something overwhelming and far from the American tradition. Critics also believe that the author's style, besides having been influenced by the Russians is *sprinkled* with Freudian ideas, which he presents as not extremely familiar, but quite useful:

> Whatever I have received from Freud has come "through the air." It is part of me; I could not therefore evaluate it separately. All I can say is that analysts and analyzed people find corroboration in my plays from time to time and so I assume I have been "influenced." If so, it is a good influence. I know enough to say, however, that the schematic use of Freud in art is disastrous. The problem of art is not to dramatize Freud, to 'prove' him, but rather to go beyond and discover the total truth of the making of man-the interaction of his inherited nature with the Society in which he must struggle to mature -- and to so symbolize the disparate as to create 'beauty,' which is the ultimate organization of reality. [9]

The playwright showed concern for the American drama of the mid-20th century because he realized that it was presenting the theme of a young man who ought to be the symbol of the future and his father who should stand for the past generations. Every time the son tried to escape the routine and create something new and different, there was a flaw in him – either he was impotent, or rebellious, or even a sort of fugitive. This repetition of the theme did not precisely bother Miller but made him feel aware of the need for a fresh start and new topics that had to be created. This might very well be one of the reasons why he found inspiration in his biography, but also in the daily trials people were faced with. This male subject that the audience of the American descend had to applaud stands for the encapsulation of a previous image of humanity and the human element.

When it comes to dealing directly with Miller's plays one cannot help noticing that one major aspect of his work is his portraying certain types of characters who present universal human traits to which the audience can relate without making any effort. They link ordinary people to major issues and guide them into introspection. In this way the playwright's ideas about society and personal development are clearly

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[9] Quoted in Sievers, David. *Freud on Broadway: A History of Psychoanalysis and American Drama*. Hermitage House, 1955, p. 395.

transmitted to the audience and they are more easily perceived as hints about the negative effects some influences can cause. The majority of Miller's plays focus on individuals but at the same time they project a reflection of humanity and societies in a more detailed way, bringing forward contradictions and complications.

Kenneth Burke's influence in drama in general can also be connected to Miller's work as the former insisted on the fact that dramatism "invites one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action"[10]. Both Miller and Burke shared the opinion that literature was "equipment for living" as people could be guided by it in the decisions they made for personal life. All the knowledge and information that literature could provide the individual was meant to guide and preserve a certain sociological aspect that can place great importance on the relationship developing between reader and literature.

At the one year anniversary of his most famous play Miller wrote about *Death of a Salesman* in *The New York Times* and revealed some thoughts related to the Americans as a people "we must be a terribly lonely people, cut off from each other by such massive pretence of self-sufficiency, machined down so fine we hardly touch any more. We are trying to save ourselves separately, and that is immoral, that is the corrosive among us."[11]

The American drama has been considered as that type which is concerned with the modern face of suffering as it has representatives who face the individuals to the technological advances. Miller was considered the most effective playwright in formulating mythical patterns. He is very much appreciated for his interpretation of universal values of collective experience, as he was able to expose the crisis of the twentieth century men in an industrial age. He has some central symbols, which are counterparts of the life experience in general: men are responsible for the choices they make and only they can reverse the damage they have caused.

Miller stated at the beginning of his essay *The Shadow of the Gods*: "I doubt whether anybody can widen horizons by making a speech. It is possible perhaps by writing a play"[12]. This was his case, if one takes into

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[10] Burke, Kenneth. *A Grammar of Motives*. University of California Press, 1969, p. xxii.
[11] Miller, Arthur. 'The *Salesman* Has a Birthday' in *The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller*. Eds. Stephen Centola and Martin, Robert, USA: Da Capo Press, 1996, p. 13.
[12] Miller, Arthur. 'The Shadow of the Gods' in *The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller*. Eds. Stephen Centola and Martin, Robert, USA: Da Capo Press, 1996, p. 175.

account that his plays actually made a difference and brought people together to think about the past, the present, the ideals and disappointments, society and individual, but most importantly about the subjectivity of a human being and its inner self. His complex approach to social topics and also his stubbornness to twist the situations into the heart of social issues make him be appraised and analysed. Leonard Moss insisted in presenting "Miller's forte as the ability to visualize the causal complexities and the intensity of deeply personal motives inclining his moral insight to focus most clearly upon subjective process."[13] The playwright was very preoccupied with the *façade* of the nation, but at the same time intended to penetrate at a deeper level into the consciousness, leading to his exploration of self, identity and the connection they both had with sexuality. Foucault is the one who dealt with both issues as he mentioned that the government has always had its share of "techniques and procedures to direct the behaviour of men" and apparently, Miller agreed with him.

The author insisted in exploring the class ideology as he admitted having read Lukacs and his opinions about the Western Marxism as he believed that "it is not men's consciousness that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence that determines their consciousness". Miller was concerned with what the human consciousness could produce, how it could develop in an ever changing society, which displays its masks with bluntness.

The author believed that the serious theatre had died in his lifetime and that the playwright that was born out of the new society, which projected itself in such a modern and unconventional world, was "the litmus paper of the arts. He's got to be, because if he isn't working on the same wave length as the audience, no one would know what in hell he was talking about. He is a kind of psychic journalist, even when he's great".

The attention that Miller dedicated to his plays, the subjects he approached and his belief in the voice of the theatre as being the one of the people, transforms him into an icon for the future generations of writers. His plays reach people who want to understand the American culture, but who also want to relate to the conclusions the author draws. The realistic structure intertwined with psychoanalysis and pure intuition brings Miller closer to Joyce's translation regarding the Aristotelian definition of art, namely that "Art is a natural thing." As no one can state that what Miller produced is not art, then we are allowed to believe that the playwright was

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[13] Moss, Leonard. *Arthur Miller*. Twayne Publishers, 1980, "Preface".

not only the product of his time, but also of Divinity. For the author all the efforts paid off and his ideas mesmerised audiences all over the world demanding for coordination, discipline and self-inspection.

As it may often be the case, the audience believes that in Miller's drama one is capable of perceiving the unheard voice of the author guiding them through ideas which indicate that although the effects of past on present are inevitable, the metamorphosing world of the present includes the cherishing of good memories and values of the past, making the present a new hope for what may eventually come avoiding being suffocated in the ever flowing flood of time which never seems to be pitiful or interrupted from its course.

If Hollander was right and literature is indeed the confrontation between self and self, writer and reader and of each other with our demons, then Miller had his share of such interactions. His plays managed to rise to the level of creating controversy and questions. As Leo Schneiderman pointed out in the Introduction of his study,

> It is the act of communication that distinguishes the work of art from an incoherent cry of pain or joy, and it is the presence of pain or joy in the act of communication that separates literature from other forms of writing, such as journalism, or the preparation of technical reports. Whether what is communicated is evaluated as „great" or as a work of genius is in some measure culturally and historically determined.[14]

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[14] Schneiderman, Leo. *The Literary Mind. Portraits in Pain and Creativity*. Eastern Connecticut State University, 1988, p. 5.

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VISIONARY BESTIARY:
ANIMAL METAPHORS IN THE POETRY OF WILLIAM BLAKE[1]

CĂTĂLIN GHIȚĂ[2]

Abstract

My essay focuses on the problematic of Blake's animal metaphors, and describes them in both visual and poetic terms. My strategy in this paper is twofold. On the one hand, my discourse focuses on the relationship between beasts and the fourfold geography of the sacred, on the other, it analyzes Orc, an important Blakean icon, by taking into account its reptilian metamorphosis, interpreted along the lines of psychological exclusion.

Key words: Animals, Metaphors, William Blake, Poetry

Blake is by no means the first visionary poet to deploy animal metaphors with a view to enhancing the frame of his prophetic descriptions, nor is he the first who believes that a beast may embody some hidden human quality or vice versa. The history of religions abounds in similar examples.[3] Nevertheless, it is a particular feature of Blake's poetry which makes the latter stand apart from other visionary productions, and that is its concrete symbolism.[4] One should bear in mind the fact that Blake

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[3] Consider, for instance, the case of the Egyptian or the Mesopotamian pantheons, in which various divine figures are assigned animal traits.

[4] However, this artistic propensity is permanently threatened by Blake's hostility to the natural world. In the words of Ashton Nichols, the poet's anti-materialism 'disdained all forms of embodied "spirit", a category that includes humans and all other aspects of "animate nature" as well: botanical, zoological, even insectivorous' (132). Nichols adds that 'Blake may have distrusted "nature" in visionary terms, but he celebrated its physical beauty, its sensuous details and its crucial role in our awareness of our human place in the cosmos' (132).

is also an *artist of visual representation*, a pictorial genius. It is my opinion that Blake's poetic treatment of animal symbols parallels an Oriental frame of mind, which assigns definite qualities to different animals, interpreted as *vahana*, a Sanskrit term meaning 'vehicle' or 'bearer.' Margaret and James Stutley, in their massive and erudite *Dictionary of Hinduism*, note that *vahana* designates '[t]he bird or animal on which a Jaina, Hindu or Mahayana Buddhist deity rides or is associated with' (316). Although there exists a significant number of European texts, particularly the medieval Bestiaries, some of the best-known numbering amongst themselves those of Philippe de Thaon, Pierre de Beauvais, Gervaise, and Guillaume le Clerc, which focus on animals as allegorical figures in a Christian-oriented discourse, they draw mainly on the Alexandrinian *Physiologus*, an Eastern book itself, albeit written in Greek. Moreover, none of these texts are as old as that Indian tradition springing from the Vedic collection, which is the most important in terms of animal symbolism and the relationship between the sacred and the profane, a contact mediated by a vast array of allegorical beasts. After pointing out a few aspects concerning Blake's fourfold zoomorphic symbolism, my discourse will be centred explicitly on the possible parallelism which may be established between the poet's main figures and the Indian beast pantheon. Needless to mention that these correspondences should be taken with a grain of salt.

1. Beasts and the Fourfold Geography of the Sacred

Elsewhere, I have demonstrated the significance of the numeral *4* in Blake's visionariness, and enriched my analysis by pointing out the corresponding four types of vision.[5] For the moment, by focusing on Blake's employment of animal symbols as instances of the sacred, I intend to show that the aforementioned symbolism is by no means random, and that it is part and parcel of a visionary *modus operandi*, which extends far beyond the confines of theory. Thus, I am strongly inclined to believe that the artist envisaged geography in terms of organic symbols, although Blake can be integrated neither into the Greek tradition of natural philosophy (the pre-Socratics) nor into the German lineage of *Naturphilosophie*. In *Jerusalem*, for instance, despite the poet's inclination towards obfuscation of readily available visionary truths, there is a transparent quaternary on the smaller scale: the Eagle corresponds to the north, the Fly – to the south, the

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[5] For more details, see my book, *Revealer of the Fourfold Secret: William Blake's Theory and Practice of Vision*.

Worm – to the west, and the Dove – to the east. These petty animals pair the large beasts which had already appeared in Blake's chief prose work:

> . . . And I heard Jehovah speak
> Terrific from his Holy Place & saw the Words of the Mutual Covenant Divine
> On Chariots of gold & jewels with Living Creatures starry & flaming
> With every Colour, Lion, Tyger, Horse, Elephant, Eagle Dove, Fly, Worm (E 258).

Nevertheless, in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, the quaternary correspondences are shifted to another level. If, in *Jerusalem*, one encounters four earth creatures on the larger scale, and three air creatures and one earth creature on the smaller scale, here, one finds four earth creatures on both scales. Thus, the Lion is assigned to the north, the Horse – to the south, the Elephant – to the west, and the Tyger[6] (in Blake's transcript) – to the east.[7] Four other petty animals appear, i.e. the Rat, the Mouse, the Fox, and the Rabbet (in Blake's transcript). Since the latter series is not transmuted into another poem, I can only infer that the humble quaternary merely parodies the grand one. The poet takes into account two different perspectives: the microscopic and the gigantic, corresponding to the microcosm and the macrocosm. The microcosm stands for the sublunary world, dominated by fault, instinct, time, and death, whilst the macrocosm stands for the divine world of Eternity, which is the archetypal abode of vision, the spiritual axis of the universe. The main message, however, is consistent with the newly found ontological key of Blake's system, i.e. each and every being plays its part in God's creation: 'The rat, the mouse, the fox, the rabbet; watch the roots, the lion, the tyger, the horse, the elephant, watch the fruits' (E 36). If one wishes to grasp the full span of Blake's thought, one must read this assertion in connection with that describing the cohesion of poetic parts in the prefatory lines to Chapter

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[6] It is well known that the figure of the tiger has been rendered famous by a poem bearing the same title and found in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. The poem's 'oriental feature' is noted by Dr Benjamin Heath Malkin, in the prefatory lines to the book devoted to the short life of his brilliant infant, Thomas: 'Our bard [Blake], having brought the topic he descants on from warmer latitudes than his own, is justified in adopting an imagery, of almost oriental feature and complection' (XXXVII).

[7] For a good survey of Blake's possible sources for the portrait of the Tyger, see Ashton Nichols 128-32.

I of *Jerusalem*.[8] It becomes quite clear now that the spectrum of analysis is broader than one may have anticipated in the beginning, and that the poet's zoomorphism translates a visionary mode which is inclined to accept *realia* in its complete and often confusing diversity rather than to operate on a selective basis.

A contrastive analysis of the animal pairs further clarifies their morphological traits. The first doublet in *Jerusalem*, Lion-Eagle, displays protection, nobility, genius, but also spiritual wrath. The subsequent pair, Horse-Fly, evinces reason, but also thoughtless *naïveté*. The third couple, Elephant-Worm, again evinces nobility, but also propensity for frailty. The final tandem, Tyger-Dove, equates love, but also, in a decayed form, instinctual wrath. Nonetheless, the first doublet in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Lion-Rat, is a mere contrast of force and weakness. The subsequent pair, Horse-Mouse, constitutes another opposition, the two entities having in common the idea of swiftness and agility (though the former adds grace to its intrinsic qualities). The third couple, Elephant-Fox, emphasizes the antinomy between sincerity and cunning (the former is resolute, whilst the latter is utterly spineless). The final tandem, Tyger-Rabbet, embodies the binominal Courage-Fear. Whilst, in *Jerusalem*, the pairs are noble and creative, in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, the couples are marred by sarcasm and frivolity.

A parallel analysis of these poetic tetrads points to the fact that Blake's bestial figures mirror, at least partially, certain zoomorphs which are found in the Indian pantheon. From the 'minor' series, one may distinguish the avian metaphor for the Eagle, as well as the frail frame of the Rabbet. There are no less than four similar birds in Hindu mythology: Suparna, '[a]n eagle or a vulture . . . noted for its strength and swiftness' (Stutley 290), Śyena, '[a]n eagle, hawk, falcon or other bird of prey' (Stutley 296), Garutmat, '[a]n eagle which protects one against poison and poisoned arrows' (Stutley 96), and, most importantly, Garuda, '[a] mythical figure having the beak and talons of a predatory bird and the body of a man,' described as a harpy in Buddhism (Stutley 95). David Weir identifies the composite figure found on plate 78 of *Jerusalem* as an engraving of Garuda, Visnu's vehicle: '[b]oth Garuda and Blake's composite creature bear the head of a bird featuring the hooked beak of an eagle or a hawk . . .' (81). On the other hand, though not intending to question Blake's

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[8] See E 146.

originality, Keri Davies believes that '[v]ery similar to the Garuda of Moor's Plate 105[9] are the winged, bird-headed riders of *Jerusale*m Plate 46 . . .' (49). As concerns the Rabbet, O'Flaherty notes that, in Hindu thought, this animal is associated not with sexuality or fecundity, as in the West, but with cleverness and fragility (259). If Blake does not necessarily imply that the Rabbet is quick-minded, he certainly intends it to be extremely fragile: hence its transparent pusillanimity.

Interestingly, all the elements pertaining to the 'major' series have corresponding ones in Hindu mythology. Simha, the Lion, is 'identified with sovereignty and given the title of lord, chief, hero, etc.' (Stutley 276). Asva, the Horse, is '[t]he symbol of luminous deities, esprecially the sun' (23). In *Aitareya Brahmana* (VI.35), the sun metamorphoses into a white horse. Moreover, his chariot is pulled by seven golden horses (Stutley 23). 'The head of the horse is particularly sacred and potent. Among other things, it represents knowledge' (Stutley 24). At once, everything becomes clear. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, horses are associated with sagacity and knowledge,[10] being surpassed only by the instinct-embodying tygers: 'The Tygers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction' (E 37). The golden 'horses of light' belong to the god of reason. The striking parallelism is enhanced even further: Damon underlines that 'they pull the sun chariot of the redeemed Urizen (the Greek Apollo) in the fourteenth illustration to *Job*' (189). Subsequent examples of horse symbolism in Hindu scriptures cannot overlook the significance of Hayagriva, the horse-headed god played, in disguise, by the powerful Visnu. In his attempt to save the Vedas, which are hidden inside the head of the stallion Dadhyanc, the god metamorphoses into a horse's head. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty further depicts the Vedic Stallion, as a symbol 'linked with fire through the rituals of the sun stallion and the sacrificial fire' (239). Moreover, she insists that there are essentially two contrastive models: one in which the stallion, functioning as a symbol of the sun and the day, is set in opposition to the mare (embodying the moon and the night), and the other in which the same stallion stands in contrast with the bull, both bearing the same meaning as in the first scenario (255). Gaja, the Elephant, is a widespread character in Puranic mythology, in connection with rain (Stutley 88). Numbering four (later, eight), they 'support and guard the regions of the

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[9] The author has in mind Edward Moor's illustrated work *The Hindu Pantheon*, published in 1810, and containing 105 engraved plates.

[10] Damon himself notes that, in Blake, horses 'represent Reason' (189).

world' (Stutley 88). As one may see, the obsession about tetrads is not only Blake's own. O'Flaherty also points out that the elephant, especially the white one, 'serves as a symbol of royalty, as a symbol of the Buddha . . .' (258). Albeit a symbol of fertility, it is never sacrificed. David Weir notes that 'Blake is said to have done a drawing of two elephant-headed figures that might have been modelled after the Indian god' (83), Ganesa, that is often depicted as elephant-headed and with a prominent belly. Finally, the tiger is associated with the menacing Goddess Durga, being her omnipresent and powerful vehicle (sometimes, a lion replaces this traditional character in some Indian icons).

My analysis evinces that the apparently paradoxical distribution of the aforementioned animals accounts for the similar geographical structure which Blake set at the core of his divine analogies. Thus, the dialectic of the sacred may be defined through a complex polarity of micro- and macrocomponents, inferior and superior elements, highly developed organic and primitive life patterns.

2. Ophiomorphic Symbolism and Psychological Exclusion: Orc's Reptilian Metamorphosis

The second part of my zoomorph study deals with Orc. He embodies Blake's idea of Revolution and, according to S. Foster Damon, constitutes 'a lower form of Luvah, the emotions . . . because repressed love turns to war'(309). He is the elder son of Los and his consort, Enitharmon.[11] Although only the latter part of Orc's analysis directly concerns possible Oriental filiations, I think that the whole exegetic attempt is relevant in the general context of Blake's animal metaphors.

Orc's reptilian metamorphosis has been generally interpreted as 'the degeneration of Revolution' (Damon 309). However, Morton D. Paley offers a more refined insightful comment, according to which, as a serpent in *America*, 'Orc can embody the cycle of historical recurrence . . . the serpent can also represent the possibility of millennial regeneration, suggested by the snake's annual casting of its slough . . . In addition, Orc's form has explicitly revolutionary dimensions' (58). In *The Four Zoas*, it is Urizen, the jealous god of the Old Testament, who forces Orc to become a serpent and to hide himself in the foliage of the forbidden tree, the Tree of

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[11] Nevertheless, in *Europe a Prophecy*, Rintrah, the symbol of divine wrath, is said to be the eldest: 'Arise! O Rintrah, eldest born, second to none but Orc!' (E 62).

Mystery.[12] Orc and Luvah, rebellion and sensuality, mingle, and the god of reason is baffled. The bitter knowledge brought about by Orc's transformation is symbolic of the 'Godlike State,' wherein physical pain and self-consciousness are mandatory elements. According to Brian Wilkie and Mary Lynn Johnson, 'Orc as the serpent is the erroneous identification of energy with evil that has been perpetrated in so much of religious orthodoxy' (150). As I shall further underline, this energy, called Kundalini in Hindu esoteric traditions, provides absolute, and therefore, in the eyes of the 'orthodox,' dangerous, knowledge. The assertion of Wilkie and Johnson holds water particularly when one correlates it with that of Jeffrey Burton Russell, which points out that the concept of the Devil[13] displays 'a coherent historical development growing from pre-biblical roots through Hebrew and Christian thought into the present. The essential point of this tradition is that the Devil is a *satan*, an "obstructor" of the will of the good Lord. Satan's basic function is to say, "My will, not yours, be done"' (25). Despite the fact that Orc rebels against a self-asserted *Demiurgos*, he is essentially a victim (although Blake's poetic scope is much broader if not taken at face value), not an obstructor. Victimized though he may be, Orc is still a powerful symbol of complete spiritual transformation, a fact proved by the character's stubborn resistance to all forms of hermeneutic explanation:

> . . . Thou knowst me now O Urizen Prince of Light
> And I know thee is this the triumph this the Godlike State
> That lies beyond the bounds of Science in the Grey obscure
>
> Terrified Urizen heard Orc now certain that he was Luvah
> And Orc began to Organize a Serpent body

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[12] It should be noted that this episode constitutes Blake's account of the Fall, a reinterpretation of the Miltonic version of the 'original sin.'

[13] In parallel, Jeffrey Burton Russell offers an interesting list of nonhistorical arguments for the Devil's existence:

(1) The Devil manifests himself personally: there is a 'Devil-experience' as there is a 'God-experience.'

(2) There is a universal human experience of the principle of evil. Some recent writers have spoken of natural diabology akin to natural theology.

(3) The Devil's existence can be demonstrated ontologically.

(4) The Devil's existence can be demonstrated a priori from certain theological assumptions.

(5) The Devil is accepted on the basis of biblical evidence (23-25).

Despising Urizens light & turning it into flaming fire
Recieving as a poisond Cup Recieves the heavenly wine
And turning affection into fury & thought into abstraction
A Self consuming dark devourer rising into the heavens (E 356).

It is quite obvious that everyone rejects Orc: Los, his father, who is jealous of his son's love for his mother, binds him to the ground; Urizen urges him to alter his shape radically (that is, to become estranged). These actions, forceful and hasty as they may be, are both forms of *exclusion*. I define the concept of *exclusion* in terms of opposition states, related to novelty, originality, and hidden meaning. One tends to reject whatever one perceives as perilous, utterly new, or incomprehensible. Thus, the basic features of the *exclusion* in Blake's Orc are the following antinomies: otherness (as opposed to identity) and deviance (as opposed to commonly accepted normality). Otherness and deviance are particularized in my discourse as traits of sexual, as well as spiritual, growth and initiation.

I have drawn two distinct axes of significance. They both envisage the relationship between subject and its counterpart (otherness) from two clear-cut viewpoints. Horizontally, the hero opposes the ordinary society. Vertically, he is set against his own subsequent distant self, as a superior form of existence. In order to achieve this ideal state, the hero undergoes a complex process of initiation, which implies a double self-deprivation (*Selbstentäußerung*): on the one hand, the giving-up of his initial body, on the other, his total abandoning to a higher authority, a fact which enables him to redefine the concept of liberty. The new corporeality and newly reached identity stage are, paradoxically, appropriated by Orc and, at the same time, perceived as alien, therefore as vivid metaphors for *exclusion*.

This vertical development causes an alteration on the horizontal axis: as the hero proceeds towards his pinnacle point, the gap between himself and the others grows proportionally. Feeling mystically elected, he develops a sense of estrangement in relation to the profane world (rendered metaphorically by the god of reason). Simultaneously, by perceiving the change in Orc, most of the characters tend to reject him, as he is viewed to be the recipient of what could ultimately be perceived as an ontological deviance. Yet another type of response is at hand. Thus, the hero is transformed into the archetype of an exemplary stance, functioning as a comprehensive yet unattainable symbol of the psyche.

However, the significance of Orc's metamorphosis cannot be fully grasped in the absence of a reference to Hindu mythology. Semantically, in Sanskrit, there is no difference between the snake and the elephant: both

are called *naga*. The former embodies wisdom and spiritual evolution: secret spiritual techniques of contemplation speak about the awakening of a divine form of energy, Kundalini, figured as a serpent and coiled at the base of the spine, in the sacrum bone. When Kundalini gushes out of the fontanelle bone area, which is the apex of the head or the seat of spiritual salvation, the human individual is freed from material bondage and breaks free from the inexorable cycle of life and death, thereby attaining immortality and absolute knowledge of the sacred. Thus, Orc's ophiomorphic transformation may be interpreted in terms of radical personality alteration, functioning on the premise of ontological substitution. Concurrently, Orc attains a superior level of understanding phenomena, as his reptilian metamorphosis is determined by his father, Urizen, who, in his unfallen form, embodies true *gnosis*. However, Orc's instinctual slavery is presented only through the eyes of Urizen. It is only reason's perspective which is present in the text: the castrating, domineering attitude of a jealous god, who proves utterly incapable of sharing the joy of intellectual and spiritual discovery. The conclusion reads that Orc may well have gained access to a superior metaphysical scale, which is meant to replace the sterile function of reason by opening the gates of the senses to an altogether different state of affairs. The serpent body is, in Blake's terms, a metaphor for *difference*: he who masters both his sensorium and his intellect is transformed forever. No conventional representation of human identity can possibly surface this radical change.

To sum up, I must say that Blake behaves ambivalently towards the figure of Orc. On the one hand, he downplays and debases its role, thereby paying tribute to a Christian convention according to which the serpent is a subversive icon, an image of the Devil. On the other, he remains faithful to his inner conviction that energy is a Luciferic force which, albeit apt to disrupt orthodox attitudes at a surface level, remains the only element able to guarantee both creative liberty and spiritual enlightenment at a deep structure level. It is at this point that Blake's thought meets Hindu tradition, identifying the ophiomorphic effigy with Kundalini, i.e. with the provider of absolute knowledge.

My analysis so far has shown that the animal metaphors scattered throughout Blake's poetry play a capital role in the metaphorical articulation of his visions. A more comprehensive study is needed, which may point out the complex ontological interplay, involving human and animal tropes, which defines the Blakean visionary edifice.

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ON MAGICAL REALISM IN *SHAKESPEARE'S MEMORY* BY BORGES

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Abstract
Reading Borges's stories is both interesting and somehow overwhelming. Being one of the major representatives of magical realism, Borges ingeniously intertwines fantasy and reality in his stories, carrying the reader to unfamiliar paths and leading him through stupendous paradoxes for which there is no logical explanation, and yet, they are very much rooted in mundane existence. In *Shakespeare's Memory* Borges tells the story of a man who has dedicated his entire life to Shakespeare and, as always, the story is not meant to elucidate any mystery, but to force the reader to question the details that make up his own life experiences.

Key words: magical realism, details, memory, reality, fantasy.

The work of the Argentine born writer, Jorge Luis Borges, dazzles the reader through its magnitude and presents an original view on human existence. So much rooted in the national history, and yet so much synchronized with the worldwide literature, Borges manages to give the world a masterpiece of magical realism with the short-story written by the end of his life, *Shakespeare's Memory*, a story which is not only meant to pay a tribute to the great British writer, William Shakespeare, but also to express Borges's fascination with the world of ideas, which seemed more real to him than the material world itself.

Jorge Luis Borges was neither a South American writer, nor a European one, but rather a universal writer whose work incorporates elements belonging to various cultures. Born in Buenos Aires in a family of intellectuals belonging to the upper-classes, who took great care of their son's education, Borges was sent to study in Switzerland, mostly because of his father's fondness for the European culture, but also because of his distrust in the national institutions (McNeese: 20). The Hispanic heritage,

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the European experience, as well as his extensive readings of classic works of English literature, that were predominant in his father's library, contributed to his development as a writer and enabled him to create stories that can go beyond any frontiers of time, space and even imagination.

The many biographies of Borges present him in his childhood as a voracious reader acquainted with the world mostly through books. His appetite for reading was extraordinary even then, and many biographers concluded that the young Borges might have realised that some day, earlier than normally, he would be sentenced to darkness because of an eye condition that run in the family. Besides blindness, Borges also inherited from his family the propensity for writing, an inexhaustible veneration of his ancestors, the admiration for English writers and "a dreamy, bohemian way of life" (Wilson: 25). Thus, despite getting in contact with different cultures and despite his ability to integrate in each of them, Borges was never really engulfed in any of them. Instead, he was more of an observer, getting the best out of his experience, and he created his own system of ideas that he would later incorporate in his creation, ideas which were relevant for both the Latin American and the Western culture.

We can say of Borges that he had a multicultural formation that influenced him in working with a wide range of themes, and because he was constantly in and out of the national Argentine culture, the subjects he approached in his writing find their roots in the international, as well as the South American culture. The topics that captivated his attention are so vast and various that it would be impossible to refer to all of them in only a few pages. Nevertheless, a handful of themes are widely used throughout his literary creation and these are memory, identity, time and the divided self. On a first look, these may seem as elements that would put Borges among the first postmodern writers of the century, and yet, his original use these themes clearly makes him an important representative of magical realism and only a precursor of postmodernism.

Although Borges moves back to Argentina after he had already made his debut in Spain with a volume of poetry, his literary career begins to blossom once he is back on Argentine soil. His work is innovative mostly because he draws away from traditional narrative boundaries and eliminates from his writing any details that would make it harder to digest. The brevity of his stories might make them seem rather simple, and yet, the ideas he communicates are so complex and sophisticated that it might have been difficult for readers to understand them if they had been delivered in a lengthy narrative. Willingly or not, Borges took the task to reinvent

Argentine literature and he started by reinventing himself. If in the beginning he was invariable in his idea of being a pure Argentine, he later developed an original perspective on culture and writing. He eradicated the idea of portraying the local colour of the Argentine society in his work, and instead he created what we might call a hybrid of different cultures, an original mixture of subjects that arouse readers' interest, regardless of race or gender. However, Borges never gave up the task to set forth Argentine writing, and we might even say that his work revived critics' interest in South-American literature.

Most of Borges's stories spin around one particular theme – reality. However, he never resorted to a mimetic description of reality and, instead, he was more interested in the unexplainable things that one can experience. Therefore, the reader often detects in his stories elements of magical realism, which were often used as instruments the process of drawing insight from the surrounding, material world by darkening the line between reality and fantasy. *Shakespeare's Memory*, like most of the stories written by Borges, contains fragments of the author's own experience and personality and examines how memory and imagination work together to build or, in our case, to alter an individual's identity. Set in a normal, modern world, the story contains authentic descriptions of humans and society, and yet, when Shakespeare's memory is conjured up, fantasy steps in and the reader is drawn into a magical, but still real setting and forced to explore his own ideas about reality.

By the time *Shakespeare's Memory* was published, Jorge Luis Borges was already at the end of a long and prolific literary life that brought him international fame and appreciation. The story, despite incorporating many of the subjects that captivated Borges's attention throughout his life, received poor and even negative critical reception. The collection that includes *Shakespeare's Memory* was often considered below the standards imposed by the author's previous stories and critics either just ignored it, or they labelled it as a collection of an old man's stories that bring nothing new on the table. Indeed, there are stylistic differences between Borges's early work and the story I intend to analyze, but I do not see any reason why *Shakespeare's Memory* shouldn't be considered as valuable, challenging and memorable as anything Borges ever wrote.

Shakespeare's Memory tells the story of Hermann Sörgel, a German scholar who dedicated his entire life to studying and writing about Shakespeare and his literary legacy. At a conference on Shakespeare, the protagonist meets Daniel Thorpe, a military physician who offers him a

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priceless gift – the centuries old memory of the man many people recognize as the most distinguished and exceptional writer in the world – William Shakespeare. The reader suspects from the beginning that the story he is about to read is intriguing and rather strange, and yet he never expects that such an abstract entity – the actual memory of a man, which comprises the thoughts and emotions that Shakespeare ever had, the places and people he had ever seen, the words he had ever read or the songs he had ever listened to – would be invoked.

Nevertheless, the surprise diminishes when we think that this story comes from Borges, the man for whom the world of ideas was more fascinating than everything else. He chose memory as the main theme for his story, because memory is the element that defines one's identity, and he chose Shakespeare as the man whose memory is being conjured up because of his admiration for the Elizabethan writer.

Memory and its role were also the subjects of another well-known short story written by Borges – *Funes el Memorioso* (*Funes the Memorious*). In this story, the main character possesses the unique ability to remember everything and forget nothing. His limitless power to store any detail of everything he had ever seen, read or experienced is useless, however, because all he does with his memories is to arrange them in a numbering system that can be used and understood only by him, as no other man exhibits the same ability; therefore, as valuable as this gift may seem, it is actually worthless if its owner cannot accomplish anything with it.

In *Shakespeare's Memory* the idea of a gift of infinite value is introduced by a story that Sörgel hears from one of the participants in the conference. The 'story within the story' reveals the existence of a magic ring, which belonged to King Solomon and which later came into the possession of a beggar. Apparently, the ring allowed its owner to understand the language of birds, but because no price could be assign to it, the beggar couldn't sell it and he was forced to live in misery for the rest of his life. Obviously, the ring was lost "as that sort of magical thingamajig always is" (Borges 1998: 123), and its owner, much like Funes, never achieves anything because of it. Later that night, Thorpe offers a ring to Sörgel. As expected, the ring is merely a metaphor for the precious memory of the great Elizabethan writer, a gift which would later prove to be as useless as the beggar's ring or Funes's ability.

Shakespeare's memory passes from one person to another after a verbal acceptance that must be uttered out loud. Amazed and even

distrustful, Sörgel remains speechless, reflecting upon Thorpe's offer: "It was as though I had been offered the ocean" (Borges 1998: 124). The comparison not only suggests the unlikelihood of being able to give and to receive such a gift, but also the tremendous consequences and the uneasiness that such a situation would cause if it were to materialize. And yet, the transfer is made. Sörgel accepts Shakespeare's memory, considering it was the right thing to do after spending his entire life "in pursuit of Shakespeare" (Borges 1998: 125).

Paradoxes and contradictions are omnipresent in Borges's fiction. In *Shakespeare's Memory* nothing extraordinary or awkward seems to happen when the transfer is being made, and yet Sörgel knows that "something happened; there is no doubt of that. But I did not feel it happen. Perhaps just a slight sense of fatigue, perhaps imaginary" (Borges 1998: 125). These words suggest that the narrator is at the same time subjective and detached, as if the story related belonged to two different people. Nevertheless, this subjectivity and detachment coexist within the mind of one person in search for a "unified sense of individual being" (Frisch: 83). Ergo the reader must bear in mind that the man telling the story is someone who once possessed Shakespeare's memory, not the man he was before the related event happened.

