

Explorations of Identity and Communication

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Explorations of Identity and Communication

Carmen Popescu (editor)



**Editura Universitaria
Craiova, 2018**



**Presa Universitară Clujeană
Cluj-Napoca, 2018**

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Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naționale a României
Explorations of identity and communication / ed.: Carmen Popescu. –

Craiova: Universitaria ; Cluj-Napoca: Presa universitară clujeană, 2018
Conține bibliografie

ISBN 978-606-14-1417-8

ISBN 978-606-37-0391-1

I. Popescu, Carmen (ed.)

Table of Contents

Introduction <i>Carmen Popescu</i>	7
Part I. Identity and Communication in Literature	
The Winds of Change. Conceptual Metaphors with Arab Women Writers from the Middle East <i>Bushra MK Khudhair Al Muttairi</i>	21
The Quest for Self-knowledge in Arthur Miller's <i>Death of a Salesman</i> <i>Bassim Hussein Al Nawashi</i>	30
Returning from Diaspora, Exile and the Loss of Identity in Inaam Kachachi's <i>The American Granddaughter</i> <i>Falih Mahdi Jabur AL-Zamili</i>	38
American Exceptionalism and Political Fear in Margaret Atwood's <i>Ustopias</i> <i>Adela Catană</i>	49
On Lucian Blaga's Metaphors and Similes. A Cognitive vs Traditional Linguistics Approach <i>Mădălina Deaconu</i>	58
Ethnopsycholinguistic Aspects of Bulgarian and Slavonic-Based Cognitive Models of the World <i>Zlatina Dimova</i>	69
Herman Melville's Ismail and Ishmael: <i>Moby-Dick</i> in Islamic and Arabic Eyes <i>Mohammed Naser Hassoon</i>	75
The Iceberg Theory: Hemingway's Journalistic Technique <i>Ghufran Abd Hussein</i>	85
Parentheses and Dialogization. Discursive Levels in Romanian Postmodern Poetry <i>Emilia Parpală</i>	93

Aspects of the Parodic Discourse in Romanian Contemporary Poetry <i>Carmen Popescu</i>	107
The Alienation of the Female Figure: Denial of Subjectivity in <i>The Fall of the House of Usher</i> by Edgar Allan Poe <i>Laura Monica Rădulescu</i>	121
W. B. Yeats’s Use of Irish Mythology and Folklore in order to Preserve Irish Identity <i>Thabit Shihab Ahmed</i>	129
Identity and Ethics in Jane Austen’s <i>Emma</i> <i>May H. Srayisah</i>	139
 Part II. Identity and Communication in Media and Culture	
Social Media and Iran’s 2017 Presidential Election. A Study of the Correlation between <i>Instagram</i> and <i>Telegram</i> Popularity and Students’ Political Participation <i>Alireza Abdollahinezhad</i>	151
A Pragmatic Analysis of American Apologies: Depicting How Americans are Flouting Grice’s Maxims <i>Ahmad Kareem Salem Al-Wuhaili</i>	160
African American Cultural Projection, Intercultural Communication, and Co-Cultural Theory <i>Péter Gaál-Szabó</i>	174
“Getting Carter” through Post-Presidential Articulations (and What It Tells Us about News Discourse in an Age of Concision) <i>Brian Michael Goss</i>	185
Communication Biology: A Transsexual Case <i>Genta Maghvira, Engkus Kuswarno, Siti Karlinah</i>	206
Olive Oil Tasting and Food Advertising Discourse <i>Alina Ţenescu</i>	213
Internet Hoaxes: Chain Letters – How Dangerous Are They? <i>Oana Voichici</i>	219
Contributors	230

Introduction

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“Identity” and “communication” are undoubtedly more than fashionable buzzwords: testifying to the existence of underlying obsessions, they are very much present in common parlance, albeit sometimes in an unclear manner. Indeed, both concepts are also values, which are likely to elicit an affective, emotional or ethical response and not just an intellectual one. One could even call them building blocks of modern civilization (more or less visible and more or more recognized as such), quintessential to our everyday life and to the encyclopedia of concepts we use in order to make sense of our surroundings.

The “experience of modernity” throws us in a never-ending “struggle to make ourselves at home in a constantly changing world” (Berman 1988: 6) while “the postmodern politics of recognition” runs the risk of “boxing individuals into identity scripts” which are “far too narrow” (Sell 2000: 10-11). The emergence of modern identity depended, to a certain extent, on an “ethics of inarticulacy” (Taylor 1989: 53). A way of mitigating the hardships generated by both globalization and neo-tribalism is precisely the effort of articulating and mediating similar and different identities in the process of interpersonal and / or intercultural communication. Human communication is almost never just transmission of messages or the delivery of an informational “package”; instead, we should see it as a combination of *content* and *relation* (Watzlawick *et al.* 1967: 54), the latter being a form of *metacommunication*: “Every communication has a content and a relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former and is therefore meta-communication” (*ibidem*). The role of phatic communication in maintaining the social fabric is also an indication that the relation is sometimes more important than the content *per se*. According to Malinowski, *phatic communion* is “language used in free, aimless, social intercourse” (1972: 142).

The scholarship regarding these two compelling notions highlighted in the title is undeniably huge and diverse but also overwhelming and confusing, because of the many ramifications, in quite divergent fields, engendered by their systematic theorization. The papers in this volume coagulate two main directions, given, on one hand, by the sociological approach, appropriate to the analysis of texts in such domains as journalism, mainstream media, social media and political discourse, and,

on the other hand, by the literary-critical approach, which is itself pluralistic, heterogeneous and inclined to borrow methods and principles from various sciences, including the ones grouped in the first direction, more sociologically-inclined.

Literary communication can be conceptualized on a continuum with other, more “mundane” forms of human interaction, considering that “literary writing and reading are viewed as uses of language which amount to interpersonal activity” (Sell 2000: 2). Also, the dialogue that is literature is “a kind of give-and-take which has both ethical entailments and communal consequences” (Sell 2011: 10). As the recent trends in literary criticism tend to demystify literature and describe it primarily as a type of discourse among others or as part of culture in general, the alliance between the two orientations is all the more felicitous. In a complementary perspective, literariness or the specificity of literature is still to be defined in a satisfactory manner by literary theory, but many insights from traditional or modern approaches to literature can prove useful for the description of media discourse, which also resorts to indirect and ambiguous communication and even has its own poetics and rhetoric.¹

In the previous volumes based on the proceedings of CIC conference, the editors stressed that identity was a “hyper-theorized term” which “has come to express nowadays a rather diffuse, fluid, contradictory set of characteristics, instead of stable, homogeneous and independent meanings” (Parpală 2017: 1). Identity is also a “dominant ontological term”, while “the global community has changed the rigid semantics of individual and collective ways of being, accentuating their ambiguity and forms of expression” (Loveday & Parpală 2016: 1). The complementarity between the key-notions “identity” and “communication” is embedded in the inextricable relationship between “subjectivity” and “alterity” (or “self” and “otherness”). Language itself is the proof of this pervasive dialectics:

Consciousness of self is only possible if it is experienced by contrast. I use *I* only when I am speaking to someone who will be a *you* in my address. It is this condition of dialogue that is constitutive of *person* [...]. Many notions in linguistics, perhaps even in psychology, will appear in a different light if one reestablishes them within the framework of discourse. This is language in so far as it is taken over by the man who is speaking and within the condition of intersubjectivity, which alone makes linguistic communication possible (Benveniste 1971: 224, 230).

Dialogism is essential to subjectivity, but also to language and discourse, which, “for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s” (Bakhtin 1981: 293). In *Problems of Dostoyesky’s Poetics*, Bakhtin talks about

¹ According to Robert T. Craig (1999) communication should be approached as a *field*, by taking into account seven “traditions” of communication theory: rhetorical, semiotic, phenomenological, cybernetic, sociopsychological, sociocultural, and critical.

The dialogic nature of consciousness. The dialogic nature of human life itself. The single adequate form for verbally expressing authentic human life is the open-ended dialogue. Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds. He invests his entire self in discourse, and this discourse enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium (Bakhtin 1984: 293).

Dialogue is thus universal; indeed, ontological, as the psychological and cognitive research has confirmed (Ferryhough 1996; Salgado & Hermans 2005; Salgado & Clegg 2011). In a similar vein, Ivana Markova (2005) connects dialogicality with social representations and social cognition. It is proven that dialogical solving of problems is more efficient than individual ones (Trognon *et al.* 2011). Also, the theory of mirror neurons, along with developments in neurophysiology and brain imagining reinforce the idea that humans prefer conversations instead of a monologue, even though the latter allows them to carefully prepare and organize the arguments in advance:

The role of empathy is clearly important in our preference for conversations. It is also possible, however, that evolution has selected certain mechanisms in our brain according to which the construction of meaning is much easier in a conversation than in a monologue. One of these mechanisms may be the ontological priority of representations (Iacoboni 2011: 9).

So, we can safely establish that dialogue and communication are natural and innate to the human psyche. They are also vital for the process of self-expression and self-understanding as well as for the negotiation of identities. Moreover, in human societies, communication is a form of ritual, and “a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed” (Carey 1989: 21-23). Even reading a newspaper is seen

less as sending or gaining information and more as attending a mass, a situation in which nothing new is learned but in which a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed. News reading, and writing, is a ritual act and moreover a dramatic one (*ibidem*: 20).

At the same time, we cannot help but notice that mutual comprehension is in fact rather difficult and rare, especially among persons and groups with different backgrounds, world-views and value-systems. Along with successful communicational strategies, the scholarship often needs to account for the many dysfunctions and pathologies involved in communication. Sometimes, communication is “systematically distorted” (Habermas 1970). By the same token, authentic communication is not necessarily consensual and it may involve a polemical drive. Yuri Lotman goes as far as to assert that “misunderstanding

(conversation in non-identical languages)” is “as valuable a meaning-generating mechanism as understanding” (Lotman 2009: XXIII). The differences, the idiosyncrasies of each separate identity are as important as the similar points or the common denominator of the conversation.

The present volume is a selection of papers presented at the tenth edition of the International Conference *Comparativism, Identity, Communication* (CIC2017), hosted by the Faculty of Letters from the University of Craiova. The collection of articles proposes an inter-disciplinary investigation of cultural issues pertaining to “identity” and “communication”.

The selected articles come from established scholars and young researchers who work in Bulgaria, Hungary, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Romania and Spain / the U.S.A. Both original and well informed, the 18 contributions offer fresh perspectives on the crucial issues discussed above, by shedding new light on the complexity and ambiguities of identity and communication, as well as on their concrete manifestations in several cultural areas.

The volume is divided into two sections: the first part deals mainly with literature (with only one of the contributions focusing on language in relation to cultural specificity); the second part includes papers which study aspects of media and culture in general.

Bushra MK Khudhair AlMuttairi is a PhD candidate at The University of Bucharest and is affiliated with University of Babylon, Iraq. Her article is entitled *The Winds of Change. Conceptual Metaphors with Arab Women Writers from the Middle East* and studies three prose fictions by Arab women writers from the standpoint of cognitive theory. The three texts come from Syria, Palestine, and Egypt: Ulfat al-Idilbi’s *The Breeze of Youth*, Samiya At’ut’s *The Collapse of Barriers* and Salwa Bakr’s *The Beginning*. The traditional worldview is here contrasted with the progressive mindset, the latter being open to configuring new social roles for women. One can therefore notice, in these contemporary instances of Arab women’s literature, a heightened interest in female autonomy and responsibility within the public sphere. The deep grammar of literary texts becomes more visible and intelligible with the help of the cognitive approach, which is able to build a repertoire of conceptual metaphors associated with female identity.

Bassim Hussein Al Nawashi, a doctoral student at The West University of Timișoara, writes about *The Quest for Self-knowledge in Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman*. While most readings of Miller’s famous play often bring into discussion “the American dream”, Hussein chooses to focus on the problem of self-knowledge as related to the central issue of identity. Daydreaming, introspection and painful, bitter self-analysis are vehicles for the gradual awakening of Willy Loman, of Biff and the other characters. The sense of self is almost impossible to obtain except in the matrix of the familial unit, where the sons receive false values from the father and are able to achieve autonomy only when it is almost too late. Miller’s American tragedy cuts deep into the infinite intricacies of modern identity and interpersonal relations.

In *Returning from Diaspora, Exile and the Loss of Identity in Inaam Kachachi's The American Granddaughter*, Falih Mahdi Jabur AL-Zamili, a doctoral student at the University of Craiova, analyzes a novel by Iraqi journalist and writer (who is based in Paris) Inaam Kachachi. *Al-Hafeeda Al-Amrikyia. The American Granddaughter* (2010), a fictional work about the post-war situation of Irak, is an occasion for the author of the article to tackle crucial problems like identity, exile, diaspora and nostalgia, from the perspective of cultural anthropology, postcolonial studies and other disciplines. Literary contributions by exiled Iraqi authors who reinvented themselves as Arab-American authors do a great deal to inform the general public about the tragedy of the Iraqi people while also working to dispel a number of stereotypes concerning the Middle East. Zeina, Kachachi's protagonist is an American translator from Arabic and has all the data to be a mediator between the two cultures. Unfortunately, she is rejected by both parties which are engaged in conflict, being perceived as a "spokeperson for the enemy" by the Americans and as a traitor by the Iraqis. Intercultural issues intersect with problems of gender, given that the plight of women affected by the war appears in a different light once discussed in a Western framework, which is often feminist by default.

American Exceptionalism and Political Fear in Margaret Atwood's Utopias by Adela Catană, from the Military Technical Academy Bucharest, is a timely contribution, due to the recent resurgence to public attention of the Canadian author's *Handmaid's Tale*, in the wake of Donald Trump's winning of the presidential election. Atwood coined the term *ustopias*, which is a combination of *utopias* and *dystopias*. *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* (2003, 2009, 2013) are the texts Catană focuses on, by bringing into attention Atwood's originality on the background of various forms of science-fiction, fantasy or "speculative fiction". Atwood deconstructs the myth of American exceptionalism and connects political fear with the rise of various totalitarianisms. The political nightmare described in *The Handmaid's Tale* has puritanical origins and exploits several Biblical passages in a sinister way, but history has shown that repression and torture can very well coexist not just with religious fanaticism, but with systems based on secular/ atheistic and "enlightened" values.

Mădălina Deaconu, a Reader at Titu Maiorescu University, in Bucharest, is the author of *The Duality of Knowledge in Lucian Blaga's Poetry. A Cognitive Linguistics Approach*. In this paper, Deaconu explores the problem of mystery in Lucian Blaga's philosophy and poetry, using the cognitive theory of conceptual metaphors and blending (Lakoff and Johnson, Mark Turner, Peter Stockwell) as a framework for a more up-to-date understanding of the Romanian modernist's theoretical contribution as well as his literary achievement. Blaga was a very important interwar writer who, apart from his literary output, has devised a complex philosophical system dealing with issues of knowledge (where a special place is given to the notion of *mystery*) and of cultural specificity. The cognitive approach proposed by Mădălina Deaconu is all the more appropriate as Blaga himself had elaborated an original theory of metaphor (in the treatise *The Genesis of Metaphor*)

which anticipates, in many respects, some of the tenets of cognitivism. If the “duality of knowledge” refers to the two types of cognition described by Blaga (paradisiacal and luciferic), there is also a duality of the metaphor (plasticizing and revelatory), which deserves to be reassessed through the filter of the conceptual metaphor theory, as Deaconu does in this paper.

Zlatina Dimova from Trakia University, in Bulgaria, studies the *Ethnopsycholinguistic Aspects of Bulgarian and Slavonic-Based Cognitive Models of the World*. Here, *cognitive model* has a looser meaning than in the previous paper: it refers to worldview, mindset or collective *Weltanschauung*. The author resorts to *lacuna theory*, borrowed from Russian ethnopsycholinguistics, which maintains that there are semantic gaps in intercultural communication, due to the difficulty of understanding a foreign culture. Dimova is interested in ideas, in the psychic and temperamental traits but also in the values shared by the Slavic populations (Bulgarian and Russian, in particular). Influences work in both directions, but they are often intertwined with more problematic tendencies towards dominance of one culture over the other and also towards cultural appropriation.

Mohammed Naser Hassoon, a PhD candidate at the University of Craiova, is the author of the next contribution, *Herman Melville's Ismail and Ishmael: Moby-Dick in Islamic and Arabic Eyes*. Hassoon tackles the problem of the “Arab Melville”, starting from the connection between language and culture, along with that between modernity and traditional legends. Myths and legends present interest for the modern writer due to their potential of capturing the depth of the human heart (here, in the guise of the watery world and the sea monster). Ishmael, Abraham’s rejected offspring (a character from the *Bible* but also present in the *Quran*), who is the narrator’s persona and “voice”, becomes the symbol of division between people on the criterion of ethnic belonging (Jews vs non-Jews) and religion (Christians vs pagans). Conversely, Melville does not shy away from religious syncretism (in the person of Queequeg, a Polynesian who worships an African idol and keeps the Ramadan). In the textual maze of this encyclopedic novel, references to Islam are scarce, the author shows, and should be analyzed in connection to orientalism. However, the main argument of the paper is about the challenges faced by the translator of the novel into Arabic. For instance, the famous incipit, “Call me Ishmael”, is rendered in a less concise form in Arabic but it thus acquires interesting supplementary connotations.

Ghufran Abd Hussein, also a doctoral student at the University of Craiova, is the author of *The Iceberg Theory: Hemingway's Journalistic Technique*. She starts by placing the American writer in his historical and cultural context, providing a detailed timeline of his life and literary activity. Journalism was the writer’s apprenticeship and, of course, there were mutual influences from his two main activities, that of a fiction writer and that of a newsman. Hemingway’s journalistic strategy has to do with brevity and concentration, and is part of his “iceberg theory”, explained in several writings, such as *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), or in the unpublished essay *The Art of the Short Story*. The iceberg principle also has an

interesting relation with the allusive method and other indirect forms of communication. The image created in the reader's mind by this iceberg metaphor suggests that there are hidden depths to Hemingway's minimalist aesthetics.

Emilia Parpală, Emeritus Professor at the University of Craiova, signs the article *Parentheses and Dialogization. Discursive Levels in Romanian Postmodern Poetry*, where one can find unexpected things about the communicative resources of this otherwise humble graphic sign. On the level of literariness, parentheses are necessarily more than mere appendages. As a dialogizing factor in the diction of postmodern poetry, parentheses have important effects on the pragmatic, the intra-discursive and interdiscursive levels. The grammatical function of parentheses needs to be distinguished from the pragmatic one. The purported monophony of the poetic genre (in Bakhtin's interpretation) is qualified with the help of Rabatel, Jenny and other scholars in the field of enunciation theory. In Romanian postmodern poems (Danilov, Ghiu, Iova, Leahu, Mincu, Nimigean, Stoiciu, Urmanov), parenthetical insertions generate polyphony, enunciative retardation and complex communicational engagements with the readership. Along with the original typology of the parenthetical use within the corpus, the chapter also shows in detail how this metatextual peculiarity contributes to the idiosyncratic profile of postmodernist discourse as opposed to the modernist one.

The next article, by Carmen Popescu, a senior lecturer, PhD, at the University of Craiova, *Aspects of the Parodic Discourse in Romanian Contemporary Poetry*, works on a corpus similar to that studied by Emilia Parpală, addressing the communicational dimension of literary intertextuality, in particular, parody. This genre (or, perhaps, device, according to other theories) is a form of engaging with the literary canons and traditions but also with literariness itself. Hence, the metalinguistic and metaliterary dimension of the parodic palimpsest as emphasized by a selection of texts from postmodern poetry in Romanian. Along with reviewing various theories regarding the ontology of the parodic discourse, the author brings into attention, through close reading of texts, a series of sophisticated dialogic strategies employed by the writers Magda Cârnelci, Augustin Pop, Aurelian Dumitrașcu and Alexandru Mușina.

Laura Monica Rădulescu, who is working on her PhD at the University of Bucharest, is the author of *The Alienation of the Female Figure: Denial of Subjectivity in The Fall of the House of Usher by Edgar Allan Poe*. The article revisits Poe's gothic stories and poetry by pointing out the gendered nature of literary representations present in his texts. Poe's typically romantic cult of the dead (or dying) woman reveals, at closer inspection, some very disturbing effects of the "othering" of women by the male gaze and the male discourse. Feminist criticism provides the author with the appropriate framework for analyzing a fictional world where women are presented as disempowered, mostly ill, lacking agency, devoid of a personal voice, and, eventually, demonized. The shocking violence and incredible cruelty displayed by the male protagonist towards the females in his life suggest a deep-seated fear and need to be reevaluated from a psychoanalytic perspective: Lady

Madeline Roderick is both a victim and the perpetrator of a gruesome revenge over her brother; the two characters, who are twins, also seem to represent “twin” aspects of the same tortured and split self.

W. B. Yeats's Use of Irish Mythology and Folklore in Order to Preserve Irish Identity is the title of the article proposed by Thabit Shihab Ahmed Ahmed, a doctoral student at the University of Craiova. Yeats's engagement with Irish tradition is very complex and nuanced. In the context of the Irish revival, his interest in mythology and folklore was justified by his aim to contribute to the preservation of national identity under colonial conditions. At the same time, the Celtic heritage needs to be exploited for his extraordinary artistic potential. Although a modernist (or at least a close precursor of this movement), Yeats was often critical towards the alienating effects of modern urban civilization. Thabit Ahmed analyzed here essays like *The Literary Movement in Ireland* and *The Celtic Element in Literature* but also the poems *The Wanderings of Oisín*, *The Stolen Child*, and *Leda and the Swan*. In these texts, the celebrated Anglo-Irish writer depicts a positive image of Irish folklore as a source of inspiration for modern literature, while also integrating this local tradition into the larger framework of *Weltliteratur* (usually epitomized by references to Homer and Greek mythology). Thus, the national and the transnational are inextricable elements, in the perspective of modernist poetics.

May H. Srayisah is a doctoral student at the University of Craiova; her article deals with *Identity and Ethics in Jane Austen's Emma*, bringing a new outlook on one of the most admired and loved British novelists of all times. Austen's undeniable charm has a lot to do with the way she depicts romantic relationships leading to marriage. But recent studies have shown that her fictional world is much more complex than just the marriage plot and the comedy of manners (both, features which have ensured her a rightful place in the literary canon). The psychological dimension is, of course, of utmost importance. However, the ethical framework can provide a more useful and complete approach to Jane Austen's realistic but at the same time open-ended narrative world. Austen's moral casuistry is not explicit or didactic but subtle and needs to be brought to light by critical exegesis. Virtue ethics is tantamount to building a sense of identity and the exceptionally gifted writer that was Jane Austen knows very well how to describe self-knowledge which results from the interaction with others. The protagonists in *Emma* or *Pride and Prejudice* acquire a considerable amount of humility and self-awareness in the process of interpersonal communication.

The second part of the book deals with broader cultural issues, from politics and the democratic process to the various forms of media (print, social media, online promotional materials and the internet in general).

Alireza Abdollahinezhad from University of Allameh Tabataba'i, Tehran, Iran is the author of *Social Media and Iran's 2017 Presidential Election. A Study of the Correlation between Instagram and Telegram Popularity and Students' Political Participation*. This contribution is based on a sociological research about the role of social media in political (and especially electoral) participation. Despite the harsh

economic and political circumstances, the citizens of Iran have participated in large numbers to the 12th presidential elections. The group under scrutiny was constituted of students enrolled at state universities in the city of Tehran and the standardized questions they were addressed concerned the influence of two media platforms, *Instagram* and *Telegram*, in their political decision. The findings lead to the conclusion that this type of communication had a crucial role in mobilizing people for the re-election of Hassan Rouhani.

Ahmad Kareem Salem Al-Wuhaili, a PhD candidate at the University of Craiova, is the author of the next article, entitled *A Pragmatic Analysis of American Apologies: Depicting How Americans are Flouting Grice's Maxims*. The "cooperative principle" lies at the core of Grice's theory of communication. This principle is reinforced by four conversational maxims (of quality, quantity, relation and manner) whereby the speakers are required to make their contribution truthful/sincere, brief, relevant, consistent and non-prolix. However, these maxims are often flouted, via indirect communication and implicatures, which makes that the genuine meaning of sentences is sometimes hard to retrieve. By studying five different statements by American politicians (including Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton), the author shows how elaborate and contrived (but also "creative") fake acts of apology can be.

Péter Gaál-Szabó, a Professor at Debrecen Reformed Theological University in Hungary, has delivered a key-note talk entitled *African American Cultural Projection, Intercultural Communication and Co-Cultural Theory*. Given the multilayered nature of ethnic and cultural identities (and most notably the hyphenated ones), intercultural communication is relevant not just for intergroup but also for in-group relationship. When relationships are asymmetrical, there will be a degree of uncertainty and anxiety from the part of minorities engaged in the communicational exchange. But beyond the threat of acculturation, alienation and perhaps hegemony of one particular group, intercultural interaction is necessary and can be effective, in the guise of cultural "translation". Co-cultural theory, as explained in this article, is the framework which can account for the complex identity negotiations involved in the process of intergroup communication. In this perspective, African American religious leaders from the 1950 and 1960s have acted as an interface between their community and the white majority. Thus, preachers like Dr. Martin Luther King have helped transcend racial binaries.

The first key-note speaker of the conference was Professor Brian Michael Goss, from Saint Louis University in Madrid, Spain Campus. His paper, entitled "*Getting Carter*" through *Post-Presidential Articulations (and What It Tells Us about News Discourse in an Age of Concision)* starts from the current reality of *memes* which is then connected with the concept of "articulations" which will be applied to the journalistic use of Jimmy Carter's image in the first decade of the new millennium, in light of his remarkable post-presidential career. Brian Michael Goss has studied a corpus of 225 articles from *Time* and *Newsweek* about Carter with the broader goal of assessing news media behavior in the latest period. Despite the

impressive contributions the former president made in various fields (including 24 books and the founding of a center for promoting democracy and human rights), despite the international recognition brought by the Nobel Prize for Peace he won in 2002, he was maligned (by way of re-articulations), in recent years, by many journalists and authors associated mainly with right-wing or right-leaning media outlets. His detractors strived to establish linkages and articulations between Carter and every conceivable ill possible, including terrorism. Articulations, with some help from “personalization”, work as ideological shortcuts, for instance by associating Carter with the political Left and by making Bush personify the Right. The recourse to clichés and telegraphic but familiar associations is somehow predictable, in an era in which the audience is overwhelmed by information. Even prestigious publications tend to forget their serious journalistic mission of pursuing the factual truth and indulge, instead, in ideological bias and media punditry.

Genta Maghvira (co-authors: Engkus Kuswarno and Siti Karlinah), a PhD candidate from Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia is interested in *Communication Biology: A Transsexual Case*. She argues that, apart from the biological data a person is born with, his or her identity changes in the course of his or her life. In some cases, gender identity may change dramatically, due to the subjective self-perception of the individual, which is not in perfect alignment with his or her biological sex. Of course, gender non-conformity often meets with adversity and judgement from the part of the gender-conforming majority, especially in conservative communities. However, the informant for this research, who became an artistic performer, discovered that he could thrive once he found a supporting network of friends who struggled with the same issues.

Alina Țenescu, an associate professor at the University of Craiova, writes about *Olive Oil Tasting and Food Advertising Discourse*. This paper analyzes the main aspects of the figurative language used by olive oil specialists in food advertising discourse. It starts from the approach whose main guidelines are based on conceptual metaphor theory and it identifies the main categories by examples taken mainly from a corpus of excerpts of English advertising discourse. Some of these excerpts are taken over and developed on online promotional sites and also help us understand how olive oil tasting is described in metaphorical terms. The conceptualization of olive oil and olive oil tasting into several categories of conceptual metaphor relies upon the model established by Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2003). The research uncovers the main characteristics of olive oil tasting imagery in English media discourse.

Oana Voichici, from Valahia University of Târgoviște, closes the second section with the article *Internet Hoaxes: Chain Letters – How Dangerous Are They?* Chain letters promising good luck (or, on the contrary, threatening with great misfortunes in case one refuses to forward them) have a predictable structure: they are usually composed of a *hook* (“this information is vital” etc.) followed by a *request* and sometimes a *prayer* or a moralizing message. Interestingly, an ethnographic approach can find similarities between this electronic hoax and older

strategies of manipulation and extortion, for example the so-called *Epistles fallen from Heaven*, which were attested starting with the sixteenth century. Obviously, this type of hoax appeals to superstition and magical thinking, even when it exploits the tenets and moral-spiritual values of established religions (Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.). They also play on the recipients' emotions and compassion when the content of the letter refers to terminal illness, sick children, and so on. The author also draws attention to the fact that the effect of this practice is enhanced by the rapidity of communication facilitated by the Internet.

In conclusion, the papers included in this collection propose various theoretical hypotheses and close analyses of texts from a variety of genres and traditions: journalism, mainstream media and social media, advertisements, issues of translation, religious discourse (sermons), world literature (English, Irish, American, Canadian, French, Romanian, Arabic). Hybrid and hyphenated identities as analyzed in several of the papers warn us about the perils of ethnocentrism but also about the risks of not belonging entirely to a particular culture. Gender identity is a sensitive issue and a number of papers address the problem of the oppression of women or, the opposite, i.e. female empowerment. The cognitive approach and the interest in the poetics of postmodernism are other points of interest which unite individual papers. Comparative literature offers a solution of mediation and dialogue between different identities and cultures, as does the translational approach. But political discourses, and, for that matter, even media, seem to remain ideologically polarized and committed, less to building bridges, and more to creating certain versions of reality and imposing them as truth. The researchers' task becomes a difficult one, as they are called to unmask dishonest strategies of manipulation and propaganda. Literary discourse, on the other hand, often deals with apparently incommunicable / incomparable identities and incomprehensible alterities while at the same time demonstrating that these are nevertheless comprehensible, communicable and comparable.

Apart from the theoretical and methodological convergence determined by the conceptual triad proposed by the conference, the readers will hopefully find the supplementary, serendipitous encounters between contributions equally satisfying.

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PART I

Identity and Communication in Literature

The Winds of Change. Conceptual Metaphors with Arab Women Writers from the Middle East

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1. Introduction

This article is an empirical application of cognitive theory, aiming at identifying CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS (CMs) from narrative texts written by three well-known contemporary Arab Women Writers from Syria, Palestine, and Egypt: Ulfat al-Idilbi's *The Breeze of Youth*, Samiya At'ut's *The Collapse of Barriers* and Salwa Bakr's *The Beginning*, respectively. Those short stories were compiled and translated from the Arabic into the English language by Dalya Cohen-Mor in 2005. The writers depicted the change characterizing that epoch, especially in the Middle East after the revolutions of independence. Moreover, they highlight the gap between two generations (that of the past and that of the present) which apparently existed in the heroines' roles of various social positions - as a wife, daughter, granddaughter, lover, mother, grandmother, and sister.

A conceptual metaphor is generally one of the fundamentals of the *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (CMT) proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980). It is used as an essential analytical tool to identify CMs specifically within the abstract domains: LIFE, LOVE, FEMININITY, and MARRIAGE, as long as it is convenient with the chosen prose texts. It allows for a more comprehensive account referring to the winds of change in the thought of Arab women writers from the Middle East by setting comparisons between the traditional Arab World views and the progressive ones.

CMs are phrasal entailments inferred from contexts and should be supported by either metaphorical linguistic expressions or propositional inferences from chosen proses. Those three contemporary Arab women writers were mostly well known for depicting the aggression, female harassment, tribal inherited restrictions and hard challenges that Arab women confronted in their daily life, particularly in the rural regions of the Arab states in general and in the Middle East in particular.

Before going forward, it is necessary to confirm that most CMs were mainly proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their well-known book entitled *Metaphors We Live By* (1980 / 2003). They suggested a specific style of writing for any CM: the SMALL CAPITALS to designate conceptual metaphors, while *italics* were

used to refer to all metaphorical linguistic expressions which supported the proposed CM. Also, whenever the term *metaphor* is mentioned in this article, it would be related to the conceptual metaphor, not to the literary metaphor.

2. Methodology

In this study, the research will follow several steps:

- close reading and discourse analysis on chosen literary proses.
- an application of CMT by derivation or identification of CMs.
- metaphors derived from Ulfat al-Idilbi in *The Breeze of Youth* (a Syrian writer).
- metaphors derived from Samiya At'ut in *The Collapse of Barriers* (a Palestinian writer).
- metaphors derived from Salwa Bakr in *The beginning* (an Egyptian writer).
- setting a comparison between traditional and contemporary views to demonstrate and highlight the proposed change within the two generations.

3. From text to context

3.1. Ulfat Al-Idilbi – *The Breeze of Youth*

In *The Breeze of Youth*, Ulfat al-Idilbi describes some of the challenges that parents faced when raising or giving advice to their kids or grandchildren. Three characters with three different social roles (a woman, her mother and her granddaughter) are part of a story that compares two different attitudes within the two generations – mainly about the marriage institution and its motivations. The protagonist, a grandmother, telling sorely how her marriage was done; she asserted that nobody asked for her opinion concerning the suitor. According to the context, her father received pride price from an elderly suitor, whom she had never seen before their wedding night. The tension of the story resides in the elderly woman's impossibility to put together her objection towards her granddaughter's open character and her own experience when she was a young woman forced by her father to marry a man she did not love:

(The grandmother asked her granddaughter) 'Where are you going? To the university or to a wedding? Since when do schoolgirls do their hair and put on makeup? Everything's so different nowadays. How much tighter are you going to make your clothes? Have you no fear of God? You, schoolgirls!' (Al-Idilbi 2005: 258).

The elderly woman's youth memories refer to a young man who worked as a sales assistant in his father's shoe shop. They interacted when he tried to help her put on new shoes. He expressed his admiration for her beauty and praised God for that. Later, since she wanted to see the man again, she lied telling her mother that

her little brother threw one of her shoes into a canal. Unfortunately, her father had already sold her to another man by that time. He received her pride price from an old man who had asked for her hand. Al-Idilbi perceived the traditional view of MARRIAGE as A DEAL between two males dominating women with their authority, and WOMAN, here, is no more than A PRODUCT; the use of metaphorical linguistic expressions *bride price, payment, received, an old man* is literally evident of the CM.

On the other hand, the elderly woman is eager to have the chance of returning to the days of her youth. One day, she starts to imitate her granddaughter, putting make-up on her face and using other cosmetics. By this behavior, she tries to compensate for her deprivations and oppression experienced since her youth, and everything seems like sinning. The elderly woman's unusual change of mind is a symptom often found in the narratives about the Arab society published over the second half of the twentieth century after the revolutions of independence from the hegemony of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent periods of European colonization.

Al-Idilbi summarizes the experience of three generations of women without mentioning any details about the mother, the woman in between who represents the transition between two completely different lifestyles. This striking absence suggests the level of strain and the fact that she focuses on facts and actions on the path of freedom and education rather than on reflection and writing. From the beginning, Ulfat al-Idilbi perceives mainly CMs such as LIFE IS A JOURNEY and YOUTH IS one of many STATIONS. Life is a long journey full of obstacles which might begin from the family home itself where the woman faced aggressiveness and taboos from her father; the grandmother saying:

When I was your age, my father once saw me making myself pretty in front of the mirror – and I was already a widow and the mother of a child. He took me by the hair, slapped me hard, and said to me in a tone so harsh I still remember it: ‘Who are you making yourself pretty for, you wicked girl? I won’t have daughters who spend hours in front of the mirror, understand?’ Since that day, I’ve never had my hair done or put makeup on my face (*ibidem*: 258).

And: “She heaved a deep and fervent sigh for her lost youth and long life...” (*ibidem*: 262). LIFE here, as a target domain, is metaphorically expressed in terms of JOURNEY as a source domain. Here, the JOURNEY starts from birth and passes through several stations like childhood, adulthood, youth and old age. By choosing a grandmother as the heroine of her short story, the writer depicted several intervals of the woman's life when she experienced enjoyment, aggression and eventually depression. She is on the last lap of her life, close to the previous station of her journey. Her life is conceptualized as full of misfortunes.

The sub-conceptual metaphor YOUTH IS A STATION is also implicitly explained, because youth is one of those stations, or some stages, that human beings go through over the years. The writer perceived grandmother's Youth as a sad station; a person who has missed the train, because of obstacles or difficulties from inside or outside the family.

Moreover, the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY fits in this context as well, given that the elderly woman realizes in retrospect the end of the possibility of love: "That day marked her last contact with love and the beloved!" (*ibidem*). In general, human beings conceptualize LOVE AS A JOURNEY that may stop at any time for any reason. Through her memories, the grandmother finds herself sinking in a sea of bitterness, thinking of the unfulfilled love of her youth. Regarding a journey, love might take longer, lasting for many years, or be very short, as al-Idilbi's story shows.

Traditions and social restrictions sometimes have a dramatic impact on women's destiny, especially in illiterate rural communities. From the moment women open their eyes, they grow up in close male-dominated environments: that is their father, their brothers or uncles who decide for them. These pictures from the remote past sprang up one after the other in the old woman's mind. When they had reached their sorry conclusion, her eyes filled with tears.

The writer framed the conceptual metaphor A FEMALE IS A PRODUCT by using literal and metaphorical expressions related to business, such as *price*, *payment* and *100 pounds*, as if the young woman was an object or an animal that has a specific value, no more, no less. Moreover, the phrase *worry over a daughter* implicitly refers to the fact that any salesman worries about his products until he finds those consumers who pay more. In the context offered by this particular short story, marriage presented as a business deal between two males, the father, and the suitor, while logically, and reasonably, marriage is a holy union between a man and a woman:

Her father welcomed him and gave him *his word*, but insisted that the old man *should pay* him the *bride price* before he left. [...] On the evening of that very day, her father received from the ugly old man with the big nose and the protruding eyeballs *a bag containing one hundred gold pounds: it was payment for his daughter's hand* (*ibidem*: 262).

The change from one type of mentality to another does not occur suddenly, an idea expressed by contrasting the two women's lifestyles. Whereas the elderly woman lived in an epoch dominated by men, her granddaughter belongs to a generation that nurtures values such as independence, education, and freedom of thought and speech. The fact that the young woman can go out with her friends wherever she wants to and the way she "bounded down the stairs, three at a time, humming a popular song" (*ibidem*: 258), almost like flying, are representations of liberty, a type of freedom which she cannot understand even though she tries. Such traditional views about the Arab world were still prevalent over the last decades of the twentieth century. In general, Arab women all over the world were suffering from various forms of injustice, deprivation, and aggression, because of illiteracy, male dominance, and inequalities. The most important reasons behind such situations are the misunderstandings, the misconceptions and the misinterpretations of many instructions or rules from Prophet Ibrahim to Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon them).

3.2. Samiya At'ut – *The Collapse of Barriers*

Samiya At'ut narrates a short dialogue between a young girl and a male operator inside an elevator. The event is narrated from the man's point of view, who cannot refrain from showing his sexual desire towards the other gender. After he stops the elevator on purpose, he lights a cigarette, which she does not like. While he praises her beauty, she does not feel well because of the lack of oxygen, which she fears he might interpret as her weakness. She eventually controls herself, changes the tone of her voice from submissiveness to dominance, and shows him that she is a strong lady.

Sociologists have usually investigated such cases as sexual harassment. It is publically considered a negative social phenomenon, widespread through the second half of the last century, not only in Palestine, the writer's state, but also in almost all Arab countries, which has become widespread especially after what is known as the era of women's liberation:

(The man said) 'I have nothing to worry about except my life, and it torments me that I'm going to lose it near such beauty.'

(The young girl replied) 'You're insolent!' she retorted and turned her pallid face away. She was trembling. I smiled inwardly" (At'ut 2005: 277).

No, rather realistic. My dream was to speak with a girl twice your age and half your beauty. Now, something even better has happened to me (*ibidem*: 278).

If one reads between the lines, the writer perceived that WOMAN IS physiologically WEAK, and she deliberately and courageously conveys a subtle message about two common cases widespread in the Arab society: repression and sexual harassment. As it is evident from these two quotations mentioned above, from different pages, a clue about how that man evokes the young girl is the repetition, referring to a provocative insistence to frighten her: "And I'm almost suffocating..." (*ibidem*: 278). In the end, however, she wants to draw attention to a girl's possible rapid change in attitude when she finds herself in such a critical situation: once the door opens, the young woman regains control of her posture:

When she noticed that I was silent and gloomy, she calmed down. Looking at herself closely in the mirror, she fixed her hair and straightened her clothes. Then she picked up her bag and said, "The fifth floor, please. Hurry up!" She spoke tersely. Her tone was that of a master (*ibidem*: 279).

The writer's use of the metaphorical expression *master* at the end refers to a logic proof reflecting the CM: WOMAN speaks as a MASTER; it means implicitly to be a decision maker or a self-dominated person.

3.3. Salwa Bakr – *The Beginning*

Salwa Bakr is a prominent Egyptian author and critic, who explored the challenges facing women in the Arab homeland. She is acclaimed for her portrayal of women's personal lives and Egypt's poorer social classes. She declared that she finds herself with poor grades. Her first collection of short stories, *Zinat at the President's Funeral*, was published in 1985, and she has since released six additional short story collections, seven novels, and a play. Salwa Bakr has a strong critical, judging tone regarding the representation of women in literature, criticizing both men and women writers for failing to write good female characters. The following lines were said by Bakr in front of students at a meeting held at American University in Cairo in November of 2012:

In most cases, women continue to write from a man's point of view on the world, because the foundational literary references are those written by men. For example, when a female author describes a woman, she writes as a man would, saying 'She was like an apple or a flower.' As a woman, I don't notice these things in other women. I would say that a character is clever, or heroic because I don't see a woman through the eyes of a man, I see her through my own eyes. I don't see her physical features alone, or see her as an object, the way a man sees her. This isn't just a problem in Arab literature, but in world literature throughout its history (Mlynxqualey 2012).

Cohen-Mor states through her introduction in the anthology that Arab women writers would assert themselves in a male-dominated arena, from the audience to publishers to critics to literary tradition:

It is a heavy tax and a hard task on many levels, especially in a society in which most individuals are illiterate, a society which is conservative by nature, whose values are static and which does not respect women in the first place. All this makes writing them like the task of Sisyphus, particularly if the writer stops to think for whom she is writing (Cohen-Mor 2005: 6).

In *The Beginning*, Salwa Bakr narrated about a wife who rises to her dignity, which has long wasted on the falsity of love and marriage. A wife tries with all her energy to satisfy her husband, but he is indifferent, careless and demanding. He does it deliberately and usually insults her because of her delay in doing ironing even though she has already made a list of housework; she struggles with herself and her tight time to accomplish all the works before his arrival. The husband neglects her efforts, as if he used to be indifferent, but his looks, his meditations, and musings are all for a four-year student. Instead of appreciating his wife's efforts, he blamed, insulted her and even gave her a blow on the head. She spends all the day with her work and then shopping, cooking and cleaning, but the husband was comparing the pungent odor of spices rising from the cooked food with the soft perfume of that

student who smells like perfume and sways with the top of femininity in the gallery of the department.

Salwa Bakr depicted two contrastive conflicts. First, the wife's inner conflict who remembers her friend's bewildering attitude: she was criticized for getting more weight after her marriage, which means that she risks losing her attraction. Second, the husband's inner conflict, who does nothing but wants everything. His selfishness and desire for other women are at the basis of his aggressiveness and exploitative behavior:

The image of a fourth-year female student flashed into his mind, wearing a light blue dress and a perfume that announced her arrival before her footsteps. She had come to ask him, 'Is it true that you deleted chapter four, Professor?' Her words sounded musical to him, just like her footsteps, as she walked off and the clicking of her stiletto heels against the floor resounded in his ears: tik...tok...sol...mi tik...tok...(Bakr 2005: 281).

Cohen-Mor introduced Salwa Bakr's prose and reflected that the male-female relations are also changing. The protagonist,

a married woman who is an employee working outside the home, she is outraged by her husband's selfish attitude and tyrannical conduct. She makes her decision to leave him alone crying for the first time through their relation after giving him a piece of her mind and a taste of her fist and walks out on him fearlessly and resolutely (*ibidem*: 17).

Then, the writer conveys a significant message upon the initiatives of change witnessed in that period. Wife becomes stronger in confronting husband's aggressiveness. The traditional view conceptualized WIFE as a SLAVE and HUSBAND is a MASTER, while the contemporary view conceptualized WIFE as a FREE and SELF-DOMINATED person urging and struggling for liberty.

4. A comparison between traditional and progressive views

The descriptive application, evidenced by linguistic metaphorical expressions or propositional inferences from the literary text, eventually reflects an apparent change in the perception of WOMAN in general or even with the women in various social positions, as a wife or a beloved or a fiancée. So, the traditional view mainly differs from the recent or even postmodern view. The table below highlights a suggested comparison between the two views according to the writers' conceptualizations of WOMAN in the frame of femininity:

The traditional view

WOMAN IS MALE-DOMINATED
WOMAN IS A SLAVE
WOMAN IS A PRODUCT
WOMAN IS AN EMPLOYEE
WOMAN IS DEPENDENT
WOMAN IS WEAK

The progressive view (trials of change)

WOMAN IS SELF-DOMINATED
WOMAN IS A MASTER
WOMAN IS A BEING
WOMAN IS AN EMPLOYER
WOMAN IS INDEPENDENT
WOMAN IS STRONG

Other social positions:

WIFE IS A SERVANT (in her house)	WIFE IS AN EMPLOYER (employed a servant)
FIANCEE IS BLOSSOMING	FIANCEE IS BLOSSOMING

Throughout the proses, such views or images were metaphorically depicted. In general, WOMAN was conceptualized AS A VICTIM for a web of social, political and financial forces found in that epoch. More research need to be accomplished to verify if such trails of change are acceptable, achievable or not.

Conclusion

In the end, it is necessary to mention that there are different female social positions displayed in this application. First, in *The Breeze of Youth*, a grandmother with her granddaughter – a conflict between a senior woman and a young girl inside home. Second, in *The Collapse of Barriers*, a young girl with a strange man outside home and third, in *The Beginning*, a wife working hard to satisfy her husband inside home although she has an outside job. So, three writers from three different countries focused on women’s issues and their trails for change approximately at the same period. Has this happened by chance? Undoubtedly, there are real attempts by educated women to lead the change and to overthrow inherited negative social forces.

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The Quest for Self-knowledge in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*

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1. Introduction

Most of Miller's works show his own sense of commitment to the modern individual to be himself. He wants theater "to present a balanced concept of life" (Miller 1978: 6). This study aims to examine the notion of "self-knowledge" in Miller's masterpiece, *Death of a Salesman* (1949) and to explore the impact of self-knowledge on the characters of the play, in particular, Willy Loman and his son, Biff. The study mainly reveals the powerful role of self-knowledge in the process of forming one's sense of identity and preparing the land for a more meaningful existence for oneself. In fact, Miller tries to show that human life could be prosperous through self-knowledge, not self-denial, and a lack of such notion could have serious consequences on one's life and may lead to his self-destruction.

In *Death of a Salesman*, Miller reflects identity crisis throughout Willy Loman and his family. Willy is always described by his son, Biff, as a person who "didn't know who he was" (Miller 1949: 111). Willy has discovered too late although he has never confessed that he has wasted his life running after false dreams. He has realized, after being fired from his job where he has spent more than thirty-four years working for Wagner company, that he had been left empty handed. He merely asks to work in a place suitable for his old age, but he is surprised by the bitter truth that his society is based on commercial values where there is no room for mercy. He feels that his life does not seem to have any purpose and meaning and his failure would bring shame on his family.

Willy is able to realize the sense of his own identity only when he invests the most of his good qualities and emphasizes the things that he can do better with his hands, like planting, carpentry and building, but he prefers to ignore standards of fair success. Unfortunately, he applies his standards of success not only to himself but also to his sons, leading to the same uncertainties about identity. Unlike his father, Biff has decided to cut his self-loss and rebuild his identity before he sinks further. He has realized the reality of his family; therefore, he no longer accepts his father's expectations. During the final confrontation with his father, Biff puts things right. While Willy is unable to accept the need to change within himself which causes his inevitable failure as a father and a salesman, Biff has become able to determine his own future by himself and not through anyone else.

2. Willy Loman: Breakdown of identity

Willy Loman does not know himself very well from his early childhood. He was brought up amid a family which has no good bonds. His father who died when Willy was still a baby is a flute maker who had spent most of his life travelling throughout the country to earn his living. Willy could barely remember his father and that has created a strong sense of his insecurity. So, he has lost the guide and love early in his life and that has deeply influenced his character. He also does not remember his mother and he does not see his brother Ben who always appears in his daydreams for a long time. Therefore, he tries to compensate the support of his family by adopting other individuals as guides.

He has lived his life adhering to unrealistic values and, regrettably, his ideas moved to his sons. He has raised his children on ideals and philosophy far from the harsh realities of life, creating an unattainable world for himself and his family which has made success something impossible. He makes attractiveness and charisma as a base for success while the world marches in a different direction. In Willy's words to succeed, you must be "well-liked" not only "liked" (Miller 1949: 20). He advises his sons that: "The man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead. Be liked and you will never want" (*ibidem*: 21). His constant advice makes his sons idolize him as an ideal father and a successful salesman who has an excellent reputation, preceding him wherever he goes in the New York territory. In fact, Willy himself needs advice because he is not quietly confident that everything would go as he wants; therefore, he wonders if he has brought his boys up right.

Willy has felt his failure early although he never appears to. A sign of his obvious weakness to meet his responsibility as a father could be seen through his seeking to find a model of success for his sons instead of himself to be followed. For this reason, he has evoked in his mind the memories of those people who are successful like his father, his old brother, and his hero, Dave Singleman. Willy's first model of success is his father who died when he was a baby. He was a flute maker and musician travelling around the country to sell his flutes. He was a man who had a pioneer spirit. Ben shows that "we'd stop in the towns and sell the flutes that he'd made on the way. Great inventor, Father. With one gadget he made more in a week than a man like you could make in a lifetime" (*ibidem*: 33). His father's early death makes Willy always in need of a person to advise him on how to live and behave. He knows everything about him from his older brother, Ben, with whom Willy used to talk unconsciously, in an inner conversation. Although he does not see him, he has admired his competence in his work of making flutes and travelling from one city to another to sell them. Willy may inherit the urge to travel from his father. He expresses his need and longing for his father when he says "Dad left when I was such a baby and I never had a chance to talk to him and I still feel – kind of temporary about myself" (*ibidem*: 36). Thus, he has grown up without a male role model. He is uncertain of his manhood. His friend Charley has asserted this fact when he tells

him: "When the hell are you going to grow up" (*ibidem*: 75). The early loss of his father makes him lose father's love and guide and reveals the impact of his father on his character. He feels a sense of insecurity about being left alone from his childhood. It is not surprising, therefore, he becomes unable to cope with the harsh responsibilities of life. He is always seeking for others' advice about bringing up his children and the secret of business success.

The second model of success for Willy is his older brother, Ben. Ben is a fictitious character in the play and Willy has summoned up his memories in times of pain and suffering to give him his advice. He has always arrived from the past in Willy's mind. He appears only in Willy's daydreams. He has paved his way for success in life with courage and some danger towards the west. He goes to Alaska searching for gold, but he misses the way and finds himself in Africa where he has gained diamonds. He becomes rich and successful. So, Willy considers him as a guide who appears to him in times of distress. In reality, Ben represents the American dream of success through hard work and adventure.

Ben strongly wants Willy to go with him on his adventure but Willy rejects the idea claiming that his future is at home, being supported by his wife's attitude about staying in his work as a salesman. While Ben becomes rich and successful, Willy remains poor and fails to achieve what he wants. Willy always blames himself for not following his brother. As a result, he has asked Ben to wait for some days to tell his sons about his experience and the best way to achieve success in business that he had achieved throughout his journey to Africa to be followed as a positive role model for his sons in their life. It seems that Willy is not quietly confident that everything would go as he has planned.

Willy has doubts regarding his way of raising his sons: for instance, when he told Ben that "sometimes I'm afraid that I'm not teaching them the right kind of – Ben, how should I teach them?" (*ibidem*: 36). His way of talking reflects clearly the fact of his inability to do his duty as a father in an appropriate way. He wants Ben to tell his sons about his valuable experience, and the way that he has followed to achieve success and Ben has always repeated the secret behind his success "when I was seventeen I walked into the jungle, and when I was twenty – one I walked out (*He laughs*). And by God I was rich" (*ibidem*: 33).

Ben describes life as a jungle, suggesting that one has got to be very strong to succeed. He completely understands that life in America becomes a hard and dangerous struggle to survive, especially in situations where it is very difficult to be successful or to trust anyone. So, he can be considered as a model of a modern American businessman. He does not depend on making friends or good contacts or popularity in achieving his success. Neil Carson shows that Ben embodies the competitive spirit, which "functions primarily as a dramatic embodiment of those qualities of assurance, daring and lack of scruples which Willy secretly admires, but doesn't possess. [...] his own nature yearns for the security of home, garden, and an adoring family (Carson 1982: 52).

Willy has widely blamed himself for his crisis because he fails to respond to his brother's advice to go with him to Alaska: "God! didn't I go to Alaska with my brother Ben that time? Ben! That man was a genius, that man was success incarnate! What a mistake! He begged me to go?" (Miller 1949: 41). Therefore, Willy takes the full responsibility for everything that goes wrong in his life and his family and for his inability to seize the available opportunity through joining Ben and be successful and rich instead of sticking to unrealistic dreams. When the opportunity comes, he has to seize it with both his hands.

Failing to go west with his brother, Willy chooses another model to follow. He is inspired by Dave Singleman who is interested in his work and can do his job from the hotel. He has attained success by the sheer strength of his personality that makes everyone respect him. Obviously, Willy admires the way that Dave Singleman has handled things even though he is in his old age. When this man died, many people from all over the country came to his funeral, and this man became Willy's inspiration. His admiration and obsession with Dave Singleman can be seen in his conversation with Howard:

Without ever leaving his room at the age of eighty-four, he made his living. And when I saw that, I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want... When he died – and by the way he died the death of a salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York; New Haven and Hartford, going into Boston – when he died, hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral (*ibidem*: 58-59).

So, he wrongly believes that a salesmanship is the best job for him and will save him fears about a lonely old age and all he has to do is to have a good personality and be well-liked: "be liked and you will never want" (*ibidem*: 20). Thus, he has decided to be a salesman. He also dreams of having the same funeral as Singleman, who died "the death of a salesman" (*ibidem*: 58), and hundreds of salesmen and buyers will attend to pay tribute to his death. Things have not gone entirely according to plan. Willy does not realize the fact that Dave Singleman has died alone and has worked until the end of his life.

