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Pedagogic Criticality and English as a Lingua Franca

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This article discusses the pedagogic relevance of recent theory and research in the use of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), particularly focusing on the implications of this field for language teacher education and development. Research in ELF has begun to pose some critical challenges to established principles and practice in English language teaching. The consensus among researchers is that ELF empirical data and theoretical discussions hold implications for all manner of professional concerns, including the language syllabus, teaching materials and language assessment. There has to date, though, been relatively little in-depth exploration of what teachers might do in order to respond to ELF in practice. Modifying the language syllabus or teaching materials in response to ELF requires substantial rethinking of current approaches. I report here on continuing attempts to incorporate an ELF perspective in the language classroom, using practitioner-oriented research to re-examine current methodologies and consider how we might develop materials and tasks that better incorporate aspects of English as used in lingua franca interactions. I examine the feasibility of developing an ELF orientation to language by adopting a critical approach to language pedagogy and professional development, exploring ways in which teachers might move beyond a conventionally norm-driven approach to additional language education.

Keywords: critical pedagogy; English as a lingua franca (ELF); English language teaching (ELT); language ideology; professional development; teacher education

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Criticalidad pedagógica y el inglés como lengua franca

Este artículo analiza la relevancia pedagógica de la teoría y la investigación sobre el uso del inglés como lengua franca (ILF), centrándose especialmente en las implicaciones de este campo para la formación y el desarrollo del profesorado de lengua inglesa. La investigación en ILF ha comenzado a plantear algunos retos críticos a los principios establecidos y a la práctica habitual en la enseñanza de lengua inglesa. El consenso entre los investigadores es que los datos empíricos y las discusiones teóricas del ILF tienen implicaciones para todo tipo de cuestiones profesionales, incluidos los programas de lengua inglesa, los materiales educativos

y la evaluación del idioma. No obstante, hasta la fecha no se ha explorado en profundidad lo que el profesorado debe hacer para responder al ILF en la práctica. Modificar los programas de lengua inglesa o los materiales educativos en respuesta al ILF requiere una revisión sustancial de los enfoques actuales. En el presente artículo repaso los constantes intentos de incorporar la perspectiva del ILF en el aula de lengua inglesa, utilizando una investigación orientada a sus hablantes para reexaminar las metodologías actuales y considerar cómo podemos desarrollar materiales y tareas que incorporen mejor aspectos del inglés utilizado en interacciones como lengua franca. Examino la viabilidad de desarrollar una orientación hacia el ILF mediante la adopción de un enfoque crítico a la pedagogía de la lengua inglesa y al desarrollo profesional, explorando maneras en las que el profesorado pueda ir más allá de un enfoque tradicionalmente orientado a las normas y hacia una educación en lengua adicional.

Palabras clave: pedagogía crítica; inglés como lengua franca (ILF); enseñanza de la lengua inglesa (ELI); ideología en la lengua; desarrollo profesional; formación profesorado

1. Introduction

This paper considers the use of English as a global lingua franca, reflecting on the relevance of recent research developments in this area for current approaches to English language pedagogy. During the past decade and a half or so, there has been substantial growth in empirical and theoretical engagement with the globalization of English and English language teaching. This has led to the emergence of English as a lingua franca (ELF) as a distinct research paradigm, a development which loosely coincides with the publication of two seminal works in the field: Jenkins (2000), an investigation into the phonology of English in lingua franca interactions; and Seidlhofer (2001), which marks the launch of the first large-scale (and to date only publicly available) corpus of English as a lingua franca (VOICE—the Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English, https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/).