From the moment Sörgel receives the memory that comes from another man's experience, he must learn to handle it, but he eventually fails just like the man that offered it to him. He gradually starts to discover it, and he is soon able to possess two different sets of experiences, or rather to be possessed by them. His body turns into an object in which two memories seek to coexist and Sörgel soon becomes simply a vessel for another man's memory. Consequently, his identity is altered, because when Shakespeare's memory infiltrates his mind, Sörgel is no longer the man that once heard a story about a magic ring, but the man who once had the magic ring. Even when he liberates himself from the burden of the other man's memory, he does not turn back to his previous self, because the experience he had was so intense and challenging that it would have impossible to leave no marks on his identity.

Sörgel is at first delighted by the idea of being in control of Shakespeare's memory: "I would possess Shakespeare, and possess him as no one ever had – not in love, or friendship, or even hatred. I, in some way, would be Shakespeare" (Borges 1998: 126). However, he becomes Shakespeare, the man, not the writer. He doesn't get the talent to write what Shakespeare did, but he recalls the moments when the Bard was given

the inspiration to write his tragedies and sonnets. He remembers Anne Hathaway like he remembered "that mature woman who taught me the ways of love in an apartment in Lubeck so many years ago" (Borges 1998: 126), a first detail that indicates that Sörgel is actually a substitute of Borges.

In his famous essay "The Death of the Author" Roland Barthes condemns critics' habit of searching for biographical details in the interpretation of a text and asserts that a texts should be analyzed independently of its creator. He purports that "a text's unity lies not in its origin, but in its destination" (Barthes: 401), therefore the reader is the key element in the interpretation of a text, and not the author. However, a curious reader would want to know how an author came up with the idea of writing a certain text. And because Borges is definitely one of those artists whose work makes you want to know more about its creator, after reading his biography it becomes quite difficult not to notice that Borges took pieces of his personality and implanted them in any story he ever wrote. *Shakespeare's Memory* is no exception and the story's protagonist is a transposition of its author. Sörgel, a German scholar, worships Shakespeare, although "Goethe is Germany's official religion" (Borges 1998:129), and for Borges, an Argentine writer, Shakespeare was supreme as well, although one might expect him to have chosen a Hispanic writer as his idol. Furthermore, the reader learns about Sörgel that he is an old man, partially blind, who was sexually initiated by a mature woman. Borges himself had a similar experience in his youth, when he was taken by his father to his own mistress in Geneva (an unpleasant experience he couldn't forget for the rest of his life) and he also lacked visual perception. And yet, he didn't lack imagination and talent for writing, and every experience, every intention and every passion he ever had became an item in his writing.

Sörgel continues the story of how he came in possession of Shakespeare's memory by mentioning De Quincey who said "that our brain is a palimpsest" (Borges 1998:127). Borges, in his turn, was an admirer of the English author, therefore this reference is not arbitrary, and instead it points out to Borges's idea that every new literary text has its roots in previously written texts, because "authors are readers who rewrite what has already been written" (Block de Behar: 3). In the story we discover references to various literary personalities, a fact that makes us think of the prominent intertextuality that generally pervades Borges's writing. And because intertextuality is often considered a postmodern technique,

Borges's use of it, along with a fragmented reality and the idea of a decentred self in search for unity, enables us to call *Shakespeare's Memory* a masterpiece which stands at the threshold between postmodernism and magical realism.

Memory and personal experience play the leading roles in the process of writing because, while memory allows information to surface when needed, personal experience establishes the way in which the information is transmitted. However, the two are not enough for writing and Sörgel's experience reinforces my statement. Despite being able to discover details of Shakespeare's life that cannot be found in any of his biographies, and despite knowing him as no one ever had, he realizes that his possession is as futile and ineffective as Funes's capacity to remember everything. He decides to write a biography of Shakespeare, but he changes his mind, because he understands that he does not possess the talent for telling a story: "I do not know how to tell my own story, which is a great deal more extraordinary than Shakespeare's" (Borges 1998: 129).

If in a previously written story dedicated to Shakespeare's life and work – *Everything and Nothing* – Borges envisages the Bard striving for an identity, in *Shakespeare's Memory* the protagonist's identity is crushed by the memory of a man who had "become proficient in the habit of simulating that he was someone, so that others would not discover his condition as no one" (Borges 1962: 231). Shakespeare, as Borges describes him, had "no one in him" and yet, "no one has ever been so many men as this man, who like the Egyptian Proteus could exhaust all the guises of reality" (Borges 1962: 231). As we may notice, Borges uses antithetical details in Shakespeare's portrayal. Nevertheless, they are not meant to create confusion, but to reveal Shakespeare's uniqueness as a man and a writer. And because Shakespeare, just like God, is no one, and yet so many, it becomes quite clear that Sörgel, a man with no extraordinary abilities, wouldn't manage to handle Shakespeare's memory and this experience would influence him for the rest of his life.

Soon enough, the bliss that Sörgel felt when he was given the ability to know what Shakespeare knew becomes a torture. Even though the two memories that inhabited his mind initially seem to coexist, granting their possessor the ability to contemplate someone else's past without being a part of it, Shakespeare's memory eventually annihilates the protagonist's own memory. He remembers places and people he had never seen and he forgets the language of his parents. He pronounces words he had never read and he whistles melodies he had never heard, but he fails to recognize cars

and engines. Everything around him becomes a "welter of great shapes forged in iron, wood, and glass" (Borges 1998: 130). His confusion deepens to such an extent that Sörgel gets the impression that he no longer belongs to this world; therefore he decides to give Shakespeare's memory to someone else. He starts dialling telephone numbers and gives the memory to the first man that has the courage to accept it.

The loss of Shakespeare's memory awakens in Sörgel contradictory feeling. He is nostalgic for giving up the opportunity to write Shakespeare's biography, but also afraid that he might not be able to free himself from the memory he once possessed. The fear, however, surpasses the nostalgia, because he repeatedly utters the words: "Simply the thing I am shall make me live" (Borges 1998:131). Paradoxically, the words belong to Parolles, a character from Shakespeare's play *All's Well that Ends Well*, which could indicate that the protagonist doesn't really escape Shakespeare's memory when he passes it on to someone else. He invents exercises that should help him get his memory back and he tries to fill his minds with other subjects, such as William Blake's mythology or Bach's music. Nevertheless, all his attempts are useless and they all lead to Shakespeare.

Borges's story manages to inflict a feeling of anxiety upon the reader, and this feeling persists even when we finish reading it. In his work, the author always seems to question different things and clarify nothing, as if his writing was meant to stimulate readers' awareness that reality sometimes comprises things that cannot be rationally explained. The protagonist of his story doesn't reach any real closure, because in the end, he writes: "In my waking hours I am Professor Emeritus Hermann Sörgel; I putter about the card catalog and compose erudite trivialities, but at dawn I sometimes know that the person dreaming is that other man" (Borges 1998:130). Bearing in mind that in *Everything and Nothing* Borges imagines Shakespeare as a man who had dreamt his characters just like God dreamt the world, and that in *Shakespeare's Memory* Sörgel's dreams are actually Shakespeare's, perhaps the real message of the story is that in every new literary text there is a trace of Shakespeare and, if he had never been born, literature would not have been the same.

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"*DETAILS*" OF AN INTELLECTUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: RUSKIN'S *PRAETERITA*

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Abstract
John Ruskin, the leading personality of the Victorian culture (writer, art critic and patron, painter and prominent social thinker) tests his skills in approaching his own life in *Praeterita***,** an incomplete autobiography published between 1881-1886 in separate numbers, after which year his mental illness prevented him from writing. This piece of work is an astonishing account of revelation, and Ruskin himself avows that, just like Mill's writing of the same kind, his autobiography is an intellectual history, with an obvious personal touch and consists in a series of juxtaposed moments of vision. The aim of this paper is to present and emphasize the importance of some of these "*details*" in Ruskin's life, as perceived and described by the author himself.

Key words: Ruskin, autobiography, *Praeterita,* details*,* intellectual experience, moments of vision

John Ruskin, the towering figure of the Victorian culture (writer, art critic and patron, painter and prominent social thinker) tests his skills in approaching his own life in *Praeterita***,** an incomplete autobiography written at the end of his career and published between 1881-1886 in separate numbers, after which date his mental illness prevented him from working. The reasons for which he wrote this piece of work are revealed by Ruskin himself. It was:*"*an old man's recreation in gathering visionary flowers, in fields of youth*"*, as well as a "dutiful offering at the grave" (35. 11-12) of his parents. This writing was also a way of permitting his readers to observe the way he approached and presented his main ideas: " How I learned the things I taught is the major, and properly, the only question regarded in this history". Two important points are to be noticed here. First, this autobiography does not take a confessional or self-revealing form, nor does it allude to his mental suffering, abortive marriage or friendships, all

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these omissions being caused by the fits of madness that eventually obliged him to stop writing before approaching certain issues or periods of his life.

Ruskin himself avows that, just like Mill's writing of the same kind, his autobiography is an intellectual history, with an obvious personal touch, in the sense that the author is interested, as George P. Landow (1993:172) puts it: "in his dual emphases upon the visual sources of knowledge and upon the intrinsic unity of human sensibility." Ruskin did not approve the idea of man regarded in the economic, aesthetic or intellectual sense, but considered only the human being taken as a whole, with interconnected and relevant experiences. For him, human experience resides in acts of perception, and the result is that his autobiography consists in recording moments of vision, blending his concern with both perception and interpretation, which he considered strongly related in the process of his education. Ruskin points out his experience of learning to see and understand in specific, individual episodes, as is the case with the importance of reading the Bible in childhood:"It had never entered into my head to doubt a word of the Bible, though I saw well enough already that its words were to be understood other-wise than I had been taught; but the more I believed it, the less it did me any good." (35. 189). On this occasion, he realized that even the Bible itself, taken for granted by evangelicals as the literal word of God, could be subject of interpretation.

Ruskin's early religious beliefs, which lay at the basis of his interpretations of life and art were constantly endangered in the mid-1850 by geology, the Higher Criticism, and even by his own doubts, which made him confess that these inconveniences led to " the inevitable discovery of the falseness, of the religious doctrines in which I had been educated." (35.482). His separation from evangelicalism is narrated in the April 1877 issue of *Fors Clavigera* and remoulded in *Praeterita*. From *Fors* we learn that the *"crisis"* in his mind appeared one morning in Turin "when, from before Paul Veronese's Queen of Sheba, and under quite overwhelmed sense of his God-given power" he visited the Protestant church where he listened to the priest assuring his parishioners that only they would be safe in front of the damnation that was endangering the life of their fellow citizens. " I came out of the chapel, in sum of twenty years of thought, a conclusively unconverted man. " (29.89). The pastor's assertion denied the truth of Ruskin's own belief in the ways of God, which finally made him choose between *"*Protestantism or nothing" (29. 89). In *Praeterita* we find a different version: first he took part in the Waldensian sermon and only after that he saw Veronese's painting. Moreover, from this second variant

of his past, we learn that Ruskin's reaction against the sermon was not strong or led to an immediate break with his evangelical belief before leaving the church. Considering the sermon rather unconnected than irritating, he left the church and only later realized that the better ways of serving God were music and painting. (Rosenberg, 89)

When the order of happenings was switched, in the sense that the sermon was placed before Ruskin's seeing the Veronese painting, the point of his narrative was changed; for whereas *Fors* tells us the way in which a painting induced the artist to challenge the damnation doctrine of evangelicalism, *Praeterita* narrates how painting and music made Ruskin realize that these were better ways to serve God than his earlier faith. However, *Praeterita* does not cite an all-important element, namely, that Ruskin's option was between *"Protestantism or nothing"*, in this way alleviating the sense of crisis, but at the same time accentuating a touch of affirmation rather than denial.

Ruskin's task as autobiographer is dominated by interpretation, a fact turned obvious when ascertaining the contradictions observed in the two versions of this important moment of his life. Reading his letters and diaries, one notices that the initial incident described in *Fors* delineates in detail the happenings of an afternoon spent in Turin, but as soon as he went back in 1875 to some configuration of Christian belief, he started to comprehend unifying elements in his past, rather than interrupting ones.

Therefore, Ruskin 's past life is presented mainly in instants of vision as he considers himself a mere spectator as such, who feels alive only due to such moments and lives primarily by seeing. In presenting Ruskin's image of himself, *Praeterita* centers upon the evolvement of his sense of sight and the essential elements in this process represent moments when he managed to observe things in a new, significant manner. This does not imply resourcefulness, able-mindedness, or "any special power or capacity; for, indeed, none such existed, except that patience in looking, and precision in feeling, which afterwards, with due industry, formed my analytic power .... On the other hand ", he tells us, " I have never known one whose thirst for visible fact was at once so eager and so methodic. " (35. 51). The importance of this "thirst for visible fact" is self-evident in *Praeterita*, the work revealing the ways in which it was developed. Actually this form of intellectual appetite constituted one of young Ruskin's main springs of childhood enrapture. In his early boyhood he generally lacked toys, his source of entertainment being the examination of the fabrics and carpets in his house.

No toys of any kind were at first allowed....   I had a bunch of keys to play with, as long as I was capable only of pleasure in what glittered and jingled; as I grew older, I had a cart, and a ball; and when I was five or six years old, two boxes of well-cut wooden bricks. With these modest, but, I still think, entirely sufficient possessions, and being always summarily whipped if I cried, did not do as I was bid, or tumbled on the stairs, I soon attained serene and secure methods of life and motion; and could pass my days contentedly in tracing the squares and comparing the colours of my carpet; - examining the knots in the wood of the floor, or counting the bricks in the opposite houses; with rapturous intervals of excitement during the filling of the water-cart,... But the carpet, and what patterns I could find in bed-covers, dresses, or wall-papers to be examined, were my chief resources, and my attention to the particulars in these was soon so accurate, that when at three and a half I was taken to have my portrait painted by Mr Northcote,1 I had not been ten minutes alone with him before I asked him why there were holes in his carpet.(31,13).

The vitality of his sight was stimulated by his parents' travels around Europe, in the position in which they did not speak foreign languages, thus not being able to socialize. (Abse, 65). For young Ruskin, this state of affairs was fairly comfortable, for *"*"if you have sympathy, the aspect of humanity is more true to the depths of it than its words; and even in my own land, the things in which I have been least deceived are those which I have learned as their Spectator' (35. ll9). *Praeterita* is then, as Landow (1993:175) states *"*an autobiography of Ruskin the Spectator, the man who sees and understands."

        "Ruskin the Spectator" is the boy who remains outside the flow of life and observes with attention. Because of his parents' insecure financial status, he had no close friends of his age; his autobiography emphasizes his "perky, contented, conceited, Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life", and when Ruskin says "our regular and sweetly selfish manner of living", he refers to his family's social isolation. With such a way of living, the boy concentrates on the visual and on the visionary, observing things at hand or envisaging those out-of-the-way: "Under these circumstances, what powers of imagination I possessed, either fastened themselves on inanimate things - the sky, the leaves, and pebbles, observable within the walls of Eden - or caught at any opportunity of flight into regions of romance." (35.37). Thus, little by little, Ruskin came to enjoy the life of one able to observe others, he himself taking a back seat: "My times of happiness had always been when nobody was thinking of me. ... My entire delight was in

observing without being myself noticed -if I could have been invisible, all the better." (35.165-6). As he confesses, this invisible posture produced his "essential love of Nature ", which was the "root of all that I have usefully become, and the light of all I have rightly learned" (35. 165-6). This kind of feeling, *Praeterita* tells the reader, was fostered by his childhood surroundings, which he describes like some sort of a lost Garden of Eden, turned inaccessible, but dearly remembered. ((Hewison, *John Ruskin and the Argument* ...81*).

Besides describing Ruskin's sentience of sight and how it progressed, *Praeterita* registers altogether his aesthetic education by mentioning the boy's experience with drawing teachers, various landscapes, and works of art. Actually, Charles Runciman, his drawing-master, did not do much to spur on his talent for "drawing delicately with the pen point", but he did teach his pupil "perspective, at once accurately and simply" and "a swiftness and facility of hand which I found afterwards extremely useful, though what I have just called the 'force', the strong accuracy of my line, was lost." (35. 76-7). Most crucial, Runciman "cultivated in me - indeed founded - the habit of looking for the essential points in things drawn, so as to abstract them decisively, and explained to me the meaning and importance of composition." (35. 77).

Encounters with various works of art and spectacular surroundings that strongly acted upon Ruskin's life and work are also to be found in his autobiography. Some of them took place in the presence of more experienced artists, for instance in the house of Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet. Thus Ruskin tells us that when he "was getting talkative" in expressing approval of a Rubens sketch that belonged to his host , another artist, George Richmond, wondered why he hadn't considered the much greater painting of Veronese hanging in the same room. To Ruskin's surprised answer that, in his opinion, Veronese looked more domesticated in comparison with the Rubens, Richmond retorted that, however: "the Veronese is true, the other violently conventional. "(35. 337). Such argued comparisons between the two painters led Ruskin, a young art critic at the time, to a new perspective of understanding Venetian color and the nature of art's conventions. (Helsinger, 112).

Most of the experiences described by Ruskin were merely personal discoveries, without being assisted by others. For instance, while in Genoa in 1840 he saw *"for the first time the circular Pieta by Michael Angelo, which was my initiation in all Italian art. For at this time I understood no jot of Italian painting, but only Rubens, Vandyke, and Velasquez"* (35.

264), and, on another occasion, while visiting Lucca in 1845, he first discovered twelfth-century buildings built "in material so incorruptible, that after six hundred years of sunshine and rain, a lancet could not now be put between their joints." (35. 350). As a young man, the romantic and artistic dimension of his nature urged him , as Landow (1993: 177) states "to seek out the pleasing irregularities and age mark of the picturesque, and for a time he patterned his own drawing style after that of Samuel Prout, who invented a particular kind of urban picturesque." During his visit to Lucca, he realized the importance of great architecture in the context of admiring the picturesque, in the sense that architecture had its own rules of form, which those interested in the picturesque failed to notice. He also learned that the picturesque, although extremely enjoyable, proved to be some sort of artistic convention with rather negative connotations because it somehow obstructed the discovery of what was really to be seen there. Coming to visit Lucca, a spectacular medieval location, Ruskin discovered Gothic buildings with a strong, firm and precise design, which he labeled as anti-picturesque.

When he first visited Venice, the city seemed to him the perfect place for stimulating Romantic imagination, and he felt overwhelmed with joy. (Hewison, *Ruskin and Venice.....,*22). Considering that *Praeterita* is shaped around moments of perception, this feeling arose at perceiving a single exciting and epiphanic sight, similar to the experience occurring in the Alps*:"* The beginning of everything was in seeing the gondola-beak come actually inside the door at Danieli's, when the tide was up, and the water two feet deep at the foot of the stairs and then, all along the canal sides, actual marble walls rising out of the salt sea, with hosts of little brown crabs on them, and Titians inside." (35. 295). He was delighted by the buildings along the Grand Canal, the Ducal Palace or Saint Mark's, but the great moment of revelation about the city took place when he saw the series of paintings by Tintoretto on the life of Christ. Urged by his fellow-artist and close friend J.D.Harding, he visited the Scuola di San Rocco, where the above-mentioned Tintoretto cycle determined him to approach the cultural and historical heritage of Venice, having as result the writing of one of his highly praised books, *The Stones of Venice.*

Several other important "*details*" reported by Ruskin in his autobiography prove to be parables of perception revealing the ways he managed to see for himself. The incidents of the Norwood ivy and the Fontainebleau aspen, as well as his encounter with Turner's sketches of Switzerland led him to a subtle understanding of the latter's creation. For

him, Turner's above-mentioned pieces of work *"*were straight impressions of nature - not artificial designs, like the Carthages and Romes. And it began to occur to me that perhaps even in the artifices of Turner there might be more truth than I had understood ... In these later subjects Nature herself was composing with him .*"* (35.310). After this insight into the painter's way of creation, Ruskin reveals the way he came to see with a cleared vision:

> Considering of these matters, one day on the road to Norwood, I noticed a bit of ivy round a thorn stem, which seemed, even to my critical judgement not ill 'composed'; and proceeded to make a light and shade pencil study of it in my grey paper pocket-book, carefully, as if it had been a bit of sculpture, liking it more and more as I drew. When it was done, I saw that I had virtually lost all my time since I was twelve years old, because no one had told me to draw what was really there! (35.311).

Ruskin's purpose is, in Landow's (1993: 178) opinion: " to contrast critical judgement and the act of drawing, sculpture and ivy round a thorn stem, man's art and nature's higher creation." Following the sketching rules of the amateur artist in search of the beautiful for years left him with unimportant records of place, but in the long run he abandoned this habit and started drawing little bits of vegetation, which made him realize that : " I had never before seen the beauty of anything, not even of a stone - how much less of a leaf! " (35. 311)

Praeterita narrates another important "*detail*" in Ruskin's progress. When walking around Fontainebleau, he felt tired and started to draw a little aspen tree. On this occasion, he had an important moment of vision, after realizing that he was drawing a natural fact without considering any rules.

> Languidly, but not idly, I began to draw it; and as I drew, the languor passed away: the beautiful lines insisted on being traced - without weariness. More and more beautiful they became, as each rose out of the rest, and took its place in the air. With wonder increasing every instant, I saw that they 'composed' themselves, by finer laws than any known of men. At last, the tree was there, and everything that I had thought before about trees, nowhere! (35. 314)

Ruskin did not feel 'abased' when drawing the Norwood ivy, having always thought of the plant to be ornamental. On the contrary, randomly drawing such a thing led him to the conclusion that nature was greater than art.

That all the trees of the wood (for I saw surely that my little aspen was only one of their millions) should be beautiful - more than Gothic tracery, more than Greek vase-imagery, more than the daintiest embroiderers of the East could embroider, or the artfullest painters of the West could limn - this was indeed an end to all former thoughts with me, an insight into a new silvan world.

Not silvan only. The woods, which I had only looked on as wilderness fulfilled I then saw, in their beauty, the same laws which guided the clouds, divided the light, and balanced the wave. (35. 315)

Ruskin confesses that the elements that provided the cornerstone of his artistic career were his encounters with Turner's Swiss sketches, the Norwood ivy, and the Fontainebleau aspen. The drawings of the Gothic in Rheims continued these experiences, being again surprised by another moment of vision. (Hunt, 176). While drawing the tomb of Ilaria de Caretto, he soon noticed that the fine lines of the monument applied the same laws that he had observed in the Norwood ivy and the Fontainebleau aspen. The " harmonies of line ... I saw in an instant were under the same laws as the river wave, and the aspen branch, and the stars' rising and setting" (35. 349). He was surprised when recognizing an element of crucial importance he had not considered until then. First, that the ivy incorporated laws of beauty superior to those man can ever invent, and then that trees, nature's more majestic creations, are subject to the same rules. The next step in his advance came when he observed that the same laws were to be found in the Gothic, a hint that the great medieval artists, sculptors and architects especially, had instinctively the same revelation, namely, that the beauties of nature are not predictable in theory.

Ruskin the artist understood that everything he discovered urged him to learn to see art with his own eyes and write art criticism according to his own principles, even though at times he benefitted from precious guidance, as is the case with Richmond, with whom he discussed Venetian color. (Hewison, *Ruskin and Venice:*..135). He strongly believed that he had to experience and judge for himself, and that the act of drawing was all-important in the self-education of the artist. He considers that he gained his independence as a critic when he visited Rome in 1840, on which occasion he realized that he had to make his own judgments as regards painting and architecture: "Everybody told me to look at the roof of the Sistine chapel, and I liked it; but everybody also told me to look at

Raphael's Transfiguration, and Domenichino's St Jerome" (35. 273), something he barely enjoyed.

Occasions when he discovered beauties of nature, like the Norwood ivy and the Fontainebleau aspen are presented by Ruskin in his autobiography in the form of spectacular epiphanies. They present the author's catching sight of something, not close, but in the distance. This is the case with his visiting Schaffhausen with his parents in 1833 at fourteen years of age and saw the Alps for the first time in his life. At first, the landscape seemed "one of our own distances from Malvern of Worcestershire or Dorking of Kent", but at once set eyes on the mountains at a certain distance.

> There was no thought in any of us for a moment of their being clouds. They were as clear as crystal, sharp on the pure horizon sky, and already tinged with rose by the sinking sun. Infinitely beyond all that we had ever thought or dreamed - the seen walls of lost Eden could not have been more beautiful to us; not more awful, round heaven, the walls of sacred Death.
> It is not possible to imagine, in any time of the world, a more blessed entrance into life, for a child of such temperament as mine. True, the temperament belonged to the age: a very few years - within the hundred - before that, no child could have been born to care for mountains, or for the men that lived among them, in that way. Till Rousseau's time, there had been no 'sentimental' love of nature . . . The sight of the Alps was not only the revelation of the beauty of the earth, but the opening of the first page to its volume - I went down that evening from the garden-terrace of Schaffhausen with my destiny fixed. (35. 115-616).

Just like other Victorians, Carlyle, Tennyson, and Mill, in narrating this, as well as other fundamental experiences, as Landow (1993: 181) states: " Ruskin employed the pattern of a religious-conversion narrative. *Praeterita,* though it does present climactic moments, does not, like most conversion narratives, build towards a single climax or moment of illumination. Rather Ruskin organizes his materials into a series of climactic illuminations, such as that attained by drawing the ivy and the aspen, each of which can stand to some extent by itself." In *Praeterita* every single moment of vision or perception is juxtaposed to the others with a view to forming a whole, Ruskin's aim being to narrate relevant instances of intimately achieved vision. One may put forth that *Praeterita* shares similar structural principles with Ruskin's other important writings, like *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice.*

In conclusion, the above-mentioned "*details*" may account for the fact that *Praeterita,* although incomplete and purposely written in a fragmented manner, does not invite the reader to witness a continuous series of events, but urges him to visit a gallery of pictures that need to be compared, along with inducing the feeling of being with Ruskin, the beholder of his own life.

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Quotations from the writings of John Ruskin are taken from: E.T.Cook and Wadderburn Alexander, ed.in 39 vol., *The Complete Works of John Ruskin*, Library Edition,George Allen, London, 1903-12. The Arabic numerals in parentheses refer to volume and page numbers. *The Online Books Page*. [Online]. Available: *onlinebooks.library. upenn.edu/*

CULTURAL SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY IN HENRY JAMES'S NOVEL *THE GOLDEN BOWL*

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Abstract
In Henry James's international novels, sexuality plays an important part in the constitution of the Self, in the conception of identity; it doesn't represent a static concept. The author insists upon the meeting between culture and Self, where the notion of a gendered, sexed Self is always interrogated. In *The Golden Bowl*, James analyzes the power of the Self to pass over the pain that derives from intimacy. The incestuous relationship between Maggie Verver and her father is definitely the cause for the difficulty in finding a sense of identity. The novel actually depicts not only Maggie's birth of the Self and the struggle to obtain an autonomous identity, but also the pain and the difficulty which accompany this birth. Finally, she discovers her womanhood due to her sexual passion for her husband and she can separate from Adam.

Key words: identity, Oedipus complex, Self, sexuality

Henry James was one of the most controversial figures in the literary criticism concerning sexuality, more precisely same-sex relationships and homosexual identities. He was very often associated with 'queer' literary criticism. Some critics adopted a biographical approach and considered his supposed sexual abstinence the cause for unintended sexual moments in his literary works. Others insisted on the author's consciousness in his erotic representations. Many of them were reluctant to write about the sexual implications in James's writings. James was considered an erotic writer by critics like Linda S. Boren in her *Eurydice Reclaimed*, which presents the erotic borders of James's fiction between decorum and libido. John Carlos Rowe insists upon the absent father's power, erotic otherwise, while Eve Sedgwich and David Van Leer analyze the possibilities of homoeroticism in his writings. Despite all these different

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opinions, he had a major contribution to the cultural understanding of sexuality.

When James started to write, the vocabulary related to sexuality was increasingly used by specialists, but it didn't have a general circulation, as it has today. He actually didn't use this term in his international writings, but only rarely in private context, in his letters. The absence of this term partially illustrates its importance as a term difficult to represent. James infuses his literary writings with elliptical representations of sexuality, which is characterized by the absence of speech. The scenes of seduction are present, but the language which describes the erotic aspects is absent. This aspect is very much present in his late international fiction and style, where the readers are offered partial images that suggest and not name. They are challenged to imagine the reality. Ruth Bernard Yeazell describes his late style as "the impulse toward evasion and postponement, articulating the space of imaginative free play." (Yeazell, 1988: 23) James's ambiguity and unconventionality are modern techniques and the sexual references have a hidden presence in the text. At the same time, the erotic silence was historically related to the nineteenth century's 'taboo' to use the erotic in the discourse.

Sexuality is differently treated in his early and late international novels. In his first novels, for example, he tends to neglect his males, placing them to the margins of the text, while in the last ones he centers these characters for a complex examination. Another difference is that in his early fiction, he often tries an aestheticization of sexuality, while in his late fiction he critiques not only this aestheticization but also the medicalization of sexuality. "For James, sexuality is always cultural, and his fiction responds, in various ways, to the proliferation of discourses, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which attempt to 'represent' sexuality, yet are responsible for its very creation." (Stevens, 1998: 6) The relation of his characters to the sexual life has larger social implications.

James combines the feminine and the masculine in his literary writings. Actually, he continuously oscillates between geographical, sexual, ideological worlds. In James's international novels, sexuality plays an important part in the constitution of the Self, in the conception of identity. It doesn't represent a static concept, but it "is rather a dynamic process, a performance, a story, a narrative, in which the unstable play of desire and identifications can erode the boundaries of the perceived self." (Stevens,

1998:1) The author insisted upon the meeting between 'culture' and 'the self', where the notions of a gendered, sexed Self are always interrogated.

The Golden Bowl (1904) is a complex, intense study of marriage and adultery that completes the "major phase" and, essentially, James's career in the novel. The book explores the tangle of interrelationships between a father and daughter and their respective spouses. The novel focuses deeply and almost exclusively on the consciousness of the central characters, with sometimes obsessive detail and powerful insight. The incestuous relationship between Adam and Maggie Verver is definitely the cause for Maggie's difficulty in finding a sense of identity. Like Milly Theale in *The Wings of the Dove*, she is characterized by a sense of loneliness and emptiness, but only at the beginning of the novel, because, unlike Milly, she chooses to live and not to die. She rejects her father and she wants an adult marital relationship. She is actually the only American girl who has and accepts sexual desire.

The novel also deals with the differences between appearance and reality that Maggie Verver and Prince Amerigo have to discover. Maggie finally understands that she has to deal with her husband as a subject and not an object. She is not a detached observer anymore, but an engaged participant. She observes the connection between Charlotte and the prince and she is not innocent anymore. She uses manipulations as response to their own manipulations. She manages to live with the knowledge of the betrayal, regains her husband's loyalty. She discovers her Self, her appearance to the others and the fact that she can control the plot, without playing a single role.

Unlike the other James's American girls, Maggie Verver has many relations with other characters. She has a parent, a husband and a child, and most important, she manages to triumph over life's assault. The most intriguing and debated aspect is her relationship to her father, Adam Verver. Matthiessen showed his perspective on this relationship by saying that: "James regards this intimacy between father and daughter as 'perfectly natural', exceptionally close, to be sure, and naively innocent, but without a trace of the pathological fixation that our novelists would now see in it." (Matthiessen, 1944: 92-93) The novel actually depicts not only Maggie's birth of the Self and the struggle to obtain an autonomous identity, but also the pain and the difficulty which accompany this birth. It dramatizes the deception to which the individual must resort to realize the break with the family.

The roots of this connection between Maggie and her father seem to lie in the fact that her mother died when she was young. She became a constant companion in his voyages as a collector of art. As a matter of fact, his attachment to her remains unchanged even after her marriage to Amerigo, who is treated as another piece in his collection: "the instinct, the particularly sharpened appetite of the collector, had fairly served as a basis for his acceptance of the Prince's suit." (James, 1908-9: XXIII, 12)

At the beginning, they absorb her marriage into their life together, but later she wants Adam to marry because somehow her marriage to Amerigo has meant the dissolution of her 'marriage' to Adam:" It was as if you couldn't be in the market when you were married to *me*." (James, 1908-9: XXIII, 172)

The novel also depicts the process of her individualization from Adam, the assertion of a self independence of him. This happens in the moment she finds out about the relations between Charlotte and the Prince, which makes her "decide to live." (James, 1908-9: XXIII, 385) She also discovers her sexuality: "it had come to the Princess, obscurely at first, but little by little more conceivably, that her faculties hadn't for a good while been concomitantly used." (James, 1908-9: XXIV, 8) Unlike Milly Theale, she accepts her sexuality. She determines she will no longer be kept in a "bath of benevolence" because "baths of benevolence" are good only for "a patient of some sort, a nervous eccentric or a lost child." (James, 1908-9; XXIV, 44) Maggie is the James's only heroine who transcends the title of 'girl'. She can separate from Adam due to her sexual passion for her husband. She awakens to her womanhood.

The encounter between Americans and Europeans is actually that between the Self and Other, individual and society. In this novel, James insists on the power of the Self to pass over the pain of the violation that derives from intimacy. Maggie's decision necessitates violence toward her Self and of others. "Maggie Verver finally opens her eyes to knowledge and accepts the suffering accompanying it, but then goes one step further: she determines that her own self and her own desires must, if they are to be realized, take precedence over the selves and desires of others, and, in acting on that determination, she acknowledges her willingness to enter a fallen world and share its taint." (Fowler, 1948: 139). This means to pass over innocence and to ask for and fight for power by accepting the condition of being human.

The novel endlessly returns to the problem of marriage, which triumphs due to the renunciation of adultery. Two of the most known

theorists of sexuality, Sigmund Freud and Claude Lévi- Strauss talked about the renunciation of perversity for a socially sanctioned heterosexuality. In his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), Freud mentions that the polymorphously perverse child passes through the experience of the Oedipus complex and obtains normal genital heterosexuality. Lévi- Strauss makes reference to the Christian innocence from Eden which is followed by a fall from grace. For him, civilization is the result of the prohibition of incest.

Sexuality is only suggested and not directly portrayed. The sexual desire takes shape only in the bonds of matrimony. This novel is a very passionate one, with eroticism more as text than as bodily contact. The sexuality gravitates around the main question of the love affair between the Prince and Charlotte. This question is asked repetitively by Fanny and Bob Assingham and the result is an increasing erotic tension of the novel.