Willy was always exaggerating in his expectations, like when he goes to the company to ask Howard, the owner of the company, to respond to his request of changing the place of his work in an office in New York where he lives. He is certain that he would gain soon what he has asked about, but, on the contrary, Howard fires him and his quest goes astray. Instead, Howard gives him the advice to leave his false pride and depend on his sons' support. The false view of himself has made Willy make many mistakes in his relations with others. He does not understand the language that is used by his manager Howard who searches primarily his interest, regardless of people's feelings and emotions. He has no time to listen to his worker's problems and suffering. The way he has behaved towards Willy is utterly ruthless. He is only determined to get what he wants and does not care if he hurts other people. He believes in the motto that the end justifies the means. In fact, Howard does not realize that the loss of the work for Willy means the loss of life. On the contrary, he

exploits the current situation to his own ends. The job for Willy is “part of his identity and his self-respect as it gives him status and self-esteem” (Bloom 1991: 4). In such a materialistic world, the value of man largely depends on his income and his job. Indeed, in a capitalistic society, it is hard to find another end but this. It is a use and throw away system based on exploiting individuals and throwing them apart when they are unable to work until the end of their life, without giving them any rights for a decent living.

3. Biff: Recovery of identity

In fact, Biff is a victim of his father’s values and ideals. However, Biff seems to follow another way. He tries to create a new world for himself because he no longer accepts the false world that his father wants to impose on him. He discovers the truth about his father when he finds him with another woman in a Boston hotel room where he has come to ask for his father's help to talk with his math teacher, because he has failed to pass. He used to idealize his father as a successful father, salesman and provider, but the adultery has revealed the other side of the coin. He is shocked at the scene. He never thinks that such a thing would happen as he is sure of his father’s loyalty. He has realized that their life is merely an illusion and he should wake up from this untrue world. Although the image of his father has shattered completely, Biff never reveals his father’s fatal secret to his family and keeps it to himself. As a result, the son-father relation has deteriorated and whenever they meet they quarrel. His father's secret betrayal makes him recall that all his life is based on lies and illusions. Therefore, he disrespects his father and calls him a “liar! ... You fake! You phony little fake! You fake!” (Miller 1949: 95).

In fact, Biff is a product of his father’s philosophy. Willy believes that the quality of being physically strong and being well-liked lies behind his success and his sons’, especially Biff’s, who has been a star in his high school football team. He believes that his son will achieve success in the world of business as long as he is a football star. So, he never pays any attention to Biff’s studying. Ironically, Biff fails in math and that entails that he cannot go to university and that we won’t be able to achieve his father’s dream of being a future football star. Willy used to idealizes his sons with words like “That’s why I thank Almighty God you’re both built like Adonises. Because the man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead” (*ibidem*: 21). He draws a model for his sons which makes them appear to be more important and impressive than they really are. He inflates their significance; therefore, they believe that they can get anything without a great deal of effort.

Biff goes to the West trying to escape from his fate which is trapped by his father’s false dreams, but he finds himself in a situation from which it is hard to escape. Therefore, he continues to “steal and move from job to job, not so much

because he feels guilty but because he feels ashamed of himself for not living up to an image of success that has already been proven to be a fake” (Ribkoff 2000: 51).

After fifteen years travelling to find a suitable job, Biff has returned home from the West empty handed and he does not still find himself. He feels that he is still lost like an empty boat drifted out to sea. He has spent some years after high school drifting aimlessly. He feels that he has no future and he does not know what he wants. He tries to explain the futility of his life to his brother, Happy, saying:

I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up. Shipping clerk, salesman, business of one kind or another. And it’s a measly manner of existence [...]. I’ve had twenty or thirty different kinds of jobs since I left home before the war and it always turns out the same. I just realized it lately I’m thirty-four years old, I oughta be makin’ my future. [...] And now, I get here, and I don’t know what to do with myself. [...] Every time I come back here I know that all I’ve done is to waste my life (Miller 1949: 10-11).

It is clearly evident that Biff is involved in a serious internal conflict over his future. He feels lost because he is now 34 years and does not find a suitable job, still unmarried, and has failed to be anything. He complains that: “I’m like a boy, I’m not married, I’m not in business, I just – I’m like a boy” (*ibidem*: 11). His future is uncertain as he feels his entire fate is at risk. He tells Happy that “I don’t know what the future is. I don’t know – what I’m supposed to want” (*ibidem*: 10). He believes that he only wastes his life in vain. He is confused and bewildered because he does not do anything significant in his life. Encouraged by his family, Biff has decided to take a loan of \$10,000 from his old manager, Bill Oliver, in order that he and his brother can start a new business together. He doubts that Oliver would receive him kindly because he has stolen a “carton of basketballs” (*ibidem*: 14) from his locker in the past. While waiting six hours to meet Oliver, who finally came and looked at him blankly and indifferently, Biff realized at this moment that he has wasted fifteen years of his life not realizing who he is and he has lived in a fantasy world imagining that he had been a salesman for Oliver. He describes this moment: “I even believed myself that I’d been a salesman for him! And then he gave me one look and- I realized what a ridiculous lie my whole life has been. We’ve been talking in a dream for fifteen years” (*ibidem*: 81). He has realized that he was dreaming about being a salesman for Oliver, but, in reality, he was only a shipping clerk.

Biff begins to realize for the first time the facts about himself when he steals Oliver’s fountain pen unconsciously, as he used to steal before, and stops one moment to think about his life carefully in order to make a decision:

I saw the things that I love in this world. The work and the food and the time to sit and smoke. And I looked at the pen and I thought, what the hell am I grabbing this for? Why am I trying to become what I don’t want to be [...] when all I want is out there, waiting for me the minute I say I know who I am (*ibidem*: 105).

He has decided to tell the painful truth from now on, whatever the result. He makes up his mind to open a new page in his life and put an end to such lies and illusions they experienced, supported by their dreaming father. He rejects to be as his father wants him to be. He struggles to establish his own identity despite the deep-rooted influence of his father. His journey to discover himself is very hard. After he has suffered a sequence of crucial experiences, he realized that his family should know themselves well instead of being deceived by their father's illusions. Therefore, he confronts his family with the fact that they “never told the truth for ten minutes in this house!” (*ibidem*: 104). He has faced Willy with the fact that they are only common people and there is no need to pretend otherwise:

Pop! I'm a dime a dozen, and so are you!... I am not a leader of men, Willy, and neither are you. You were never anything but a hard-working drummer who landed in the ash can like all the rest of them!... I'm nothing! I'm nothing, Pop. Can't you understand that? (*ibidem*: 105-106).

Biff's words go astray as Willy still lives on his old dreams and never realizes his crisis as if nothing unusual has happened. He responds to Biff with his pride by rejecting, “I am not a dime a dozen! I am Willy Loman, and you are Biff Loman!” (*ibidem*: 106). Willy seems unable to deal with reality. While Willy is unable to understand being himself fully outside of the world of the commercial success and the illusions of being attractive and well-liked, his son, Biff, succeeds with difficulty to comprehend the notion of individual identity. Biff grasps the fact that he can pave his way out of the life of illusions that his father used to fill him with. He considers his father responsible for his failure: “I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is!” (*ibidem*: 105).

He tries his best to shock his father with the light of truth but without success, because Willy could barely comprehend what is happening around him although sometimes he realizes the seriousness of the situation and that things go wrong when he cries, “Where are you guys, where are you? The woods are burning!” (*ibidem*: 28). He refuses to listen to Biff's side of the truth either because he could not live with the shame of other people knowing the truth or because he still adheres to his old illusions. He still clings to his old dreams to achieve success as a salesman even when he is dead by making some money for his son because he still believes that Biff is “magnificent” (*ibidem*: 51) and that his unfulfilled dreams could be achieved through his son.

Biff had finally freed himself from the deep-rooted harmful authority of his father's false world and the constraints of the past after he was completely caught in his father's bonds and expectations. Through the bitter and painful experiences and various jobs, he is forced to rethink how he should find himself and choose the right way in life. He struggles hard to know himself like a small boat struggles against the waves.

Conclusion

In *Death of a Salesman*, Arthur Miller tries to say that the key to success lies in self-knowledge which enables the individual to determine his goals in accordance with his potential. Willy has never known who he is; therefore, he has lived bewildered and confused. He avoids confronting his true self. He has created a system of life which is based on dreams and illusions to cover up his own shattered sense of identity and inferiority. Biff's final confrontation with his father helps him reveal his own true identity. He is happy to be himself for the first time when he knows he is only a common man and has the ability to get away from his father's delusions of grandeur. He has had self-confidence and an insight into the reality of himself. From his painful experiences, he has gained a fruitful result of self-knowledge through a true confession of his own limitations that "I know who I am" (*ibidem*: 111), and more importantly for him, is to keep true to who he is.

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Returning from Diaspora, Exile and the Loss of Identity in Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter*

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1. Introduction: On identity

The Paris-based Inaam Kachachi (born in 1952), an Iraqi journalist and author, was born in Baghdad, where she studied journalism at Baghdad University. Her texts are based on the background of historical transformations in the Iraq society after the USA invasion and Coalition War against Iraq in 1991 and 2003. Iraq has been suffering in different fields, such as political, economic and has become an oppressive society. The most significant topics of Kachachi's works are identity, belonging, immigration and political disintegration during the post-war period. In *The American Granddaughter*, the writer analyses the loss of identity of the Iraqi people who were forced to leave their country. The main character is a girl called Zeina; the writer tries to reveal all her emotions after she moved to the USA. It is an introspective journey in her mind, stressing the cultural and political differences between these two societies.

Our present approach to the issue of identity in the writings of this Iraqi writer who has chosen Paris as the location for her exile is based on the assumption that

Identity is a basic umbrella-term nowadays, because the opening towards 'otherness' that accompanies the transgression of the borders of communication implies identity awareness. Multicultural cohabitation is possible if individuals become aware of symbols of identity and their value, if they consciously participate in the intercultural dialogue and operate with flexible concepts and, by all means, if they place themselves under the unifying sign of tolerance (Parpală, Afana 2013: 9).

Identity is a relation between the individual and his home. That represents the concept of "citizenship" and the relationship of belonging, which is determined by rights and duties (Salih 2011). It is based on the implicit theory of cultural anthropology which is defined as "the study of humanity in all biological, social, cultural, and linguistic diversity." It can be encountered with people who participate in the daily life and understand the meaning of life. Cultural anthropology is considered to be the most important factor of configuration of community and it draws a comparison between similarities and differences in human behavior (Welsch and Endicott 2003: xi).

The notion of “identity” that is characterized by its fluidity, polysemy and the richness of its connotations is particularly difficult to define from the outset. But this difficulty is not purely linguistic, because to define and analyze identity, we must take a position on such problems that is to engage in ideological or sometimes political debates. Therefore, it seems to us vain to isolate ourselves in the identity of what belongs to politics. On the contrary, we admit that identity phenomena are intrinsically political in nature. Today, any political discourse on building or the quest for a collective identity in Iraq, often called national, necessarily involves taking into consideration the linguistic and cultural issues that are linked to this question of identity.

In a first sense, social identity represents the image that the group has of the individual and the behaviors that the group collectivity expects from him. In a second meaning, complementary to the first, social identity means the objective apprehension of the identity of the individual, which allows us to define it from the outside; it is the identity “for others”. It defines its position in the socio-economic system (the socio-occupational category), in culture, language and the political and ideological system (ideological, philosophical, religious affiliations etc.) as well as the biological and social categories to which it belongs (sex age, marital status, ethnicity, or nationality).

Personal identity must be understood as a process of identity through which the individual seeks to become what he has chosen to be. The functioning of this process is explained by the duality of the identity which is, on the one hand, conscious awareness of personal particularity, and on the other, an unconscious exercise tending to restore the solidarity of the individual with the representations of the group. Identity is formed according to him during his existence, but especially on the occasion and circumstances of separation or crisis. Adolescence represents the most critical period of this identity crisis.

2. The concepts of “exile” and “nostalgia”

Edward Said considers that “the exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted” (Said 2007: 137). He also describes the necessary relationship between exile and nationalism.

Throughout the period, there were many writers that wrote about war and exile, realities which shaped and inspired the insight in their works. The purpose of their writing was an informative one: to inform and provide the reader with details of the lives of some societies which are affected by wars.

Particularly, the contemporary Iraqi women who suffered from the war and the sanctions imposed on them wrote about these issues in their novels. They have been revealing their experiences of war in the 1980s, and sanctions in the 1990s to

reach voices of Iraqi women who live under laborious conditions to expose the desolation, the pain and the struggles of a nation's war (Zangana 2007). So, they wrote in exile about the Iraqi expatriate community living far away from their homeland. Iqbal al-Qazwini, an Iraqi journalist and novelist, has lived in exile in Berlin since 1978 because of the regime that rose to power. She has been a member of PEN International since 1993. She wrote *Mamarrat al-Sukun (Zubaida's Window: A Novel of Iraqi Exile, 2008)*. Haifa Zangana, born in Baghdad in 1950, is an Iraqi novelist best known for her volume *Nisaala Safer (Women on a Journey: Between Baghdad and London, 2001)*. Hawara al-Nadawaiwas, born in Baghdad, to Arab and Kurdish parents, was widely acclaimed for her debut novel, *Tahta sama kubenhagen (Under the Copenhagen Sky, 2012)*. Inaam Kachachi's novel, *Al-Hafeeda Al-Amrikyia (The American Granddaughter, 2010)* has formed the main topic of this essay. Moreover, the novelists who wrote in exile also wrote with nostalgia about the past and the places that they left behind because of the political activity or economic reasons. We can notice in their writings a kind of nostalgia for the childhood days and a deep understanding for the hard living conditions, especially for women.

3. The concept of “diaspora”

The term *diaspora* comes from an ancient Greek word meaning “to scatter about”. This is exactly what the people of a diaspora do – they scatter from their homeland to places across the globe, spreading their culture wherever they go. The *Bible* refers to the diaspora of Jews exiled from Israel by the Babylonians. But the word is now also used more generally to describe any large migration of refugees or culture. According to Steven Vertovec (1999), the diaspora is characterized according to three different points of view: as a social form, as a type of consciousness and as a mode of cultural production. All of these types of diaspora are forms of substantial structure of the general understanding of it. The 1980s and the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty first century witnessed an increase in the literary production of the Arab women writers in the diaspora, both in the United Kingdom and the United States, though the reception may have been slightly different. It is a literature that developed into a means of self-representation aiming to become influential on the background of the official discourse of the majority. In America, by addressing several genres, the women writers from the Arab diaspora have pursued a dual purpose: to bring a correction to the stereotype regarding the Arab diaspora in general and the Arab women in particular and to change the generally accepted image of the Arabs as undesirable outsiders and to consolidate their position in the public conscience as members of an established ethnic community in the multicultural landscape of their adoptive country. In the so-often cited Foreword to *Scheherazade's Legacy: Arab and Arab American Women on Writing*, Barbara Nimiri Aziz explains:

there is the wall to pull down. Given the heap of misrepresentations and the patronizing tales of Arabs penned by generations of Orientalists, and reporters, we face barriers of half truths that we ourselves have imbibed and perhaps believed. So we have a great deal of sorting out to do. We must decide what is really true and what is false, then negotiate those and add to this our own hidden experience (Aziz 2004: xii).

In addition to representing different generations of Arab migration, these poets were selected because they occupy a central position on the Arab-American literary scene, as Barbara Aziz indicates in her account of RAWI history:

It also takes our leading writers like Etel Adnan, Naomi Shihab Nye, DH Melhem, Salma K. Jayyusi and Lisa Majaj, [and] Suheir Hammad who did so much for me and RAWI. It is really an honor for me but perhaps more an honor to RAWI that such eminent writers devoted their support to RAWI (Aziz 2007).

A realization of collective ethnic identity instigated the founding of RAWI (the Arabic word for a “storyteller”) in 1996: “Radius of Arab-American writers, Incorporated”, a name suggested by the poet Mohja Kahf (Majaj 2005: 25). Then, it included fifty publishing Arab American male and female writers. According to its mission statement, the literary organization “is devoted to serving the Arab American community through Arab American leadership”. Naomi Shihab Nye is regarded as the most celebrated and recognized Arab-American woman poet in the United States, and she was the first Arab American woman to be invited to the White House by the Clinton administration. Mohja Kahf is one of the first Arab American woman writers recognized as a Muslim American feminist and whose work expresses an Islamic feminist standpoint. Finally, Suheir Hammad is the first Arab American woman to perform her work on Broadway, New York. Emerging from hip-hop culture, Hammad’s work has led Arab-American literature into a new direction through identifying and connecting with African-Americans.

4. A novel of exile, return and lost identity

The 182-page novel *Alhafida alamerikia (The American Granddaughter)* by Iraqi woman writer Inaam Kachachi is about the American occupation in Iraq from 2003 onwards and depicts these events through the eyes of a young American-Iraqi woman returning to her old homeland Iraq, as a “transnational” migrant, to work as a translator for the US Army in Iraq. Her temporary return to her old homeland means that questions of identity and migration are processed literarily.

The concept of “migration” has been the topic of many sociological treatises, their authors describing the impact of migration for both the countries of origin and for the receiving countries, and the overwhelming influence of dislocation on the immigrants. Upon arriving in the country of their exile, most migrants struggle with the matter of identity. Simultaneously associated with two nationalities – American

and Iraqi – Zeina’s notions on each of them are based on her personal experiences with both. Though US citizens, her parents have never severed their ties with their former identity: they grieve for the loss of the Iraqi cultural heritage which they betrayed by keeping their children apart from it. Zeina finds it hard to understand why her parents turn so emotional when they talk about their native Iraq, and to find a justification for her father’s words “my country is dear to me even if it makes me suffer” (Kachachi 2010: 118). To Zeina, America means “home” and she is proud of her American citizenship and her Iraqi origins. She sees Iraq through her parents’ eyes: a romantic view, strengthened by her father’s love for the beauty of classical Arabic language and poetry, and by the Chaldean and Assyrian heritage of her Christian grandmother in Baghdad. However, during her mission as a US-Army translator in Iraq, her romantic view suffers drastic changes: on the one hand, she is confronted with the reality of war with its toll of death and destruction, and her “in-between” position between the two sides; on the other hand, she faces her grandmother’s respect to the memory of her grandfather, former colonel in the Iraqi army whose uniform she treasures, and who sees Zeina as a kind of a traitor. Zeina is set apart, she no longer identifies as an Iraqi as she did at a young age, she realizes that she cannot be part of a culture where she does not share the same values, and she never really knew what it meant to be Iraqi, therefore that identity can no longer exist for her.

The main character, Zeina (“the Pretty”), is a Christian Iraqi woman from Baghdad, whose family fled from Iraq to the United States years before because of the political persecution of her father. Thanks to her proficiency in Arabic, she applies for a lucrative job as an interpreter for the US Army in Iraq after 9/11. After attending some training seminars, she is allowed to travel to Iraq. Zeina returns to her “home” in American uniform and sees everything old with new eyes. She meets her grandmother Rahma, who sticks to her roots and traditions and tries to change Zeina’s worldview. Through her work between the two fronts, but also through her love for Muhaymen, her Iraqi milk brother, she finds herself in deep conflict and backs up her own values, identity and role as a translator in Iraq. The story ends with her return to the US following the death of her grandmother, while her identity and beliefs have changed significantly.

Presented in the form of a very credible testimony, this novel presents us with the portrait of a young immigrant woman torn between her two “niches”: the native country that rejects her and the country of adoption of which she does not quite understand the motivations. The atmosphere of Iraq at war is very well made with its heat of furnace, its permanent threats and through the dramas of a dirty war and without great panache. Initially, Zeina is convinced to lend a hand to a just cause: to debunk the tyrant responsible for the misfortune of his family. At the end, she is no longer sure of anything and wonders if one has not replaced a dictatorship by another, a torture by another and oppression by another. The novel is a sobering book about the horrors of war, identity, roots, patriotism and the very definition of resistance: the terrorist of some being always the resistant of the others.

The plot takes place against the background of the explosive political context of the Iraq war and the American intervention in Iraq. September 11 and the ensuing war decision are seen as triggering strong demand for Arab interpreters in the US. The main character Zeina takes the chance and logs on to one of the agencies to work as a translator for the US Army in Iraq. Zeina is characterized by a high level of language skills, she grew up bilingual, and her circle of acquaintances consists almost exclusively of Arabs. At home in the US, only Arabic is spoken, while English has remained the language of the street, work and news. Zeina can easily commute from one language to another. She speaks High Arabic perfectly thanks to her father's efforts. He is a poet who always practices poetry with her. Her mother is especially proud of her High Arabic. When she learns of the strong demand for Arabic interpreters, she wants to benefit from her multilingualism, she wants to enrich herself to enable her family to have better living conditions. When she answers for her job, a short test is first carried out on the phone. Zeina should translate a sentence into Arabic. There are some questions about age, qualifications, health status, social status and financial condition. Her language skills and her calm demeanour during this short test on the phone have convinced the examiner that she is suitable for the profession through the emotional stamina that is so pleasurable.

Various passages in the novel convey a picture of the linguistic work in Iraq, a hotbed of crisis, and bear witness to the fact that it contains a bundle of different tasks. The wide range of the translator's activities in this conflict zone is not limited to translating a single message from one language to another, but is also a kind of cultural advocacy for the US Army, in which the translator's cultural competence is in high demand:

I settled in Tikrit as a cultural adviser at the Civilian Affairs Division. An interpreter who not only transferred words between two languages but also offered her soldiers her sociological expertise. I explained to them, for instance, that entering places of worship was not to be done with shoes on. That they had to give women time to cover their heads before breaking into a house. That people were repulsed by the security dogs, as they considered them impure. I told them these things and they were free to take them or leave them (Kachachi 2010: 83).

As part of her work, Zeina must also accompany the US soldiers into the city at night and take on life-threatening missions, police patrols running around and storming houses suspected of having terrorists there. This potential life-threat coupled with the work makes the job particularly lucrative, the annual salary is 186 thousand dollars because of the hard and difficult nature of the mission and the potential mortal danger. Zeina seems to be aware of the mortal danger associated with her profession: right at the beginning of the novel, she expresses her anxiety about work: "one hundred and eighty-six thousand dollars, the price of my precious language, the price of my blood" (*ibidem*: 10). With her fear, even before her trip to Iraq she feels a sense of scepticism about her role. She first has to go to Washington to attend the CIA, where she has several meetings, she has to attend seminars there,

where she learns about her expected role, maps and films about the country. The seminars at the CIA have made Zeina skeptical of the job she hoped to do from the beginning. She worries about the nature of her job, whether she will only practice a linguistic activity, or whether she is required differently, she says to herself after that: “I was applying for work as an interpreter, not as a secret agent” (*ibidem*: 16). When she arrives in Iraq, she has to learn that there are some restrictions she has to follow, she does not talk to the locals or make contact with them: “unnecessary chatter that could endanger me and my colleagues. Orders demanded I be mute” (*ibidem*: 7). Another limitation is the prohibition on exercise imposed on translators due to mortal danger. Translators should not go into town alone, because interpreters were persecuted and slaughtered like sheep.

After a few months in Iraq, Zeina is anything but satisfied with her job: “My work is exciting, but it leads to a kind of depressive mood” (*ibidem*: 152). She questions her role as a translator in the US Army: “Did my father teach me the language and trained me in careful pronunciation so that I could end up an accredited interpreter for the US Army?” (*ibidem*: 131). Other colleagues also share with her the dubiousness of working as a translator of both US Army in Iraq and job dissatisfaction. One says: “We ate shit, Zeina, my dear” (*ibidem*: 109), another one, the interpreter in Mosul, takes his own life, most likely because he can no longer bear the stress and psychological pressure.

In addition to the order to be silent, another bid is expected from Zeina regarding her neutrality as a translator. Zeina expresses this in one text passage: “I listened and interpreted and filled in forms and gave advice. But I didn’t permit myself sympathy or displays of emotion” (*ibidem*: 84). Two scenes, however, make it clear that her attempt to remain emotionless completely fails her. The first interpreting scene takes place in the house of an Iraqi teacher who is stormed by the Americans because they suspect terrorists there. Upon hearing, the teacher is thrown to the ground and the rifle is aimed at his head. Zeina, who has to interpret the survey, cannot just watch powerless and emotionless. It acts spontaneously by trying to push away the rifle aimed at the man’s head (*ibidem*: 93).

The second time, Zeina is involved in a police patrol in the city. They pass some Shiite women at a religious festival. The American soldiers make fun of the women and their rites. Zeina intervenes in the conversation, takes the women into protection and defends them. She exaggerates it by ridiculing Jewish rites at the Wailing Wall in revenge against her American colleagues. Their behaviour causes equal scepticism in their American supervisor. Her supervisor spontaneously reacts with the question to which Zeina cannot answer: “Whose side are you on?” (*ibidem*: 106), Zeina is silent, but the question does not leave her alone until the end of the story, revealing her conflict and her dilemma between both sides: the Americans she works with expect her to be on their side, but they do not quite trust her and see her as potential for disloyalty and betrayal. The Iraqis see Zeina differently. Already in the US, Iraqi migrants disagree on the American occupation of Iraq: while some in

the profession see the opportunity for material and social advancement, and therefore struggling to be accepted, others regard the profession as high treason for Iraq.

To her grandmother, Zeina is nothing else than a collaborator who she accuses of disloyalty. She returned to her homeland “riding the occupation tanks” (*ibidem*: 65), wearing the uniform of the occupation army, in contrast to her deceased Iraqi grandfather, whose officer uniform grandma hangs on the national holiday every year. In several passages of the novel, Zeina expresses how society values her newly assumed role: “They turned and looked at me like I was the spokesperson for the enemy” (*ibidem*: 140). Zeina is even worse for the Iraqis than the US soldiers:

[...] the Iraqis thought of my comrades as foot soldiers of the occupation, merely performing their military service and following orders. They had no say in the war. In a way they were like Iraqi soldiers in the Iran-Iraq War and the Kuwait invasion. But they saw me as a traitor (*ibidem*: 144).

Only for her half-brother Haider, who hopes that Zeina will help him migrate to America, the land of freedom, is she not a traitor, but “a girl who worked in translation and didn’t understand politics” (*ibidem*: 65). Zeina expects a tragic end to herself¹, she believes she will be liquidated either by her half-brother Muhaymen or one of his comrades in the suspicion of betrayal: at the end of this story, the author will “have a black bag placed over my head and have me shot at close range. That’s how treason is supposed to be punished. But I refused to die a coward’s death. I demanded the chance to fight back” (*ibidem*: 92).

In Chapter XXVIII, there is a revealing dialogue between Zeina and Muhaymen, the man she fell in love with. According to Muhaymen, “emigration was like captivity: both left you suspended between two lives, with no comfort in moving or turning back”. To Zeina, migration is “a form of settling, that belonging didn’t necessarily come from staying put in one’s birthplace”. To his reproach that she is one of “those who changed their skin,” Zeina says, “I have only one skin. It just has multiple colours”. She refuses to be considered a “Chameleon”, and – to his accusation that she is oscillating between “motherland” and “stepmother land” – she prefers being “a citizen of the world” (*ibidem*: 130). In addition, Zeina is referred to as a “dog with two homes” (*ibidem*: 147). Her relatives thus describe her attitude between the two camps: Iraq, and the Americans she works for and receives money from. She wants to serve and please both, but must fail because it is impossible. Based on this metaphor, the hopelessness of her situations is portrayed correctly and her loyalty is doubted. As a result, the sorrow and regret overtly appear, the feeling is exciting and motivational. “Here’s what I’d brought back from Baghdad: a sadness

¹ The novel starts: “If sorrow were a man I would not kill him. I would pray for his long life. For it has honed me and smoothed over the edges of my reckless nature. It has turned the world and everything in it a strange colour with unfamiliar hues that my words stutter to describe and my eyes fail to register. Maybe I was color blind before. Or was my eyesight perfect then, and is the colour that I now see the wrong one?” (*ibidem*: 1).

like pure honey, thick and sticky and translucent, good for insomnia and poetry, bad for my aging skin and my aching joints. It was a kind of suffering that lifted me up then weighed me down again. It took me by the hand, led me to a forest of grey trees and left me there” (*ibidem*: 176).

5. Patriotism and loyalty

Patriotism means the love of one’s homeland and the love for it. As for the loyalty, it is the essence of it. The old woman Rahma who could read and write, was unique among the women of her generation who still preserved in the folds of her wrinkled skin all the heritage of the previous generations, being brought up with a strong sense of justice. The winds of justice were still blowing between the Tigris and the Euphrates, endlessly roaming the land. She got angry with her American granddaughter who was working with the U.S. army which occupied and destroyed everything, and who considered herself an American. Zeina left when she was a young girl and became an American who forgot her roots. Zina’s grandparents were inconsolable, when she was taken away from them. Their hearts were broken when they had to say goodbye to Zeina. It was not going to be a normal journey. But fifteen years later, Zeina did return to her homeland, and she was welcome by everyone, except this one. All the arms were wide open in order to receive the prodigal children, except this girl, ignorant, reckless girl who is falling in love with her milk brother. She was obsessed by her parents’ nostalgia, by her mother who put a tape in the car stereo, and started crying when she heard the long classical song, “Your mother’s milk will lead back home”. It was not back to Baghdad. Her father, too, used to sit in his new car reaching for his favorite CD: “My country is dear to me even if it makes me suffer”. He bowed his head in appreciation, yearning for Baghdad in spite of the fact that he was tortured and humiliated, his teeth were smashed and tongue stapled. She was a stranger to her grandmother, because all her relatives were closer to the old woman than she was: they remained pure Iraqis, like pure gold. Their patriotism was not stained by a dual nationality, and the blood raced in their veins when they heard the name Iraq.

Having an American education, Zeina believes in Democracy and on many occasions she expresses her view in a strong voice and she hopes that her Iraqi fellows will be equally strong and open-minded. She joins the army as a translator convinced that it is the Americans’ duty to bring freedom and civilization to Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein. She will soon discover that the purpose of the occupation army differs from her own. Taking part in armed raids on the homes of innocent citizens, and interpreting during the interrogation of prisoners, she becomes aware of the terror inflicted by the US-Army, and the suffering of the Iraqis who only try to protect themselves. Zeina’s feeling is that she has been betrayed by the Americans in the same way that her fellow Iraqis have been betrayed into believing in the benefits of imposed democracy. She finally understands the adverse reactions

of Tawoos, Haider and Muhaymen, her grandmother Rahma, and even her parents do not cherish her decision to join the army, and think of her as a collaborator and a traitor of her own people. As a result, the sorrow and regret overtly appear, the feeling is exciting and motivational:

Here's what I'd brought back from Baghdad: a sadness like pure honey, thick and sticky and translucent, good for insomnia and poetry, bad for my aging skin and my aching joints. It was a kind of suffering that lifted me up then weighed me down again. It took me by the hand, led me to a forest of grey trees and left me there (*ibidem*: 176).

She returns to what she had forgotten for a long time, namely the tyranny and the democratic ideas. This jubilation is an awakening and it makes her unsure of the myth of the second home. She realizes that a human being can have only one home, the birthplace. The home is the birthplace, the roots, and its branches. Until the end.

Conclusion

The present paper underlines some of the most important features of the Inaam Kachachi's novel, *The American Granddaughter*. The author is an Iraqi female writer, currently living abroad, which offers a deep and objective perspective on the Iraqi society she left when she was young. We emphasized the struggle the main heroine experiences, namely: her identity, the feeling of the lost identity, the integration in the diaspora, the feeling of not belonging to the homeland. We also analysed the pull for the individual between representing her culture, and valuing traditions, and evolving with the colonizers, developing with modernity. In many novels, this tension is described in the midst of tradition fighting with modernity, but Inaam Kachachi's *American Granddaughter* takes on a new perspective of developing national identity. The novel takes place during the Iraqi-American war, and the heroine is preoccupied with finding her identity between the two different worlds, having the feeling that she doesn't belong to either of them.

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American Exceptionalism and Political Fear in Margaret Atwood's *Ustopias*

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1. Introduction

Margaret Atwood's "ustopian" texts, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* (2003, 2009, 2013), are "something of an oracle, which does feel as – if not more – relevant now than it has ever been" (Sabelhaus 2017). Social relevance is, perhaps, exactly what ensures their astonishing international success, makes them sell in billions of copies worldwide and inspire various adaptations including movies or TV serials. The futuristic societies depicted by Margaret Atwood reflect a distorted America which, blinded by the mirage of its Exceptionalism and double-edged myths, has collapsed under its own weight. The Canadian author is no stranger to the belief that "the United States differs qualitatively from all the other developed nations because of its national credo, historical evolution, or distinctive political and religious institutions" (Buck 2009: 201) but uses her novels to show how deranging its impact is. Living with the idea that America is great by the Will of God, that it has a divine mission on Earth and that it is not influenced by the same forces of history and government as other countries are, it can be extremely difficult to accept the fact that corruption, extreme socio-economic polarization, totalitarianism, terrorism, segregation, pandemics and environmental contamination can be present within its own borders. *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* are shocking as they show the consequences of such a megalomaniac illusion but they are also cautionary tales which play on predictable scenarios and enforce Atwood's statement: "No one thinks about what it would be like to actually act it out" (Bloom 2004: 13).

2. The road to *Ustopia*

Framing *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* within a certain genre or literary tradition proves to be truly challenging. Quite frequently critics such as Ursula K. Le Guin (2009) qualify these novels as "modern science-fiction" with "unusual cautionary imagination and satirical invention". A close analysis of Margaret Atwood's books reveals, however, that while all of them preserve the

“interaction of estrangement and cognition”, which according to Darko Suvin is a “necessary and sufficient condition” for a work to be considered “science fiction”, they are far from being the traditional “science fiction” we are all accustomed to (1988: 37). Although readers are gradually introduced to a futuristic world, they do not encounter the *novum* specific to this type of writings (Suvin 1979: 63). There are no aliens, time or space travel or other planets are involved. All the discoveries and technologies depicted by Atwood already exist or can be possible in our lifetime. These books do not look at all like other consecrated SF works such as Wells’s *War of the Worlds* (1897) and the danger they signal does not come from the outer space but from inside, from our collective and individual mistakes. According to Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* should be better regarded as “speculative fiction” instead of “science fiction”. For her, *science fiction* defines “things that could not possibly happen” or at least not in a near future, whereas *speculative fiction* deals with “things that really could happen but just hadn’t completely happened when the authors wrote the books” (Atwood 2011: 6). *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* lack the traditional features or clichés of “science fiction” and speculate upon things and events that already exist or were undergoing at the moment the author conceived her plots. Moreover, the texts preserve the “scientific methods” – observation, hypothesis, experiment – considered by Judith Merrill as being specific characteristics of this genre (qtd. in Clute and Nicholls 1999: 587). They examine “some postulated approximation of reality” made out of “known facts” and “imaginary or inventive changes”, and provide responses about the environment, characters, inventions or about all of them and not only them (*ibidem*).

Atwood’s novels are not, however, any type of “speculative fiction”. As their author invests a lot of time and effort in describing a particular type of community, with all its “sociopolitical institutions, norms and individual relationships” – rather than in the development of particular characters and psychologies”, these texts can be explored in the light of the scholarship on utopian fiction (Suvin 1988: 35). They follow a tradition initiated by Thomas More back in 1516, when he published his Neo-Latin socio-political satire, *Utopia*, and later on, reshaped by Yevgeny Zamyatin’s *We* (1921), Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell’s *1984* (1949), and many others. However, these books preserve both the human longing for a better world and its nightmarish failure, and cannot be truly called *utopian* (a perfect society) and nor *dystopian* (the counterpart of utopia). Therefore, terms like or Margaret Atwood’s *ustopia* seem to be much more appropriate for them than those which already exist (2011: 61).

In her 2011 non-fictional work, *In Other Worlds*, Atwood explains that *ustopia* is a word she made up by combining *utopia* and *dystopia* because, in her view, “each contains a latent version of the other” (Atwood 2011: 61). In *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) the leading class wants to create a perfect society and their effort is clearly embodied by the name of the republic they built – Gilead – a Biblical allusion to a prolific region in ancient Palestine, but things go terribly wrong, ending

in tyranny, war, environmental disaster and sterility. The Utopian impulse continues to exist but as it usually happens in the case of experimental communities, it cannot be materialised. All actions intended to be positive prove to have negative consequences. Furthermore, this nightmarish society is contrasted with two better versions namely, Offred's past, "the past – the past that is our own present" and "a future in which Gilead remains only a subject for conferences and academic papers" (*ibidem*: 77). Margaret Atwood's trilogy, too, has "a utopia embedded within a dystopia" (*ibidem*). *Oryx and Crake* (2003), the first novel of *The MaddAddam Trilogy*, is, as the author explains, "dystopic in that almost the entire human race is annihilated, before which it has split into two parts: a technocracy and an anarchy" (*ibidem*: 78), yet the Utopian impulse is present in the creation of the Crake's Children, bioengineered creatures who lack all the faults that *Homo sapiens* perpetuated. In addition, the dichotomy Compounds-Pleeblands (privileged vs impoverished cities) reveals that things are never as they seem to be. The Compounds which are envisioned as "castles with high walls and drawbridges and slots on the ramparts" become "real prisons" for their residents, whereas, the Pleeblands, which are known for their "rows of dingy houses", "huge pile[s] of garbage", crowded streets, brothels and mobsters, become a utopia in the form of the Edencliff Rooftop, where the members of a veg cult named God's Gardeners plant a garden and live in harmony (Atwood 2003: 26, 194). In the end of the trilogy, the chaotic, pre-apocalyptic world known by the protagonists is contrasted, once again, by the utopia built by Humans, Crakers and Pigoons, the moment they decide to live and work together in peace. But nothing is everlasting and Atwood suggests that this hierarchy may soon end because of a new emerging species born out of Humans and Crakers (Atwood 2013: 381).

3. American Exceptionalism

Margaret Atwood's interest in examining the puritan roots of the American Exceptionalism is well known and probably begins with the study of Cotton Mather's book *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) during her Masters Program at Harvard University back in 1961. The puritan minister is frequently remembered for his implication in the Salem witch trials (1692-1693) as well as for accusing Mary Webster of witchcraft. Coincidence or not, Mary Webster seems to be a seventeenth-century forebear of the Atwood family and the author dedicates *The Handmaid's Tale* to her. Margaret Atwood remains, however, objective in analysing and translating the problems of the American Exceptionalism into literature. She cautions her readers, particularly her American readers, that the belief of being "a nation above the nations" distorts their image of themselves and prevents them from understanding the rest of the world imagining that we are the whole rest of the world.

In his 1702 book (written long before the United States were formed), Cotton Mather describes Americans in biblical terms, projecting them as the chosen people

of God, who crossed the Ocean sea and settled in a desert that would reveal itself as being the “Kingdom of God”. From here to imagining the peculiar destiny of the American people, there was only one step. Americans are said to represent, by God’s will, the “benevolent power in the world”, to be the defenders and promoters of democracy and liberty (Stam and Shohat 2007: 22-23). Being the fulfilment of a Biblical prophecy, America is no subject to the same forces of history and organization. Every century is the American Century. No evolution is required. Likewise, the lack of social stratification turns individual and collective progress into “a quantitative multiplication and elaboration of the founding principles” (Ross 1991: 26). The influence America has over the whole world is clearly underlined by Francis Fukuyama’s 1992 book *The End of History and the Last Man*:

if we are now at a point where we cannot imagine a world substantially different from our own, in which there is no apparent or obvious way in which the future will represent a fundamental improvement over our current order, then we must also take into consideration the possibility that History itself might be at an end (Fukuyama 2012: 51).

In his view, the advent of American liberal democracy and fair rules of Capitalism may signal the endpoint of humanity’s sociocultural evolution and the final form of human government (*ibidem*). All the other countries have only to join the United States in its “eternal now”. The utopia that comes with the American Exceptionalism is not, however, deprived of its self-destructive seeds. Cotton Mather laments in his book the gradual degeneracy of the people: “the many provoking evils that are amongst us [...] have moved our God severely to witness against us” (Mather 1972: 14). It is the duty of the American generations to come to remain moral and upright otherwise calamity would fall upon their nation. The way in which they run their country Calamity happens particularly when Americans get entangled with outsiders, foreigners – comes packed with fear, particularly, political fear.

3. Political fear

According to Robin Corey, political fear can be defined as “a people’s felt apprehension of some harm to their collective well-being – the fear of terrorism, panic over crime, anxiety about moral decay – or the intimidation wielded over men and women by governments or groups” (Corey 2004: 1). Political fear differs from private ones, as it “may dictate public policy, bring new groups to power and keep others out, create laws and overturn them” (*ibidem*: 2).

The Handmaid’s Tale (1986) speculates upon several political fears of the mid 1980s western society such as: the New Right Movement and the return to a traditional patriarchal society; the Islamic Republic of Iran and female oppression; extreme feminist movements and the Greenpeace protests against nuclear tests and pollution, among others, and transplants them in a near future America, starting from

the premises that Americans “are more extreme in everything” (qtd. in Bloom 2004: 15). The Republic of Gilead (the place where Offred, the protagonist-narrator lives) is the product of an elaborate coup d’état conducted by a religious extremist group, called the “Sons of Jacob”. The country is governed based on a combination of Puritan precepts and Communist or Fascist ideology, and ravished by constant war, environmental degradation, and most importantly by the sterility of the population. All people suffer, being garment regimented into specific casts and submitted to all sorts of restrictions as well as psychological and physical torture, yet, women seem to be the most affected as they are deprived of all their civil and moral rights being mostly treated as simple instruments. The detractors of the regime as well as the traitors of gender (homosexuals, adulterers etc.) are hunted down and publically executed. How is this possible? Margaret Atwood provides an explanation saying that Americans have already a similar precedent in their history: “The Puritans banished people who didn’t agree with them, so we would be rather smug to assume that the seeds [of the Republic of Gilead] are not there” (qtd. in Wisker 2012: 92).

By comparison, in *The MaddAddam Trilogy*, Margaret Atwood brings into the foreground fears that trouble not only the United State but also the whole world: the violation of the Constitution, vulnerability of state borders and private information, political corruption, badly administrated economy, the huge economic gap, global warming and so on. Likewise, shaken by September 11, the author feels that America should readjust its position in the world, remember the values it used to stand for and acknowledge the fact that with authority there comes also responsibility. The author is conscious of the fact that the collapse of the United States can trigger a terrifying domino effect: “We know perfectly well that if you [America] go down the plug-hole, we’re going with you” (Atwood 2017).

In Atwood’s books, the protagonists are blinded by double-edged myths of the American Exceptionalism and the problems their society is confronted with are usually accompanied by a sense of shock, denial, fear and helplessness. The coup d’état which gives birth to the Republic of Gilead takes people by surprise, rendering them unable to react. Offred remembers: “when it was known that the police, or the army, or whoever they were, would open fire almost as soon as any of the marches even started, the marches stopped” (Atwood 1985: 180). By contrast, in *The MaddAddam Trilogy*, protests are extremely violent, last longer and cross local boundaries going global. However, just like those in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, they are brutally annihilated by the CorpSeCorps with tear gas, bludgeoning and shootings.

Segregation based on various criteria deepens the culture of fear and increases the chances of manipulation and class hatred. Gilead is a patriarchal society whose policy can very well be defined by the Latin expression *Divide et impera*. Men and women are usually kept apart from each other but also in specific casts according to their social roles. The high-ranking men are known as *Commanders of the Faithful*. They are followed by the Eyes (Gilead’s police force and spies), the Guardians (bodyguards, security officers and personal drivers) and finally by the Angels who serve as soldiers. The Commanders’ Wives are the highest-ranking women. Usually

suffering from infertility, they are assisted by the Handmaids (the breeders), who are, in turn, trained and controlled by the Aunts (paramilitary troops). The lowest ranks are represented by the domestic servants, called Marthas, and Econowives (multipurpose women). The Unwomen (criminals or “infidels”) and the Jezebels (the prostitutes) are not considered citizens at all. In *The MaddAddam Trilogy*, the Gardeners have also an inner hierarchy where the Adams and the Eves are ranked higher and supposed to teach and take care of all the others but also spy and complot against the organizations which lead the Compounds. The hierarchy that exists at a macro-level is, however, the most interesting to explore. At first glance, the people living in Compounds enjoy a better and much more comfortable life than those from the Pleebs. But, of course, the Compounds are not all the same and neither are the Pleeblands. Some places are always richer, larger and much more sophisticated than others, and just like them, their residents come with a different status, life styles and expectations – characteristics which make room for stereotypes and a deeper segregation.

Religious manipulation plays an important role in both “ustopian” texts, and Atwood motivates it stressing that “The States are more extreme in everything” (qtd. in Bloom 2004: 14). In Gilead, people are supposed to follow the Puritan tradition and have biblical teachings rule every aspect of people’s daily life as a condition for “America to be Great Again”. The precepts of the *Old Testament* are, however, abused and arbitrarily interpreted in order to produce and impose a state ideology. The *Bible* is kept locked up and only the Commanders are allowed to read from it – a fact which makes Offred notice that: “It is an incendiary device: who knows what we’d make of it, if we ever got our hands on it?” (Atwood 1985: 87). In *MaddAddam*, religion is not a state policy but continues to be as interfering as in *The Handmaid’s Tale*. The Church of PetrOleum is the invention of a schizoid Rev, who starting from the reinterpretation of the scripture: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church”, succeeds to persuade its followers to worship oil, make important donations and even die or kill on command (Atwood 2013: 110). The God’s Gardeners, on the other hand, is a peaceful veg cult, whose founder and spiritual leader, Adam One, tries to bring people on the good path, give up their selfishness and material things, live in harmony with nature and to prepare for a “Waterless flood” (a virulent pandemic meant to bring mankind to an end similar to the biblical myth of Noah) (Atwood 2009: 17).

Political fear is extensively magnified by “illusion or exaggerated dangers” (Hobbes 1991: 41). In this sense, the Gileadean regime censors information, limits communication among its citizens and maintains a so-called “state of nature” or constant conflict, promoting a war which “[was] going on in many places at once” (Atwood 1985: 85). In consequence, people willingly accept all sort of drastic measures including: the rationalisation of food, the lack of goods and services; abusive security measures, limited communication, the Wall with all its hanging bodies, and many others. In *MaddAddam*, censorship is replaced by the flood of information which can be equally damaging. Unlike the citizens of Gilead, those

living in the Compounds or in the Pleeblands are flooded by all sorts of news and footage constantly revealing plagues, famines, riots, terrorist attacks and “chickenshit boy-soldier wars in distant countries” (Atwood 2003: 251). As these images are so repetitive, viewers become desensitized, losing their sense of reality and sympathy. Unable to differentiate what is real from what is not, people become easy to manipulate in order to accept all the measures taken by the institutions in power; in this case, omnipotent corporations. Additionally, it becomes very easy to convince people that the presence of the armed Guards, spying Eyes, terrorising Aunts or CorpSeCorps (Corporations Security Corps), as well as that of the high walls with barbed wire and towers of control with searchlights, the extra searching measure, cameras and bugs are meant for their own protection. Fear shifts into ‘total terror’ as a result of tangible threats such as: permanent surveillance, punishment, prison, torture, death. Gilead is a real panoptic state similar to the Orwellian society of Nineteen Eighty-Four. Public executions, which are very carefully directed, add more to the general terror people experience. The Particicution, for instance, is particularly shocking not only because it is performed by a violent group of Handmaids, who experience a nervous outbreak when they are able to “tear a man apart with their bare hands every once in a while” but also due to its cheap overhead which involves a scene and a public made out of Wives and Daughters (Atwood 1985: 308). In the first novel of Atwood’s trilogy, *Oryx and Crake* (2003), executions such as that of Jimmy’s mother, Sharon, are not too different from the Particicution. Her son, however, is forced to watch the whole execution on TV while the guards keep all the old customs. The woman’s appearance is incredibly theatrical: a “figure in the loose grey prison clothing shuffling along, hair tiedback, wrists handcuffed, the femaleguard to either side, the blindfold” (Atwood 2003: 76). As she is accused only of treason, she gets to be shot quite quickly. For more serious crimes, convicts are gassed, hanged, electrocuted or sent in the Painball arena where they are hunted to death. The woman tries to act very bravely in front of the firing squad and looking right into the camera with her defiant blue eyes, she even manages to send her son a goodbye message: “Remember Killer. I love you. Don’t let me down” (*ibidem*: 256).

Political fear does not represent only a source of oppression but it is also one of resistance. In this regard, Hannah Arendt explains that the “treasure” of the resistance movements is “the feeling of freedom and self-discovery that comes not only from opposing tyranny, but also from acting without the guidance of things past, with the conviction that it is one’s actions, and one’s actions only, that stand between darkness and light” (Arendt 1966: 4). Offred reinforces this statement adding that: “I believe in the resistance as I believe there can be no light without shadow; or rather, no shadow unless there is also light” (Atwood 1985: 105). Mayday and Underground Femaleroad are two interconnected resistance groups who sabotage the regime and seem to help people escape. Individually or in groups, the characters of Atwood’s trilogy put up resistance to or rebel against the various systems of control as well. God’s Gardeners, for instance, among others, boycott corporations and help

all sorts of people escape from the Compounds. Their actions are based on the idea that you have to “cast a wide net ... although some of the fish may be small” because, otherwise, “if you tell people there’s nothing they can do, they will do worse than nothing” (Atwood 2009: 246). The idea of resistance counterbalances political fear and signals the idea that people still have a chance as long as they have hope and take action. Beliefs such as the American Exceptionalism can be harmful and deranging, rendering people unable to see the dangers that await them but also easy victims of political fear and its various ways of manifestation.

Conclusion

It is important to underline that the role of *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *The MaddAddam Trilogy* is to raise a collective consciousness and encourage readers, especially teenagers and young adults, to perceive the world they live in from a more responsible perspective and try to make a difference. Margaret Atwood’s intention is not that of criticising the United States for their problems but that of urging them to find a way to correction. Her message is quite clear: “don’t think it can’t happen here, because it already has. When I wrote *The Handmaid’s Tale*, American Exceptionalism was prevalent, but it’s less so now. With Trump, people are starting to see it can happen here” (qtd. in Sabelhaus 2017). Her books, we conclude, are the earthquake meant to shake Americans from the mirage of Exceptionalism and make them responsible of their actions and the political fears which hunt contemporary society.

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The Duality of Knowledge in Lucian Blaga's Poetry. A Cognitive Linguistics Approach

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1. Lucian Blaga's theory on the duality of knowledge

The present paper aims at giving a brief insight into the poetry of one of the most important Romanian poets, Lucian Blaga, representative of modernism, focusing on his philosophical ideas – referring to the duality of knowledge: luciferic and paradisiacal – applied to his poetry, from the linguistic point of view. Mention should be made of the fact that the metaphors in connection with the luciferic and paradisiacal knowledge are analysed from a cognitive point of view.

Lucian Blaga is the creator of a philosophical system which is the backbone of his poetry. One cannot understand his poetry in its depth without fully understanding his philosophical system.

Blaga establishes a clear cut distinction between two types of knowledge which intertwine in any product of a human mind: the *paradisiacal knowledge*, which has only “degrees of abstractions” and the *luciferic knowledge* – “original”, “intense” (Blaga 2013: 359). The paradisiacal knowledge is self-sufficient, its object is complete, whereas the luciferic knowledge causes a crisis in the case of the object, bringing on the idea of mystery: the object is split into two, a part revealing itself, called the *fanic*, the other hiding itself, called the *cryptic* (*ibidem*: 257; 268). A theoretical idea (an attempt, risk) lies at the basis of the luciferic knowledge. If such an idea fails, one can try to reveal the mystery using another idea. By revealing the cryptic part of a mystery, the respective mystery has passed into a second latency, a quite unstable state pointing towards a luciferic crisis. A mystery in its “second latency”¹ is qualitatively attenuated as compared to the opened mystery because the opened mystery was initially represented by its complex and diverse *fanic* and now it is represented by its revealed *cryptic*, which is simpler and more elementary (*ibidem*: 271).

Thus, the object is only a “sign” (*ibidem*: 257) of a hidden mystery, the luciferic knowledge being an attempt to decipher it. The objects of the paradisiacal

¹ According to Blaga, a mystery is never completely revealed because the Great Anonymous prevents human beings to have access to the ultimate truth.

knowledge are “latent mysteries” (*ibidem*: 258): the objects have not been split in two, the fanic and the cryptic, but someone could do that anytime.

2. Blaga’s theory on metaphor

Blaga speaks about the style which wraps the substance of a work of art. This substance, unlike the substance of things in the real world, stands for something else, points to something else, involving “a transfer and a conjugation of terms belonging to different domains” (Blaga 2011: 348). Thus, the respective substance acquires a “metaphoric” character. In this way, Blaga enlarges the significance of metaphor, making a clear-cut distinction between the metaphor as figure of speech and the metaphoric character, as an inner trait of a work of art. Therefore, we can say that Blaga somehow anticipates¹ the cognitive linguistic theory according to which metaphors are no longer seen only as stylistic figures of speech, but as a part of a “conceptual system” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3).

A human being is in a situation which is twice precarious. On the one hand, he / she lives in the concrete world which he / she cannot express with the available structural means and, on the other hand, he / she lives in the horizon of mystery which he / she is unable to reveal. Metaphor becomes an ontological moment which aims at correcting this twofold precarious situation. It has an „ontological purpose” (Blaga 2011: 366), being a “special trait of human destiny” (*ibidem*: 351), requiring all the contemplative efforts of anthropology and metaphysics. It originates in the depth of the unconscious.

Blaga divides metaphors into two types: plasticizing (type I) and revelatory (lucipheric, type II) metaphors.

Plasticizing metaphors are formed by uniting two facts which are more or less similar. This type of metaphors do not enrich the content of the respective facts. They are meant to render a certain fact as good as possible, which cannot be done by using mere words, which are so “anaemic” (*ibidem*: 350). A plasticising metaphor is a „compensatory technique” (in the sense that it compensates and completes the inability of a direct expression), “an organ of rendering the concrete indirectly, instantaneously” (*ibidem*: 351), correcting the fatal disagreement between concrete and abstract. As an organ it appeared inevitably as a natural reaction of a human being against its own imperfection / inability to express the concrete in the best possible way. The genesis of the plasticizing metaphor is a non-historical moment, being in connection with the genesis of the spirituality of the human being. Therefore, the genesis of the plasticising metaphor is a matter of anthropology.

Revelatory metaphors enrich the significance of the facts to which they refer. They are meant to reveal something hidden in connection to the respective facts, a “mystery” making use of the tools given to us by the concrete world, by the sensible

¹ “The genesis of metaphor coincides with the genesis of man” (Blaga 2011: 357).

experience and by the imaginary world. They cancel the common meaning of facts, proposing a new vision. They suspend meanings and proclaim others. They originate in the existence of human beings in the horizon of mystery and revelation, being “the first symptoms of this specific way of existence” (*ibidem*: 358). When man becomes aware of the horizon of mystery, he starts using revelatory metaphors. Blaga is against those metaphors which replace a given object, behaving like a mere riddle, making the respective object or fact taboo because, in this way, they are sterile, a mere intellectual game. They do not try to reveal their hidden mystery or to add something to it. Such metaphors are a duplicate, a double of the respective object or fact. They are an “algebra of images” (*ibidem*: 362), a game with certain rules that can easily be learnt by anyone. Blaga illustrates these “sterile”/ “abusive” metaphors / “metaphors with no message” (*ibidem*: 356) by giving as example the hermetic poetry.

It is very interesting to underline that this theory on metaphors is poetically expressed in a poem considered to be Blaga’s *ars poetica*, *Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii* (*I Will Not Crush the World’s Corolla of Wonders*).