In the years since these publications, ELF has become established as a vibrant field of research, now with a dedicated journal (*Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*), an annual international conference (with the 8th, 9th and 10th conferences scheduled to take place respectively in Beijing 2015, Lleida 2016, and Helsinki 2017). In addition, there have been numerous edited collections of research papers focusing on various aspects of ELF (e.g., Mauranen and Ranta 2009; Archibald, Cogo and Jenkins 2011; Bayyurt and Akcan 2014). In terms of understanding the importance of ELF research for English language teaching (ELT), it is worth considering Seidlhofer's description of ELF as "the most extensive contemporary use of English worldwide" (2001, 133). More than a decade later, the use of English has become even more globally extensive. And the sheer volume of research in ELF now being carried out is a reflection of the continuing globalization of English. In addition to the VOICE corpus, there is the corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings (ELFA; www.helsinki.fi/englanti/elfa/elfacorpus), based at Helsinki University (see Mauranen 2003), and more recently, the Asian Corpus of English (ACE), established in Hong Kong, but involving a team of researchers across East and South East Asia (www.ied.edu.hk/rcleams) (see e.g., Kirkpatrick 2010). In other words, just like the use of ELF, research in this field has begun to "go global." In this paper I discuss the relevance of research findings in ELF for language pedagogy, most specifically examining how an ELF perspective on language use can be integrated in language teacher education.

The major premise underpinning my discussion here is that research in ELF has begun to pose critical challenges to some long established principles and practices in ELT. There is broad consensus among researchers that ELF empirical data and theoretical discussion hold major implications for the ELT profession, including the language syllabus, teaching materials, language assessment, and of course teacher education. To date, however, there has been relatively little in-depth examination of what teachers can do to respond to ELF in the classroom. This paper explores the value of incorporating an ELF perspective in the language classroom, drawing on practitioner-focused research to re-examine current perspectives regarding ELT methodology, accepted notions of (communicative) competence, and a predominantly norm-centred orientation to language. I report on

recent research, examining ways in which we might move beyond the conventional normativity of language pedagogy by adopting a critical approach.

2. Explaining ELF

There have been a number of points of controversy regarding the nature and scope of ELF communication and ELF research, so it is worth outlining briefly here what exactly I refer to when using the term. For the purposes of my discussion, it is helpful to think of ELF according to three levels (see also Cogo and Dewey 2012, chapter one): first as a contextual setting; second as the interactional practices that take place in these settings; and finally as a research paradigm. In short, an ELF context is any communicative situation in which speakers from two or more linguacultural backgrounds use English as a contact language. Research into ELF communication focuses on the language forms (which tended to be the basis of earlier research in the field) and the pragmatics of ELF interactions, with more recent work predominantly interested in understanding the communicative strategies of speakers engaged in ELF communication. (While some recent research has begun to focus on written language use, see e.g., the corpus of written academic ELF at the University of Helsinki, http://www.helsinki.fi/englanti/elfa/wrelfa.html, ELF research to date has predominantly been concerned with spoken interaction).

Given how exceptionally widespread the use of English is in contact language situations, it is not possible to be very precise about the nature of ELF settings, except to say that they typically comprise a high degree of linguistic and cultural diversity. ELF research has focused on detailing the language use patterns and communicative properties of lingua franca interactions, a major focus of which has been the extent to which speakers' linguistic repertoires are not only diverse but are also drawn on in dynamic and inventive ways. There has been considerable empirical work to date documenting how speakers in multilingual speech environments do not simply *use* English, but in fact also modify language by drawing on various other language resources, combining and adapting these in a collaborative process of expressing and interpreting meaning. In light of this, the most important premise underpinning ELF research, as well as that underpinning my approach to examining its relevance for language learning and teaching, is the inherent dynamicity of language(s).

On the face of it there is nothing unique about the use of English in this way. There are and have been many lingua francas other than English, but the global extent to which English has become a contact language is entirely unprecedented. ELF has emerged as the first truly "globalinguistic" phenomenon, leading researchers into what Mauranen (2012, 1) describes as "unchartered territory." Historical lingua francas and other contemporary contact languages, no matter how widespread, have ultimately operated at a local or regional level. Never before has a language operated in a lingua franca role on such a worldly scale. As a result, communication in English often occurs in contexts of exceptional linguistic and cultural heterogeneity. It has now long been argued that English is spoken in more

lingua franca contexts than conventional "native" ones. This of course must have major consequences for English language learning and teaching.