Maggie imagines herself as an abused woman in a triangle of desire in a passage where a savage sexuality is hidden behind a civilized form: "One of the most comfortable things between the husband and the wife meanwhile…was that she never admired him so much, or so found him heart-breakingly handsome, clever, irresistible, in the very degree in which he had originally and fatally dawned upon her, as when she saw other women reduced to the same passive pulp that had then begun, once for all, to constitute *her* substance…[E]ven should he some day get drunk and beat her, the spectacle of him with hated rivals would, after no matter what extremity, always, for the sovereign charm of it, charm of it in itself and as the exhibition of him that most deeply moved her, suffice to bring her round." (James, 1985: 156-7) This fragment emphasizes the existing social arrangements and the female resistance to the clichés of the passive femininity and Maggie feels endangered by the image of masculinity.

The clichés of femininity and masculinity are re-worked in the novel. The Prince considers the women some objects and divides them in two categories: the ones he made or didn't make love to: "He liked in those days to mark them off, the women to whom he hadn't made love: it represented- and that was what pleased him in it- a different stage of existence from the time at which he liked to mark off the women to whom he had." (James, 1985:42) His masculine identity is challenged in his relation to Charlotte, "as if a galantuomo, as he at least constitutionally conceived galantuomi, could do anything but blush to go about at such a rate with such a person as Mrs Verver in a state of childlike innocence, the state of our primitive parents before the Fall." (James, 1985: 275)

In his work, *Henry James and Sexuality* (Stevens, 1998: 50-51), Hugh Stevens speaks about Maggie's "masochism" because of her eroticization of and ambivalence towards violence. This aspect is a reality if we take into consideration the definition of "masochism" given by Richard von Krafft-Ebing in the first edition of his *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886): "…it is easy to regard masochism in general as a pathological growth of specific feminine mental elements- as an abnormal intensification of certain features of the psycho-sexual character of woman- and to seek its primary origin in the sex…It may, however,…be…that, in woman, an inclination to subordination to man (which may be regarded as an acquired, purposeful arrangement, a phenomenon of adaptation to social requirements) is to a certain extend a normal manifestation." (Krafft-Ebing, 1965: 130) He also describes the woman passivity and makes pathology of female desire: "[Man's] love is sensual, and his choice s strongly prejudiced in favour of physical attractions. A mighty impulse of nature makes him aggressive and impetuous in his courtship…Woman, however, if physically and mentally normal, and properly educated, has but little sensual desire. If it were otherwise, marriage and family life would be empty words. As yet the man who avoids women and the woman who seeks men are sheer anomalies.

Woman is wooed for her favour. She remains passive. Her sexual organization demands it, and the dictates of good breeding come to her aid." (Krafft- Ebing, 1965: 8-9)

In 1904, G. Stanley Hall wrote that in sexual selection "woman may acquire a Masochistic love of violence and pain for the ideal of pleasure, [and] abhor the bashful man." (Hall, 1904: 112-3) Havelock Ellis's work, *Love and Pain* (1903), returns to the phenomena of courtship in the animal world and the conclusion is that "[t]he masculine tendency to delight in domination, the feminine tendency to delight in submission, still maintain the ancient traditions when the male animal pursued the female." (Ellis, 1903: vol. 3, 67) Freud doesn't refer to the primitive states of humans or to animal life to explain the contemporary social aspects. He rather prefers speaking about the infantile sexuality and the Oedipus complex. He establishes a connection between the biological masochism of the organism and the one found in the individual subjects through the figure of the father: "We now know that the wish, which so frequently appears in phantasies, to be beaten by the father stands very close to the other wish, to have a passive (feminine) sexual relation to him and is only a regressive distortion of it."(Freud, 1953-66: vol. 2, 418) In his essay "Analysis Terminable and

Interminable"(1937) (Freud, 1953-66: 23) Freud mentions that some women are unable to renounce the Oedipus complex so the only way the novel can finish is with Maggie's renunciation of her father.

Henry James often associates Maggie with the figure of the passive victim. The Prince says that "the Blessed Virgin and all the Saints…have her in their keeping" (James, 1985: 76), and after the marriage Maggie the "nun" (James, 1985: 172) is still seen as a virgin who "wasn't born to know evil."(James, 1985: 94) Even if Fanny Assingham defines her as "the creature in the world to whom a wrong thing could least be communicated. It was as if her imagination had been closed to it, her sense altogether sealed" (James, 1985: 310), she negotiates with the fantasy of passivity. The Freudian psychoanalysis normalizes masculinity and presents a difficult path for the human being who aspires to become a woman. Maggie considers these difficulties to be rooted in the social relations. She says that Amerigo "had a place, …something made for him beforehand by innumerable facts, facts largely of the sort known as historical, made by ancestors, examples, traditions, habits" (James, 1985: 548-9), while she has "an improvised 'post'- a post of the kind spoken as advanced- with which she was to have found herself connected in the fashion of a settler or a trader in a new country; in the likeness even of some Indian squaw with a papoose on her back and barbarous bead-work to sell. Maggie's own, in short, would have been sought in vain in the most rudimentary map of the social relations as such. The only geography marking it would be doubtless that of the fundamental passions. (James, 1985: 549)

Maggie's development in the novel can be read as a passage through the Oedipus complex, and as defining the boundary between the primitive and the cultured, with reference to Lévi-Strauss. She sees in Charlotte the 'other woman' who is banished and this way the marriage may take the aesthetic form of the bowl "without a crack". (James, 1985: 475) She represents the civilized woman who projects onto Charlotte the image of the primitive beast. Maggie is seen from different perspectives: as the virgin, the daughter, the wife and the mother. She abandons her father for her husband, allying herself with the cultural forms of sexuality.

Henry James has a major contribution to the cultural understanding of sexuality. The relation of his characters to the sexual life has large social implications. Sexuality plays an important part in the constitution of the Self, in the conception of identity. Maggie Verver is the only American girl who has and accepts sexual desire. Her decision to renounce her father for her husband necessitates violence toward her Self and of others, but

marriage triumphs over adultery. The novel depicts the existing social arrangements, but also the female resistance to the clichés of the passive femininity and the birth of the 'woman'.

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"IN CLASHING HUES": IMAGES OF THE GYPSIES IN PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR'S *BETWEEN THE WOODS AND THE WATER*

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Abstract
Images of the Gypsies have for long been employed in literature written in English, in genres varying from masque to poetry and novel. And if, as Hazlitt suggests, the principal event of any journey is a meeting with a party of Gypsies, then travel writers are more prone to accommodate them in their accounts. Patrick Leigh Fermor's book starts in Hungary and ends in Transylvania, where Gypsy tribes have flourished along the centuries. And the predominantly traditional background of the historical realities of the prewar world, against which they are presented – more or less stereotypified –, makes the narrative even more challenging.

Key words: English travelogues, Hungary and Transylvania, images of the Gypsies, stereotypes

1. Path crossing

Images of the Gypsies have for long been employed in literature written in English, in genres varying from masque to poetry and novel: the queen of Egypt is referred to as a Gypsy in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.[2]; on 3 August 1621, a masque written by Ben Jonson – *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*, initially called *The Masque of the Gypsies* –, was performed before James I of England; and in Fielding's *Tom Jones*, the protagonist has the opportunity of meeting some Gypsies and enjoying their company during a wedding-feast, while being welcomed by their king, "a man who bears no badges of office" (cf. Drew 6)

It was the Romantics who placed more emphasis on the images of the Gypsies and the stereotypes associated with them. William

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[2] Antony's heart "is become the bellows and the fan/ To cool a Gypsy's lust" (I.I. 9-10), cf. Drew 4.

Wordsworth's poems, "Beggars" and "Gypsies" refer to the poet's encounters, either with individuals or with groups that challenge his prejudices, unusual for a "prince of poetic idlers, and patron of the philosophy of indolence"[3]. And John Keats praises, in his *Letters* – after having read Walter Scott's *Guy Mannering* –, the portrayal of Meg Merrilies, the female Gypsy protagonist, who has a typical role of a fortune-teller.

William Hazlitt[4] drew the most sensible conclusion with regard to the path crossing, at times turned into clashes, between the individuals belonging to the two different ethnic – and social – groups. For him, the principal event of any journey – and we are speaking about the age of Romantic travellers –, is a meeting with a party of Gypsies (cf. Drew 11). But why is that such an extraordinary event for the traveller/wanderer? Is it because the Gypsy is perceived as the Other? Or is the Gypsy just an(Other) fellow traveller? Who exactly is the traveller? Is he/she a scholar or a writer? Or both? Is he/she a travel writer or a travelling writer? …

In her book on how Gypsies fuelled the British imagination, Deborah Epstein Nord states that Gypsies performed the function of "a perennial other" and they were "a recurrent and apparently necessary marker of difference", She even draws on a comparison with the "biblical Hagar and Ishmael". After projecting an *Oriental* light on the topic, she underlines, though, the fact that, "unlike colonial subjects, (…) Gypsies were a domestic or an internal other", whose "proximity and visibility" accounted for "their deployment as literary or symbolic figures" (Epstein Nord 3)

2. The scholar-gypsy – just an(Other) fellow traveller?

In 1853, Matthew Arnold published the poem "The Scholar-Gypsy", inspired by a 17th century Oxford story found in Joseph Glanvill.[5] Arnold made the story into a pastoral poem, celebrating the scholar/alchemist – probably of Flemish origin –, who left off his studies and joined the Gypsies, to whom he attributed a special wisdom, not to be found within the walls of a university. The paradigm had been set two years earlier, with the publication by George Borrow of the novel *Lavengro: The Scholar, the Gypsy, the Priest*. But, as the author put it,

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[3] As Hazlitt described him. (cf. Drew 11)
[4] He seemed to be partly aware of the *nomads*' Indian origins, as he associated the grace of a Gypsy fortune-teller to "Hindoos that we see about the streets" (cf. Drew 12)
[5] *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661)

"Should you imagine that these three form one, permit me to assure you that you are very much mistaken." (Borrow, *Lavengro*) "Lavengro" is the Romani for Word-Master, and in this autobiographical dream, the author figures himself as a *scholar-gypsy*.

More than eighty years later, after World War I, as "borders were still relative porous, and travel cheap", opportunities for *scholar-gypsy* ventures expanded. Writers belonging to different literary generations – such as Lawrence, Douglas, Huxley, Greene, Fleming and Waugh –, contributed to the revival in the travel literature genre; writers whose "wanderlust (had been) aroused by privations of the war", according to Rob Nixon (52)

In 1933, a very young man set out to walk from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople. He had been born in London, in 1915, so privations of the war "whether experienced in the trenches or through a claustral, garrisoned, rationed life back in Britain." (Nixon 52) were not known to him. His parents, who were in India at the time, had left him "with a family in Northamptonshire." (Campbell, 22) Although "an avid reader from an early age", with "a passion for languages both living and dead", Patrick Leigh Fermor experienced serious discipline issues while in school. Eventually, he "was sacked for holding hands with the greengrocer's daughter" (Cooper, in Leigh Fermor, 2004: 2) and afterwards sent to London in order to prepare himself for a career in the army.

Instead, and *mainly* because of "envisaging himself as <a medieval pilgrim, an affable tramp with a knapsack and bob-nailed boots>" (Campbell 22), he decided to travel, on foot, across Europe, and get for himself the "best education he could ever had." (Cooper, in Leigh Fermor, 2004: 2) He kept notebooks, but he did not produce any accounts of the journey until 1976, when *A Time of Gifts*[6] was published. Actually, some of the notebooks were lost, and miraculously recovered many years later. The critics are, though, unanimous in acknowledging that he succeeded to recreate and recapture, with "an astonishing freshness and immediacy" (Cooper, in Leigh Fermor, 2004: 3) the Golden Age years of his youth in pre-war Europe.

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[6] The title is derived from a couplet by Louis MacNiece, "For now the time of gifts is gone – / O boys that grow, O snows that melt", which "encapsulates the double vision involved in evoking one's own adolescence from a distance." (cf. Campbell, 20),

And the paradox is that he wrote "in a world that is post-World War II and postcolonial and belongs to the high age of tourism." [7] (Nixon 57). Yet, unlike Evelyn Waugh, who was twelve years his senior, and who had his share of the World War II as well,[8] it is doubtful that Patrick Leigh Fermor would have ever been able to lament that his "own travelling days are over, and I do not expect to see many travel books in the future." (Waugh, as qtd. in Nixon, 57-58)

Leigh Fermor didn't feel like his *travelling days* were over after the war. They had started in Europe in the early 1930s and were resumed in the late 1940s. As one could read in *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, he met and befriended with shepherds, bargemen or pedlars, but he also benefited from the acquaintance of the European aristocracy, who "were still living the life that they had lived a hundred years before" (Cooper, in Leigh Fermor, 2004: 2). To some of them, meeting the curious youngster must have been an opportunity to display an extent of knowledge *wrought* in their castles' libraries, or while travelling and studying abroad. "The Polymath", for instance, as portrayed below and whose encounter with Leigh Fermor was fortuitous, gives us a possible replica of the paradigm we are trying to analyze.:

> His English, mastered from governesses with his brothers, was wide in range, flawless in its idiom and polished by many sojourns in England. He was full of stories about the inhabitants of Danubian castles, of which he was one, as I had more or less gathered from the others' style in addressing him: his lair was a battered Schloss near Efferding, and it was the empty heronry I had noticed there which had first excited him when he was a boy about the fauna of the river. He had a delightful *Bohemian, scholar gypsy*[9] touch. (Leigh Fermor, 2004: 134)

Whenever such encounters occurred, letters of introduction were written to friends and relatives to further the young traveller along the route. At times, he would sleep under the stars, or in caves, barns,

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[7] His first book, *A Traveller's Tree* about the travels he had made in the Caribbean in 1947-8, was published in 1950. (Cooper, in Leigh Fermor 2004: 4)

[8] In May 1941, when required to assist in the evacuation of Crete, Waugh was appalled by the seemingly cowardice of the troops. And it was during the German occupation of Crete that Patrick Leigh Fermor acquired his hero status, as one of the officers in charge with organizing the island's resistance to German occupation.

[9] All italics in quotes from Patrick Leigh Fermore are ours. The quote is from the chapter "The Polymath" – *A Time of Gifts*, included in the anthology *Words of Mercury*.

monasteries and inns. But once accommodated in a castle, he would immerse himself in their owners' lives and personal histories, and also "spent hours in their libraries reading everything he could lay his hands on." (Cooper, in Leigh Fermor, 2004: 2)

3. A dancing bear and "women like tattered mendicant rainbows"

Eventually, *A Time of Gifts* ended on a bridge over the Danube between Slovakia and Hungary, and it was only nine years later, in 1986, that Patrick Leigh Fermor published its sequel, *Between the Woods and the Water*. His reputation as a master of travel literature had already been established and he had also had the paradigm of the scholar-gypsy definitely consecrated. The events described in the second part of his intended trilogy[10] took place in Hungary and Transylvania, and it was there that "many things made this part of the journey quite different from the rest. (…) all seemed immeasurably old and at the same time brand new and totally unknown …" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 11)

The traveller entered Hungary at Esztergom, on Easter Saturday, which gave him the perfect opportunity to pick out many figures on a display that he further compared with the one of the Toledo knights painted by El Greco at the Burial of Count Orgaz[11]: burgers, peasants, girls, monks, nuns and last, but not least,

> near the great doors a flock of Gypsies *in clashing hues* leaned whispering and akimbo. It would scarcely have been a surprise to see one of their bears amble in and dip its paw in a baroque holy-water stoup shaped like a giant murex and genuflect. (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 15)

It is the very first image of the Gypsies in the book and one should notice the *visible* – the *visual*, obviously colorful –, dimension underlined; and the *less visible*, the *expected* stereotype of the bear, although in a comic contrast with its baroque framing. The bear is not given much room in the book, and its second mentioning, for instance, is the only circumstance in which the symbolical animal is present in the flesh, though far from being

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[10] The third part is going to be published in 2013 by John Murray, under the title *The Broken Road*.

[11] Such references are an important *mark* of his travelogue, a proof of Patrick Leigh Fermor's ability to freely and imaginatively associate different cultural and historical contexts.

an archetypal menace, for he **"**dropped his paws in his lap and peered about with bleary goodwill" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 50)

The third occurrence of the animal image is again only hinted at – therefore less or even not visible –, in a contrasting context, this time of a fair in Transylvania. Yet an emerging feeling of aggression cannot be overlooked by the reader, as "the tambourine and flute of a *bear*-leader and *the siege of Gypsy beggars* formed a solid barrier that we bawled in each others' ears in vain" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 141). The aggression relates mostly to the Gypsies, as they seem to be an overwhelming presence, from suckling infants to men wilder-looking than any others the traveller had ever seen: "matted blue-black locks falling to their shoulders and eyes like meneaters." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 141). The image of the women, "like tattered mendicant rainbows", although extremely suggestive, doesn't exactly give balance to the setting, except for style.

In fact, the potential threat of the wild is transferred to those who have for centuries lived in the closest proximity of nature. The scenes depicted express a clash of mentalities, with modernity under the stress of being overcome by very ancient, almost primitive, ways of living: "Carts drawn by *horses and oxen* easily outnumbered the motor-cars.", realizes the travel(ling) would-be writer, as "Gypsies were on the move in long, jolting wagons that made all their gear clatter." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 44) The image reoccurs at a later stage of the journey, animal life and the nomads being posed next to each other like in a pictorial: "There were *storks'* nests and sweep-wells and *flocks* and *cattle* and *Gypsies on the move*." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 85)

Even children inscribe themselves in a well-acknowledged, and expected, pattern of behavior. When the English traveller notices "An abrupt swarm[12] of Gypsies" that, in the beginning, makes him believe they were old acquaintances from a previous encounter in Hungary, the reader cannot tell whether the order of description is the same with the order in which they fill the stage. The men are referred to first, then the women, and finally the boys.[13] The last-mentioned – leaving "the serious work to their little sisters", which says something about the way roles are assigned in the community –, assault the traveller, "calling out "Bácsi! Bácsi!" – for the

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[12] The animal imagery pertains to gregariousness & aggression
[13] One should notice a doubled regressive perspective, the order men-women-boys (sisters) being paralleled by actually travelling back in the narrative time. The encounter mentioned takes place in Hungary, and he remembers a previous one, also in Hungary, then he compares the boys with the "ones on the Slovak shore at Easter" (Leigh Fermor 1988: 66).

masculine *prey* of small Gypsies are all honorary uncles" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 66).

There is also a Transylvanian incident – though this time the traveller is accompanied by two friends: "In a vast borrowed car, the three of us explored the old cities of Alba Iulia and Cluj and the important Magyar town of Tirgu Mures."[14] Another "swarm of small Gypsies" is depicted in terms related to marine creatures. The travellers are "entangled (…) in cries and supplication and a mesh of arms like brown tendrils." The socio-economic dimension, in this case extreme poverty, is brought to the front, as they "could only unloose by flinging coins beyond their heads like confetti." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 143)

4. Hair-rising stories and *incommunicado*, at first

Leigh Feermor met his own "party of Gypsies" quite early during the journey, soon after leaving Budapest. On horseback and crossing the Great Hungarian Plain, with the lights from the town of Cegléd well behind him, he is misled by "three camp-fires", which he relates to a farm. Instead, he is welcomed by "the darkest Gypsies (he) had ever seen", wearing "loose white Hungarian trousers", in stark contrast with the "black hats, all in the last stage of decay". Poverty is pointed at here, and that could be partly as a result of their lack of organizational skills, as suggested by the "black and brown tents" that, surprisingly, "gave no hint of a thousand years' practice of in pitching camp" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 46)

The traveller felt relieved that the Gypsies' "informal supper was over" by the time he joined them. What he knew about their eating habits was far from comforting him: "Apart from hedgehogs, delicious by hearsay, the untoothsomeness and even danger of their usual food were famous." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 47) Moreover, he "had heard many hair-rising stories about Gypsies" so he was the prisoner of both the common prejudices and, somehow, of his own readings from other travellers or promoters of the scholar-gypsy paradigm. His Gypsies might have been just like Borrow's, "the same superstitious, horse-dealing, fortune-telling, thieving, at worst dangerous (poisoning) and at best charming, bunch that literature constantly purveys." (Drew 23)

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[14] (from 'Rumania – Travels in a Land before Darkness', *Daily Telegraph* Weekend Magazine, 12 May 1990, in Leigh Fermor, 2004: 40) One of the three, Angela, "a wild and enterprising girl" is the only affair confessed in *Between the Woods and the Water*. We look forward to reading, in the 2013 forthcoming sequel, about the first love of his life, princess Balasha Cantacuzene.

His main concern was Malek, "a fine chestnut with a flowing mane and tail, one white sock, a blaze and more than a touch of Arab to his brow" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 43), entrusted to him by his Budapestan friends. From the very first moment, he noticed how the gypsies scanned the horse with "eyes like shrewd blackberries". When sharing a salami with the members of the tribe, his comments account for the fear of the Other from both sides/ *fellow* travellers: "They seemed half-fascinated; also, and I couldn't make out why, half-alarmed: perhaps all strangers, except as prey, boded ill." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 47) During the night he had "nightmare visions of the Gypsies making off with that beautiful Szápáry horse". They could – and here the salami image reoccurs, converting the fear of the Other into a hilarious stance –, "getting him secretly turned into salami, the whispered fate of old donkeys, after the hasty dispatch of both horse and rider." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 49) He woke up the next morning only to find himself disappointed "by the tameness of this little company".

Their linguistic path crossing is engendered by what the oldest man of the tribe had uttered before the horse being given a drink: "the mumbled sentence had ended, I thought, with the word (…) – immediately recognizable, to anyone at all in touch with Anglo-India, as the Hindi for water." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 48) With his rare gift for languages, Leigh Fermor, although "incommunicado at first", managed to cause sensation among the audience: "When I pointed questioningly at the water-jar and asked what was inside, they said "Víz" using the Magyar word; I cunningly answered, "Nem [not] víz! Pani" And later on, to the growing wonder of the Gypsies, he held up the fingers of his hand and "said "Panch!" – the word for five in both Hindi and Romany (*öt*, in Magyar)."

He also tried other words that he remembered from *Lavengro*, thus giving credit to his readings from the presumed wardens of the knowledge related to Gypsies' life and language, though he wasn't successful every time. Borrow's Petulengro – meaning horse-shoe-master/ blacksmith –, "caused no reaction, but when I cut down to *petul*, and pointed to the anvil, a small boy dashed into the dark and came back holding up a horseshoe in triumph." (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 48)

5. Bedraggled in green and yellow and magenta

As mentioned before, the traveller was surprised by the "tameness" of the nomads, and in the morning he felt like lacking "a glimpse of a musical instrument, (…) a note or a twang" He got nothing but "the dazzling frippery of the girls" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 50) It was the image of

the women that captured most of the traveller's imagination. Men, contrasting as usually, appeared "shaggy and unkempt", therefore threatening, "the darkest Gypsies I had ever seen". But the presence of the young traveller had drawn the attention, the evening before, of a few "Beautiful girls, flounced and bedraggled in green and yellow and magenta", who "stared with effulgent eyes" (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 46). A vivid and colorful snapshot, unlike the more elaborated one, later in the same context, of "a girl of ten, who had just begged for a cigarette". Her later behaviour may point at archetypal stances, foretelling the child-prostitute, the fortune-teller, even a member of Macbeth's triad of witches?: "she coiled to the ground again with an indulgent smile as she let the smoke stream lazily from her nostrils. (Leigh Fermor, 1988: 47)

One may believe that Patrick Leigh Fermor was a writer of the picturesque, with too light a touch on people and landscapes. One of those Georgian travel writers who, unlike their Victorian predecessors, "sought to escape a civilization that seemed mechanistic and soulless and to have come adrift from the causes of progress and power." (Nixon 52-53) Nothing could be further from the truth. But he is, at the same time, one who lacks the "elements of missionary purpose" so much admired in some of the Victorians by V. S. Naipaul, a writer "who has helped rehabilitate the genre while, at the same time, altering it to accommodate the amplitude of the global changes since the rush of travel literature during the thirties." (Nixon 57) Naipaul was firm in stating the difference between his travels and those of the Georgians: "while they travel for the pictoresque, I'm *desperately* concerned about the countries I'm in." (as qtd. in Nixon 55)

Just like Naipaul, Leigh Fermor was deeply concerned about the countries he was in, either visiting or staying, sometimes for years, and he came to like peoples that used to be each other's enemy for centuries. But, during his travels in the 1930s through Hungary and Transylvania, as he recalled them in an article written after the Fall of the Berlin Wall, he "was absorbed in everything but politics." (Leigh Fermor, 2004: 40) His statements are not a sign of shrewd diplomacy, a *captatio benevolentia.* They are founded on his deep understanding of historical realities, an awareness of the consequences of the Trianon Treaty: "My reason for liking the Hungarians was their welcoming kindness, their dash and their spirit, and similar subjective grounds, later on, inspired on equal fondness for the Romanians" (Leigh Fermor, 2004: 40)

As for the Gypsies, they were almost every time in the background, either passing by or waiting to be summoned by the owner of the land. In a

Transylvanian house against a setting that seemed half surreal, – "it stood pillared and Palladian like the Haymarket Theatre in a sea of vineyards", the traveller's stay was changed into a joyful initiation that ended "with gypsy musicians and a party of neighbours" (Leigh Fermor, 2004: 41). Later on, when writing about Baleni, in Moldova, where he shared with Balasha Cantacuzene – in a "large, rambling, one-storeyed house" –, the enchanted moments of a life "rich in tales of past extravagance", he would remember, among many others, "an accomplished violinist", who "played and sang when called upon, backed by half a dozen fellow gypsies settled in the village." (Leigh Fermor, 2004: 44)

Although pertaining to realities that were going to disappear or to alter their course for good after World War II, such writing – and we mean travel literature in particular –, according to V. S. Naipaul, "should not be viewed as ephemeral or occasional" (Nixon 5). On the contrary, a conscientious writer would refuse to downgrade other genres, by "presenting them (…) as ways (…) of retreating, in timidity, from the squally waters of the imagination." (Nixon 5) And in this respect, Patrick Leigh Fermor has remained a great proof that landscapes "do not start to be real until they have been interpreted by an artist" (Nixon 5)

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MARIANO JOSÉ DE LARRA, A SPANISH ROMANTIC

LAVINIA SIMILARU[1]

Abstract

Mariano José de Larra is an outstanding representative of the Spanish romanticism. He was a writer, journalist, and politician. He committed suicide at 27. In his works, articles, poems, plays and a historical novel – a deep pessimism can be traced; whose origin can be found in the author's biographical circumstances. Beyond Larra's skepticism and deep bitterness, we cannot but observe his undeniable literary skills. If he had lived longer, he would have created many masterpieces, no doubt.

Key words: Spanish Romanticism, suicide, pessimism, skepticism

1. Suicide in the history of mankind

Among sin, crime, and escape, or honourable chance to avoid humiliation, suicide has consistently marked the history of human civilization. In ancient times men often killed themselves. The philosophers Socrates and Seneca were forced to commit suicide, and they did so without hesitation.

The vision of death has changed over the centuries. If in the past century the American president John F. Kennedy said that he wanted to die in a plane crash, because everything happens very quickly that way, and dying quickly is certainly the desire in the contemporary period, the medieval men prayed to God not to give them a sudden death, not wanting to die in sin and considering that they needed time to repent. At the same time, in Europe the bodies of suicides were degraded being dragged through the streets. Instead, the Maya worshiped a goddess of suicide, and in the Far East, the Japanese considered suicide a way to wash the shame, and practiced seppuku.

The vision of death has changed over the centuries. If in the last century from E. Durkheim onwords it is known that suicides are most numerous among atheists and Protestants than among Catholics and Jews,

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since Catholicism and Judaism consider suicide as a mortal sin, and suicides are not buried next to other dead.

In Spain, in the nineteenth century there were two prominent writers who took their lives: Mariano José de Larra in 1837 and Angel Ganivet in 1898, due to personal circumstances, and the disappointment caused by the social and political situation of their country. Or, as the French writer Honoré de Balzac, would have said, they had decided to write a "sublime poem of melancholy."

2. Biographical circumstances of Mariano José de Larra

Mariano José de Larra was born on March 24, 1809 during the Spanish War of Independence, in a Spain invaded by Napoleon's troops, devastated by famine, and economic and political crisis. Goya had immortalized for future minds the terrible images of that war. The writer's father, Don Mariano de Larra and Langelot was Frenchified, a doctor who after the battles of Vitoria and Arapiles had to leave Spain in the ranks of Joseph Bonaparte, and exiled to France, along with his family. They lived in Bordeaux, and Paris. Thanks to the generous amnesty granted in 1818 by King Ferdinand VII to the exiles, and perhaps also to the intervention of Infante Don Francisco de Paula, who had been a patient of the doctor, the Larras could return to Spain. The writer was nine years old, and was forced to start new studies, in another language, and all this in an atmosphere of hatred towards France and everything that came from that country. Children are cruel, and we can imagine the taunts and the wickedness of their peers. Being the son of a Frenchified was not easy. More than that, these classmates changed, since his father moved often, apparently for political reasons not entirely clear, and the writer attended Pious Schools of Madrid, and a school in Corella (Navarra), and again in Madrid, at the Imperial College of the Jesuits, and the San Isidro Real Studies. This situation did not allow him to make lasting friendships, and certainly gave a sense of emotional instability. Maybe this is the source of Mariano José de Larra's feeling of loneliness, scepticism, and pessimism. Derozier Albert writes: "... a childhood split like this probably relates to the topic of the splitting (very noticeable especially in the game of pseudonyms), to that feeling of being torn between two opposing trends that so often strips the narration of its most profound pages" (Dérozier: 1995, 48).

In 1827 he was able to begin his literary career as he translated *The Iliad* from French, and immediately wrote a *Spanish Grammar*, and a Geography of Spain in verse.

In 1825 he studied law at the University of Valladolid, and suffered love disappointment: he had fallen in love with an older woman, whom he idolized, despite the indifference of the lady. Eventually, he discovered that the woman was his father's mistress. He did not complete his studies and left Valladolid, to begin other ephemeral medical studies at Valencia. From 1827 he moves to Madrid, and develops an intense literary activity. He dedicated mainly to composing minor art verses. But soon abandoned poetry to engage in journalism.

In 1829, when he was twenty, despite the disapproval of his family, he married Pepita Wetoret y Velasco, marriage that lasted until 1834. Critics have always associated the failure of this marriage with the article *El casarse pronto y mal*, published in 1832 in *El pobrecito hablador*.

They also talked about Larra's inclination for the singer Grissi. Anyway, it was an infatuation. The woman who had a major role in the emotional life of the writer was Dolores Armijo, the beautiful wife of the lawyer Jose Cambronero. Enrique Rubio in the Chair edition of the Larra's *Artículos* that he edited assures us that the writer felt an "obsessive torment" towards her. Enrique Rubio thus describes the tumultuous love: "The relationship probably started around 1832, before the final marriage breakdown, continuing up haphazardly on the threshold of Larra's suicide." (Larra: 1994, 18).

In 1835, Larra travelled to Portugal, then to Belgium and France. In the letters he wrote to his parents it can be inferred that he thought about settling in France, and continuing there his journalism. But Mendizabal's rise to power made him wait to find solution to the civil war and the economic crisis. Soon he was disappointed, and approached Istúriz, with whom he became elected Ávila deputy in 1836. But historical events, the Mutiny of the Farm, cancelled the elections and Larra never managed to sit in the Parliament.

The writer had the heart full of all kind of disappointments. However, a little hope surfaced: a date with Dolores Armijo, his yesteryear lover, and the ability to reconcile with her. Unfortunately, that hope did not materialize, but on the contrary, tragically vanished. She attended the event along with her sister-in-law, and was just trying to recover some old compromising letters. We can imagine a passionate discussion, prayers, tears, or vehement and full of indignation replies. Dolores Armijo certainly had the support of her sister-in-law. And she got what she wanted: the writer returned the letters. Maybe the two women could hear the gun that Larra shot in his right temple, when they were barely out of his house.

Anyway, the body was discovered by the daughter of the writer, Adela, age five, when she wanted to say good night to her father.

3. Scepticism, pessimism and bitterness in the works of Larra

Mariano José de Larra is one of the most prominent representatives of the Spanish romanticism. He expressed himself as a writer and journalist. He published his writings under the pseudonyms *Fígaro, Duende, Bachiller* and *El pobrecito hablador*. He wrote a historical novel, *El Doncel de don Enrique el Doliente (The Child of Henry the Aching)*, and a play: *No hay más mostrador*, *Macías* y *El conde Fernán González y le exención de Castilla* (*There is no counter, Macias and Count Fernan Gonzalez and the Castilla exemption*). He also carried out translations and adaptations, probably pushed by the need to survive, as more than once he criticized the translations, which damaged so much the Spanish theatre.

One of Larra's most interesting works the tragedy *Macías*, premiered on September 24, 1834, after being rejected by the censorship in late 1833. The critics had believed to see a screening of Larra in the protagonist of this tragedy. The legendary Macías already enjoyed a long literary tradition, since his story was used, among others, by Lope de Vega in *Porfiar hasta morir*.

Macías is a medieval troubadour, son of Don Enrique de Villena. Macías is in love with Elvira. Her father forces her to marry another suitor, and the bride sets the wedding date in about a year. The action begins on the date of the deadline. Macías comes home to his beloved right after the wedding ceremony. He asks Elvira to go with him, but she refuses because she was about to marry another, and did not want to lose her honour; she owes fidelity to her husband. Macías is arrested and taken to jail. Fernan Perez, Elvira's husband plans to kill the troubadour in prison. Elvira learns everything and goes to jail, to inform Macías. But her act fails to change the fatal outcome: Macías cannot be saved, he is mortally wounded, and Elvira decides to commit suicide.

The drama ends with a love suicide, and because of this it is considered that it approches "essential reasons for the feeling of Larra. Hence the selection of Macías by Larra was not by chance, but as an entity projector that fit perfectly to his feelings and ideas." (Enrique Rubio: 1994, 32). Larra himself confesses in the self-criticism of this work: "Macías is a man who loves, and nothing else. His name, his pitiful life belongs to the historian, his passions to the poet. Painting Macías as I imagined I could or

should be to foster the feelings experienced in the frenzy of his mad passion, and portraying a man, that was the object of my drama."

It has to be mentioned that Macías's story also constitutes the theme of his historical novel *El doncel de don Enrique el Doliente*, written at the same time as the tragedy.