3. Analysing some of Blaga’s metaphors

The mechanism by means of which a metaphor is born has become known as conceptual blending, a revolutionary concept having the capacity to explain how sets of characteristics are mapped across new contexts, where they are blended with other mappings, generating new meanings. Thus, conceptual blending does not only present an unidirectional mapping from source to target, as conceptual metaphor theory does, but shows networks of cross-domain mappings in the process of creating the meaning. Mark Turner points out that conceptual blending is a universal mental function: “The mental operation of combining two mental packets of meaning – two schematic frames of knowledge or two scenarios, for e.g., – selectively and under constraints to create a third packet of meaning that has a new, emergent meaning” (Turner 2002: 10).

Gilles Fauconnier developed the theory of Mental Spaces which explains the creation and mapping of conceptual structures for organising and processing discourse: “The mental space constructions are cognitive; they are not something that is being referred to, but rather something that itself can be used to refer to real, and perhaps imaginary, worlds. And, importantly, they include elements (roles) that do not, and cannot, have direct reference in the world” (Fauconnier 1994: xxvi). Mental spaces are “Representations of the scenes and situations in a given discourse scenario as perceived, imagined, remembered or otherwise understood by the speaker. Mental spaces are used to package information about an interlocutor’s centre of interest within an interactive context” (Oakley, Coulson 2008: 29).

The theory of Mental Spaces is quite appropriate for analyzing Blaga’s poems and the types of metaphors he uses.

3.1. Plasticizing (type I) metaphors are not frequently used by Blaga in his poems. He himself gives the following lines from his poem *Septembrie* (*September*, *ibidem*: 356) as example of type I metaphors: “In the green hour of the forest / forgotten poisons breathe gently”¹. From the cognitive linguistics point of view, *poisons* is a conceptual metaphor². Thus, the following elements can be identified:

- *scents* – target, vehicle, focus space. It is in attribute relation with the base domain.
- *poisons* – source, tenor, base space.
- common features / generic space / ground – olfactive character.
- the blended space (the new emergent understanding); Blaga creates the landscape of a forest in which the smell of the vegetation enchants like a spell, being capable of taking human beings into another world, like a poison. Only the source is present, the target is missing from the text and the readers can easily infer it from the text.

As it can be seen from the above example, this type of metaphor does not enrich the meaning of the target (vehicle) but it is used to support the target (vehicle), to correct its imperfections. There is no deeper meaning to be understood by the readers.

Another example of plasticizing (type I) metaphor is *spears* in the following lines from Blaga’s poem *Pe țărm* (*At the Seaside*) (Blaga 2012: 26): “The rising sun / washes in the sea / its purple spears... ”³. From the cognitive linguistics point of view, *spears* is a conceptual metaphor. Thus, the following elements can be identified:

- *sun rays*: target, vehicle, focus space. It is in attribute relation with the base domain.
- *spears* – source, tenor, base space.
- common features / generic space / ground – elongated and sharp shape.
- the blended space (the new emergent understanding) – Blaga creates a world at sunset in which the colour red prevails.

Only the source is present, the target is missing from the text and the readers can easily infer it from the text. Just like in the above given example, this type of metaphor does not enrich the meaning of the target (vehicle), it does not point to a more profound meaning.

3.2. When the human being awakens, he / she becomes aware of the mystery defining the entire existence. Therefore, he / she starts referring to it by using type II metaphors (revelatory, luciferic), as they enrich the meaning of the ideas they point

¹ Our translation from Romanian. The original verses: “Prin ceasul verde-al pădurii / otrăvuri uitate adie”.

² According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), the first theoretical framework of cognitive semantics, the conceptual structure, which is reflected in the semantic structure, is organized according to conceptual operations (also called conceptual projections), namely cross-domain mappings or correspondences between conceptual domains. The conceptual domains are the target (the domain being described) and the source (the domain in terms of which the target is described).

³ Our translation from Romanian. The original verses: “Soarele în răsărit – de sânge-și spală-n mare / lăncile”.

to. They refer to something hidden, concealed. The ideas to which they point are seen differently, cancelling their common meaning.

In the analysed metaphors, there have been identified three distinct instances of pointing to the mystery:

A. an instance in which the mystery is referred to as being completely sealed, the access to the answers being completely blocked; see below examples (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6).

B. an instance in which the mystery reveals itself but only up a certain point, but never completely; see below examples (7), (8), (9).

C. an instance in which the poet refuses to talk about the mystery, for fear not to harm it in any way by using words and thus, he / she turns it into an even greater mystery; see below examples (10), (11), (12). Maybe, in this way, Blaga urges each and every human being to his / her own contemplation and partial revelation of the mystery. Each individual must find his / her own answers for the “great riddle” (*ibidem*: 19). Or, maybe, Blaga does not completely trust the capacity of words to express the ultimate truth, resorting to a silence suffused with meanings.

- (1) “Flora arches deeply / over a whole fairy-tale” (*ibidem*: 106)¹.
- (2) “there is no noise in the sky from the stars” (*ibidem*: 110)².
- (3) “Behold, there is night, with no windows facing outside” (*ibidem*: 104)³.
- (4) “the waters in wells / refuse their buckets” (*ibidem*: 138)⁴.
- (5) “The dove of the Holy Ghost / passes through neighbour-suns, / extinguishing with its bill the last lights” (*ibidem*: 138).⁵
- (6) “I carry / in my soul / [...] wonders of darkness. / But I can’t see them, / I have too much Sun in me / that’s why I can’t see them” (*ibidem*: 31)⁶
- (7) “there are ploughs, ploughs, countless ploughs: / huge black birds / which have descended from the sky on the ground” (*ibidem*: 107)⁷.
- (8) “The sky abandons itself to the waters below” (*ibidem*: 106)⁸.
- (9) “Behold, stars get into the world” (*ibidem*: 104)⁹.

¹ Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “Frunzare se boltesc adânci / peste o-ntreagă poveste”.

² Our translation from Romanian. The original verses: “nicio larmă nu fac stelele-n cer”.

³ Our translation from Romanian. The original verses: “Iată e noapte fără ferestre-n afară”.

⁴ Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “apele din fântâni / refuză gălețile lor”.

⁵ Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “Trece printre sori vecini / porumbelul Sfântului Duh, / cu pliscul stinge cele din urmă lumini”.

⁶ Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “(...) eu port / în suflet / minunile-ntunericului. / Dar nu le văd, / am prea mult soare-n mine / de-aceia nu le văd”.

⁷ Our translation from Romanian. The original verses: “Pluguri, pluguri...: / mari paseri negre / ce-au coborât din cer pe pământ”.

⁸ Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “Cerul se dăruiește apelor de jos”.

⁹ Our translation from Romanian. The original verses: “Stelele intră în lume”.

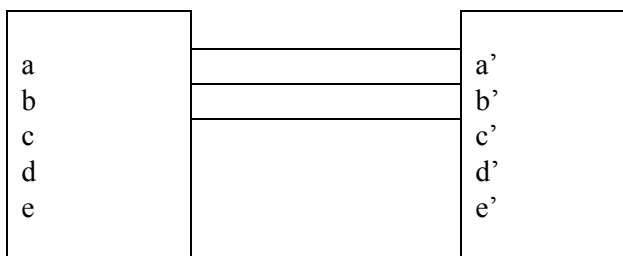
- (10) “I will not crush the world’s corolla of wonders” (*ibidem*: 19)¹.
 (11) “I stop with my fist all the springs, / forever silent / silent”. (*ibidem*: 106)².
 (12) “With the words quenched in my mouth / I sang and still sing the great passing, / the sleep of mankind, the wax angels. / From one shoulder to the other/ in silence I pass my star like a stone”³

A (1)

From the cognitive linguistics point of view, *fairy-tale* is a conceptual metaphor. Thus, the following elements can be identified:

- *the Absolute* – target, vehicle, focus space. It is in attribute relation with the base domain.
- *fairy-tale* – source, tenor, base space.
- common features / generic space / ground – deeper meaning requiring an effort to be deciphered.
- the blended space (the new emergent understanding) – Blaga creates a world with deep hidden meanings. Everything has a deep essence which is concealed. This essence is the divine element, the matrix existing in everything and carrying a mystery. Only the source is present, the target is missing from the text and the readers have to make an effort of understanding it.

The above example can also be seen from the point of view of the discourse world theory, which considers the cognitive tracking of entities, relations and processes to be a mental space (Stockwell 2007: 96). In order to understand and represent reality, Blaga builds a mental space which contains mental representations of everything that can be perceived in real space (also called *base space*). Blaga’s poem is a blended space, a space that combines the other spaces and which has specific features emerging from the mapping. The stages that can be referred to are: cross-space mapping, generic space and blend.



¹Translation from Romanian by Andrei Codrescu (<https://beautifulrailwaybridgeofthe-silverytay.wordpress.com/2012/03/02/i-will-not-crush-the-worlds-corolla-of-wonders/>). The original verses: “Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii”.

²Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “Închid cu pumnul toate izvoarele, / pentru totdeauna să tacă, / să tacă.”.

³ Translation from Romanian by Don Eulert, Ștefan Avădanei, Mihail Bogdan (1975); the original verses: “Cu cuvinte stinse în gură / am cântat și mai cant marea trecere, / somnul lumii, îngerii de ceară. / De pe-un umăr pe altul / trecând îmi trec steaua ca o povară”.

Base Space / Real Space /
Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM)

a = fairy-tale, as magical story

b = Sun

c =beasts

d =forests

Projected Hypothetical Space/
Fictional Space / Blend

a' = fairy-tale as THE Tale, the Absolute

b' = Sun

c' = beasts

d' = forests etc.

In the base space (real space), there are basic level categories and objects. It is a familiar representation of life, with familiar entities and familiar structure: burden beasts, celestial bodies, forests etc. In this space, fairy-tale is understood as a magical story.

The generic space contains the commonalities of the two spaces, namely common general nodes and relationships across the spaces.

In the projected hypothetical space / blend, Blaga creates a world that seems to be like the Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM) but, however, it is an entirely different world. In this fictional space, there is a Tale of everything pointing to the Absolute, which has a matrix in everything, but it is impossible to decipher it because of the “transcendental censorship” (Blaga 2015: 130). The Absolute is encoded (“fairy-tale“). In Blaga’s poem, burden beasts carry it, the Sun also has it, but it is hidden etc. **a'**, **b'**, **c'** are counterparts of **a**, **b**, **c** in the base space.

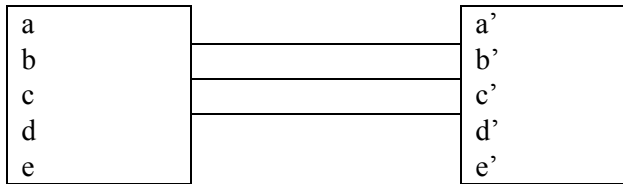
In the same way, the words *noise* (2) does not refer to the common idea of *noise* as disturbing, unpleasant sound but it refers to the Absolute. The words *windows* (3), *waters* (4), *lights* (5) and *wonders of darkness* (6) also point to the Absolute.

B (7)

From the cognitive linguistics point of view, *ploughs* is a conceptual metaphor. Thus, the following elements can be identified:

- *the Absolute* – target, vehicle, focus space. It is in attribute relation with the base domain.
- *ploughs*– source, tenor, base space.
- common features / generic space / ground – dissemination.
- the blended space (the new emergent understanding) – Blaga creates a world in which human beings are rather alienated. The only possible cure for their painful alienation seems to be a coming back to the origins. In the “furrows” of the past centuries people could find glimpses of the absolute truth.

The target is missing from the text and the readers have to make an effort of understanding, only the source being present. The above example can also be seen from the point of view of the discourse world theory. In order to understand and represent reality, Blaga builds a mental space which contains mental representations of everything that can be perceived in real space (also called *base space*). Blaga’s poem is a blended space, a space that combines the other spaces and which has specific features emerging from the mapping. The stages that can be referred to are: cross-space mapping, generic space and blend.



Base Space / Real Space /
Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM)

a = ploughs as farming implements

b = fields

c = pear trees in bloom

d = furrows as trenches in the ground

Projected Hypothetical Space/
Fictional Space / Blend

a' = ploughs as the vehicles for revealing
the Absolute

b' = fields

c' = pear trees in bloom

d' = furrows as partially revealed parts of
the Absolute

In the base space (real space), there are basic level categories and objects. It is a familiar representation of life, with familiar entities and familiar structure. Thus, there are ploughs as farming implements, fields, flowering pear trees, furrows as trenches in the ground etc. In this space, the ploughs are understood as vehicles for revealing the Absolute.

The generic space contains the commonalities of the two spaces, namely common general nodes and relationships across the spaces.

In the projected hypothetical space / blend, Blaga creates a world that seems to be like the Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM) but, however, it is an entirely different world. In this fictional space, the entire world can be cured by going back to traditions, by finding the signs of the Absolute deeply hidden in the ploughed fields. In Blaga's poem, **a'**, **b'**, **c'** are counterparts of **a**, **b**, **c** in the base space.

In the same way, in example (8), the word *sky* does not refer to the common idea of *sky* as outer space. It points to the Absolute, to the idea of Truth. In example (9), the word *stars* does not refer to the common idea of *stars* as incandescent bodies, but it refers to the Absolute.

C (10)

From the cognitive linguistics point of view, *corolla of wonders* is a conceptual metaphor. Thus, the following elements can be identified:

- *the Absolute* – target, vehicle, focus space. It is in attribute relation with the base domain.

- *corolla of wonders* – source, tenor, base space.

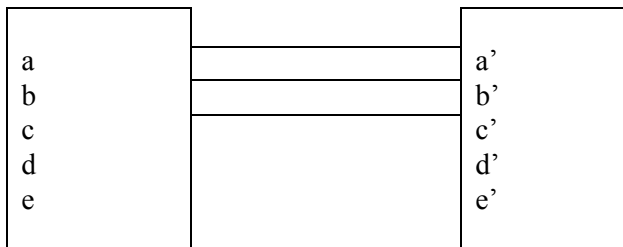
- common features / generic space / ground – extraordinary character.

- the blended space (the new emergent understanding) – Blaga creates a world full of mysteries. Nothing is what it seems to be. The truth lies beyond the surface of all things

The target is missing from the text and the readers have to make an effort of understanding, only the source being present. The readers can also identify an entire

chain of conceptual metaphors in which the source / tenor / base is represented by the following: *deep magic* (hidden in the profound darkness), *enigma*, *mysteries of night*, *darkening horizon*, *riddle*.

The above example can also be seen from the point of view of the discourse world theory, which refers to a mental space made up of cognitive tracking of entities, relations and processes. Blaga's poem is a blended space, a space that combines the other spaces and which has specific features emerging from the mapping. The stages that can be referred to are: cross-space mapping, generic space and blend.



Base Space / Real Space /
Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM)
a = wonders as out of the ordinary facts
b = eyes

c = lips

d =grave

Projected Hypothetical Space/
Fictional Space / Blend
a' = corolla of wonders as the Absolute
b' = eyes carrying the mystery of the Absolute
c' = lips carrying the mystery of the Absolute
d' = graves carrying the mystery of the Absolute

In the base space (real space), there are basic level categories and objects. It is a familiar representation of life, with familiar entities and familiar structure. Thus, there are extraordinary facts, eyes, lips, graves etc. In this space, *the world's corolla of wonders* is understood as the representation of the Absolute.

The generic space contains the commonalities of the two spaces, namely common general nodes and relationships across the spaces.

In the projected hypothetical space / blend, Blaga creates a world that seems to be like the Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM) but, however, it is an entirely different world. In this fictional space, the entire world is a mystery which must not be destroyed by rationality. It cannot be understood using the intellect, as the mind can alter it, can damage it severely. It is a paradoxical world, in which the light of rationality brings darkness, not revelations: "The light of others / Drowns the deep magic hidden / in the profound darkness". In Blaga's poem, **a'**, **b'**, **c'** are counterparts of **a**, **b**, **c** in the base space.

In example (11), the word *springs* refers to the Absolute, in the same way as *star* (12) also points to the Absolute.

Extremely suggestive for Blaga's conception of luciferic knowledge is example (12). The metaphor "words quenched in my mouth" points to Blaga's disbelief in the power of words and also to his idea that the Absolute Truth must be concealed not revealed. Maybe the poet tells us we can only live and feel the Absolute in a secret communion with it. The difficulty of living without having access to the Absolute is wrapped in silence. The metaphor of the star passed from one shoulder to another points to the Christian doctrine of the cross. The destiny of human beings is to toil in their attempt to understand deeper reasons. There are only partial revelations, at the most.

Conclusion

Blaga's philosophical distinction between the paradisiacal and the luciferic knowledge can be tracked down into the metaphors he uses in his poetry. Therefore, one can identify two types of metaphors: plasticizing (type I) and revelatory (luciferic, type II) metaphors. The plasticizing (type I) metaphors are seldom used in Blaga's poetry. They are meant to express a notion better, but without enriching its meaning. In the examples quoted, the target (vehicle, focus space) is missing but it can easily be inferred from the text. The revelatory (luciferic, type II) metaphors prevail, this being a proof of the philosophical character of Blaga's poetry. They enrich the significance of the facts to which they refer, aiming at revealing something hidden: the greatest mystery of all, the absolute meaning of everything. This type of metaphor occurs naturally when people become aware of the fact that they live in the horizon of the mystery.

In the analysis of the revelatory (luciferic, type II) metaphors, there have been identified three distinct instances of pointing to the mystery: an instance in which the mystery is referred to as being completely sealed, the access to the answers being completely blocked; an instance in which the mystery reveals itself but only up a certain point, but never completely; an instance in which the poet refuses to talk about the mystery, for fear not to harm it in any way by using words and thus, he / she turns it into an even greater mystery.

The cognitive linguistic analysis is appropriate to explore the unique characteristics of this type of metaphors. It reveals the fact that the target (vehicle, focus space) is, in the examples quoted, the Absolute, and it is always missing from the text (the readers being faced with the difficulty of realizing what the target is), whereas the source (tenor, base) is every time an impressive, out of the ordinary choice from the part of the poet. The blended space is, in all cases, a world with deep hidden meanings. The essence, the Absolute, is concealed and, at the same time, present in every single being and thing. From the point of view of the discourse world theory, it can be concluded that Blaga builds a mental space that seems to be like the Idealised Conceptual Model (ICM) but, however, it is an entirely different world. In this fictional space, the world is impregnated with the Absolute. The real awakening of every human being consists in starting to look for the Absolute in his / her own life as well as in the world around.

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Ethnopsycholinguistic Aspects of Bulgarian and Slavonic-Based Cognitive Models of the World

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1. Introduction

People grow in a way similar to that of nations, first passing through childhood, then adolescence, at last to become or not to become adults. Some nations wither at the crisis of growth, some have not passed it and keep staying very young, almost unborn in their understanding of the world. Cognition is pre-modelled by our belonging to a specific culture, and as recent research on linguistic and cultural relativity managed to prove, it is in many and particular routes influenced by language. In fact, language affects the way we think by drawing our attention to specific facts and their arrangement; it also shapes the mode of our thinking.

This article focuses on Bulgarian and Russian interrelated, akin and mutually influencing conceptualization of the world, based on the shared foundations of old Bulgarian (also called Church Slavonic) grammar, vocabulary and letters. At the time of Russian acceptance to both Christianity and letters from Bulgaria, the two languages are practically one and the same in their written form. Thus, they initiate and develop a similar cognitive interest predominantly to the spiritual and subjective world, to the soul and moral compass, which becomes an axis of orientation for both nations.

Later, in the period of our liberation from Turkish reign, we have the reverse process: a great amount of Russian words is introduced into Bulgarian, but most of them have the same meanings, forms and even formation principles as those of Bulgarian, due to our shared linguistic past – that of old Bulgarian.

Most recently, the two languages have less intensive contacts but pass through one and the same transformation: the exclusively high intensity of being exposed to English. The latter will hardly be a problem, unless we were talking not about mutual Bulgarian-Russian or Russian-Bulgarian influences, but about the impact of English on both of them.

In previous articles, there was outlined a principle, a key difference between Bulgarian and English worldviews, in what the two languages build their world on. It was proved that objective reality and material status quo is of primary interest to cultures using English as their language of thinking. On the contrary, Bulgarian is interested in subjective reality and the natural capacity of man to create, given to him

through language, by means of the Word. So, an orientation of knowing through creating, of approaching every single item as deserving of our care and attention would be prevalent. As previously discussed (Dimova 2018), the existential orientation of Bulgarian language and societies is in the modus of wisdom.

2. Cognitive model's core: a tale of two language-based cultures

In the globalized world of today, the number and variety of constructed realities increase almost with the speed and precision of updating software. But deep inside, there stays a stabile conceptual core, allowing us to function as human beings, able to withstand anything.

Cognitive linguistics with its agile apparatus of analysis gives an abundance of precise details of the two languages' cognitive models and conceptualizations. In this article though, we are more concerned with the bigger picture, and search for the impetus that gives life to both cultures and nations.

According to the *lacuna theory*¹, there are semantic gaps in intercultural communication that make the understanding of the foreign culture difficult, sometimes questionable. *Lacunae* are an ethnopsycholinguistic phenomenon showing how languages differ in their cognitive structures. Ethnopsycholinguistics deals with culture and language specific codes characterizing the identity of a culture thus being able to precisely recognize collective from constructed identity.

Appropriate for our analysis are the new words in both languages, investigated over three periods of crucial importance to both nations and cultures: Russia's christening and accepting Bulgarian letters in order to consolidate into an independent and literate nation; Bulgaria's liberation from Ottoman rule with the help of Russia, and the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century.

The cultures and languages of Bulgaria and Russia prove to be language-based with most of its achievements having their roots in a shared Old Bulgarian model of cognition. The latter is formed in a very sensitive to foreign influences way (because of unprecedented foreign hostility). This model for survival of our kingdom and nation had to be organized entirely on the basis of self-reliance and since the character of the culture, civilization and language is that of respect to God and creation, it looked in a direction predominantly peaceful, creative, wise, good for all people. This direction is that of letters, knowledge, and wisdom. Taken as a positive Bulgarian influence on Russian language and culture, it is returned later by Russians in either a favourable manner, or with harm not exceeding the extent above which it would cause the death of language, culture and nation. It's normal, in a family, you are more likely to support, take care or withdraw at a normal distance from your kin when you're not needed. Especially if you belong to the cultures that are complete in themselves, reliant on their own resources and efforts, responsible and seeking the approval of God.

¹ The *Lacunae Theory* is the main area of research in Russian ethnopsycholinguistics. Yuri Sorokin derived the term *lacuna* from contrastive lexicology to develop it into an ethnopsycholinguistic research category.

Such cultures feel comfortable in their own company. They would defend what is theirs and would hardly look for what does not belong to them. They would be open-hearted, honest and straight, their only problem being they see the world from their point of view. And here comes the other worldview to remind us we can be tricked, neglected, lied to, disrespected, taken possession of in ways looking clever, witty, yet immoral. Also, here comes the hint that the foreign principle of structuring knowledge, as well as the type of cognition valid under different from our living conditions would more often inflict loss and pain than anything else. The long history of Bulgarians has proved so throughout the centuries.

Most naturally, the two Slavonic languages represent not only a very close inclination as far as their choice of cognitive objects is concerned. They could be also named as invariants or two variants of one and the same unity, a whole. This statement is proved by the almost identical meanings, forms and language of Old Bulgarian and Russian manuscripts. The cognitive unity of Bulgarian and Russian letters is based on Old Bulgarian, apparently the “adult” in the group. In fact, without Old Bulgarian cognition, Slavonic would be qualified as unborn, and so it proves considering our too often childish reactions and states of mind. Or was I unjust saying “our”? We, as Bulgarians, are a part of the Slavonic perspective, but were far from being childish and unaware, from the earliest times of our existence as a nation and state. Otherwise, there should not be the growth and revival of our nation and state always in one and the same way: by means of the Word, through letters, knowledge, spirit and morality. From the time of Tsar Boris I till now this is our code, the code coming from old Thracians, who are Bulgarians, as Greek, Roman and Western European chronicles remind us.

In fact, there could hardly be traced lacunas of crucial importance in the period of Old Bulgarian’s usage as the literary language of both nations. The other period observed is the second half of the 19th century, the period of Bulgaria’s becoming an independent and free nation again. Most naturally, the influence of the liberator’s language is felt in Bulgarian. As our prominent linguist L. Andreichin points out, the role of an important mediator for the perception of Russian elements in our language plays, as already noted, Old Bulgarian / Church Slavonic language whose lexical wealth was well-known to literate Bulgarians during Bulgarian Revival (Andreichin 1986). It contains examples of almost all categories of words. Chronologically, Church Slavonic precedes Russian and prepares the ground for it. Russian words then were absolutely clear, accessible and natural to all Bulgarians, being composed of elements, which exist in Bulgarian as its structural elements. It is important to note the fact that the influence of Russian on Bulgarian is predominantly felt in its literary rather than colloquial form. Also, the lexical fields were very close to what we once gave Russia: letters, knowledge, education, government and culture. This fact made it easier for us to choose and allow the acceptance of words essential to our language. In the process of assuming Russian words we were given the right, time and choice what and how to take, which is not exactly the transformation our language underwent in the third of the observed periods.

3. A cognitive or identity-taking transfer?

For less than half a century similar processes affect our two akin languages and cultures. Limiting our cognitive, linguistic and identity perspective to adopting a foreign one, which is moreover opposite and destructive to our natural cognitive development perspective. We have been cast in the midst of a strange value system, designed for us, devastating both nations and forced into a constructed identity, confronting Bulgarian / Russian collective identity and cognitive interests.

How was the constructed identity built? Through devising the myth of our objective incompetence to deal with the material world. Well-to-do cultures, nations and linguistic realities interpreted a material organization that they presented as suiting our abilities while they themselves were explaining to us ourselves in terms of their limited or biased knowledge of who we are and how we think. They chose the segment of reality the most uninteresting to us – the material world and represented it as a dream fulfilled of what we really cared about: wisdom, justice, withstanding, love, family. Thus we had to think through a cognitive dissonance. Such a dissonance existed in the main, essential to our newly constructed worldview terminology. It was both a linguistic, cognitive and cultural dissonance. Predictably, the orientation of this lexical transfer was the material world's organization, our material world's organization. Thus, *стопанство и хозяйство* became *economics or economy*, directly accepted, only transliterated in Cyrillic. These two words though, mean an entirely different underlying principle of organization, confronting both the creative and wise principle being inherent in the Bulgarian concept, and the principle of mastering, knowing best, teaching which is inherent in the Russian term. In the English version, etymologically precise comes the meaning of “separated household, organized well” but under initially undefined principles.

In our quest for a definition to the gist of the abundance of English words in a period of less than 50 years (which would be enough to form one stage of a cycle in the development of a civilization), we discover that foreign words are strictly and correctly recognized as such, also the origin is easy to trace. It is not so with the so-called new words. Their origin is not always announced, though they sound English and are direct transliterations of the English words. It would be more accurate to say that these are not new words, but foreign words, written in Cyrillic. From words of semantic transfer in the course of translation or communication, the new words tend to opt for a definitive and restructuring our thinking and society function.

If we are successors to what was most justly called “Bulgaria as the state of the spirit”¹, what would our organizational opposition be? Perhaps the state of materialism as being and existing predominantly in the material. The severe troubles Bulgarian collective identity underwent during this shift in cognition, culture and prevailing language could be bravely defined as linguistic, because all the stages of its development could be discerned and motivated by the essence uncovered through

¹ D. Likhachev at the I International Congress of Bulgarian Studies defined Bulgaria as “the state of the spirit”.

language. The shift we were emerged into comes from a culture and language opposite and destructive to ours since this language and culture imported to us do live and prosper based on the surroundings of foreign components, whereas ours live and thrive in natural, congenial, close or friendly surroundings. It lives well in itself, badly in other territories, encircled by people who are ill-disposed and strongly-biased to them.

Most naturally, it will be expected and history proved so, that when we have the freedom to choose and organize reality according to our understanding of it, when we live in but not driven out of ourselves, we progress in every aspect, especially in the spiritual and cultural ones, where our true self exists. So, the most recent of the analyzed periods could be characterized by a covert opposition to our collective from the cognitive model of the world constructed for us, our collective versus constructed identity. It is not mere lexical or semantic, not even cultural transfer, it is an existential one, masked by that of everyday, normal, “civilized” living. The case of the recent development to the Russian cognitive model of the world is in many ways different. Their language is confronted with the same flood of new English words as depicted in Russian dictionaries of new foreign words, but they have built a very strong and resourceful school of ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics and all the differences of the cultural, cognitive and linguistic code, encountered daily, are being strictly analyzed, researched, defined and paid attention to.

To learn, to progress through knowledge, to always understand and be aware, to organize the world according to our linguistic, spiritual, Christian principles is what we discover developed and put to life in Russian ethnopsycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and awareness of true vs constructed cognitive models. The first impulse of knowledge and wisdom, that shaped and still shapes the outlines of both our cultures and civilizations.

Conclusion

In their growth, people and nations develop in different dimensions of reality and capture different parts of the world’s variegated picture. For those, inspired by the creative impulse of letters, wisdom, spirit and knowledge, a shared universe is that of mutual understanding, support, help and love indeed. Such is the case of the Bulgarian and Russian vision of what is important here, on earth, what needs our attention and should be explored and learned. Bulgarian and Russian cognitive models of the world share the direction of their cognitive interests and both languages and cultures have played beneficial effect on one another. They face very similar problems and look for their creative solutions through language and cognition. Wisdom, with its warmth, light, softness, withstanding and love, is what frees us and makes us stronger and true, once that we meet the cognitive universe of Bulgarian and Russian languages, cultures and nations.

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Herman Melville's Ismail and Ishmael: *Moby-Dick* in Islamic and Arabic Eyes

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1. Introduction: Melville and religion

Any approach of the Arab Melville starts from the assumption that, at each stage of its development, language reflects the principles of the analogous stage of the development of a given culture's dominant metanarratives: it is both its medium and its product. The "linguistic worldview," encoded in narratives, rests upon categories determining shared comprehension of the logic of the world and the universe, and one's own place in it: the pace and direction of the transformations in language are the measure of cultural change. The central objective of the present study is to shed light upon the uniqueness of the "Arab Melville," in the prism of which the essential differences between the linguistic worldview of Islam and that of Christianity become most clearly visible.

Melville is one of the authors who has best taken the measure of the perilous moral situation of modern man: a being dazzled by his own success, to the point that he has come to believe that all true knowledge is of the same nature that the knowledge which has been so successful in the conquest of the world; a man who lives in ignorance of himself, and imagines that the monsters of legends, myths, were the products of naivety and credulity, when they were, on the contrary, the expression of the knowledge that the Ancients possessed on the abysses of their own heart. Melville undertook to search these abysses.

The stories he tells often have a maritime context. But the watery part of the world that at the beginning of *Moby-Dick* the narrator announces his resolution to go exploring, is not so much the sea that the boats crisscross, or that the oceanographers study, but that of which the Apocalypse speaks, of which it is said that, on the earth recreated after the end of time, it will have disappeared. It is the place of rebellious, monstrous powers, elementary elements, the irreducibly wild and uncontrolled part of the human heart. The Enlightenment thought to dispel the darkness but they only illuminated a surface, marrying the reliefs that remain shaped by powers they do not know anything about.

However, while the ancient Gnostics sought the good out of this world, abandoned to the evil forces, and turned to the God who would release them, Ahab, modern as he is despite his Biblical name and his Shakespearean tirades, intends to

purge this world of everything that resists the mastery, the grip of which the white whale is for him the emblem. He is the man of radical solutions, decisive, and which embark the whole humanity, whose motley crew of his ship is the representative, in his mad enterprise. He does not realize, except in lightning, that the immured is not only outside of him, in the whale, but also in his own heart, in passions of which he becomes totally the instrument while he hopes to attain mastery by killing his prey. That he was tied to the monster he wanted to eliminate is the symbol of an ambition of total control which, in seeking to satisfy itself, precipitates the man in what he was hoping to escape from.

“Call me Ishmael”, says the narrator on the doorstep of *Moby-Dick*. Ishmael is the one who, in Abraham’s eyes, was none the less rejected in the desert, who did not belong to the chosen offspring. In this rejection, Melville sees the emblem of the divisions which religion establishes, and solidifies, between men, instead of bringing them together, between Jews and non-Jews, later between Christians and pagans, the emblem of these gatherings that it creates at the cost of exclusion. Melville understands that the *Bible* is not one of those books that he was trying to reject, ignore, or philosophize to get out of it, and that to struggle with it in a consistent way and wonder what can be done at his level.

In *Moby-Dick*, the writer explored the limits of the Calvinist doctrine concerning the innate depravity of mankind, the power of the free will, the principle of determinism, and the limits of knowledge and self-knowledge. In *Moby-Dick and Calvinism* (1977), T. Walter Herbert Jr. displays some traditional concepts about Melville’s religion in terms of his inner conflicts towards several doctrines in Calvin dogma:

Melville’s religious conflict includes his perplexities regarding the specific traditions of religious belief that his culture made available to him; but it also involves his confrontation with the possibility of final unmeaning, the confrontation that is native to religious thought (Herbert 1977: 4).

Commenting on Herbert’s book in 2008, Cyrus Patell sees in it a demonstration of “ideological literary criticism” and neo-historicism, by which text and context must be approached together in their interactions: Melville could not escape the context of his education, his church, and the debates of his time, but he uses these materials to make a work of art, and, according to Patell, to brag about, in counterpoint, the virtues of “cosmopolitanism” (Patell 2008: np).

The Calvinist doctrine is marked by the notion of an “original fault”, which the people of God must expiate by following the precepts of the divine messages; as for the individual, his life is largely predestined, the possibilities for improving it are very limited. Some thought that slavery was the original fault that Melville pointed to in *Moby-Dick*. For others, it is in the unbridled expansionism, in the westward march, or in the overexploitation of nature, that this original and collective fault lies. This Calvinistic background explains Melville’s use of *Bible* in most of his literary works attributed to his early education life among a family that had adopted Calvin’s doctrine.

2. *Moby-Dick* and Islam

Moby Dick is a symbolic compendium dealing with religious and philosophical themes discussed in the time of Melville between American transcendentalists and philosophers of German Romanticism. It is a maze loaded with quotes and references. There is no doubt that religious elements pervade the 566 pages of *Moby-Dick* of the 1950 American edition. One of the first evidences of the influence of religion in the work is in the fact that Melville frequently speaks of the beliefs and religious practices of the members of the crew of the Pequod. The Pequod is like a microcosm navigating the sea of life, transporting people of the most diverse nationalities and religious tendencies. In fact, the Pequod transports humanity through the ocean of existence. Referring to the variety of religious beliefs and practices, Ishmael says:

I say, we good Presbyterian Christians should be charitable in these things, and not fancy ourselves so vastly superior to other mortals, pagans and what not, because of their half-crazy conceits on these subjects. There was Queequeg, now, certainly entertaining the most absurd notions about Yojo and his Ramadan; [...] All our arguing with him would not avail; let him be, I say: and Heaven have mercy on us all – Presbyterians and Pagans alike – for we are all somehow dreadfully cracked about the head, and sadly need mending (Melville 1851: 91).

As for the variety of religious practices present in *Moby-Dick*, it is observed that, in a curious way, Melville mixes elements of different religious traditions into one person, supposedly adept of a single creed. In other words: Melville describes a kind of religious syncretism in some of the crew of the Pequod. In chapter 17, *The Ramadan*, Queequeg is presented as observing the fast of Ramadan, one of the obligations of every Muslim (*ibidem*: 91-97). Interestingly, at the beginning of the narrative, Queequeg had been introduced as a “pagan,” who worshiped his “Congo idol” (*ibidem*: 25). It is perceived that Melville makes a true amalgam of religious beliefs: a Polynesian worshiper of an idol of African origin (Melville was certainly aware that Congo is not in Polynesia), but at the same time observes a Muslim religious practice. Although not absolutely impossible, it was at least highly unlikely that there would be a Muslim Polynesian in the mid-nineteenth century. The same goes for the mysterious character named Fedallah, a crew member feared by other sailors. In Chapter 73 *Flask and Stubb...*, two sailors, Flask and Stubb, are talking and refer to Fedallah as “the devil in disguise” (*ibidem*: 362). Fedallah is described as a Parsee, that is, a “Persian”, an adept of Zoroastrianism. The curious thing is that the noun *Fedallah* itself is the corruption of *Fadl-allā*, a very common Arab name among Muslims, which means “God’s grace”.

The expected references to Islam are scarce, and we can only consider them in connection to Orientalism. However, we can analyze such references in terms of

the characters' names and occasional allusions. And the most powerful allusion is found in the third word of the most famous opening, "Call me *Ishmael*" – Ishmael, being a much revered character in the tradition of Islam: he was the son of Abraham, listed by the *Qur'an* among the Prophets, the son meant to be sacrificed, and one of the builders of the Ka'ba. By choosing this verse from the *Qur'an*, "Commemorate Ishmael in the Book. He was true of his promise, and a messenger, and a prophet. He enjoined on his household worship and zakat, and he was obedient to his Lord" (*Al-Qur'an* 19: 54-55), Elijah Plymesser concludes that

the legacy of Ishmael is a debate between Islam, Judaism and Christianity that will likely never be reconciled. The following paragraphs will take a look at the theological arguments for and against Ishmael's prominence and a few of their sources. Due to the chronology of the three faiths and Judaism and Christianity's already established tradition and cementing of Isaac's place in the Bible there is far less criticism on Islam's view of Ishmael (Plymesser 2010: np).

3. Foreignization and domestication

In 1965, the reputed Palestinian scholar Iḥsān 'Abbās published his own translation of *Moby-Dick* into Arabic and, in doing so, he positioned himself as an empirical reader of Melville's *Moby-Dick*, whose own

Mūbi Dīk could even be read as covert elegy for homelands lost, with Queequeg's own fated death at sea representing a bereavement that poignantly touches not only fictional Ishmael, but extends also to historical 'Abbās, the translator who himself 'wept in silence' as he prepared to leave behind his beloved Sudan, propelled forward to other exilic lands (Einboden 2013: 121).

When such a famous scholar like Iḥsān 'Abbās proposes to translate a novel from the language of a people who once ruled the seas and oceans of the world in the language of another people intimately connected to the realities of life in the desert and a predominantly oral and lyrical literature, then he performs a cultural transfer, inevitably subjecting the original text to a process of foreignizing and domestication – to use the principles formulated by Umberto Eco. *Moby-Dick* was taken mostly as a result of "the translator's own forced experience of exile and nomadism", apart from the American writer's declared fascination with the East. Though rightly considered a landmark of Arabic translation, it was not the work of a professional translator but of a scholar and author whose utmost purpose was to show "that modern Arabic was fully capable of meeting even the most difficult of translation challenges and of expressing the most complex concepts and ideas of other cultures" (*ibidem*: 101).

However, there is the reverse of the process: 'Abbās had to find a way to deal with another linguistic problem: finding an acceptable way to deal with the Anglicized Arabic (or Islamic) terms used by Melville, and which he had to restore to their original shape – a process by which these words lost the oriental flavor they had acquired in *Moby-Dick*. One solution was to use quotation marks in order to draw attention to the words' foreignness. As regards religious terms, both Judeo-Christian and Islamic, that Melville was familiar with from his readings of Orientalist studies, the translator decided to use replacements, often neutral in meaning in order to avoid any ambiguities and misunderstandings.

Fluent both in English and Arabic, Iḥsān 'Abbās bridges two metanarratives, yet, operating in Arabic, he produces a text that functions in the context of the metanarrative organized in accordance with the principles of Islam. There was another serious challenge to the translator: rendering those terms that had already entered the source language (English) into the target language (Arabic) that already has them, sometimes with slightly different meanings. How would a readership of native speakers of Arabic react to such a situation? It is again a case of adapting (or even) transferring elements of the source language to the source language, a process in which the Arabic words were first Anglicized through a process of domestication and made their way into the English language. Discovered by 'Abbās in Melville's text, the words were subject to a process of foreignization, which the translator showed by writing these words between inverted comas. For example, the word harem – also discussed in detail in Einboden's study – used by Melville to describe the social structure of a whale's family, is normally rendered by 'Abbās using the Arabic term *الحريم* which he prefers to insert in his text by using the Arabic way of quotation – '(الحريم)' – quite unusual even for an Arabic readership. In *Chart 1* we have shown the cycling and re-cycling of Arabic words from Melville's original text, to 'Abbās' translation and his rendition to his Arabic readership. It was the translator's way of "foreignizing" a common Arabic word, making it obvious to his readers that this is the word Melville himself had preferred in order to give an Oriental flavor to his own text. Indeed, Arabization is not a translation. Translation is the transfer of meaning and style from one language to another, while Arabization is the drawing of a foreign word in Arabic letters, which is known as the literal; or, the literal is the writing of the words of a language in other language characters, and the method followed is the same method used by the ancient Arabs, which is unmatched in Arabic with its similar pronunciation: the Arabic letters.

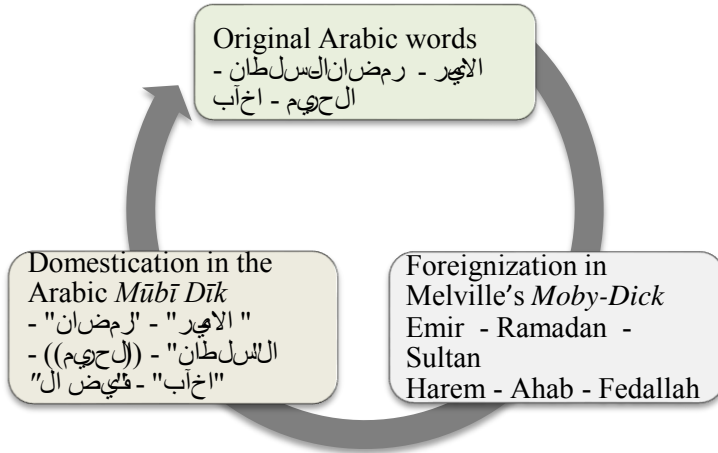


Chart 1

From foreignization to domestication in Iḥsān 'Abbās' *Mūbī Dīk*

4. From Ismael to Ishmael

The narrator's opening words of the novel, "Call me Ishmael", are generally considered to make one of the most famous openings of a novel in world literature, having triggered numerous interpretations and even different versions in the translations of the novel in other languages. As regards the translations in Arabic, there are two published versions thus far: the first one is the 1965 canonical text of Iḥsān 'Abbās (republished in 1998), followed by a more recent translation of Aden Amari (2015). Of these two versions, the second one is much closer to the English original, as the translator chooses a formula that could be roughly rendered as "My call (is) Ishmael", or "a way to call me is Ishmael". Iḥsān 'Abbās chose to insert this famous statement into a longer, more complex sentence that explains the circumstances that determined the narrator to embark on his sea adventure.

What interests us most are the instances when the translation sounds differently, or even conveys a meaning that is slightly different from the original: for example, the Portuguese Ishmael allows the readers to call him by that name, the Polish simply announces what his name is, while the Japanese seems to offer a temporary solution for those who want to address him properly [see Table 1 below]. What follows is a comparative presentation of the first paragraph of the novel, and its rendering in Arabic. Here is Melville's original:

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago – never mind how long precisely – having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world (Melville 1851: 1).

Nr.	Language	Translation	Meaning in English	Remarks
1.	Romanian	“Spuneți-mi Ishmael”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
2.	French	“Appelez-moi Ismaël”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
3.	German	“Nenne mich Ismael”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
4.	Spanish	“Lamadme Ismael”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
5.	Portuguese	“Podes me chamar de Ishmael”	“You may call me Ishmael”	other
6.	Italian	“Chiamatemi Ismaele”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
7.	Russian	“Зовите меня Измаил”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
8.	Polish	“Imię moje: Izmael”	“My name is Ishmael”	other
9.	Japanese	私の名はイシュメイ ルとしておこう	“Let Ishmael be my name”	other
10.	Greek	“Λέγε με Ισμαήλ”	“Call me Ishmael”	same
11.	Arabic (tr. Amari)	توعل لي اسم اعجل	“Call me Ishmael” (“My call Ishmael”)	almost the same.
11.	Arabic (tr. Iḥsān 'Ab bās)	"لغنت أنا – وليكن اسمي الذي أعرف به هو مواسم اعجل-"	“I was... and let it be like that... the name that I am known by is Ismail.”)	other

Table 1. Different translations of “Call me Ishmael”

The translation of Iḥsān 'Abbās is a personal interpretation of the Melvillean text:

قبل بضعة سنوات ال أدري عدد اعلى وجهه القصة لغنت – وليكن اسمي الذي أعرف به مواسم اعجل –
خالتي وافاض من لدار هم القوال خالي، ولجي عدل إلى البرش يوجب عثال لجة ففينس في فخطو لي لاي قد
فأض يبعض القوقتم بحرا وأرى لجنوالم ائني ملامعالم

[A few years ago, I do not know exactly how many, I was 1851 – and let my name which I acknowledge be Ismail – with my purse empty of dirhams or almost empty and on the mainland nothing left to please me, it came to my mind to spend some time sailing and see the water part of the world (’Abbās 1965: 1), my translation.]

A closer look at this text would reveal instances of the types of delayed strategies which were used by Iḥsān 'Abbās in translating this novel into Arabic, and how he was able to foreignize strategies by manipulating it and obliterating it. For this reason we may call him a pioneering translator, who sought everything from tricks and means until the translated text appears natural to the reader in the target language, and the latter understands all the related issues, and the events of the novel and at all levels without much trouble as if the text was originally written in Arabic, and not moves from another original text. 'Abbās also revealed the capacity of the

Arabic language to accept adaptation in different ways, molds and shapes, and to be embodied in various images and bodies thanks to their enormous expressive potential and structural features.

There is no evidence that Herman Melville had any knowledge of the Islamic faith that would allow us to speculate that his choice for the narrator's name was the result of his access to such resources. When translating *Moby-Dick*, Ihsān 'Abbās encountered the delicate problem of introducing Ishmael to his Arabic readers, and rendering a credible character whose name would appeal to an Islamic readership. Thus, 'Abbās famous rendering of the opening of the novel, that avoids the conciseness of Melville's "Call me Ishmael", and gives the reader the feeling that the narrator's real name is not exactly Ishmael, but another one that they will never know:

لغيت لنا -وليكن اسمي الذي أعرف به واسم إسماعيل

["I was... and let it be like that... the name that I am known by is Ismail"].

The Hebrew "Ishmael" becomes إسماعيل [*Isma'ā'il*], a name that connects to both Melville's narrator, and to the Biblical and Qur'anic character. If Melville's American readers, educated in the Calvinist tradition, could easily relate Ishmael to their Bible readings in the Sunday school, 'Abbās Arabic (and Muslim) readers would associate him with a promising Prophet they all know from the *Qur'an*. According to Einboden, this translation "preserves the scriptural identity of the novel's narrator but simultaneously threatens to alter the semantic contours of this identity, replacing the (ostracized) 'Ishmael' with the venerable 'Isma'ā'il'" (Einboden 2013: 113).

As for 'Abbās' rendition of Captain Ahab's name, the Arabic form إخاب [*Ākhāb*] is significant to the Arab readers in that they see not only the word as a whole, but are aware of the two lexical components of the word – 'اخ', meaning "brother" and 'اب', meaning "father", the overall meaning of Ahab's name becoming "father's brother" (literally, "brother [of the] father"). The translator's decision is not accidental: by choosing the Arabic form of the name, he prepares his readers for the many paternity allusions that will shape Ahab's portrayal in the following chapters, justifying his special relationship with Pip, and giving more weight to the conversation with Captain Gardiner, in Chapter CXXXVIII *The Pequod meets the Rachel*. The Rachel's Captain begs Ahab to join him in a 48 hour search for his own son lost at sea. At Ahab's stubborn refusal, Gardiner says:

"I will not go," said the stranger, "till you say aye to me. Do to me as you would have me do to you in the like case. For you too have a boy, Captain Ahab – though but a child, and nestling safely at home now – a child of your old age too – Yes, yes, you relent; I see it – run, run, men, now, and stand by to square in the yards (Melville 1851: 586).

In the Arabic version, the words نلك لتوايض البني لي اخاب would translate, "For you, you have a son too, O, *Ākhāb*!" There is an added amount of irony in 'Abbās'

version, in which Ahab rejects and denies his duties to his family, while the name acquires a load of paternity and brotherhood simultaneously. We can assert without fail that the translator not only leaves his mark on the original text, but gives it new meanings that Melville had not thought of, amplifying the identity of the characters. It is a defining feature of this original approach to the Melvillian text, in which biblical names and oriental words are domesticated, rendered back to their origins, and thus responding to the readers' expectations.

The Arab readers' familiarity with Ahab's name came from the Qur'anic tradition. The Muslim readers know about **أبو لهب** (Abu Lahab), the red-haired uncle of Prophet Mohammed and an opponent of Islam. Abu Lahab was a member of the Khuza's tribe, who had traditionally been the caretakers of the holy shrine of Ka'bah for several centuries, before the Quraysh took over the responsibility through their ancestor Qusai ibn Kilab. He is mentioned in the *Qur'an*, in *Surah 111, al-Masad*, one of the Surah revealed in Mecca at the beginning of the open invitation to the holy Prophet, that gives a warning against one of the declared enemies of the Faith.

Conclusion: The Arabic *Moby-Dick* and the Arab reader

The Arab reader knows very well that the Arab and Muslim navigators discovered the world and wrote about it. Therefore, it may easily come to his mind that *Moby Dick* is a journey of exploration and description of other peoples and civilizations.

Thus we come to the Arabic version of *Moby-Dick*: **موبي ديك** [Mūbī Dīk]. In a first instance, the reader tries to understand the title: Is it the name of a person or a place name? The second element in the title, *Dick*, means "rooster", "male chicken" and has many other meanings for Arabic language specialists, such as a species of fish abundant in the Red Sea. As for the word *Mobi*, it is obscure in classical Arabic and may have some meanings in different dialects.

The word *sea* is mentioned several times in the *Holy Qur'an*; for example, in *Sūrat Ash-Shu'ara*, God drowned those who opposed Him, and saved the others aboard the ship. And sometimes it [the sea] brings to people good things and benefits and if you cannot earn your living on earth, you can go to sea. It is always an example of God's knowledge and mercy. God is testing his people at sea. Due to the fact that the sea bears a multitude of mentioned meanings, each reader makes in his mind a connection to the story of Jonah – Younis – [peace be upon him] swallowed by the big fish for three days. The Prophet of Allah, Younis bin Matti, is mentioned by his name Younis in the *Qur'an* four times: in *Sūrat An-Nisa*, *Sūrat Al-An'am*, *Sūrat Yunus* and *Sūrat As-Saffat*. He is mentioned with his sobriquet Dhu Al-Nun ("The One with the Fish") and "The One with the Whale" in two places of the *Sūrat al-Anba'* and *Sūrat al-Qalam*.

The Arab reader could relate the story of *Moby-Dick* to the fate of the Arab peoples, which were under the weight of autocratic rulers, and think that they would perish with their leaders if they did not stop the oppressors from persisting in tyranny

and injustice. If not, their fate is the fate of the sailors in this novel, although there was a small opposition that could not gain support: the rest who have sinned and professed. On the other hand, the reader understands that whoever attacks their countries and takes away their goods and colonizes them will have the destiny of Ahab and his companions. The White Whale warned them first, as in the case of the amputation of a brother's leg, and if he did not deter the colonizer he would be eliminated, like Moby Dick did the second time. The Arab reader sees this ship as carrying different types of people, of different origins, religions and races, and the friendship between them represents religious tolerance and living under the umbrella of humanity; our life in this world is like a ship that we all sail... All heavenly books carry the same meanings and values in dealing in all fields and uniting preachers on their platforms and the role of their worship. Moreover, these books accompany us wherever we go but often without a clear practical benefit. We should thus be alert to the symbolical depths of myth and literature, which means that we must take responsibility, and deal with our nature.

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The Iceberg Theory: Hemingway's Journalistic Technique

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1. Introduction: The legacy of an adventurer

The sinking of the Titanic in 1912 drew the attention of the world to the danger inherent in any encounter with an iceberg. As the huge ship sank unexpectedly, carrying its passengers to the depth of the Atlantic, it brought about an equally huge absence. Thus, the physical iceberg turned into a cultural symbol and a warning against the reliance on technology. Hemingway himself was deeply marked by the tragedy of the Titanic and in his posthumously published volume *Islands in the Stream* (1970), one of the characters says: "I know old songs such as the loss of John Jacob Astor on the Titanic when sunk by an iceberg" (Hemingway 1970: 16). Also, in a letter sent in 1956, one year after the publication of *A Night to Remember* (1955) by Walter Lord, he asked for a copy of the book to be mailed to him to Cuba. Megan Floyd Desnoyers, curator of the Hemingway collection at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston M.A., commented on the paradox a reviewer is facing when approaching Hemingway's work:

There are three pieces to the puzzle that is this person we know as Hemingway: the life the man really lived, his writing, and the celebrity. One has to guess where one piece ends and another begins. Could Hemingway himself distinguish between the fact, the fiction, and the celebrity? As the consummate storyteller, he may not have cared which was which. But he left such a generous record of all three that biographers, literary critics, and the general public can endlessly reconfigure the puzzle – sometimes successfully, sometimes not (Desnoyers 1992: 3).

Hemingway's work can not be understood without framing it in the social context of his time and without knowing the biographical aspects that preceded his literary career. In 1938, after participating in a safari in Africa, he wrote *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*. Africa marked his literary production and inspired him to write other stories. It all started in 1933, with a trip that Gus – uncle of the writer's second wife – paid for the couple. According to Desnoyers, "The safari lasted only ten weeks, but it had a great impact on Hemingway. Everything he observed seemed to have made an indelible impression on him. He used his experience as a basis for the hunting tales: *The Green Hills of Africa* (1935), *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1938) and *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* (1938)" (*ibidem*: 9). Although it

was not until he was 34 years old when he set foot in Africa for the first time, his American literary and journalistic career had begun much earlier. His father was Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, a reputed doctor in Chicago, and his mother Grace Hall Hemingway, was an opera singer, and her influence may be seen in the novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, that has the musical structure of the counterpoint. From 1913 to 1917 he attended the Oak Park High School. It would be a year before the end of his studies when he would be in contact, for the first time, with Journalism. Subsequently, he went to war. In response to a request from the Red Cross, he became an ambulance driver in Italy, and in June 1918, while he was coming from a mobile canteen to get cigarettes and chocolate for the soldiers, he was wounded by a mortar from the Austrian side, an experience which he recalled in *A Farewell to Arms*:

Then there was a flash, as when a blast-furnace door is swung open, and a roar that started white and went red... I tried to breathe, but my breath would not come. The ground was torn up and in front of my head there was a splintered beam of wood. In the jolt of my head I heard somebody crying... I tried to but I could not move. I heard the machine guns and rifles firing across the river (Hemingway 1929: 47).