I will not go into specific details regarding the properties of ELF here—for a relatively recent overview, readers can consult Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey (2011), which provides a fairly extensive account of research and debate in the field. In summary though, research has tended to highlight the following characteristics of ELF communication: interactions in ELF settings occur across rather than within conventional sociolinguistic boundaries; speakers make extensive use of accommodation, drawing on multilingual repertoires in a largely collaborative, listener oriented way; meaning is often explicitly oriented to, with speakers providing and seeking explanation, paraphrase and repetition; code-switching is frequent; use of linguistic resources in a flexible (often non-standard) way can enhance the effectiveness of communication. In addition, ELF research has increasingly focused on the fluidity with which speaker relations and interactional settings are formed. ELF communication often occurs in evolving, transitory contexts. This tends to result in highly variable language use, where English is reshaped in response to the immediate communicative surroundings. These research findings have begun to present a number of important challenges to conventional beliefs about good practice in ELT.

The fluidity and hybridity noted in ELF research is particularly at odds with the customary characterization of language in educational settings. In researching teachers' awareness and understanding of ELF I have conducted a number of empirical studies in which I have sought to examine teachers' perceptions regarding knowledge of and approaches to English in language teaching (see e.g., Dewey 2012). In discussions with language teachers, and via examination of the syllabus documents for language teaching awards (see e.g., Dewey forthcoming) as well as several reviews of current teaching materials (and see further discussion below), the following ELT principles come to light. In second language pedagogy, grammar is predominantly seen as a precondition for communication. In short, grammatical accuracy is regarded as an important factor in determining communicative success, and so intelligibility is conceptualized as being norm dependent. In other words, if learners are not able to reproduce language "accurately," that is, according to a pre-determined set of norms (based on standard British and/or American English), then they are deemed to be unsuccessful language users. In addition, considerable emphasis is placed on tests of language proficiency, with the result that teaching is often predominantly assessment focused. In practice, accuracy is widely favored as the most important dimension in the assessment of language competence, with "failure" in this dimension closely linked to notions of who is and is not identified as a speaker of English (see McNamara 2005 on language tests and identity). As a consequence, teaching is essentially norm driven. Learning and teaching English is based—practically exclusively—on the promotion of the norms of a limited number of varieties (British and American English), and there is little scope for an appreciation of linguistic diversity.

The above characterization of English in ELT conflicts with the contemporary sociolinguistic realities of the language worldwide. Increasingly, learners of English

as an additional language will encounter speakers who have been exposed to different varieties (or versions) of English, most of whom will not be native speakers (NSs) of the language (so why continue to base language models and norms exclusively on NS English?). What has also come to light as a result of research in this area is that as learners become more proficient in English they exploit the resources available to them, often in innovative ways, in order to meet the specific communicative demands of actual settings. Contrary to current practice, with its strong emphasis on "accurate" reproduction of standard NS norms, effectiveness in communication in English is often best served by speakers' ability to be sensitive to the speech of their interlocutors and ability to adapt language forms accordingly. In fact, a number of studies have shown that conforming to a norm is not always the most effective way of ensuring successful communication (see e.g., Hülmbauer 2010), with some even showing that it is precisely the unmonitored use of NS English by NSs themselves that can impact on intelligibility (see e.g., Kolocsai 2009).