The most important facet of the work of Mariano José de Larra is constitutes by his articles full of humour as Larra is an "outstanding master in the art of satire and irony play". (Dérozier: 1995, 50). In his articles he criticized the evils of Spain at the time, but he did so with an unsurpassed art. Albert Dérozier characterized Larra's articles in these terms: "witticisms, findings, puns and misunderstandings, in the great Spanish tradition of ingenuity on the one hand of course, but also false naïveté, grotesque monologues, deceptions and pastiches, feigned admiration streaky of sections with insidious paragraphs, digressions or destructive effects, exclamations and rhetorical questions, illustrations or examples with risky implications. Everything in the great path of literature, where the bulk of the text is displayed between the lines, is played between the words." (Derozier: 1995, 50)

The articles had to be "a day's flower" as anything published in a newspaper, born to die the next day. Yet Larra had something that transcends time and is still relevant today, as it speaks of the human condition in general and the human vices that have not been lost, despite the nearly two centuries that have passed since the author's death. Albert Dérozier observed it as well: "In fact, nothing is more impressive than to check how those delicious pamphlets, committed to evanescent support, by definition, to the newspaper, paradoxically retain its freshness, even read out of such special circumstances that aroused their appearance. That is certainly the privilege of a writer more attentive to the secret game of the appetites and passions than to the passing of events." (Dérozier: 1995, 51)

In the works of Larra it is emphasized his self-irony and modesty, the famous article *El casarse pronto y mal* begins with these words: "You have observed the reader, if he has read, that neither method we follow or observe order nor do we but jump from one subject to another, as one who does not understand any, when in bad prose, when into tough lines..." It seems that Larra doubted his skills as a journalist and writer, and thinks that no one reads his work.

In *Sátira contra los malos versos de circunstancias* (*Satire against bad circumstance lines*) laments the condition of the poet:

No hay cosa, Andrés, como nacer poeta,
no hay plaga que al alumno de las nueve,
no hay mal que infeliz no le acometa.

¿Creerás que huyendo de la turba aleve
de los necios, sin fin, siempre he buscado
un rincón en el mundo oscuro y breve,

donde esconderme de ellos resguardado?
¿Y presumes que en balde lo pretendo
desde que la razón su luz me ha dado?

Donde quiera que voy, vanme siguiendo;
agárranse de mí, como la hiedra
del árbol que la vive sosteniendo.

Entre los pies me nacen, como medra
entre cepas la grama; que parece
que aquí produce un necio cada piedra.

Ni me sirve correr, que también crece
su paso con el mío, ni el embozo
en los ojos llevar aunque tropiece.

There's nothing, Andrew, as being born a poet,
no plague than that of the student from nine,
there's no evil the unhappy one will not commit.

Would you believe that running from the mob
of fools, endless, I have always sought
a corner in the dark and brief world,

Where to hide, to shelter from them?
So you presume that I pretend in vain
since your light has given me reason?

Wherever I go, follow me;
grab to me, like ivy
the tree living by holding her.

Between the feet I am born, how it thrives
between strains the grass; it seems
that here every stone produces a fool.

It doesn't help me run, because it also grows
its pace with mine, or the fold
in the eyes taking even stumble. (our translation)

The poet is obliged to write verses in all circumstances. *Verses hastily the poet throws up* is a line in the same *Satire against bad circumstance lines*¸ which also asks indignantly:

¿Yo a todo he de hacer versos? ¡Qué! ¿Templada
habrá de estar mi musa a todas horas,
y a todo como cera preparada?

Do I have to make verses all the time?What! Temperate
will have to be my muse at all hours,
and prepared everything as wax? (our translation)

Larra intuits very well that *the blandishments of the miserable poet* cannot be missed under any circumstances:

Y no es nada la pública alegría,
ni es la función magnífica y completa
si el vate no aumentó la algarabía.

And the public joy is nothing,
nor is superb and complete the function
if the poet did not increase the excitement. (our translation)

Albert Dérozier observed Larra's drama: "Larra had pathetic words to evoke the loneliness of the writer – «writing in Madrid is crying» – revealed the face of misunderstanding about the deeper meaning of his message." (Dérozier: 1995, 50) Larra, like all his contemporaries, constantly faced the terrible censorship of Spain at the time, and his article *Lo que no se puede decir no se debe decir* is very eloquent in this regard. In the tragic and poignant article *El día de Difuntos de 1836*, written a few months before taking his life, Larra bitterly states that only the dead have freedom: "They live because they have peace, they have freedom, the only possible on earth, which is given by death, they do not pay taxes they do

not have, they would not be enlisted or deployed, they are not prisoners or denounced; they, anyway, do not groan under the jurisdiction of the warden of the barracks, they are the only ones who enjoy the freedom of the press, because they speak to the world. They speak loudly and no jury would dare to prosecute and convict. They, in short, recognize only one law, the imperious law of nature that put them there, and that one they obey."

But the writer's job is not the only one that aroused the scepticism of Larra. In *Modos de vivir que no dan de vivir*, Larra characterized the professions with irony and sarcasm:

"Considering carefully the moral construction of a great people one can observe that what is called *known professions* or *careers*, is not what holds the great crowd; discard the lawyers and doctors, whose job it is to live in the absurdities and excesses of others, the priests, who base their time on the spiritual life of the faithful, the military, who sell theirs with the express condition of killing others, the merchants who reduce even the feelings and passions to stocks and shares; those born owners, who live to inherit, the artists the only that give work for money, etc., etc. […]" This cynicism clearly shows that Larra did not trust the man, considered him selfish and corrupt.

In *La vida de Madrid* he contemplates the human existence, and asks himself if it makes any sense, considering that no one is happy, or satisfied with their fate: "When one of those days, in which a prolonged sleeplessness, or a mishap of yesterday prepare the man in meditation, I stop to consider the fate of the world when I see myself rolling into it with my peers by imaginary spaces, without anyone knowing why, or where, when I see all born to die, and die only because they were been born and when I see the truth equally distant from all points of the globe where it is searched, and happiness always home of the neighbour of each trial, when I reflect that there is no end in sight to this rosy picture, which in all probability had no beginning, when I ask each and every one who answers me complaining about their fate, when I contemplate that life is an analysis of contradictions, of crying, of diseases, of mistakes, sins and regrets, I admire several things." The conclusion is very pessimistic, the writer was greatly astonished "by that attachment we all have, however, to this life so bad." There is no doubt that for Larra, it was not worth to go on living.

In *El día de Difuntos de 1836*, Larra imagined Madrid as a huge cemetery: "the cemetery is in Madrid. Madrid is the cementery. But a vast cemetery where every house is the niche of a family, every street the tomb of an event, every heart the cinerary urn of a hope or a wish." Three and a

half months after writing these words, the writer committed suicide. And he did it because he had lost all hope. The article *El día de Difuntos de 1836* ends like this: "My heart is nothing more than another grave. What does it say? Read. Who died in it? Frightening sign! *Here lies hope*!"

Beyond Larra's pessimism, scepticism, and such deep bitterness, we cannot fail to observe his undeniable literary skills. If he had lived longer, he would have created many masterpieces, no doubt. The same is stated in *Historia de la literatura española* coordinated by Jesús Menéndez Peláez: "Larra is a good writer, died young, as he began to master the technique of the article and was able without doubt of greater maturity and perfection. His prose is clear and expressive, and effective vehicle providing exquisite quality in most cases." (Menéndez Peláez: 2005, 242)

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ON DETAILS IN JOHN UPDIKE'S *SEEK MY FACE*

MIRELA CODRUŢA STĂNIŞOARĂ[1]

Abstract

John Updike is the personality that both audience and critics appreciated for fiction writing in a period of almost half a century. From the first novel generally acclaimed, *The Centaur*, the author made a long way connecting mythical archetypes to present the average man in his *Rabbit* cycle. In between, the discourse grew ampler and deeper, generated from within in novels like *The Lilies* or *Seek My Face*, which is the object of my analysis.

Key words: detail, biographication, expressionism, culture.

Starting with Daniel Arasse's study on details in painting,[2] the interest on *details* as an important topic in the re-reading of the text grew bigger and bigger. Nevertheless, if in the Renaissance approach details are considered powerful instruments meant to disclose the overall meaning of a literary text, the rapid development of reader-oriented criticism brought about slight changes in detail analysis. Critics and theoreticians stressed the importance of details in a text even more, turning their attention to the constitutive elements of a text, as well as to the arbitrary ones that can arouse the reader's interest, but can also be easily challenged.

In John Updike the touch of a master is to be noticed in his first writings of texts, short-stories and novels that become anthological with time. Interested in the art of painting even as a child, Updike initially decided to make a name for himself in the field of visual arts. Under his mother's guidance, however, he first studied English at Harvard and only then attended the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art in Oxford. After that he made his first attempts in painting and started commenting on

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[2] Daniel Arasse. Le Détail. Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture. Paris: Flammarion, 1992.

other's artists' works, only to realize he mastered words better than colours or shades:

> Drawing is sacred to me, and I don't like to see it inferiorly done. A drawing can feel perfect, in a way prose never does, and a poem rarely. Language is intrinsically approximate, since words mean different things to different people, and there is no material retaining ground for the imagery that words generate in one brain or another. When I drew, the line was exactly as I made it, just so, down to the tremor of excitement my hand may have communicated to the pen: and thus it was reproduced.[3]

Nevertheless, his lifelong interest in visual arts never faded away, which is why we often detect in his writing adaptations of pictorial techniques. Through words he manages to portray the twentieth century American culture and by conjuring up people, places, things and atmospheres with painterly precision he proves his fondness with "pop art which descended from abstraction and showed us our world – its artifacts, its trash, its billboards, its standardized romantic imagery."[4]

In a work in which subjectively selected details manage to build pieces of reality and expose moments of art history, the reader is challenged to treat the novel as a painting and discover the images behind words. Dedicated in itself to Abstract expressionism, the novel offers us a lot of information about painters, techniques, cultural events and personal lives, turning Updike into a chronicler whose work lets abstract expressionism breathe through its lines.

In *Seek My Face*, details, both *detaglio* and *particolare*, according to Arasse's classification[5], fill up the pages transforming the memories of a single person into the summary of an entire century. Based on Jackson Pollock's life, the novel consists of a long dialogue between a young reporter, Kathryn D'Angelo, and an elderly artist, Hope Chafetz, better known for the men she married than for the art she created. Through Kathryn's questions and Hope's answers, some of them uttered out loud, some kept for herself, we learn about Hope's personal history and the history of modern art at the same time.

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[3] John Updike. *More Matters: Essays and Criticism*. Fawcett Books, New York, The Ballantine Publishing Group, 2000, p.796.

[4] Ibid., p.72

[5] Daniel Arasse. Le Détail. Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture. Paris: Flammarion, 1992, p.11.

The interview in itself becomes an instrument of self-examination for Hope who, faced with an enthusiast, but also somehow ignorant reporter, is forced to re-examine her entire life. During their conversation we learn about Hope's first husband, Zack McCoy, a character clearly built on the image of a major figure in the abstract expressionism movement – Jackson Pollock, while Hope, in her turn, fulfils many of the qualities of Pollock's wife, Lee Krasner. Her second husband seems to be a mixture of several Pop artists and most of the characters carry echoes of various famous figures in the art world. The novel in itself with its many details on art and artist rests on statements taken from real artists, as Updike confessed when introducing his work:

> This is a work of fiction. Nothing in it is necessarily true. Yet it would be in vain to deny that a large number of details come from the admirable, exhaustive *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga*, by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith (Clarkson N. Potter, 1989), or that some of my fictional artists' statements are closely derived from those collected in *Abstract Expressionism: Creators and Critics*, an illuminating anthology edited and introduced by Clifford Ross (Harry N. Abrams, 1990).[6]

Updike's statement is reinforced by the similarities we can discover between Pollock's biography and Zack McCoy. First of all, they are both the youngest of five children and they were both raised by a single mother. Like Pollock, McCoy lived in California and then moved to New York, where he attended the Art Student League and met Thomas Hart Benton, his mentor and close friend. The next common characteristics of the two are the will and the power to forge themselves into artists. They both lacked inborn talent, but they were both inspired by the desire to become great artists. Like Pollock, Zack "really had very little talent, the way most art students have it – just this terrible drive to be great. He was desperate to be not just good but great."[7]

Interestingly enough, an interview in which Hope's artistic work should be the main subject becomes an interview on the life of her famous husband, which ultimately turns into a biographication. Following Pollock's path, Zack's work started to be appreciated, but he never became

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[6] John Updike. Introduction to *Seek My Face*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks Edition, 2012, p.9.
[7] John Updike. *Seek My Face*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks Edition, 2002, p.20.

rich: "…Zack was still not selling paintings. A few prints and works on paper but not the big paintings. He was getting to be famous, but we stayed surprisingly poor – it maddened him."[8]

Excessive alcohol use is another similarity between the two. Zack, for example, used to drink a lot and tried to solve this problem by seeing a Jungian psychotherapist. Of course, Pollock as well went to therapy in order to solve his drinking problem and his analysts were also Jungian. Moreover, Zack married Hope in 1945 and they lived in a house in Long Island as Pollock and his wife Lee Krasner did. Here it is where he started painting, first in the upper room and on the floor, until he eventually turned the barn into a studio. Next he began to paint on big canvases and used the unconventional technique of dripping the paint form the cans, sticks and brushes. After a while, he moved the barn uphill, so that nothing could distract him from creating his art: "Zack knocked out partitions and replaced shingles and porch supports and moved the barn uphill, out of the center of their view of the marsh and the distant strip of saltwater that was really a small harbor."[9] As we know, turning the barn into a studio was the key in Pollock's drip techniques, which was perfected in front of witnesses, when a young photographer paid him a visit in order to take some pictures of him at work:

> A dripping wet canvas covered the entire floor … There was complete silence … Pollock looked at the painting. Then, unexpectedly, he picked up can and paint brush and started to move around the canvas. It was as if he suddenly realized the painting was not finished. His movements, slow at first, gradually became faster and more dance like as he flung black, white, and rust colored paint onto the canvas. He completely forgot that Lee and I were there; he did not seem to hear the click of the camera shutter … My photography session lasted as long as he kept painting, perhaps half an hour. In all that time, Pollock did not stop. How could one keep up this level of activity? Finally, he said 'This is it.'[10]

In the novel, Updike vividly describes the moment witnessed by the young photographer as well. Through Hope we find out that Zack started getting involved with his entire body in the making of his paintings. She remembers how he danced around them while dripping paint and how he

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[8] Ibid., p.16.
[9] Ibid., p.62.
[10] Pepe Karmel, ed.„*Jackson Pollock: Key Interviews, Articles and Reviews*. Museum of Art. Pepe Karmel. Abrams,Harry N Inc.,1999, p. 132.

gave the impression of creating works that embody the energy released by his dancing body:

> Nobody had ever had to master exactly those skills before; he was wonderful to watch, so graceful and sure of himself in the very way he wasn't usually. I think it was that, the athleticism that generated the publicity, the appeal to the masses: it was like what they saw in the movies. This beautiful torso in the black T-shirt, the tight dark jeans, the bald head, the intensity. He was not only uncharacteristically graceful, he was decisive. […] When Hans took those movies he complained that Zack didn't hesitate enough; he didn't ponder, he just jumped right in, sputtering and waving his wet stick in the air. That was part of it, that speed, when he was, as he used to say, in it.[11]

The way Zack dealt with his canvas and the process of creation in itself emphasizes an almost ritualistic drive towards painting. The use of the word "graceful" and "decisive" in Hope's discourse suggests her appreciation for her husband's art, which was the result of "an instinct for order, an instinct fighting his pull towards self-destruction."[12] Her description of Zack's ritual brings to surface the tension and dynamism that generally characterize abstract expressionist paintings and Pollock's works in particular.[13]

In what concerns the naming of the paintings, we learn that Zack wanted to make them sound more neutral in order to avoid any misinterpretation, challenging thus the viewer to see them for what they are instead of searching for some pre-established meaning in them: "Zack didn't want people to look for constellations in the spatters, so we used more general terms like Galaxy or Comet […] he didn't want people to think his paintings were in anyways portraits, so, beginning in '48, he labeled them with numbers and the dominant colors: Blue, Red, Yellow; Yellow, Gray, Black."[14] And, of course, this is something that Updike also took from Pollock.

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[11] John Updike. *Seek My Face*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks Edition, 2002, pp.90-91.
[12] Ibid., p.228.
[13] Joan Marter, ed. *Abstract Expressionism: The International Context.* New York: Rutgers University Press, 2007, p.119.
[14] John Updike. *Seek My Face*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks Edition, 2002, pp.101-102.

However, Updike's protagonist is also allowed to act on her own. Unlike Zack, who is a surrogate of Jackson Pollock, Hope is only a variation of Lee Krasner. In the novel, she remains by her husband, despite his infidelity, until the day he dies in car accident while driving under the influence of alcohol. Also, she did everything in her powers to keep her husband's memory alive in the world of art, but, unlike Lee Krasner, she found herself another husband.

As Updike himself asserted, *Seek My Face* is an attempt to expose the transformations of American visual arts through a woman's eyes. Hope, his protagonist, becomes thus an observer and also an active participant in a movement that "was basically a boy's show, and very masculine, very macho, rather chauvinist in its sayings."[15] And yet, somehow, Updike diminishes her role as an active participant by highlighting her role as a witness of an evolving culture. She, like Pollock's wife, stayed in the shadow of her husband, and although she continued to paint, her duty as a caring and loving wife seems to have always come first.

Often considered just a camp follower of her husband in a period when "art was a man's world," a world in which artist "could hardly make rooms for women, even when they married [them],"[16] Hope also stands for the quest of woman's rehabilitation and artistic identity. As she confesses, the happiness of early marital life gradually turned into a nightmare because of Zack's awareness of his superior artistic craftsmanship. If at first he would politely deny the greatness of her paintings, later on he would use virulent criticism to dismiss hope's talent.

As Zack's wife, she endures his lack of consideration for her work, his insults and his constant abuse to such an extent that she comes to believe her life was a complete waste and that she "has displeased God, who is not there, or is there only in the form of light."[17] With this assertion Hope reveals a recurrent theme in Updike's fiction – that of a "God who seems to be defined by his absence."[18] And yet, it is precisely the evidence of this non-existence the trigger that enables Updike to turn to traditional

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[15] Lila Azam Zanganeh. *Updike Redux. Lila Azam Zanganeh interviews John Updike*. Guernica, November, 2010.
[16] John Updike. *Seek My Face*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks Edition, 2002, p.16.
[17] Ibid., p.41.
[18] Andrew, Tate. *Contemporary Fiction and Christianity*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010, p. 44.

religious values and Hope to take upon herself the task to capture "holiness" in her paintings:

> For a long time I have lived as a recluse, fearing the many evidences of God's non-existence with which the world abounds. The world, it has come to me slowly, is the Devil's motley, colourful instead of pure. I restrict my present canvases to shades of gray ever closer together, as if in the pre-dawn before light begins to lift edges into being. I am trying it may be, to paint holiness.[19]

With her second husband, Guy Holloway, Hope reveals to Kathryn significant details on Pop Art, a graphic art movement that rose to fame from the fifties to the eighties. As an embodiment of Pop Art itself, Holloway is a semi-invented character, a mixture between Robert Rauschenberg, with his "combine paintings," Claes Oldenberg, with his soft sculptures, Andy Warhol, with his portraits, Jasper John and Roy Lichtenstein. In describing her marriage to this man, Hope actually shows how the Pop Art movement evolved, how artists tried to find a new way of seeing and interpreting the world: "Pop Art was all about sanity, about modesty, about accepting the world as it was, flags and trash and ads and goopy hamburgers, and not trying to have something impossibly momentous up out of the poor nebulous self."[20]

For Guy everything around him was nature and the artist was not the subject of art, but the means. If Zack and his generation had rejected the playfulness of the Surrealists and tried to extend the legacy of Cézanne and Velázquez, Guy took art back from being a confession to being something that belonged to everybody and anybody. If Zack's work looked like an accident but it wasn't, Guy "depended on accident, on human imperfection intervening," and he used to say that "the smaller the imperfection is, the more poignant in a way."[21] He was not so much interested in what the painter felt as in what the viewer saw. He had this talent of turning everything into something worth considering by simply saying it was art: "Guy's art cherished trash, it cherished America as it was, dirty, commercial and visually violent."[22]

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[19] John Updike. *Seek My Face*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks Edition, 2002, p.5.
[20] Ibid., p. 109.
[21] Ibid., pp.173-174.
[22] Ibid., p.184.

Finally, Hope's discourse focuses on violence and its omnipresence in everyday life: in society, in art, and even in her interaction with the young woman who is trying to dive into her intimacy. However, she masterfully leads the conversation; she remembers subjectively selected details, but she somehow manages to disclose mostly objectively significant details, so that the line between her answers and her actual thoughts can never be crossed. And yet, the reader crosses these boundaries, reads her most intimate thoughts and discovers in them pieces of reality, facts and events that Updike selected to be transmuted into art. He does invite his readers not to think of his characters as "mere codes for living people,"[23] but he still gives enough hints to identify major representatives of abstract expressionism and Pop Art in his novel, turning it into an almost authentic chronicle of a century of art history.

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[23] Jack de Bellis, The John Updike Enclyclopedia, Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000, p.38.

THE CHARM OF ROBERT WYNNE'S EKPHRASTIC POETRY

ANNA SZCZEPANEK-GUZ[1]

Abstract
The article analyzes the use and function of details in Robert Wynne's ekphrastic poetry published in the volume *Museum of Parallel Art.* Wynne transmits details from various visual works of art into his poetry, creating unique notional ekphrastic poems. These poems verbally represent imaginary works of art: paintings, sculptures, installations which are attributed to real artists, yet they exist only in the mind of the poet. The reader's task is to reconstruct or 'decipher' the details provided by Wynne and visualize the poems' content. The details in Wynne's poetry play the role of significant clues which help both evoke the image and bring out the most crucial artistic ideas.

 Key words: ekphrastic, ekphrasis, visual and verbal arts

In 2008 Robert Wynne, a contemporary American poet published his second full-length volume of poetry entitled "Museum of Parallel Art.*"* It is claimed by the literary critic and poet Tim Seibles to be:

> a sharply written, wonderfully imagined collection of poems. To think that visual art could invite such delicious speculations. The sheer variety of tones and perspectives found in Wynne's work are good fuel for the heart. (Wynne, back cover)

What makes this volume special is not only the appealing subject matter: famous and unique works of art, but also the unusual combination of artists and their masterpieces. Wynne spontaneously links various visual artists, paying no respect to the chronology, artistic technique or the scope of their interest. The poet imagines a world in which e.g. Walt Disney is the author of "The Last Judgment" or Jackson Pollock of "The Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" and the poems have such a visual power that it seems as if

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he had truly seen those paintings in a gallery or a museum. Hence, it is not astonishing that the volume is entitled "Museum of Parallel Art." Apart from the spatial context, the title also suggests that the pictures presented in this volume exist side by side with the original paintings. Wynne refers here to the theory of parallel words. As Ruth Ronen observed, "constructed as a parallel world, every fictional world includes a core of facts which orbit sets of states of affairs of diminishing fictional actuality."(8) For Ronen the construction of parallel words resembles the solar system, the further away from the sun, the less sunlight is perceived. The core of facts consists of all the essentials in the imaginary world which refer to the external, veritable world. In ekphrastic poetry the core of facts implies the existence of a piece of art which functions as a catalyst in the creation of verbal art.

Ekphrasis has the original meaning in Greek "to tell in full." In the ancient Greece, it could refer to three distinct phenomena: ekphrasis was understood as a rhetorical strategy, a poetic or literary genre or a rhetorical prose description of a work of art. All these aspect of ekphrasis shared a common feature: vividness or particularly vivid description (*enargeia* in Greek; *evidentia* or *perspicuitas* in Latin). In contemporary literary criticism the word ekphrasis is frequently used to denote literary description of works of visual art (Chinn 256) or a verbal representation of visual representation (Heffernan 3). *Bi-focal ekphrasis*, as I termed Wynne's poems, denotes the type of intermedial relationship in which two visual sources are engaged in the production of a single verbal account. Both sources are of equal importance and status and what is more, they are inseparable. The reader balances between the two of them, going back and forth from one to the other. The poems remind us of a double (or multiple) exposure method used in photography when the film is exposed more than once, creating a combined image. These images may be seemingly unrelated and the time-span between them quite long, yet they exist side by side in the photograph. Even if such a photo results from the photographer's mistake, it may cast a new light on the objects in the picture, as it is hard to concentrate on one of them, neglecting the other ones.

In the 20th and 21st century American poetry the arts are not represented only by the forms belonging to the canon of classical tradition (such as painting, sculpture, architecture, drama), but also by other, modern media: television, film, photography, comics, posters etc. Specimens of high culture are mixed with pop-culture and speak to us from TV-commercials or magazine covers. According to Ludomir Doležel

"postmodernism creates a wonderland where each thing can morph into another, a ludic world free of conventions, rules and traditions."(4) Postmodern art, being easily accessible, does not affect the viewers as it used to. It has lost the power to startle, surprise or even shock us. As a result, ekphrastic poetry must apply new forms and points of view so as to attract the reader and express the changes in visual culture.

The American poet Frank O'Hara addressed in one of his poems the painter, Larry Rivers "Don't complain, my dear, / You do what I can only name." (128) This straightforward statement nostalgically summarizes the tradition of the rivalry of the "*sister arts*," the contest started by da Vinci's *paragone* and continued in the aesthetic theories of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's essay, *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1766). The verbal arts are considered as somehow inferior to the visual arts, as they only imitate the actual thing, being able to name or describe it, but they can never attain any tangible object. A remarkable fact is Robert Wynne's lack of interest in the competition between visual and verbal arts. His "Museum of Parallel Art" is not only a volume of poetry, the poet attempts to do something more than just *name*. Despite the difference in the means of expression, the poet, being faithful to his own verbal media, endeavours to create a collection of works of art which exist only in his mind, yet, thanks to the ekphrastic poems based on these imaginary works, he shares this artistic vision with the reader.

In the past, the objective of ekphrastic poetry was to evoke an image which was verbally re-presented by the poet. Contemporary poets do not feel the pressure of *enargeia,* their poetry does not have to visualize a work of art in a detailed manner. Before the photography was invented, a vivid description (whether in prose or poetry) had been the only way to make the broad public acquainted with a particular work of art. Nowadays, visual arts are ubiquitous, all important artworks have been catalogued and it takes only seconds to identify a work of art via the Internet. As a result, poets use ekphrasis to serve their own poetic, ideological or aesthetic purpose, choosing those elements in the picture which they find useful, needed or adequate. Ekphrasis is employed as a technique for defining what is central and essential to a poet. Contemporary poetry bases on the condensation of words and images. Details, understood as pure ornamentation are extremely rare. Each word in a poem may have metrical, rhythmical or figurative function, therefore all of them must be interpreted as bearing meaning. Wynne rejects abstraction, instead of representing visually the emotions and thoughts evoked by the frescoes in the Sistine

Chapel, he creates a series of poems which contain all crucial aspects of each of the frescoes. This concentration of images and emotions borrowed from the original painting and verbally re-created in the ekphrastic poems echoes Ezra Pound's notion of *luminous details.* Discussing them, the poet states: "the artist seeks out the luminous detail and presents it. He does not comment. His work remains the permanent basis of psychology and metaphysics." (Pound, Osiris 22) The idea of *luminous details* is only one step away form Pound's future theories of vorticism and imagism. Pound understands the image not as an ornament but rather as a sign of the most important ideas inside the poem: "the image itself is the speech. The image is the word beyond formulated language."(Pound 1914:466) A detail is an image in a work of art which is self-contained, which can exist as a separate entity, it does not have to be subordinate to the original whole. It may contain partial information on the whole, yet its message is not incomplete.

The article aims to present the importance of details in Wynne's poetry as a vehicle for conveying meaning and expressing vital ideas and complex subject matters. Details in the volume "Museum of Parallel Art" fall into two categories: the details which come from the original picture and the ones which point to the imaginary work of art.

In each of the poems in this volume, Robert Wynne hides himself behind a mask, the mask of another artist. In this case, it is a visual artist whose art becomes a springboard for a more profound discussion of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Wynne needs these masks as they give him the possibility to view the process of artistic creation from various perspectives. Wynne resorts here to the full scope of visual arts and does not limit himself to figurative painting. Among the artists, whose artworks we can admire in the imaginary Museum of Parallel Art as creators of the Sistine Chapel ceiling are: an abstract painter Kenneth Nolan, surrealists: Joan Miró and Dorothea Tanning, a neo-impressionist Georges Seurat, cartoonists: Matt Groening and Charles Schultz, a fauvist Henri Matisse, a realist Bob Ross and a pop-artist Keith Haring.

Wynne does not want to break the mimetic illusion that the poems are ekphrases of real works of art. There is no *as if* in his poetry, it does not tell us how *would* an artist paint a certain biblical scene, but how she or he actually *did* it. He makes the reader believe that what is reconstructed is an actual painting. There are various ways of creating this illusion of visual presence. Here, the poet carefully presents the compositional elements of the canvases:

God is massive, consuming/ the entire right side. (32)

The ark is a huge heart in the distance.
In the foreground, black outlines scramble against each other (35)

The cracks in the firmament behind them are bits of infant lightning (39)

and also makes comments on the technique, drawing attention to the visual media used by the painters: "sketched so quickly" (39)*,* "bright acrylics" or "visible lines around them."(35) Wynne encourages the reader to visualize particular paintings basing on our ability to conjure them up in our minds and also our cultural and personal background. Without the knowledge of the artists mentioned in the titles of the poems, their style, technique or/and the works of art, it would be impossible to understand these ekphrases. Here, a detail becomes a clue, a part of the unknown wholeness which may be reconstructed starting just from the very detail. The reader is supposed to read deductively, treating the ekphrastic poem as a puzzle.

The dichotomy between the form and the content of 'imaginary ekphrases' and the original art is the organizing principle of Wynne's poetry. The juxtaposition of visual details in these poems gives them a new meaning, making the reader look at Michelangelo's art as if for the first time, revealing a hidden agenda. "Henri Matisse's Sacrifice of Noah" is based on the painter's well-known picture "Joie de vivre." Nonetheless, instead of expressing the joy of life, Noah's family:

holds hands
and dances to the music of blood
staining stone, celebrating
over and over
each death
that' s not their own.(34)

Thus, the joy of life ironically becomes the celebration of death and it is turned into a *danse macabre.* This *dance of death* shifts the reader's attention from the act of sacrifice to the flood which killed numerous people. The poem is undoubtedly a verbal representation of Matisse's picture "Joie de vivre," the text includes details borrowed from the original painting, yet new characteristics are ascribed to them.

"Joan Miró's Creation of the Sun, Moon and Plants" is virtually riddled with tiny details. These elements reflect Miró's paintings, many characteristic details of his art (such as simple geometrical shapes, stars, triangles, the use of vivid colours) are employed here to represent the creation of the universe. The poet translates Michelangelo's fresco into the language of Miró's images. The informative details: God's head, the sun and moon, the heavens, a thin snake of smoke (29) are directly transmitted from the original painting, however the simplistic form of Miró's art is employed to convey the early stages of creation, and the limited number of aspects of the yet-to-be -accomplished world. The poet resorts to surrealist art in order to represent the unreal and unrepresentable.

The same technique of juxtaposition of details is applied in " Matt Groening's Creation of Adam" which is a precise, prose-like description of the imaginary painting. The poet focuses here on the world-famous iconic image of God's hand pouring life to Adam. However, in the picture in the *Museum of Parallel Art,* the first man is not Adam, but one of the most popular cartoon characters: Homer Simpson, reaching not for God's hand, but for *the beer* in God's hand, "taking no notice that God is nothing but the hand: blue foam rubber covered with red words, pointing at the first man."(31) The poet avoids any interpretation as the images speak for themselves, the clash between Michelangelo's perfect Adam and shabby Homer Simpson is a strong statement on the condition of a contemporary man. It's a comment on the triviality of life which is nowadays perceived just as a game, devoid of any transcendental aspects.

Certain ekphrases in this volume owe their visual power to the similarity between the frescoes and the visual scene depicted in the poems. In "Dorothea Tanning's Creation of Eve" the imagery and the general composition are similar to the original painting. Wynne introduces a number of details characteristic of Tanning's surreal art: a sunflower with a mirror inside, an open door standing alone. This verbal illustration of the Creation of Eve acquires a more fragile and ephemeral mood being filtered through Tanning's surreal sensibility. Likewise,"Keith Haring's The Flood" contains most inherent details of Michelangelo's fresco: a huge ark in the distance, people seeking rescue on a rock, a solitary tree. All these elements are created in Haring's unique pop-art style: "the ark is a huge heart," people become "black outlines [that] scramble against each other's yellow bodies fling themselves against the bright boat." (35) It has been an excellent idea to choose Bob Ross as the imaginary author of "The Fall and Expulsion from the Garden of Eden." This American painter was

famous for his idealistic and vibrant landscapes which immediately bring to mind the Eden garden. The ekphrastic poem sets its narration in one of Ross' pictures, producing an equation between the canonized works of art and a mainstream, contemporary painter, whose pictures are frequently judged as commercial and kitschy. The strategy of pseudo-similarity is used in "Charles Schulz's Drunkenness of Noah" to stress the clash between high and popular art. Even though the poem evokes numerous aspects of Michelangelo's fresco, it is done in a surprising and humorous manner. The creator of the most popular comic strip*, Peanuts,* in the imaginary ekphrasis dresses Noah in a "yellow shirt zig-zagged with black" which is an attribute of Charlie Brown, a character from the strip. Not to mention the famous dog, Snoopy, which also participates in the biblical scene: "their small white dog/digging diligently for something in this world."(36)

The principle of similarity is employed in *bi-focal* ekphrastic poems to bridge the gap between the Old Masters and contemporary artists. The poet links the traditional art with new forms of visual expression, to confirm the value of art to our culture and society, Consequently, he casts a new light on the biblical scenes, making them more intelligible for a modern reader. Ekphrasis has a great power of defamiliarisation which:

> operates by making the usual seem unusual, unnatural seem natural ... It is meant to make the viewer see is/her culture differently, cultural practices that before looked natural and obvious now seem distorted or strange. (Webster 98)

In contrast to the previously discussed poems, some ekphrastic *imaginary paintings* in this volume bear little or no resemblance to Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. The first poem in the series,"Kenneth Noland's Separation of Light from Darkness" is a description of an abstract painting. Wynne does not introduce here any details borrowed from Michelangelo's frescoes apart form the title. Nolan's abstract art: concentric black and white and grey bands, reflects the actual impossibility of the separation of light and darkness, the good from the evil.