After WWI, Hemingway returned to Chicago, to move shortly to Toronto, where he also practiced journalism and met Elisabeth Hadley Richardson, who would be his first wife. From there they moved to Paris, a city that has a capital importance in his writing during his life, and where “some of the most interesting people in the world lived – people like Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound, and James Joyce – as well as many others who could help a young writer in the first rungs of his career” (Baker 1972: 7). It is from them that Hemingway “learned the discipline of his craft – the taut monosyllabic vocabulary, stark dialogue, and understated emotion that are the hallmarks of the Hemingway style” (Lass 1970: 175). In 1927, he began a romance with Paulina Pfeiffer; Hemingway and his new companion moved, one year later, to Cayo Largo (Florida), for the birth of their first daughter. That’s where they were installed when the uncle of his second wife gave them the safari that would lead to the story under study. Five years passed from the trip to the publication of *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*.

2. Journalism and the writer’s apprenticeship

Hemingway handled the pen as if it were a sword. Both language and word were his weapons. No one doubts the influence that journalism had on Hemingway’s literature, as well as the role that Hemingway the writer played in his journalistic work. *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, a literary example in the form of a short story, has numerous stylistic references that characterized the pattern of the journalist’s writings. And so it was throughout his work, with writings that were the result of a tasty cocktail of literature and journalism. Everything started very early in his life. The Oak Park Secondary School that the author attended was the cradle of his first

great idyll with writing. And there were two teachers who had much to do with this: Margaret Dixon and Fannie Biggs. The first was the discoverer of young Ernest's talent, while the second went deep into his psyche:

The interest of Fannie Biggs in Hemingway was more personal than that of Miss Dixon. She not only responded to his potential as a student, but also to his problems on the individual level. She observed his difficulties, more common than any other adolescent child could have, several of them due to his particular position, and did what she could, in the most tentative way, to soften them (Fenton 1954: 9).

The truth is that he always remembered both as referents and, during his participation in the First World War, he sent a thank you letter to both. Hemingway always remembered the teachings of his teacher Biggs, and they helped him to develop the strength of character to both his person and to his narration. The suffering he had passed through was already part of his literary fate. Years later Hemingway declared that the best training for the writer was an unhappy childhood. Already known at school as a potential writer, Biggs induced him in the *Tabula* magazine. In this literary magazine he published various stories of fiction and verses. It was, therefore, the first total approximation to Ernest's literature, and he did it with the rigid writing that his two teachers were so enthusiastic about:

The primary significance of Hemingway's *Tabula* stories is to emphasize the crucial apprenticeship which lay ahead of him in journalism, in war, and in the European associations of the 1920's. His high school fiction demonstrates that he was blessed with an acute interest in all new experience, a ready narrative style, and a sound training in clear self-expression (*ibidem*: 17).

3. Journalism and the “iceberg theory”

Hemingway became known as a writer in a moment of collapse of the American society, identified by the lost generation. He is a very elaborate writer, with a great lucidity of his job, who realized that by investigating the human condition he will never overcome his own condition as a modern writer. In his first period of creation, he managed to overcome many of the difficulties posed by novel writing; in *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* he deals with the life impasse the protagonist faces, attempting to find personal ways out by his personal experience.

Ernest Hemingway paid equal attention to both the prose style and the content of his novels and short stories. Any reader of his works can't but ascertain the writer's use of a minimalistic, repetitive, and unadorned style: the use of short descriptive sentences, an apparently simplified grammatical structure, and meanings left untold. It is the writer's way to avoid stating directly his opinions and allowing the reader to mentally fill in the void and figure out the author's underlying meanings. Among Hemingway's manuscripts, biographers found two telling random

notes: “You can phrase things clearer and better,” and “You can remove words which are unnecessary and tighten up your prose.” The debate on Hemingway’s style was also prompted by what is generally considered his famous “shortest” novel ever written:

FOR SALE:
BABY SHOES,
NEVER WORN.

Whatever our criteria, this “novel” demonstrates the “iceberg principle” in action. Everything else is left to us, the readers. We may easily imagine the drama of this unnamed mother, her joy in buying the shoes for the baby and her despair at losing it. There is, then, a reason in advertising the sale of the shoes: her financial situation has been so seriously affected she is selling everything, including the never-worn baby shoes. The expectant mother had been full of joy when buying the shoes, and we may finally infer her trauma and grief. In its entirety, it is a six-word novel, belonging to the genre of “flash fiction”, or “sudden fiction.” This extreme sample of concision leads to his other short stories and novels in which the technique is fully used. We don’t know if the technique favors the writer or the reader, but the reader is given full liberty to fill in in his mind the seven eighths not yet written, and he has to deduce from the visible one eighth. It is the writer’s task to dig beyond the superficial layer of description and go beneath the surface to unpredictable depths. Hemingway demonstrates he is a writer with a deep knowledge of the human condition, with the ability to apply his iceberg technique – versatile and effective as it is – to realistic renderings of people’s existence.

The six-word story pursues this principle of writing to its most logical and yet its most radical extreme, distilling Hemingway’s creative theory into fewer words than he himself used to express it and putting the theory into practice at the same time. So when a story that so closely adhered to his principle somehow came to be written, there emerged a back story which held that Hemingway himself wrote it in order to demonstrate the power of his principle.

Hemingway first introduced his aesthetic theory in *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), in which he uses the metaphor of the iceberg to carry the weight of his argument. The theory was detailed again in the interview taken by Gerald Plimpton in 1958 for the *Paris Review*, in his essay *The Art of the Short Story* (unpublished), and also in *A Moveable Feast* (1964), his posthumously published memoir. In Chapter 16 of *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), he describes his theory of fiction writing and launches what has been later referred to as “Hemingway’s Iceberg Theory”:

If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water. A writer who omits things because he does not know them only makes hollow places in his writing (Hemingway 1932: 164).

Both *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) provide a close, first-hand reading of the twentieth-century post-WWI culture, due to Hemingway's unique writing style. His distinctive diction, short sentences, simple syntax, and the sometimes open endings lead to apparently simple stories that allow the readers – who are left without any further clues – to fill in the gaps and reach their own conclusions. Such a style is in accordance with the equally unadorned subject matter. One first example is *The Sun Also Rises*, to which Hemingway successfully applies the metaphor of the iceberg in presenting his protagonist, Jake Barnes, an expatriate American journalist in Paris, who suffers of impotence caused by a wound inflicted in the war. There is no visible future in the relationship between Jake and Lady Brett Ashley, and happy ending to this novel about the Lost Generation, masculinity, gender, and bullfighting, Jake's affliction is never openly discussed, just alluded to, living the reader to decipher it from the otherwise simple plot. The end of the novel is an example of the use of the iceberg:

The driver started up the street. I settled back. Brett moved close to me. We sat close against each other. I put my arm around her and she rested against me comfortably. It was very hot and bright, and the houses looked sharply white. We turned out onto the Gran Via.

'Oh, Jake,' Brett said, 'we could have had such a damned good time together.'
Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.
'Yes,' I said. 'Isn't it pretty to think so?' (Hemingway 1926: 222).

Both refer to a love relationship which had not been very successful, of a love affair that was never really consummated. No more words are spoken, and everything is in compliance with Hemingway's style manual which he included in Chapter 16 of *Death in the Afternoon*:

No matter how good a phrase or a simile he [the writer] may have if he puts it in where it is not absolutely necessary and irreplaceable he is spoiling his work for egotism. Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over. [...] People in a novel, not skillfully constructed characters, must be projected from the writer's assimilated experience, from his knowledge, from his head, from his heart and from all there is of him (Hemingway 1932: 164).

A similarly minimalist approach to the text is also manifest in Hemingway's use of the dialogue clues – “he said”, “she said” etc. – that are scarcely used. It is a feature that may seem intriguing and even confusing to the readers who may lose track of who is speaking, as in this short sample from *A Farewell to Arms*, in which Catherine and Frederick talk:

“Now do you want to play chess?”
“I'd rather play with you.”
“No. Let's play chess.” (Hemingway 1929: 300)

This is only one example of the many that show the lack of distinction between the participants to a dialogue. Any difference between the speakers is blurred, and often irrelevant. It is the dialogue itself that matters, and not the information conveyed by the participants. It is as if the general message is what matters in Hemingway's short stories and novels, more than the individual characters' feelings and opinions. The writer prefers the simple dialogue as an instrument that allows him to stick to the general picture without bothering with useless (to him) private details from the characters' lives. *A Farewell to Arms* successfully exemplifies Hemingway's minimalistic, economical use of the dialogue and of the physical description meant to bring to light the inner conflicts in the lives of his characters. In fact, it is this mastery of the art of story-telling that was highly praised and finally brought him the Nobel Prize for Literature. The value and attractiveness of Hemingway's fiction resides in his "expertise in controlling both the skills of dialogue and stream-of-consciousness under the iceberg principle on the canvas of the laconic narrative" (Ma and Zhang 2014: 82). Such strategic omissions are a defining feature of the writer's style and successfully illustrate the iceberg theory and his belief in the importance of conveying such inferred information to a wide audience via his prose style. He favors intuition more than any direct statement.

Another feature of Hemingway's style is that, in order to ensure a psychic distance, the writer interweaves the narrative modes: the third person, omniscient narration – which represents two thirds of the story – gives way to interior monologue, close to a stream-of-consciousness, when the action moves at sea. It is an essential shift of perspective, suitable for the two characters' odyssey into the natural world, their confrontation of the natural order of things, and the existential acceptance of the inevitable succession of life and death, and the liberation of man's individual existence.

Back to the writer's language, critics and readers alike have noted its uniqueness by its simplicity, naturalness, directness, clarity and freshness. The explanation may be found in Hemingway's choice of words: his English is rich in concrete, short, common words, belonging to the Anglo-Saxon stock of the language, which gives his style a dominant dimension of freshness and clarity. His texts are notable for the author's reluctance to use abstract nouns and adjectives; the sentences are short and to the point, carrying the tension of his characters' everyday existence. Complex sentences are avoided as much as possible. Otherwise, Hemingway prefers to connect different simple sentences by *and*, and use dialogue as a creative device in his drawing of real people drawn from the world around him, as in this example from *The Old Man and the Sea*:

"Santiago," the boy said.

"Yes," the old man said. He was holding his glass and thinking of many years ago.

"Can I go out to get sardines for you for tomorrow?"

"No. Go and play baseball. I can still row and Rogelio will throw the net."

"I would like to go. If I cannot fish with you. I would like to serve in some way."

"You bought me a beer," the old man said. "You are already a man."

“How old was I when you first took me in a boat?”

“Five and you nearly were killed when I brought the fish in too green and he nearly tore the boat to pieces. Can you remember?” (Hemingway 1952: 37).

Here is one final example. Towards the end of “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” – Hemingway’s favorite short story Hemingway – the older waiter finds the reason that brings customers to the café late at night, and which prompts the waiter to attend to their wishes. It is something indescribable, and untouchable, difficult to define:

What did he fear? It was not fear or dread. It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too. It was only that and light was all it needed and a certain cleanness and order. Some lived in it, and never felt it but he knew it all was *nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada* (Hemingway 1987: 291, emphasis in the original).

There is nothing fortuitous in Hemingway’s words. It is something well beyond common understanding. It ultimately touches upon the main themes of the story: loneliness, despair, escape, connection and nihilism, Hemingway – prominent topics of existentialist writing which, in the case of Hemingway’s short story, keep the people away from the fearsome darkness of the night outside and make the waiter and the other customers spend most of the night in “a clean, well-lighted place.”

A closer reading of this apparently simple and extremely concise short story reveals deeper meanings. One clue is Hemingway’s diction which carefully allows the reader to see truth in nothingness, the void, *nada* – the real cause of the human being’s inner darkness, isolation, and depression. These three existential elements complement each other. Thus, the inner darkness overwhelming the old man and the older waiter is an emotional component in the story. The two men equally experience fear, loneliness, hopelessness, and the indescribable *nada*. Light vs. darkness comes as a recurrent refrain. The older waiter is the one who likes “to stay late at the café... with all those who need a light for the night.” He is never eager to close the café for the simple reason that “there may be someone who needs the cafe.” Because the café is “a clean, well-lighted place” where all fears are alleviated, where anyone like the old man may turn a deaf ear to the world outside, which is well understood by the older waiter who – unlike his younger colleague – lives his life alone, lacking “everything but work” (*ibidem*: 290).

Conclusion

As formulated in *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway’s iceberg theory is an original contribution to the development of fiction writing. Hemingway’s texts are remarkable for the writer’s gift of leaving aside the seven-eighths of the matter untold, allowing the readers to make up the submerged, untold matter, using their imagination to fill in the existing gap through personal interpretation. The readers

are thus actively engaged in the creative process, contributing their own knowledge of the social and cultural background of the period when the novels and short stories were written. This “theory of omission”, as it has been called, may be thought of as one Hemingway’s major contribution to fiction writing. He always tried to write according to his own “iceberg principle”, leaving only what he considered absolutely necessary to the development of the plot and character development to be seen, and the rest is the reader’s duty and obligation to infer.

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Parentheses and Dialogization. Discursive Levels in Romanian Postmodern Poetry

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1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to focus on the parenthetical insertion as a rhetoric figure of dialogization by revealing its pragmatic functions, at the intra-, inter- and extradiscursive levels. Implicitly, I challenge Bakhtin's claim that poetry, as opposed to prose, is a monophonic genre.

Lacking the modernists' formal radicalism, Romanian poetic postmodernism has innovated within the poetics of parentheses by the pragmatic, interdiscursive and metalinguistic emphasis. The investigation of the parenthesis as a pragmatic figure makes evident the fact that, due to the richness of contexts, this graphic sign became a landmark of the postmodern poetic discourse.

Firstly, it is useful to distinguish between the code values (the linguistic perspective) and the creative use of the parentheses (the communicational perspective); while the linguistic codifications are conventional and institutionalized, the discursive occurrences point out the pragma-rhetoric aspects of a "cooperative and strategic behaviour, intended to offer the reader the most favorable possibilities of decoding" (Ruxăndoiu 1995: 9).

Secondly, we can't ignore some special questions generated by the poetic use of parentheses: do they represent a parasitic text of minor importance or are they an expressive element of literariness, in other words, how much parenthetical is a parenthesis? Are they free of context or integrated? Which are the communicative functions, the types and the discursive variables?

In the common speech, the parentheses are perceived as an accessory, as an appendage whose content could be omitted without altering the meaning of a sentence. From their first attestation in a manuscript from 1399 (Lennard 1991), the parentheses entered into the literary text, more or less systematically, as a poetic device. By drawing them into spectacular experiments, Eliot and Cummings are still referential points for their innovative, even abusive manner.¹

¹ "among the various punctuation marks none has been more explored, used, and abused by Cummings than parentheses [...]. Cummings is the unparalleled poet of parentheses" (Tartakovsky 2009: 216).

The following aspects of parenthetical dialogization could be relevant for this research:

a) the pragmatic level: the discontinuance of enunciation and the inter-subjective manipulations, the (pre)discursive ethos, the reported discourse,¹ the marks of subjectivity and the contextual dynamics;

b) the intra-discursive level: the dialogic relations between the parenthetical “appendix” and the framing utterance (the size, the place, the independence from the discursive context);

c) the inter-discursive level: dedoxification and intertextuality (pastiche, parody).

The object of this article is mainly the pragmatic level. I lean on the Romanian postmodern poets (1980-2010), who intuitively noticed the universality of the relations between theory (semiotics, pragmatics) and literary practice. In the light of this isomorphism it comes out that enunciation was preferred to utterance, the parentheses and the intertext to the text, and a description of the text’s production to its symbolic meaning (Parpală 1994 and 2012). I adopted Rabatel’s concept of “dialogization” which articulates the two Bakhtinian aspects of enunciative heterogeneity, perceived from a translinguistic point of view – named “dialogism”, and from an anthropological one – named “polyphony” (Rabatel 2006). The criteria for selecting the corpus have been constrained by the presence of subjectivity at the macro- and at the microlevel: the textual marks of enunciation (reported discourse, intertextuality, metadiscourse, speech acts) and the intra-discursive marks of enunciation (deixis, evaluative adjectives, interjections, negations, tropes, syntax, punctuation, code-switching). The absence of such strategies signals the “residual subjectivity” (Monte 2007).

Parenthetical dialogization will not be isolated from the construction of the referent. The socio-cultural framework, coincident with the emergence of Romanian poetic postmodernism, is heavily marked by the pressure of the totalitarian regime; in such a context, the metatextual poetics of the 1980s was a subversive way of cultural resistance.

2. Is poetry a monophonic genre?

M.M. Bakhtin derived the concepts of his anthropological poetics – “carnavalesque”, “dialogism”, “heteroglossia” and “polyphony” – from prose in general and from novel in particular. He referred to poetry in order to reinforce by contrast the complexity of novelistic discourse. While the novel is representative and polyphonic, poetry is expressive and monophonic: “the differences between the novel [...] and poetic genres are so fundamental, so categorical”; “for the poetic word [...] such a relationship to extraliterary heteroglossia is of course utterly excluded” (Bakhtin 1981: 43; 384).

¹ The (self)construction of enunciator’s identity, the direct and indirect reported discourse and addressivity, the parody and heteroglossia characterize the ontology of Romanian poetry of the 1980s (Parpală 2012: 239-246).

Since he discussed language in terms of dialogism, this exclusion is contradictory. However, it is motivated by the idea of a utopian unity of the poetic genres, which gives rise to the conception of a purely poetic language – the “language of gods” (*ibidem*: 331). It is obvious that Bakhtin’s tendency to depreciate poetic genres in favour of prose is also motivated by the nature of the poetry that was accessible to him in the early 20th century. As an exception, Bakhtin admitted the heteroglossia of “low” poetic genres, like satire, comedy, and others (*ibidem*: 287).

Laurent Jenny (2003) noticed that Bakhtin’s thesis regarding the presumed monophony of poetry could still be nuanced at least for the following three reasons: the poetics of inspiration has claimed that the poetic voice is an alienation of subjectivity through the agency of a transcendent entity; there are poems in which the poetic voice translates internal discordances; starting with the twentieth century, genres tend to lose their distinctive features and the poem has begun absorbing the feature of the narrative and the dramatic. The prejudice that poetry is less complex than prose, due to Bakhtin’s preference for Dostoievski’s novel, is considered by Donald Wesling (1993: 42) “a severe error”, which lies in “his failure to read poetry as an art of human expectations”; instead, Bakhtin’s focusing on the role of meter and poetic rhythm provided him a formal poetics, not a communicative understanding of lyric poetry.

In spite of the effacement of poetic genres and the privilege granted to the novel,¹ Bakhtin’s conceptual system generates premises for a dialogic reevaluation of poetic genres. It is by now justified, considering that postmodern poetics has replaced the self-referential discourse of modernism by a communicational and quotational paradigm; it has thematized the plurality of points of view, it has reconfigured the subject and, implicitly, the ontology of the text.²

To respond to the need of a mediated critical apparatus adequate to postmodern literature, R.D. Sell configured a theory of “literature as communication”, seen as a interrelationship of at least three types of contexts: “the context of writing, the intradiegetic context within the world created by the writer, and the current context of reading” (Sell 2000: 61). In the line with cognitive poetics and stylistics, which hypothesize that „literature is best conceptualized as reading” (Simpson 2004: 39), R.D. Sell conditions genuine literary communication on the real reader’s processing of literary texts, in terms of “the fusing of different horizons of expectations” (Sell 2000: 63).

¹ In order to designate a theory of literature that privileges prose and “an imperializing movement on behalf of the novel”, G.S. Morson and C. Emerson (1990) coined the neologism *prosaics*, as opposed to “poetics”, an original concept that permeates Bakhtin’s work. On the other hand, “prosaics” is a form of thinking that presumes the importance of the everyday, the ordinary, the “prosaic” (Morson, Emerson 1990: 14). Although we are accustomed to using the term *poetics* as a virtual synonym for “theory of literature” (*ibidem*: 15), *prosaics* recruits and corrects itself with the ideas of rhythmic cognition invented in poetics” (Wesling 1993: 97).

² The questioning of the definitive character of the poetic text, the discontinuity, the indeterminacy, the exploitation of the poetic sign in its materiality etc. have been recognized as distinctive features of postmodern literature (Gelpi 1990).

3. Grammatical and pragmatic parentheses

Given the primary statute of orality, the current communication is governed by monoglossia. The “interior dialogization” and the „heteroglossia” (Bahtin 1982: 134) suppose an alternation of the oral code with the written one, therefore “diglossia”; by practicing diglossia, poetry retrieves, thanks to the punctuation marks, the paraverbal features of orality – a semiotic complexity which was lost in written communication. Consequently, the main function of punctuation is to provide the legibility of the written text (Lennard 1991; Dahlet 2003; Williams 1993). Parentheses make evident the way the reader is anticipated, vexed, guided by the author in text processing. From a pragmatic perspective, they display instructions to decode the meaning or to perform the text, acting as a meeting point between the agents of communicational ritual. The „accessories” parentheses insert in the utterance (a spatio-temporal reference, a „translation”, an alternative, a reported discourse etc.) bring about complicity, irony, tension.

More than other punctuation marks, parentheses bring the reader through visual qualities related to syntax: they break off the linearity of the utterance, in order to insert an additional information. Thus, the intradiscursive level reveals the dialogue between the parenthetical insertion and the framing utterance. By the tangential information encapsulated in parenthesis, the poet deliberately signals the fact that the insertion is distinct from the rhetoric line of the text. Roy Tartakovsky (2009) speaks about a paradoxical status: although part of the text, the parentheses are at the same time isolated. His essay, *E. E. Cumming’s Parentheses: Punctuation as Poetic Device*, contains a subtle analysis of the modern poetic use, systematized in seven categories of meaning: iconic, enunciative (protection and intimacy, direct address, dialogism and heteroglossia), communicational (invalidation of formal expectations), syntactical (plurality of levels, framework, tmesis), contextual (simultaneousness and temporality).

The linguistic and stylistic approach, focused on the syntactic (dis)continuity between the parenthesis and its frame utterance, generated two lines of interpretation: for some scholars, parentheses are grammatically integrated in the linguistic context; for others, they are independent. As the frontier between a parenthesis and its context is difficult to determine, Ulla Tuomarla (2010) identified two simultaneous “cognitive programs”¹:

a) “an integrated syntax approach”, referring to “grammatical” parentheses engaged in syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of (in)dependency with the framing utterance: auto-corrections, repetitions, reformulations, subordinations etc. In Romanian postmodern poetry, the parenthetical insertions support an emphatic syntax, based on

¹ “les linguistes ont travaillé sur le partage des différents types de parenthèses en deux catégories principales: les parenthèses grammaticales qui gardent un lien syntaxique avec l’énoncé-cadre et les parenthèses pragmatiques qui ont un sens pragmatique (et pas de lien syntaxique avec l’énoncé-cadre)” (Tuomarla 2010).

strategies of amplification and retardation, so that the linear progression is frequently interrupted. In bounded contexts, the false parentheses are focused by including the conjunction “and” and the colon before the closing parenthesis. Tmesis and hyperbaton are prevailing syntactic figures (Parpală 2011: 89-91).

b) “a radical orphanage approach”, referring to “pragmatic” parentheses, engaged in oscillations of enunciative level. By anticipating the reader’s response, pragmatic parenthesis induces intersubjective strategies of dialogism and polyphony, in order to optimize it. Independent of the syntactic level, this type does not supplement the frame utterance, but modifies the sentence by enunciative and referential turnings. In fact, it functions like a “secondary speech act”¹, aiming to comment, to harmonize or to destabilize the frame discourse, usually placed at the left side of the pragmatic insertion.

By making evident the non-belonging to the context,² the parentheses have also been associated with the idea of structure’s dissolution. In this respect, Ludmilla Védénina (1989) advanced the thesis of parenthetical insertion’s syntactic independence.³ Given the fact that the frontier between real and false parentheses is difficult to establish, we should consider that the interruption in itself is not sufficient for the identity of a parenthesis; it is necessary to find a pragmatic shift between the frame utterance and the tangential insertion. Tuomarla considers as decisive: the coexistence of two cognitive programs and the movement from a textual level to another, hierarchically superior.⁴

Nina Catach (1994: 73; 74) noted that the parenthesis is „un signe éminemment subjectif”, which brings „l’élément le plus lourd et le plus expressif du message.” For Marion Colas-Blaise (2011), the parenthetical specifications aim at a better adequacy, at the level of expression, between the project and its achievement. They create a tension or a complicity between the author and the reader – a dialogic intersubjectivity, as Tartakovsky and Tuomarla argued.

Besides their interactional dimension, parentheses have been studied as a poetic device of creating either ambiguity and intermittency or, on the contrary, of clearing up the meaning. Stylisticians could be interested if the parenthetical insertion is stilistically homogeneous with its context or not.⁵

¹ “En effet, le rôle de la parenthèse pragmatique a été vu comme celui d’un acte de langage secondaire, cherchant à accroître la compréhension du récepteur du sens de l’énoncé-cadre ou de la pertinence de celui-ci” (*ibidem*).

² “the parenthesis has tended to be misinterpreted as referring simply to brackets and their contents. It is therefore important to highlight the distinction between parentheses and the syntax conventionally used to denote one” (<http://www.thepequod.org.uk/essays/litcrit/parenthe.htm>).

³ “Deux tirets encadrent une parenthèse, segment qui ne fait pas partie du corps de la phrase. Ce sont des précisions, un jugement de valeur, des commentaires.” (Védénina 1989: 63).

⁴ “La parenthèse et le discours-cadre sont ainsi considérés comme deux activités différentes mais simultanées, entre lesquelles on observe une disparité sur le plan du contenu et de l’action” (Tuomarla 2010).

⁵ Maria Cvasnii-Cătănescu (2008: 719) argued the stylistic homogeneity between the parenthetical commentary and the frame utterance in a Romanian novel of the 18th century.

4. A dialogic displacement: The oscillation of enunciation levels

In the field of poetry, dialogization has redirected the text's production, so far too centered on the modern internal structure, towards the exterior constellation of the interdiscourse. This turning point derives from Bakhtin's anthropology of unfinalizability, which grants the Other an essential role in the constitution of the self. The signifying universe disintegrates in plural micro-universes and tensions appear between different points of view representing different consciousnesses.

From the typographical perspective, parentheses draw attention to the passage towards another level of enunciation, with or without the syntactic discontinuity. These punctuation marks interrupt the current codification and present the linear event of enunciation on two planes: a principal one, constituted by the frame utterance, and an "accompaniment", constituted by the parenthetical insertion. Placed at the intersection of these subjective levels, parenthesis encapsulates tangential information, thus fracturing the textual coherence.¹ The author seems to move off the main discourse and addresses the reader², paving the way for a detailed, comprehensive or distorted perception of the frame utterances. The oscillation of the points of view, the interplay of the displaced units, the ontological slide, the overlap of voices and styles etc. stimulate the dialog between the discursive agents. Theatrically manipulated, the rupture of enunciation connotes an oxymoronic ethos: ironic proximity in alternation with distant intimacy. An eloquent illustration of oscillation between two levels of enunciation could be the first paragraph of the short poem *Trying to get you back again in the world*, written by Bogdan Ghiu:

You (me) in the dark (drowned in the cave of a letter), and some-
where (on the side, underneath) a blank page (blinding, cold, sha-
rp) (Ghiu 1989: 12)³

Multiple fractured, the nominal phrase could be decomposed into two parallel utterances, having as referent the deictic personal pronouns "I" and "you":

- a) framing utterance: "You in the dark and somewhere a blank page";
- b) parenthetical utterance: "(me) (drowned in the cave of a letter) (on the side, underneath) (blinding, cold, sharp)".

The poet exposes some isotopies frequent in the poetry of the 1980s, such as: "the writing hand", "the paper of the poem", the textua(liza)tion as abolishing and the resurrection of the world. Metonymically, "the page" signifies the recuperative

¹ For the relation between the structuring of textual units and coherence see Maingueneau (2008: 297-302).

² "Comme signe typographique d'une opération énonciative, les parenthèses, sous leurs deux formes (parenthèse et tirets doubles), ne posent aucun problème d'identification: l'élément mis entre parenthèses est placé par le scripteur à un autre niveau énonciatif, il est présenté comme une rupture, qui permet en particulier de s'adresser au lecteur" (Charaudeau & Maingueneau 2002: 422).

³ English translation by Rimona Afana. In Romanian: "Tu (eu) în întuneric (înceat în peștera unei litere), și un- / deva (lateral, dedesubt) o pagină albă (orbitoare, rece, ascu- / țită)" (Ghiu, *Incercând să te mai aduc o dată pe lume*, 1989: 12).

power of discourse – “to get you back again in the world”. In *The Small Sense*, Ghiu interpolated this idea just in the graphic sign:

I foresee (returning to an old foresight – this
should only be a parenthesis, a small refuge of the hand,
a trap within which the mind catches for an instant the hand),
I foresee (and I now start it from the beginning). (*ibidem*: 13)¹

Bogdan Ghiu exploits the graphem’s iconism² and intuits its oxymoronic symbolism: “refuge” and “trap”, a protective space³ and the space of death. Parentheses iconize the text’s production as an alternation between continuity and discontinuity, between inside and outside.

A common expectation of the reader is that the material inside the parenthesis will add something new. In Bogdan Lefter’s poem *Elevating Yourself, Spinning Yourself*, the parenthesized information (“Death / is / a / surrealist / poet.”) is identical to that of the outside (“Death is a surrealist poet”), the loud voice being an echo of the interior monologue. The circularity, also presented in the title, signifies the failure of enunciation, the meaninglessness and the emptiness of death:

You have at this age an obsession, just one: death.
Death is a surrealist poet.
(I think this aberration,
I utter it in a loud voice:
“Death
is
a
surrealist
poet.”) (Lefter 1983: 37)⁴

The most ostentatious manipulation of the punctuation marks could be found in Liviu Ioan Stoiciu’s long poems. The “graphic blindage”⁵ and the enunciative overlap configure the distinctive rhetoric of the parable *Evoe!* – a significant poem of the 1980s. The fractured utterances, the coexistence of oral and written codes, the dialogized monologue, the reported discourse, intertextual references – all are

¹ In Romanian: “Presimt (mă întorc la o mai veche presimțire – aceasta / nu trebuie să fie decât o paranteză, un mic refugiu al mâinii, / o capcană în care mintea îmi prinde o clipă mâna), / presimt (și o iau acum de la capăt)” (Ghiu, *Sensul mic*, 1989: 13).

² In Latin, parentheses have been metaphorically named *lunulae*.

³ In subjective literature, parentheses have been used as a form of camouflage (White 2005).

⁴ In Romanian: “Ai la această vîrstă o obsesie, doar una: moartea. / Moartea e o poetă suprarrealistă. / (Gîndesc această aberație, / o rostesc cu voce tare: / “Moartea / e / o / poetă / suprarrealistă”.) (Lefter, *Înălțîndu-te, învîrtîndu-te*, 1983: 37).

⁵ “In the space of his generation, Liviu Ioan Stoiciu’s poetry has probably the most particular presentation [...] His verses cover the pages in a methodic disorder, patchy fractured, sometimes very long, sometimes very short, strained with lots of suspension points, colons, parentheses, commas, marks of exclamation, thus creating an authentic graphic blindage” (Lefter 2005: 258).

syntetized in the parodic epopee of the 248 lineman's hut. The "autobiographic pact" induces the first person lyrical narration, in parallel with the reconstruction of narrator's childhood. In counterpoint to golden old times, the real world of the lineman's hut is presented in a grotesque manner. The *mise en abyme* is achieved by antithesis: the genuine revival of childhood dreams, fed with classic mythology, contrasts with the lucid evaluation of everyday prosaic life; the alternation of registers is marked by the deictic pairs now – then, present – past continuous:

Stands board, covered in wax, inscribed, only Greek
 letter, stands bird with fish in beak, antique,
 half woman, petrified: a...yo, kids, the spring,
 our elder said, smoke, pensioner, professor,
 the spring of life
 was the darkness...a...in the beginning reigned
 the dream, a chaos...(and here he made a pause, long...he
 girdled his temples with white
 ribbons and laid, on the chair
 a rabbit fur: he picked
 a tooth, tasted some more wine and opened a book, old,
 of poems, reading in his mind...and because he was staying silent, I
 was losing my patience and was spelling:) mi-st, yo, see, it's
 the whole canton...(the 248 canton, CFR
 halt) and I unrolled the ox skin, of the lyre (Stoiciu 2002: 332)¹

The interpolated parantheses supplement the frame discourse and are coordinated by the conjunction *and*, both inside and outside the graphic signs. The process of enunciation includes two discursive (sub)levels: the frame utterances and the parenthetical insertion.

a) the heterogeneous frame context is composed by a prologue, a reported discourse and a description of some performative acts:
 - the prologue, at present time, builds the enunciative stage; written communication as the medium of the message; the symbolic signs evoke the Greek antiquity and its mythology ("Greek letter", "bird with fish in beak, antique").
 - direct reported discourse,² at past continuous, the narrative subject stages a parodic cosmogony; oral communication as the medium of the message. The quoted

¹ In Romanian: "STĂ TABLA, acoperită cu ceară, înscrisă, numai literă / greacă, stă pasăre cu pește în cioc, antică, / jumătate femeie, încremenită: ă...mă, copii, iz- / vorul, spunea bătrânul nostru, fum, pensionar, pro- / fesorul, izvorul vieții a / fost întunericul...ă...la început domnea / visul, un haos...(și aici făcea o pauză, lungă...își / înconjura tâmpile cu panglici / albe și își așternea, pe scaun / o blană de iepure: își scobea / un dinte, mai gusta din vin și deschidea o carte, veche, / de poezii, citind în gând...și fiindcă tot tăcea, îmi / pierdeam răbdarea și silabiseam:) pâ-clă, bre, vezi, e / tot cantonul...(cantonul 248, haltă / CFR...) și desfășuram pielea de bou, a lirei." (Stoiciu, *Evoe!* 2002: 332).

² Reported (or represented) discourse is the most evident sign of dialogization, in its various aspects: direct or indirect, real or fictional. According to Bahtin (1982: 162), the concept designates the fact that in an enunciation two utterances are differently but simultaneously represented, two manners of speaking, two

discourse of the old teacher is incorporated in the quoting discourse of the narrator, thus illustrating the possibility of speaking about other person's enunciation, of producing a "symulacrum of quoted discourse" (Maingueneau 2008: 211). The representation of a foreign enunciation in the locutor's speech increases the illusion of authenticity and maximizes the enunciator's empathic participation while recalling the discursive event.

- description of those acts preliminary to the syncretic performance of the antique poem (the preparation of lyra); the co-presence of prediscursive and discursive ethos of the locutor: he is simultaneously a presence in the world and the subject of enunciation. The melancholic and ironic projection of the narrator into the child-agent brings the fading of the reality and the access to the mythological fiction.

b) the parenthetical insertions consist in three pragma-rhetoric interventions:

- the first and the longest, at past continuous, is a tangential utterance which describes the rhythm of performing, the teacher's posture and his gestures. The scenic directives are interrupted by the narrator's reactions – "I was losing my patience and I was spelling:". The close parenthesis frustrates the reader's expectations, because it introduces a discontinuity in the place where the colon imposes a continuity in the form of enumeration.

- the second, at present time, introduces the qualifying parentheses, a poetic device specific to Stoiciu's style: A term from the frame utterance is encapsulated inbetween parentheses, in order to be qualified and localized: "it's the whole canton...(the 248 canton, CFR halt) and [...]."

- the third performs an artificial cutting up of the narrative line, by complementing it with details regarding the tuning of lyra. This rhetoric parenthesis intensifies the feelings caused by the reconstitution of events, accompanied by their revival.

We have to remark in Stoiciu's poem that, in addition to the parenthesis, the points of suspension play a prominent part¹; they both indicate the dissonance of registers, the insistent address to the reader to decipher the implicit. The richness of the punctuation marks, together with "indexis of contextualization",² express, besides structural, pragmatic and stylistic values, the poet's hesitation and emotion.

5. The parentheses – an enunciative retardator

By mediating expansion and ontological shift, parentheses represent an "enunciative retardator" (Colas-Blaise 2011), just like colon and suspension points.

styles, two languages and two semantic and axiological perspectives. We have to observe that it is not an utterance that is being reported, but an enunciation, distinct from that of quoting utterance.

¹ Among the structural, prosodic, interactional resources of poetic suspension, Mari Lehtinen (2011) remarked the prolonging of the unexpressed thoughts, the transmission of implicit meanings on the basis of shared encyclopedic knowledge, the effect of orality in the written dialogue, by imitating a pause or a particular speed of speech.

² "...ă..." is an "index of contextualization", as well as "oh", "ah", "hm". These particles emphasize modal functions, having an extralinguistic, anaphoric reference, and a connotation of orality (*ibidem*).

With Liviu Ioan Stoiciu, the enunciative strategies rely on the text's division into fragments, counterbalanced by diegetic continuity, in which the author is simultaneously performer, narrator and character. On the one hand, the poet is playing the part of familiar addressing to the audience ("yo, brother"; "yo, kids"): he anticipates their reactions ("who?"), he stages the flamboyant appearance of the feminine personage. On the other hand, he imposes an ironic distance between imagination and reality, between creativity and cliché, between rhetoric and communicative efficiency. In descriptions, the qualifications inserted in parentheses (a stylistic allusion to Homeric epithets) shock the reader by their prosaic stereotypy: "long dress (sewing by herself)", "horses (undying, well...)", "wheels of gold (and spokes of copper)", "Zeus (the chief)", "cow (tethered on zone)". The pressure of the classical model predictably amplifies the fenotext and there is no doubt that the parentheses are the best device to mimic the performativity of the written text.

With Nichita Danilov, the enunciative stasis is obtained by repetition in the form of the refrain. In *Inner Face* (2007: 36-39), the oscillation between the surrealistic narration in prose and the poetic parenthetical refrain is marked by italic. The theme of the prose poem, the inner apocalypse, is counterpointed by five parenthetical insertions, variations on some other topics: the double, the initiation, the anxiety and desolation. The strategy of amplifying and shortening the refrain (the sequences consist in 7 – 12 – 7 – 2 – 10 lines) emphasizes the poet's capacity to juggle with variations on the same content, just like the Baroque art of fugue.

The semiotician Marin Mincu didn't write about *Happenings at Pompeii* but about the poem on the page, about its completion or emptiness, about whimsical communication with the real reader. The pregnant metadiscursive parenthesis placed at the end of the text relates to autocorrection and suppresses, through negative politeness, the cooperative principle:

(I skipped a page and
want to fill it with
something so as not to notice
the void in poetry everything
is based on the principle
of ubiquity – look at
Iliada – this we all
know as much
filling crammed words
with no rhythm and sense and
other bunk dispelling itself
choosing itself the biggest
concern is this only
no void
no rest area
for the eye is
poetry nothing but
the sponge wiping
the dust from the inner window

but here it ends
the white space
and I close the parenthesis in your face) (Mincu 1982: 81)¹

The interlocutory function of the parenthesis exposes here the meta-communicative ironic ethos and the reader's face aggression.

Postmodern rhetoric connected the use of the parentheses with performative acts aimed at optimizing the genuine communication with readers. The tendency towards performativity in postmodern art favoured, with the poets of the Millennium, the intense cooperation with the reader or the spectator. Adrian Urmanov (2002) interpolates, in the end of his short poems, prescriptions about how to perform the reading: ("next page"); ("turn also this page") ("just a little more, just another page, yet another page"). While N. Leahu solicits the addressee's cooperation (see his *Fill in the Space between the Parentheses*), Gh. Iova's empty graphemes frustrate the reader's expectations and rouse instead his curiosity:

today – (fill in the space between the parentheses)
I draw (well molded to a cross of bones) (Leahu 1997: 55);
She played but lived this () for whoever says when you play you don't live
(Iova 1998: 92²)

The invitation, be it explicit or implicit, to fill in the empty parenthesis is a litotic use which questions the definitive character of the poem; in Iova's excerpt, it could be a matter of deconstruction and autocorrection – he is a poet who abused of this punctuation mark. On another hand, we noticed the tendency to extend parentheses, so that to cover the entire body of the text; in Nimigean's poem *apoi sau (then they)* (1993: 54), the framing context has one line, whereas the parenthesis has ten lines. By adding something tangential, the parentheses suggest an excessive, irrefrenable imagination, and the poet's hesitation concerning the real boundaries of the poem. If we extrapolate R.D. Sell's standpoint, parentheses illustrate a literary communication insistently mediated, which activates or frustrates the cooperative reader (Sell 2000: 158). In postmodern poetry, the distrust of communicative possibilities is another connotation of this paradoxical poetic sign .

¹ In Romanian: "(am sărit o pagină și / vreau s-o umplu cu / ceva să nu se vadă / golul în poezie totul / se bazează pe principiul / ubicuității – uitați-vă la / Iliada – asta o știm cu / toții cât mai multă / umplutura / cuvinte îngrămădite / fără ritm și noimă și / alte fleacuri alungându-se / alegându-se grija cea / mare e doar aceasta / nici un gol / nici un spațiu de odihnă / pentru ochi nu e / alteva poezia decât / buretele de șters / praful de pe fereastra / interioară / dar iată că se termină / spațiul cel alb / și vă închid paranteza în nas)" (Mincu, *Întimplări la Pompei*, 1982: 81).

² In Romanian: "azi – (completați spațiul dintre paranteze) / desenez (bine mulat pe o cruce de oase)" (Leahu, *Completați spațiul dintre paranteze*, 1997: 55); "Ea a jucat dar a trăit aceasta () cine spune că atunci când joci nu trăiești (Iova 1998: 92).

Concluding remarks

In our Bakhtinian reading, poetry – especially postmodern – is dialogic and polyphonic; parentheses ontologically reflect the internal dialogization achieved by the oscillation between two levels of enunciation: the framing utterance and the tangential interpolation. In the corpus under study, parenthetical insertions represent a central figure, with pragma-rhetoric and stylistic functions. They maintain poetic versatility and invite us to reflect on the interplay between enunciative heterogeneity, the text's limits and the argumentative efforts of persuading the reader.

Unlike in the common use, poets give them autonomy, put them in the position to destabilize the entire poem; sometimes they are more important than the frame utterance, other times they contradict or complement it. As subjective signs, parenthetical insertions are the ground of interactions between the enunciator and the reader – a place of meaning negotiation. The polyphony of enunciative voices is accompanied by various effects: ambiguity, amplification, retardation, camouflage, intimacy, aggression, confusion and indecision. The examples analyzed here expose multiple enunciative discontinuities, as well as meaning effects generated by the interference with other punctuation marks, with the enunciator's ironic ethos, with the reader's expectations. The enunciative retardation is also relevant for the topic under discussion.

The poetic use of parentheses participates in building up a discursive identity: if the overuse of parentheses indicates the inability to refrain imagination, it is no coincidence that the referential poetry practiced by the poets of the 1980s and 2000 avoid these typographical signs. The centrality of the parenthetical insertions in the metatextual poetry of the 1980s indicates that postmodern poetry, simultaneously enunciated on two levels, is no longer a pure product, but an interrupted production act, corrected and always resumed. The privileged use of parentheses as a poetic device permits the identification of certain isomorphisms between the rhetoric of the frame utterance, the parenthetical insertion, and the discursive genre. It implicitly direct us to the stylistic identity of the Romanian postmodern poets, as follows: dialogic and qualificative parentheses with Stoiciu, didactic-demonstrative with Ghiu, metalinguistic with Iova, Ghiu and Mincu, conceptual and repetitive with Lefter and Danilov, empty with Leahu and Iova, argumentative with Ștefoi, intertextual and addressed with Bucur and Băicuș etc. The excessive presence of parentheses with Stoiciu, Iova, Ghiu, Leahu, Morar contrasts with the corresponding parsimony in Cărtărescu, Mușina, Dobrescu.

Parenthetical insertions simply denude the techniques and dialogic strategies behind the text production; they materialize the failure of entirely capturing an idea, the fact that poetry is never perfect. Postmodern parenthetical additions reveal a model of text production different from the modernist one: the poetry is no longer a finished product, but an improvising process, played on two planes.

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Aspects of the Parodic Discourse in Romanian Contemporary Poetry

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1. Introduction

The paper tackles, within the framework of intertextuality and other recent approaches to parody, the complex and ambiguous status of this device in contemporary (especially postmodern) Romanian poetry, but also its ability to function as deconstruction *in actu* and as a variety of differential rewriting. The corpus displays a range of parodic practices: from the minimal parody – détournement of a famous quotation (with Aurelian Dumitrașcu) to the consistent parodic framework (with Mircea Cărtărescu, Magda Cârneci, Augustin Pop) and the contamination of several hypotexts (with Alexandru Mușina). The polemic edge varies, from the mildly ironic to the utterly sarcastic.

Along with parodic hypertexts with easily recognizable sources which belong to the national or the world literature canon, the anti-literary impulse of much contemporary Romanian poetry is directed towards architextual configurations / genres, discourses, literary codes and conventions, or clichés and stereotypes which are denounced on account of their being perceived as obsolete and incompatible with the poet's own aspirations. The change in the "ideology" of literary value and literariness is quite often reflected in the *artes poeticae* or manifestoes of Romanian poets, generating an interesting interplay between anti-poetry and meta-poetry. In consequence, parody may act like a regenerative force, accompanying the paradigm-shift from (late)modernism to postmodernism.

As the intention is not that of a comprehensive account of parody in recent contemporary poetry, this study offers mere illustrations which may be symptomatic for the contemporary propensity towards the questioning and reevaluation of all consecrated values.

2. Complexity of the parodic discourse

Parody is one of the most complex topics of contemporary literary theory. It has been approached as an instance of dialogism (Bakhtin 1981) or intertextuality / hypertextuality (Genette 1982), as a semiotic and pragmatic activity (Gobin 1986),

or even, in the broadest sense possible, as “repetition with difference” (Hutcheon 1985). Found at the very core of communication, of linguistic exchange (cf. Dentith 2000), parody can also be viewed as a form of “human behaviour which is enacted in various ways, through gesturing, writing or speaking, and in various contexts” (Rossen-Knill & Henry 1997: 720). Within the same communicative framework, parody is also described as a means of “interlocutory alteration” (Madini 2000). The complex processes required by the adequate codification of parody rely on the competence of a conscious reader who is also willing to enter parody’s particular “game”.

Our epoch has witnessed a genuine “fascination with parody” (Müller 1997: 3). Parodic transformation of previous styles, texts and discourses has been identified as the dominant style and mode of the (post)modern age. It is a “major mode of thematic and formal structuring”, and “one of the most frequent forms taken by textual self-reflexivity” (Hutcheon 1985: 101). Contemporary parody reveals ambivalence, ambiguity, even complicity, inasmuch as it incorporates and celebrates its target, due to the fact that it “makes the object of attack part of its own structure” (Rose 1979: 35). As varieties of *metaparody* (a parody that includes its *counterparody*), these recent literary experiments remain “fundamentally open” (Morson 1989: 81).

Romanian contemporary poetry from the latest three decades offers a diverse stylistic landscape. However, the most theorized, discussed, and, the most exploited paradigm in this period appears to have been postmodernism. The proponents of this movement, first manifested in the eighties, were prone to echo and rework, in a playful but critical way, various themes and styles, but at the same time the most difficult theories of the second half of the twentieth century, including semiotics (cf. Parpală Afana 1994).

Romanian postmodernism has been acknowledged as palimpsestic, as a mainly imported phenomenon, but also as a conscious cultural choice, which Mircea Cărtărescu has called “the postmodern option” (1998: 58). While generously embracing, through intertextuality and bricolage, the manifold aspects of the literary tradition, postmodernism definitely defies the modernist inheritance, its complicated ascetic rituals, and its “negative categories” (cf. Friedrich 1974: 8-9). One of the strongest polemic tools in the anti-modernist critique of this movement is, without any doubt, parody, the prevailing intertextual genre in contemporary literature. Therefore, I consider inaccurate Jameson’s account of postmodernism as being dominated by *pastiche* or “blank parody” (1991: 17). When pastiche meets irony, the result is parody, which can be more or less edgy or polemical, even to the point of being exempt from “ridicule” (Hutcheon 1978). In (post)communist¹ Romania, ironic palimpsests influenced by the poetics of postmodernism did have a subversive-deconstructive edge oriented towards the dominant ideologies (Popescu 2012a) or the authority of the literary canons (Popescu 2012b).

¹ Corina Croitoru (2014) argues that, under communism, Romanian poetry employed a very complex “politics of irony”, ranging from ethics to self-referentiality.

Among the various possible parodic targets, subjected to ironic deconstruction, I will focus on the self-referential / metaliterary parody and the parodic palimpsests that put into question the very status of poetic discourse.

3. The metaliterary and metadiscursive dimensions of parody

Literary parody is inherently metaliterature, a prototypical mode of self-referentiality or textual “narcissism” (cf. Hutcheon 1977) but also hypertextuality or “literature in the second degree” (Genette 1982). By (critically) foregrounding the artificiality and conventionality of literature, contemporary parody manifests as a variety of “the art that plays with art” (Chambers 2010), meaning that it is rather playful and non-destructive, and that it preserves its aesthetic status even when it assumes an anti-literary / anti-artistic dimension. The transdiscursive and interdiscursive nature of parody should also be emphasized: there are not only literary genres, architextual conventions and codes, which are aimed at, but also more complex and intricate discursive formations as well as the non-literary, scientific discourse. (On the other hand, parody can simulate the scientific discourse in order to reach its deconstructive purpose).

It is not only in fiction that the presence of parody has the effect of emphasizing literariness and “laying bare” the devices of the genre in order to “refunction them for new purposes” (Rose 1979: 14), but also in other genres, including poetry, as the rich corpus of contemporary poetry proves it.

3.1. Generic parody, anti-poetry and meta-poetry

By the anti-poetic parody, the poetic discourse *per se* is thematized and problematized. Just as postmodern fiction has registered a change of “dominant” from the epistemological to the ontological, so did postmodern poetry (cf. McHale 1987). One of parody’s main functions (or simply “effects”) is to reveal the workings of the hypotext’s grammar, its poetics, the parodied author’s stylistic idiosyncrasies or the parodied genre’s outdated conventions. But since literature is the ultimate genre, the connection between parody and “anti-literature” appears entirely justified.

The anti-literary drive reveals the strong impact that the historical avant-garde had on some of these poets. It is not just the modernist poetic model which is rejected, or some other identifiable paradigm, but the very principle of the poetic process. In these cases, the deconstruction is not undertaken from the vantage point of another (present or future), innovative, “better” poetics. The saturation with each and every kind of literary writing is not in fact proper to postmodernism, which is clearly very much inclined to recycle, recuperate and re-inscribe (even ironically) previous, historicized discourses and styles (hence, its propensity towards meta-poetry). However, with Romanian contemporary poets, the anti-poetic “project” is just another stage in their endeavour towards a complex experimentalism, based on hypertextual strategies. Disappointed with the entire “business” of poetry, Simona

Popescu (see *In the Shadow of the Desert in Bloom. To My Spirit*¹) will later dedicate a book (2006) to a “plea” for writing and reading poetry.

The all-encompassing subversive impulse revealed by the radicalized version of contemporary poetics (apparently trying to undermine and delegitimize the “institution” of literature itself) is not alien to a contemporary trend in world literature, namely, “the politics of self-parody”:

[...] a literature of self-parody that makes fun of itself as it goes along. [...]; it calls into question not any particular literary structure as much as the enterprise, the activity itself of creating any literary form, of empowering an idea with a style (Poirier 1992: 27).

The self-parodic or auto-parodic mode can also be seen as “an argumentative form of the carnivalesque” (Șimanschi 2013: 90).

The poetry written by authors like Mircea Cărtărescu, Traian T. Coșovei, Florin Iaru, Ion Stratan, or Alexandru Mușina abounds in neo-manneristic, bookish, self-referential games. This line in the poetry of the eighties has been focusing on intertextual dialogism and rewriting strategies, allusions, explicit or distorted quotations, stylizations and parodies. Their poetry is *meta-poetry* in an explicit and ostentatious way.

Excessive intertextuality can also have the paradoxical effect of dismantling the poetic “heterocosm”. In Romania, parody has been the privileged palimpsestic mode in the direction of what the critics have been calling (borrowing a title from Petru Romoșan, 1980), “the comedy of literature” (cf. Țeposu 2002: 159). The self-reflexivity of Cărtărescu’s play with the texts and the traditions (meta-literary in essence) is subsumed to the same postmodern dominant. Cărtărescu’s *A Night at the Opera* (in Mușina 2002: 67-77) relies on the “lover’s discourse” and the many layers of *déjà-dit* embedded in any attempt to put one’s feelings into (poetic) words. This typically postmodern long poem presents the poetic “I” (the lover / poet) engaged in a confrontation with a talking monkey, who will prove to be the real enunciator of the erotic discourse: but one who can only mimic the voices of Romanian poets (from the anonymous folk creator to the canonical poets of the inter-war period: Bacovia, Blaga, Arghezi, Barbu)². It looks, to some extent, like an elaboration on Eco’s characterization of the postmodern, by comparison to a lover who is compelled to put an ironic intertextual distance between him and his love declaration to a woman: “The postmodern reply to the modern consists of recognizing that the past [...] must be revisited: but with irony, not innocently” (Eco 1994: 67). The profusion of devices which emphasize similarity (quotation, collage, stylization and pastiche) does not reduce the *difference*, the striking originality of this

¹ *La umbra deșertului în floare. Duhului meu*, in Simona Popescu, *Juventus și alte poeme. Antologie* (2004: 135-143).

² Due to the lack of space, I cannot provide examples, since it would be necessary to contrast the hypertexts and the hypotexts. I have already analyzed the parodic mechanisms in *A Night at the Opera* and *The Levant in Scriiturile diferenței. Intertextualitatea parodică în literatura română contemporană* (Pascu 2006: 102-107).

metapoetic configuration. I believe this is due to the general parodic (deconstructive) frame on which the poem is based.

Stylization turns into parodic stylization, which manifests itself when “the intentions of the representing discourse are at odds with the intentions of the represented discourse” (Bakhtin 1981: 347). The background provided by the carefully crafted paratext (the *Argument*) and the duo of the two “lovers”, the generic *Woman* and the *Monkey*, help the reader in the process of adequately decoding tongue-in-cheek irony, which otherwise might go unnoticed or dissolved into the playful celebratory tone. The allusion to the so-called “infinite monkey theorem”¹ serves as the “scientific” basis for a creative experiment which, besides being a very entertaining series of “exercises de style” in the manner of various Romanian poets, could also be read as a parable of the dialectic of imitation / conventionality and difference / originality in the writing process. The internalized voices of canonical authors are invited to act as co-enunciators in this synoptic carnivalized history² of erotic poetry. In this respect, the poem is an anticipation of Cărtărescu’s ultimate intertextual experiment called *The Levant* (1990), where, within the frame of a mock-epic placed around the revolutionary year 1848, he mimics and parodically rewrites every major style and idiostyle of Romanian poetry. The poetic language is here the true “protagonist”.