The truth is that, regardless of the continued promotion of NS norms, ELF is continuing to evolve of its own accord. What we see in ELF speakers' language adaptations is simply the contemporary manifestation of age-old processes of language ecologies (see Mufwene 2008 on language evolution and language contact). What is most different in the case of ELF is the scale and scope of these processes on the one hand, and—most significantly—the agency of the speakers who lead this process. In the contemporary use of English it is non-native speakers (NNSs) who are leading the way in terms of current developments. Until now, all second language pedagogy has been based on the assumption that the goal of learning an additional language is for communication with and possibly integration into a "target" community of NSs. The situation has now changed dramatically, but current practice in ELT has not yet moved on very far. In the remainder of this paper I consider ways in which we might do more to address this imbalance.

3. ELF in Language Pedagogy

A good deal has already been said about the pedagogic "implications" of ELF in the literature. Many scholars have argued that it is essential that teachers are made aware of recent research and current debate regarding the globalization of English (see among others, Mauranen 2012, Seidlhofer 2011). It is also clear from recent research studies that there is a growing awareness of ELF and Global Englishes and their potential impact on pedagogy, especially among experienced language teachers. In a recent survey of teachers enrolled on a Master's program in Applied Linguistics in the UK (an entry requirement of which is a minimum 3 years' teaching experience),[1] when asked about the nature of English

[1] The participant responses described here are gathered from a study of the professional development experiences of 18 practising language teachers who were enrolled on a Master's degree in English Language and Applied Linguistics for the academic year 2012-13, and who had elected to follow a module in teacher education.

in the world, teachers typically comment on aspects of its global role, as in the following: "Due to the globalization and the new media, English is the predominant language used in business, on internet, in academic publications." Teachers also describe some of the more important consequences of this, as in the following comment on the concept of ownership: "English does not belong to the 'native' speakers, it belongs to all people who use it." It is evident from the use of the scare quotes in the latter comment that the teacher is also expressing awareness of the critical treatment that the concept of nativeness has been given in recent years. Elsewhere, I have reported that ELF has begun to feature prominently in teachers' perceptions of English (e.g., Dewey 2012). However, for the most part, to date teachers have tended only to come into contact with ELF in a systematic way on higher-level in-service teacher education programs, typically on MA TESOL modules. Where such modules are available they tend to concentrate on ELF research and theory, with relatively little consideration of the practical aspects of incorporating ELF in the classroom. There are several exceptions to this, but so far most attention to ELF in practice has tended to deal with phonology, the most notable source of which is Walker (2010), the first book-length publication providing guidelines for teachers who wish to incorporate an ELF approach into their pronunciation teaching.

Research into teachers' perceptions of ELF and its relevance to pedagogy thus suggests that awareness raising is not sufficient for an ELF perspective to be taken up in any lasting or practical sense.[2] Instigating change in educational practices is never an easy task. As Suzuki (2011) reports in relation to her attempts to increase awareness of linguistic diversity among a group of English language teachers in Japan, although teachers were shown to develop a better understanding of diversity, they continued to express reluctance to make scope for varieties of English in future practice. Suzuki concludes that "single-shot instruction" (2011, 151), that is, a one-off module focusing on diversity, is unlikely to be sufficient to bring about change in teachers' thinking. Suzuki ascribes this to "deeply ingrained beliefs that there is a single useful form of English for international communication . . . , i.e., American and British English (in their eyes)" (2011, 151).

Similar beliefs are also reflected in my own research. In a questionnaire study in which teachers were asked to comment on: a) their understanding of ELF and related concepts, and then b) ways (if at all) these were perceived to be relevant in practice, participants tended to express interest in ELF conceptually but express skepticism towards any practical application. This can be seen in the following comment, which was quite typical of participants' responses.

[2] I use "perspective" here as opposed to, say, "approach," as the latter term tends to suggest an established methodology, replete with firm ideas about relevant techniques and procedures. In the case of developing a pedagogic response to ELF, in my view, this should be much more a question of adopting a particular perspective on—or orientation towards—language in the classroom. Once it is understood what this perspective entails, it then becomes a question of applying the principles underpinning this to pedagogic resources and procedures (i.e., designing and/or adapting texts, tasks and so on, and drawing on the full range of classroom activities), very much in line with Kumaravadivelu's (1994) notion of a postmethod condition (see my discussion of this in Dewey 2012).