> White and grey rings alternate
> expanding out to black
> surrounded by more white-
>
> light containing darkness and darkness light...(28)

These contrasting colours are metaphors of the relationship between God and a human being who are totally opposed, yet cannot exist without each other. The power of the poem results from the restrictive use of detail. Wynne adjusts the tone and imagery of the poem to the subject matter of the fresco. The abstract and hard to imagine process of creation of the universe is presented by means of simple details found in non-representational art.

Another poem, which hardly invokes the Sistine Chapel ceiling is "Georges Seurat's Separation of the Earth from Waters." It could be easily taken as a verbal account of Seurat's painting "Bathers at Asnieres"(1884), were not for the title. The main variation is the identity of the central figure whom the poet considers to be God:

> God sits on the shore
> with his feet dangling into the water.
> He wears only a swimsuit,
> perfectly matching his sunset red hair.

and the place of other bathers is taken by "three cherubim /[who] skip stones, dig holes and play in the mud." (30) Here, apart from the figure of God, cherubim and water, the poet does not transfer any details form the Sistine Chapel. Instead, he resorts to prosopopeia, giving voice to the image of God:

> Days like this, he thinks,

> are worth all the trouble:
> soft patch of grass, cool water
> lapping at your ankles

 The impressionist style of Seurat's painting reflects the mood of tranquility, serenity and calmness just before the first human being was introduced to the world.

Even though the poet does not alter much in the ekphrastic representation of a single work of art, yet these poems require the highest degree of *cultural competence.* The readers are left here alone, the poet does not guide them through the maze of possible meanings. The poems in which details of both visual sources work upon the principles of juxtaposition or similarity prompt the reader's responses, leading from one

detail to another, the same manner as roadsigns help us achieve our destination. In case of ekphrases offering detailed descriptions of only one visual source, it is essential to mentally trace the poet's chain of associations. Thus, details here are not meant to be clues leading to the whole because they already constitute the whole. The reader is supposed to deconstruct the image, finding elements which made Wynne link two distinct works of art into one ekphrastic poem.

The ekphrases of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in *Museum of Parallel Art* present the story of the Creation the Universe which becomes a pretext for a discussion of the process of artistic creation. Wynne attempts to show how versatile and unpredictable might be the flow of artistic imagination. This collection of poems points out to multiple levels of creation. The first creator is God who creates the world, the second is Michelangelo painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, the third is the artist whose talent or influence are admired by the fourth creator, the poet who composes ekphrastic poems inspired by the visual arts. The last one in this chain of creators is the reader who, in order to understand an ekphrastic poem, has to decode the message and to make whole of particular elements and details. Wynne assumes the role of the main demiurge. He constructs the fictitious world basing on his own principles, seeing in the Sistine Chapel a field for his creative activity. What is more, he creates *the ideal reader* whose education, knowledge and observant eye enable the appreciation and understanding of *bi-focal* ekphrastic poetry.

Details in ekphrastic poetry pay a normative role, the amount of detail contributes to the categorization of ekphrasis. It ranges form simple mentioning the artist's name or the title of the painting, through a prosopopeia which envoices the silent image, or a narrative suggesting events taking place on the canvas to a very meticulous and unrestrained description of every single element in the picture. The use of details in this specific category of ekphrastic relationship, namely *bi-focal* ekphrasis, unites the two visual sources and makes it possible to find a common ground for a discussion or analysis. Such details never become obsolete, they refer not only the original painting, but also to themselves as separate entities. In the course of analysis they may acquire a new meaning, or convey new ideas.

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LETTER-WRITING IN 18TH CENTURY BRITAIN AND ITS IMPACT ON FRENCH CULTURE

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Abstract

In the 18th century, when education overcame class barriers, letter-writing became a daily practice in both aristocratic and middle-class families. Epistles helped strengthening family relations and, if of a particular interest, letters were gathered into printed collections. But letters were brimful of details! Those very details are now subject to research work and provide unexpected answers to issues related to everyday life or artistic creation. The paper deals with the influence that one of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's letters exerted on Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres' painting, and the detail that explains some of his artistic choices.

Key words: letters, Turkish bath, harem, sensual, naked body

The 18ᵗʰ century was called 'the golden age of letters' (Whyman 5) because the letter turned into the handiest means of communication. Poor children, boys and girls, were allowed to attend school and, thus, the rate of literacy rose considerably. On the other hand, through the extraordinary rise of print culture, reading, as well as writing, were enormously encouraged. Not only was the age remarkable for the rate of literacy and the opportunity people had to produce and read letters, but the Royal Mail turned into a fully operational nation-wide system of a proficiency unparalleled before.

The educated were still observing the medieval conventions regarding the topic, layout and rhetoric of letters, the so-called *ars dictaminis* (Whyman, 11) and Erasmus' definition of the letter as being 'a mutual conversation between absent friends, which should be neither unpolished, rough, or artificial, nor confined to a single topic, nor tediously long' (Whyman, 11) constituted the starting point of every manual teaching epistolary skills. But common people generally put in their letters pieces of

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information about themselves and their daily duties, enabling us, centuries later, to have a glimpse at their life and mentality.

With men of letters, letter-writing often turned into a more serious pastime. They would go beyond the mere scope of informative messages and would very frequently expand their literary or philosophical outlooks into long erudite letters, which now constitute invaluable literary documents. Much of the profile of the 18th century writers, scientists or philosophers was revealed by the details in their letters.

Generally, letters were published after their authors' death, a tradition that confirms that the intimacy the private correspondence might have contained, was held in high esteem by the contemporaries. Nevertheless, in 1735, Alexander Pope broke the rule and published his correspondence while he was still alive, ingeniously attributing the 'evil deed' to his 'treacherous' publisher.(Whyman, 15) He thus inaugurated the habit of being contemporary to your own collection of letters and enjoying the public reactions to them.

In 1763, a year after their author passed away, there were published *The Turkish Embassy Letters,* written by Lady Mary Wortley Montague (1689-1762) during her voyage to Constantinople. She was the wife of Edward Wortley Montague, a Member of Parliament, who was appointed Ambassador at Constantinople in 1716. An intelligent, partially self-taught aristocrat, with a bias for literary composition and well-connected in the English literary circles, Lady Mary Wortley Montague kept a regular correspondence with her sister and friends during her voyage to and stay in Constantinople. She informed them on 'the Orient' she was convinced she was experiencing while visiting such towns as Belgrade and Sofia, under Ottoman rule at the time. The published letters were obviously edited and refined by the Lady herself, and their posthumous publication against the family's wish caused a genuine cultural stir. Britain is indebted to her for her remarks on the life of Ottoman women and the letters were a rich source of inspiration for foreign artists, as well.

On the 1st of April 1717, she wrote the famous letter on the hot Turkish baths in Sofia that she was so eager to visit. The details of this letter had an enormous appeal to its readers in the 18th and 19th centuries. They compose a very vivid image of a public *gynaeceum*, where women were free from any masculine presence and from any social constraint. The Turkish bath, that Lady Montagu called 'the Bagno', comprised 5 stone domes: the first sheltered the entrance where 'ladies of quality' had to leave a small sum of money to 'the portress', the next contained two circular

rows of marble sofas and four fountains with cold water channeled to the next 3 rooms where it cooled the hot water. The nudity of the women present in large numbers inside was but the natural result of the hot vapors that filled the bath.

As she was dressed according to the Western fashion, Lady Montagu further comments on the Oriental civility with which the women received her, which amounted to an attitude of apparent indifference to her looks, which, she remarks, was in stark contrast with the reaction in her own country to a person from a different civilization.

> I know no European court where the ladies would have behaved themselves in so polite a manner to a stranger. I believe in the whole there were 200 women and yet none of those disdainful smiles or satyric whispers that never fail in our assemblies when any body appears that is not dressed exactly in fashion. (Lord Wharncliffe and W. Moy Thomas, 1861)

She further describes in detail the hot baths where the marble sofas were covered in cushions and rich carpets on which the ladies were lying. The second row of sofas was for the slaves that would tend to their mistresses and plait their hair with pearls and ribbons. She is amazed to notice that the women were not socially distinct by means of their attire since they were 'in plain English, stark naked, without any beauty or defect concealed, yet there was not the least wanton smile or immodest gesture amongst them'(Lord Wharncliffe and W. Moy Thomas, 1861). She continues describing the extreme beauty and majestic movements of the nonchalant women whom she associates with John Milton's General Mother.

Lady Montagu rapidly passes from one type of comment to another, though she simply recounts her impressions. Her social remarks are continued by some artistic comments, which, both, are evidence of her interest in the social status of women in foreign communities and testify to her range of knowledge. She is so struck by the assembly of beautiful women that she identifies them with the Graces. She finds them so pure in their relations with each other, so tolerant and devoid of western prudery about their nudity, that she instantly thinks of painters. She claims that many of the ladies had the same proportions with the goddesses painted by Guido Reni or Titian and she confesses she wished Charles Jervas, the Irish painter who had painted her own portrait, were there, invisible, and drew inspiration from the magnificent sight: 'I fancy it would have very much

improved his art to see so many fine women naked in different postures, …'(Lord Wharncliffe and W. Moy Thomas, 1861).

Lady Montagu makes an interesting comment on the Western criteria of assessing beauty. She survived smallpox in 1715, but she was disfigured and forced to cover her face under a thick layer of make-up. The beauty of the women's shapes and skins confirms her 'sour' philosophy: if one were allowed to show one's body, then beauty would no longer be judged by complexion alone. This is, obviously, the commentary of a woman embittered that her natural beauty was marred by an infelicitous incident.

Lady Montagu further relates how she was invited to discard the riding garments she was wearing and join the entirely feminine diversion, which she compares to a British coffeehouse, where men could entertain themselves, discuss politics, scandals and feel at ease in the company of other men. But she declines the invitation and hurries to visit a church that she finds abominably ruined.

She ends her letter confident that her account cannot but startle and amuse its addressee, for, she is right, few westerners had experienced a Turkish bath in Europe in the 18th century.

> Adieu, madame, I am sure I have now entertained you with an account of such a sight as you never saw in your life and that no book of travels could inform you of. 'Tis no less than death for a man to be found in one of these places. (Lord Wharncliffe and W. Moy Thomas, 1861)

The last sentence in her letter points to the gendered nature of public places in 'the Orient'. It also highlights the exclusivity of the account, since men, generally used to travelling and writing travel accounts, would have found it impossible to enter and subsequently describe such places.

The letter reveals an exhilarating experience that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu depicted in such a fresh and vivid manner that her description has arrested the readers' attention ever since its publication and has compelled them to imagine what the place looked like. Owing to the force of her details, the picture takes contour before your eyes, it is dynamic, full of novelty, both in its presentation of the setting and in the way Lady Montague makes associations between Western Europe and 'the Orient'. Her description progresses like a narrative and presents her entering the bath and passing from dome to dome until she reaches the women scattered on the sofas in relaxed positions, talking, drinking coffee or eating sorbet, but not entirely passive, since they interact with her and among themselves.

You can almost hear the whisper of their voices even if you cannot understand the words.

What must have struck the British imagination most was the *tableau* complete with naked women breathing freedom from any constraint, enjoying the company of one another, being proud of their nudity and totally careless of class distinctions or sexual implications. What she experienced in the Turkish bath was unheard of in England and in the western part of the continent, as she admits in the last part of her letter. But she was among the first women of repute to signal that British women needed an acknowledged form of public entertainment where sex, class and religion should be banned as conventions that limit or mar the joy of asserting their personality.

In 1825, almost a century later, Jean-Auguste-Dominque Ingres (1780-1867), who was under the spell of the female body's beauty and shared Orientalist influences with other prominent French painters, put down a fragment from Lady Montagu's *The Turkish Embassy Letters* and tried to fulfil the Lady's wish: he did draw inspiration from the scene and proceeded to paint:

> so many fine women naked in different postures, some in conversation, some working, others drinking coffee or sherbet, and many negligently lying on their cushions while their slaves (generally pretty girls of 17 or 18) were employed in braiding their hair in several pretty manners. (Lord Wharncliffe and W. Moy Thomas, 1861)

The Turkish Bath, a tondo that the Louvre refused to buy until 1911, was painted when Ingres was 82 years old, in 1862, and is considered his last masterpiece. One of Louis David's favorite students, Ingres excelled in painting historical scenes and portraits, but nowadays his fame mainly relies on the female nudes that he painted under the influence of either the Oriental tales the whole of Paris was humming with, such as *The Great Odalisque* (1814), or in the context of domestic bathing, such as *Bathing Woman* (1808). He developed 'a highly sensitive aestheticism' (Rauch:, 2006, 391) in painting the female naked body and, though his bodies are not flawless, they celebrate female beauty and 'deliberately use erotic attraction.'(idem).

Unlike Eugène Delacroix, his eternal rival, Ingres had never travelled as far as any Muslim country, so all his knowledge of a *gynaeceum* was based on his readings. The painting, now interpreted as a *harem*, bears a title that highlights its affiliation, *The Turkish Bath*, and it

gives visual texture to Lady Montagu's letter. It shows an assembly of nude women relaxing on marble sofas carpeted in red, some discussing, others drinking coffee or sorbet, one slave perfuming her mistress' hair, 'in an infinite blending of curves' (Claude Roger-Marx: 1973, 231).

Nudes were not new to the art consumer in the 19th century, but such a profusion of white sensual bodies, set in lascivious positions, totally disregarding prudish conventions, could hardly be accepted on the spot. The bodies, a little too plump, and the arms, a bit too fleshy, reveal the liberties the artist took in 'correcting nature', or, as he said, in destroying 'the health of form' (Claude Roger-Marx: 1973, 231). But the painting breathes tenderness and delicacy, as well as a flamboyant display of female sensuality. Though commissioned by Napoleon III's son, prince Napoleon, the painting was sent back to Ingres on grounds of impropriety.

Ingres changed the painting's rectangular shape into a tondo and added a few details to both create verisimilitude and make it suitable to the new framing. The women he painted are genuine visual renderings of Lady Montagu's account. They are presented reclined, simply sitting and some are standing. But Ingres added a few extra persons to make the scene complete. A beautiful blonde is covering her eyes as she wants some rest and another one has started to dance to the amazement of her neighbors. A third has just arrived and is in the process of taking off her Muslim clothes.

Ingres was truly inspired by Lady Montagu's letter, but he couldn't help cheating here and there. The first major 'betrayal' is the grand figure of a slave playing a lute, who turns her back to the viewer and is placed in central position. Her naked back, beautifully curved, catches the eye, since it is lighted differently from the other characters who are placed rather in semi shade. She is obviously the main character, unaware of being watched and admired, absorbed in her lute playing.

Thus, to the four senses present in the letter: *sight, smell, taste and touch*, Ingres added *hearing*, though Lady Montagu never mentioned any music in her account. Apart from the foremost, dominant figure playing her lute, there is a black slave who is playing a tambourine in the background.

Then, rank can be told by the veils or jewelry that some of the women have kept. If the slaves are either bare headed or use a towel to keep their hair from falling, their mistresses have kept elaborate veils or even tiaras, necklaces, bracelets and rings. And, of course, they are the ones who totally surrender to the pleasures the bath offers to them.

The painting, apart from being first dismissed for its rather erotic tones, may also be criticized for not being true to the context of a Turkish

bath: the bodies and faces are too European. Now, knowing that the painting was inspired by Lady Montagu's text, we also remember that she described a Turkish bath in Sofia, not in Adrianople, though the letter was composed there, or Constantinople. Therefore we can assume the bath was Turkish owing to its organizational structure not because it was placed in Turkey. Sofia was under Ottoman rule at the time and Lady Montagu rightly felt that she had entered 'the Orient' once she found herself in Belgrade or Sofia. But the populations in both regions were Caucasian and if there were two hundred women, as she estimated at the time, on the premises of the bath, they were probably Bulgarians. That is why she describes their skin as being 'shiningly white'.

The detail that the painting was inspired by Lady Montagu's letter comes from the excerpt that we mentioned earlier and which was found among Ingres' papers. This small detail reveals that he intended to be true to her description, and not simply that he read or heard about her letters and got an idea of painting a *harem*. Which is another misplaced label that the painting has got. A Turkish bath was public, therefore it was open to every woman (Lady Montagu mentions that women took 'this diversion once a week'), while a *harem* is a closed space, generally devised for the female occupants of a single household.

Lady Montagu's letters were translated into French and published several times in France in the ten years following their publication in Britain. They caused quite a stir and produced an enhanced interest in the Orient by the details that Lady Montagu provided about the communities she encountered in Eastern Europe and the Turkish Empire. It was again one of the twists of history, how the details in a letter composed to amuse a friend contributed to stimulate the artistic imagination of a European artist.

On the other hand, the detail that Ingres was attracted by Lady Montagu's description of the Turkish bath in Sofia to such an extent as to write it down in case he forgot it, explains his choices of subject, of characters painted, of atmosphere. Moreover, it highlights his interest in painting a particular Turkish bath, not a generic one, thus celebrating again and again, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's achievement from both a sociological and a literary perspective.

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ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES.
CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

     The domain of English for Specific Purposes, which deals with the communicative needs and practices of specific individuals or groups of individuals, has developed constantly to become a major issue in ELT. ESP is based on a durable theoretical foundation. Some new ideas that have come to influence English for Specific Purposes might be critical approaches, social constructionism and discourse analysis.

     New ESP approaches highlight the importance of what the individuals are studying and allow them to use the English they know in order to acquire even more information, as their interest in their domain will motivate them to interact further with other learners

Key words: theoretical foundation, interaction, English for Specific Purposes, needs, communication

Introduction

     During the last fifty years, English has turned into one of the most important languages for foreign learners. There are many explanations for such a metamorphosis: political and financial, not to mention military reasons. The linguistic awareness of learners has grown in importance as the demand for effective English teaching has increased too.

     It should be mentioned that one essential constituent of teaching English nowadays is represented by English for Specific Purposes, or ESP for short. This component has been referred to as *applied English Language*, because its contents and goals are designed according to the needs of a specific group of learners. *Applied English* makes some use of the general methodology, yet it is centred on the specific language domain

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considered to be appropriate for the specialized register in terms of grammar, vocabulary or discourse (Anthony, 2005). ESP is designed mainly for adult learners in a professional work situation, as we are about to see.

In nuce, the definition of ESP deals with the study of language, discourse and contexts of use and the direct application of these discoveries to the practical domains. This is what basically makes the difference between ESP and General English. In a more recent article, Belcher (2004) states that:

> Unlike other pedagogical approaches, which may be less specific needs-based and more theory-driven, ESP pedagogy places heavy demands on its practitioners to collect empirical needs-assessments data, to create or to adapt materials to meet specific needs identified and to cope with often unfamiliar matter and even language use. (p. 166)

ESP can be described as a mixture of methods, strategies and techniques whose main goal is to offer a perspective over the informational content of the specialized register. Still, native speakers of English will have to accept accommodative techniques in their own interpersonal interactions with non-native speakers of English.

Hutchinson (1987:53) was asked: *What is the difference between the ESP and General English approach?* He answered: *In theory nothing, in practice a great deal.* Probably the most important difference between these two notions lies in what is taught and learners' motivation. ESL students are mostly youngsters who struggle to acquire basic knowledge of English, while ESP learners are usually adults who already have some linguistic background. They study English in order to be able to communicate in a specific technical register and to perform various job-related tasks. In addition to that, ESP focuses mainly on language patterns in specific contexts rather than on teaching grammar and language structures. ESP covers subjects ranging from robotics or aerospatial engineering to medicine. Moreover, English is integrated into a subject matter area that had been previously defined as important to the learners. However, as far as the interests and motivations of students are concerned, ESL and ESP diverge mainly in the purpose of instruction. All four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) are trained equally in ESL classes, whereas in ESP classes a needs analysis would identify what skill is to be developed more.

ESP has several absolute characteristics, as defined by Dudley-Evans (2001):

• It is customized to meet the specific needs of the learners;

• ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;

• It is centred not only on language issues, such as grammar or vocabulary, but it also focuses on the skills and discourses appropriate to the specific register activities;

• ESP students are interested in intercultural communication and the development of intercultural competence.

Specialists have classified ESP in two categories: English for Academic Purposes and English for Occupational Purposes (Dudley-Evans, St John 1998:95). Here is also a series of subcategories of English for Occupational Purposes, such as *Business English*, *Professional English* (e.g. English for doctors, lawyers etc.) and *Vocational English* (e.g. English for aviation, tourism etc.)

Hutchinson and Waters (1987:16) note that there is not a clear distinction between EAP and EOP:

> People can work and study simultaneously; it is also likely that in many cases the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up or returns to a job.

There seems to be general agreement that ESP teachers do not necessarily need expertise in a specific technical domain. Yet, they are required to meet two basic conditions: awareness and feel for a specific technical registry. Bell (2002) indicates the three C's to help ESP teachers enhance their knowledge and skills in a specific field of ESP:

• *Curiosity* – ESP teachers should be interested in the subject area and want to learn more about specific topics;
• *Collaboration* – ESP teachers should ask for feedback from specialists;
• *Confidence* – It will grow as ESP teachers are willing to analyze a new subject area.

Teaching Practice

Until recently, ESP courses have been customized for intermediate or advanced adult learners. Because of the way the world has evolved towards globalization, most students begin practising academic or vocational English in middle school. This is because ESP has grown in importance and it may be designed for specific disciplines. In specific

situations, ESP may use a different methodology from the one used in General English, as long as it is in the learner's best interest.

Harding (2007:31) stresses the fact that general skills, such as those considered as applicable to General English, e.g. ability to communicate, pragmatism or use of authentic materials, are also suitable for ESP classes. Specifically, there is no need for ESP teachers to follow a course book strictly. They should consider their students' needs and comprehend the nature of their subject domain. ESP teachers should also identify students' language needs in relation to their area of interest.

Other aspects deal with the use of situations or texts from specific areas, authenticity or the use of authentic materials so that students are motivated to interact in a proactive way and to perform at high standards during ESP classes.

For an ESP class to be effective, the teacher should make assumptions on the teaching stages that are likely to be implemented as the foundation of later ESP classes. Hence these assumptions will give an appropriate outlook on the theoretical background and they will help decide upon the most correct methodology that should be applied. Needless to say, all assumptions should take into consideration the specificity of every student.

To understand the internal mechanism of ESP elaboration techniques, we should remember the very beginning of ESP development approaches. Basically, they used to focus mainly on vocabulary, grammar and syntactical characteristics. In other words, they did nothing but follow the trends of that time. But it seemed that this particular kind of approach was going to come to a fruitless end, so specialists decided to lay more emphasis on a more communicative and pragmatic basis. Therefore, more recent outlooks on cognitive studies have provided a more appropriate framework to apply the cognitive strategies that students use in order to acquire ESP informational content.

Five decades ago, Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964:87) introduced the concept of *register analysis*, which explains the proportion in which the language varies according to the type of speaker, the situation and the purpose in which it is used. Their approach had a very important aim: to highlight the grammatical and vocabulary characteristics of different registers of English, as in scientific, technical or academic English. Their works are considered as an essential contribution to the consideration of ESP status as a new tendency in Applied Linguistics.

According to these authors, the basic scientific language taught in ESP classes should be made up of sentence patterns and structural and non-structural vocabulary. The acquisition of special vocabulary elements is of very little or no difficulty, as most of them are international words and therefore quite similar to those already used by students in their native language.

ESP courses should start from the premises that students have already acquired the information specific to the National Curricula during their previous stages of education. Hence the material to be presented in ESP classes should be graded in length and complexity. For example, some possible resources for technical texts might be university textbooks, professional papers and articles, scientific dictionaries or even websites of transnational corporations. A principal criterion of selection can be represented by elements such as frequency or range, while others can be included for reasons such as their usefulness as describers or definers. Due to the fact that students show a great deal of variation with regard to the knowledge of English they bring to the ESP classes, courses should have the flexibility required by such situation.

Teachers should also lay emphasis on the oral approach for several reasons: first of all, oral repetition in context is the most effective way of retaining the information, even for purely recognition purposes; secondly, over a specific period of time, much more work can be done orally rather than in writing; thirdly, an oral approach can stir students' interest for ESP classes.

Regarding the oral approach, there are several factors that justify this emphasis on the oral component of ESP classes:
- the number of English – speaking specialists visiting non – English speaking countries to lecture or to present seminars;
- the failure of students to understand oral scientific English and their inability to communicate;
- in spite of the fact that there are scholarships available in English – speaking countries, many students fail to obtain them because of their lack of access to the information, thus resulting in a serious loss of qualified human resources.

In the early steps of ESP development, the focus had been set on language at the sentence level, whereas, in the later stages, the emphasis shifted to the level above the sentence, analysing the way the combinations of sentences and phrases serve the learner's purpose. At this stage, it is important to understand how specific linguistic features influence the type

of statement made in each case and how these issues are combined in order to become understandable at a certain stage. Still, there have been debates on the specific features used in General English compared to ESP. For example, we could think of tense choice dependent on the notion of time in General English, whereas in ESP they are dependent on the degree of generality. Researchers have tried to identify the organizational patterns in texts and the linguistic realisations by which tense patterns are used in ESP.

E. Trimble (1985:88) classified the paragraphs in two major types: the physical and the conceptual type. Physical paragraphs are important up to a point, whereas conceptual ones contain general informative notions. By using specific rhetorical techniques, these notions can be combined into chunks of information within ESP discourse, according to several criteria: time, space, causality and result. Trimble's approach to ESP text cohesion has been closely related to Mann and Thomson's theories on rhetorical structures. Their opinion led to a choice of teaching materials based on discourse approach. This proved useful for students to recognize textual patterns and discourse markers.

These are some aspects that need to be clarified. For example, questions arise related to the proportion of syllabi applicable to ESP courses. Some argue that students should be allowed to opt for a narrow or less restrictive focus approach. Still, we consider that it should be the teacher's choice for a specific approach that would broaden students' skills and aptitudes.

Present Circumstances and Future Evolution

Globalisation, as a modern world phenomenon, is in constant need for professionals and specialists, whose success depends on their ability to communicate or exchange information related to their fields of activity. This phenomenon exceeds the traditional limits of political or cultural facts, causing some issues related to language.

These days we live in *The Informational Age*. So far, ESP has experienced an incredible expansion mostly due to the need of global communication and the scientific and technical innovations that have improved our modern life. Yet, this expansion has been followed by a series of changes in the field of communication: webinars, mobile phones, satellite dishes or multimedia. But all these innovations triggered a complex transformation within interhuman relationships. Thus, a new technical paradigm has occurred: the informational technology. According to Castells (1996:469), the modern social structure causes a new modern

society pattern: global information economy. As a result, the technical revolution, by means of new emphasis on people and aims, will morph into a linguistic revolution. Therefore, it is the role of ESP to mediate the interconnectivity among culture models, communicative situations and science.

Most papers on ESP can be divided into two categories: discussion papers related to the process of teaching, e.g. *ESP at crossroads* by Hutchinson and Waters or *Teaching the communicative use of English* by Widdowson and Allan; papers that deal with the National Curricula, e.g. *How to arm your students: A consideration of two approaches to providing materials for ESP* by Phillips and Shettlesworth or *Further notes on developing an English programme for students of science and technology* by Ewer and Hughes-Davies and papers containing mainly useful teaching materials and methodological hints e.g. *Writing Scientific English* by Swales. Most of these researchers have managed to demonstrate that there is a close relationship among research and methodology and they should be studied as a whole rather than considering them separate notions. This would be the starting point of a new approach that is considering the student as the central axis of the needs and wants analysis process.

For a successful ESP evolution in the future, there are some basic conditions to be met, such as the systematic use of all available tools that can help overcome the problems some learners might encounter and the continuous development of the convergence among several constituents of ESP, such as teaching, learning and research.

All these components form a global framework in which ESP plays an essential role. It covers a series of specific areas of research, other than plain Philology, but it is well accepted that the main research has developed in the domains of science and technology. Regarding this approach, Swales' statement (1985:16):

ESP has set and continues to set the trend in theoretical discussion, in ways of analysing language and in the variety of actual materials, can still be applied.

In that sense, there seems to be general agreement on the new directions in ESP. They should include three major components:
- Permanent collaborative work between the ESP teacher and the subject teacher;
- Focus on material production and lesson planning rather than needs analysis;

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• Awareness of the importance of cross-cultural elements.

Having said that, we could predict that the ESP latest discoveries might evolve towards several directions; yet, these paths do have some elements in common, such as a focus on learner's both present and future needs and wants.

Modern approaches also focus on shifting attention from ESP textbooks to a more practical approach to material, with emphasis on careful selection on materials to be taught, in order to meet the students' requirements.

Modern trends in ESP teaching lay emphasis on situation and needs analysis and on a more practical approach to the discourse. Nowadays, ESP contains an ever-increasing number of specific terms, specially customized to fit a large array of jobs circumscribing the ESP domain, so the future of ESP seems bright. There are two major factors (the phenomenon of globalisation and the increasing mobility of the world's workforce) that will trigger a rise in the demand for specialized register courses. Moreover, the local economies of the emergent countries will cause a high demand for the workers to have a good knowledge of English as a second language, especially for the workforce of transnational corporation.

Hopefully, learners should become aware of the importance of ESP and understand that English should also have a social component as a means of communication rather than restricting to just few target situations.

Conclusion

Judging by the various aspects and approaches identified so far, we consider that ESP will be exposed to a continuous influence of several factors and trends. There is no doubt that ESP research and practice will boost interest in ESP in geographical areas where an increase in specialisation of ESP courses is highly required.

Yet, there seems to be a small delay between the rapid growth of ESP courses and the research in this domain. But, hopefully, the growth of ESP courses will determine an emphasis on innovation in the field of ESP research. In addition to that, the areas of theory that have had a systematic influence on the development of ESP appear to have the same beneficial impact on ESP in the years to come.

If a personal opinion is allowed, then we consider that the ever increasing use of English as a means of communication in interpersonal relationships between native and non-native speakers of English is likely to

have a major impact and it will probably trigger an even more extended use of ESP programmes throughout the world.

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PATTERNS OF LEXICALIZATION OF MOTION VERBS

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Abstract

The paper deals with motion as a universal concept and with patterns of lexicalization of motion verbs in the two languages English and Romanian. The paper is structured in three parts: the first two parts discuss the internal semantic structure of motion verbs, i.e. the type of componential semantic analysis in which certain semantic concepts, such as, the concepts of change of place, path, direction, manner of motion, cause of motion are specified; The second part focuses on the two basic patterns involving the conflation of motion with manner and conflation of motion with path. The last part of the paper investigates the lexicalization patterns of motion verbs revealing differences between English and Romanian in certain areas such as, directionality, manner of motion, and path.

Key words: lexicalization, motion verbs, componential semantic analysis, patterns

1. Introduction

During the last four decades significant contribution has been made by cognitive linguistic research (G. Lakoff, 1978; R. Jackendoff, 1983, L. Talmy, 1985, 2000) towards a better understanding of the relationship between space and language: according to cognitivists, spatial cognition and language closely interact, spatial representations serving as a basis for what gets mapped into linguistic structure. In the underlying conceptual organization of language the "event" has been identified as a basic element of language and cognition.

The growing interest in the field of lexical semantics has also prompted researchers (D.A. Cruse 1986) to propose a new methodology for investigating word meanings by seeking recurring patterns of semantic elements, as well as by identifying traits regarding their syntactic behaviour. Starting from the hypothesis that the meaning of a verb influences its syntactic behaviour, B. Levin has classified over 3,000 English verbs according to their meaning and syntactic behaviour. By examining verb behaviour with respect to a wide range of syntactic

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alternations that reflect verb meaning, Levin succeeded in isolating and distinguishing semantically coherent verb classes. Levin's method of analysis as well as the results of her research, were encapsulated in her seminal book *English Verb Classes and Alternations: A Preliminary Investigation* (1993), the most noteworthy features being the fact that she distinguished different senses of verbs and produced synonym sets; she also separated verbs into different classes based on their syntactic alternations, and generalized syntactic patterns for these differing classes, such as, Verbs of sound emission, *Run* verbs, *Waltz* verbs, Verbs of body-internal motion, *Push/Pull* verbs.

One of the verb classes identified and investigated extensively by Levin was represented by verbs of manner of motion (Levin 1993: 105-6; 265; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 282).

This class of verbs was further subdivided into two groups depending on the [+/-animate] entity occurring as their subject, namely *Roll verbs* and *Run* verbs:

i. The verbs in the first group, termed *Roll verbs* (Levin 1993: 264), have a [+/-animate] entity as their subject; the *Roll* verbs describe manners of motion characteristic of inanimate or animate entities; with inanimate subjects, they describe manner(s) of motion characteristic of inanimate entities, that is, where there is no agent control on the part of the moving entity. Some verbs imply imprecise motion, such as *bounce, drift, drop, float, glide, move, roll, slide, swing*. Other verbs indicate motion around an axis, for example, *revolve, rotate, spin, spiral, turn, twirl, twist, whirl, wind*.

An important feature of the *Roll* verbs is that they imply displacement, but they do not indicate direction of motion if there is no directional (prepositional or adverbial) phrase in the sentence. In this respect, consider the pairs of sentences in (1) and (2) below, which contain two verbs of imprecise motion *drift* and *float*: as a motion verb, *drift* is listed in dictionaries with two special types of manner of movement "to move slowly on water or in the air", "to move, change or do something without any plan or purpose" (Longman, 2005: 479); having a [+/-animate] entity as its subject, *float* denotes "to stay or move on the surface of a liquid without sinking", "to walk in a slow light graceful way" (Longman, 2005: 613).

(1) a. The waves became rougher as they drifted.
   b. We proceeded to drift on up the river.

(2) a. I wasn't sure if the raft would float.
   b. A couple of broken branches floated past us.

As the examples above illustrate, the verbs in the (a) sentences do not describe direction of motion, while the verbs in the (b) sentences are directional, the path or direction of motion being indicated by prepositional directional phrases: *up the river*, in (1b) and *past us*, in (2b).

ii. The verbs in the second group, initially termed *Run* verbs (Levin 1993: 265-6), and later renamed 'Agentive Verbs of Manner of Motion (Levin/Rappaport Hovav, 1995: 282), have a [+ animate] entity as their subject.

Among the 125 verbs identified by Levin as belonging to this class, we can mention *clamber, climb, dodder, hasten, hobble, inch, lope, lumber, lurch, plod, prowl, romp, rove, run, scurry, scuttle, slouch, sneak, stroll, strut, tear, tiptoe, toddle, totter, trundle, wade, walk,* etc. The verbs in this group share two important characteristics: first, they describe the manner(s) in which the animate entities can move; secondly, although they usually suggest displacement, no specific direction is implied without a directional phrase. The specific direction of motion or the path is usually implied in a prepositional directional phrase.