3.2. A Post-manifesto

Sometimes the polemic dimension in contemporary parodic metapoetry is conveyed by a parodic *Grundstimmung*, a subtle, evasive, often misleading tone³. In the postmodern sceptic and relativistic mindset, any type of serious and passionate commitment (including the aesthetic one) would be self-contradictory. Therefore, the primary parodic impulse in the postmodern age could be paralleled to deconstruction’s tendency to place everything “under erasure” (cf. Derrida 1997: 60). Manifestoes are substituted by anti-manifestoes, pseudo- or mock-manifestoes or even post-manifestoes in poetic form, like the one by Magda Cârneci. Here she postulates, ironically, a “postmodern reader”, endowed with miraculous capacities of decoding poetry. This ideal reader, although not “a semblable, a frère” (obviously, a Baudelairian reference), appears to possess an absolute competence. The reader should just have “his eye glued” on the poem’s “images” as if they were “his infant photos”; (s)he should also “rummage after tropes, the oxymoron, the synecdoche, but especially the fashionable metonymy, the pretentious young lady” (Cârnelci 2004: 143)⁴.

¹ The *Argument* refers to an allegedly well-known speculation that, given the infinity of time, a monkey which was trained to type will eventually succeed in writing a Shakespearean sonnet.

² According to Linda Hutcheon (1985: 101) parody is “an important way to come to terms with the past” through “ironic re-coding” or “trans-contextualizing”.

³ Parody “operates on the transsentential level. [...] is not a localizable phenomenon. [...]. It is everywhere and nowhere” (Wall 1986: 69).

⁴ My translation from Romanian: “scormonind după tropi, oximoronul, sinecdoca, dar mai ales metonimia în vogă, prețioasa ridicolă”.

Instead of making high promises of a revolutionary poetics, as a “normal” manifesto would do, the post-manifesto puts all the emphasis (together with an enormous pressure) on this “perfect” reader. The parodic strategy relies here on a playful breach of the pragmatic “contract”, whereby the poet flaunts some basic conversational rules. Of course, all these unrealistic demands are undermined by bitter irony, because the scholarly knowledge that the regular postmodern reader is indeed expected to detain is not really what the poet desires. To be scrutinized with “psychoanalytic, structuralist and symbolic lenses” (*ibidem*: 144)¹ is hardly a poet’s dream.

3.3. The creative process demystified

3.3.1. Considering the assumption that contemporary poetic discourse should be doubled by its own metadiscourse, Augustin Pop goes as far as giving a recipe for writing a “famous poem”:

One should first watch on TV
The literary show
One should remember opinions on poetry
creation and *écriture* (degree zero)
of all personalities being interviewed
One should work out
One should make a journey
(preferably in South-Eastern Europe)
One should make love
One should thoroughly study the role of emotion
in the evolution of the stone and mentality
in consumer societies
One should have a brief trial of conscience
One should shower [...]

(Pop, *How to Write a Famous Poem*, in Mușina 2002: 294)².

The poet recasts the genre of didactic treatises and *artes poeticae* (in the line of Horace’s *Epistle to the Pisones*) in the rhetorical format of a “how to” book, simulating the easy, happy tone of such guides and manuals. This would be an abbreviated version of poetics, let’s say, “poetics for dummies”. Of course, it ought to be read antiphrastically, just as Swift’s *A Modest Proposal*, because it shows similar cynicism.

¹ “lentile psihanalitice, structuraliste și simbolice”.

² My translation from Romanian: „Se urmărește mai întâi la televizor / Emisiunea literară / Se rețin opiniile despre poezie / creație și scriitură (gradul zero) / ale tuturor personalităților intervievate / Se face sport / Se întreprinde o călătorie / (de preferință în sud-estul Europei) / Se face dragoste / Se studiază amănunțit rolul emoției / în evoluția pietrei și a mentalității / în societatea de consum / Se face un scurt proces de conștiință / Se face duș [...]” (Pop, *Cum să scrii un poem celebru*, in Mușina 2002: 294).

But which is in fact the target of derision in these series of ironic recommendations? The use of the adjective “famous” in the title suggests that it is not about the true urge of expressing and communication one’s view (or emotions, anxieties, etc.), but about using the medium of poetry to obtain social legitimacy among one’s contemporaries. Therefore, one target of this satirical parody could be the widespread phenomenon of artistic imposture and the (often) shallow, undeserved and ephemeral nature of success. A famous poem is not necessarily a valuable, well-written poem, but it is usually a fashionable one. The writer who strives to be truly up to date is fully aware of the mainstream “opinions” about poetry, (and also pretentious concepts, like *écriture*), as long as they belong to acknowledged “personalities” who give interviews on television. So, the theoretical knowledge necessary to the would-be poet should be acquired in the easiest way possible, with the minimum of effort from the part of the disciple.

Other types of advice are simply frivolous and absurd (the reference to physical exercise or to having a shower), while others allude to the necessity of personal experience as a source of topics to write about (travelling, being in love). Plus, the necessity of a larger, transindividual perspective (“studying” the role of emotion...). The poet could not have forgotten the compulsory requirement of depth, hence, the necessity of a “trial of conscience”, provided it is a brief one. In this particular demythization of the creative process we can recognize a bitter, cynical reality: the “right” fashionable clichés at the right time might indeed ensure a future “famous” poem.

3.3.2. In his very short poem, *La poétique avant toute chose*, Aurelian Dumitrașcu proposes a mock *ars poetica*: “Contemplated from behind every nude woman looks like / a typewriter”¹. The surrealistic image along with the parodic quotation of the title is indicative of a parodic intention. It is a synthetic way for the poet of embracing and at the same time distancing himself from the creative mentality which tends to turn everything into poetry. According to the new imaginary, creation is no longer metaphorized as a dream, or a song, as prophecy or other hieratic gesture, but instead it is reduced to the performative act which helps accomplish it: writing, typing.

Far from intending to poke fun to Verlaine’s poetics (“de la musique avant toute chose”), Dumitrașcu’s minimalist parody seems to use the literary allusion (with the replacement of *music* by *poetics*) in order to denounce the obsessive aestheticism of his own age, and the strict separation of art and life, which is paradoxically enhanced by postmodernism’s very effort to eliminate the boundary between the two. If there is irony in this extremely compressed *ars poetica*, I believe it to be directed towards the substitution of life by art. This collapse of oppositions tends to occur when poetry and poetics are no longer perceived as means for the transfiguration of the world or even to compensate existential failure, but as the true “reality”, the true “life”, or even a manifestation of an *au-delà*; this is a situation engendered by the radicalization of modernist aesthetic purism.

¹ My translation from Romanian: „Privită din spate orice femeie goală seamănă / cu o mașină de scris” (Dumitrașcu, *La poétique avant toute chose*, in Mușina 2002: 123).

3.3.3. A very refined parodic palimpsest thematizing the status of both poetry and the poet in a revisionist, nonconventional manner is Alexandru Mușina's poem *Hyperion's Afternoon*. As a promoter of the *new anthropocentrism* Mușina was an original presence in the landscape of Romanian "postmodernism" (a notion he vehemently contested) and was very inclined to rework pre-existent texts but also more vague enunciative situations and ritualized clichés or social scripts, which are likely to be approached from a pragmatic perspective (cf. Parpală 2011: 240-248). As noticed by Iulian Boldea,

Alexandru Mușina stood out among the writers of his generation due to the manner in which he knew how to render the grotesque and precariousness of existence in the vivid colors of a sarcasm hardly softened by an irony that subtly distinguishes appearance from essence, fake from authentic, reality from illusion. [...] referentiality, self-referentiality and symbolic valences are the instances that rule supreme over this poetry that is attracted by phenomenality, but also by the visionary, metaphysical perspective alike (Boldea 2014: 16-17).

For the reader who is familiar with metapoetry in the tradition of modernist initiation and this movement's way of conceiving of the poetic experience as epiphany, *Hyperion's Afternoon* has a confusing effect:

Friends who know me well
And those who only sort of know me
Come in through the window and settle themselves comfortably
In the four corners of my heart.
They light their rank cigarettes,
Stretch out in bed, shoes on, and,
Apathetically and passionately, play various
Games of chance or cards;
They rummage through all the crannies and drink
Blue blood and bitter venom,
Make themselves sober with basil water,
Then clear out muttering, grumbling:
'Where in hell's that ingrate,
Why's he never at home?'
I drop down from the ceiling, from where I watched
In the form of a cruciform spider, unseen and poisonous,
I tidy up a bit, then, shyly,
I pour myself some basil into a cup,
Which shatters with a crystal-clear sound, and I cry out:
'This is art, boys!'

(Mușina, *Hyperion's Afternoon*, in Bodi, 1999: 105)¹

¹ Translated by Adam J. Sorkin & Radu Surdulescu from Romanian: „Prietenii care mă știu / Și cei care mă știu mai puțin / Intră pe fereastră și se așează comozi / în cele patru vânturi ale inimii mele. Se întind încălțați în pat și joacă / Indiferenți și pasionați diverse / Jocuri de noroc și cărți; / Cotrobăie prin toate ungherele și beau / Sânge albastru și venin amăru, / Se trezesc cu apă de busuioc, / apoi se cară bombănind nemulțumiți: / «Unde dracu e nesimțitu ăsta, / De ce nu stă și el pe acasă?» / Eu cobor din

This is a multilayered palimpsest, conflating / contaminating at least two major legacies: Romanticism and Symbolism / (High) Modernism. Mallarmé's famous title *L'après-midi d'un faune* (sub-titled *Eclogue*) is here refunctionalized, but the titan Hyperion has replaced the faun. According to the ideal reader's intertextual competence, other romantic references will be evoked: John Keats's *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion. A Dream*, Hölderlin's epistolary novel *Hyperion or the Hermit in Greece*, and, as far as the Romanian readership is concerned, Eminescu's epic poem *The Evening Star (Luceafărul)*, the uncontested masterpiece of Romanian literature (the title was sometimes translated as *Hyperion*, after the name the Demiurge gives to the protagonist in the poem).

The text proper does not use again the name Hyperion, but we have no other choice than super-imposing this symbolic label (Hyperion as a genius, an exceptionally gifted and misunderstood individual), with its entire intertextual load, on the lyric actant (the "I" of the poem). The incongruity between this high expectation and the poem's "anecdote" is what generates parodic difference: because, notwithstanding the emphatic posture suggested by the title and the prestigious literary references, the language used by the poem is colloquial (including also an element of profanity and verbal violence)¹ and the characters' behaviour is inelegant or even downright strange.

Mallarmé's poem, which, due to the paratext, must be regarded as the main hypotext, related a faun's dream and subsequent musings: the two nymphs have escaped him but the thought of transfiguration through art (of "perpetuating" them) is what finally consoles him. Mușina's rewriting also focuses on *poiesis* and the encounters that may trigger creativity, with the difference that his is no longer a tale of seduction, but one of hide-and-seek. In Mușina's ironic *ars poetica*, a mysterious ritual is described, but one which is made out of what could be enigmatic initiatic gestures, except that they are very disconnected and ambiguous. It is extremely difficult to ascribe a definite role and posture to the actants (the speaker himself and the unnamed human entities who invade his intimate space). But this is rather the parody of modernist elitist hermetism, here represented by the poet's reluctance to communicate with "friends" (i.e., the overbearing voices of the past, but also the public).

Several beverages² are mentioned here: blue blood (an ironic allusion to the poet's spiritual nobility), bitter venom (the prototypical *pharmakon*³, the poison

tavan, de unde priveam / Sub chip de păianjen cu cruce, nevăzut și otrăvitor, / Mă apuc și deretic, pe urmă, timid, / Îmi torn și eu o ceașcă de busuioc, / Care se sparge cu sunet cristalin, și strig: / 'aceasta e artă, băieți!'" (Mușina, *După-amiaza lui Hyperion*, 2003: 9-15).

¹ The mixture of registers reminds us of the double stance of postmodernism as underlined by Linda Hutcheon: "Postmodernism is both academic and popular, elitist and accessible" (Hutcheon 1988: 44).

² An enduring symbolic tradition associates water, wine and various other drinks mentioned in poetry with inspiration. In particular, springs and fountains were protected by the Muses or certain deities who were also patrons of creativity: "In classical literature, fountains or springs (Greek *krene*, Latin *fons*) are sacred to the Muses and sources of poetic inspiration" (Ferber 1999: 79).

³ For an in-depth analysis of *pharmakon* as an ambivalent concept and its relationship with writing, see Derrida, *Plato's Pharmacy in Dissemination* (2004: 67-186).

which is also cure) and the basil (an ingredient for holy water, used in the Orthodox Church for exorcism and blessing). In some cultures, basil was considered a cure for venomous bites and it is also interesting that in this poetic *mise-en-scène*, the drinking of basil water is used for “sobering up” (possibly, a reference to the recourse to reason, which is also part of the creative process, besides the intoxicating “blood” and “venom”, figuring the deeper, darker forces of inspiration). The classical ideal of the poet who makes a balanced use of the faculties of the soul (inspiration, imagination, reason) might also be here alluded to. The marriage of Romanticism (inspiration) and Modernism (cerebrality), as suggested by the palimpsestic title, is another means of achieving this ideal, at this (postmodern) stage of history.

The setting of this anti-eclogue is in the poet’s inner self (his “heart” being the most obvious metonymy of personhood). Like any other human heart, this one is haunted by alien presences, voices, images, recollections, etc. It could be a representation of the polyphonic nature of (creative) subjectivity and authorship as redefined by postmodernism and poststructuralism. Not all of these alien voices that make up the dialogic fabric of inner life are harmonious or beneficial. Some of them may be hostile or intruding and threatening for the sense of self, but the poet-as-orchestrator, the one who has the last word, is the one who “tidies up” the place after they leave, meaning that he organizes all this “material”, turns the self-as-home into a haven, integrating influences, appropriating everything, but at the same time keeping at a distance and contemplating from above the chaos of thoughts, voices and drives that are not all his. From the standpoint of the phenomenology of imagination, Gaston Bachelard has noticed the psychological value of the *corner*, which is an element of the ideal space of a retractile personality:

Every corner in a house, every angle in a room, every inch of secluded space in which we like to hide, or withdraw into ourselves, is a symbol of solitude for the imagination; that is to say, it is the germ of a room, or of a house. [...]. That most sordid of all havens, the corner, deserves to be examined. At times, the simpler the image, the vaster the dream. To begin with, the corner is a haven that ensures us one of the things we prize most highly—immobility. [...] It will serve as an illustration for the dialectics of inside and outside [...] (Bachelard 1994: 136-137).

As I have already suggested, the “friends” may stand for the co-creators inside the poet’s psyche (the voices of various intertexts) but also for the receivers. The fact that the poet chooses to represent himself as a spider is significant, and it turns him into an agent of textualism, recalling Barthes’s “hyphology”:

Text means *Tissue*; but whereas hitherto we have always taken this tissue as a product, a ready-made veil, behind which lies, more or less hidden, meaning (truth), we are now emphasizing, in the tissue, the generative idea that the text is made, is worked out in a perpetual interweaving; lost in this tissue – this textu – the subject unmakes himself, like a spider dissolving in the constructive secretions of its web. Were we

fond of neologisms, we might define the theory of the text as a *hyphology* (*hyphos* is the tissue and the spider's web) (Barthes 1975: 64).

However, in the Romanian writer's poetic imaginary, the creative subject does not appear to dissolve in the text as in his own organic secretion. Although his identity remains elusive, in biographical and psychological terms, because of the fact that his animal persona is a suffering one (being a "cruciform" spider), a new web of meanings is generated, where a strong archetypal symbolism is not lost (on the reader). The spider has a special place in the literary mythology of creativity: the episode about Arachne in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* tells a compelling tale about the subversive artist's hubris and the ambiguous punishment the gods inflict upon her. By turning her into a spider, Athena dehumanizes her but at the same time she gives her a type of agency (because she remains a weaver of webs) and consecrates her as an artist, although in a diminished form. Similarly, the postmodern writer is more a technician than a demiurgic creator relying on inspiration and innate genius.

Mușina's poem exploits the incompatibility between the romantic pose¹ and the modernist ideal of impersonality (involving a version of depersonalized creativity). Both masks seem to be on the one hand accepted and integrated, on the other hand discarded. Stronger than his desire to commune with others is his sense of alienation and his search for intimacy, which is ever more difficult to preserve. The "venom" and the "poison" which are referred to in the poem might be an extreme, hyperbolic way to reclaim a drop of agency for the poetic subject.

In spite of the final triumphant cry ("This is art, boys!"²), the ambiguity remains: what exactly is the essence of art, in Mușina's opinion? Is it a collaborative, dialogic endeavour, in the light of pervasive and implicit intertextuality, or maybe a technical ability to combine and orchestrate quotations, allusions, and themes already approached by canonical authors? But, of course, the postmodern mentality is incompatible with any type of essentialism and a definite answer is out of reach.

Conclusions

The pervasiveness and complexity of parodic practices in Romanian contemporary culture can stimulate the reassessment of the key issues of literary communication: authorship, aesthetic autonomy, cooperative reception (the reading contract). In a very large perspective (adequate for the postmodern context), literary parody is seen as a sub-category of verbal parody (cf. Rossen-Knill & Henry, 1997), which can be understood as an expressive means in the on-going "dialogue" between sender and receiver (encoder and decoder, parodist

¹ The poet as solitary genius, titan, evening star, albatross, "poète maudit", or as "legislator" and *vates*.

² The verse "Băieți, această este arta" is an ironic quotation from Mihai Beniuc, a proletcultist Romanian poet.

and reader). Contemporary parody in the poetic guise is able to draw our attention mainly by its pragmatic and communicative implications.

As a genre of palimpsest or intertextual / hypertextual rewriting, parody is an inherent questioning of any claim to originality. In fact, it subverts and deconstructs the romantic myth of creation or writing as original invention. At the same time, as a form based primarily on the deconstructive energy of irony, it may help reinterpret “originality” as “difference” occurring on the background of imitation, mimicry, pastiche.

The strong sense of (cultural) history that contemporary parodists seem to entertain makes them appear as conscious responsible artists who are fully aware of parody’s expressive virtues and possibilities. Both by practice and by theory, the recent literary paradigm has the merit of having rehabilitated and even “canonized” parody. A notable aspect of the Romanian contemporary poetics of parody is the ironic distance it takes, with respect to high modernism and the latter’s mode of conceiving the process of literary communication on all levels (creation / poiesis *per se*, the message, and the effect on readers).

Parody emerges as a critical tool in artistic form (thus preserving the aesthetic function) and also, from the point of view of literary history, as a device for change, innovation, able to determine paradigm-shifts (when it is not, on the contrary, the symptom of a conservative backlash). Parody foregrounds art as art, but also its limitations, conventions and clichés. By foregrounding the “poeticity” of poetry (the special ontological status traditionally attributed to the genre), metaliterary parody denounces, in fact some of the illusions and delusions that this “puristic” model ended up endorsing, starting with the very strict separation between poetry and prose, or between genres in general. Structural hybridization and voluntary “impurity”, depoetization, irreverence and the recourse to a prosaic style are some of the strategies used for contesting the dogma of an autonomous and pure poetic language.

In several of the examples analyzed here, the target of parodying deconstruction is the dominant representation about what a poem should be (like) or about what a dignified poetic object is. A historicized concept of “literariness” / “poeticity”, of *decorum* and poetic loftiness may find itself utterly undermined by parody. Instead of seeing parody as a destructive and maliciously ridiculing gesture, we are persuaded by the sophisticated palimpsests of contemporary poetry to represent it as a strategy able to generate polysemy, ambiguity and genuine aesthetic novelty.

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The Alienation of the Female Figure: Denial of Subjectivity in *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe

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1. Introduction

Feminist criticism became a widespread approach in Western literary studies in the late 1770, when literary theory began to be involved in linguistic and literary fields. Feminism has had a great impact over the manner in which literary texts are read and analyzed by trying to disclose the way in which gender has been constructed and depicted through language. Ellen Rooney (2006) has defined the essence of feminist literary theory as consisting in competing range of struggles, including the interrogation of tradition and the reevaluation of the aesthetic. French feminism has derived many of its ideas from Simone de Beauvoir's book *The Second Sex*, published in 1949, which brought the sexed body to the center of literary, political and philosophical thought. The authoress maintains that women have been oppressed for a long period by men and have been categorized as man's Other. Women are regarded as deviant, abnormal. A woman has ovaries, uterus and these peculiarities imprison her in her subjectivity and it is often said that she thinks with her glands (1998: 163).

In *Towards a Feminist Poetics*, Elaine Showalter divides feminist criticism in two areas, "feminist critique" and the gynocritique. The first deals with woman as reader. This "feminist critique", as she names it, tries to reveal the images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions and misconceptions of women in criticism and the fissures in the male-constructed literary history. The *gynocritique*, which is concerned with woman as a writer, studies the history, themes, genders and structures of literature by women (Showalter 1998: 169).

Julia Kristeva talks about the radical feminist currents taking refuge in *jouissance*, a sort of laicized transcendence, and this is the result of various forms of marginalism. Women's affiliation to terrorist groups arises from their frustration and from the violence they have endured (Kristeva 1998: 165-6).

Kate Millet, in *Sexual Politics*, analyses sex roles by arguing that women are relegated to domestic service and raising the children, while the rest of human achievements, interest and ambition are reserved to men. The female is granted a limited role which arrests her at the level of biological experience. Consequently, nearly everything that can be considered as human activity and not animal, because

the animals too give birth and take care of their young, is largely devoted to men. Gender difference is not a natural feature, but appears as the effect of the complex interconnection of knowledge and power which permeate all areas of life. The white male, according to the theories of gender difference, is the norm in relation to which all others should be measured and which sees all women as deviating from this norm in ways which make them proper for domesticity and motherhood (Weedon 1999: 5, 6). Women novelists have found new, ingenious ways of expressing their outrage caused by the position in which their gender had placed them, while still accepting the masculine rules of the novel genre by “projecting their rebellious impulses... into mad or monstrous women” (Gilbert, Gubar 2000: 78). Bertha Mason becomes, thus, the heroine of feminist criticism. Women act violently only when they are barred access to means of self-expression which are always available to men (Armstrong 2006: 101).

The goal of this paper is to provide a feminist reinterpretation of E.A. Poe’s tale *The Fall of the House of Usher* by inquiring into the construction of the female figure as seen by a male writer, who thus becomes alienated and whose subjectivity is utterly denied by various mechanisms that I intend to reveal. I shall also explore other works of Poe so as to provide a deeper insight into the ways in which female identity is shaped by male discourse. My paper explores feminine stereotypes and discloses male misreadings and their impact over identity, as they emerge in Edgar Allan Poe’s tale *The Fall of the House of Usher*, by employing a feminist approach. Throughout Poe’s fiction there is a pervasive representation of women as dead, buried alive, suffering from various illnesses or enduring gruesome deaths. As a result, the primary premise of this paper is that the writer has delighted in presenting women as victims or subject to man’s power and authority. Moreover, I will study the characteristics the male writer ascribes to the female protagonist, who emerges as a powerless individual who only by violent means, beyond death, can prevail over men. The woman therefore is envisaged as lacking rationality and means of self-actualization, falling prey to othering. My objective is to analyse the forces that shape selfhood by arguing that the female character is portrayed as a diseased recluse, devoid of agency, which leads to her alienation. In this sense, I will strive to elucidate the process of female identity construction as it develops in some of Poe’s writings.

2. The disempowered subject

In *The Black Cat* the narrator buries an axe in his wife’s head and then hides her body behind a plaster wall. Leslie A. Fiedler, in discussing *Morella* and *Ligeia*, remarks that the dying succubus-bride is a dark projection of the husband’s psyche, bearing the stigmata of a tabooed figure: the dark eyes and hair which make her a carrier of madness and death (Fiedler 1960: 398). As the male protagonist cannot deal with the conflicting drives, he chooses to suppress all opposition, but the female figure only reemerges in a more threatening form. The character of Madeline Usher

represents the projection of a male mind concerning the character of a woman. As Simone de Beauvoir argues, Madeline appears imprisoned in her own subjectivity by a patriarchal society. Throughout the story, Madeline is not seen as a human being in flesh and blood, but only as a specter that frightens the narrator:

While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread - and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps (Poe 1994: 82).

This position of the specter becomes suggestive for women's marginal position in society, public affairs and even family, where the man, whether father, husband, brother, occupies the prominent place and is the decision-making person and the one who has the right to act. We can perceive here the tendency to see women as unstable, equated with the irrational (Showalter 1998: 171). Therefore, lady Madeline is portrayed as a shadow and the narrator only gets a brief look at her "retreating steps". Madeline, in spite of her important part in the plot, is seen only as a picture-the picture of a young woman dying at the acme of her beauty – a widespread motif of Renaissance literature in Poliziano, Lorenzo El Magnifico, Ronsard, Garcilaso (Spitzer 1996: 59).

Madeline is silenced, deprived of thought and language, identified as a creature of lack. She is never granted the chance to speak and all the information that we have about her are what Roderick Usher chooses to tell us. Elaine Showalter's observation appears to describe Madeline's position: if we study stereotypes of women, the sexism of male critics, and the limited roles women play in literary history, we are not learning what women felt, but only what men thought women should be (1998: 169). A woman is defined only through the position of her husband or father. The female character in this tale is thus displayed as a nonentity, a person bereft of agency. The patriarchal discourse shapes her condition. Moreover, the writer constantly emphasizes her split self. Madeline acquires identity only as a result of being one of the twins. She cannot develop as a free individual because her brother is so dependent on her. They are linked by their incestuous love. Simone de Beauvoir's postulate in *The Second Sex* seems appropriate for her case

And she is simply what man decrees [...]. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the absolute – she is the Other (Beauvoir 1998: 163).

Furthermore, Madeline, unmarried and childless, is confined in the House of Usher which appears to entrap the twins. She seems to embody the most deathly masks of nineteenth century, the monster and the "angel in the house", an allusion to Coventry Patmore's poem *The Angel in the House* (Gubar, Gilbert 2000: 22). She

cannot move or behave freely because the house somehow exerts an evil influence over them. Edward H. Davidson pinpoints the fact that in this tale every object exists as a haunting figuration of the profound inner drama of Roderick and his sister, Madeline (1957: 154).

The nineteenth century praised feminine virtues such as submission and maternity and valued the beautiful, passive women as *objet d'art*. Roderick appears to be an aesthete who paints, sings and reads a lot. Madeline is described as often being bedridden and she apparently does not seem to have an intellectual life. This is a common patriarchal ideology - women's participation in intellectual and cultural production is belittled if not prohibited. There was a widespread belief that writing, reading and thinking were not only alien but also inimical to female characteristics (Gubar, Gilbert 2000: 95).

Otto Weininger argues that thinking and feeling are identical for woman, while for man they are in opposition. A woman is sentimental and is defined by emotion but feels no mental excitement. Consequently, while Roderick Usher stands for the rational and intellectual part of the personality, Lady Madeline is identified with the sensuous, earthly side. She embodies the Otherness, a woman confined to household, who has no participation in the artistic preoccupations of her brother. On the contrary, she only seems to attend to her brother's needs, as Roderick confesses that:

Lady Madeline is a tenderly beloved sister – his sole companion for long years-his last and only relative on earth. Her decease, he said with a bitterness which I can never forget, would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers (Poe 1994: 82).

Accordingly, Lady Madeline is doubly bound, both to Roderick and to the house, as her brother admits that he has “tentled, and whence, for many years he had never ventured forth”. We can infer that Madeline in being a woman, and furthermore “his sole companion”, had neither left the mansion. This aspect is in tune with Simone de Beauvoir's observation, according to which women live among men for reasons of residence, housework, and economic condition (de Beauvoir 1998: 163). This utter isolation can be considered a cause of her illness. Roderick witnesses her gradual disintegration and from the description of her lingering illness, Madeline emerges as a weak, feeble person in need of constant care. At this stage, the woman is thus essentially represented as a disempowered subject. Her cataleptical fits are especially suggestive¹. Catalepsy thus becomes a metaphor for women's incapacity, inconstancy and lack of strength. The traditional misogynistic position states that women have no control over their bodies, and are thus associated with instability, fluidity, while men represent stability and aridity. Simone de Beauvoir, too, has shown how “some moralists have delighted in showing up the weakness of women” (1998: 164). *The Fall of the House of Usher* displays a

¹ According to the *Dictionary of Medical Terms*, catalepsy consists in a loss of voluntary motion and a fixed posture and this condition is often connected with schizophrenia (2004: 63).

common feminine stereotype in literature, namely women's victimization: "The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the usual diagnosis" (Poe 1994: 83). Lady Madeline is thus displayed as a helpless person and she consequently falls prey to othering. The beloved sister turns into an object of fear. For Roderick, the emotionally and mentally troubled man, the prospect of Madeline's death causes anxiety and inner turmoil. Roderick feels that her death will bring about his own doom. The "barely perceptible fissure" that the narrator spots upon entering the house can be seen as a symbol of the emotional estrangement between the twins.

This tale seems to display the writer's hostility towards women, as Roderick prematurely buries his sister although he knew about her peculiar condition. We can infer that the loss of the person who had provided him comfort and emotional support causes this antagonism. The act of shutting Lady Madeline into a dark, cold vault entails an effort to silence and to destroy her. Poe has perpetuated throughout his fictional work this image of women as dead, this being the most passive stance that a human being can assume. By placing his sister in the donjon, Roderick adopts a power position, that of the oppressor. This reminds us of nineteenth century prevalent misogynistic view of women as being submissive, passive and dedicated to motherhood and household activities. Therefore, the entombed Madeline assumes the ultimate subject position, and now she cannot react or rebel, and "only a suspicious lingering smile" (Poe 1994: 89) remains on her face, the smile of the one who will take revenge. Roderick does not seem to be alarmed by "the mockery of a faint blush" (*ibidem*: 89).

Lacan asserts that all female corpses in Poe stories are "strictly speaking the same, the woman as corpse, as pure body without soul, is semiotically speaking, a figure-that is, a rhetorical figure without any distinguishing facial traits of her own, an arbitrary, empty, interminable surface of projections" (qtd. in Roderick 2006: 17). This position contradicts Helene's Cixous argument, according to which "there is no general woman, no typical woman" (1988: 168).

3. Feminine otherness in some of Poe's works

Many of Poe's tales present men mistreating women by poisoning, mutilation, rape, bleeding, untimely burial. The women are also rendered ill, which implies their debility and gradual wasting. This means that in such a position a woman can be "handled" more easily to fit the male's purposes. In *Berenice*, the narrator opens the tomb of his cousin and mutilates her by extracting her teeth while she is still conscious. In *Ligeia*, the narrator begins to hate his second wife. Lady Rowena becomes ill and is frightened by the strange tapestry of the bridal room which had been decorated with sarcophagi and her husband does nothing to temper her anguish.

Lady Madeline shows at the end an almost supernatural strength and she escapes from the vault. The woman is here demonized, constructed as an evil Dark Lady. Madeline assumes a vampire-like demeanor as she rises from the dead and kills her brother:

It was the work of the rushing gust - but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold, then, with a low, moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated (Poe 1994: 95).

Leo Spitzer compares Madeline to the doughty Ethelred from the legend that the narrator reads to Roderick. The enshrouded figure of Lady Madeline becomes a female Ethelred who “struggles within the coppered archway of vault” and conquers death. She represents “the true male and the last hero of the House of Usher”, an embodiment of life-in-death, of the will to live. Roderick, on the contrary, stands for pure sentience, having no power of reason, an embodiment of death-in-life, of the death will (qtd. in Carlson 1996: 193-4).

The cult of the dead woman was developed by Poe in *The Philosophy of Composition* in which he asserts that “the death of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world-and equally it is beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such a topic are those of a bereaved lover”. Poems such as *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee* display beautiful dead women being mourned by their forever melancholic lovers. The woman, in being presented as dead can be more easily manipulated and the readers are never aware of her true feelings. Annabel Lee “lived with no other thought / Than to love and be loved by me”, that is, she lacks a true personality and is identified only through the act of loving and being loved. The “sainted maiden” Lenore or the “beautiful” Annabel Lee become the object of male gaze, figures of passivity and frailty. Kate Millet maintains that it is a general tendency of the Western culture to attribute impossible virtues to women, which results in their confinement to a narrow sphere of behavior. The lover and the departed woman are forever chained and “Nor the demons down under the sea / Can ever dissever my soul from the soul of the beautiful Annabel Lee”. In his idealization as “the rare and radiant maiden”, the woman turns into an ethereal, evanescent presence that the male can mould as he pleases. Simone de Beauvoir’s statements in *The Second Sex* are revealing in this concern: “This, then, is the reason why woman has a double and deceptive visage: she is all that man desires and all that he does not attain [...]. He projects upon her what he desires and what he fears, what he loves and what he hates” (qtd. in Roderick 2006: 1).

The woman remains forever virginal, bridal, distant, idealized in death; she is thus inextricably bound to her lover even in death. This state of confinement can be viewed as a symbol for the state of women’s entrapment in a society that asked them

to behave in a certain way. The seraphs of heaven and the highborn kinsmen from *Annabel Lee* can be considered as representatives of the patriarchal discourse. Their position in heaven is suggestive of their patronizing attitude. E.H. Davidson (1957: 113) offers an interesting insight into this issue by claiming that death was not an event or an action nor a condition of nonbeing but a series of seductive postures. The woman could be wooed all over in death. Poe's poems and tales become ritual incantations to the erotically desirable woman (*ibidem*: 111).

Conclusion

To sum up, *The Fall of the House of Usher* presents various patriarchal ideas that are specific to a male-centered literature. The tale reveals mistreatment of the feminine character who is buried alive. Lady Madeline is presented as a silent character, a picture in motion who never does or says anything in the story, but only appears looming in the background and haunting the consciousness of her brother. Moreover, she is presented as bed-ridden and confined to the household, as opposed to her brother Roderick who enjoys a rich intellectual life. In the end, Madeline is demonized, becoming a Dark Lady who brings about the terrible death of her brother. Poe's poems *The Raven* and *Annabel Lee* also present women as dead, becoming passive objects shaped by man's desire.

Consequently, in all these works, women's identity is construed by male discourse, and what surfaces is the negation of their subjectivity, as they are relegated to submissive positions, enmeshed inextricably in tawdry relations, or turn into daemonic, vengeful figures.

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W. B. Yeats's Use of Irish Mythology and Folklore in order to Preserve Irish Identity

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1. Introduction

William Butler Yeats, as a poet, playwright, fictionist, field collector, anthologist, theorist of folklore, and student of matters spiritual (Foster 1987: 206) believed that poetic realization comes from spiritual belief, and that myth and folklore are important materials to achieve the artist's theme. Yeats realized that legend and myth could provide him with limited themes to develop his poetry. He considered legend and myth as the bases of literature and regarded himself as both a legendary and a historical writer (Brown & Grene 1989: 37). Yeats worked throughout his prose and poetry to preserve and spread the folklore of his country to many people.

Interestingly, the field of Irish folklore studies has flourished and the reason for this development is the great interest of Yeats in folklore. Yeats had a powerful personality, in addition to the acceptance that he has enjoyed encouraging several people to engage in systematic folklore researches. However, his activities in this field were characterized by artistic rather than scientific creativity, as opposed to the main objective of researchers. In the popular materials that have been taken from the heart of folklore, Yeats saw it as a wonderful source that has provided him with imaginative images that helped him greatly in his poetic poems and plays. It also provided him with inspiration for the formation of symbols that he widely used in most of his works. In his essay *The Literary Movement in Ireland*, he described the importance of myth and tradition, along with asserting that legends should be a basic source of all plays and poems, because he believed in the excellence and abundance of the Irish legends. Yeats asserted that Ireland alone, among nations, has been distinguished in its written Gaelic literature, its love for old tales, and the forms in which the imagination of Europe speaks for itself before Greece „shaped the tumult of legend into her music of the arts” (Yeats 1899: 864). Ireland can discover from the beliefs and emotions of its common people the habit that created several sources of inspiration.

Throughout his literary works, Yeats called for the use of myth and legends in art because he believed that the folk tradition is the important inspiration for an individual to be unified with himself and with the external world. Yeats strongly believed in myths and that human imagination had the potential to unify reality with

fantasy, life with art, localism with universalism, humanism with the divine, and history with literature. With this competence, Yeats explored the philosophical and religious possibilities of poetry by widely stimulating myths in a society that also needs to be remembered for its history in an acceptable way. By doing so, Yeats reached his poetic climax in the way he used a fusion of history with the mythical and philosophical vision. As a result, myth played a crucial role in Yeats's poetry and plays. In his essay *The Celtic Element in Literature*, Yeats expounded the uniqueness of the folk tradition and insisted that the artist should seek his topic depending on folk literature that makes his theme stronger and closer to a genuine culture. Yeats emphasized that popular literature and, in fact, all literature, especially the one that preserves popular tradition, rejoices in things that can be described as unorganized and even gives them the character of immortality. All popular literature has in fact a passion that does not exist in modern literature, music, and art, except where it may come by some in a straight or crooked way, deriving its power from antiquity (Yeats 1961a: 179-180).

Yeats adopted the idea of the spiritual renewal of literature using mythic and symbolic expressions, considering that the poet must write of his own personal experience. Yeats's creative ambitions began to be realized when he transitioned from limited fairy tale to the excellence of myth; it was a transformation from a dream world outside the traditional boundaries of history and reality to a more profound outlook and knowledge. Yeats looked into the Irish traditions and endeavored to elevate all imaginative images used in his poetry to reach a more expressive symbolic vision. In *Ireland and the Arts*, Yeats pointed out that the artists should rely on their folklore and legends in order to be on a strong basis, and for their artistic productions to bear the flavor and history of the splendid past. Yeats emphasized his desire to have Irish writers and artisans of many kinds dominate this history through these legends. They installed in their memories the mountains and rivers present in their home and made everything visible again through the arts. Yeats asserted that while the Irish may go thousands of miles away from Ireland for any reason, they still write about their country and their history using Irish mythology (Yeats 1961b: 1901). Yeats insisted on the personal experience of the writer; he proved his commitment to this principle through his poems and plays, most of them being derived from his personal life affairs. In addition, a writer who wishes to write with a purely intellectual presence must blend the beliefs and hopes that have made his country with its different life circumstances (Yeats 1899: 858). As a great poet, he was interested in re-educating the Irish population as well as motivating their national spirit by taking advantage of the Irish mythology and folklore. Yeats was both a poet and mythographer of his own literary moment (Sheils 2016: 4). The main foundation of Yeats's poetry is Victorian and Romantic poetry. He leads the imagination of his reader towards the mythological images of fairies derived from pastoral images. Yeats uses myths and legends to represent innocence. According to Debbie Barry (2013: 18), Yeats's poetry at the beginning of the twentieth century was filled with religious images that pertain

to the Judeo-Christian heritage, as well as images of the mythical Greeks and Irish in a serious attempt to find religious feelings that no longer exist in the era of progress and technology. Yeats's poetry expressed the sadness and boredom of the modern world because people were distancing themselves from spiritual things and caring only for physical things. Yeats believes that the modern era lacks myths and legends that have been relegated with time, and the church has become a weak force, by taking the lead and promoting the English life.

Yeats realized that the world had lost its beauty and innocence because of modernity, and the only way to restore those values and ideals was by using Irish mythology and religious beliefs, so as to evoke the goodness and purity in the Irishman's imagination. Yeats's poetry is based on the religious imagery and the images derived from world mythology to represent exhaustion with life in the modern times. In his essay *The Literary Movement in Ireland*, Yeats confirmed that, certainly, the Romantic Movement will never have a prominent superiority unless, as the mystics believe, the golden age is to be renewed again, and the hearts of men and conditions of growth are gentle with the time that fades into immortality. Blake said that "all art was a labor to bring golden age, and we call romantic art 'romantic' because it has made that age's light dwell in the imaginations of a little company of studious persons" (Yeats 1899: 865).

Yeats's use of mythology transcended from the religious perspective to the national perspective. Irish mythology gave Yeats a national identity and promoted his political aspirations without recourse to his country's religious institutions (Gomes 2014: 376). In the same essay, Daniel Gomes confirmed that "it is noteworthy that Yeats used or embraced the Irish myth intensively in his first articles, poems, and folklore, and was clearly stating that he was doing so for national ends. He adapted greatly or abandoned those myths to find inspiration through his own interests or his own study of *Mysticism and Mysterious Science* (*ibidem*: 377).

Yeats was interested in Irish folklore and legend that may come in contact with the supernatural (Sundmark 2006: 101). According to Jin Edward, Yeats loved the Irish folklore and at the same time, he was afraid that Irish myths and legends will lose their effect in the present time because most people in Ireland do not know anything about these myths and legends. Therefore, his poetry was replete with the supernatural and fairy tales to revive the Irish folklore (Edwards 2008: 1-2). He used symbols and stories derived from Celtic legend and Irish folklore and mythology. The main source of Yeats's writing was the storylines of life, as he states: "I have, therefore, written down accurately and candidly much that I have heard and seen, and, except by way of commentary, nothing that I have merely imagined" (Yeats: 2004a: 1).

Yeats considered myth as an interpretive tool (Pietrzak 2011: 42) to connect reading with the imaginary stratum (*ibidem*: 44). As one of the greatest re-writers of Irish folklore during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Yeats was interested in Irish fairy tales and peasants; besides, he became absorbed in ancient Irish heroes. Mary Helen Thuente in her book *Yeats and Irish Folklore* states: "Materials from

Irish myth also provided the seriousness and depth which Yeats had once sought in Irish fairy lore” (Thuente 1981: 233). In order to have a wide knowledge of Irish folklore, Yeats devoted much of his time to reading published collections and books to different writers, as well as his continuance in collecting the ancient traditions through the oral culture which offered an environment that is not subject to the linguistic and political disruptions observable in the published books.

Folklore and legends attracted Yeats emotionally and intellectually on occult and literary bases. Indeed, his deep interest in Irish folklore and legends merged his romantic formulations of knowledge with his desire to recognize himself as an Irish writer. He saw Ireland’s myths and legends both as an imaginative resource and as the potential locus of national identity (Howes & Kelly 2006: 140). The folklore and legends of the ancient Celtic tradition gave Yeats a rich inspiration to draw powerful images by not falling into the romance as many other writers did at the time. Yeats was able to help start a tradition of a different kind from other surviving traditions whose first and last aim was to highlight the Irish literary tradition. By putting importance on the Irish culture in his work, Yeats sought the fulfillment of patriotic feeling by instilling national pride in his readers and by challenging many of his English contemporaries who felt indebted to Irish society but thought that he could not come out creative from this society.

Lady Gregory played a very important role in assisting Yeats through the collection of many tales and folk materials. Additionally, she shared Yeats’s aspiration to build national identity by promoting Ireland’s literary, legendary, and folkloric resources (*ibidem*: 136). Susan Johnston Graf asserted that Yeats believed that working with Lady Gregory would make it easier for him to gather Irish popular and superstitious beliefs that would promote and develop his convictions to those who believed in them from the beginning. At the same time, the registration and preservation of these beliefs were integral parts of Yeats’s work on Irish national and cultural awareness (Graf 2015: 22).

Yeats imagined folklore as a wellspring of an Irish imaginative renewal. Therefore, he preferred writing for the legendary past and abandoned his contemporaries in favor of the countrymen he has merely imagined. He found in the country people a splendid and plentiful tradition despite his understanding that tradition had been influenced and eradicated by the forces of modernity and the rise of bourgeois values (Howes & Kelly 2006: 138-139).

As one of the greatest revivalists of the Irish Literary Revival, Yeats was interested in the rural traditions and tales of the Irish people. He placed the Irish peasant at the gist of his enterprise. He believed that the strangeness of Irish culture depended on the Celtic spirit that can be found among the Irish people. He saw the peasants as inheritors of “Celtic” tradition whose folklore and legends were essential for the development of a national tradition (Fleming 1995: 1). Yeats believed that the people of the Irish countryside had imaginative possessions which emerged through their stories and poems. In *The Galway Plains* (Yeats 1961a: 213) he

asserted that Irish countryside does not cease to feed the community with fantasy stories and poems that express in one way or another their wonderful lives and the past, full of great emotions that still awaken the heart to fantastic work. Yeats emphasizes that he wants to inspire these people to compose plays and poems, such as those of Greece, England, or any other country who was exploiting the harmony of the big cities and get its taste and values from the schools and not from the old customs that people might not have.

Yeats was an Anglo-Irish Protestant and as most of the writers of the Irish Literary Revival (like Gregory, Synge, and Hyde), for him and his associates, the Irish peasant represented the Irish identity. In his essay *The Imaginary Irish Peasant*, Edward Hirsch stated that most Renaissance writers believed that cities in general, and English cities such as London in particular, represented modernity and trade while rural areas, especially the landscape in Western Ireland, lacked trade and materialism. These writers also believed that people lived in cities while folkloric stories originated from the rural society that preserves and perpetuates them from generation to generation (Hirsch 1991: 1122). In most of his literary works, Yeats depended on the Irish rural life to give the real representation of the peasant on the historical perspective. Yeats believed that the real materials of folklore were centered in Irish rural life and he established his private symbol system through his keen interest in folklore because here he discovered the way to locate his work in a historically real community (*ibidem*: 1126).

Yeats considered the Irish peasants as essential materials to establish a new awareness of the Irish identity by converting the stories of peasants into art, and by capturing the rhythms of the Anglo-Irish dialect (Fleming 1995: 1). Yeats believed that the struggle of peasants to own the land was like the struggle of the nationalists and others who were fighting to get independence for Ireland. He believed that there was a close connection between the Irish peasants through their traditions and folklore and the Irish history of the golden age. Yeats thought that the Irish peasants had the wisdom because of their language and folklore, as well as their simple rural life. Yeats states: "I have met with ancient myths in my dreams, brightly lit; and I think it allied to wisdom or instinct that guides a migratory bird" (Yeats, 1961a: viii). Yeats collected many supernatural stories from lots of informants, as well as from popular newspapers and magazines. Most of his poems and plays contained stories and characters of Irish folklore to elevate the Irish literature, especially the Irish mythology in the world literature (W. B. Yeats 1888: xiv). He believed that various Irish folklore collectors had a great advantage, while from the perspective of others, they were making a big mistake. He asserted that they have made literature, rather than science, their main work. They transferred to us the wisdom of the Irish peasantry rather than the primitive religion of the people. Yeats addresses the feelings and emotions of his audience by using legends and myths from the Irish folklore to make them proud of their history, and at the same time, to make them aware of their homeland (modern Ireland).

2. *The Wanderings of Oisín*

The Wanderings of Oisín is Yeats's mythological poem about Oisín, the legendary Irish poet and warrior who was a member of mythical Fianna (Yeats, 2004b: 29). In the poem, there was a spiritual and occult folklore, and the poem breathed a freer air of inspiration (Jeffares 1996: 35). Yeats made the poem as a dialogue between Oisín and St. Patrick:

S. Patrick. You who are bent, and bald, and blind,
With a heavy heart and a wandering mind,
Have known three centuries, poets sing,
Of dalliance with a demon thing.
Oisín. Sad to remember, sick with years,
The swift innumerable spears,
The horsemen with their floating hair,
And bowls of barley, honey, and wine,
Those merry couples dancing in tune,
And the white body that lay by mine,
But the tale, though words be lighter than air,
Must live to be old like the wandering moon (Yeats 2008: 375).

The folk story of Oisín is a tale of a man who fell in love with the fairy princess Niamh. They spent 300 years in an eternal fairy island, spending the first one hundred years in the Island of the Living (the land of youthful dancers and lovers); but when Oisín found the warrior's lance in the sea, he felt the nostalgic memories to the Fianna and then, they departed the island on their magic horse to the Island of Victories. Oisín spent the second hundred years in fights with the demons. Again, he remembered his homeland and the two lovers left the island and came to the Island of Forgetfulness (the Island of Sleepers). Oisín and his beloved slept an unsettled sleep for another one hundred years, surrounded by the heroes of Ireland. However, when Oisín woke up, he again remembered Fianna and finally decided that he and his companion must return to Ireland (Jeffares 1996: 35-36). When Oisín returned to Ireland, he found that it has completely changed and Christianity has dominated the world. Yeats likened himself to Oisín; the vision of the three islands, including the difficulties and risks of moving from one island to another are the stages of the poet, especially the early stages of his career and his transition from one stage to another (Sidnell 1996: 167).

3. *The Stolen Child*

The Stolen Child describes the extratemporal and magical world by soft and romantic words derived from Irish legends and myths. The poem has an airy delicacy and grace, an innocence, and the charm of unreality (Jeffares 1996: 31):

Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

(Yeats & Finneran 1997: 16)

The story revolves around a child who was attracted by a group of fairies from his home to a fairy world. In his poem, Yeats mentioned the names of several local places to make the poem as realistic as possible. He believed that the magical creatures in Irish folklore were not friendly, and “Ireland is the country of Fairies” (O’Connor 1920: 545); he illustrated his dissatisfaction with the modern society which has destroyed nature. The interpretation of the poem, especially of its refrain by the readers in London and Dublin, can be interpreted as an invitation to leave their new civic life and come to the realm of beauty and peace represented by the traditions of Irish peasants (Holdeman 2006: 12). In addition, Yeats’s was to create an obvious contrast between the urban world that he originated from and the other imagined world, the idealistic world of the Irish Peasant (Shin 2015: 58-59). In conclusion, this poem coincided with the findings of Susan S. Sailer in her article *Time against Time: Myth in the Poetry of Yeats and Heaney* when she stated: “Yeats’s several mythologies seek to transform a world indifferent to human needs to one marked by those needs” (Sailer 1991: 54).

4. Leda and the Swan

Leda and the Swan narrates the rape of Leda, wife of Tyndareus, king of Sparta (Morford & Lenardon 1999: 348) by Zeus, the king of the Greek gods, master of lightning, smiter of those who offend him, god of the sky who rules on Mt. Olympus (Dowden 2006: 3). The understanding of the poem depends on the background knowledge of the event and its place in Greek mythology:

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast. (Yeats 2008: 220)

The traditional story started when Zeus saw Leda and directly fell in love with her in the shape of a swan and was able to seduce her and slept with her. Her husband also slept with her that night and the result was the birth of four offspring from two eggs. Pollux and Helen sprang from one egg while Castor and Clytemnestra, the representations of love and death (as some commentators have pointed out) sprang from the other egg (Quinn 1999: 98).

Leda and the Swan is one of the excellent poems of Yeats where he succeeded in portraying the feelings of Leda as a victim of the story. Although the main aim of

the poem are the mythical allusions, Yeats's attitude towards myth and history was partly magical and related to astrology (Terrinoni 2012: 49). With his poem, Yeats explained his philosophy that history consists of respective and interrelated events in which everything influences something else. The unnatural births which engendered in his sonnet *Leda and the Swan* asserted his myths of historical change (Vendler 2007: 177). Helen Sword in the book *Engendering Inspiration* stated: "Leda, described in the poem as staggering, helpless, terrified, and vague is as yet but dimly aware" (Sword 1995: 203). Besides, the external interpretation of the poem is about the rape; there are several interpretations of the poem on the dramatic, mythical, and metaphorical levels (Yeats 1935: 12). The form of the poem is a revisionist love sonnet, and it is a typical example of a liberal interception in the discussion of the subject of censorship in Ireland (Howes & Kelly 2006: 181). In the context of *A Vision*, the poem has been read as an allegory of W. B. Yeats and it has been discussed as a part of the dramatic structure of the volume of the poem" (Fletcher 1982: 82). The main interpretation of the poem lied on when Yeats turned the central theme of the poem, the rape, into a metaphor for the British occupation in Ireland: "We can imagine that the rapport between the two protagonists of the poem might also be a subtle allusion to the relation between the invaders and the invaded" (Terrinoni, 2012: 53).

Several literary critics found that in *Leda and the Swan*, there are opposing forces within the poem, mixed with the observation of the Irish conditions against England, revealing the poem as a representation of the conflict between colonialism and anti-colonial people, and the confrontation between man and the divine. In fact, Leda was involved in several conflicts; first, a physical conflict with Zeus. As Yeats used her to explain the suffering of females in their struggle with males in the age in which Yeats lived, he portrayed Leda as a part of the solution to the political cause, a political issue in which her work contributed to the periodic transition of power that takes place in the world. This confirmed the impact of individual conflicts, just as happened in the transition of power between Ireland and Great Britain. Leda represents the perception and understanding of how and to what extent changes can be achieved in society.

Conclusion

Mythology is one of the most poetic aspects of William Butler Yeats' symbolic poetry. In his poems one can notice a tendency to escape to nature from the changing, unstable urban world. He uses symbolism, homogeneity, deception, and superstition to create a modernist influence in his poetry. Yeats uses legendary images to represent the decadent society and moral values that have become prevalent after wars, be it the Great War or the Civil War. The poems *The Wanderings of Oisín*, *The Stolen Child*, and *Leda and the Swan* are compelling examples of his use of legends to emphasize the influence of the mythical imagination on modernity. In addition to

mythology and Irish folklore, Yeats incorporated stories and personalities of Celtic origin into his literary works due to his sense of national identity. Its goals are, first, to modernize the ancient Irish legends for modern Ireland, and secondly, to serve as a model for writers who write on Irish subjects.

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Identity and Ethics in Jane Austen's *Emma*

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1. Introduction

Human beings tend to create a social and ideal world through morality and ethics. The kind of world we create will depend even more appreciably on our views, implicit or explicit, about the nature of the superior life – about right and wrong, good and bad and our abilities to enact ideals in the face of limited knowledge and temptations to ease or arrogance.

The present essay aims at investigating the identity of virtue ethics in Jane Austen's *Emma*. As social ethics is the essential issue for Jane Austen, she had the courage to present the standards of her age, and was proficient to accurately detail all of the important aspects of virtue ethics in England society in the eighteenth century. Austen was considered one of the most learned woman authors in late 18th century and early 19th centuries. It was a time when the polite society demanded a new transfer in social manners that required an ideal conversation and cultivated speech. As Kathryn Sutherland writes in her monograph, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood*,

We hear in the early formulation of her classic status a set of rules for looking at literature and life that seem deplorably exclusive on grounds of class, race, and even gender. That status itself seems to smack of tokenism within the establishment: Austen the novelist for good girls and women-wary male scholars. The framework such rules set around text and reader alike assumes the workings of a consensus that appears partial and even offensive. The moral imagination is, we sense, more shaded; fiction itself is more intractable (Sutherland 2005: 13).

2. Jane Austen, a romantic novelist?

Jane Austen was born in 1775 in Steventon, in the south of England. Her father, a pastor of the Anglican Church, was an open and cultured man who loved books and had a library at his home with a large number of diverse and varied works. As the heroines of her novels will later do, Jane Austen, drawing from the family library, read a lot: Fielding, Richardson, and also the all-new and fictional Walter Scott. Nor did she disdain Ann Radcliff's sentimental and gothic novels, peopled with pale,

distraught young women in the depths of gloomy castles, novels of which she will mimic the tone, to make fun of it, in *Northanger Abbey*. She is armed with a sharp critical mind, she is a rationalist, and she is suspicious, in the name of good sense and personal balance, of passions, of exalted feelings, which can only lead to error, by excess of the imagination. She looked around and observed the gentry (nobility of the English countryside) with humour, tenderness and lucidity, pinning here and there the ridiculous and the strength of the prejudices of these small, closed social groups, both futile and puritanical, whose mentality and manners she will describe with admiration in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). This gentry is a micro-society living in isolation and in a rural environment, which goes from balls to receptions, frequenting the wealthy people of the local bourgeoisie, and who envy and admire the riches and titles of nobility (since nobility, or high nobility, is titled, unlike the gentry). Even if all her novels deal with love that leads to disappointment or marriage, Jane Austen does not yet belong to Romanticism, a vast literary movement that was born in England (and Germany, too) in her day. Heir to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, she has the sharp and caustic mind, sometimes fiercely ironic, of her elders in literature, among which we can mention the French writer La Bruyère, famous for his *Characters* (1688), a work in which he paints quaint human portraits with a satirical brush. Jane Austen has the elegance of the phrase and style of the eighteenth century and the biting tone of satirists. Armed with her pen, she ardently defends Reason: one of her novels is aptly titled *Sense and Sensibility* (1811); her other masterpieces are *Mansfield Park* (1814) and *Emma* (1816).