Consider the sentences under (3) and (4) which contain two agentive verbs of manner of motion, *hop* and *stumble*. In each pair, the (a) sentences describe an undirected movement, while the (b) sentences indicate direction or path of the motion rendered by means of a prepositional directional phrase:

(3) a. The little girl was hopping and skipping.
   b. He hopped across the room.
(4) a. She stumbled and fell, scraping her palms and knees.
   b. The drunk stumbled down the steps.

Thus, in (3a) *hop* denotes a special type of manner of movement "to move by jumping on one foot" (Longman, 2005: 784); in (3b) the prepositional phrase *across the room* describes the path taken by the subject, namely, from one side of the room to the other. Similarly, in (4a) *stumble* denotes a manner of movement "to walk in an unsteady way and almost fall" (Longman, 2005: 1652); in (4b) the prepositional phrase *down the steps* describes the path taken by the subject, namely, towards a lower place or position.

2. The Components of a Motion Event
2.1. A cognitivist framework of analysis

In his studies on lexicalization patterns, L. Talmy (1985, 2000) describes a motion event as consisting of four internal components, namely, Figure (object), Ground, Path and Motion. R. Jackendoff's (1983) approach is, to a large extent, similar to that proposed by Talmy.

In the cognitivists' interpretation, the *Figure object,* (also termed the Subject) is the [+ animate] entity or the object that undergoes the motion; the *Ground* (also referred to as the *Reference object)* is the object which the Subject is located with respect to; *Path* refers to the course followed by the Figure (Subject); the component of *Motion* refers to the presence per se of motion in the event of motion. In addition to these four key internal components, a Motion event can be associated with some external components (defined as co-events) represented by *Manner* and *Cause.*

In this paper we shall use the terms *Subject* and *Reference object* for Figure and Ground, respectively.

The two components – the Path-function and Reference object – are very important in the description of the various types of motion event patterns, in that they make up the entire path of the Subject's movement.

In particular, the Path component has attracted considerable attention being considered the core feature of the motion event, since the way this feature is expressed has further consequences for encoding other features of a motion event. In the most elaborate sense, Path refers to the motion of the subject, which moves from a source (or a starting point) to a goal (or destination), specifying the end-point. The Path-functions are also linguistically interesting because they can be expressed by a number of prepositional phrases, which can be divided into three basic types (see Lakoff 1987: 275-6):

i. TO-Path (or Goal Path) has a Reference object that is a Goal (or an end point) of the subject's Motion. The Goal, which also includes direction or movement with respect to a destination, is rendered by directional prepositional phrases. In English, this type of Path is typically encoded by a small set of spatial prepositions, such as: *to, in(to), on(to), towards.*

ii. FROM-Path (or Source Path) has a Reference object that is a Source (or a starting point) of the Subject's Motion. Basic English spatial prepositions that typically encode this type of Path are: *from, out, off, away.*

iii. VIA-Path is the Path or trajectory in which the Subject moves past the Reference object. This type of Path is typically encoded by the prepositions *past, via, over, around, through.*

Sentence (5) below provides an illustration of a motion event pattern:

(5) A man is running across the street

Applying the framework for analysis proposed by Talmy, we can describe sentence (5), as denoting motion, which can be parsed into a number of distinct encodable parts: the noun *a man* is the Figure object (the Subject); the verb *is running* expresses the Motion, giving details of the subject's movement, more specifically, the manner of motion; the preposition *across* renders the subject's trajectory, i.e., crossing the street; the noun *the street* represents the Ground (Reference object) traversed by the man.

The recurrence of certain features of meaning in the linguistic description of motion has led cognitivist linguists (Talmy, 1985, 2000) to the supposition that the cognitive partitioning of motion events is universal.

Nevertheless, along with this cross-linguistic identity of encoding motion events there is also systematic variance specific to particular languages. Extensive work carried out in lexical semantics and cognitive linguistics (Talmy 1985, 2000; Jackendoff 1983) has shown that the encoding of space and motion varies significantly across languages, more specifically, that languages vary in the way they encode motion events, or in the way they conflate the elements of motion events within grammatical structures.

The extensive research has led to a typological classification of verbs based on their main lexicalization patterns. Linguists have identified significant differences in how languages conflate the main motion components (manner, path) inside the clause. Depending on the encoding of the components of manner and path in motion event, languages fall into two types: (i) manner languages and (ii) path languages.

Thus, there are two main lexicalization patterns for verbs, (i) *Motion + Manner/Cause* pattern, in manner languages, and (ii) *Motion + Path* pattern, in path languages. These two main lexicalization patterns for verbs, identified by Talmy, typically correspond to the Germanic and Romance languages respectively (Talmy, 2000: 55-6).

In manner languages (the Germanic languages, such as English), manner of motion is typically encoded within the verb, while direction of motion information, path information appears in modifiers, in non-verbal elements such as prepositional phrases. The Germanic languages are also defined as *satellite framed languages* because they lexicalize the *Manner/Cause* of the motion event and specify the directional values by means of external particles. In other words, satellite-framed languages express Motion by means of lexical morphemes and encode the core feature (i.e. Path) in 'satellites' to the verb, such as prepositions, particles, prefixes or adverbs.

In path languages (the Romance languages, such as Spanish), the verb usually encodes the direction of motion or various types of Path information, while the manner information is (optionally) encoded in modifiers, rendered by gerunds or prepositional phrases. The Romance languages are also defined as *verb framed languages* because they lexicalize the *Path* and leave the *Manner/Cause* specification to adjuncts. Verb-framed languages conflate Motion and Path into the same lexical morpheme, they encode the core feature (i.e. Path) in the verb.

2.2. Conflation of Motion with Manner

Manner refers to various factors, such as motor pattern, rate (high or slow speed of motion), and degree of effort of the subject's movement (easy, relaxed or difficult, awkward movement).

As we have specified in section 2.1. above, the typical pattern of lexicalization of English motion verbs is to conflate motion with manner, leaving path to be expressed by an additional prepositional phrase. Thus, English has quite a large group of manner-conflating verbs, such as: *crawl, creep, fly, jog, roll, run, rush, skate, slide, stroll, swim, trudge, walk,* etc. Thus, there are some verbs that carry explicit unequivocal information about a relatively high speed of motion, such as *bolt, charge*, *dart, dash, hasten, hurry, lollop, lope, race, run, rush, scurry, speed, sprint, spurt, zoom*, etc.

There is an opposite group of verbs that conflate the two components Motion plus Manner representing a low speed of motion, such as, *amble, drift, inch, lumber, mosey, stroll, trudge, trundle,* etc.

Consider the following sentence in (6)

(6) The pencil *rolled* off the table.

The verb *roll* in sentence (6) conflates two components: Motion plus Manner, being defined as "to move along a surface by turning over and over" (Longman, 2005: 1426); the Path of the motion is expressed by the prepositional phrase *off the table.*

The components of a complex Motion event proposed by Talmy can be identified and illustrated in the following sentences under (7):

(7) a. A bird flew out of a bucket, past a cup, and into a bowl.
     b. The tissue blew off the counter.

In sentence (7a.), the noun 'a bird' represents the Subject (or the Figure object in Talmy's terminology), that is, the animate entity that undergoes motion; the verb 'flew' describes the Motion undergone by the Subject; the prepositions 'out', 'past', and 'into' render the Path-function the Subject traverses; the nouns 'a bucket', 'a cup', and 'a bowl' represent the Reference object(s) which the Subject is located with respect to. Thus, in this sentence the prepositional phrase '*out of a bucket*' expresses the Source (or the starting point) of the subject's Motion; the prepositional phrase '*into a bowl*' expresses the Goal (or end point) function of the motion; the prepositional phrase '*past a cup*' expresses the VIA-Path function. In this sentence, *flew* is a verb that conflates Motion with Manner of motion.

Sentence (7b) can also be analysed in terms of the four main components: the noun 'the tissue' represents the Subject; the verb 'blew' describes the Motion that the Subject undergoes; the preposition 'off' indicates the Path that the Subject traverses, more precisely, it expresses the Source (or the starting point) of the subject's Motion; and the noun 'the counter' represents the Reference object. An important difference between these two sentences is that unlike the verb *flew* in sentence (5a) which conflates Motion with Manner of motion, the verb *blew* in sentence (7b) conflates Motion with Cause of motion. Sentence (7b) can be paraphrased as 'the tissue blew because of a strong wind'.

2.3. Conflation of Motion with Path

There is a large group of verbs which include several components in their lexical meaning: besides the component of motion itself, they express various types of Path information, such as the source of the movement, the destination, direction. The motion verbs which include various types of the Path of motion in their lexical meaning are called **Path-conflating motion**

verbs (Talmy, 2000: 53-5). There are numerous verbs which conflate motion with path, such as *advance, arrive, ascend, come, cross, depart, descend, enter, escape, exit, fall, go, pass, proceed, recede, retreat, slide, turn*, etc.

Consider the examples under (8) below:

(8) a. He entered the room briskly and stood near the door.
   b. He exited the courtroom in a fury.
   c. Ann slid the books across the table.

Verbs such as *enter* or *exit,* express not only the component of motion, but they also express various types of Path information: the verb *entered* in (8a.) encodes the Goal (or the end point) of the subject's Motion, i.e. it expresses direction and inclusion in a container or enclosure ('*the room'*); the formal verb *exited* in (8b.) encodes the Source (or the starting point) of the subject's Motion; the verb *slid* in (8c.) appears with a directional prepositional phrase ('*across the table'*).

Verbs which encode the direction of movement (called *directed motion verbs*, cf. Talmy 2000: 55) are considered to be deictic because they allude to a particular path, or direction, such as upwards (e.g. *ascend*), downwards (e.g. de*scend, fall*), inside (e.g. *enter*), outside (e.g. *exit*), etc.

Deictic motion verbs, such as *come* or *go,* are considered to be a kind of Path-conflating verbs, in which "the deictic component of Path typically has only the two member notions 'toward the deictic center', represented by *come,* and 'in a direction other than the deictic center' represented by *go*." (Talmy, 2000: 56). Consider the sentences in (8):

(9) a. Can you come here for a minute?
   b. I could see a figure coming towards me.

The characteristic feature of the verb *come* is its use in contexts of movement toward the speaker and the addressee: in (9a) *come* indicates movement towards the deictic centre, rendered by the adverbial *here,* while in (9b) it is used with the prepositional phrase *towards me* (the speaker).

In Talmy's interpretation (Talmy, 2000: 53), the lexical meaning of *come* is conflated with the speaker as [Ground, i.e. Reference object], as represented in (10).

(10) COME   MOVE   TOWARD   a point which is the location of the speaker

[Motion]   [Vector]   [Conformation]   [Ground] [Path]

As Talmy points out, MOVE is an abstract verb which represents motion in a motion event, and TOWARD is a component of the Path called Vector (which expresses the basic types of arrival, traversal, and departure). The Vector, which is represented in terms of abstract prepositions, called "deep prepositions", such as TOWARD and TO, expresses the meaning of a preposition as well as the Path information conflated within the semantics of motion verbs.

A special subclass of motion verbs is represented by **meander verbs** (Levin, 1993: 256) such as, *cascade, climb, crawl, drop, go, meander, plunge, run, straggle, stretch, sweep, turn, twist, wander, weave, wind.* The verbs included in this group, also described as 'pseudo-motional locative' verbs, are different from other motion verbs in that they do not express real motion but at most a type of fictive motion, being used to describe the location of a long continuous object such as a path, a road, a river, or a stream. Meander verbs usually take directional prepositional phrases, to express the path or the goal, the end-point of the motion, as in the examples under (11):

(11) a. The path climbs high into the hills.
    b. The river *runs* from the lake to the sea.
    c. The stream *twists* through the valley.

Thus, in (11a.) *climb* expresses the meaning of "to move gradually to a higher position" (Longman, 2005: 276), and the goal which also includes direction or movement with respect to a destination, is rendered by the directional prepositional phrase *into the hills.*

In (11b.) *run* as a pseudo-motional locative verb is combined with two prepositional phrases, the sentence illustrating the unmarked order of directional prepositional phrases as being source - path – goal: *from the lake* represents source (or the starting-point), the verb *run* realizes the path expression, while *to the sea* represents the goal or destination, specifying the end-point.

In (11c.) *twist*, used of a road or river, expresses the meaning of "to change diretion in a series of curves" (Longman, 2005: 1792), while the

prepositional phrase *through the valley* expresses the path, passage of the motion.

3. Lexicalization Patterns of Motion Verbs in English and Romanian

Although motion is a universal concept, being closely interrelated with every aspect of human life and activity, it is encoded differently in different languages. The two language types differ with regard to the attention they pay to MANNER of motion. As was pointed out in section 2.1., in *satellite framed* or *manner languages* (e.g. English), manner of motion is typically encoded in the verb, while path information appears in non-verbal elements such as prepositional phrases.

In *verb framed* or *path languages* (Romance languages, such as Spanish, or Romanian), the verb usually encodes the direction of motion, or various types of Path information, while the manner information is (optionally) encoded in gerunds or prepositional phrases. Thus, in Romanian, PATH tends to be encoded in some motion verbs, such as 'a intra' (*enter*) or 'a ieşi' (*exit*), '*a urca*' (ascend), '*a coborî*' (descend): the verbs express not only [Motion] but also the Path information such as 'into an enclosure' for 'a intra' or 'out of an enclosure' for 'a iesi', respectively.

English, as a *satellite-framed* language and Romanian, as *a verb-framed* language, differ in the way they convey MANNER of motion and Path information. Manner of motion is encoded in English by the main verb, whereas it is subordinated in Romanian being encoded in modifiers, rendered by gerunds or prepositional phrases.

The main components of a motion event - namely [Motion], [Manner], [Path] and [Goal] – are distributed differently in English and Romanian, as we can see in sentences (12) and (13) below:

In English there is an extremely productive pattern in which the (motion) verb also conflates manner of motion, while the path function is expressed by a prepositional phrase. Consider the three sentences under (12) below, as illustrations of manner of motion encoded in the verb:

(12) a. The man walked across the street.
     b. John ran into the room.
     c. Mary limped into the house.

In sentence (12a), the components of the Motion event can be described as follows: the noun '*The man*' is the Subject that undergoes

motion; the verb '*walked'* describes the Motion that the Subject undergoes; the preposition '*across*' outlines the Path-function that the Subject traverses; and the noun '*the street'* represents the Reference object, which the Subject is located with respect to. The motion events in sentence (12b) can also be analysed as consisting of the following components: the Subject ('*John*') undergoes the motion; the verb *ran* conflates the direction of movement and manner; the preposition *into* describes the Path with respect to a volume or enclosure, in this sentence *the room*; *the room* denotes the end-point or the Goal of the motion. A similar approach of analysis can be applied to sentence (12c).

In all three sentences, the verbs *walked, ran* and *limped* encode manner in the motion event. The conflation of [Motion] + [Manner] in the same lexical item can be represented as follows:

walked / ran / limped = MOTION + MANNER

Consider sentences (13) below, the Romanian equivalents of the English sentences in (12)

(13) a. Bărbatul a traversat strada (pe jos / picioare)
 b. John a intrat în cameră alergând / în fugă.
 c. Mary a şchiopătat în casă
 c¹. Mary a intrat în casă şchiopătând.

Sentence (13a.) *Bărbatul a traversat strada (pe jos / picioare),* literally, *The man crossed the street on foot,* is the Romanian equivalent of the English sentence in (12a.). In this sentence, the components of the Motion event can be described as follows: *Bărbatul* ('the man') is the Subject, the verb *a traversat ('crossed')* describes the Motion as well as the path that the Subject undergoes; the noun *strada* ('the street') represents the Reference object; an optional constituent is the prepositional phrase *pe jos / picioare* ('on foot') meant to specify the manner of motion.

Sentence (13b.) *John a intrat în cameră alergând / în fugă,* a literal rendition being *John entered (in) the room running,* is the Romanian equivalent of the English sentence in (12b.). In this sentence, the components of the Motion event can be described as follows: the main verb *a intrat* (lit. *entered*) conflates movement and [Path], the gerund *alergând* (lit. *running*) or the prepositional phrase *în fugă* (lit. *in a hurry, hurriedly*)

indicate the Manner of the motion; the noun *cameră* (the room) which follows the verb denotes the Goal or the end point of the motion.

An attempt to translate sentence (12c) into Romanian shows that Romanian disallows the co-occurrence of a manner-of-motion verb (a verb that conflates motion and manner of motion) with a prepositional phrase expressing path within the same clause, as illustrated by the two possible Romanian equivalents - (13c.) and (13c¹.) - of the English sentence (12c.).

Sentence (13c.) *Mary a şchiopătat în casă* is not an adequate equivalent because it lacks the reading according to which the Subject ('*Mary*') started out outside the house and ended up inside it.

A correct rendition of sentence (12c.) is (13c¹.) *Mary a intrat în casă şchiopătând* (lit. 'Mary entered (into) the house limping'). Therefore, the alternative available for Romanian is to select a path verb ('*a intra*') and express the manner-of-motion information as a modifier, more precisely a gerund ('*şchiopătând*'). Unlike English, Romanian disallows the co-occurrence of a manner-of-motion verb ('*a şchiopătat*') with a path prepositional phrase ('*în casă*') within the same clause when the motion event involves some sort of path; in other words, Romanian lacks the option of linguistically packaging complex motion events in a compact way, i.e., of using a manner of motion verb like in English.

In the Romanian sentences - (13a.), (13b.), (13c¹.) -, the verbs *a traversat* and *a intrat* encode path in the motion event. The conflation of [Motion] + [Path] in the same lexical item can be represented as follows:

a traversat / a intrat = MOTION + PATH

The examples in sentences (12) and (13) confirm the view that in English the predominant pattern of lexicalization of verbs is to conflate motion with manner in a manner-of-motion verb, while in Romanian the predominant pattern of lexicalization of verbs is to use predominantly path verbs.

Although these two patterns are considered representative for the two languages, they are not the only ways for encoding Motion events.

Thus, in English, besides verbs which encode manner in the motion event, there are also numerous verbs which encode path information in the motion event (e.g. *enter, exit, ascend, descend, cross, return,* etc.).

Likewise, in Romanian, besides verbs which encode path information in the motion event, there are also verbs encoding manner of

motion (e.g. *a alerga* 'run', *a înota* 'swim', *a şchiopăta* 'limp', *a se târî* 'crawl', etc.).

However, the two languages – English and Romanian – differ in the way they prefer to lexicalize motion events.

Thus, English, as a manner language, has an extensive list of verbs which convey various types of manner of motion, but not directionality, such as *bounce, jump*, *limp, roll, rush*, *slide, stumble,* etc. These manner-of-motion verbs can be combined with a large set of adverbial or prepositional elements expressing path (*across, along, in, out of*, *up to,* etc.).

By contrast, Romanian, as a path language appears to make sparse use of manner-of-motion verbs. In Romanian, there are numerous verbs which, besides the component of motion itself, they express various types of Path information, such as the source of the movement, the destination, direction: *a urca* 'ascend', *a coborî* 'descend', *a intra* 'enter', *a ieşi* 'exit', etc., which are frequently combined with underspecified prepositions such as *în* ('in'), *de la* ('from'), *la* ('to').

4. Conclusions

Depending on the number of components of motion encoded in their lexical meaning, motion verbs can be divided into two groups/types: i. There are motion verbs which include only one component of motion in their lexical meaning, motion itself (e.g. *move, drift, float*); other components regarding the Path information are either absent, or are rendered by additional phrases, such as prepositional phrases or adverbial particles.

In English, as a *satellite-framed* or *manner language*, manner of motion is typically encoded in the verb (e.g. *walk, run, limp*), while path information appears in non-verbal elements such as prepositional phrases (*across the street*).

In Romanian, as a *verb framed* or *path language*, the verb usually encodes various types of Path information, the direction of motion (e.g. a *traversa* 'cross', *a urca* 'ascend', etc.), while the manner information is (optionally) encoded in gerunds or prepositional phrases.

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EXPLICIT OR IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This present study examines the effects of explicit and implicit instructional conditions on the acquisition of English dative alternation by 97 Turkish university students at the English Language Teaching Department of Cukurova University. While there is a general consensus among many second language researchers on the necessity of some type of focus-on-form (FonF) instruction for language learning to take place, there is a considerable disagreement regarding how explicit FonF instruction should be. Long (1991), on the one end, advocates a narrow view of focus-on-form which emphasizes switching attention to the linguistic code briefly and implicitly when a problem arises incidentally. At the other end of the implicit-explicit continuum, there are researchers such as de Graaff (1997), DeKeyser (1998) who favour a broader approach to FonF instruction involving presenting learners with explicit metalinguistic explanations as a means of drawing the learners' attention to the formal properties of the target language. For example, as Schmidt (1990, 1995) and Leow (1997) claim, awareness of the level of noticing is the necessary and sufficient requirement for the conversion of input to intake which involves personalization of the received input.

In the present study, students' performance regarding dative alternation was assessed using *preference* and *picture description* tasks. The results of the study reveal that that explicit learning is superior to implicit learning, especially when the targeted grammatical focus is complex syntactic structures.

Key words: Second language acquisition, focus on form instruction, explicit instruction, implicit instruction, textual enhancement

Introduction

Focus-on-form instruction (FFI) refers to a type of instruction that attempts to draw learners' attention to the formal features of the target language as they arise incidentally in lessons whose focus is on meaning, or communication (Ellis, 2001). The term focus-on-form has given rise to a considerable degree of debate among second language acquisition researchers over its interpretation. Doughty and Williams (1998) point out that focus-on-form interpretations range from a very narrow and implicit view adopted by Long (1991) to a broader, liberal, and more explicit view

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as presented on the work of DeKeyser (1998), Harley (1998); Rosa and O'Neill (1999); and Swain (1998). This divide is reflected in a growing number of experimental studies that have examined both ends of the spectrum. Investigating the effects of visual input enhancement (e.g. bolding, capitalizing, and underlining) on language learning, White (1998), Jourdenais (1998) and Izumi (2002) demonstrate that this form of implicit instruction may not be sufficient to induce changes in learners' performance. On the other hand, studies conducted under explicit instructional conditions have generally demonstrated positive effects on the learners' L2 development. In this regard, Alanen (1995), Harley (1998), Robinson (1997), and Rosa and O'Neill (1999) have concluded that learners exposed to explicit learning conditions outperformed those exposed to implicit learning conditions. Such studies may emphasize that grammar learning is an indispensable component of the second language learning experience.

Despite the considerable amount of research already conducted in the field of FFI, SLA research still needs to explore more facts regarding the differential effects of various instructional conditions on the learners' level of learning different grammatical structures. This specific study on FFI tries to explore answers to the following questions:

Do differences in the type of focus on form instruction affect the learning of target feature?

Do differences in the type of explicit grammar instruction affect retention?

Method
Participants
The data for this study were collected from 97 Turkish prep year students (three classes) at the English Language Teaching Department of Cukurova University in the academic year of 2009-2010. The participants in the groups were aged between 18 and 21.

The three groups were randomly assigned to one of these conditions: *a textual enhancement group* (TEG) with 26 out of 31 students participating in every phase of the study, *a rule-oriented group* (ROG) with 28 out of 33 students taking part in a pretest and in posttests of the study, a control group (CG) with 29 out of 33 students attending the study. No participant in this class had been abroad. The participants in TEG were from the same linguistic background where Turkish is their native

language. Their age ranged from 18 to 20. As for ROG, the participants were all Turkish similar to TEG. They ranged from 19-21. Only one member of this group had been abroad (United States) for a summer program. The participants in COG were also from the same linguistic background: Turkish. They had an average of 19. Two of the participants have been abroad for a short visit.

All participants in this study had to take a pretest, and two posttests. The first posttest was conducted immediately after the treatment sessions and the other was conducted after a three month period to see whether a long lasting effect exists or not. The tests comprised two parts: a preference task on datives and paragraph writing based on pictures used as a clue for the participants.

Experimental Design

Given the fact that the study explored the effects of different types of formal instruction (*implicit* or *explicit*), participants' knowledge of dative verbs was assessed by a pretest. Then a two session treatment on datives was administered before giving them a posttest to assess their development. A second delayed posttest was administered after a three month period of treatment sessions to see whether long lasting effect exists or not.

Data Collection Tools
Preference Task

This task (recognition) was designed following White (1991). The task was devised to test the participants' preference for the different combinations (whether permissible or not) in which dative verbs could occur. This task consisted of 28 sentences, and the participants had to circle their preference on a naturalness scale which ranged from 1-5, where (1) was completely unnatural and (5) was completely natural. The following is one of the examples from the task:

Directions: Decide to what degree each of the following sentences seems natural or unnatural. If it sounds unnatural to you please state your reasons next to each item.

	completely unnatural			*completely natural*	
I told the story to the inspector.	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

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Picture Description Task

This task measured the learners' ability to produce in writing the dative structure which is the targeted grammatical element in a controlled context in order to maximize the production of the relevant items. The task comprised a set of 20 pictures with each picture representing a single action. The students were given three noun arguments for each picture as well as the targeted verb. Below the pictures, there were three blanks (this idea was similar to one used by Sawyer (1995), but with a different set of verbs). The students were asked to describe each picture in as many ways (up to three or four) as they could.

Procedure

The materials to be utilized in the study were administered in two weeks after the pretest. In the first week, participants in both instructional groups were handed out the materials which consisted of a short story that contained a high incidence of dative verbs. The textual enhancement group were exposed to the reading material with all the dative verbs bolded and enlarged and their complements also bolded and underlined. The textual enhancement techniques tended to present the target feature implicitly by increasing its visual salience. On the other hand, ROG received the same text without any textual enhancement but with one page of explanations of the rules governing dative verbs. The second treatment session in the second week following the pretest was designed to fulfill two objectives: to reinforce the targeted feature and to teach/ learn the targeted items.

On the day following the second treatment, the first posttest was administered. Three months later, a second posttest was administered to assess the long term effect of the instruction types. Two assessment tasks were used in this study: a) preference and b) paragraph writing. The first task included 28 sets of sentences based on the participants' preference of the sentence pairs. In the second task, participants were expected to write sentences about the pictures given to them before the task started.

Target of Instruction

English *dative alternation* as syntactic feature was chosen as the target of instruction. Many researchers in the field have pointed out that it is one of the most problematic areas for both L1 and L2 learners (Baker, 1979; Gropen et al, 1989; for L1 acquisition; Carroll and Swain, 1993; Hamilton, 1994; Hawkins, 1987). The problem with dative verbs stems from the learners' tendency to observe regularities in cases where they do

not apply. Upon observing that a verb such as *buy* allows two types of complements, Noun Phrase (NP) Prepositional Phrase (PP) and NP NP, learners acquire both *complements* as possible subcategorization for the verb, as shown below.

Charlie bought a book for David.
Charlie bought David a book.

However learners tend to over-generalize this rule to the verbs of different category allowing only one pattern NP PP can also appear in some verbs such as *purchase* and *donate*. Maybe the semantic similarity between these verbs may lead learners to make overgeneralizations.

Mary purchased a book for Jack.
*Mary purchased Jack a book.

Learners do not seem to perceive the restrictions of these verbs. Lack of awareness of the constraints on dative alternation may be a result of the semantic and morphological restrictions. In fact, the distinction between the two types of dative verbs could remain obscure unless some type of formal treatment intervenes to overcome the problem.

28 English dative verbs were chosen for this study, half of which alternate and half of which do not. The selection of these verbs was further scrutinized following Robinson and Ha (1993) to meet another criterion i.e. that all alternating verbs were monosyllabic and nonalternating verbs were disyllabic. The morphological structure of verbs was the major defining criterion for the structural pattern in which any given dative verb occurred. So, if the verb was disyllabic, no alternation was permitted. This principle was complemented with a semantic criterion which required monosyllabic verbs to have an animate recipient for alternation to exist.

Data Analyses

All types of statistical analyses were conducted using the statistical software "SPSS" version 11.0. To ensure that all test participants started at the same level of proficiency with respect to their knowledge of dative alternation, the participants' pretest scores for each task were subjected to a one-way analysis of variance ANOVA. In order to answer the research question of the study, concerning the variable effects of the various types of instructional treatments on the participants' use of the dative alternation

construction, the learners' raw scores on the pretest, posttest, and the delayed posttest in/for each of the three test tasks were subjected to a repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), using a one between-subject, one within-subjects factorial design.

Initially, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the pretest for each of the two tasks to determine whether there were any differences among the three groups with regard to their recognition of the dative alternation prior to the start of the study. The analysis did not reveal any significant difference between the groups in any of the tasks (F= .112, p = .823 for *preference task*; F = .607, p = .344 for *picture description task*). The results of this analysis, thus, indicate that the participants were similar at the outset of the study, so any improvement which they demonstrated is not related to any prior knowledge they had about the target feature, rather it is attributable to the instruction which they received during the experiment.

As mentioned above, the results of a one-way ANOVA performed on the participants' pretest scores revealed no significant difference between the three groups with respect to their knowledge of the target feature at the outset of the experiment. This result allows us to state with confidence that any changes in the subjects' performance between the pretest and posttest are a result of the treatment which they received. The descriptive statistics for the Preference and Picture Description Tasks are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations for Preference Task

	Control Group		Implicit Group		Explicit Group	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Pretest	26.03	2.99	25.97	2.10	25.99	1.70
Postest1	25.64	3.1	26.15	1.83	34.78	3.39
Postest2	25.76	3	25.96	2.45	32.96	5.08

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics of the three groups' performance in the *Preference Task*. As seen in Table I ROG-*explicit group*- outperformed in Posttest 1 and Postest2 which was served as a delayed posttest. TEG-*implicit group*- in the study did not show any progress based on the pretest and posttest scores. The control group of the study did not display any improvement.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations for Picture Description Task

	Control Group		Implicit Group		Explicit Group	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Pretest	30.03	4.33	30.09	5.77	30.08	5.30
Postest1	29.40	6.30	33.01	2.08	42.80	4.98
Postest2	29.90	3.20	32.03	6.90	41.90	5.10

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics of the groups' performance in the *Picture Description Task*. Similar to the Preference Task results, ROG-*explicit group*- outperformed in Posttest 1 and Postest2 which was served as a delayed posttest. TEG-*implicit group*- did not show any progress based on the pretest and posttest scores. The control group of the study did not display any improvement.

Conclusion
The results of the present study indicate that the participants' performance is largely connected to the type of treatment they received. Accordingly, the more *explicit* the treatment, the better the participants' performance was. According to the study, although learning under implicit conditions such as textual enhancement within short duration of instructional periods may result in some improvement in learners' overall performance, that is not enough to lead to substantial language development. In contrast, learning under short, explicit conditions that involve exposing learners to explanations of the target feature leads to a significant improvement in the learners' L2 ability. The results obtained in this specific study are also in accordance with Robinson (1997). In his study, Robinson showed that participants receiving explicit treatment were superior to participants in both the implicit and incidental conditions as regards their accuracy of responses to both simple and complex rules.

This study showed that different instructional conditions have variable effects on the learners' L2 development. ROG outperformed all other groups in the immediate and delayed posttests in the two tasks used in this study. While ROG made significant progress between the pretest and the immediate and delayed posttests in all tasks, TEG did not display any significant improvement in any task. They generally showed some progress, but it was not significant. No improvement was reported for the

control group of the study. ROG outperformed the other groups in the immediate (Posttest1) and delayed (Posttest 2) posttests.

Implications of the Study

The present study will positively contribute to the ongoing debate about the effects of types of instruction. It provides support for the proponents of providing learners with explicit metalinguistic explanations as a means of influencing their interlanguage i.e. emerging linguistic system that has been developed by a learner of a second language (or L2) who has not become fully proficient yet but is approximating the target language, and it also shows that for short-term instructional treatment the implicit instruction of FonF explicit-implicit continuum does not result in any substantial improvement in the learners' second language acquisition. This study also suggests an alternative view of grammar instruction which recommends explicit explanation of problematic linguistic elements to overcome problems of comprehension and production which L2 learners might encounter during the learning process. As for teaching problematic structures in L2, FonF instruction aiming at drawing learners' attention to these forms as they arise in a very explicit manner including metalinguistic explanations of the rules governing them is recommended in this specific study. In the present study, those participants who demonstrated explicit knowledge of the target feature were able to successfully transfer their knowledge of the rules to the test tasks. More importantly, exposure to the targeted features should not be a one-shot treatment. For instruction to be effective and to extend beyond the short-term memory, repeated exposure to the targeted forms may help learners move beyond keeping them in their short-term memory to complete acquisition of these targeted structures in second language acquisition process. Then the information received in L2 context may become individualized for any learner.

Further Research

In this study, implicit instructional conditions were not effective in helping the Turkish learners of English with the targeted feature-*dative construction*-. The results, however, cannot be generalized for learners with different L1 backgrounds and proficiency levels; therefore, future research may help to provide invaluable data to see the effects of learners' L2 proficiency levels and different L1 background on their ability to deal with targeted structures under different conditions.

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PERSON DEICTICS AS REFERENT-ANCHORS IN KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *REMAINS OF THE DAY*

CLAUDIA PISOSCHI[1]

Abstract

Person deictics contribute to the efficiency of the message due to their direct referent-designation. They illustrate the complex hierarchies characterising the relationship between the speaker and the community he/she is part of, on the one hand, and between the speaker and the listener, on the other.

Characters are constructed as social beings and the discourse contributes to the creation of their identity in discourse and in the discourse world. The main motive of the deferent attitude of Mr. Stevens, 'the perfect butler', is persuasion. This politeness strategy reflects a mental pattern and might even reach the level of manipulation, exerted both on the characters placed on various levels of social power and on the readers.

Key words: person deictics, referent-anchor, hierarchy, identity in discourse, politeness strategy

Motto:

De fapt, romanele lui Ishiguro asumă forma unei dezvăluiri involuntare, sub masca unei siguranţe ce nu lasă loc de îndoială decât pentru amănuntul neînsemnat în aparenţă. De aceea, nuanţa capătă o putere revelatoare aparte.[2]

Geta Dumitriu, Bucureşti, 1994

If we agree that Ishiguro's novels are, in fact, involuntary confessions, then it is only natural to discuss the extent to which each character (in)voluntarily exhibits his/her various layers of subjectivity and the linguistic devices used as means of expressing that subjectivity. In the same line of thinking, if we agree that Ishiguro's novels wear the mask of an unquestionable certainty, with the exception of insignificant details, it would be a real challenge to discover how person deictics become a detail of particular significance; they remain referent-anchors but also acquire the

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[2] 'In fact, Ishiguro's novels assume the form of an involuntary confession, behind the mask of certainty which allows doubts only regarding the apparently insignificant detail. That is why nuances acquire a distinct revealing power.'

ability of expressing a wide range of modality types when used in various co-texts and situational contexts.

This paper is a pragmatic-stylistic analysis of the revealing power of personal pronouns in 'Remains of the Day', as far as the identity of the main character, Stevens, is concerned. We focused on pronominal reference and pronouns' role in communication, but also on their use as indirect modality markers. A semic analysis was performed on personal pronouns, our interest being mostly in their pragmatic meaning which varies according to their vicinities.

Returning to the idea expressed in our motto by Geta Dumitriu, the effort of giving words a single meaning and of controlling the process of decoding the text, in spite of the role played by subjectivity in perception, creates an ironical effect. The key character, Stevens, should be interpreted in the light of the same obsession for certainty encountered throughout the novel. The opposition between certainty, factuality on the one hand and relativity on the other creates the intricate network of text worlds.

To give our analysis coherence and to make our point clear, we started from the fact that narrative voices acquire various roles in communication within the frame offered by the dialogue, be it between characters or between characters and readers.

1. Character-reader dialogue
1.1. The character-narrator's implicit dialogue with the reader

The main character, Stevens, is also the narrator who turns the whole novel into a confession. The confession addresses an imaginary interlocutor with whom the speaker has a friendly relationship. There is a part containing the theory about 'the perfect butler', but every dialogue in the novel is an illustration in favour or against the total identification of the referent with his social role. Finally, the theory in question can be interpreted as a sort of parody which is rather amusing and answers the sometimes exaggerated need for conceptualisation encountered so often in the modern world. Therefore, contemporary readers will find themselves quite at home in the world of the text. The philosophy of the art of serving is paralleled by the recollection of apparently misinterpreted memories which are actually easily grasped by the reader. Beyond that, i.e. no matter what the topic in discussion or the background might be, the main character is obstinate in explicitly expressing his convictions in full accordance with the prevailing social rules and principles. His discourse world is defined by redundant sentences and phrases: he is what he utters and what he utters is his inner self.

The linguistic means at hand are represented by parenthetical structures and clauses. Their secondary syntactic value is used to connote Stevens' modesty and self-awareness regarding his social position; on the other hand, their simple presence underlines his personal convictions. They can be classified into several types:

- parenthetical clauses of the type *I SHOULD* + infinitive, the modal being followed by declarative or cognition verbs:

    *I **should** say* (p. 3; p. 5)
    *I **should** point out* (p. 3; p. 16)
    *Why **should** I hide it?* (p. 4)

Irrespective of the propositional content of the clauses conveying the basic message, these structures are meant to objectivise the speaker and 'to cancel' any subjectivity tainted by flaws, passions and selfishness.

- parenthetical clauses with anaphoric or predictive value (the former prevailing), introduced by *as* used as a textual marker; apparently the story is viewed as a puzzle with possible missing pieces, but the structures are not to be interpreted literally; they are just a politeness strategy meant to increase the reader's confidence in Stevens' point of view; related to present or past events, Stevens' opinions or memories acquire an extra-value just by being accompanied by such structures:

    as I foresee it (p. 3)
    as I recall (p. 3)
    as I say (p. 14; p. 16; p. 29)
    as I understood (p. 91)
    as I would like now to explain (p. 70)

- other parenthetical constructions and clauses expressing the intensity of his convictions and degree of commitment. The illocutionary value is common to all the examples below, and it consists in persuading the reader regarding the stature and the solid, unshakable system of values shared by Stevens. Modal and lexical verbs prevail expressing dynamic modality, more precisely a strong volition 'hidden' under the mask of politeness. Verbs in the indicative should be included in the lexical-semantic field of the means expressing a high degree of certainty. Dynamic modality markers and indicative mood verbs combine with epistemic modals expressing permission; the combination is unbeatable in terms of gaining both attention and respect:

    *and I **would** underline* (p. 5)
    *what I **mean** to say* (p. 6)
    *I **would** venture* (p. 6)

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> *I can say that I am in agreement* (p. 5)
> *I would like, if I may, to try and say* (p. 34)
> *I hasten to add* (p. 31)

1.2. The characters in explicit dialogue with the reader

The reader becomes one of the characters, being explicitly addressed various replies. He is apparently passive, but the speaker sometimes aims at guessing the opinion of the reader, and this is another strategy of persuading the latter of his views. This form of dialogue, in fact a monologue with better chances of success in that respect, is meant to assert the subjectivity of the speaker in terms of his narrative role. Stevens' subjectivity (since he is the speaker under discussion) is defined by two features: a false uncertainty and the cooperation of the reader. They can be seen as two contextual semantic features characterising the pronoun *I,* when designating Stevens as a speaker. Thus, Stevens' individuality acquires two specific dimensions of meaning: [+/- false uncertainty] [+/- co-operation of the reader]

1.2.1. Asserted subjectivity in point of narrative role

[+false uncertainty] [+ co-operation of the reader]

- parenthetical clauses with anaphoric or predictive value (the former prevail)

  > *as you know* (p. 6)
  > *as you might expect* (p. 4)
  > *I hope you do not think me unduly vain […] if you are not familiar with Mrs. Symons books […]* (p. 11)
  > *You will not dispute, I presume, …* (p. 34)
  > *Perhaps you might be persuaded but you may think me merely biased* (p. 34)

The agglomeration of epistemic quantifiers, meant to give the reader the impression that the speaker can consider himself a person of authority in the matter, is not upsetting; it enhances Stevens' intention of imposing his outlook on the topic. Whenever Stevens finds himself to be too direct, he introduces a structure which apparently diminishes his authoritarian attitude. Gaining the reader's benevolence is essential.

[- false uncertainty] [- cooperation of the reader]

In other cases, the strong manifestation of the speaker's certainty is considered as much more important than politeness strategies:

- emphatic constructions containing various types of linguistic elements used as emphasisers (modals expressing deontic modality,

adverbs), markers of evidentiality, or just indicative mood forms of cognition or factive verbs:

> ***I mean*** it (p. 4)
> ***I*** *felt* ***sure*** (p. 8)
> ***I*** *am* ***sure*** (p. 8; p. 29)
> ***I must say*** (p. 16; p. 67; p. 68)
> ***I must admit*** (p. 17)
> ***I must say*** *I'm* ***quite*** *satisfied* (p. 23) (a non-harmonic

combination regarding the types of modality, but balanced as regards the intensity of the elements enhancing the certainty underlying the attitude of the speaker);

> ***I suppose*** *I was* ***very*** *conscious of the fact…* (p. 23) (a

harmonic combination in point of modality type but apparently unbalanced as regards intensity; nevertheless, the epistemic quantifier *suppose* is dominated by the collocation between the adverb *very* and the adjective conscious, the two making up a superlative with stylistic effects);

> *so it was,* ***I assume***, *…;* ***my*** *point is…* (p. 7) – the same

opposition between the indicative verb and the epistemic quantifier *assume*; the latter is just a softener, since it is followed by another indicative in the context, the result being a clear manifestation of a strong subjectivity;

> ***it is my belief*** *that …*(p. 74)
> ***I regret*** *to report that* (p. 6); ***I regret*** *to say* (p. 29)
> ***I recall*** (p. 11; p. 51)
> ***let*** *me make it immediately clear* (p. 4)
> ***let*** *me explain further* (p. 4)
> ***let*** *me return* (p. 31)

The meaning of *let* is bleached, the whole clause functioning pragmatically as a unit meant to gain and keep the reader's interest while implicitly getting his/her permission.

1.2.2. Asserted subjectivity regarding his social role

Is Stevens a citizen of the world and responsible for the collectively assumed history? Yes, to the extent to which history is seen as limited to his micro-universe or sharing the specificity and values of his micro-universe. Generally speaking, someone's micro-universe reflects the general trends in history but, in this case, Stevens seems to live in a physical and cultural setting which is a self-sufficient world to him, that is why his micro-universe tends to subordinate the macro-universe and history. Consequently, Stevens' individuality and solidarity enter a complex relationship, partly overlapping, partly antagonizing. Linguistically, the connotations associated to first person pronoun will reflect that complex relationship.

Individuality in the form of a subversive attitude, whenever expressed, is discrete, without denying the role history has as a factor of humanistic values and stability. Some critics see the implication as personified, the novel becoming an expanded metaphor of the profession of butler. As a result, subjectivity is limited to a person/ fictional character's social role, as seen within the cultural determinations; they are transcended when the character involves the reader in his monologue.

The personal pronoun *I*, the corresponding Dative-Accusative and possessive forms, all acquire semantic features such as [+broad-mindedness], [+initiative], [+discretion, low-profile], [+self-awareness of one's hierarchical position], [+aristocratic behavior]. We grouped the excerpts so as to illustrate each of the features mentioned:

> *I undertook **for myself** a number of duties which **you** may consider most broad-minded of a butler to do* (p.8) - [+broad-mindedness] is seen as a feature of the main character, thus invalidating any contrary opinion.

> *It has actually been an idea **of mine** for some time* (p. 7) - [+initiative] which means intelligence and concern for one's activities.

> *I decided to minimize **my** presence by standing in the shadows much further away than **I** might usually have done.* (p. 72) - [+discretion, low-profile] associated to a major historic event happening in the mansion, of which Stevens is fully aware.

> *It is not **for me** to suggest that **I** am worthy of ever being placed alongside the likes of the 'great' butlers of **our** generation [...] though it should be said there are those, who, perhaps out of misguided generosity, tend to do just this.* (p. 110)
> *As far as **I** am concerned, **I** carried out **my** duties to the best of **my** abilities, indeed to a standard which many may consider 'first rate'.* (p. 201) - [+self-awareness of one's hierarchical position] does not mean mediocrity but a perfect knowledge of the qualities and abilities required to get to the top of the hierarchy which is specific to one's profession.

We grouped the two quotations below because we think they are the answer to two questions which arise in the light of Stevens' assertion that a butler does not identify himself with the role only when he is entirely alone: 1. Is Stevens or any other butler resembling him ever *entirely* alone? The presence of the adverb in Stevens' reply proves that the condition is rarely met. 2. What does solitude mean to Stevens? It is not just the absence of

other persons in a given physical space, but the psychological comfort necessary to manifest one's true inner self. However, the process of reaching that state of comfort does not happen automatically or at wish. Doctor Carlisle's reply proves that one's true nature is visible even when one is not alone. Stevens being mistaken for an aristocrat is a proof of the degree to which he allowed himself to be influenced by the atmosphere he lives in. But the change is not always for the better: Stevens' appearance and behaviour can be connoted negatively as reflecting a complex of superiority:

> *A butler of any quality must be seen to inhabit his role, utterly and fully; he cannot be seen casting it aside one moment simply to don it again the next as though it were nothing more than a pantomime costume. There is one situation and one situation only in which a butler who cares about his dignity may feel free to unburden himself of his role; that is to say, when he is entirely alone.* (p. 169)

> *The likes of the people here, they're bound to take you for at least a lord or a duke [...] It must do one good to be mistaken for a lord every now and then.* (p. 208)

Explicit solidarity includes the reader in sticking to the old ways if it is worth preserving them; it is pragmatic reasons that prevail in choosing change:

> *Now naturally, like many of **us**, **I** have a reluctance to change too much of the old ways. But there is no virtue at all in clinging as some do to tradition for its own sake.* (p. 7)

Neither social nor cultural antagonism, but the generation gap is criticised in the fragment below; it is the reader's decision to view it as a reflection of a worldwide social change in terms of a strong inclination towards superficiality; Stevens' social group solidarity overlaps his generation solidarity. To that generation the job meant vocation:

> *And let **me** tell you, if **you** were to have come into **our** servants' hall on any of those evenings, **you** would not have heard mere gossip; more likely **you** would have witnesses debates over the great affairs preoccupying **our** employers upstairs, or else over matters of import reported in newspapers; and of course, as fellows professionals from all walks of life are wont to do when gathered together **we** could be found discussing every aspect of **our** vocation.* (p. 18)

The same type of historical antagonism, to call it that, is visible at a more abstract level, in the metaphor of the world as a ladder or a wheel; it is an image which encourages a patient, rather balanced general attitude in life.

What mattered was the final purpose, 'the big picture', not the ordinary or maybe unpleasant details of everyday activities:

> *We tended to concern **ourselves** much more with the moral status of an employer* (p. 114)
>
> *For **our** generation, **I** believe it is accurate to say, viewed the world not as a ladder, but more as a wheel. [...] **we** were, as I say, an idealistic generation for whom the question was not simply one of how well one practiced one's skills, but* to what end *one did so;* (p. 115)

1.2.3. Apparently non-asserted subjectivity

Subjectivity may not be overtly asserted because the pragmatic objectives force Stevens to use strategies compatible with his status. All the excerpts below illustrate the advantages of choosing the 'compromise pronoun' *one* instead of the first or second person personal pronouns, which would have sounded too blunt. In many cases free indirect thought method is used, being considered appropriate for the narrative purposes. A series of reasons determine the choice of *one* by the speakers:

- Stevens avoids criticizing his employer which would be totally incompatible with his social role:

> ***One** need hardly dwell on the catastrophic possibility of uttering a bantering remark only to discover it wholly inappropriate.* (p. 16)

- *One* means *I and the likes of me*; the generation gap and lack of solidarity and understanding are covertly criticised; nevertheless, reduced to his social role, a butler is defined by the stature of his employer; the two are supposed to make up a whole:

> *Such difficulties as these tend to be all the more preoccupying nowadays because **one** does not have the means to discuss and corroborate views with **one's** fellow professionals in the way once **one** did. No so long ago, if any such points of ambiguity arose regarding **one's** duties, **one** had the comfort of knowing that before long some fellow professional whose opinion **one** respected would be accompanying his employer to the house, and there would be ample opportunity to discuss the matter.* (p. 17)
>
> ***One** is simply accepting an inescapable truth: that the likes of **you and I** will never be in a position to comprehend the great affairs of today's world, and **our** best course will always be to put **our** trust in*

> *an employer **we** judge to be wise and honorable, and to devote **our** energies to the task of serving him to the best of **our** ability.* (p. 201)

- *One* is used instead of *I* for fear of showing his true feelings and beliefs; objectivity is a mask for subjectivity; affection, attachment and gratitude are not to be shown:

> *When one thinks about it, when one remembers the way Miss Kenton had repeatedly spoken to me of my father during those early days of her time at Darlington Hall, [...]* (p. 66)

- *One* is used instead of *I* for fear of appearing proud, full of himself, arrogant or a misfit, unable to adapt himself to modern times:

> *[...] one could recognize a great butler as such only after one had seen him perform under some severe test. [...] it is with such men as it is with the English landscape seen at its best as I did this morning; when one encounters them, one simply* knows *one is in the presence of greatness* (p. 43f.)

> *After all, when one thinks about it, it is not such a foolish thing to indulge in – particularly if it is the case that in bantering lies the key to human warmth.* (p. 245)

- Miss Kenton uses *one* instead of *you* because she wants to avoid being too frank in order not to hurt Stevens; her advice is meant to be full of encouragement and hope:

> *One can't be forever dwelling on what might have been. One should realize one has as good as most, perhaps better, and be grateful.* (p. 239)

II. Dialogue between characters

We selected some short dialogues which give different views on Stevens' social and referential profile.

The first perspective is that of a 'foreign' member of the upper-class, the American employer, Mr. Farraday. To him, the butler's social profile is subsumed to his cultural identity. Hence, Farraday asserts a position of power and, in fact, his apparent understanding hides a total misunderstanding of Stevens' social category and also of the concept of Englishness. Irony and seriousness are hard to discern in Farraday's reply, therefore it is difficult to see if, in the end, the American sees in Stevens something more than a strange specimen, bought like a commodity together with the mansion he

serves in. Incompatibility in all its forms, individual, social and cultural is obvious below:

> **You** *fellows,* **you***'re always locked up in these big houses helping out, how do* **you** *ever get to see around this beautiful country of* **yours***?* (p. 4)

> *She* [Mrs. Wakefield] *even thought* **you** *were 'mock', Stevens.* […] *And* **you***'re a genuine old-fashioned English butler, not just some waiter pretending to be one.* **You***'re the real thing, aren't* **you***? That's what I wanted, isn't that what I have?* (p. 124)

The next quotation belongs to a person socially equal to Stevens if we don't consider the internal hierarchy of the social category. It reflects the results of the (in)voluntary mimetic process through which the butler became similar to aristocracy members in attitude and behaviour:

> *Couldn't make you out for a while, see, 'cause you talk almost like a gentleman.[…] I thought at first, here's a really posh geezer. And so you are, guv. Really posh, I mean.* (p. 119)

Stevens' discussion with his own father as if they were not standing face to face is a clear sign of Stevens' estrangement, of his losing those referential identity dimensions which are not assimilated by the social profile. Nevertheless, the attempt of re-establishing the natural relationship and form of dialogue is a sort of cry for affection. Distance seemed to annul all natural feelings, but the essence of Stevens' character wins over his appearance:

> *Father* used in the third person singular (p. 65)

> *I hope Father is feeling much better now.* […] *I'm very glad Father is feeling better.* […] *I'm glad Father is feeling so much better* […] *I'm so glad you're feeling better now* (p. 97)

Conclusions

Personal pronouns prove to be more than grammatical markers, they become pragmatic devices, acquiring a variety of semantic features within the linguistic and situational context. Remaining referent-anchors, they also combine with modality markers and illustrate a wide range of subjectivity layers to be discovered by the readers of a literary text.

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COURSE DESIGN IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

They say that the 'assessment' of a coursebook is an out-of-class judgment as to how well a new book will perform in class. Coursebook 'evaluation', on the other hand, is a judgment on how well a book has performed in fact. However, a problem with assessments is that no matter how good they are, they may still fail to predict what actually happens when the material is used. For years methodologists have been arguing about the usefulness of coursebooks, questioning their role, defending their use, worrying that they act as methodological straitjackets, or promoting their value as agents of methodological change. Coursebook or no coursebook? is the Shakespearean question I will give an answer to in this paper and I will also like to outline the benefits and restrictions of coursebooks.

Key words: methodological straitjacket, course design, appeal, de-motivation

A. Textual explication

There are similarities between textual explication of a literary work and course design to the sense that textual explication is generally known as a scrupulously careful reading in depth of a literary work and is equally present in the case of course design, too. While somewhat eclectic in the sense that it allows readers to focus on one or another of the properties of literary works, so that readings to that extent are partial, more ambitious readers, can try to comprehend a piece of writing/ course by close attention to how its various properties are operative and mutually supportive. There are a number of such properties which are worth being mentioned, beginning with voice, tone, point of view, and ending with structure and language.

According to some readers, language is the means or medium of the piece of writing, whichever it might be. Textual explication takes a specific view of language. Operating on its belief that whatever happens in a writing is subject to analysis, explication makes two points relevant to the functional: role of language. First, to make their *compositions* work, writers are perpetually involved in choosing appropriate diction, since the language is

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what controls meaning. Second, words have connotations and meanings that are part of the social resources of the language, and are to that extent out of the control of the writer. This second point makes communication possible.

Language can be a convention. The authors of the book *"Two approaches to literature"* assert that "All writers have their "styles", which are personal and subconscious networks of verbal obsessions. Obviously style in this sense is personal and therefore non-conventional.[2]

At the same time, an author "inherits" his language. He is an observer of institutionalized conventions within which the activity of writing can take place.

B. Choosing coursebooks

I would give an answer to the Shakespearean question : *coursebooks or no coursebooks?* By saying that it is my strong belief that the use of coursebooks in the teaching activity is of a paramount importance**.**

One approach to the assessment of coursebooks is to use a checklist - or checklists prepared by others which analyse various components of the material whether linguistic, topic, or activity based. However, a problem with such assessments is that however good they are, they may still fail to predict what actually happens when the material is used. And when we use a checklist prepared by other people we are accepting their view of what is appropriate in our particular situation. Nevertheless, we need some basis for choosing which books to use or pilot, whether we use checklists prepared by others or whether we make them ourselves. We can then see whether our out-of-class judgements are borne out in reality.

A potential difficulty for successful post-use 'evaluation' of a coursebook, on the other hand, is that 'teachers see no need for systematic and principled post-programme evaluation'. In part this is because teachers tend to feel that they 'know' whether a coursebook worked or not, and they are reluctant to give time to a more formal evaluation once a course has finished. Yet we need to evaluate material in a reasonably structured way if we are to properly see if our pre-use assessment was accurate, and whether to continue to use the coursebook.

Whether assessing or evaluating coursebooks, we should do our best to include student opinion and comment. Their view of layout, design, content and feel should inform our pre-use assessment and our post-course evaluation.

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[2] Rathbun, Jack "Structuralist criticism": *Two approaches to literature*, Ed. Didactică şi Pedagogică, Bucureşti, 1983;

B1.   Criteria for assessment

The following three-stage procedure allows teachers to assess books on the basis of their own beliefs and their assessment of their students' needs and circumstances:

- *Selecting areas for assessment:* we first need to list the features we wish to look at in the coursebook(s) under consideration, as in the following example:

  Price (of coursebook components)
  Availability
  Layout and design
  Instructions
  Methodology
  Syllabus type, selection and grading
  Language study activities
  Language skill activities
  Topics
  Cultural acceptability
  Usability
  Teacher's guide

The list can be reduced or expanded, of course. We might separate language study activities into vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, for example; or, we might want to concentrate solely on topics and cultural acceptability. We can choose what we want to focus on in the light of our own teaching situation.

- *Stating beliefs:* we are now in a position to make 'belief statements' about any or all of the areas we have decided to concentrate on. This can be done by a group of teachers writing their individual beliefs and then combining them into an agreed set - such as the following statements about layout:

  The page should look clean and uncluttered.
  The lesson sequence should be easy to follow.
  The illustrations should be attractive and appropriate.
  The instructions should be easy to read.

- *Using statements for assessment:* we are now ready to use our statements of belief as assessment items. This means that for each of our areas we list our statements, and can then use a simple tick and cross system to compare different books, as in this layout and design checklist:

B2. Evaluation measures

Evaluation of materials which we have been using is somewhat different from assessment. Once again, however, it can have three stages:

• *Teacher record:* in order to evaluate materials we need to keep a record of how successful different lessons and activities have been. One way of doing this is to keep a diary of what happens in each lesson. A more formal version of the same thing might involve detailed comments on each activity.

There are many other ways of keeping records: we could give each activity a score from 0-5; we could design a rating scale to measure student satisfaction with a lesson or parts of a lesson. We could write reports at the end of every week under headings such as *recycling, reading progress, vocabulary work,* or *teacher's guide.* Some teachers write comments in the coursebook itself. But in each case we will end up with something which is more useful than a mere feeling.

- *Teacher discussion:* when new books are being used it helps if the teachers who are using the same book get together and compare their experiences. This may involve going through lessons (and exercises) one by one, or it may centre round a discussion of the audio material and its related exercises. Someone in the group should circulate a record of what is said, so that teachers can review the discussions before coming to a conclusion.

- *Student response***:** as with teachers' reactions, student responses can be collected in a number of ways. One way is to ask them if they enjoyed the material they have just been using. This kind of oral feedback can be unreliable, however, since some students can dominate the conversation and influence their colleagues.

 We may get better feedback by asking for a written response to the materials with questions such as the following:

 What was your favourite lesson in the book during the last week? Why?

 What was your least favourite lesson from the book during the last week? Why?

 What was your favourite activity during the last week?

 What was your least favourite activity during the last week? Why? etc.

 These questions take me to Kipling's lines:

 I keep six honest serving-men.

 (They taught me all I knew.)

 Their names are What and Why and When

And How and Where and Who.

By paraphrasing Rudyard Kipling's "honest serving men's "principles applied in course design, the authors of the book *ESP* outline in the chapter "Course design" the basic questions in this particular context::

"Why does the student need to learn?
When is the learning to take place?
What does the student need to learn?
What level of proficiency must be achieved?
What topic areas will need to be covered?
How will the learning be achieved?
What kind of methodology will be employed?"

The authors skilfully investigate these basic questions under headings such as: Language descriptions, Theories of learning and Needs Analysis, by looking at the three factors distinctively.

Because students' perception of their own progress will influence their responses to the material they are using, it is important to encourage them to assess their own performance, and to discuss the conclusions they come to. Alternatively, we could have them (in groups) talk about the lessons they have been studying and provide a short written summary of their group's joint conclusions.

The information gained through the evaluations we have been discussing now has to be set against other measures such as achievement test scores and durability. With all this information we can compare results with colleagues so that we reach confident decisions about whether the book has lived up to the original assessment we made of it.

C. Coursebook or no coursebook?

The benefits and restrictions of coursebook use can be easily summarised:

• *Benefits:* good coursebooks are carefully prepared to offer a coherent syllabus, satisfactory language control, motivating texts, tapes and other accessories such as videotapes, CD-ROMs, extra resource material, and useful web links. They are often attractively presented. They provide teachers under pressure with the reassurance that, even when they are forced to plan at the last moment, they will be using material which they can have confidence in. They come with detailed teacher's guides which not only provide procedures for the lesson in the student's book, but also offer suggestions and alternatives, extra activities, and resources. The adoption of

a new coursebook provides a powerful stimulus for methodological development (Hutchinson and Torres 1994).

Students like coursebooks too since they foster the perception of progress as units and then books are completed. Coursebooks also provide material which students can look back at for revision, and at their best their visual and topic appeal can have a powerfully engaging effect.

• *Restrictions:* coursebooks, used inappropriately, impose learning styles and content on classes and teachers alike appearing to be *'faits accomplis* over which they can have little control'. Many of them rely on Presentation, Practice, and Production as their main methodological procedure, despite recent enthusiasm for other teaching sequences. Units and lessons often follow an unrelenting format so that students and teachers eventually become de-motivated by the sameness of it all. And in their choice of topics coursebooks can sometimes be bland or culturally inappropriate.

One solution to the perceived disadvantages of coursebooks is to do without them altogether, to use a 'do-it-yourself' approach. Such an approach is extremely attractive. It can offer students a dynamic and varied programme. If they can see its relevance to their own needs, it will greatly enhance their motivation and their trust in what they are being asked to do. It allows teachers to respond on a lesson-by-lesson basis to what is happening in the class. Finally, for the teacher, it means an exciting and creative involvement with texts and tasks. In order for the DIY approach to be successful teachers need access to (and knowledge of) a wide range of materials, from coursebooks and videos to magazines, novels, encyclopedias, publicity brochures and the Internet. They will have to make (and make use of) a variety of homegrown materials. They will also need the confidence to know when and what to choose, becoming, in effect, syllabus designers in their own right. This not only makes preparing lessons a very time-consuming business, but also runs the risk that students will end up with an incoherent collection of bits and pieces of material. However, where there is time for the proper planning and organisation of DIY teaching, students may well get exceptional programmes of study which are responsive to their needs, and varied in a way that does not abandon coherence.

C1.   Options for coursebook use
Where teachers reject a fully DIY approach because of time, a lack of resources, or a preference for published materials, they then have to decide how to use the coursebooks they have chosen. One way of doing this is to start at page 1 and keep going until you get to the end. But that will probably bore both the students and the teacher and has far less chance of answering

the needs of a class than if teachers use the book more creatively, adapting it in various ways to suit the situation they and their students are in.

When we plan a lesson around our coursebook, we have a number of possible options:

- *Omit and replace:* the first decision we have to make is whether to use a particular coursebook lesson or not. If the answer is 'no', there are two possible courses of action. The first is just to omit the lesson altogether. In this case we suppose that the students will not miss it because it does not teach anything fundamentally necessary and it is not especially interesting. When, however, we think the language or topic area in question is important, we will have to replace the coursebook lesson with our own preferred alternative.

Although there is nothing wrong with omitting or replacing coursebook material, it becomes irksome for many students if it happens too often, especially where they have had to buy the book themselves. It may also deny them the chance to revise (a major advantage of coursebooks), and their course may lose overall coherence.

- *To change or not to change?* When we decide to use a coursebook lesson we can, of course, do so without making any substantial changes to the way it is presented. However, we might decide to use the lesson, but to change it to make it more appropriate for our students. If the material is not very substantial we might add something to it - a role-play after a reading text, perhaps, or extra situations for language practice. We might rewrite an exercise we do not especially like or replace one activity or text with something else such as a download from the Internet, or any other homegrown items. We could re-order the activities within a lesson, or even re-order lessons (within reason). Finally, we may wish to reduce a lesson by cutting out an exercise or an activity. In all our decisions, however, it is important to remember that students need to be able to see a coherent pattern to what we are doing and understand our reasons for changes.

Conclusion

Our professional development taught us that the moment we decide to get down to writing a course, we must establish a purpose in writing, depending on what kind of material we wish to present, who the reader will be and how familiar she or he is with the subject. All these aspects helps us determine our purpose and choose the most effective way to present our material. The authors of the book *Writing that works* offer clues to the

potential authors:" You may want to describe something or to compare it with something else. To make your subject easier to grasp, you may divide it into logical parts, define key terms, you may wish to persuade your reader to accept a particular viewpoint and finally you may need to summarize your information for readers"[3].

Setting clear instructions in this writing process is essential, as instructions are based on clear thinking and careful planning and should enable the reader to carry out the task successfully.

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[3] Oliu, Walter."Writing for specific purposes"in *Writing that works* Ed. St. Martin's Press, 1988, pag. 123;

AN EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB.
STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE IN JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

DIETER WESSELS[1]

Abstract

Job advertisements differ from other forms of advertising in a variety of ways. Communication is largely independent of the impact of pictorial elements; the addressees are more clearly defined; readers seek out the appropriate sections in newspapers or magazines with a clear focus in terms of job, location, type of industry etc.; the aim is not to "sell" a product or service. Job adverts, however much they may differ from each other, share a number of features: "personality" of the advertiser, job designation and description, candidate profile, application particulars. This paper will look at how job adverts in British print media are organised, what their structure and layout are and how they make use of language in the widest sense to attract the interest of potential candidates.

Key words: AIDA principle, layout and text organisation, use of different word categories, enumeration vs. full text, syntax

Introduction

With general advertising in the printed media the target group is largely undefined. In the discourse process between the printed text itself and addressee the as yet latent interest is aroused by an appeal to the individual needs of the chance reader for the advertised product or service or for their wants whether real or as yet unperceived. In addition the reader's age and sex, specific personal interests and requirements are the key determining factors for focusing attention on or diverting it away from a specific advertisement. Further attention getters may be the make-up of the advert itself, the presentation of the product or service, their usage or convenience value, the favourable cost-benefit ratio and maybe also the availability factor, i.e. the ease of availing oneself of the offer (e. g. the location and proximity of the provider) and to some extent also the time frame of availability (seasonal goods or services, special offers, one-off events). At this point it needs to be stated, however, that the advertiser has a preconceived idea of his target group which is based on his knowledge of the composition of the usual

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buyers that his products or services appeal to; and this largely also determines the media selection and especially also the get-up of the advertisement.

Different criteria apply for informational or image advertising and also for radio, television and online advertising, of course. As the specific needs and interests of radio and tv audiences, at any given time, may seem difficult to gauge, averts in these media tend to be of a more general informational nature and consumer product oriented; this may be different for more local broadcasts in which often the level of customer targeting can be clearly perceived. What all these advertisements have in common is that they aim to create and ultimately satisfy real or as yet unperceived wants for goods and services, that is to say their function is above all to inform and persuade.

Like most other forms of unsolicited advertising a job advertisements can be regarded as a type of functional text that also addresses an as yet unknown readership. Furthermore the purpose of such a text type is not to sell, at least not in the first instance. What it does "sell" implicitly, however, is the reputation of the advertiser.[2] The recruitment advertisement builds on the prevalent image of the advertising company in the general public. Its intention is to attract goodwill and the potential applicants' interest while at the same time aiming to enhance this image. But beyond that, first and foremost, the job advertisement is meant to communicate a want. Therefore, similar to the want-types of classified advertisements which are read quite intentionally, with a clear purpose in mind and on the reader's own initiative in order to obtain information about the availability of a product or service, the advertiser of a job advertisement addresses an audience that is more or less clearly defined by a shared existing or subliminal interest, i.e. finding or changing a job or, more generally, obtaining information about the job market in a particular field of activity and/or location. It is immaterial in the first instance whether this interest leads to action on the part of the reader.

The general disposition of the reader, the interest to obtain job-related information, means that the advertiser can do without "loud" attention

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[2] Cf. *A job advertisement is exactly that – an advertisement. You are selling the job and the company to the reader.* in: "People Management: *How to write a job advertisement.* http://www.hospitalityguild.com/GuidePro/Management/job_advert.htm and also: *So you, the job hunter, must remember that the job advert has a double meaning. Yes, it's advertising a job, but it's also advertising the company itself ...* Alice Wignall. *Hire education. Job ads are written in a strange, impenetrable language.* http://www.guardian.co.uk/money/2007/aug/13/officehours.workersandcareers1/print But cf. also the following comment that seems to go counter to my statement: *The job is your product. The readers of the job advert are your potential customers.* In: *Job adverts* http://businessballs.com/jobadvertising.htm

getters. Nevertheless though, the job advertiser, whether it is the business itself or a recruitment agency, must be sure to find ways of attracting attention so that the job advertisement stands out somewhat from the large number of similar advertisements in the job section of a newspaper or magazine or on the respective websites on the internet. On the very formal level, attention getting can involve the use of pictures and/or other graphic material, the size and placing of the advertisement (top or bottom, right or left, centre page) on the printed page or on the website, on the even-numbered or uneven-numbered page[3] in printed media, the boxing of the advertisement and/or the text matter, the font-type and font-size, the use of colour (white lettering against a shaded, black or coloured background or the traditional black and white print), single or double-column layout, bullet-pointing to mention but a few. A glance at the job sections in the printed media will quickly reveal the immense range of possibilities.

In the relevant publications on personnel management or recruitment the job advertisement is frequently termed the "business card of an enterprise"[4], a distinct form of presenting the company to the outside world, here the potential jobseeker. As such it is imperative for the prevailing Corporate Identity (CI) of the advertising company to become visible in the advertisement, in its outer appearance (colour scheme, logo, font-type, general layout) and ideally also in the text (e. g. mission statement, corporate vision) so as to allow empathy and possibly identification also.

Content and structure of job advertisements[5]

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[3] It is common knowledge that advertisements are more frequently read when they are placed in top right position of an uneven numbered page of a paper, magazine or even advertising insert or supplement. And the right-hand page is generally preferred to the left-hand side. This is entirely due to the visibility of printed matter on western cultures with writing/printing going from left to right and paper being folded in a manner that the right side is seen first.

[4] Cf. Scholz, Christian. Gründzüge des Personalmanagements. München: Vahlen Verlag 2011. p. 193. Also: Kolb, Meinulf: Personalmanagement. Grundlagen - Konzepte - Praxis. Wiesbaden: Gabler/GWV Fachverlage. 2008. p. 93.