The world of Jane Austen is a vibrant tribute to the English countryside and the domestic manners of those who reside there, in harmony. Thus no breath of history intervenes in her novels (the sound of the French Revolution, the brilliance and then the failure of the Napoleonic epic, the war between France and England). To the turmoil of history, she prefers the intimacy of forgotten villages, and the evocation, all in finesse, humour and subtlety, of the little social rituals, with the acid taste, of the gentry. Little recognized during her lifetime (especially because she published anonymously), Jane Austen now occupies a preponderant place in the history of the novel. Her work has kept its freshness and popularity, and has been the subject of many film adaptations.

The narrator's subjectivity provides ethical instruction through Emma's eyes. Austen's novels concentrate on the experience of marriage and family life. In *Emma*, the marriage relations were embodied in different images; Sara Emsley wrote in her study, *Jane Austen's Philosophy of the Virtues*, that: "Emma is about the process of learning to respect other people, to tolerate differences, and to be charitable to others, and it is about the role of misery in the process of education" (Emsley 2005: 129). The novels of Eliot, James, and Wharton focus on a single virtue that defines moral life and they may engage with the tradition of ethical contemplation, representing aspects of the classical and theological virtues, but they do not represent the full range of a plurality of virtues, as Austen does: "Austen is unique in the literature of the last two centuries in her extensive understanding and demonstration of how these

virtues can be lived as well as analysed philosophically” (*ibidem*: 166). Austen was very fond of her novel *Emma*, in which she expressed her feelings and emotions as a female novelist. As Austen-Leigh mentioned in his volume, *A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections*,

We have seen, in one of her letters, her personal affection for Darcy and Elizabeth; and when sending a copy of ‘Emma’ to a friend whose daughter had been lately born, she wrote thus: ‘I trust you will be as glad to see my ‘Emma’, as I shall be to see your *Jemima*.’ She was very fond of Emma (Austen-Leigh 2009: 203).

3. Jane Austen and ethics

According to Kitchener, “Ethics is a branch of philosophy that addresses questions of how people ought to act toward each other, that pronounces judgments of value about actions” (Kitchener 2000: 2). Austen’s fiction presents the moral behaviour of her characters in preparation of ethical actions. In the last centuries, ethics and morality occupied an essential position in literature too. Over the last several years literary theory has begun to focus on ethics, and moral philosophy has begun to enlighten the virtue of ethics. Jane Austen is considered one of the most important female novelists of manners in the eighteenth century, interested in describing people in their appearance as human beings. She gave creative writing the best manifestation of reality, and focuses on important matters related to ethics.

We are able to derive moral instruction from the subjectivity of *Emma* that is viewed and defined by generational differences. Her interest in the inter-dependence and adaptability in social matters and human relationship are well established in her first five novels. According to Todd, “Austen’s texts express some of the anxieties and complications of these conditions of her life as a woman in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century” (Todd 2005: 5). Jane Austen’s narrative techniques are seen as a triumph: she was conscious of her own style, and she could create the imaginative experience and maintain the atmosphere by her moral vision. Sutherland mentions that

It was as if Austen were motivated by a simple desire to reproduce the world visible around her, as if her world were the world, not dictated by subjective law and consciousness imposed, but based on community and with rules that could be recognized and learned (Sutherland 2005: 16).

Jane Austen had a firm belief in a human being who completes himself while in society. This society was an extension of the same man, and it could not exist if there was not a group of people, and man could not live and develop in a natural way if he was not within a society. In this society man affirmed himself as a person, developed and consolidated as a human being.

Austen based her psychological conception of humankind on ideas and insights which will also be found in the psychoanalytic current of thought. According to this current, human beings are social beings and as such they have to grow and develop. To support this theory in her works, and more specifically in *Emma*, the author reduced to the extreme the space in which this novel was developed. All experiences in this novel happened in the same town, so the geographical space was very small. The author established a direct relationship between the geographical space and the moral space in which the heroes and heroines of this novel lived. The characters were in some way “locked” in the place where they lived. And this physical confinement also corresponds to a moral confinement. Now, said moral confinement sometimes led them to doubt, to oscillate between their duty and their own internal being; it also produced an inner confusion between the natural and the social. Of course, this confusion should not even exist, considering that it really was about an expansion of oneself, and about the complementarity of the natural and social aspects of each person.

4. Virtue ethics in *Emma*

According to Thomas R. Wells,

Virtue ethics understands the good life in terms of personal moral character, of becoming the kind of person who does the right thing at the right time for the right reasons. It is therefore about the fundamental ethical question, How should I live my life? Answering that question involves identifying goals – what are the virtues you should develop – and the path to achieving them. To talk about a bourgeois virtue ethics is to talk about the particular constellation of virtues that are most significant to an ethically flourishing life in middle-class circumstances (Wells 2013).

The process of the ethical principle flourishing in the external conduct weaves a deep link between the appearance that the individual offers of himself and his ethical reasons: morality is judged by the yardstick of behavior in society, drawing a rigorous correspondence between surface and interiority. This explains the radiation of a couple of terms that systematically returns in all the English works of the period, that of *propriety-impropriety*. If one of the senses of propriety is indeed the essence of an individual, the use that is made by our works fundamentally departs from this path: propriety means an attitude meeting certain expectations, a conformity with the good manners, the rectitude and decency of a behaviour, not the deep virtue of a soul; no trace of intrinsic probity in the use that is made of it, the simple observance of customs sanctioned by propriety and decorum.

Austen encourages her characters to be teachable, to be moral, as morality gives happiness, “Humans desire a moral life: flourishing and leading a moral life are intrinsically linked” (Aristotle 1985: 14), to be charitable means to be a social person with benevolent feelings: because of her kindness, Emma visits the poor

people, she knows their troubles and deals with them with sympathy. As Ruderman contends, “*Emma*, like all of Jane Austen’s novels, suggests that humility and virtue are necessary for happiness” (Ruderman 1990: 218). Admittedly, these notions refer to intangible moral rules, but what matters is the relationship they establish between the individual consciousness and its translation into the external environment: the goal is to transpose it as faithfully as possible, out of respect for morality. In the conduct of society, the purpose is to create a perfect match between one and the other; the central movement implied by these terms is that of the concretization, of the formalization of a morality which was in the beginning disembodied, and which acquires a tangible existence only through its passage in the world.

We still know from Jane Austen that she has an impartial look on her characters and that this strategy gives them genuine psychological depth. Here is an example from *Pride and Prejudice* which highlights the character’s awareness that being insensitive generates many interpersonal problems. When the hero Darcy confesses: “I have been a selfish being all my life, in practice, though not in principle. As a child I was taught what was right, but I was not taught to correct my temper. I was given good principles, but left to follow them in pride and conceit” (Austen 1999: 248), this reveals the major defect of any man who has the simple habit of acting according to his good will.

The realism of the characters, evolving in the bucolic English context of the eighteenth century, seduced the movie directors. Already *Sense and Sensibility*, and more recently, *Pride and Prejudice* have been brought to the big screen by Ang Lee (1995) for the former and Joe Wright (2005) for the latter. If the cinema offers a realistic and sublimatory visual reconstruction of the fictional environment, the fact remains that no dialogue, no actor’s play, no matter how powerful, can live up to Jane Austen’s caustic tone or to her psychological insights. The readers of yesterday and today are seduced by the realistic depiction of the social and domestic life described under the pen of a woman and in the comic mode. Commenting on the numerous sequels to Austen’s *Emma*, Brittany Meng says:

These contemporary authors have written Jane Fairfax in their own unique way: Some authors form her with the moral sensitivity and self awareness that characterizes Austen’s original heroines while other authors create Jane with the independent demeanour of a modern woman (Meng 2010: 8).

Austen’s irony is, no doubt, once again, the best example of this work on narrative polymorphism, since it consists in letting a voice express itself while juxtaposing, or suggesting, its exact antithesis: this coexistence detaches the narrative voice of any party; a reality is expressed concomitantly with its opposite. We have seen that this trait was the door open to a disengagement of the narrator. But it also has the advantage of being based on divergence or incompatibility, and therefore it is inclined to never close the meaning. To a problematic female identity corresponds a writing whose essence is to be heterogeneous, open to choice, perpetually stripped of its claim to the government of meaning. The writing arises in

a setting where the oxymoron has the central place. Emma's irony consists in her never-failing adherence to the fantasies of the main character, coupled with a perpetual allusion to the fact that she continues to stray; the illusion and suggestion of the reality of facts are stated at the same time, and the substance of the work lies in the persistence of this structuring dichotomy.

The feminine word is not a word whose form perfectly covers the meaning but, on the contrary, a word which exposes the gap remaining between these notions: the meaning exceeds its formulation; Austen emphasizes this inadequacy by leaving this unspoken final, by matching their speech to a sketch, not to a finished canvas. Woman exists in a permanent reorientation of speech, not in the affirmation of a single truth. This is the idea on which *Emma* is built, an aimless novel in the image of the life of the heroine, immersed in incompleteness and the absence of finality: the diegesis progresses by involution, the sketches of stories are being systematically checked; the plot Elton aborts on an incongruous marriage proposal and relegates the pretender, the male figure central to the beginning of the novel, in the background; the idyll between Emma and Frank stops before having taken shape, Emma finding that she can not be in love; the rapprochement between Frank and Harriet remains in the state of fantasy before being reduced to nothing by the marriage of the young man. Each time, the story is paralyzed before it happens, and the substitution path that opens undergoes the same fate. It is the same refusal of closure that leads, admittedly exceptionally, the Austenian narrator, and this in an attitude really incompatible with the whole tradition of the novel of sensibility, and perhaps more generally the novel of the eighteenth century, to admit the irreducible enigma of a heroine, the impenetrable mystery that makes her elusive: what does Elizabeth feel when she is abandoned by Darcy? Unable to formulate it herself, the heroine remains inaccessible also to this narrator hitherto omniscient, which suddenly reveals herself fallible.

Emma is par excellence the novel of comparison. The path of the heroine is enshrined in a triangular or even quadrangular pattern: Emma is put in touch with sisters through whom she sketches a definition of herself. Harriet, Jane and Mrs Elton are the three poles around which this sketch is articulated and from which Emma forges an awareness of herself. The narrator's short, inaugural presentation once again shows the inadequacy of this voice in the construction of the narrative, its incompetence in exhausting the complexity of a character: it is clear that Emma's narcissism says nothing about the young woman's fantasy and energy, as well as about her ontological frustration with a disappointing and even inept world. The story will then seek to overcome this original failure, and this through a confrontation of the heroine with the real in the person of the women around her.

Emma's plan consists of tearing female protagonists apart from the heroine's chimerical construction, which leads to Emma's understanding of herself. It is by her comparison with other women that Emma's personality undergoes an investigation, just as it is through her that the heroine strips herself of her false pretences and illusions and gains access to self-awareness. The figure of the

triangular comparison is omnipresent in the novel, and its emblematic evolution: Emma understands the vanity of a superior understanding that reveals itself incapable of applying the principles it advocates and knows how to recognize when Harriet flaunts this “warmth and tenderness of heart”, without which the “clearness of head”, implied his, has no price. Emma experiences an inner lack through this associative method that extends into the examination of Jane, that his “coldness” condemns, but also approaches the heroine: both are then seen as beings whose high intellectual qualities cut off the world by bridling their affective spontaneity. Lucid and clairvoyant about others, they are deprived of the faculties that found a community. While doing so, Austen certainly shows a consciousness being shaped, but also sketches a portrait of the female being. The comparison has the advantage of looking at the singularities but also of bringing them together, thus of initiating a movement which rises above the individual to address the general features, to lay the groundwork for the constitution of a common set.

This transgression of social classes by inter-women relations finally emerges fully in *Emma*, a novel in which the gradually enlarged understanding of the heroine marries the regular regression of her snobbery: each stage leading to self-awareness, dictated by a reflection on the relationship between Emma and the women around her is a reversal of class prejudice. The main character renounces Harriet’s patronage by becoming receptive to her intrinsic qualities, abandoning her contempt – which hides a complex of inferiority – with regard to Jane by discovering the complexity of it all; while reproaching herself the morgue towards Miss Bates she realizes the interior destitution of this one, although she is unconscious, and abandons her supposed social prerogatives vis-à-vis the repugnance that inspires to her the possible identification with Mrs. Elton. Every step taken in self-perception is accompanied by a step forward in the meeting of women’s entities. In this work, the inner journey that takes place in the presence of others has its counterpart in the constitution of a feminine harmony. *Emma* presents itself as a deceptive spiral, both at the level of the macrostructure and the microstructure, thus in the passage where the heroine tries to make exist a feeling, an asperity in the languid course of time, before realizing the vanity of her ambition: “Emma continued to entertain no doubt of her being in love”, begins the narrator. This voluntarism of emotion refers to the desire to create and at the same time to the artificiality of this claim: the remainder of the paragraph confronts two lexical fields, that of sensual and romantic intensity, “a thousand amusing schemes”, “elegant letters”, “affection passion”, “a strong attachment” and that of sentimental apathy, which finally prevails: “When she became sensible of this, it struck her that she could not be very much in love” (Austen 2000: 171), she concluded. What is described here is the heroine’s inability to coincide with her own creations. Far from being the footstep towards an enlargement of reality, lucid self-awareness is a return to the trivial, the exclusion of fantasy edification. It is clear that Emma is far from being a simple Quixotic novel: here, the revelation is the fact of the heroine herself, who has a perfect awareness of the distance separating romantic chimera and reality. Imaginary construction is a way of creating a higher reality, but Austen shows that self-analysis leads to the devastation of such ideals, that

introspection can only lead to the contemplation of emptiness. Emma describes the impossible withdrawal from the initial nothingness and the awareness, repeated at will, of the unsurpassable character of it. The ego is too difficult to explore in an artistically composed fiction. The novel finds and stages its own impossibility.

The paradox lies in the fact that it is the intrinsically disappointing nature of existence that causes these ephemeral leaks in the fictitious: reality is eternally incomplete, but it cannot be transgressed – the movement is identical to that of *Northanger Abbey*; in either case, the author is careful to emphasize from the outset the absolute commonplace nature of the universe depicted, rejecting as impossible the constructions of her heroines. In short, people must learn to live in a world that does not satisfy them. The image of Emma and Catherine as failed Pygmalions does not come so much from their lack of power, nor even from a facility to deceive themselves, but from the inability of the novelistic material to take into account their disproportionate constructions. The same penalty falls on Fanny wishing to forge an Edmund who would be willing to love her: this reversal of the natural course of narration can only occur by highlighting the character of pure fiction, as happens in the last chapter – Fanny has no impact on Edmund’s conversion.

The novel captures the life of the upper class English people so as to give the reader an insight into the ideology system and the intricately entwined relations of the society at that time. *Emma* is a novel whose most significant technique is social realism: Austen’s fiction adopts the daily reality, and the novels of her maturity – *Mansfield Park*, *Emma* and *Persuasion* – are written much more from the point of view of that rank of society: ‘the domestic lives of the men who have the responsibility of managing large estates, and leading their local communities’ (Le Faye 2014: 253). We travel through Emma’s eyes. Austen was able to heighten the scenes of humour and joy, as “Romantic comedy, such comedy represents a love affair that involves a beautiful engaging heroine” (Abrams 2009: 49). The conclusion that Zelda Boyd brings to her study of modality illuminates the value of the language of judgment in the novels of Jane Austen, whose concern is moral, without being prescriptive, “but in the wider sense of showing us how we come to decide these issues” (Boyd 1983: 152). Moralistic rhetoric is not that of the Austenian discourse. Jane Austen’s novels belong to another genre similar to the style of an ethic. How, however, can such an effect be produced when all the discourse that overrides the theatrical space of the Austenian novels is a discourse of the ideal and in this sense rigid, always ready to become a model?

Jane Austen promotes a certain type of behaviour that makes a statement about how the personality of the character decides what their romantic relationships are going to be like. Emma’s character is raised with the consciousness to be mature “that is an assertive, powerful, independent, self confident woman” (Fergus 1991: 153). She is bound to have a happy ending with marriage to the person that is suitable. Jane Austen is always setting up moral oppositions through her characters. She is able to endow them with greater significance in terms of a denial of paternal responsibility, up to the last events in the novel. As Jan Fergus writes, “The last words of *Emma* refer to the ‘perfect happiness of the union’, and those of *Mansfield Park* refer point to Fanny Price’s finding everything at *Mansfield Parsonage* ‘as

thoroughly perfect in her eyes, as every thing else, within the view and patronage of Mansfield Park, had long been” (*ibidem*: 166). Her meeting point on the moral correspondence of all behaviours in relation to the moral, ethical and spiritual values implicit in the novel is found between the heroine and the hero, to enable them to lead a new life in society. In her study, *Needs and Moral Necessity*, Soran Reader reviews the accounts of what ethics is as formulated by moral philosophers, and she mentions Geoffrey Warnock who identifies four philosophical views about ethics: first, “what is distinctive about ethics may be something to do with sentiment, the ‘psychological penumbra of guilt and self-reproach’ felt when moral wrong is done (Warnock 1967: 53). Second, what is distinctive may have to do with moral normativity – either the way that moral norms dominate the agent’s conduct or, third, the way moral norms are, the ones the agent prescribes for others (*ibidem*: 54). Fourth, what is distinctive may be the subject-matter or content of ethics. Warnock suggests ethics may be essentially concerned with ‘human happiness or interests, needs, wants or desires (Warnock 1967: 55)” (Reader 2007: 9-10).

Conclusion

Jane Austen uses literature as an ideal vehicle for sentimental ideology. In her first five novels, Austen conceivably makes literature into a reference of ethics and morality in order to explore the idea of a superior conduct in humans. Giving importance to matters relating to social life, she has truly paid attention to the nature of characters and their relations in society. The exploration of diverse kinds of characters results in a different sort of investigation, almost deriving different moral messages each time. The audience responds to the mixture of affectivity and ethical values promoted within the narratives. Gradually, the novels become real touchstones for the morality and ethics of the age. For the fans of the novelist, the charm of her works lies rather in her humour, wit and irony. We cannot fault them. However, it should be noted that irony is not a goal in itself for Austen: when she draws portraits of her characters and their environment, she is not driven primarily by a desire to be satirical or to entertain her audience, but by a sense of moral obligation. Her outlook is a philosophical one, ignoring agitation, luxury and self-justification. It brings together a multitude of characters, puts them under the microscope and shows us who (and what) is admirable, who has flaws, but is forgivable, who is laughable and who is abject. Free from financial worries, she makes judgments that are not only intelligent, but also insightful, human and, most often, compelling. The real subject of her novels is not the love life of young girls just out of adolescence, but human nature and society. Jane Austen has written stories that show us how we think. *Emma* is the most accomplished of Jane Austen’s novels, partly because the engine of the plot is not driven by a single moral lesson: the two pitfalls of pride and prejudices, the inclination to persuade rather than invariably hold one’s position, the superiority of reason over feelings. This novel praises humility, and it is with humility that it does it.

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PART II

Identity and Communication in Media and Culture

Social Media and Iran's 2017 Presidential Election. A Study of the Correlation between *Instagram* and *Telegram* Popularity and Students' Political Participation

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1. Introduction

Social media are new communication tools whose role in various fields of modern human life is fast spreading into that of a far-reaching and effective phenomenon. One such field is politics and public participation in elections, in particular, where the role of social networking media is more than evident.

The political and election behavior of the public in the modern era, the way they take part and the levels of their participation in different societies are affected by the media and by the newly-developed tools of communication, which have transformed and given them new shapes (Hanmer & Traugott 2004; Ki & Soo 2014; Cohen & Tsfati 2009). In line with that, the present paper seeks to focus on the role played by two specific social media platforms, Instagram and Telegram, in drawing the participation of state university students in the capital Tehran during Iran's 12th presidential election (May 19, 2017).

A study of the May 2017 presidential election in Iran is significant from three different perspectives. First, the massive participation of Iranians under unfavorable economic and political circumstances; similar conditions in the past polls had dramatically reduced voter turnout. Second, the re-election of Hassan Rouhani, despite a widespread, organized and coordinated campaign by his rival conservative camp. Third, a considerable presence of social media as official and mainstream media failed to play an independent, professional and impartial role during the course of the campaigning and the shaping of the political process for public participation. Among the three, it seems that the first two were strongly influenced by the third. In other words, people's presence and Rouhani's re-election were contributed to by the stunning role social media played. Many media study observers contend that amid the limitations faced by the official media and their leanings toward the mainstream sources close to the minority in the rule, social media and mobile messaging systems including *Telegram* and *Instagram* played a key part in politically mobilizing the voters in favor of Hassan Rouhani. In fact, what they argue is that a bigger portion of the duty supposed to be played by official media was shouldered by virtual

networks, which conveyed the information, raised awareness and even managed to convince the voters.

We are living in an era in which official politics is increasingly being transferred out of the labyrinth of secret private meetings into the public, engaging ordinary citizens in the political process (Bode 2017; Vaccari & Valeriani 2016). As a result, the tendency toward political involvement among the public has found a fresh definition and has turned into a key criterion in democratic systems (Abdollahinejad 2016). Political participation refers to the individual's engagement in various levels of activity starting from non-involvement up to the point of taking official positions (Rush 1998: 123). Lester Milbrath has presented a hierarchy of political participation which ranges from no willingness to engage to the level of assuming power and official political roles. In that hierarchy, the lowest level of political participation is taking part in elections (*ibidem*: 124). In other words, from the viewpoint of quantity and numbers voting shows high political participation, while in terms of quality, it is the basic starting point.

Now, voting as one of the most significant political selection methods and an important mode of political participation has been deeply affected by media and new media in particular. Nowadays, most forms of political activity and involvement by individuals, starting from acquiring information and news stories about political developments and the campaign slogans of the candidates to building trust in them during the campaign period and finally shaping their election behavior are all directly or indirectly affected by virtual media and mobile messaging systems. This is a universal phenomenon. In Iran, however, this is more evident and has led to the growth of new discourses out of the dominant ruling one, and has even opposed the ruling power. It is explained by the fact that the mainstream media's performance and their political side-taking during elections, especially by public radio and television, has led to the development of social media as the "voice of the voiceless" (Abdollahinejad 2016: 37). This was particularly highlighted during the 12th presidential election in the country.

The key question and problem the research deals with is identifying the level, breadth, mode and form in which the selected university students in Tehran used social media (with a focus on *Telegram* and *Instagram*) in their political participation during the 2017 presidential election. To elaborate more on that, the present paper is bound with studying how *Telegram* and *Instagram* affected the students' decision-making process during the May 2017 presidential polls.

2. Theoretical background: Social media

Social media are computer-based communication tools, which allow individuals, companies and organizations to produce and share with others information, career interests, ideas, photos and videos on networks and virtual communities.

According to Obar and Wildman (2015: 2), the main characteristics of social media are:

- 1) social media services (currently) using web-based applications;
- 2) user-generated content such as texts, digital pictures and videos is considered as the lifeline of social media;
- 3) all users create and apply their own unique personal profile for the website or application (mobile phone-based), which are designed and sponsored by the leading social media organizations;
- 4) social media facilitate the development of online virtual networks establishing communication between one user profile with other users or groups.

Social media are indeed a product of the shared growth of social networks using the web technology. Thus, social networks could be regarded as some structure made up of activists and their dynamic relations. The activists could range from individuals and groups to organizations or even computer software (Kietzmann 2011: 247). Among the most world popular and widely-used social media networks are *Facebook*, *Whatsapp*, *Instagram*, *Twitter*. In Iran, however, the leading network is *Telegram*. For the purpose of this research, among the various networks, *Telegram* and *Instagram* are in focus.

3. Political participation vs online political participation

Political participation refers to the engagement and involvement of citizens in activities which are capable of affecting the ruling structure and the appointment of officials and their policies. In such a context, online political participation is viewed in parallel with conventional political participation. Serious online political activities are: 1) Online writing in support of a politician; 2) Launching online campaigns of cooperation; 3) Registering in the mailing list of a politician; 4) Voluntary enrolment for an online campaign or cause; 5) Emailing a political message; 6) Writing a letter to an online newspaper's editor (Yang and DeHart 2016: 2).

Latest research has found that online political participation should be viewed as a separate and completely unique form of participation. Although scholars have studied the individual perspectives of online political participation, they have not yet come up with a comprehensive pattern in this regard. The stunning and unique popularity of social media networks have opened up exceptional and significant windows of opportunities to the online political participation of American citizens, as internet users are able to share their views on subjects of political interest with friends using services offered by social media networks, join groups, follow political figures on Twitter, and tweet expressly their own political opinions, create and publish blogs on major social and economic trends and also share their favorite pictures, photos and videos on Facebook (*ibidem*).

4. Research hypotheses

1. There exists a meaningful correlation between the level of using social media networks in question (*Telegram* and *Instagram*) and political participation.
2. There is another meaningful correlation between the level of trust in political news stories disseminated through social media networks in question and political participation.
3. There exists a meaningful correlation between the background variables of “education level” and political participation.
4. There is yet another meaningful correlation between the background variables of “age” and political participation.

4.1. Research methodology

The present study is quantitative and has been conducted using the survey method, based on the researcher’s standardized questions, while sampling has been done randomly from among the respondents. In the research, a sample community of 400 has been selected and studied from among 250,000 post-graduate students at state universities in the city of Tehran.

5. Findings: Respondents’ features

- *Age*: the respondents were divided into three categories of 22-26, 26-30 and over 30 years. The populations in the three groups were respectively 236 (59%), 122 (30.5%) and 42 (10.5%).
- *Gender*: 242 respondents, that is 60.5%, were women, while 122, equalling 39.5%, were men.
- *Education level*: the respondents were chosen from postgraduate levels, namely masters and PhD courses. Masters students with a population of 287 made up 71.75% of the respondents, while PhD students of 113 formed the rest 28.25%.
- *Marital status*: 262 of the respondents were single; while 138 others were married, making up respectively 65.5 and 34.5 percent of the sample population.

Questions:

1. To what extent do you take to social media for political stories?
2. What is the time length you spend on *Telegram* and *Instagram*?
3. How do you define the level of your contact and conversation with election campaigning activists on *Telegram* and *Instagram*?
4. To what extent have you encouraged your friends on *Telegram* and *Instagram* to take part in electoral and campaigning activities?
5. How do you set the level of your visits to profiles and pages belonging to the candidates?

Table 1: Level of *Telegram* and *Instagram* popularity among students during Iran’s 2017 election process

Questions	To a very large extent		To a large extent		To some extent		A little		Very little	
	Freq	Per.	Fre q.	Per.	Fre q.	Per.	Fre q.	Per.	Freq	Per.
Q1	147	36.75	113	28.25	92	23	25	6.25	23	5.75
Q2	87	21.75	93	23.25	107	26.75	66	16.5	47	11.75
Q3	131	32.75	119	29.75	50	12.5	62	15.5	38	9.5
Q4	152	38	118	29.5	69	17.25	40	10	21	5.25
Q5	93	23.25	119	29.75	113	28.25	40	10	35	8.75

Based on findings from table 1, nearly 65% of the responding students received their information and political stories (election-related) to a “very large” or “large” extent from *Telegram* and *Instagram*. Another finding in the same table indicates that nearly 55 percent of the respondents declared that to “some”, “a little” and “very little” extent did they spend their time on social media. 62.5% said that to a “very large” or “large” extent they have been in touch and interacting with election campaigning activists through *Instagram* and *Telegram*. According to the same data, over 67% of the participants said to a “very large” or “large” extent they encouraged their friends through social media networks to engage in electoral activities and convinced them to vote on Election Day. This, as nearly 53% also said they did to a “very large” or “large” extent visit the personal pages, groups or channels on *Telegram* and *Instagram*, affiliated with the candidates in the 12th presidential election.

5.1. Elucidative and inferential findings

Table 2. Findings based on the correlation among the research variables

Variable	Hypothesis 1: Level of popularity of social media and political participation				
Test	Pearson			Existence of correlation	Type of correlation
Political participation	Correlation	Sig	N	Yes	Positive and direct
	0.517	0.001	400		

<i>Variable</i>						<i>Hypothesis 2: Level of trust in political stories and political participation</i>					
<i>Test</i>		Pearson				Existence of correlation		Type of correlation			
<i>Political participation</i>		<i>Correlation</i>		<i>Sig</i>		<i>N</i>		Yes		Positive and direct	
		0.365		0.001		400					
<i>Variable</i>						<i>Hypothesis 3: Education level and political participation</i>					
<i>Test</i>		Pearson				Existence of correlation		Type of correlation			
<i>Political participation</i>		<i>Correlation</i>		<i>Sig</i>		<i>N</i>		Yes		Negative	
		-0.394		0.003		400					
<i>Variable</i>						<i>Hypothesis 4: Age and political participation</i>					
<i>Test</i>		Pearson				Existence of correlation		Type of correlation			
<i>Political participation</i>		<i>Correlation</i>		<i>Sig</i>		<i>N</i>		Yes		Negative	
		- 0.451		0.001		400					

Note: $p < 0/05$

Hypothesis 1:

In order to measure the linear correlation between two variables, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, developed by the English biostatistician and mathematician, Karl Pearson, can be used, which can have a value between 1 and -1. If the correlation coefficient equals to 1 it implies that there is perfect relation between the variables and if it equals to zero, there must be no relations between the variables (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Futing Liao 2004).

Findings from the test (and the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.517 at a valid level of 0.001) establish a meaningful, positive and direct correlation between the level of popularity of the selected social media networks among the sample students and their political participation (table 2). This is also telling of the fact that the more *Telegram* and *Instagram* are taken to, the higher becomes the political participation of the sample students from universities in Tehran during the course of Iran's 2017 presidential election.

Hypothesis 2:

Findings from the test and given the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.365 at a valid level of 0.001 establish a meaningful, positive and direct correlation between the level of trust by the sample students in the political stories published by the selected social media networks and their political participation. This is also telling of the fact that the more *Telegram* and *Instagram* are taken to, the higher becomes the political participation of the sample students from universities in Tehran during the course of Iran's 2017 presidential election. The result could be generalized to the statistical population, thus rejecting the zero hypothesis. This is also telling of the fact that the higher level of trust in *Telegram* and *Instagram*, the wider becomes the political participation of the sample students from universities in Tehran during the course of Iran's 2017 presidential election.

Hypothesis 3:

Here, we used Spearman test, developed by the English psychologist, Charles Edward Spearman. The results shown in table 2 demonstrate a meaningful but negative correlation between the education level of the students and their political participation. In other words, the higher the educational degree of the sample respondents, the lower the level of their political participation.

Hypothesis 4:

The same Spearman test in table 2 shows a meaningful but negative correlation between the age factor of the students and their political participation. In other words, the older the sample respondents, the lower their political participation.

For the analyses related to the four hypotheses, the calculated probability value has been less than 0.05. While trying to statistically prove a hypothesis, the smaller the p-value is, the higher the significance would be. As the p-value for all the hypotheses are less than 0.05, the results are highly significant and all the four hypotheses can be relied on. In other terms a p-value of less than 0.05 confirms that there is more than 95 percent chance that the hypothesis is true, which is the case for our four hypotheses.

Conclusion

The present paper studied the impact that virtual social media networks and mobile-based messaging systems, *Telegram* and *Instagram*, left upon the political participation of students at state universities in the city of Tehran during Iran's 2017 presidential election. Virtual social networks have been capable of widely revolutionizing individuals' political participation. The findings demonstrated that,

during the 12th presidential election in Iran, *Telegram* and *Instagram* were the most popular and widely-used social media networks and played the role of the leading source of information and political news stories. They were also the key communication tools through which users managed to persuade others into political participation. The existence of a meaningful correlation between the extent to which social media was used and the political participation, as well as the same link between the trust on those networks and political participation, indicate that these new modern modes of communication have managed in the best way possible to affect the political response patterns and activities of university students, through establishing inter-individual connections, opening up and lifting information borders among students and potentially transferring political communication and information in the widest manner as well as updating political awareness among students.

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A Pragmatic Analysis of American Apologies: Depicting How Americans are Flouting Grice's Maxims

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1. Introduction

Language can be utilized by people to practice different behaviors within their societies. Among the polite behaviors, apologies seem to be frequent acts in every social community. However, the study here deals with how Americans can work out of the rules of language to contact others. In other words, this study lies at the interaction between pragmatics and sociolinguistics by focusing on ways of violating the cooperative principle by American politicians through their way of apologizing. Our hypothesis is that Americans use the apology act implicitly and explicitly (indirectly and directly). It is hypothesized also that American politicians do not follow the cooperative principles and they violate the maxims of conversation while apologizing.

When it comes to speech act of apology in political field, it is important to refer to the relationship between politics and the language itself since the apology act is reflected by the language which constitute politics.

In today's world where big strides are being made in mass communication and the notion of the "global village" is taking shape with every passing day, language in general and political language in particular are assuming a predominant role as a tool of an effect and counter-effect. Every topic, no matter how mediocre it might sound, is connected to politics. Politics is perhaps pervading every aspect of human thought and activities to a greater or lesser degree. It often appears in powerful emotive terms or important jargon (Newmark 1986: 14). As a matter of fact, the connection between language and politics can be realized in the sense that language and the way it is used is considered as a tool of politics, which politicians or those involved in this field employ in order to achieve a desired effect or impression on their audience. Furthermore, we should emphasize the fact that it is very difficult to separate language and politics due to the fact that they are noticeably interrelated. Indeed, this field can be perceived in every aspect of life, thus becoming inseparable from it. Another important aspect is that politics cannot be steered without language, and it is probably the case that the use of language in the constitution of social groups leads to what is called "politics in a broader sense" (Van Dijk 1997: 206).

W. O'Bar and J. O'Bar (1976: 353) point out that the relationship between language and politics is taken in the sense that language, as an effective and multi-purpose tool, is presented as a means or an issue to bring about social and political goals. In other words, language is primarily utilized by individual political actors, groups with political objectives and government to convince, persuade, control, and wield power, etc. The link between language and politics is always regarded as mutual and interactive, because most of the historical records admit the considerations and attention that governments seem to pay to language policies within the field of their jurisdiction (*ibidem*: 413).

Scholars like, for instance, Chilton and Schäffner (1997: 206) argue that politics is difficult to be carried out alone (to be carried without language). And it is probably the case that the use of language in the organization of social groups leads to what we call *politics*. Chilton and Schäffner affirm the same idea and they point out that language's use (the use of language in the composition of social groups) leads to politics (*ibidem*: 206). The connection between politics and language can be stated as „politics is the art, and language the medium, whereby... [people] position themselves to get what they need, and beyond that, what they want” (Joseph 2006: 347).

Brown and Yule (1983: 1) allege that the analysis of language should not be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed to serve in human affairs. But it is necessary to investigate what the language is used for. For instance, the idea that language is used for communication belongs to common sense, but there are many other purposes and needs which may or may not be covered by the term *communication*. That means that political language has many functions used to cover the human affairs with different senses.

However, among the functions of the linguistics forms which are used by the political language we mention the function of making an apology act. Therefore, it becomes important here to state what is an act of apologizing and how it works in political texts.

2. Apology and politics

Apologies have not been studied by scholars and researchers as modern acts. It seems that the word *apology* has been derived from the Greek word *ἀπολογία* to mean “defense” or “speech in defense”. However, by looking to the history of apology, the above idea of “defense” seems to be valid from the late of the sixteenth to the mid of the nineteenth century; *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as “The pleading off from a charge or imputation, whether expressed, implied, or only conceived as possible; defense of a person, or vindication of an institution etc., from accusation or aspersion (1993: 366).

Different attempts have been made to define the term *apology*. For Goffman (1971), and Fraser (1981), apologies are remedial actions. Others, like Edmondson

(1981) for instance, give the term the possibility of restoring social harmony. However, Leech argues that apologies „express regret for some offence committed by S against H [...] an apology implies a transaction, in that it is a bid to change the balance-sheet of the relation between S and H” (Leech 1983: 124). Similarly, but with a slight difference, scholars like Hickson (1986), Taft (2000), and Weyeneth (2001) define apologies as written or spoken expressions to express regret, sorrow, or repentance for a committed offence.

According to Blum-Kulka and Olstein (1984: 206), apologies have to be achieved under post-event acts. It is for the violation of social norms which has been committed that people offer their apologies. And by apologizing for this violation, one partially admits that he/she is involved in this violation. Therefore, apologies in this case cannot be achieved as pre-event acts as requests and some other acts.

Each and every normal person can perform acts while practicing the daily life, such as stating something, requesting, asking a question, promising, ordering, apologizing, etc. Among them the act of apologizing is an essential one that aims to maintain a good relation between members of the same society and between members of different societies. In this case, apologies can be considered a moral task. Moreover, this act cannot be confined with civilians only. Politicians for instance can also practice the act of apology to maintain a good relation between their members or between members of other societies. Therefore, it becomes important to consider the political language in which an apology is used.

As Van Dijk suggests, political language can be defined as „who speaks to whom, as what, on what occasions, and in what goals” (2000: 225). The language of politicians, particularly when they are speaking in public, is an interesting mixture of old and new: it shows much of the ritual phraseology and consciousness of precedent, associated with religion or law, and it makes use of many of the rhetorical and dramatic techniques linked to advertising or the media (Crystal 1995: 378). Charteris-Black (2005: 10) states that, in order to create a successful communication, a politician has to express attitudes and emotions that are mutually known to the participants in a particular context. At that time, the listeners realize that their beliefs and opinions are understood and supported.

However, the concern of this political language is focus on how to present and sell the positive image to others. More specifically, it is the linguistic skills which the political figure employs in order to be successful with his / her achieving of the positive image (Van Dijk 2000: 225). According to some political views, apologies should be considered as a functionalistic strategy. From a political point of view, the strategy by which an apology is offered is a functionalistic one. However, this strategy of apologizing can be considered as a strategy of restoring a tarnished image and selling it to others. Therefore, the apology acts can be transformed from the moral realm into politics as a tool for maintenance and assertion power by the apologizer i.e. by the offender (*ibidem*).

As a speech act, apology is considered by Searle, Austin, and some others as an expressive one. Therefore, according to Searle (1975: 15), the illocutionary force

of these expressive acts (apologies in particular) „is to express the psychological state that is specified in the propositional content”. However, it is important to consider when such an act like apology becomes a political one? Clinton and Schaffner (1997: 214) answer this question by stressing that when apology pertains to political issue and is delivered by a political figure can be considered as a political apology. However, according to them, not all apologies which are presented by political agents can be considered political apologies and, for instance, the bureaucratic apparatus which is their character is administrative rather than political. This discussion can lead to consider a political apology as an apology when two conditions are required: 1) it should be presented by a political figure, and 2) it should involve political issues (*ibidem*: 214).

3. The cooperative principle and the maxims of conversations

Grice built up the process of inferencing on the assumption that we communicate and exchange rationally if there is a succession of connected remarks. Our communicative exchanges have to have its cooperative efforts. Among such cooperative principles, we (as participants of talk exchanges) have to recognize some set of purposes or accepted direction (Grice, 1947, as cited in Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann 2012: 51). In any given community there seems to be available a set of assumptions according to which people can operate their talk with others (Thomas 1995: 62). In his study, Grice refers to an underlying principle which we expect to observe in any rational interaction. However, he considers this principle as the one that determines the way of using the language. In other words, the way of determining how language has to be used in any social interaction. This general principle is defined by Grice as „make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice 1975: 47). What was stated above by Grice does not mean that people should be always kind to each other or good, or cooperative in the sense of exchanging words. More specifically, he means that certain regularities can be observed by people while interacting and his interests was to find one particular set of these regularities (Thomas 1995: 62).

Moreover, the above cooperative principle was reinforced by Grice with four maxims. This however was done by him in order to understand how the mechanisms of interpreting the conversational implicature (by people) work. People (speakers and hearers in conversational interaction) cooperate and this helps their communicative process to be efficient. From another angle, the communication would be impossible between speakers if they did not try to cooperate with each other (*ibidem*: 61-3). Therefore, Slembrouck (2004: 5) holds that „the CP is based on the assumption that language users tacitly agree to cooperate by making their contributions to the talk as is required by the current stage of the talk or the direction into which it develops”.

According to Akmajian *et al.* (1997: 381), the central part of the cooperative principle is that people have the ability to interact or exchange words of conversation among each other since they are able to identify common goals. However, due to the ties that control exchanges in some conversations, only certain moves are possible between speakers.

The cooperative principle was reinforced by Grice with four maxims. In other words, these maxims accompany the cooperative principle and help to organize exchanging information between people in any interaction. Valin argues that there are sets of conventions rather than laws that govern the language's process operation. According to him, these four maxims govern all kinds of human talk exchange (Valin 1980: 224). For Yule (1997: 37), the maxims can be seen as unstated assumptions which everybody has in conversation. However, as Yule suggests, people can provide information appropriately, giving the true information, being relevant and clear; therefore, people rely on these maxims while interacting (*ibid.*). Therefore, it becomes necessary to shed light on these maxims to have an acquaintance for each of them and to consider each one when selective political apologies will be under analysis.

1. Maxim of Quantity

- a- It requires making someone's contribution as informative as it is supposed to be.
- b- Demands the participants not to make their contribution more informative than it is required.

Simply speaking, the first maxim requires giving the right or the appropriate amount of information by speakers. In other words, it asks the speaker not to be too brief or to give information more than it supposed to be. (Griffiths 2006: 134).

2. Maxim of Quality

Supermaxim: It demands people to make their contribution true while communicating; more specifically this maxim contains the following:

- a- it directs people not to say what they believe to be false.
- b- it prevents saying things for which someone lacks adequate evidence.

Agreeing with Grice (1989) and many others, Huang (2007: 25) remarks that the maxim of quality is a matter of giving the right information to others.

3. Maxim of Relation

Supermaxim: it requires making our contribution the one that is relevant.

- a- Be relevant.

However, several interpretations have been given to this maxim. Among these interpretations, it was treated as a *special kind of informativeness*. Smith and Wilson define it informally as „A remark P is relevant to another remark Q if P and Q, together with Background knowledge, yield new information not derivable from either P or Q, together with background knowledge, alone” (1979: 177).

4. Maxim of Manner

Supermaxim: Be perspicuous! (Be clear), and in specific:

a- Is to avoid using obscurity of expressions.

b- Avoiding ambiguity.

c- Is to be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

d- Being orderly. (Grice 1975: 47)

From what was mentioned above, the four maxims can play a vital role in making effective communication. In order to run the communication smoothly between cooperative participants, one has to achieve and fulfill his/her conversation with clarity, truthfulness, relevance, and not too much but enough. However, these maxims can be considered as public expectations.

4. Observing and flouting the maxims

Let us consider the following situation: suppose that your Mom has arranged your room and your things and you have asked her about your wallet to have the following conversation:

You: Mom, where is my wallet? I cannot find it.

Mom: It is on the table near the TV.

If the Mom gave the true information to her son (truthful = quality), answered clearly (manner), she has given to her son the right amount of information (quantity), and has directly addressed her son to his goal in asking about his wallet (relation), therefore, she observes the four maxims. In short, the Mom has stated precisely what she meant; no more information was given, no less, and she has raised no implicature to be distinguished. However, people may not always observe these maxims. In other words, they sometimes fail to observe a maxim for something in mind. People may fall in a situation in which they cannot speak clearly, or they choose to lie deliberately (Thomas 1995: 64). However, there are many ways in which people fail to observe these maxims among which is *flouting* which our study concerns with.

Flouting a maxim

The word *flouting* goes hand in hand with what Grice calls *conversational implicature*. There are many occasions in which interlocutors fail to observe the maxims. In other words, they blatantly fail to observe these maxims not with a purpose in mind. They do not intend to deceive or mislead others while flouting the maxims; but rather they try to provide hearers with meanings (additional meanings) different from the expressed one (*ibidem*: 65). However, as it was explained by Thomas (1995: 67-72), flouting the maxims can be explained as it follows.

1. Flouting the maxim of quantity

From the above given discussions we can deduce that flouting the maxim of quantity occurs when someone delivers more or less information than it is needed. Let us recall the above example of the same situation but instead of observing the maxim of quantity, suppose the Mom says after asking her about the wallet:

Mom: At the time of cleaning and arranging your room where your things were everywhere, I put your wallet on the table near the TV.

In the above example, the Mom has given more information than it was required. Her apparently superfluous information generates the implicature that he should arrange his things and be tidier from now on.

2. Flouting the maxim of quality

Focusing on the same example, if the Mom says untrue things or says things for which she lacks adequate evidence, then she is flouting the quality maxims. Suppose the mother has replied as:

Mom: it is in your bright room! Near your tidy books on the table!

By giving the false information, the Mom in this case means exactly the opposite to what she has said. In her speech, she conveys something far from than what her words mean. In other words, she conveys something quite different from the reality. However, as we have stated earlier that the Mom was arranging and cleaning her son's room therefore, since she was not trying to deceive her son, the son can be forced in this context to look for interpretation of her words.

3. Flouting the maxim of relation

When it comes to the maxim of relation, speakers may exploit it by giving an obvious irrelevant observation or response to the topic in which a talk is exchanged. However, this happens to people when they fail to address the other's goal in asking something or by changing the subject itself.

You: Mom, where is my wallet? I cannot find it. The guys are waiting for me outside.
Mom: Have you finished your study, John?

From what was stated by Mom it can be clearly inferred that she did not fulfill what her son was asking about. In her answer, she asks a question which is different from what she was asked about. However, it is clear from her answer what she wanted to convey, namely he has to finish his study and then to go out. Therefore, the purpose from flouting the maxim of relevance was to let her son conclude that doing his study is what interests her, rather than him hanging out with his friends.

4. Flouting the maxim of manner

To talk about the maxim of manner is to talk about how people should be clear when they converse with each other. Along with the clarity of the given information, people have to be orderly when conversing. Therefore, the speaker has to avoid any obscurity or ambiguity which might occur in his / her talk. However, people sometimes violate this maxim by giving obscure or ambiguous information. Besides that, they avoid putting their utterances in an orderly fashion. Therefore, by doing so, they make the conversation difficult to be understood by the audiences. Let us consider the following example:

A: Let's get the kids something.

B: Okay, but I veto I-C-E C-R-E-A-M-S. (Levinson 1983: 104)

In the above example, B violates the maxim of manner by not being perspicuous. This however is done by spelling the letters of the word ice-cream to convey to the other speaker he/she does not prefer the word ice-cream to be mentioned in front of the kids in order not to demand it.

5. American apologies in political texts

The following is a pragmatic analysis of five excerpts taken from American political speeches given by Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, George Bush, and John Kerry.

5.1. Clinton apologizes for Obama tax cut flap

I'm very sorry about what happened. I thought something had to be done on the 'fiscal cliff' before the election. Apparently nothing has to be done until the first of the year. I really was under the impression that they would have to do something before the election, and I was trying to figure out how they would kick it to last (through) the election. Once I realized that nothing had to be done until the first of the year, I supported (Obama's) position. I supported extending them last year, but I think his position is the right one and necessary for working out a comprehensive (deficit reduction) deal. (<http://hotair.com/archives/2012/06/07/bill-clinton-im-very-sorry-i-misunderstood-the-timeline-when-i-said-the-bush-tax-cuts-should-beextended/>).

The above given extract was given by Clinton in an interview to air on CNN's "the situation room with Wolf Blitzer". However, the above given apology was offered when he said that the "Bush tax cuts should be extended". Pragmatically speaking, Clinton has given his apology indirectly by the use of the word *sorry*. This apology act has intensified by the additional marker *sorry* to affirm his emotional state towards the situation whereby he used the act which was considered as offence. The apology act is offered in a partially detached apology form "I'm very sorry". Concerning the other part of our study, the speaker has cooperated by making his

contribution as it is required in that interview. But, he has violated the maxims of quantity. In his speech, Clinton gives more information than it supposed to be. He has made his contribution to the situation which demanded an apology more informative than it is required. What has followed the apology act is extremely long-winded. The speaker could have been brief in his way of apologizing. Therefore, the maxim of manner has been violated also by him for not being brief in his speech.

5.2. Hillary Clinton apologizes to Donald Trump

I would like to apologize. On behalf of all Americans, I apologize to Donald Trump. I'm so sorry that I suggested that he was the best recruiter ISIS has. What I meant to say was, not only is Trump an excellent recruiter for ISIS, he's also a huge fascist. Trump is the American version of Hitler. Another way to put it is that Trump is the American version of Putin. Or you could say that Trump is the leader of the American version of ISIS. I prefer to say that Trump is Satan Incarnate. So yes, I'm sorry, Donald. I should have said all these things and more on Saturday night. Also, your hair looks stupid. Really, really stupid. (<http://thegoodlordabove.com/articles/details/163>)

This excerpt should be examined very carefully for the fact Hillary has used her apology in a sarcastic way to form an irony in her way of apologizing. Trump demanded an apology from Hillary after her suggestion that “ISIS is showing videos of Donald Trump insulting Islam and Muslims in order to recruit more radical jihadists”. Therefore, in her speech to reporters on the campaign trail Hillary Clinton said the above extract. However, Hillary starts her apology by using a hyper-polite way when saying *I would like to apologize*. She expresses her will to offer the apology in a hyper-polite way. In the first part of her speech, she has offered a direct way of apologizing by using a detached apology form in a complex form *I apologize to Donald Trump*. She follows her direct apology by an indirect one in partially detached apology form *I'm so sorry that I suggested that he was the best recruiter ISIS has*. But, the idea of apologizing has been changed since she has expressed her exact meaning. Hillary's apology takes a new turn when she says “What I meant to say was, not only is Trump an excellent recruiter for ISIS, he's also a huge fascist”. Therefore, we can say that Hillary has mocked Trump by her apology. However, she continues her speech by likening Trump with others which she considers as dictators (Putin and Hitler).

By recognizing that Hillary has used the first three apologies in a sarcastic, mockery, and ironic way, one can say that these apologies were never true. Therefore, Hillary violated the maxim of quality by not being truthful when saying “I would like to apologize. On behalf of all Americans, I apologize to Donald Trump. I'm so sorry that I suggested that he was the best recruiter ISIS has”. In other words, by making sure that these apology acts have different meanings from what they really mean, she has said something false and in this case she has violated the maxim of quality. By looking to her speech, Hillary gives more information than is required to

apologize. What she had to do is either to apologize in one of the above given apologies or not to apologize by saying *No I will not apologize* for Trump's demands. But what she has done is that she did not make her contribution such as it is required. By referring to Hitler and Putin and Trump's hair, Hillary has violated the maxim of relevance. Her speech was about how Trump appeared in ISIS's videos. Therefore, there was no need to refer to these two names and the hair. In other words, she partially did not make her contribution relevant to the matter to which the apology was demanded. Examining again her speech, Hillary was not brief and specific in her speech. She has started her speech by apologizing and then by criticizing. This, however, makes her speech too long and by doing so, she has violated the maxim of manner.

5.3. Donald Trump apologizes to John McCain

John McCain – I apologize
I see strength when I look in your eyes
I got in deep with my big mouth
And I put my foot in it
John McCain's my hero baby
He went through a lot of pain
He is brave and he's courageous
John you take my breath away
John McCain – I apologize
Sometimes the words just spill out of my mouth
I hope you see – I am so sorry
I am the leader of the GOP
John McCain's my hero baby
He went through a lot of pain
He is brave and he's courageous
John you take my breath away
John McCain's My Hero, Baby.
(<http://www.breitbartunmasked.com/2015/07/20/donald-trump-apologizes-to-john-mccain-in-song/>)

After accusing John McCain of not being a war hero, Donald Trump offers his apology acts for this situation whereby he has offended McCain. Importantly to remember, this apology is given in a song which has lyrics by James Rustad. By reading the stanzas of Trump's song, we can see three apology acts. Pragmatically, the first and the third apology acts are direct apologies. These two apologies were given by the detached apology form *I apologize*. While the second apology act is expressed in indirect way of apologizing by the fully expanded apology form *I am so sorry*. This apology was intensified by an additional marker so to intensify his apology act. However, by giving the apology act in a song it may reflect that the speaker is trying to be less formal in his act. By giving his apology in a song consisting four stanzas, Trump violates the maxim quantity and manner as well.

Instead of giving more information than was required to apologize, he was supposed to be brief and to be informative as the situation required. However, some ways and expressions that were used by Trump leave us to inquire why did he offer his apology in a song? Was it orderly enough to offer his apology like this? Was he honest when he said “I see strength when I look in your eyes?” It seems clear that the last question is far from being positive. Since we read the other stanzas, we can see that Trump says “John McCain's my hero, baby” repeatedly which stands against his earlier statement of seeing strength in his eyes!. In this case he violates the maxim of quality indirectly by using contradictive words.

5.4. George Bush apologizes for not preventing the tragedy of Sep 11

To be honest with you, Oprah, Bin Laden wasn't really on my radar. I was so focused on Saddam Hussein that I couldn't see anything else. My CIA guys would come in and say 'Bin Laden's prepping an attack,' 'Bin Laden's prepping an attack,' and I was pretty much like 'Whatever. What do you got on Saddam?' There was a general lack of awareness. I'm pretty sure Condi Rice didn't even know who Bin Laden was. I had heard of him, but he sounded like more of a two-bit criminal to me so I didn't take him seriously. And that malunderestimation (sic) really cost us as a nation. You know Bill Clinton made a lot of mistakes on Bin Laden, and I think he should apologize too. But I was at the wheel. It happened on my watch. I was warned. I didn't listen. And I am sorry. I really am. I could have done more to prevent these tragedies. (<http://dailycurrant.com/2013/09/11/george-w-bush-apologizes-failing-nation-911/>).

This excerpt is given by George Bush for the 12th anniversary of 11 Sep. Bush has apologized for not paying much effort to prevent the tragedy. However, his speech was given in an exclusive interview with Oprah. Pragmatically, the act of apology has been offered at the end of Bush's text. The apology act here can be utilized to indicate an indirect speech act of apology. The apology act is offered by the fully detached apology form *I am sorry*. The act has been intensified by the sentence which followed *I really am* to intensify his *sorry* for the situation whereby people died.