[5] This paper is based on material taken from the following British papers: *Leatherhead Advertiser* of 30 June 2011, a weekly local paper with a distribution area beyond the locality of Leatherhead (21 advertisements); the relevant supplement in *The Sunday Times* of 3 July 2011, a quality national Sunday paper with a wide circulation and a readership in all walks of British life (21 advertisements); and the Executive Appointments section of *Financial Times* of 7 July 2011, a fairly specialised but highly influential business paper (25 advertisements). Altogether about 67 job adverts were scrutinised. To substantiate the findings a more broadly based study covering more daily papers, papers from different regions in Britain and also specialist magazines and professional journals and, obviously also, the internet would be called for.

Any job advertisement will include a reference to the following: job title, some indication as to job content/type of work and location, application details. Everything else seems to be optional. Most advertisers, though, will further provide information about some of the these points: the company's activities and/or standing in the market arena, candidate requirements, further sources of company and job related information, salary and benefits, closing date for applications, recruitment and gender related policies. Unless an agency is involved in the recruiting process the advertiser will ensure that the jobseeker finds a clear indication about who the prospective employer is. In small adverts this is often omitted and the mention of a telephone number leaves any interested person guessing. It can be said the in the vast majority of advertisements the relevant information is presented according to the AIDA marketing principle.[6] This principle aims to optimise the communication between the advertiser and the potentially interested communication partner and postulates that initially the advertisement must quite literally catch the reader's eye that is focus their attention (A) so that they will interested enough (I) to read on to obtain more information. The text should create the desire (D) to want to possess the product or make use of the service so that the necessary (action (A) will be taken to acquire the product/service.

The application of the AIDA principle to job advertisements implies a form of presentation and a teleological sequence of information that will result in some reader activity. It is quite obvious that the job title is the first and foremost attention getter in job advertisements. This is often followed, in some cases preceded, by a strapline, the mission statement of vision of the advertising company. A British convention has it that some reference to the remuneration package[7] is made at this stage and often also to the location of

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[6] The AIDA marketing principle has been outlined in numerous studies. Cf. the following references: *Job adverts and recruitment processes should follow the classical AIDA selling format: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. This means that good job advertisements must first attract attention (from appropriate job-seekers); attract relevant interest (by establishing relevance in the minds of the ideal candidates); create desire (to pursue what looks like a great opportunity), and finally provide a clear instruction for the next action or response.* http://www.businessballs.com/jobadvertswriting.htm And also: *Most marketing manuals agree that all adverts should follow a clear structure, firstly to grab the attention of the reader; then to immediately show relevance to the reader; next to create a desire in the reader to follow up on what they have read; and finally, to clearly explain what action the reader should take. These four clear steps should be followed rigorously if you wish to ensure successful responses to your job advertising campaigns.* http://www.phdjobs.com/how-to-write-successful-job-advert-copy/

[7] The information given can vary from being very specific (hourly, weekly or monthly terms) to being rather vague e. g. Six figure package") or non-committal (e. g. *attractive*

the place of employment. This information is usually printed in bold, sometimes in capitals, with the job title set in very large letters, in some instances also offset by a dividing line between the heading and the text body. Thus, there mostly are two or three eye-catching selection criteria at the very beginning to the advertisement before the explanatory text begins.

The body of the advertisement comprises between one and three paragraphs containing details about the future employer, his activities, the size of the business or business unit, key products/services (vital statistics as they may be called) and followed by references to the job content and the employer's expectations and finally candidate requirements (qualifications and experience). In a separate and final text section (and always beginning with a new paragraph) the advertiser lists application details (relevant documents, access to more information by phone, email, on the website, online application form) and mostly gives a personalised contact address (email or phone, mostly used for a pre-selection process; with agency advertisements one can often find a full postal address). A closing date and time (relevant for electronic applications) for applications is a common feature in recruitment advertising in the British national press. In the larger adverts in the national press (*The Sunday Times* and *Financial Times*) references can be found to employment policies (e. g. equal opportunities, ethnic diversity). In the text body there is little or no deviation from the sequence of information as described here. However, ample scope is used for the arrangement of the attention getters and formal aspects, the job title and its positioning in the advertisement, the information about pay and job location, the lettering and positioning of the advertiser's name.

Occasionally deviations from the prevailing pattern can be observed, when for example the information about the company is placed above the headings. This has the effect of breaking up an otherwise fairly long text body into more manageable units and also of enclosing and thereby potentially highlighting the job title in bold even further. Another strategy is to place the application details in a separate section (sometimes boxed or shaded) on the left or right side of the main text body. This shift of focus is another means of producing a stand-alone effect and thereby attracting the reader's attention to the advertiser's message on a page.

Advertisers using the two-column format tend to use the full width of the advertisement for the information about the company and for the application details, thus reserving the columns for the job description and the candidate profile. This method serves to create a centre section in the advertisement which clearly marks out the most relevant information for the

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salary, *competitive package*). Advertisements for public sector posts usually indicate salary brackets or scales.

applicant. It is feature that is further enhanced by the use of bullet points for arranging and prioritising the relevant details. In linguistic terms, this is borne out by the switch from full-length sentences to shorter utterances dominated by noun lists, non-finite forms (-*ing* or infinitives) and occasionally adjective lists. Thus, a change in layout goes alongside with the change in language patterns.

Some companies integrate special layout effects into the text by using paragraph headings or emboldening the first three or four words in each paragraph, some by starting each paragraph with the same linguistic pattern so as to create an alliterative effect. Thus, we observe a near endless variety in the presentation of a fairly limited range of informational matter.

Language in job advertisements
Do's and don'ts of text composition

In the literature one can find a plethora of hints as to the language that should be used in recruitment advertising. As a general rule copy writers are told to *put (themselves) in the shoes of the reader* and to *communicate clearly, concisely and simply the key information*, *to use the selling words wherever possible to maintain the interest of the reader*. And it is considered *helpful to include industry-specific words that are commonly spoken – but avoid obscure jargon*[8]. The warning to avoid "recruitmentese"[9] comes as no surprise. More specifically copy writers are advised as follows:

Make the advert easy to read. Use simple language, avoid complicated words unless absolutely necessary ..., and keep enough space around the text to attract attention to it. ... Giving the text some space is a very powerful way of attracting the eye, and also a way of ensuring you write efficiently. Efficient writing enables efficient reading.

Use language that your reader uses. If you want clues as to what this might be imagine the newspaper they read, and limit your vocabulary to that found in the newspaper.

Use short sentences. More than fifteen words in a sentence reduces the clarity of the meaning. After drafting your communication, seek out commas and 'and's, and replace with full-stops. [10]

The author of this internet text obviously has a very clear idea of what makes a functional text easy to read. And the quantitative and qualitative remarks about a language suitable for grasping and holding the reader's attention can readily be agreed to. The number of advertisements in our restricted sample of texts that can live up to these very specific postulates

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[8] For these quotes see: http://www.phdjobs.com/how-to-write-successful-job-advert-copy/
[9] Cf. http://www.guardian.co.uk/money/2007/aug/13/officehours.workersandcareers1/print
[10] Cf. http://www.businessballs.com/jobadvertswriting.htm

is amazingly small, although some general observations can be made. In the *Leatherhead Advertiser*, a local paper with a limited circulation, most of the advertisements conform to the above requirements both in terms of sentence length and language level. The text volume rarely exceeds two paragraphs, and, with two exceptions, the advertisements cover less than one eighth of a page. The advertisements in the national press, *Financial Times* and *The Sunday Times* mostly cover an eighth of a page; there are two smaller ads among the sample and a few larger ones covering a quarter of a page. In addition, if bullet pointing is not used, the text body mostly consists of 3 to 4 paragraphs. Considerable variations can also be observed concerning space use and text volume. Equally the sentence length varies considerably from 4 to 6 words for the shorter sentences to more than 30 words. In their "Guidelines for recruitment advertising" the Swedish Lantmännen Group prescribes a maximum number of words depending on the size of the recruitment ad.[11] Such a prescriptive approach to copy text writing may seem to restrict the writer's freedom of expression in devising a recruitment tool that is supposed to attract attention, provide precise information on a given of number of relevant issues and persuade the reader to take action. But it focuses the writer's mind in such a way as to consider the reader's requirements and expectations.

Language use

The language use both at the word level and the syntax level deserves closer scrutiny. As the key information carriers nouns in the context of recruitment advertising are fact-related referring to organisations in the broadest sense and their activities, to people and their skills, qualifications and, on a very personal level , to their qualities and finally to targets. The same can possibly be said with regard to adjectives, while verbs and adverbs very much retain their traditional functions of denoting action (whether in the active or the passive) and of being qualifiers.

Nouns

As with most other ESP[12] texts – and hereby we assume that job advertisements constitute a specific form of an ESP text – the noun is the most frequently used word class. In our sample of 67 advertisements we find

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[11] The recommendation is to have fewer than 220 words for the quarter page advert in the portrait and landscape formats and fewer than 350 for adverts in the half page format. http://www.lantmannen.designmanual.se p. 1. The advertisements in the Sunday Times and Financial Times, although mostly in the eighth of a page format mostly have more words than indicated above.

[12] ESP = English for special purposes

more than 1100 different single nouns, gerunds and compounds to which must be added adjective noun groups such as *public* or *private sector* or *social security,* semantic units which are also used for compounding. Taking into account the prepositional phrases as well, the scope for noun combinations and lexical variety resulting therefrom is considerable. The vast majority of nouns and noun phrases can be termed business-oriented[13] with double and triple word compounds accounting for more than 40 per cent of the total.[14] Together with sector-specific abbreviations,[15] which are mostly used without any indication as to the full form, it is these compound types that contribute to making the advertising texts seem highly technical and rather complex.

Examples of recruitmentese can be detected in the frequent use of *background* for *experience* (cf. *consultancy background*, *engineering background*) as well as *role* or *function* (cf. *development role*, *finance function*, *public health function*) or of *environment* for *field* or *area* (cf. *hedge fund environment*, *health care environment*). Furthermore, both these lexemes regularly substitute the traditional lexemes *post* or *position* to describe the duties and tasks the appointee is expected to perform in the new job, as actors as it were in a play that is directed by the *we*-party, as the discourse direction turns from the *we-* to the *you*-perspective: *In this role/function you will ...* as the wording goes.

The transfer of prepositional phrases to three or four unit compounds (cf. *staff leadership experience*, *management reporting experience*, *housing management experience*, *HR experience*) is a common feature in ESP. Terms such as *people skills*, *people agenda*, *staff leadership experience*, *relationship skills* are examples showing that the language of human resources or, in modernistic terms, people management is subject to fashion trends; and combinations like *diversity strategy*, *talent management*, *knowledge champion*, *knowledge leader*, *knowledge professional*, *thought*

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[13] This can also bee seen by the most frequently represented headwords (determinata) in compounds: *business*, *capital*, *change*, *communication*, *development*, *finance*, *growth*, *health*, *investment*, *management*, *market*, *policy*, *reporting*, *risk*, *service*, *tax*, *valuation*, *work* and *working*.

[14] Some even more complex structure can be found, e. g. *community health service provision*, *health service delivery body*, *private equity fund of funds stake*.

[15] Some of these are known outside the specific field of activity although possibly not by the general public: *plc = public limited company*, *P&L = profit and loss*, *IT = information technology*, *HR = human resources*, *CEO = chief executive officer*, *MI = management information*. But many of these abbreviations refer to highly specialised activities and regulations or to professional bodies, e. g. *RDR = Retail Distribution Review*, *CISI = Chartered Institute for Services & Investment*, *FSA = Financial Services Authority*, *IFRS = International Financial Reporting Standards*, *BACP = British Association for Counselling and Physiotherapy*).

leader and *thought leadership activities* are indeed thought-provoking. The lexeme *agenda* no longer stands for a list of topics for discussion but for a single, but multi-faceted topic, e. g. *health agenda*, *sustainability agenda*.

There very few engineering and science-related terms in the advertisements in the sample. The local paper has a distinct emphasis on openings in education and care, while the national papers mainly attract advertisers from the world of finance and business. This becomes partially visible in the list below.

young) people (7x)	company('s) (8x)	level(s) (10x)	responsibility/ responsibilities (14x)
ability (9x)	consultant(s) (5x)	management (10x)	reviewing (7x)
accountant (6x)	control(s) (6x)	managing (7x)	role(s) (36x)
advantage (5)	customers (5x)	member(s) (13x)	school (7x)
advantage (6x)	delivering (9x)	needs (6x)	service(s) (17x)
advice (5x)	delivery (10x)	office(s) (7x)	skill(s) (7x)
approach(es) (12x)	developing (7x)	operation(s) (6x)	staff (12x)
area(s) (6x)	development(s) (9x)	opportunity (10x)	strategy/strategies (6x)
background(s) (9x)	direction (5x)	organisation(s) (23x)	students (7x)
business(es) (18x)	engagements (5x)	part (5x)	success (7x)
care (5x)	environment (6x)	people (14x)	support (10x)
career (6x)	experience (33x)	plan(s) (7x)	team('s)/team(s) (33x)
challenge(s) (13x)	growth (10x)	planning (9x)	time (5x)
change(s) (11x)	heart (5x)	position(s) (11x)	training (10x)
Chief Executive (8x)	investment(s) (7x)	post(s) (6x)	turnover (5x)
client(s) (14x)	knowledge (11x)	project(s) (5x)	understanding (10x)
commitment (7x)	leader (10x)	range (12x)	value(s) (5x)
communication skills (7x)	leadership (8x)	Regulator(s) (5x)	vision (6x)
community/ communities (5x)	leading (7x)	relationship(s) (6x)	
		reporting (6x)	

It is interesting to observe from the frequency list of nouns occurring ten times and more in the sample shows a bias towards personnel-related lexemes.[16] Derivations of some of the nouns listed here will then also be found in the verb and adjective lists, and occasionally also in the adverb list (cf. *challenge*, *plan*, *success*, *support* etc.).

[16] The language used in the advertisement sections asking for applications to be sent is not listed here as the range of nouns found there seemed much more closely defined.

Adjectives

The range of diversity in the adjective class is about two thirds that for the noun group; and there seems to be a level balance between adjectives used in general language discourse situations and those that can be allocated to an ESP language environment. Many lexemes in this class are derivations from verbs (present and past participle).[17] Others are formed by various forms of affixation: *advantageous*, *behavioural*, *commercial*, *competitive*, *demonstrable*, *developmental*, *effective*. In this group the business focus is much more obvious; but it is in the compound adjective group that the degree of specialisation becomes particularly visible; there are a few dominant combinations:

Noun + participle: *air-conditioned*, *career defining*, *citizen focused*, *client facing*, *cost effective*, *customer centric*, *environment friendly*, *family owned*, *FSA-regulated*, *finance based*, *graduate qualified*, *housing related*, *market based*, *patient focused*, *performance based*, *private sector*, *public sector*, *RDR compliant*, *results oriented*, *risk based*, *sales oriented*, *Swiss based*, *tax related*, *thought provoking*, *time pressurised*, *world renowned*

superlative + participle: *best placed*

superlative + noun: *best practice*, *highest quality*

adjective + participle: *external facing*, *far reaching*, *fast(est) growing*, *hard working*, *long established*, *wide ranging*

adjective + noun or noun and adjective: *computer literate*, *energy efficient*, *high calibre*, *high profile*, *high quality*, *high value*, *large scale*, *light weight*, *long(er) term*, *low income*, *next generation*, *organisation wide*, *short term*, *single site*, *world wide*

noun + noun: *board level*, *centre stage*, *front line*, *medium term*, *middle income*, *part time*, *year end*

numeral + noun: *first class*, *six figure*, *six strong*, *third sector*

qualifier + participle: *fast growing*, *well known*, *well versed*

adverb + participle: *highly regarded*, *like minded*, *outward facing*.[18]

There are some others that do not belong into these categories: *day-to-day*, *down-to-earth*, *not for profit*, *post acquisition*, *post-qualified*, *proactive*, *stand out*, *transnational*.

A fair proportion of the adjectives used in the advertisements are three-syllabic, thus contributing to the effect that became visible with the noun class of making the body text technical and complex.

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[17] Cf. *challenging*, *committed*, *distinguished*, *growing*, etc.

[18] The use of a hyphen in these compounds varies in the advertisements. In the majority of cases a hyphen was not used.

Verbs

A rough count reveals that only about 150 different verbs are used in the sample. This is a small number at first sight; and it is indeed indicative of the limited variety in the verbs phrases in job advertisements. Quite a number of verbs occur at a fairly high rate of frequency though, especially those which one would class as "simple" verbs such as *be* (85x) and *have* (42x). And there are about twenty others which have much lower, but still significant frequency rates, cf. *achieve, build, deliver, demonstrate, drive, ensure, expect, help, include, join, lead, look, make, manage, need, offer, provide, require, seek, support, take, work.*[19] And it is fair to say that a large number of these verbs belong to the more frequently used verbs in general oral and written communication.

A reason for the higher proportion of verbs with a higher usage frequency in more informal discourse situations (*be*, *bring*, *have*, *look*, *make*, *manage*, *take*) may be seen in the fact that nouns and adjectives are mainly used as prime carriers of meaning. There are some notable exceptions though. The verb *drive* in the sense of *moving/pushing sth. in a predefined direction* often combined with nouns such as *strategy* or *change* or the adverbial *forward*, while not being "recruitmentese", is clearly associated with people management and management functions generally. The same can be said of the use of *demonstrate* in the sense of *show* or *prove and deliver*, here mostly found in the figurative sense. This association is less obvious with *achieve*, *deliver*, *ensure*, *lead*, *manage*, *offer*, *require*, *support*. The number of seldom used verbs is rather small, and they tend to be business-related: *encompass*, *guarantee*, *implement*, *maximise*, *optimise*, *pioneer*, *reapply*, *revolutionise*, *scrutinise*, *underpin*. Interestingly, the majority of these have Latin roots, the exceptions being *encompass*, *pioneer* and *underpin*.[20] Among the verbs listed here and others found in the sample there are many examples of semantic proximity, an indicator of the degree of flexibility in the verb group.[21]

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[19] Cf. also: *achieve* (8x), *build* (8x), *deliver* (12x), *demonstrate* (8x), *drive* (11x), *ensure* (12x), *expect* (12x), *help* (10x), *include* (10x), *join* (11x), *lead* (9x), *look* (10x), *make* (11x), *manage* (11x), *need* (10x), offer (6x), *provide* (24x), *require* (13x), *seek* (14x), *support* (11x), *take* (10x), *work* (11x).

[20] *encompass*: derived from *compass* meaning *encircle*; *pioneer*: from Old French *pionner* or *peonnier* = a foot soldier; *underpin*: derived from Middle Low German *pinne* meaning *prop* or *support*.

[21] *demonstrate* vs. *show*, *ensure* vs. *guarantee*, *help* vs. *support* or *assist*, *enclose* vs. *encompass* or *comprise* or include, *need* vs. *require*.

Adverbials

Adverbials, as is to be expected, are the least frequently used word class of the key content-relevant word classes. Taking only those ending on *-ly*, that is to say those derived from adjectives and mostly with a qualifying function, we note only about 60 different adverbs in our sample. A third of them occur in more than one advertisement with the following among the most frequently used:

closely (6x)	*fully* (4x)
currently (6x)	*highly* (8 x)
directly (5x)	*ideally* (9x)
effectively (6x)	*internationally* (4x)

While *currently* clearly refers to time the others are of a qualifying or descriptive (*internationally*) nature. Both *currently* and *ideally* are also commonly used as phrase openers and, thus, refer to reality at the time of the utterance and an ideal state at the recruitment stage respectively. *Ideally* in initial position and as a qualifier is followed by a verb phrase in the future tense: *Ideally both our new Directors will have an understanding of the social care sector.*[22] And also: *... you will ideally bring a background in public administration or trans-national relations.*[23] With few exceptions the adverbs can be classified as being general language, and even those that might be counted as special language adverbs are not overly sophisticated with the exception of *corporately*[24]. The figurative use of *shipshape* stands out in this group as being largely reserved for oral communication.

Tenses

Taking the content structure of recruitment advertisements as a base, one would expect to find the present tense dominating in the description of the advertisers' current situation and activities and also in the outline of job content. As regards the candidates' qualifications and skills, verb forms in the past and present tenses would seem appropriate considering when they were obtained and are applied respectively, while in the final section involving the exhortation to obtain further information, to apply and send details the imperative forms should predominate. This latter expectation is consistent with the actual findings in the texts. Equally, the introductory sentences or paragraphs provide the company or organisation-related

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[22] Sunday Times, 14.

[23] Financial Times, 25. Cf. also: *Ideally, you will have practical experience of the UK life insurance tax regime and be ready to apply it in an advisory role.* (Financial Times, 3)

[24] Examples of special language adverbials and frequency of occurrence in the sample: *commercially* (3x), *effectively* (6x), *environmentally*, *financially*, *operationally*, *politically*, *professionally*, *strategically* (2x), *technically*.

information in the present tense, even though statements relating to the past or the future may be made. These are then couched in phrases such as *has embarked upon*, *our track record*. In the central sections of the advertisements we note, however, that remarks concerning job content and candidates' profiles in terms of qualifications, experience and skills are mostly worded in the future tense (future I and II and even future continuous)[25] and only occasionally in the present tense (*can do*-statements) or be + adjective or present or past participle.[26]. There are also quite a few instances of a change of degree that the use of *would* brings about.[27] The highly frequent use of *will*-forms must be seen in the context of the communicative approach where the *you*-form is preferred to address the potential applicant. And a verb phrase such as *you will lead a team of …* is, of course, much more communication-friendly, more direct and also shorter than alternatives such as *you are expected to lead a team of …* or *the successful candidate is expected to lead a team of …*

Syntax

The main aim of recruitment advertising is to provide sufficiently ample information about the employer, the job available and the requirements. And this is reflected in the organisation of the content. The high degree of information-related text density entails forms of presentation which deviate from those found in ordinary expository texts. As discussed at the beginning of this paper, using two columns and bullet-pointing (often in a two column layout) are ideal forms of presenting comprehensive information in a clearly structured format in a restricted space.

Resorting to enumerations is another albeit much less reader-friendly form. This is widely done at the word and also at sentence level:

*Ideally with a background in a health **or** social care environment, candidates will need to display the intellect, experience, relationship skills, business **and** financial acumen to quickly establish a position of trust **and** engagement with Managers **and** Directors.[28]*
*The current membership includes people with knowledge of social security policy, law **and** operations **and** those with broader interests in social policy **and** related fields. The membership meets regularly with Ministers, senior officials, frontline staff **and** customers … We*

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[25] Future I: *will bring/build/contribute/demonstrate/drive/guide/implement/work*; Future II: *will have gained/proven/given*; Future continuous: *will be carrying out*. And even future continuous II: *will have been operating.*

[26] *can do*-statements: *can contribute/deliver/demonstrate/offer*; be + adjective/present or past participle: *is good at/capable of/interested/ready/willing*.

[27] Cf. *would be leading/drive/find/like/require/suit*.

[28] Sunday Times, 8. (Highlighting by the author)

> *are seeking people with integrity, impartiality, credibility and discretion **plus** strong communication skills **and** an interest in social security **and** welfare reform. Applicants with a background in one **or** more of the following will be particularly welcome: policy analysis, organisational and service delivery (**including** technology **and** large systems), finance **and** inducing behavioural change.*[29]

These two extracts reveal some of the methods applied for listing a considerable number of points of information within the framework of one sentence. In addition to the standard-type enumeration of words and word phrases[30] bound together by a sequence of commas and the usual most widely used connectors *and* and *or* before the final enumeration element; text compilers additionally use prepositions such as *plus* and *including*. As a result many such sentences become unduly complex. In one case the duties are listed in one complex sentence in which, after the introductory phrase: *The duties of the CUO will include the following ...*, there is a sequence of nine items (seven of which start with a gerund, one with a noun and one – quite in contrast to the pattern expected by the reader – with an enumeration of gerunds introduced by an adjective).[31] Additionally, in this duties list there are no new fewer than 10 *and*-connectors, sometimes two following each other in one item: *developing **and** enhancing the range of ATI products **and***

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[29] Sunday Times, 9. (Highlighting by the author). The impression of information density and structural complexity is also due to the fact that in the first compound element in *social security policy* relates to *law* and *operations* as well which causes a moment's hesitation in the reading process. In the following example two enumeration groups are integrated in one sentence: *Alongside an advanced degree in Science, Economics, Development, Business Administration **or** a related discipline, you should bring extensive practical experience of forecasting, strategic planning, market analysis **or** product management related to pharmaceuticals.* (Financial Times, 24) (Highlighting by the author)

[30] Cf. the following as an example for the use of more complex word groups in enumerations: *If you have had experience of starting **or** establishing new service lines, verticals **or** sub-verticals in the power, water **and** gas sectors, you would find yourself more at home with us.* (Financial Times, 4) Here we find an enumeration of short nouns embedded in a noun enumeration. (Highlighting by the author)

[31] Financial Times, 8. *The duties of the CUO will include the following: Leading the underwriting team **and** managing the day to day underwriting operations of ATI; leading the business performance **and** making appropriate recommendations for the expansion **and** profitability of business; developing **and** enhancing the range ATI products **and** services in line with developments in the market place; developing **and** enhancing underwriting **and** risk management procedures in accordance with market conditions; liaising with Marketing **and** Communication staff in implementing the Agency's marketing **and** business development plans; participation in corporate strategic planning; responsible for ATI departmental planning, budgeting **and** forecasting; undertaking the performance evaluation **and** management of the underwriting team; managing client relationships.* (Highlighting by the author)

services in line with developments in the market place. The information density resulting from the combination of two devices for enumeration is not likely to motivate the reader. The enumerative effect is also used beyond the sentence level, when the same syntactical pattern is repeated in three or more subsequent sentences often combined with alliterative elements.

> *__You will be__ a graduate qualified accountant with an FSA regulated, consumer financial services background. __You are culturally attuned__ to the aims and vision of a modern mutual. __You are accustomed__ to operating at board level and in getting the best out of both internal and external resources. __You are__ not just a proven financial leader, but a seasoned board executive used to a positive inclusive culture.*[32]

In a standard blocked text body of more than 20 lines containing between 12 and 20 words each, the repetition of a straightforward syntactical pattern (noun followed by a predicate group) without any sub-clauses combined with the repeated use of the auxiliary *be* and with discourse-friendly personal pronoun *you* produces a bullet-point effect that impacts the reader.[33] For all the other sentences in this advertisement the author uses the normal SPO structure. In only one instance is there a longer time adverbial starting with *following* at the beginning. With the average sentence length varying between 15 and 20 words and 16 sentences altogether the advertisement is very reader-friendly. In many other cases the perceived and real complexity of the syntax results from a combination of enumerative devices with the gerund structures, non-finite forms and subordinate clauses:

> *As a sharp thinker, outstanding leader, __and__ excellent communicator, you will thrive on the challenge of adding substantial value. You will be responsible for [1] the smooth __and__ efficient running of the headquarters, [2] __including__ motivating __and__ managing all NAHT staff (c.80), __and__ for [3] implementing the association's Strategic Plan for a dynamic association. Ensuring all operations are 'Best in Class'', you will be expected to have an unrelenting approach to {1} constantly delivering even greater business performance, __including__ {2} the delivery of the highest quality services to members, {3} alternative income streams, {4} budgetary control __and__ {5} highly effective communication.[34]*

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[32] Financial Times, 14. (Highlighting by the author)

[33] It should be pointed out that, except for two whilst-clauses, the whole text is characterised by a high degree of consistency in the use of this standard syntax pattern and sentence lengths that are similar to those seen in the example, that is to say between 15 and 20 words except for the whilst-clauses.

[34] Sunday Times, 17. (Highlighting and bracketing by the author)

In this example a lack of syntactical clarity goes hand in hand with seemingly unbridled performance expectations.

Communicating with the reader

In job advertisements the lines of writer-reader discourse are straightforward. A message originator in the advertising business addresses an unknown number of unknown individuals via a text message, often additionally encoded with a visual message. The response by an interested party is back to the originating business. And here the lines of communication become somewhat fuzzy, as can be seen by the variety of contact channels available. The preferred channels are mail, phone or company website. Only seldom do businesses indicate their postal address as a point of contact. If only an address is given or an anonymous information contact by postal mail, email (general company mail address) or company website or, very rarely, by phone (without the name of the responsible person) the discourse partner remains unknown which makes establishing contact more difficult as far as forms of opening the contact, the level of formality and choosing the appropriate language patterns are concerned. Some companies resort to referring the interested party to their website only, where additional information is promised and where often also an application form can be found. This latter impersonal form of contact affords the businesses an enhanced control over the early stages of the recruitment process, as it allows them to apply a highly structured and efficient pre-screening round in terms of time and staff requirements.

However, in the vast majority of advertisements in our sample the application/further information section provides a much more direct access to the discourse partner. Quite often the name of the contact person is indicated with a personalised email address or telephone number and, in this case, with the full name of the person in charge. In some instances only the first name is mentioned. This shows to which extent the advent of electronic forms of communications and the conventions of these media have changed the traditional forms of address.

The reader and potential job candidate is addressed in a variety of ways. In the traditional mode the advertising company usually presents itself under its corporate name and continues using it throughout the text. The interested party is then referred to as *the candidate*, *the applicant*, *the individual* and occasionally also simply as *person* or *someone* and as *the jobseeker*, *the jobholder*, *a personality*, *the appointee* or, taking a different perspective, as *a professional*.[35] A change in the discourse convention in the

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[35] In the requirements/qualifications/experience section of the advertisements the potential applicant is also referred to as *personality* or *professional*.

advertising texts can also be observed which clearly reflects the influence of modern communication theory on recruitment texts. Increasingly job advertisements are characterised by a *we* and *you* communication pattern of focus change where the advertisers first present themselves and then proceed to outline the job profile and their expectations of their prospective employee, as can be seen in the following:

> *St. Nicholas school is ...* **We** *are looking for a teaching assistant who would like to become part of* **our** *exciting team. If* **you** *are looking for a challenging and rewarding career with supportive professional development opportunities then please contact ...*[36]
>
> *If* **you** *are passionate about developing businesses from ideas and growing high-value jobs, know how to get the best out of working with higher education, business and public sector partners, have a personal record of success and relish helping deliver an ambitious vision for the region and* **Tamar Science Park** *(i.e. the employer),* **we'd** *like to hear from* **you**.[37]

This form of "talking" to the reader indicates a partnership-oriented approach to the recruitment process and creates a dialogue-type verbal setting. However, in spite of the personalised *we* (which also entails the use of the possessive *our*) placed at the very beginning of the body text (mostly the first word), which very often is the case, this apparently hierarchy-levelling discourse mode barely disguises the traditional hierarchical pattern in the relations between employer and employee.[38]

None of these forms of addressing potential candidates throughout the body copy seems to involve any preferences for the wording of the action-provoking imperative: "please apply" or similar phrases. The short imperative forms of *phone*, *contact* or *apply* are seldom used and, if so, are mostly accompanied by a polite *please*; this applies in particular to the shorter advertisements in the local press. Occasionally such phrases are introduced by *If (you are) interested ...* Advertisers in the national press tend to use the additional space purchased for the recruitment advertisement for a much more expanded form of exhortation to act. On the one hand there are some completely impersonal and communication-adverse phrases which then frequently continue with an action-provoking imperative, e. g. *Application packs from ...*, *How to apply* (followed by a colon and then an imperative).

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[36] Leatherhead Advertiser, 52/3. (Highlighting by the author)

[37] Sunday Times, 18. (Highlighting by the author)

[38] The hierarchy-levelling effect of this communicative approach is often destroyed by a very outspoken reference to reporting lines. Cf. *Reporting to the vice-President you will manage country Retail/Managers/Directors ...* (Financial Times, 23); *As the right hand to a predominantly external facing General Secretary you will be responsible ...* (Sunday Times, 17)

- *Applications should be via full CV and covering letter ...,*
- *Interested candidates should send ...,*
- *For further information and details on how to apply ...,*
- *For an information pack ..., please visit ...,*
- *Read more and apply to ...,*
- *To apply please forward/submit/address your application to ...,*
- *To apply for this role, please send your CV ...,*
- *Further information including eligibility criteria and application form is available in the Applicant Pack which can be downloaded ...*[39].

After the non-personalised opening the imperative section usually contains a possessive adjective to refer to the applicant.

A few advertisers, on the other hand, also resort to a highly personalised approach in this action section by directly appealing to the candidates' desire to change their job and their motivation for professional advancement (cf. AIDA-model): *If you're passionate to develop ..., we'd like to hear from you.*[40] This example not only shows the successful application of the dialogue concept with a "you" opening of an *if*-clause and a *we* completion. In addition more informal language and short forms are used to facilitate contact:

- *If you'd like us to inspire positive change and want further information about the role, including details of how to apply, please refer to the website of our employment agency advisors ...*[41]
- *If you are keen to progress your career, perhaps on a different stage within a different setting, send your current CV to ... or contact him for an informal discussion ...*[42]
- *If you're up to the challenge and want to find out more, visit ...*[43]

The predominance of shorter words which stand in stark contrast to the length of words and more complex word groups in the main section of the advertisement reinforces the communicative approach.

The novel feature of imposing or, in some cases, only suggesting an information-gathering loop, before the actual application is made, is a strong reflection of changes of behavioural patterns in the recruitment process due

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[39] Cf. Sunday Times, 13.
[40] Cf. Sunday Times, 18. The sentence is quoted in full above (Fn. 17).
[41] Cf. Sunday Times, 19.
[42] Cf. Sunday Times, 15. Cf. also: *If you feel you have the required skills and can demonstrate the potential and ambition to be successful in this role, please apply to Charlie Holroyde ...*
[43] Cf. Financial Times, 13.

to the readily available information on the on the advertiser's homepage. Potential applicants, as can be seen here, are often called upon to perform two tasks: obtain further information from the advertiser's website or an application pack first and then, having considered the supplementary information and application details, apply for the job (mostly by using the format provided by the advertiser). The alternative, and sometimes a second option even, is to phone a named contact in order to gain direct oral information. In both cases the applicant gets an impression of how the company communicates. Thus, a media discourse is enacted which is beneficial for both parties. The applicant obtains valuable information about the prospective employer and ideally also the job environment, while the advertiser can impose a framework of questions in their application form that enables the recruiters to collect from the candidate more standardised data in specified fields that facilitate the selection process. Abortive applications based on mistaken expectations on the part of the candidate and misjudged interpretations of information by the future employer can thus be eliminated from the outset.

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