By examining this long-winded speech to offer the apology act, we can say that Bush has violated the maxim of manner for not being brief in his way of apologizing. For the 12th anniversary, he could simply have replied: (for Sep 11 I am sorry. I was warned but I did not listen. It is my fault.). However, by giving this long information we can say that he has violated the maxim of quantity also. In his speech, he has given more information than it is required. By saying “I was so focused on Saddam Hussein that I couldn't see anything else” one might wonder if he is honest or not? If not, then he violates the maxim of quality. One more aspect that has to be examined is that Bush has violated the maxim of relevance by saying “Bill Clinton made a lot of mistakes on Bin Laden, and I think he should apologize

too, I was so focused on Saddam Hussein that I couldn't see anything else. My CIA guys would come in and say *Bin Laden's prepping an attack, Bin Laden's prepping an attack*, and I was pretty much like *Whatever. What do you got on Saddam?*” The above mentioned names were irrelevant for the situation whereby he supposed to apologize. It seems the speaker was trying to find excuses by doing so.

5.5. John Kerry apologizes for his “botched joke” (being a lousy comedian)

Of course I'm sorry about a botched joke. You think I love bombing like a B-2, man? I mean, you know, the whole thing is pretty f'in' stupid. Which is like, true, you know? And I guess my delivery was off or something and I get a few polite laughs and a lot of crickets, so I recover and switch to my pussy-eating material, which always kills. I didn't think that much about it until later, when I start getting all this shit for it. I'm sorry I screwed up the joke. It's new material, and still needs some work. I'm sorry that BushCo has totally boned us and Iraq. That's what I'm really sorry about. The reality is, when I bomb, it's not innocent women and children. And it's not like I'm a big homo, diddling underage Congressional pages or anything, either. Boom, daddy! That's right! In your face, G.O.P.! (http://uncyclopedia.wikia.com/wiki/UnNews:John_Kerry_apologizes_for_being_a_lousy_comedian.)

This excerpt is given by Kerry during his appearance on Mickey and Gonzo's Morning Zoo nationally syndicated radio program. In his speech he apologizes for making a joke about the policies of Bush in Iraq. However, his “botched joke” was considered by Republicans and Bush himself as insulting to U.S troops. If we read the text carefully we can realize four apologies were given by him. All of them are indirect apology acts. The first two apologies were directed to the real situation whereby he has used the joke. Whereas the last two apologies were directed to other situation in which Bush boned Americans and Iraq. The first three apologies have been given in an expanded apology form *I'm sorry*. The last apology acts has been intensified by additional marker really to intensify his emotional state towards what Bush did.

However, by giving this very long-winded and convoluted speech, we can say that he has violated the maxim of manner. In his speech, Bush uses prolixity to describe his apology. Kerry has used some utterances and expressions which seem to be irrelevant to the situation whereby an apology (as a polite behavior expression) is demanded. In his speech he says “You think I love bombing like a B-2, man? I mean, you know, the whole thing is pretty f'in' stupid, my pussy-eating material, I start getting all this shit for it, and I'm sorry that BushCo has totally boned us and Iraq”. However, by doing so, he violates the maxim of relevance. By examining what Kerry has written, we can see that he has given more information than it was required. He becomes informative more than it was supposed to be. Therefore, he has violated the maxim of quantity.

6. Conclusion

By analyzing and identifying the selective apology acts from American political texts, we have discovered that there are two styles in the way of apologizing. In other words, the act of apologizing is offered in direct and indirect manner, which verifies our first hypothesis. Moreover, in our analysis of the four American political texts we have seen that apologies can be used to convey different meanings. More precisely, it can be used to mean an irony or to give a sarcastic meaning as we have seen in the case of Hillary Clinton's apology act. Furthermore, by focusing on our data analysis, we have seen that in all the selective data Americans were flouting the maxims of cooperative principle. In some of the texts, more than one maxim has been violated.

Almost all the political figures we have selected violated the maxims of quantity and manner. The reason may belong to the fact that political apologies need to justify the situation whereby an offence was committed towards the others. In other words, it can be said that among political apologies, the violation of the maxim of quantity (giving more information than required) and the maxim of manner (not being brief) is justifiable and common. From another angle, justifying and giving explanations before or after the apology act seems to be more acceptable to set the things right and to maintain the harmony between people.

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African American Cultural Projection, Intercultural Communication and Co-Cultural Theory

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1. Introduction

The hyphenated coinage of ethnic cultures indicates in itself the positioning of the ethnic community within a broader cultural context, which proves a complexity of hierarchies and juxtapositions within and without it. The fact that any cultural group is also further stratified, as “layers of culture” – as Hofstede *et al.* has it (2010: 18) – apply to any cultural group, shows their inner heterogeneity, which is why intercultural interaction is a basic characteristic not just between cultural groups but also within ingroups, which renders the application of intercultural communication theories to any cultural activity validated. It is the theory of co-cultural discourses that maps the communication between groups with asymmetrical relationship, especially when some minority groups are concerned.

Even if co-cultural theory has mainly been employed in empirical studies to delineate the interrelation of co-existing cultural groups, it is justified exactly on this basis to apply the intercultural communication theory to black sermons and speeches in the 1950 and 1960s, which I have done in related studies elsewhere (Gaál-Szabó 2015, 2016a, 2016b). The sermons and speeches are, on the one hand, manifestos of black cultural implosion with all its alternate foci in different ingroup contexts and, on the other, appear in interactions with the significant outgroup within a predominantly white socio-cultural context, which is no less diverse. It is this duality – black / white and intergroup communication – that channels intriguing communication tactics in the uproarious decades of the Civil Rights Movement, especially as religio-cultural identities significantly shape the discourses. Here I provide the theoretical framework for this research orientation.

2. Intercultural communication in a co-cultural context

The need for an intercultural response stems from the perception and experience of difference deriving from various cultural backgrounds that relativize assigned value and valence of groups and their members, as well as social / political / cultural-political settings and mechanisms that enforce coercive entailing of a group and its

members by another one. The former simply acknowledges difference on a nominal basis as groups are considered integrated wholes, sovereign entities juxtaposed. In this case difference between groups and members belonging to different groups can be looked at with acceptance and tolerance in a pluralistic way, i.e., without the threat of losing or altering identity. The question here is more likely how effective communication, i.e., the achievement of particular communication goals, can be obtained; and how transparent communication, i.e., the rendering of the own culturally tainted message clear and unambiguous in an act of cultural translation, can be achieved. The latter, however, refers to a vertical stratum, which emplaces the cultural group in the cultural space of a dominant group. Consequently, beyond communication focusing on the realization of direct goals, the intercultural communication act always already entails identity negotiation in a more heightened way, while the outcome of negotiation does not primarily denote reconciliation or harmonization of differences, i.e., identity juxtaposition; but the protection of the cultural self, blending into the dominant culture with some degree of the old cultural self retained, or even the risk of losing identity.

The asymmetrical relationship between cultural groups foreshadows issues of uncertainty and anxiety, which add a further layer to the chemistry of transcultural communication from minorities' point of view. The terms represent two sides of the coin, uncertainty conceptualized as the cognitive aspect and anxiety as "the feeling of being uneasy, tense, worried, or apprehensive about what might happen" (Gudykunst 2004: 22) and shed light on relevant aspects in the background of an intercultural response as uncertainty and anxiety shape the nature of reaction based on intra-group specific and inter-group specific factors. As Michael A. Hogg claims,

identifying with a group reduces self-uncertainty because the group's attributes are cognitively internalized as a prototype that describes and prescribes one's own attitudes, feelings, and behavior, and these attributes are consensually validated by fellow group members (Hogg 2012: 20).

Questioning the tie between member and group or the identity of the group may reverse his definition and shatter self-definition and consequently lead, among others, to the destabilization of self, intra-group cohesion, and, in addition, to profound modification of established communication patterns. Importantly, as Hogg points out, the process of uncertainty is closely connected to the social and collective and is "context- not personality-dependent" (*ibidem*: 21), as "events only appear as uncertain in some context of purposes, and expectations of orderliness" (Marris 1996: 16). Furthermore, recurring events may solidify a process leading to uncertainty on group level and thus "a social cognitive process transforms uncertainty into group behavior" (Hogg 2012: 21). In this way – as I will point out in the subsequent chapter concerning African American cultural trauma – similarly to the collective treatment of cultural trauma, uncertainty can be naturalized into self-definition through processes of routinization. As such uncertainty tailors both prescriptive and predictive expectations (see Burgoon 1993: 34), i.e., how a group

regulates intra-group behavior through self-perception and how another group and its members as well as their behavior is interpreted.

The factors leading to intercultural uncertainty and anxiety depend heavily on situational / pre-situation-bound processes as well as personal characteristics involving the perception of sociohistorical context and of conflict, the strength of identification with the own group, interpersonal relationship, and personal values (see the table pertaining to the initial orientation in communication accommodation in Gallois *et al.* 2005: 133) – even if very much bound up with social and collective aspects. From a group specific point of view, however, which appears especially relevant in an African American context, factors such as intergroup relations and boundaries and their stability, group vitality and status, norms of intergroup contact, and cultural values (see same table in Gallois *et al.* 2005: 133) influence the context which may prove determining for the outcome of the immediate interaction. In William Gudykunst's interpretation, factors like these account for “superficial causes” (2003: 183), and uncertainty and anxiety provide for the underlying “basic” causes, whereby he refers to the fact that such factors beyond mere representations or symptoms, may be engendered by uncertainty and anxiety in constant reproduction. He, in fact, naturalizes uncertainty and anxiety as epistemological categories in intercultural discourses. From this perspective, anxiety and uncertainty do not necessarily inhibit intercultural communication but shape communication in a constantly alternating / spiraling process of categorization and decategorization. If contained at “optimum levels” (Griffin 2006: 431), i.e., between “maximum and minimum thresholds” (Gudykunst 2003: 169), referring to points beyond which anxiety and uncertainty can be paralyzing or lead to negligent disregard of the other respectively; effective communication is possible. In this sense, uncertainty and anxiety can contribute to identity formation in an either degenerative or constructive way; and, in any way, strengthen collective identity and group cohesion.

In a co-cultural, African American / white American setting the phenomena of uncertainty and anxiety thus engender identity negotiation from two complementary angles: a) to protect self and to uphold African American identity; and b) to relate to mainstream, white American culture. The two interrelated mechanisms coexist simultaneously and have additional, various layers, as discussed subsequently. However, despite the fact that identity negotiation is considered a “transactional interaction process” and “a mutual communication activity” (Ting-Toomey 1999: 40), mutuality at the most denotes asymmetrical relations in a co-cultural discourse due to uneven power constellations. In establishing rewarding identity negotiation, African American subjects must achieve successful face movement in Stella Ting-Toomey's coinage to counterbalance asymmetry. In practice negotiating face movement pertains to retaining African American identity and disregarding other-face, i.e., white American identity; on the other extreme, obliterating African American self-face and upholding white other-face; obliterating both African American and white cultural identities in an attempt to achieve shared identity or mutual-face; and protecting both African American and white identity or

self-face (Ting-Toomey 2005b: 76) i.e., it refers to “choosing whether to maintain, defend, and / or upgrade self-face versus other-face in a conflict episode” (*ibidem*: 76). In a co-cultural situation these movements highly depend on cultural and ethnic/racial identity salience” (Ting-Toomey 2005a 215-16) and can work toward establishing a bicultural, assimilated, or marginal identity in Ting-Toomey’s interpretation (*ibidem*: 223-24), which largely can be translated into appropriation, accommodation, and separation – even though the latter is understood by her as estrangement from both the ingroup and the outgroup.

The triad of face movements is reiterated by co-cultural discourse, which studies the communication of underrepresented group members in response to challenges posed by dominant group members. Co-cultural assumptions entail that “no one culture in [...] society is inherently superior to other coexisting cultures,” however “one co-culture has acquired dominant group status in the major societal institutions” (Orbe 1998: 2). The label *co-cultural* signifies thus the juxtaposition of different cultures often in a hierarchical way, however without any subversive notion about their relationship. It foreshadows therefore asymmetrical situations, in which presumed and perceived societal hierarchy and power relations shape the interaction between cultural groups. Importantly, the initial orientation of the underrepresented group member in an interaction is based primarily on presumptions and expectations deriving from pre-interaction horizon as discussed above in connection with communication accommodation, i.e., the initial orientation constructs an orientated and orienting perspective to view the event from.

The concept of standpoint underlying co-cultural thinking is prevailing in studies concerning muted group and standpoint. Edwin Ardener, for example, whose thinking has also influenced Mark P. Orbe’s co-cultural theory, reinlives the subjectivity of remote places, perhaps through the honest realization of the professional anthropologist that the “world-structures” (Ardener 2007: 102) simply indicate “the extraordinary complexity introduced into the surface by the rapid transmission of provisional maps of its own transfiguration” and don’t reveal “more than some fraction of the complexity of the individuals composing it” (*ibidem*: 103), which may be due to the fact that places are viewed and conceptualized by social spaces – a dominant move whereby remote places appear to lose their singularity through textualization (Ardener 2012: 527). Inverting the idea of remoteness so that places withstand objectifying conceptualizations by transparent spaces (see for the latter Rose 1993: 40), he argues,

‘remoteness’ is a specification, and a perception, from elsewhere, from an outside standpoint; but from inside the people have their own perceptions – if you like, a counterspecification of the dominant, or defining space, working in the opposite direction (Ardener 2012: 531).

As a proof of successful reterritorialization, remote places devise event-richness and event-density (*ibidem*: 531) – as opposed to the “*linguification* of the surface” as “automatism” of events (Ardener 2007: 103) – and thus move out of a

subverting paradigm to negotiate identity for themselves. Important for any underrepresented group, the process marks

the result of the weakening of, or probably [...] the continuous threat to, the maintenance of a self-generating set of overriding social definitions (including those that control people's own physical world), thus rendering possible the 'disenchantment' of individuals, and [...] overdetermination of individuality [...] (Ardener 2012: 531-532).

Remoteness may refer to the mutedness of people, i.e., typically minorities, women, or people with disabilities, as they are excluded from the dominant discourse, or suffer from rigid emplacement in it, or, on a more permissive note, have a different culture leading naturally to differences. Even though muted groups for Ardener were meant to "explain the lack of anthropological data then available on women" as they were "neglected in social anthropological studies" (Wall and Gannon-Leary 1999: par. 4), his terminology was picked up, especially by feminist thinkers, to demonstrate women's disadvantaged position in male-dominant social settings, in which they are denied a voice (e.g., bell hook's *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* [1989]) or only have limited access to self-realization through the use of means, such as language, defined by men. As Cheris Kramarae, pioneer of the feminist muted group theory, explains,

In many situations, women are more constrained than are men in what they can say, when, and with what results... [since] Accepted language practices have been constructed primarily by men in order to express their experiences. This means that women are constrained (muted) (Kramarae 2005: 55).

She insists that "technological processes [i.e., social relations] developed by men for men [...] have lasting impact on women's communication" (Kramarae 1988: 2). As a result,

Women are muted because they have no part in the creation and validation of meaning. The result is that it is difficult for women to express themselves: the concepts and vocabulary available to them are those that come out of male experience (Benston 1988: 23).

Mutedness is thus a matter of non-representation: it does not only pertain to the all-pervasiveness of dominant communicational patterns, but also to a given set of properties with which the muted group can define itself. Ardener's idea of the muted group is often employed to refer to total mutedness, i.e., suppression, even lack of subjectivity, of women and does not entail the fact that it may refer to an autonomous cultural space. The concept of "remoteness" makes it clear that despite mutedness in any societal setting, ingroup interaction proves event-rich, thus, from the point of view of the muted, silence depicts the illiteracy on the part of the

dominant group as it fails to read the muted group adequately. In a twist of perspectives, silence can even be strategically deployed in an intercultural discourse. As Kramarae insists,

silence may involve culturally appropriate interaction. Silence isn't always a problem to be 'solved,' although it is something to be understood. Silence is not only a result of oppression, nor is it synonymous with passivity. [...] Silence is as complex as speech (Kramarae 2005: 60).

Generally speaking, as a “silent response” it can amount to a speech act (Nakane 2007: 6) or it can refer to “hidden silence” (*ibidem*: 6), which occurs when untold stories shape the vortex of the interaction (Pearce 2005: 48).¹

Indirectly, Orbe also reiterates that any minority response to dominant group challenges represents inter-group harmonization with variously intense focus on the self and the other and denies therefore any presumption of lack of subjectivity. In fact, intercultural communication styles on the part of members of underrepresented groups derive from both direct and indirect (mediated) experiences with the dominant group and ingroup cultural specificities. As he and Regina E. Spellers assert, “instances of co-cultural communication are defined from the perspective of the underrepresented group members when they perceive cultural differences as salient during any given interaction” (Orbe, Spellers 2005: 174). This can well include intragroup communication (*ibidem*: 174). The latter tenet highlights cultural subjectivity and allows for a view of cultural groups as heterogeneous entities as it foresees differences within groups and thus it predicts individual responses. Ultimately examining the “relationship between culture, power, and communication” (1998a: 183), Orbe identifies different factors (preferred outcome, field of experience, abilities, situational context, perceived costs and rewards, and communication approach [Orbe and Spellers 2005: 175-179]) and communication orientations of members of muted groups (Orbe 1998a: 180) that shape intercultural discourses. The latter encompasses nine different orientations established on the basis of “nonassertive-assertive-aggressive continuum” (Orbe 1998b: 14).

The orientations “are adopted in contexts where a person’s membership in one or more marginalized groups becomes the salient factor when interacting with another who can assert a position of greater social privilege or power” (*ibidem* 1998b: 20). Orbe’s orientations suggest that muted group members employ strategic discourses in order to negotiate rewarding identities in different communication contexts. Hence it follows that “muted group status is not necessarily a fixed state, but instead something that is constantly reinforced, augmented, or challenged through everyday discursive interaction” (*ibidem*: 7-8). The processes Orbe mentions are bidirectional. Not only do members of a hierarchical group make every

¹ Pearce’s LUUUTT model theorizes interactions along “stories Lived, Untold stories, Unheard stories, Unknown stories, stories Told, and storytelling” (Pearce 2005: 47).

effort to keep members of a muted group in their place – as foreseen in the power discourse – but the latter also embrace their stereotyped place or struggle to challenge it. Challenging mainstream discourses in particular relies on genuine cultural means of the minority group (e.g., African American cultural properties) as well as incorporates means and properties of the dominant cultural group as Benston also implies.

It is, however, the factor of preferred outcome which determine “how [participants’] communication affects their ultimate relationship with dominant group members” (Orbe and Spellers 2005: 175). Its threefold stratification includes assimilation “to eliminate cultural differences, including the loss of any distinctive characteristics, in order to fit in with dominant society” (*ibidem*: 175), accommodation “to retain some of [the] cultural uniqueness” by “transform[ing] existing dominant structures” (*ibidem*: 178), and separation that in an act of negation of ties with the dominant group urges to “join other co-cultural group members and create social communities and organizations that are reflective of their own values, mores, and norms” (*ibidem*: 178). Together with various communication approaches, which explicate the degree by which the preferred outcome is sought to be realized, i.e., in a non-assertive, assertive, and aggressive way, Orbe identifies 26 communicative practices (1998a: 50-86) to map co-cultural orientations. The choice of communicative practice also depends on further factors such as the “field of experience” (Orbe 1998b: 178) that reflects the differences between standpoints (Orbe 1998a: 118), but, more closely, the “sum of an individual’s lived experiences” (Orbe 1998b: 178). Even though Orbe and Spellers emphasize the lived aspect of experiences, which would largely correspond to Jan Asmann’s “communicative memory” (2008: 109), the indirect experience of (imagined) events greatly influence the initial expectations regarding any co-cultural situation. The factor of personal abilities refers to “individual characteristics” or “natural abilities” (Orbe 1998b: 178), which enable a person to adopt certain practices in a situational context a further factor – including location, persons present, and circumstances (*ibidem*: 178). Whether a person employs a certain communicational practice depends on the perception of the chances for the realization of the preferred outcome. Orbe and Spellers call this factor “the perceived cost and rewards” (2005: 178), whereby they include the individual evaluation of risks and potentials.

Event-richness and event-density can be seen as results of an individuating process, as it happens, often in response to subverting challenges; but also as prerequisites to facilitate that process. In this sense, the terms signify both the features and the output of places or, within the scope of this study, the African American community as a co-cultural group.¹

¹ The richness of African American culture is aptly documented from a communication point of view by Molefi Kete Asante (1987), Anne Maydan Nicotera *et al.* (2003), and Michael L. Hecht *et al.* (2003) among others.

There may be many derailing interferences in understanding and communicating this output, which are brought together by Arthur L. Smith (Molefi Kete Asante) under the umbrella term *transracial noise* and thematized as control beliefs, stereotypes, lack of basic skills, and inadequate perception (Smith 1973: 69-81). The underlying preponderant cause of such noise is presented by self-perception and the perception of the own cultural group, which is indeed foremost channeled by autostereotypes. Mostly resting on a belief-disbelief system, which, in Milton Rokeach terminology, pertains to “an organization of verbal and nonverbal, implicit and explicit beliefs, sets, or expectancies” (Rokeach 1960: 32), the stereotypes about the self primarily concern “the idea of race-place or status” (Smith 1973: 72), largely referring to the assigned position and social valence in the societal matrix as a group. From the point of view of minority positions, autostereotypes do not simply denote mere oppositionality to other cultural groups or distinctiveness of the own group, but, as Rokeach’s belief-disbelief system does, ideologized and “highly personalized pre-ideological beliefs” (*ibidem*: 35). In this way, heterostereotypes, i.e., stereotypes about outgroups, are rooted in self-perception as much as generated by them.

Even though the preferred outcome in a situation depends on immediate communication goals, it really rests on pillars of self-perception. Concomitantly, the classification on the basis of the preferred outcome appears straightforward if the chosen religious leaders are examined to exemplify one of the three categories without any overlaps with another. However, a diachronic view offers a more exact depiction of intercultural moves as, on the one hand, the leaders show modifications of greater and lesser degrees throughout their lifetime, i.e., oscillation to and from categories may be identified; on the other, any intercultural response is situation-bound even if initial orientations may prove determining, which may mean that practices are chosen to render the interaction effective, i.e., practices may be employed pragmatically to realize larger or underlying objectives. Furthermore, if assimilation, accommodation, and separation are taken to illuminate the identificatory anchorage of the speaker, they may employ co-cultural practices deliberately in a way that, unlike what Orbe’s taxonomy suggests, they can serve purposes beyond their initial category (e.g., a communicative practice of separation can be utilized for assimilationist goals).

Conclusion

Choosing the appropriate communicative practice is thus a conscious activity of the African American religious leaders in the 1950 and 1960s who must be aware that they stand in a focal point between cultures, even more than that as they represent an interface for the African American community, heterogeneous as it is. Martin Luther King, Jr., for example, is careful to choose his communicative strategy because performing “in black spaces beyond white scrutiny was often a more ethnic figure” (Rieder 2008: 250). Provided the fact that the African American community

cannot be regarded as a united front, the speaker's role becomes even more complicated as he needs to address multiple audiences. Aware of it, King asserts, "There has to be a synthesis, [...] I have to be militant enough to satisfy the militant yet I have to keep enough discipline in the movement to satisfy white supporters and moderate Negroes" (qtd. in Rieder 2008: 252).

W. Barnett Pearce's daisy model reveals that any interaction is embedded in multiple discourses and speakers seemingly addressing an audience are in fact in conversation with multiple audiences.¹ It seems that often the speaker's figure can be regarded as a carrier of multiple voices. Furthermore, having to talk to different audiences which themselves are heterogeneous necessitates to transcend any racial binaries even across spaces (as the speaker deliberately or unknowingly may reach absent audiences). The mixology the speakers employ (Rieder 2008: 266) presupposes the implicit use of co-cultural taxonomies with the realization that ingroup communication tactics may indeed be as varied as outgroup communication tactics.

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¹ It needs to be added, too, that the voice of the speakers are often constructed since they receive substantial help in writing their speeches. It may even therefore appear speculative to treat the public persona of the speakers uncritically. As Jonathan Rieder points out, King, for example, relied on ghostwriters (Rieder 2008: 260) and his published work was heavily edited by others (*ibidem*: 257).

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“Getting Carter” through Post-Presidential Articulations (and What It Tells Us about News Discourse in an Age of Concision)

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1. Introduction

The concept of “memes” has, in a sense, become a meme, at least on the internet. In case one has not heard, a successful internet meme is construed as a prevailing logic that circulates like a virus between minds. One may further venture that memes have increasingly become associated with “wise-ass” glibness that speaks more to punditry than to wisdom. While evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins is credited with having minted the term *meme* in 1976 (Solon 2013), it burst into wide circulation around 2010 with internet enablement. Indeed, Mark A. Jordan observes that, rather than waiting for memes to “evolve” through a cultural form of “natural selection”, by 2014 one could utilize “websites that offer to generate memes for you!” (Jordan 2014: 1).

Nonetheless, we are not thrust into a wholly unprecedented situation as the now familiar “meme” meme has conceptual forebears (even if the intensity of memeing is unprecedented). In this view, memes may be taken to be special cases of what cultural studies theorists have long called *articulations*. Following Stuart Hall, Lawrence Grossberg (1992) posits articulations as semiotic shortcuts that link concepts, with prevailing ideology as the adhesive that seals elements together into a code. The United States’ Republican Party has, for example, long labored to be articulated to security strength, wedded to a non-nonsense view of the world – even as the ledger displays notable failures in these regards, as in the livid, book-length appraisal of George W. Bush’s own anti-terrorism coordinator (Clarke 2004). No matter: Articulations may or may not correspond with reality, but they do align with the repeated assertions of a “natural” linkage between elements. In this view, an articulation’s correspondence with other articulations is sufficient to achieve the appearance of truth value – at times, even more than the articulations’ correspondence with an externally verifiable reality.

The purpose of this chapter is to map out articulations of a specific public figure, former US President James Earl “Jimmy” Carter, Jr. (born 1924, Georgia, US), during the first decade of the millennium. In particular, the study covers the meme-like articulations of Carter from 2002 (when he was awarded the Nobel Peace

Prize) to 2009 (after another Democrat, Barack H. Obama, assumed the Oval Office). The period under examination also corresponds, very roughly, with the timeframe in which the internet graduated from a burgeoning and unruly curiosity into permanent, socially- and commercially-significant infrastructure. The site of study is two longtime pillars of mainstream US news discourse: *Time* (founded 1923) and *Newsweek* (founded 1933). The analysis demonstrates that media punditry across the better part of a decade performed a referendum on the political projects of the left and right, via telegraphic (*meme*-like) quick-sketch articulations of Carter.

As noted, within the world of discourse, articulations need not be wise or true in order to circulate; their mere circulation and repetition endows them with the aura of truth, even if that aura is (partly, largely, wholly) illusory with no obligation to bend toward documented reality. However, before turning to this study's methods and the details of its findings, the question is begged: who is this enigmatic figure who has pirouetted in and out of the spotlight since the mid-1970s – and why is Carter of note almost 40 years after he exited Washington following a crushing electoral defeat?

2. Re-introducing Carter: An overview

Jimmy Carter first burst to national and international prominence in spring 1976 when the formerly low-profile ex-governor of Georgia reeled off a surprise series of victories in the Democratic primary elections; momentum that eventually propelled him past incumbent Gerald R. Ford to the US presidency at the end of the year. By the time he left The White House in January 1981, Carter appeared to be destined for a return to obscurity, beyond bouts of disco-era nostalgia. As Carter exited Washington, he registered an anemic 34 percent approval rating that testified to his administration's difficult tenure (Steinhauser 2009). By 2009, however, a poll found that 61 percent approved of Carter's performance as president – an almost two-fold retrospective increase from the moment his administration left office! How did this occur? It is partly because Carter fashioned a legacy as a post-presidential global player whose activities continued to be a subject of media attention into his ninth decade. For example, Kevin Mattson's (2009) book-length treatment of Carter's 15 July 1979 Crisis of Confidence speech was published in time for the address' thirtieth anniversary. The anniversary, punctuated by Mattson's book, prompted a flurry of editorializing on the speech's reverberating significance (e.g., Coller 2009).

Alongside authoring 24 books since retiring from electoral politics, the former president founded the Carter Center in 1982 with a mission to “resolve conflict, promote democracy, protect human rights, and prevent disease” (*The Carter Center* 2018: 2). Where preventing disease is concerned, Carter's efforts since the 1980s were instrumental in the almost concluded campaign to eradicate the heinous affliction of Guinea Worm from Africa (McNeil 2014). Perhaps the pinnacle of recognition for Carter's post-presidency was the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in

2002. In light of the accomplished post-presidential career, it is unsurprising that *Time* magazine describes Carter as the epitome of post-White House accomplishment in an article entitled *Presidential Second Acts* (Cruz 2009). While his one term (1977-1981) presidency is defended only on occasion in media discourse, Carter is often regarded as “perhaps the best ex-president in American history” (Victor 2008: 2).

Nevertheless, an incongruous riot of meanings has erupted around Carter in the new millennium. Along with the acclaim, in Carter’s own words, “‘I’ve been called a bigot. I’ve been called senile. I’ve been called a liar. I’ve been called a plagiarist. And so forth’” (*Newsweek* 2007a: 1). Numerous moments in the news magazine discourse channel enduring dismissal of Carter. In this vein, pundit Joe Klein perfunctorily waves away Carter’s “sad presidency” (2008: 1). In another column, Klein posits Carter as “among the worst recent Presidents” – although he garnishes Carter’s more conservative policies as president with praise (“a strict monetary policy”, “a vigorous arms buildup” [2005: 1]). During his 2008 presidential campaign, John S. McCain III reached back a generation to posit the election as a replay of 1980 via a swipe at Carter: “‘Senator (Barack H.) Obama says that I’m running for a [sic] Bush’s third term. It seems to me he’s running for Jimmy Carter’s second’” (Halperin 2009: 2). Beyond Carter’s term in the Oval Office, Pundit Hugh Sidey also targets his post-presidential activity for ridicule. In Sidey’s glib appraisal, Carter is prone to “quaint bouts of political pique” while he has “lobbied the world”, in contrast with his ex-presidential peers who revel in being “Bigger than rock stars” (Sidey 2005: 1).

Carter’s Nobel Peace Prize would seem to present a prompt for universal praise. However, the award similarly mobilized an array of responses that included full-throated hostility and efforts to tarnish his legacy. Stephen F. Hayward’s *The Real Jimmy Carter* (2004) exemplifies post-Nobel, anti-Carter discourse that furiously assays to hammer articulations into place between Carter and every worldly ill (most notably, terrorism [206-13]). While Hayward traffics in lazy, ideologically submissive contentiousness (published by rightwing publication mill Regnery Press), the political right’s campaign against Carter’s Nobel award in the news magazines was more rapidly mobilized. For example, George F. Will (2002)’s screed in *Newsweek* trolls through decades of comments and gestures in Carter’s public life to force linkages between the former president and any available unsavory topic (terrorism, nuclear proliferation). *Newsweek*’s Eleanor Clift (2002) presents a more divided posture toward Carter’s award while *Time*’s Jeffrey Chu is celebratory. With the 1978-79 Camp David Accords in mind, Chu characterizes Carter’s Nobel as “24 years late” (2002: 1). Chu also construes the award’s timing as a signal of global unease with the contemporaneous Bush administration’s aggressive histrionics in anticipation of invading Iraq.

Beyond ambivalence, and given the many hostile articulations of Carter that continue to circulate, it is no surprise that similar criticisms are insinuated into the magazines’ “Letters to the Editor” discourse. In one letter, Carter (and fellow

Democrat William J. Clinton) are called “laughingstocks” (Park 2006: 2). Carter’s political radioactivity in some quarters prompts recollections that extend to the factually (but hardly randomly) wrong. One reader asserts that “(Ronald W.) Reagan inherited a U.S. military that had been decimated by vast cuts under the Carter administration” (Axley 2003: 2). In fact, the political “centrist” Carter *raised* military spending during peacetime, in excess of the rate of inflation and at the expense of social programs (Kaufman and Kaufman 2006: 166, 217).

Carter has clearly been invested with contradictory meanings and interpretations in *Time* and *Newsweek*’s journalistic discourse. It is not, however, my concern to defend or “rejuvenate” Carter; his own actions in the international arena have spoken for themselves on that score. I am, however, concerned with characterizing broader tendencies of US news media within two of its most well-known brands – *Time* and *Newsweek* – through their discourse on Carter.

Before turning to the details of this investigation’s findings, I map out a methodology that emphasizes the concept of articulations (or, equivalently linkages) with support from the concept of personalization, as they play out in news discourse. Next, *Time*, *Newsweek* and Carter are further embedded within context. Thereafter, I discuss the linkages (and *de*-linkages) that surround Carter in the corpus of 225 articles, notably with regard to the Middle East and to other recent US presidential administrations. Finally, in conclusion, I discuss what these articulations may reveal about news media logics in the new millennium.

3. Method: What was read, and why?

Articles from *Time* and *Newsweek* were gathered through the web pages’ search function, using the search term “Jimmy Carter” for the specified period between January 2002 and June 2009. The search feature of each web page ordinarily sorted the resultant hits by “relevance”. The year 2002 was selected as one temporal bracket as it was the year in which Carter travelled to Cuba in May in defiance of US isolation of the island and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October. The resultant 225 articles (top 125 in “relevance” from *Time*, top 100 from *Newsweek*) emerged from a cross section of the magazines’ departments (e.g., *News*, *Culture*, *Blogs*, *International Edition*). Most of the 225 articles in the corpus were two or three printed pages in length, with a range from one to ten printed pages. Hence, the corpus of articles under examination approximates the size of a medium-sized book.

Aside from articles and interviews that focus squarely on Carter (e.g., Clift 2006), the former president mainly performs “cameo” appearances in the news magazines’ discourse. These cameos range from a passing mention in a sentence to a paragraph in articles that principally address other topics (e.g., the US’ 2008 election). Mentions in passing of Carter may indeed illustrate the “hit-and-run” character of articulation. That is, claims that are telegraphed quickly, and often

without further backing, may be assumed to channel deeply-held, ideologically-pregnant articulations within mainstream news media.

In that vein, why examine *Time* and *Newsweek*? For most of the twentieth century and into the opening decade of the new millennium, *Time* played “Coca-Cola” to *Newsweek*’s “Pepsi”; in other words, *Time* and *Newsweek* were the two most high-profile weekly news magazine brands. Nevertheless, *Time* was advantaged for having arrived ten years earlier in 1923 and having been endowed with gravity in David Halberstam’s magisterial *The Powers That Be* (2000). Moreover, *Time* has been further advantaged by its hypertrophic parent company, Time Warner, a behemoth even by the oligopolistic standards of the US mediascape (*Columbia Journalism Review* 2014). *Time*’s print circulation continues to be robust in 2017, with more than 3 million weekly copies sold, in an era when print is being pushed to the wall (Alliance for Audited Media 2017).

As for *Newsweek*, in the time period from which the Carter discourse was excavated, the magazine was in the process of launching a new business model. The make-over was intended to move the magazine into alignment with more upscale publications such as *New Yorker* and *Economist*. After 2010, *Newsweek* shed staff, lost substantial amounts of money, and was sold by its long-time proprietors at The Washington Post Company to Sidney Harman for one US dollar, plus liability for the magazine’s debts (Vega and Peters 2010). *Newsweek* subsequently merged editorially with the internet upstart *Daily Beast* (Brown and Shetty 2012), although the two publications have remained separate titles. Through a convulsive decade in which it abandoned print publication, *Newsweek* has been rebooted as a successful web site.

In any event, it is important to bear in mind that during the sampled period of 2002-2009, *Time* and *Newsweek* still presented a duopoly with respect to the US’ mainstream, high-circulation, weekly news magazines. The market niche differentiation between them consisted of *Time*’s tendency to hew center-right in its editorial stance, whereas *Newsweek* leaned more center-left.

4. Method: How was it read?

Analysis of articulations is vital to this chapter’s analysis of news magazine discourse on Carter as post-president; but what, more specifically, are articulations?

To start with, associations that form a verbal code may vary in the degree to which they are more constrained (i.e., motivated) by straightforward connections between signifier and signified (Fiske 1990: 46-55). The association between a scream of “Ouch!” and pain is intimate and causally-driven. As an indexical code, a scream of pain is relatively rare for its tight (even “existential”) fit between signifier and signified; most codes are far more symbolic and arbitrary. The association between the signifier “house” and its signified is more typical with respect to its arbitrariness. To wit, a house could have been called anything, as the word has a

wholly symbolic relation through linguistic convention *to the thing itself* (hence, different languages use arbitrarily different words, as a matter of convention, to signify “house”). In turn, longer chains of symbolic codes may also be taken apart or put back together in near endless combinations, much like Lego pieces – but with greater consequence and ideological valences. Like Lego pieces, political words and deeds may be tactically linked or de-linked within political discourse, relatively autonomously from the strength of their actual connections.

For Lawrence Grossberg, “Articulation links...this text to that meaning, this meaning to that reality” in a cascade that forms a “*network of relationships*” (emphasis added; 1992: 54). These networks, in turn, implicate political projects through their reverberating meanings. As a concrete example, take Ernesto “Che” Guevara, a dour and deadly serious Marxist insurgent in the flesh. In the decades following his death, however, Che’s posthumous career has re-articulated him as a consumerist icon, conscripted for the promotion of accoutrements such as vodka, soft drinks, and mobile phones (Carroll 2008). The ideological labor of these articulations may even suggest that market relations can absorb and appropriate *anything*, including the image of a communist revolutionary. In the face of such semiotic brazenness, Grossberg insists on critically teasing articulations apart; or, “delinking or disarticulating” them in light of “what we take for granted” (1992: 54, 55). In doing so, a critical decoder of messages resists the tendency to “naturalize” articulations between elements, within the conceptual mappings of a given time and place.

Robert M. Entman (1989) addresses similar semiotic concerns in the realm of news media through his concept of linkage; despite the different origins of the terms “articulation” and “linkage”, I will use them interchangeably as both implicate a critical posture toward (semi-arbitrary) symbolic codes. Through linkage, Entman analyzes coverage of Carter and his successor Reagan. Linkage is “the connection of presidents to events that reflect positively or negatively on their leadership” (1989: 55), as forged within media discourse – and regardless of strength of causal connections between the behavior of the White House and co-occurring events. In applying the concept, Entman finds that news of eight servicemen’s deaths in the Iran-hostage rescue mission in 1980 was strongly linked with Carter’s governance. By contrast, three years later, linkages were generally muted between the news of 241 US servicemen killed in their barracks in Lebanon and Reagan’s administration (1989: 59). Entman claims that the respective presidential reactions in part accounted for the degree of mediated linkage that followed. To wit, Carter publicly assumed full responsibility for the failed rescue mission. By contrast, Reagan discursively *de-linked* his administration from the events by positioning himself as another distraught and outraged citizen observing events in the Middle East; that is, Reagan did not discuss the events from within a “commander-in-chief” frame. Into the new millennium, the impact of the eight servicemen’s deaths in 1980 still situates Carter *vis-a-vis* Reagan. In 2008, *Time*’s Mark Thompson bluntly fashions these causal linkages: “The Desert One fiasco...doomed Carter to lose to Ronald Reagan and

primed the pump for Reagan's military build-up" (2008: 2) – even as a military build-up is ill-suited to rescue hostages and the US military already dwarfed all other nations, to no avail, in 1980.

Linkages and articulations readily dovetail with what W. Lance Bennett calls "personalization". In Bennett's account, pervasive personalization collapses the structural imperatives of institutions into a particular face. As a result of personalization, "we learn more about powerful and glamorous personalities in government than how government works" (2001: 49). Indeed, articulations are more easily made, and meanings more readily managed, when shoe-horned into a personalized framework, in which contingent chains of events are over-simplified or even disfigured via links back to one person. Personalization also enables simplification into the "issue" of whether a political figure is "winning" or "losing" at statecraft (2001: 49). In this view, news discourse positions the president not as the manager of one political "team" (with its factions, priorities, preferred constituencies); rather, the US executive is constructed as a regent-like figure, tropology that stimulates further personalized narratives. Moreover, US news media's long-standing personalized and president-centric coverage contrasts with national news traditions that diffuse causal emphases onto parties and government departments, among other actors (Hallin 1994: 113-132).

As a further illustration of articulations and their service to personalization, consider one moment in the Carter discourse. In a *Newsweek* obituary, Catholic priest Richard John Neuhaus is characterized as "an early supporter of Jimmy Carter who became a counselor to George W. Bush" (Weigel 2009: 1). Thus, within 13 words, Neuhaus' sojourn through the US' political left-right continuum is conveyed through articulations. On this view, Carter is a personalized avatar, unambiguously articulated to the left, and Bush is correspondingly linked as personification of the right. While these articulations are not simply random, further analysis complicates the picture of the unconventional Democrat Carter as an exemplar of the political left. In other words, offhand articulations in news discourse may reveal more than assumed about what they assume!

5. Carter in context

This section furnishes context beyond the well-rehearsed articulations of Carter's tenure in the Oval Office; it is an integral part of an effort to appraise the extent to which articulations may be permeated with ideologically-driven distortion. Carter hails from the US' rural deep south and is a religiously (Baptist) "born again", Euro-American male. He thus checks the demographic boxes of the Republican Party electoral base that hardened into place in the closing decades of the twentieth century. Carter's résumé presents other typically conservative-leaning subject positions; to wit, extensive military service after graduating from the US Naval Academy and business experience prior to entering electoral politics.

Historians Burton I. Kaufman and Scott Kaufman judge the Carter administration's performance as having been, "replete with contradictions and inconsistencies" (2006: 1). While often left-leaning on issues of social equality, a conservative streak characterized Carter's policies as Georgia governor (1971-1975) and US president with respect to government spending and safety net entitlements. Mattson (2009) stresses that Carter's policy pastiche oscillated between affronts to both the emerging religious right and the liberal wing of the Democratic Party (that include his own disgruntled Vice President, Walter F. Mondale). Aside from Carter's four-year term, Republicans claimed The White House during all 20 non-Carter years between 1969 and 1993. Hence, Carter's administration was awkwardly perched on the fault line of political re-alignment; "between the rock of traditional Democratic constituencies" formed by the New Deal "and the hard place of an emerging conservative movement" (Kaufman and Kaufman 2006: 249).

Kaufman and Kaufman praise Carter's hands-on initiative for crafting enduring peace between Israel and Egypt, as well as his government's formalization of relations with the People's Republic of China. However, they conclude that it would have required "a leader of consummate political skills and an unerring sense of direction" to navigate the contradictions of the late 1970s. "Carter was not that leader" for his stress on micro-management over vision that "never adequately defined a mission for his government, a purpose for the country, and a way to get there" (2006: 250). Moreover, one of Carter's ostensible signature initiatives – a human rights-anchored foreign policy – was in rapid retreat almost from the start of his presidency (Kaufman 2008: 28-36, 212-13). In other words, a more carefully tailored account of Carter's presidency may characterize it as an awkward wedding of right and left political tendencies of the 1970s.

Nevertheless, Mattson interprets Carter's tenure as the route that was not subsequently taken in US politics with regard, for example, to energy self-sufficiency (including renewables) that Carter championed while in office (2009: 196-206). Following Carter, the nation's historical vector made an extended pass through Reaganite "Dreamwork" that was "without sacrifice" and that "expelled anything from it 'that might trouble the dreamer'" (2009: 194). The US' gravity-defying dreams were later manifest in the neo-conservative's destructive paroxysms in Iraq that Thomas Ricks summarized in one word in the title of his book (*Fiasco*, 2006) and that were concurrent with the discourse on Carter examined in this chapter. In this view, the palpable if partial rehabilitation of Carter through his post-presidency may be a touching story. It is, however, an incomplete narrative if it does not also flag the counterfactual path that the US could have initiated in the 1970s via a strong dose of realism; a dose that could have averted the US' present day situation, as it careens from (always inevitable) *relative* decline within a more multilateral global order to striking *absolute* decline in its standing and efficacy in the world.

6. Overview of the magazines' discourses

Having set up the investigation, I turn to the results: What do the news magazines' discourses say about Carter's post-presidency? And what do those discourses tell us about articulation in news discourse? Recall *Time*'s and *Newsweek*'s origins as weekly print publications. Consequently, during most of their histories, the news in their pages had already been broken. One might therefore assume that, as a matter of long-standing practice, the magazines prioritize investigative reporting, deep context, and/or interpretative iconoclasm that would set them apart from daily newspapers. These expectations are broadly disappointed in the 2002-2009 discourse on Carter. Both *Time* and *Newsweek* indulge heavily in poses of punditry despite their ostensibly news-oriented missions (flagged in the title *Newsweek*).

And what is punditry? In Jeremy Jennings' discussion, punditry indulges "fast food"-style commentary that valorizes "signals, gestures, and stances (as) it reviews and rates performances, rather than assessing arguments"; all this is delivered through "smirking and glibness" (2002: 110). In contrast with the pundit, the intellectual may be characterized as staunchly autonomous in his or her efforts to address truth, analyze problems and improve society via considered action; a remit that, in turn, overlaps with the idealized mission of journalism. The pundit may be construed as an ideological "carnival barker" who is smart in the sense of being cynically "hip", while gliding over the waves of prevailing opinion (that he or she has helped set in motion), stressing style over content (Jennings 2002: 111); a role that the news magazines appear to have broadly embraced.

7. Out of *Time*?

Along with tendencies that overlap with those of *Newsweek*, *Time* hurtled further toward a "soft-focus" orientation at the start of the millennium. As if designed for readers who do not like to read, *Time* channels brutally concise "micro-articles" and "Top Ten" lists in the sampled discourse. Despite a weekly publication interval for its hard copy, coupled with the vast resources of its parent company, *Time* rarely pursued investigative reporting. The one article in the corpus that best approximates investigative reporting is a nine-page examination of Bush-era appointments to federal agencies that were evidently made for reasons of cronyism and ideological commitment over professional qualification (Thompson, Tumulty and Allen 2005); it is also a story that could have been pursued *prior to* Bush's second four-year term. The single longest article in *Time*'s Carter-relevant corpus is not investigatory, but a ten-page *fictional* effort by British historian Niall Ferguson (2006). Ferguson's lengthy imaginings present an effort to recruit support for the contemporaneous "War on Terror" by inventing "news" from the year 2031.

When *Time* orients to current events, rather than preemptive ideologization of the future, the results are often lacking. These tendencies include truncated historical

narratives, composed with the telegraphic efficiency of fortune cookie messages. For example, the history of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – an agency inaugurated by Carter’s government in 1979 – is shoe-horned into 375 words (Sharples 2008). In one of *Time*’s many “Top Ten”-genre articles, the 1980 election and the subsequent Reagan era is captured in seven sentences that extend over 94 words (Dykman and Gregory 2008). The pronounced tendency toward concision facilitates glibness and “final word” assertion.

Via its link to the *Real Clear Politics* webpage (hereafter *RCP*) for which searches of *Time*’s webpage produced hits, the magazine endows tendentious rightwing (“neo-conservative”) punditry with a platform and implicit approval. *RCP*’s articulations of Carter under *Time*’s aegis are, in turn, frequent and obsess over the “War on Terrorism” (e.g., wpcomimportuser1 2006a) – despite that fact that Bush’s ill-fated project was inaugurated decades after Carter’s presidential term. Although the Bush administration’s pre-9/11 anti-terror posture was critiqued as shockingly complacent by its own anti-terror coordinator at book-length by 2004 (Clarke 2004), rightwing discourse adamantly assumes the political right’s supreme counter-terror efficacy as a matter of definition. Hence, the Bush administration is criticized within *RCP*’s discourse only for not hewing sufficiently rightward, as under the vaingloriously portentous title “Let History Be the Judge” that opens with a swipe at Carter (wpcomimportuser1 2006c).

Via its link to *RCP*, *Time* chastises Carter when the ex-president criticized then British Prime Minister Tony Blair in the United Kingdom’s *Daily Telegraph*. Carter described Blair as “lacking leadership” and exhibiting “timid subservience to George W. Bush” (wpcomimportuser1 2006b:1). Carter’s criticisms were well-rehearsed within Britain’s popular and elite discourse; for example, ministers quit Blair’s cabinet over the invasion of Iraq and a million citizens protested weeks beforehand in London. Moreover, by 2006, Blair was a largely exhausted, third term “lame duck” prime minister who would retire within a year, tarnished by rigid support for the neo-conservative project; an association that reverberated into the following decade with the release of the Chilcot Commission’s final report on its Iraq Inquiry, following seven years of investigation. The report scorched Blair’s probity and acumen in becoming a subaltern to Washington’s mendacious neoconservative ineptitude (*The Iraq Inquiry* 2016). Notwithstanding these features of British politics that were patently obvious to anyone following the contemporaneous discourse in Britain, *RCP* positions Carter as having advanced far beyond the pale; to wit, Carter’s words “will hurt Blair badly”, in what *RCP* implies to be a low blow by Carter, rather than a verifiably accurate characterization of reality (wpcomimportuser1 2006b:1). On this view, that insinuates its way into *Time*’s discourse, Carter is at once a demented clown – and a political sorcerer who is able to move the needle of British discourse through interview statements.

In contrast with Carter, articulated in its discourse as meddling and wrong-headed, *RCP* links Blair to a “clear understanding of the global terror threat” through his copious material and ideological support for the invasion and occupation of Iraq

(wpcomimportuser1 2006b:1). *RCP*'s cock-sure, faux-sophisticated articulation of Blair to counter-terror efficacy contradicts the blistering appraisals of militarized responses to terror from within the professional apparatus tasked with handling the blowback from those policies (Jones 2008; *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication* 2004). These moments in *Time*'s Carter discourse, partly channeled through its association with *RCP*, articulate Carter as a rolling foreign policy fiasco, uninterrupted by having left the White House decades earlier. At the same time, *Time*'s discourse via *RCP* articulates Blair-Bush international disaster mongering as steely and gutsy triumph on the march.

8. *Newsweekness*?

With the significant exceptions of endowing George F. Will with a regular column and harboring contributions from self-proclaimed Republican Party “revolutionary” Newt Gingrich (2008), *Newsweek* appears relatively more concerned than *Time* with aiming toward the political center, as that center is constituted within US discourse. In this vein, one *Newsweek* commentary sardonically parries rightist pundit Dinesh D’Souza’s latest book. *Newsweek*’s Jerry Adler observes that, in the *Enemy at Home*, D’Souza implicates Carter within what he conjures as a George W. Bush-hating “domestic insurgency” (along with, e.g., Senator Ted Kennedy, Martin Sheen, and Markos “Daily Kos” Moulitsas). Adler reports that D’Souza claims that the aforementioned insurgents “promote the interest of jihad” (2007: 1). In letting D’Souza’s ugly articulations speak for themselves, *Newsweek* implicitly lambasts the easy target of fringe opinion incubated on the right; in this case, fringe opinion from a one-time “wunderkind” of the “respectable” right who has since been convicted of a felony, among other disgraces (Peretz 2015).

More broadly, political squabbles that emphasize personalities are nourished with detail in *Newsweek* (e.g., Fineman 2008b), while policies that widely impact subject populations are often unexamined beyond glib articulations. Moreover, despite copious opportunities to furnish context in its pages (and in the unlimited space of its online version), *Newsweek* often does not. Thus, in its “Perspectives” feature of the week’s noteworthy quotations, it regularly cites statements outside of any framework, so that the statements resemble inscrutable phone messages left at the wrong number. For instance, a Sudanese security chief is quoted as telling Carter that a visit to a refugee camp is, “Not on the program” (*Newsweek* 2007b: 1) – and *Newsweek* then presents no further discussion. Such events simply happen in Sudan, where refugees are apparently air-dropped from above as a matter of course, as surely as Carter has a penchant for turning up in odd places.

Some of *Newsweek*’s pundits position themselves as “hip” media gurus to the politicians whom they are ostensibly covering on behalf of the public. In this vein, Richard N. Haass (2008) fashions his article as a “memorandum” to President-elect Obama to dispense political strategy to the incoming administration. Haass councils

Obama on how to avoid the missteps of predecessors, including Carter, so that the US can better manage the globe (as it is assumed the US must do). Haass is, at least, a player who addresses such issues as a former government official in his contemporaneous post as President of the Council on Foreign Relations. More striking is professional journalist Howard Fineman's adoption of the "memo" genre (2008a). In lieu of assuming the public's perspective and holding public figures accountable on quality-of-life issues, Fineman's piece presents unashamed submission to political pantomimes and shell games. Fineman writes in his "memo" to Obama (that tangentially references Carter), "you should fire whoever allowed three guys in Abercrombie & Fitch shirts to stand behind you at your big post-Pennsylvania rally in Indiana" (2008a: 1). Fineman's contention: "You don't need Abercrombie & Fitch – you need Smith & Wesson", in reference to the gun manufacturer (2008a: 2). Putting aside the sadistic impulse to fire subordinates and showy display of gun fetishism, Fineman demands that even trivial features of reality (e.g., citizens in the background wearing designer clothes) be cleansed in favor of contrived linkages within a mediated Potemkin village.

In some notable moments of its Carter discourse, *Newsweek* does not appear to regard the political landscape as interesting in itself; nor does the publication unpick differing policy visions, with their broad implications for the allocation of power, privilege and opportunity. Instead, *Newsweek* reduces the political arena into a desiccated version of population management that seems modeled on a caricature of the technocratic methods of political consultants (Alter 2008b; Baird 2008). In these moments, *Newsweek* carves the body politic into finely grained demographic slices, then funnels the results into exhausted horse-race discourse on politics. Poll data are the oxygen on which such discourse thrives – and it necessarily reduces the space in which thoughtful analysis of policy and rhetoric (with their material implications) play out. It is enough to make politics seem a technocratic slog in the first and final instance, best reserved for experts with spreadsheets and cheered on by media supplicants.

9. Legacy in the Middle East

As elaborated earlier, Carter is a chimerical figure in the magazines' discourse. In focusing more squarely on Carter and the Middle East, what do the news magazines say? With regard to US policymakers' and politicians' near unconditional support for the government of Israel, the magazines demonstrate a degree of independence when they position Carter as their narrative fulcrum (e.g., Dickey 2006; *Newsweek* Staff 2008a). Nevertheless, it would be facile to overstate these tendencies since *any* degree of criticism toward Israel continues to read as jarring in US media (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007: 169-75).

In this vein, *Time* mints positive articulations of Carter's interventions in the Middle East. Andrew Lee Butters posits that Carter "has done more to achieve peace

in the region than anyone else alive” – although he is quick to add that Carter’s efforts “have gone unappreciated in Jerusalem and Washington” (2008: 1). As concerns Carter, *Newsweek*’s Jacob Weisberg writes that “those (US) presidents regarded as least friendly to the Jewish state have done it the most good” in contrast with unswervingly allied administrations “have proved much less helpful” (2009: 1). He argues that pressure exerted by Carter on Israel’s government was crucial to the lasting Camp David Accords with its largest Arab neighbor, Egypt. By contrast, Weisberg appraises Reagan, Clinton and George W. Bush as having “encouraged Israel’s worst tendencies” (2009: 1). While lauding Carter’s interventions in the Middle East, US news media’s drive toward personalization – collapsing an administration into its most visible face – is also on display in these passages.

In a *Newsweek* interview, Carter is steadfast on the topic of his book’s title: *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid* (Carter 2007). He posits that the Palestinian situation is “worse than some of the aspects of apartheid in South Africa” (Clift 2006: 1). Carter also makes a brief critique of US media as he observes wide-ranging debates over the direction of the Middle East as commonplace in Israel, Arab nations and Europe – but finds open debate about Israel “almost completely absent” in the US’ discourse (Clift 2006: 2). Along with harboring Carter’s criticisms of US media, the interview ends on a curious note as Eleanor Clift refers to a former Carter Center staffer who accused Carter of plagiarism. Carter furnishes no answer in the *Newsweek*’s transcript of the interview that makes the question itself the final word.

In arenas beyond the Middle East, Carter is also articulated with pro-social developments. Hence, *Newsweek* claims, in the register of received wisdom, that human rights functioned as “the cornerstone” of Carter’s foreign policy (*Newsweek* Staff 2007: 1). It is an unqualified claim that is agnostic about, for example, the Carter administration’s indulgent posture toward Ferdinand Marcos’ regime in The Philippines (Kaufman 2008: 32-35). Alter may apportion more credit to Carter than the record demands as a concomitant of assuming human rights advocacy as central to the US’ presumptive place in the world. In this view, a positive articulation of Carter is paper-clipped to Alter’s pro-America cheerleading for the nation’s ostensible human rights leadership.

10. Linking and de-linking

Comparisons between US presidential administrations frequently occur in the news magazines discourse. These comparisons furnish ready material for analysis of articulations – linkages as well as de-linkages – between Carter and others who have headed (or aspire to head) a US federal administration. The articulations are also revealing about understandings of the past that condition the interpretation of the present. Moreover, the news magazines’ comparisons of presidents and ex-presidents carry strong shadings of personalization, as governance writ large is aggressively articulated to the individual acting as president.

Time and *Newsweek* both dwell on links between Carter and Obama even before the then-Illinois Senator had declared his presidential candidacy. The articulations are particularly pronounced in *Newsweek*, even as connections between Carter and Obama mainly exist in the stitching of its own discourse. While Carter was not the last one-term president (George H. W. Bush [1989-93] claims the mantle), *Newsweek* coaches Obama around the political ignominy of a one-term legacy via unflattering articulations with Carter. Obama is alert to the hazards of a Carter-like presidency, following interview promptings (Alter 2008a), while other *Newsweek* pundits reinforce the perils of being Carter (e.g., Clift 2009; Gingrich 2008; Weisberg 2009). Michael Freedman's acerbic *de*-linking posits "Obama is no Carter" on the grounds that Obama's "Nixonian pragmatism" contrasts with what he articulates as "Carter-inspired weakness" (2009: 1). *Time* chimes the same articulations. "I worry that Obama could be the next Jimmy Carter", Romesh Ratnesar frets – a full two years before Obama's election as president (2006: 2).

In *Newsweek*, historian Sean Wilentz furnishes the most extended concern over the prospect of linkages between Obama and Carter. In a 2800-word essay, Wilentz sternly warns that, "Democrats ignore his (Carter's) different brand of politics and its fate, at their peril" (2008: 2). In particular, "'There is a quotation that ought to give Democrats, and not just Democrats, pause: 'This year will not be a year of politics as usual...'" Wilentz continues in a register of palpable alarm:

Delivered in Obama's exhortatory cadences, the words are uplifting. The trouble is [...] the passage is from Carter's acceptance speech at the Democratic convention in 1976. The convergence is revealing. As Republican strategists have begun to notice with delight, Obama's liberal alternative to the post-Bush GOP [i.e., Republican Party] to date has much in common with Carter's post-Watergate liberalism. [...] (I)n all of these ways, Obama resembles Jimmy Carter more than he does any other Democratic president in living memory (Wilentz 2008: 3).

While Carter's 1976 dismissal of "politics as usual" is now anodyne in US discourse, Wilentz uses it to inaugurate a series of "hair-on-fire" articulations between Carter and Obama; articulations that seem strange indeed, as Wilentz hystericizes about Carter linkages that he is in the process of reifying and circulating. At the same time, Wilentz is muted on more the immediate need to avoid repetition of Bush's contemporaneous, full-spectrum failure at statecraft in the realms of security, international relations, and managing the economy. Despite the temporal remove from the late 1970s, it is *Carter's* administration that is rendered problematic as the looming threat, even in the liberal academic's discourse.

Comparisons between Carter and Obama are rife despite the 32 years that separate their respective electoral triumphs in 1976 and 2008. However, articulations between Carter and his next Democratic successor as president, fellow southerner and ultra-centrist William J. Clinton, are less frequent and more measured (e.g., Darman 2008; Gitlin 2007). In one instance, Clinton is characterized as assaying to outdistance Carter's "gold standard" for a globally active ex-president (McCulley 2008).

By contrast with muted articulations to Clinton, Carter may be fated to always be linked to (contrasted with) Reagan, to whom he relinquished the Oval Office. *Time*'s Mike Allen elaborates with heavily personalized articulations: "Only political junkies know that Carter never actually used the word malaise" in the 15 July 1979 "Crisis of Confidence" speech (2006: 1). Nonetheless, Allen continues, "the speech was judged a disaster" – by the punditry, far more than the public (Mattson 2009: 159-66), a point that eludes Allen. In Allen's narrative, the speech "set the stage for Ronald Reagan to use sunny optimism to run Carter out of town" (2006: 1). Simple and unswervingly monolithic, the Carter / "malaise" and Reagan / "sunny" articulations endure across decades, nourished by punditry. Simultaneously, they reduce US history to a parade of characters and privilege presumptive personal traits over excavating the deep structures from which politics arise.

Newsweek's Clift elaborates the enduring impact of the articulations first cemented into place during the 1980 campaign. She observes that Carter was defeated by Reagan "who campaigned on a platform of strength and Republicans have campaigned and governed in this aura ever since" with all the linkages that follow (2002: 2). To wit, articulating Republicans to "strength" – an articulation that Clift uncritically invokes and thus re-circulates – necessarily assumes the reverse about the center-left party, while it enacts unmarked conflation between a party's long-cultivated "brand image" and reality itself. Nonetheless, at least on a "peace" issue, Carter realizes a measure of rehabilitation in *Newsweek* via references to his forward looking 1970s' energy plans (Carter 1979 / 2009: 214-15). Pundit Thomas Friedman (Begley 2009) and "green architect" William McDonough (*Newsweek* Staff 2008b) both refer approvingly to the solar panels that Carter installed for the White House. They also notice that, in turn, Reagan's zealously pro-petro team stripped off the panels; a judgment on alternative energy initiatives that looks increasingly reckless decades on, in a country once known for energetically innovating the contours of the future and ushering in new technology.

Conclusion

In parsing the discourse in the news magazines, this study demonstrates that Carter is a chimerical figure. Through quickly forged articulations and linkages, he is largely dismissed as an unimpressive president, while often (but not monolithically) hailed for post-presidential accomplishment.

At the same time, the discourse on Carter reveals deeply inscribed defects of US news media. In discussing Carter, *Time* and *Newsweek* engage in reporting that is characterized by a generalized lack of back-story (context) and a strong degree of concision. Storylines that enthrone personalization present politics as a puppet theater of "winners" and "losers" that may readily be off-putting to the public (as well as fickle on their own terms, by making-over yesterday's "winner" into today's "loser"). In addition to these tendencies, *Time*'s incorporation of *Real Clear Politics*

into its web page is of a piece with US news media's indulgence of right-wing polemic, regardless of how factually destitute it may be. Indeed, the period sampled in this investigation overlapped with US news media's egregious coverage of the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, that has since been subject to searing criticism for its ready adoption of Bush administration talking points (Goss 2013: 93-118; Lewis, Brookes, Mosdell, and Threadgold 2006; Scatamburlo-D'Annibale 2005).

This discussion has largely turned on the concision and attendant simplification of politically-charged articulation. To be sure, I am not positing that the richness of human communication is in a condition of imminent collapse or reduction to George Orwell's dystopian *1984* vision of "newspeak", in which the lexicon of expressible ideas is drastically truncated. Indeed, in the current communication environment, *too little* being said is hardly a problem of moment; there is more discourse than any one person can keep up with!

At the same time, it can reasonably be assumed that the communicative order has become more permeated with concision in recent decades with, for example, the rise of *memes* and Twitter "micro-blogging", within the broader milieu of media saturation and fragmented cascades of messages. As Jacques Ellul observed (above the contemporaneous cacophony of 1960s radio-television-newspapers), when a person has five pieces of information to parse, he or she may do so carefully; but when inundated with 100 pieces of information, one falls back on well-rehearsed scripts, caricatures, and received opinion (Ellul 1965). Within today's crowded agora of messages, the privileging of bluntly-fashioned, rapid-fire articulations constrains political communication and understanding. Audiences may also simplify the clotted communication environment by scanning for the messages that back up their pre-standing assumptions – a process that Paul F. Lazarsfeld and colleagues already observed in the simpler mediated times of the mid-twentieth century (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944 / 2007). In this view, *Time* and *Newsweek*'s emphasis on concision in no measure blasts through the status quo; instead, it effectively reinforces easily decoded articulations about "things as they are". Meanwhile, the pressures toward concision have generally spiked upward since 2009 as the new media universe has expanded, such that a chain of posts on Twitter can be called "epic" in scale (!).

That said, the new media sphere is vast and contradictory. The new media ecosystem has included notable sites that have arisen in the past ten years (e.g., *ProPublica*, *Vox*, *The Intercept*) that pursue a mission to drill down deeply into news stories. Moreover, empirical research from Todd Graham (2013) demonstrates that some of the dreams that were originally harbored for new media (diffusing authority, empowering audiences) have been realized – albeit in comment fields on news articles in Graham's empirical study, more than in the articles themselves. Despite encouraging trends, the staggering dimensions of contemporary discourse continually structure messaging toward telegraphic assertions, zingers, *memes*, articulations and linkages that chime with the familiar.

Finally, the argument that I have sketched here should not be construed as a rallying call for unbridled expertism as a panacea to all that troubles political discourse. Investigators informed by decades of dedicated study who explain issues with sophisticated accessibility are indeed vital to educating (not simply informing) the interested public; Nobel Prize winning economist and columnist Paul Krugman provides an admirable model on this score. At the same time, and in contrast with *Time* and *Newsweek*'s complacent rapid-fire articulations, the news media that I advocate depends less on sheer verbiage and white-knuckle seriousness; rather, my vision of news pivots toward revealing politics as accessible, deeply high stakes and consequential, close-at-hand, interesting for its own sake, a function of spontaneous emotion and long-term investment. Curiously, the practices of sports coverage and spontaneous enactments of long-term fandom may generally recruit subjects better than news media, as it stands. Subjects who retreat from exercising a political voice outside of the safety of already circulating *memes* may readily express well-briefed views on a sports match (strategy, tactics, historical backdrop of team rivalries) that exercise knowledge that they have developed throughout their life spans. The fever of sport usually grips its fans young and may then hold them across the lifespan as articulate subjects; could news media do the same by appealing more to the mind, and associated emotions, than appealing to the internet *meme*?

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Communication Biology: a Transsexual Case

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1. Introduction

In natural understanding, when a child is born, the child can also be recognized as either male or female. However, at the same time, he or she gets gender assignment from the cultural environment. A person's gender "burden" depends on the cultural values of his or her society. In patrilineal and androcentric societies, from the beginning, the gender burden of a boy is more dominant than that of a girl. In this society, the pattern of gender assignment refers more to the biological elements. Therefore, a review of gender burden, because it might be considered unfair, is a daunting task for humanity. The identification of gender burden is more than just a problem of the genitals, and is relevant for the fundamental values that have been entrenched in society. Thus, there needs to be a review of the gender setting in society, because the concept of gender burden on a child is rather a result of gender stereotypes within the community itself.

According to John R. Wenburg and William W. Wilmot (Deandra 2017: 9), communication is an attempt to gain meaning. Meanwhile, according to William I. Gordon (*ibidem*: 10), communication can be briefly defined as a dynamic transaction involving feelings and ideas. As a science, it was born at the crossroads of mathematics, psychology, social psychology, sociology and anthropology. Then, the science of biology, physics, and other pure sciences contribute to the development of communication science itself. On the picture of the *Communication Tree* developed by Nina W. Syam (2013: 101) biology is present in two areas: (1) in the root part with the Philosophy; (2) in the stem with Intrapersonal, Interpersonal and Cultural Communication.

The purposes of this research are to find out how the implementation of communication biology theory works in transsexual cases, with the critical paradigm as a point of view. The critical paradigm acknowledges that the construction of reality is influenced by historical factors and by social, cultural, economic and political forces that affect each other. The critical paradigm is a form of historical realism, where reality is assumed to be plastic (and not real). It means that reality is formed over time by a set of factors, such as: social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors; this phenomenon is crystallized into a series of structures that are regarded as "real", and these are considered natural and fixed (Pambayun 2013: 24-25).

2. Communication biology

Biology occupies two parts of the *Communication Tree*, because, as a foundation, it is able to predict the mental events that occur in the human brain, as the center of hormones and the center of thinking. Then, in communication stem, the position of communication biology is a result of those mental events that are contained in the daily life of a human, such as speech styles and adopted values, for instance masculine or feminine values.

If in the physics approach the science of communication seeks to predict the accuracy of the messages' arrival and effects, from the interaction of the sender and receiver, in the biological approach, the connection is more influenced by the idea that gender and biological composition will affect the processes of message exchange themselves. The word *gender* in the *Webster New World Dictionary* is defined as "the apparent differences between men and women in terms of values and behavior."

Biology, as a part of communication science, is devoted to studying natural events in biology area as influence variable in communication phenomena. Natural events in the biology area are closely related to the hormonal system, the nervous system and the biological structure of a person. This is justified in one branch of communication science, namely interpersonal communication, which has a biological basis. The biological dimension can indeed affect the course of the interaction. Let me give the simplest example: sleep deprivation lowers concentration, hunger lowers the level of interest in listening to information; or, for a more specific example, gender determines the way in which people communicate, in other words, masculinity and femininity determine a person's behavior when communicating.

Furthermore, the study of the genetic component has a relationship with the study of the effectiveness of communication of messages and it is thus accountable. In short, biology as a scientific foundation of communication is a set of rules that describes human biological aspects that can not be separated from the communication people have in daily interactions.

In communication biology there are two main subtopics of research: (1) gender communication relations and (2) transsexual communication. In gender communication, there is an important cultural concept that makes a difference in the roles, behaviors, morality, and emotional characteristics between men and women. Differences in biological anatomy then lead to the concept of different roles of men and women, namely the culture of masculinity / femininity in men and women. The linguist Noam Chomsky (1966) formulated a theory related to this. The theory states that "a human is born with a mechanism that enables him to make rules and sentences he hears and he speaks, and when man begins to speak, he will use this rule to derive the correct sentence according to his grammar" (Syam 2013: 101).

Biology in communication science has been used to study natural events in the biology area as a variable influence on communication. The point is, if a person is born male or female he or she has a biological area, corresponding to his or her

gender, and that area will affect his or her life variables, like their way of assessing values from a masculine or feminine perspective, and how to behave.

While on the level of epistemology of this science (origin, nature, character and type of knowledge) biology has a role as contributor in human behavior that is also visible from the outside. Then, the study of genetic components has a link with the study of communication effectiveness, to the extent that it can be accounted for. The study of genetic components has been seen as an element that is capable to be calculated and tested. When a human is born male or female, it can be automatically calculated that his or her traits must be masculine or feminine. It is also tested that people who are born male or female have a perspective on values, ways of communicating and behaving in a masculine or feminine manner.

All these things lead to one conclusion: that biology as the foundation of communication science can describe human biological aspects and can not be separated from the aspects of communication it has.

3. Qualitative method: A case study

Biological variables that appear as regularity nevertheless experience some irregularity in the process of development. In this case, one can speak about the emergence of transsexual phenomena. An individual who was born male, in particular, in his progression, may not continue to be male (with respect to his subjective self-identification). He switches or changes into a woman, in the perspective of value.

Being born a man does not necessarily mean that until adulthood he will become a man. In transsexual phenomena, sometimes a male-born person experiences a change of vision and even transforms his body shape into that of a woman. In cases like that, the quantifiable elements of biology systems (understood as the cornerstone of communication) can no longer be ascertained and tested.

In fact, being a woman has a cultural heritage that is heavier than that of men. For example, the mindset embedded in the minds of people has become part of the framework of the concept of women. Women are associated with household things, such as cooking for the family, parenting, and other passive roles. More extreme, women are sometimes only seen as an assumption of the object of sexuality, and they have no space to make decisions in the context of patriarchal domination. In certain societies, especially those dominated by sectarian rule, such as religion, women are seen as second class citizens in everyday life. Although there are a few groups who see women as the first class that was exalted.

Then why do individuals who have been born male want to change their lives and look like women? This question is underlying researches designed to see how far the implementation of communication science biology can predict the way of a person's life in the future. Based on that, the authors then choose to use the qualitative research methodology in this study. This research will use a qualitative

perspective. Qualitative research is a descriptive research and tends to use analysis with inductive approach. Process and meaning (subject perspective) will be more highlighted in this study. Theoretical basis is used as a guide to focus on the research in accordance with the facts in the field. In addition, the theoretical foundation is also useful to provide an overview of the study background and as a discussion of study results / conclusion.

The paradigm of this study is a constructivist one, which views communication as a process of production and the exchange of meaning. Two things that become important characteristics of this paradigm are the meaning and the process whereby a person makes a picture of reality and communication is seen as a dynamic interaction. The constructivist paradigm takes into account the interaction between the sender and the receiver to create meaning or interpretation of a message (Eriyanto 2002: 40).

The technique of data analysis is using Case Study techniques. According to Bogdan and Bikien (1982), case study is a detailed test of a single background or a subject person or a document storage or a particular event. Surachmad (1982) limits the case study approach as an approach by focusing on an intensive and detailed case. Based on these limits it is understood that the limitations of case studies include: (1) the research objectives may be humans, events, background, and documents; (2) the goals are examined in depth as a totality according to their respective backgrounds or contexts with a view to distinguishing the various links between the variables.

At the beginning of this study (pre-research), the authors conducted randomly observations on transsexual communities in the city of Semarang, Indonesia. Then, on the occasion of several interactions, the authors found there an interesting informant. The informant has a unique family history. He was born as the youngest of seven siblings in his family. His father married three times. From the first wife and second wife, no transsexual children were found. But from the third wife, the authors found two children who became transsexual (informant) and his older brother, a person who was rumored to be gay. At first glance, it appears that their decision to change their values of masculinity was based on the biological (genetic) factor. The genetic factor was caused by the union between the father and his third wife. But in his later development, it was not so. Because of that uniqueness reason, the authors finally focused on those two people only. Until today the data obtained that there is no influence of the biological structure that causes this case. The determining factor for informants to be transsexual and gay was not biological. This is evidenced by the absence of other children from the first and second wife of the father who became gay and transsexual (step-family of the informant). This explanation is also reinforced by the absence of other siblings of the informant who became transsexual and gay (beside the informant and his brother). At the same time, the children of the informant's siblings have declared no tendency toward being gay or a desire to become transsexual.

Based on this observation, the informant's decision to be transsexual was most probably a result of the job he chose. After graduating from high school, the

informant went to Jakarta (the capital city) and decided to become a worker, but many times the informant was rejected because of his minimal talent. With the demands of high lifestyle, the informant maintained his desire to be a successful entertainer and to earn a high income. At that time, in 1988, most people in Indonesia were not so familiar with transsexual figures, only few cases – there was an entertainer who became transsexual. By this little opportunity, the informant uses that gap to transform himself into a transsexual. Being different from others has attracted the attention of many people: the informant finally gets a job as a local entertainer in a café. He became successful and earned a lot of money. Simultaneously he came to know the transsexual community in Jakarta and felt that being transsexual was quite comfortable, and with the existence of the community, he was not alone. He has many friends from his community and decides to continue being a transsexual; besides, he is scared to lose his job. The informant adopted all the behaviors of a woman from his community friends. He even decided to tend to like men rather than women, and he says he was comfortable with his new life. He feels free from the men's gender burden.

The informant's old point of view that there are only two types of values in this life, masculinity and femininity, instantly changed after he experienced the new life-style. Maybe when he lived in a small town he felt that being different was a mistake. When he goes to the big city, he knows a lot of life values, and he becomes aware that the values held can be changed. After all, many others did.

Based on the informant's narrative, the case that happened to his older brother was more or less the same. Because of the job that forced him having to move around the cities, and one day meeting a gay community, his older brother finally felt comfortable, even got a lot of business help from his solid gay community's friendship. His older brother remained married to a woman (so he became bisexual) and had a son who entered puberty, but his son decided to become a straight male. But, the older brother still decided to be open-minded to whatever life values a person takes, whether the value of masculinity, femininity, or even beyond that.

Conclusion

The results of this research relates to "self"-concept theory. There is a little difference from the theory formulated by Noam Chomsky, which has been discussed in the early chapters. The authors thought that perhaps this theory is no longer applicable to answer cases that occur lately, like transsexual phenomena. The theory states that man is born with a mechanism that makes him able to make rules and sentences he hears and he speaks, and when man starts talking about himself, he will use this rule to derive the correct sentence according to his grammar. In this case, it is apparently not so. Like in this research, the informant was born into a male body, and in the middle of his life's journey, he turns into a woman, turns into femininity value holder, and behaves like a woman, although he was not born with a female biological mechanism.

Apparently there are other things that are more able to change the mechanism of birth, especially a person's lifestyle; more specifically, the demands of life, friendship, work and business. This is related to the statement of George Herbert Mead (1934) known as the theory of "self" or self-concept theory. This theory assumes that the concept of self is a process derived from the social interaction of individuals with others. Mead's view of the "self" lies in the concept of "taking role by others." For Mead, individuals are active, innovative, not only socially created, but also creating new societies whose behavior is unpredictable. In discussing human behavior, Mead marks such behavior as social and in contrast to the behavior of animals in general, the latter being characterized by a stimulus-response mechanism. He views human actions as encompassing not only open acts, but also closed acts, so conceptualizing behavior in a broader sense.

Through the process of "taking role by others", the individual internalizes the norms of his group, from his family, peer group, community group to his nation. Individuals associate with others outside themselves based on these norms that enable individuals to be socialized (1934: 173-178). At birth, the human being has been given the mechanism of life. Then, because of the processes of interaction, whether while working or on the social level, he or she learns other life mechanisms, which may be very different from the mechanism of inheritance.

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Olive Oil Tasting and Food Advertising Discourse

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1. Introduction

Olive oil tasting proves to be a complex experience, since it integrates knowledge, technique and extreme sensitivity. This combination of three qualities is useful in perceiving, describing, evaluating and classifying olive oils and olive oil tastes from different backgrounds and resulted from different preparation methods. Complex images evoked in the mind of the reader of an olive oil tasting review or advertisement reveal the oil's intricate combination of aromas, flavours and textures that is translated into words by olive oil tasters and creative advertisers and copywriters whose aim is to render as accurately as possible the information they receive or seize through the senses. As sight, taste and smell interweave, they convey the richness of synaesthesias associated with olive oil tasting.

A sensory journey into the landscape of olive oil tasting might be analyzed from the perspective of content analysis of food advertisements (Gracia Arnaiz 2001), from the perspective of discourse analysis and of the relationship between advertising and attitudes to food (Fox 1981, Igun 1982, Hung, Ling and L-Ong 1985, Taras *et al.* 1989), as well as from the perspective of cognitive semantics. It is precisely this last perspective we would like to focus on in this article.

While Gracia Arnaiz (2001: 4) shows how nutritional discourse in advertising discourse is intended to draw the attention of the target audience, Menéndez (1982) and Perdiguero (1992) emphasize the fact that advertising achieves a synthesis between scientific and popular knowledge, disclosing the old relationship between science and common knowledge in food choices and diet which is associated with the consumption of olive oil. Even if they all draw the conclusion that olive oil tasting discourse is closely linked to the medical nutritional discourse, they only register the formal characteristics of advertising language linked to nutritional food and olive oil (Gracia Arnaiz), as well as the economy of words, the weight of semantics and the relationship between denotation/connotation. None of them identifies the categories of metaphor that are found in olive oil advertising imagery.

From the point of view of food anthropologists like Anne Meneley (2008), the advertising and marketing of olive oil from different parts of the world is mainly influenced by society's cultural relationship with food and it illustrates the state of global economics and politics. The researcher also reveals that olive oil quality is

modeled on the mould used in wine industry, which resorts to a “discourse of connoisseurship”. Even though an anthropology professor is amongst the first to establish a parallel or similarity between wine tasting discourse and oil tasting discourse, semantic studies and linguistic studies have focused more on the cognitive and discursive approach to metaphor in winespeak (Caballero, Diaz-Vera 2013, Suárez-Toste 2007, Lehrer 2009, Paradis, Eeg-Olofsson 2013).

In order to account for the wide range of sensations and perceptions related to tasting olive oil, several metaphorical extensions are used, depending on the relationships between the source domain and the target domain in the delimitation of particular conceptual mappings. Our corpus analysis of metaphorical language related to olive oil tasting which is used by advertisers, copywriters and olive oil tasters in English starts from an approach whose perspective is given by conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980 / 2003). The overall objective is to discern the main aspects of the metaphor in this specialized media discourse. We will illustrate this category by examples taken from a corpus of advertisements and excerpts from professional reviews published in English.

2. A cognitive-semantic approach to online olive oil advertisements and reviews in English

In order to comprehend the metaphorical schemata used in olive oil advertising and reviews, we selected examples from a corpus of excerpts in English from *Olive Oil Times*¹, the world’s best source for olive oil news and information regarding health and nutrition, cooking with olive oil and olive oil reviews. To examples taken from *Olive Oil Times*, we add other excerpts from olive oil tasting and advertising sites like *Cookscountry.com* and *Cooksillustrated.com*.

As tasting supposes four different phases – appearance, aroma, taste and aftertaste –, human senses enable professionals and amateurs place a label on each tasting stage. The research hypothesis from which our study starts is that a wide array of conceptual metaphors are associated and identified in olive oil reviews that make reference to one or four of these different tasting phases. Consequently, a peculiar metaphorical design could be drawn following the assessment of olive oil quality in terms of colour and appearance, aroma, taste and aftertaste.

As regards the first tasting phase, coming before all others in time and order is colour – that is how individuals see olive oil. Physical traits convey information concerning the kind of olive the oil is made of, the period when it was picked, as well as few hints about the quality or the flaw in it. While golden hues are correlated with ripe olives which are picked at later stages, greenish hues are linked to green olives and yellowish olive oils are connected to black olives. Apart from common

¹ <https://www.oliveoiltimes.com>.

colour adjectives that professional tasters use to describe the oil's appearance, we encounter in our corpus of study some metaphorical expressions conveyed by adjectives followed by nouns and by verbal collocations.

The first category of conceptual metaphor identified in the language of olive oil reviewing in English is the organicist-animist metaphor OLIVE OIL IS A HUMAN BEING. Within the metaphorical design of the organicist metaphor we discover the pattern of age within human lifecycle that is associated with the oil's evolutive state rendered through linguistic metaphors such as: "mature", "young":

*Mature olive oil: A rich-tasting oil produced with pressed olives at the peak of ripeness.*¹

It stands as a testament to the quality of olive oil from the area of Vodnjan that this year sees the 13th hosting of the "Days of *Young Olive Oil*" fair in the town from the 17th to the 19th of November. The event has an international character and brings together producers of top-quality extra virgin olive oils. Year after year, the event continues to raise awareness of the benefits of the consumption of *young* olive oils. (Excerpt from an advertisement for the event *The Days of Young Olive Oil*²).

Another example of cognitive metaphor related to appearance is OLIVE OIL IS A SEDIMENT OR PARTICULATE MATTER that is transported by fluid flow and which eventually is deposited as a layer of solid particles on the bottom of a bottle:

Some oils become thick and viscous at cold temperatures due to fats and compounds called polyphenols suspended in their midst. [...] Polyphenols are soluble in oil only at room temperature. As the temperature decreases, they begin to separate out, making the oil *cloudy*. (For olive oil, this separation occurs at 43 degrees.) (Excerpt from *Cloudy Olive Oil* by *Cook's Illustrated*³)

Cloudiness is synonymous to lack of filtration in oil or to maintenance at low temperatures. Basically, olive oil turns "cloudy" when it is unfiltered and when it is stored in a cool place, under 50 degrees Fahrenheit, starting to solidify. The cloudiness that is perceived is nothing else but olive sediment.

The third category of cognitive metaphor associated with appearance is OLIVE OIL IS A METAL:

[...] olive oil takes a few hours to '*melt*' back into its liquid form once it has been refrigerated, so we recommend storing it at room temperature in a cool, dark place. Once opened, olive oil has a shelf life of about three months.

In the example above, there is a similarity established between the source domain and the target domain that renders the cognitive cross-mapping possible from

¹ <https://xivdb.com/item/14144/mature+olive+oil>.

² <https://croatia.hr/en-GB/Activities-and-attractions/Events/NewEvents/days-young-olive-oil>.

³ https://www.cooksillustrated.com/how_tos/5471-cloudy-olive-oil.

the source domain “liquid” onto the target domain “solid”. Olive oil is liquid metal, it is a solid material hard and malleable that liquefies and turns back to its fluid form in appropriate storage temperatures.

Aroma is the second and most complex stage in olive oil tasting, as olfactory receptors are finely tuned to recognize the specific scent emanating from a small filled cup, gently warmed by the tasters in their hand so as to release all the savours. As tasters breathe in attentively to obtain a first impression of how the olive oil smells like, they repeat the action taking in several deep breaths, not lasting more than half a minute; they afterwards write down the aromas using a two column sheet and discriminating between positive scents (fruity, sweet, flowery, grassy) and negative savours. What is striking is that we encounter more examples of metaphors with negative first impressions on the smell of olive oil:

All *olive oils*, even the finest ones, will get *rancid* eventually. This is why you *must* never hoard *olive oil*: use it and enjoy it¹.

Many *olive oil* brands are *rancid*, *moldy* or *spoiled*, sometimes before the bottle is ever opened. [...] ²

Smell the olive oil from a wine glass. If the aroma is smooth, soft, green and light, then it is real olive oil. If the aroma is *strong*, *metallic*, *musty* and *chemical-like*, then it is adulterated.³

In these three examples we find evidence of two conceptual metaphors: OLIVE OIL IS A METAL and OLIVE OIL IS MOLD.

The adjectives linked to negative aromas of olive oil (*musty*, *rancid*, *moldy*) reveal a peculiar instance of the organicist metaphor as an underlying association that is systematic – in both the language and thought of tasters and reviewers –, the association of the nutritional oily liquid to a fungus, that is to a tiny living organism which grows wherever it gets, whilst eating the medium it reproduces on and grows on. The fungi growing in the form of multi-cellular thread-like structures, hyphae, thriving on the surface they invade, following a single-celled growth pattern, are responsible for the spoiled olive oil savour that feels “metallic” and “chemical” inside the reviewers’ nostrils.

The third phase in olive oil tasting allows professional reviewers to evaluate the intensity, the texture and the flavours of olive oil that are picked on by taste buds. Olive oil is sipped and agitated in the mouth for no more than five seconds so as to reach tasters’ tongue and palate and to enable them to retain all the sensations. Twenty seconds after tasting began, they all empty their mouths and remember the aftertaste. With this third and fourth stage in olive oil tasting, we encounter a wide array of adjectives correlated with pleasant sensations, referring mainly to flower or vegetable flavours (such as almond) and unpleasant sensations.

¹ <https://www.oliveoiltimes.com/olive-oil-basics/good-olive-oils-gone-bad/8900>.

² <https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/08/05/olive-oil.aspx>.

³ <http://www.acropolisorganics.com/fraud-in-olive-oil>.

Pleasant sensations are rendered with the help of cognitive metaphors that fall within the same category of organicist-animist metaphor:

Only oil from the first cold pressing of olives can be called extra-virgin olive oil. Depending on the type of olives it is made from, this *rich-tasting* oil can be grassy, peppery, or fruity, but its delicate flavors break down when heated.¹

Within the metaphorical design of the organicist-animist metaphor, we discover another pattern, that of status (economic or other) which is related to olive oil wealth. Wealth of flavours is synonymous of intense and vibrant, fruity-peppery aromas which are the essence of the extra virgin olive oil that celebrates subtlety, health, finesse and fine cuisine.

Negative sensations arising from unpleasant aromas linked to the feel of olive oil inside the mouth convey particular instances of anthropomorphic metaphor. What is surprising is that amongst these anthropomorphic metaphors in English olive oil-speak, we discover strange mappings associating olives (and olive oil) with pejoratively connoted terms whose meaning is diverted and paradoxically turned positive such as the term *tart*:

Type of olives and olive oil: **Alphonso**: These large Chilean olives are cured unconventionally in wine or vinegar, giving them a dark purple color, tender flesh, and a slightly tart, bitter flavor. They are easy to pit.²

Even if a term like *tart* (“slutty”) usually conveys a negative connotation, in olive oil reviews, it is paradoxically used as a positive assessment term in reference to olive oil sweet sugary content and flavour bringing about its personality traits.

Conclusion

The metaphors illustrated in online English olive oil reviews reveal the prominence of the organicist-animist metaphor, without rendering covert other peculiar images, such as that of olive oil as metal, as mold or as sediment that rather rely on the perception of olive tasting through visual, olfactory, gustative mental imagery.

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Internet Hoaxes: Chain Letters – How Dangerous Are They?

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1. Introduction

In the last years, the phrase *urban legend* has come to describe all that is suspicious, strange or inexplicable; consequently the number of legends that refer to the new technologies has increased. As people become more and more skilled at using computers, warnings and hoaxes or scams exploit people's fears about other dangers: e-mail boxes are being bombed by messages from banking institutions users have never used, alerts in connection with unauthorized access to accounts that do not exist, requests to help sick children etc. Most of the times, such letters come from people one knows, misled by their enthusiasm to protect their friends against dangers.

2. What are chain letters?

Chain letters currently sent via the e-mail or social networks do not involve too much effort, unlike similar letters in the pre-Internet age. Before, the recipient had to make several copies of the same message, which he then put into the mailboxes of other people he had chosen; now a mere click does it all. The letter, whether past or present, promises good luck to those who do not break the chain and bad luck to those who do not pass them on. Most chain letters have similar structure: first, there is a *hook*, a way to capture the interest (such as “this information is vital”, “please, help me, do not delete”, “watch out for the virus”). The hook makes the reader aware of the content of the message, after which “the message attempts to influence the recipients' behaviour by evoking their greed, sympathy, or fear.” (Blank 2007: 16) Once the attention is drawn, a *request* to pass on the message follows, accompanied (or not) by a *threat* warning about the consequences of breaking the chain (“if you do not send this message to everyone of your friends, you will have bad luck”), mostly encountered in the letters that promise to bring good luck.

If copied and passed on, the letters that promise fortune and good luck are also called *prayer chains*, as many of them start with a prayer or a religious precept:

Read this prayer and see how God answers: ‘God, I love you and I need you, come into my heart and bless me, my family, my home, my friends, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.’ Send this message to at least 7 people. You will receive a miracle

tomorrow. If you believe in God, you will send this message to every one of your list! If you delete it, you will have a cold heart. Send this to everybody in your contact list within 30 minutes and look what will happen. Distribute this message to 15 people in 5 minutes and then press F6 and you will see that the name of the person who is in love with you will appear. It is strange, because it works (Irina-Andreea 2009).

After you read this, ask yourself: 'Will I run away too?' Imagine this happens to you. One morning, during the religious service, the 2,000 believers were surprised to see two men entering the church, both dressed in black and with machine guns on them. One of them said: 'Whoever is willing to take a bullet for Christ shall remain where they are.' The choir fled immediately, then the deacon and then the most part of the worshippers. Only 20 stayed back of the two thousand. The man who had spoken took off his hood. He looked at the priest and said: 'Father, we have rid you of all hypocrites, now you may start your service. Have a good day!' And the two men turned back and left. Too deep not to send further... It is curious how easily people throw garbage at God. And then we wonder why the world today is as it is. It is curious how we believe in newspapers, but doubt what the Bible says. It is curious how you can forward thousands of jokes, which then spread like wild fire, but when it comes to sending religious messages, you think twice before you share them. It is curious how someone can be a fervent believer on Sunday, but is a completely invisible Christian the rest of the week. Is there anything else to laugh about now? It is curious that when you decide to send this message further, you will not pass it on to many in your list because you are not sure what they will think, or rather what they will think about *you* afterwards. Do you still falter? Will you share this message with the people you love? I have chosen you. May God bless you and protect you, may God show His glowing face on you and may He have mercy on you and give you peace! (*personal email account*)

3. The origin and evolution of chain letters

The origin of these letters may be found in the so-called *Epistles fallen from Heaven*, which claimed to have been written by God himself or an angel of his and promised protection against misfortunes. In Romania, the first version of a *Letter fallen from Heaven* is a translation of a Slavic text, copied by the priest Grigore from Măhaci (Transylvania) and included in *Codex Sturdzanus* (1580-1620). The 16th-century Măhaci text, *Legenda Duminicii (Legend of Sunday)* or *Epistolia Domnului nostru Isus Christos (Epistle of our Lord Jesus Christ)*, would advise people to celebrate the last day of the week and threaten that the heaviest of punishments would be inflicted upon those who would disobey and transgress the law of the Lord (Cartoian 1996: 111-116). A version probably dating from the late 19th century or the early 20th would also include a story meant to confirm the credibility and efficaciousness of the religious text:

A *grof* [landlord, a Transylvanian term] had a servant. This servant he wanted to kill because of his father. The executioner did not want to cut his head off, he could not hurt his head at all. When the *grof* heard this, he asked the servant why the executioner

couldn't either kill him or hurt him. The servant answered: 'My father wrote down these letters: B.F.C.H.O.A.C.' When the *grof* heard this, he ordered that if there is somebody with a bleeding nose or with a bleeding wound, and it keeps bleeding, to put these letters on a saucer or on a sword and the bleeding will stop (Jiga Iliescu 2014: 107).

The same version also mentioned first that the one who will *own* this letter will be sheltered from all evils – “Those who have this epistle in their home should expect My holy will. Therefore, honour My epistle for I have sent My angel to give it to you”, “Those who carry this epistle shall have riches in the name of God the Father and the Holy Ghost, amen”, “Those who have this epistle on them, will be protected against enemies, guns and bullets” – then that the good shall pour down upon anyone who will *pass it on* to the others: “Whoever has this epistle and does not give it to others, for them to read it, that man will be rejected by the Church of Jesus Christ. This epistle should be given from one to another and even if they have sins as many as the grains of sand or as leaves in the trees, all will be forgiven” (*ibidem*: 98). Such writings started to spread especially in rural areas, as they offered “prayers of maximum efficiency, requiring penitence or religious fasting and feasts. The condition: either to keep these writings and letters or to copy and spread them more or less anonymously, more or less publicly” (Marian-Bălașa 2008 *apud* Sava 2009: 38).

These *Letters from Heaven* (*Himmelsbrief*) were very popular among the Protestant communities in Germany and the Netherlands, but also in the United States, particularly in the state of Pennsylvania (starting with the late 19th century).

The old letters fallen from heaven or written by divine hand gradually turned into letters sent under the patronage of Saint Anthony (probably Saint Anthony of Padua, wonderworker and patron of the poor), which were widespread towards the end of the last century all over Europe and the US (the name *Anton*, with variants such as *Anthony*, *Antoine*, *Artino*, *Antino*, still appears in letters but the saint has been reduced to the status of a simple missionary from Venezuela or elsewhere). The text, which filled the mailboxes, was “meant to bring luck by its anonymous and continuous multiplication and distribution” (Marian-Bălașa 2008 *apud* Sava 2009: 38). Here is such an example dating back to 1974, Maryland (USA):

Saint Antoine's

This chain that comes from Venezuela was written by St. Antoine de Sedi missionary from South America. Since this chain must make a tour of the world, you must make 20 copies identical to this one, and send it to your friends, parents or acquaintances and after a few days you will get a surprise.

Take note of the following:

Constantine Diso received the chain in 1953. He asked his secretary to make 24 copies and send them. A few days later, he won the lottery of 2 million dollars in his country. Carlos Brandt, an office employee, received the chain. He forgot it and lost it. A few days after, he lost his job. He found the chain, sent it out to 24 people, and nine days

later, he got a better job. Zerin Berreskelli received the chain, not believing in it he threw it away. Nine days later he died.

For no reason whatsoever should this chain be broken!!!!!! Make 20 copies and send them. In nine days you will get a surprise. Write F.E.G.E. in the right hand corner of the envelope instead of a stamp.

THINK A PRAYER

Trust in the lord with all your heart and all will acknowledge that he will light the way. This prayer has been sent to you for good luck. The original copy came from the Netherlands. It has been around the world nine times. The luck has been sent to you. You are to receive the good luck within four days after receiving this letter. It is not a joke! You will receive it in the mail. Send 20 copies of this letter to people you think need good luck. Please do not send money. Do not keep this letter. It must leave within 96 hours after you receive it.

A U.S. officer received \$7,000. Don Elliot received \$68,000, but lost it because he broke the chain. While in the Philippines, General Walsh lost his life six days after he received this letter. He failed to circulate the prayer. However, before his death, he received \$775,000, which he won.

Please send 20 copies and then see what happens the fourth day after. Add your name to the bottom of this list and leave off the top name when copying this letter.

[A four column list of 33 names follows, six struck out, several in different hands] (Van Arsdale 2014).

Other versions are presumably written by St. Antino DeCadi (1975, US), Artino de Cadi (France, 1979), Paul Anthony De Croup, a missionary from South Africa (France, 1995; here *Gen. Walsh* becomes *Gene Welch*); a 1984 Polish version mentions only that the letter is addressed to St. Anthony, without giving the name of the author, with no details about the identity or the amounts of money to be received by the beneficiaries of the letter (*ibidem*). Therefore, the content differs in the case of handwritten letters and changes occur due to illegibility, as the one who copy tries to guess what is written or there are orthographic mistakes, sometimes words substitute each other. Such changes no longer occur in the age of advanced computer technology.

4. Other examples of chain letters

In 2009, I received the following letter, which is similar to those of *Saint Anthony Chain*, but this time it was preceded not by a Christian prayer but by a Chinese precept. The letter has versions in several languages (German, Chinese, Spanish, Albanian etc.) and, as it is disseminated via the Internet, hence a mere *Copy-Paste* command is enough, it shows very few variations from one version to another; changes appear rather during translation from one language into another:

CHINESE PRECEPT

MONEY

Money can buy a house, but not a home.

Money can buy a bed, but not sleep.

Money can buy a clock, but not time.

Money can buy a book, but not knowledge.

Money can buy position, but not respect.

Money can buy blood, but not life.

Money can buy you sex, but not love.

This Chinese precept brings luck. The original is preserved in the Netherlands.

This precept has already gone round the world eight times. Nevertheless, it will bring luck to you.

After you receive this letter you will have luck. This is not a joke. Good luck will come.

Post or email the copy of this letter to people who need good luck. Do not send money because money cannot buy luck. Do not keep this letter more than 96 hours, you must forward it within this time.

Here are a few facts:

Constantin received the letter in 1953; he asked his secretary to make 20 copies; 9 days later he won 9 million Marks at the lottery.

Carlo, a clerk, received this letter and forgot about it. A few days later, he was fired. Afterwards, he sent the letter, continuing the chain, and got lucky.

In 1967, Bruno received this letter and threw it away laughing. Several days later, his son fell ill. He looked for the letter, made 20 copies and sent them; 9 days after that he found out that his son had healed.

In 1987, the letter was received by a young Californian who noticed it was illegible. He decided to retype it, but put it away to do it later. Therefore, he did not get rid of the letter within 96 hours. Later he retyped it and sent it and got a new car. In his turn, he passed it on to continue the lucky chain.

Do not forget, do not send money and do not sign the letters. Just send 20 copies and wait and see what will happen in a few days.

The precept was written by a missionary in the Antilles. I've sent it to you because it has to travel around the world. Send 20 copies to your acquaintances, your friends. A few days later you will receive good news or have a surprise.

This is true, even if you are not superstitious. This letter is a carrier of good luck. Because of someone who loves you, good luck is kept if you continue forwarding it.

Good luck will reach you in 4 days after you receive this letter.

Good luck comes from Venezuela and the letter was written by Anthony de Croud, a missionary from South Africa.

Now it is your turn to pass it on. Do not send money, but copies of the letter, to people who are in need of luck. Do not send money, for trust has no price.

Do not keep this letter, you must forward it within 96 hours. Please, send the copies and you will see what will happen in 4 days.

REMEMBER: DO NOT SEND MONEY, DO NOT FORGET ABOUT THIS LETTER (*personal email account*)

The message of these letters is based on the *good luck – bad luck* opposition, folkloric concepts that are specific to the traditional thinking according to which man's destiny depends on external forces that determine one's life experience, one's success or failure. The message

fulfils the role of a magical object: it is capable to perform miracles through its exceptional power, to transform the recipient's life, turning the bad luck into good luck (or the other way around!). Like an enchanted adjuvant from a fairy tale, the message can fulfil a strong wish but in a certain manner. The recipient has to comply with certain conditions, comparable with the tests in the fairy tales: to send the message to all the friends, not any time, but in a strictly determined period: no more, no less than within an hour from the message reading – because later, just like in fairy tales, its supernatural power disappears! (Sava 2009: 37-38).

The tone of the letters is imperative: “Make 20 copies and send them”, “Do not forget about this letter”, “Do not send money”, the imperious command being “Do not break this chain!!!!” Testimonies follow which describe the experiences of former recipients: those who complied received material rewards, those who did not take the issue seriously either died, lost their jobs or misfortune fell upon one of the family members. Usually, these recipients are identified by their names but, in time, some versions only kept details relating to occupations (an omission that can be explained by the copier's intention to abridge the message, preserving details that seem relevant, or by the illegibility of the text)¹. These testimonials are meant to strengthen promises and validate warnings and, furthermore, establish the ethnic identity by mentioning names and places. It is interesting that the letter is sometimes addressed to those who are not superstitious or believers: “This is true, even if you are not superstitious”; in other words, the warnings instil into the reader's mind the idea that the chain operates beyond faith and superstition that it functions independently of the recipients' views (Le Quellec 1997: 118).

In the *Newsfeed* of my personal Facebook account I have also received the following text entitled “Karma binefăcătoare”, in fact a translation from an English version that circulates under the title “A Message from Dalai Lama”, accompanied by pictures, as it is downloadable on the Internet in PowerPoint format:

Beneficial Karma

Reading these lines is enjoyable and does not take long. Enjoy them! These are the words of Dalai Lama on the threshold of the New Year 2009. Reading and reflecting upon these lines only takes a few seconds. Do not keep this message. The mantra must leave your hands within 96 hours. You will get a very pleasant surprise. These rules

¹ For example, a letter that circulated in Poland in 1986 simply mentions an *officer* who threw away the letter, or a *Polish minister* who obtained an inheritance, or *another man* who won great gain (http://www.silcom.com/~barnowl/chain-letter/archive/lpl1986_dlp_q20.htm, accessed on February 2, 2013).

are good for everyone – for those who does not believe and for those who share any religion. Believe!
 Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
 When you lose, don't lose the lesson.
 Follow the three R's:
 Respect for self
 Respect for others and
 Responsibility for all your actions.
 Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.
 Learn the rules so you know how to break them properly.
 Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.
 When you realize you've made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
 Spend some time alone every day.
 Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.
 Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
 Live a good, honourable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll be able to enjoy it a second time.
 A loving atmosphere in your home is the foundation for your life.
 In disagreements with loved ones, deal only with the current situation. Don't bring up the past.
 Share your knowledge. It's a way to achieve immortality.
 Be gentle with the earth.
 Once a year, go someplace you've never been before.
 Remember that the best relationship is one in which your love for each other exceeds your need for each other.
 Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
 Approach love and cooking with reckless abandon.
 Send this mantra to 5 friends and your life will become better.
 0-4 friends: Your life will improve slightly.
 5-9 friends: Your life will improve to your liking.
 10-14 friends: You will have at least 5 surprises in the next 3 weeks.
 15 friends and above: Your life will improve drastically and everything you ever dreamed of will begin to take shape.
 Do not keep this message. The Mantra must leave your hands within 96 hours. Pleasant and unexpected things are in store for you!
 IT REALLY WORKS!!! (*personal Facebook account*)

The text is in the form of a Buddhist mantra, in other words it claims to be a sacred formula with magical, spiritual powers. Its structure is two-folded: on the one hand, there are teachings that the individual must follow in order to build a good *karma* and, hence, a happy future (*karma* – the cause-effect spiritual principle by virtue of which one's deeds determine one's fate); on the other hand, there is this "arithmetic of luck spreading" (Sava 2009: 37), with no apparent logic, according to which luck grows in direct proportion to the number of potential recipients of the letter. Therefore, the secret of absolute happiness lies in not being a good person, but in passing on the epistle.

Another type of chain messages, *charity letters*, most of them altruistic, asking only to be sent further, abounds on the Internet. The message claims that, whenever the letter is forwarded to an unspecified number of people, a benefactor (an organisation, a corporation, a millionaire) will give some amount of money to a person (usually a child or a youth) struck by a terrible disease:

PLEASE, read and send: ‘Student in the fifth year at the Faculty of Medicine in Târgu-Mureş. No one WILL ASK YOU ANY MONEY! Please, do not delete, read it first! My name is Paşca Daniela, I am 21 and I have a rare form of leukaemia; my only chance is a bone marrow transplant. Without it, I shall not be able to live. The surgery costs \$55,000 and my family has already raised \$32,000. In my case, the foundation that will help me raise the money has closed a deal with Yahoo and AOL and I shall receive 1 cent for each forwarded message. Please, I beg you with all my heart, forward it; maybe I shall too have the chance to be like you! It only takes 30 seconds! THANK YOU!’ (Furtună 2015)

A pretty young girl will soon leave this world because of cancer. This girl had only 6 months to live and her last wish was to send a letter to tell everybody to live their lives. She will not be able to. She will not be able to take her degree, get married or have her own family. If you send this message to as many people as possible, you will be able to give this girl and her family a little hope, because for every name you will send this message to, the American Cancer Society will donate 3 cents for the girl’s treatment. A boy sent it to 500 people! We all can send it to at least 5-6 people. You don’t give money, you just copy. (Irina-Andreea 2009).

Altruistic messages appeal to the recipient’s compassion and even succeed in touching a chord, if we were to judge by the multitude of email addresses (of those who have been persuaded) preceding the letter. Many of them are driven by some kind of “couch activism” (in one version, the user adds: “let us not be stingy when it comes to copy-paste all the list; it only takes 30 seconds... how sad... some would give anything to live... while others... forward it”).

It goes without saying that these are hoaxes, especially since the texts of many of them are identical, only the identity of the beneficiary changes. Letters that promise *something* in exchange for *nothing* are also hoaxes: Bill Gates offering money or company *X* giving free products only if one forwards the message:

Greetings to You

You have been gifted \$5 MILLION USD From Mr Bill Gates. Contact me at this email for your claim: billgatesdonate04@qq.com

I hope this information meet you well as I know you will be curious to know why/how I selected you to receive a sum of \$5,000,000,00 USD, our information below is 100% legitimate, please see the link below:

<http://www.cnet.com/news/bill-and-melinda-gates-top-forbes-list-as-most-philanthropic-americans/>

I BILL GATES and my wife decided to donate the sum of \$5,000,000,00 USD to you as part of our charity project to improve the 10 lucky individuals all over the world

from our \$65 Billion USD I and My Wife Mapped out to help people. We prayed and searched over the internet for assistance and I saw your profile on Microsoft email owners list and picked you. Melinda my wife and I have decided to make sure this is put on the internet for the world to see. As you could see from the webpage above, I am not getting any younger and you can imagine having no much time to live. Although I am a Billionaire investor and we have helped some charity organizations from our Fund. [...] To facilitate the payment process of the funds (\$5,000,000.00 USD) which have been donated solely to you, you are to send us

your full names.....
your contact address.....
your personal telephone number.....

so that I can forward your payment information to you immediately. Thank you for accepting our offer, we are indeed grateful You Can Google my name for more information: Mr Bill Gates or Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Remain Blessed

Regards
Mr Bill Gates (The Scam Hunter 2015).

Dear customer
Our main competitor, Nokia, is giving free mobile phones away on the Internet. Here at Ericsson we want to counter their offer. So we are giving our newest WAP-phones away as well. They are specially developed for Internet happy customers who value cutting edge technology. By giving free phones away, we get valuable customer feedback and a great Word-of-Mouth effect. All you have to do, is to forward this message to 8 friends. After two weeks delivery time, you will receive a Ericsson T18. If you forward it to 20 friends, you will receive the brand new Ericsson R320 WAP-phone. Just remember to send a copy to Anna.Swelund@ericsson.com? That is the only way we can see, that you forwarded the message.
Best of luck
Anna Swelund, Executive Promotion Manager for Ericsson Marketing¹ (Chainletters.net, n. d.).

Technically speaking, these chain letters are a way for the original sender to collect email addresses of those who comply with the requests; sooner or later, by various means, the message will return to him/her (hence the request to forward it to a certain person, "Anna.Swelund@ericsson.com"), but in the meantime it has already encompassed valid addresses, later to be used by authors of *Spam* messages (i.e. unsolicited commercial or pornographic messages).

¹ Incidentally, a simple Internet search would reveal that the phones given for free are from the 1999-2000 generation; however, this message had circulated as early as 2009. It is hard to believe that a renowned company should offer obsolete devices.

We shall conclude by mentioning a last type of chain messages which speculates on anxieties related to online security and safety. Such hoaxes warn about threats included in email messages and, in order to increase credibility, refer to well-known software companies:

This information arrived this morning, from Microsoft and Norton. Please send it to everybody you know who accesses the Internet. You may receive an apparently harmless email with a PowerPoint presentation called "Life is beautiful.pps." If you receive it DO NOT OPEN THE FILE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, and delete it immediately. If you open this file, a message will appear on your screen saying: 'It is too late now, your life is no longer beautiful', subsequently you will LOSE EVERYTHING IN YOUR PC and the person who sent it to you will gain access to your name, email and password. This is a new virus which started to circulate on Saturday afternoon. WE NEED TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO STOP THIS VIRUS. MAKE A COPY OF THIS EMAIL TO ALL YOUR FRIENDS.¹ (Snopes 2008)

Conclusion

To conclude with, these well-known *chain letters*, which, prior to the emergence of the Internet, would suffocate our mailboxes, promise good luck or bad luck to those who send (or do not send) them further to a certain number of individuals. In the Internet age, the dissemination of these letters is faster and on a wider scale, for modern technology substantially eases the sender's task. Chain letters make an attempt on virtual security and take advantage of the individual's credulity to whom the achievement of happiness and welfare depend on forwarding a letter.

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¹ According to snopes.com, a website which aims to debunk such hoaxes, the message first circulated in Portuguese, then it was translated into English and other languages. However, no PowerPoint presentation called "Life is beautiful" has spread any known virus (though, it is true that PowerPoint presentations or any kind of attachments **can** indeed contain viruses).

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Magazin virtual: www.editurauniversitaria.ro