> It is good to raise teachers' and students' awareness towards different varieties of English. However, it is still important to teach the Standard form, as in reality, it is the form of English used by the gate-keeper in universities, in the academic world, in many kinds of careers.
>
> It is the responsibility of teachers to teach students the 'accepted' and 'recognized' variety, that is Standard English. This is the best for the students' future development in terms of further study and career. (Also qtd. in Dewey 2012, 152)

Raising awareness of ELF can indeed lead to a better understanding of current sociolinguistic realities, and it does lead to a certain amount of reflection. But as can be seen from the comments above, teachers' orientation to Standard language norms is very strong. It is therefore paramount that we do not stop simply at discussing the "implications" of ELF. It is not sufficient to say that it is up to teachers to develop practices in response to ELF; instead, further engagement with practitioners is needed in order to better incorporate ELF in teachers' professional development. Educating teacher educators themselves will be an essential aspect of this, since not all practitioners will have taken an MA-level course with a focus on ELF and/or Global Englishes.

The challenge, then, for practitioners aware of ELF and interested in adapting practice in line with current developments in sociolinguistics can be seen as a question of learning to move between theory and practice. Research among experienced practitioners suggests that this is a particularly pressing issue for language teachers, many of whom may be entirely receptive to the idea of ELF in theory, but who struggle to translate this into possibilities for actual classroom practices. During my recent research I have noted a certain degree of frustration among MA qualified teachers who report that they want to connect what they learn about during their studies with what they do in practice but feel constrained by prevailing norms. In part, any attempt to instigate change in practice can be inhibited by existing educational systems and the ideologies underpinning these. In the remainder of this article I first look into the nature of these ideologies and then discuss ways in which they might be overcome by initiating a more critical pedagogic perspective.

4. Language Ideologies in Pedagogic Practice

The teacher comments presented so far cannot simply be seen in isolation. Yes, these are the responses of individual teachers to questions about their beliefs and practices. Key to understanding where some of these ideas come from in the first place is the notion that professional preparation is in part a process of socialization into a certain way of thinking and doing. As Burns and Richards point out, "becoming an English teacher means becoming part of a worldwide community of professionals with shared goals, values, discourse, and practices" (2009, 3). The extent to which these goals are in fact shared, and the extent to which they remain relevant worldwide in light of recent developments regarding the globalization of English are disputable. Or at least this should be the case, as many of the assumptions, principles, and values conventionally promoted in ELT have now

been widely contested. However, there is certainly still a very widely shared professional belief in the value of NS norms. This is much in evidence in current teaching materials.

With only a passing review of contemporary English language textbooks published in the UK, it is relatively obvious that pedagogic materials continue to orient to language in a predominantly normative way. As already suggested, language models and language practice activities are exclusively based on the norms of a limited number of NS standard Englishes (British and/or American). Two current textbook series marketed internationally by probably two of the more influential ELT materials publishers in the UK are as follows: *English Unlimited* (Cambridge UP) and *Global* (Macmillan). As with other contemporary materials (see Dewey 2014 for further discussion), the syllabus in both is predominantly based on standard NS norms, with the content essentially little changed from much earlier titles produced by the same publishers. The only change to reflect current developments in English language appears to be in the way these materials are now marketed, and to a degree in the way tasks are designed. The most obvious differences from earlier materials concern primarily superficial matters, i.e., the graphics and page layout, rather than anything substantive such as linguistic content. On the face of, it textbooks are being promoted as courses that aim to help learners communicate in English as an international/global language, as clearly reflected in the Macmillan title, *Global*. Many contemporary teachers' resources are marketed on the basis of claims about an international scope to course content. In the case of *English Unlimited* this manifests itself in the following statement on the website of Cambridge UP.

> *English Unlimited* is an innovative, general English course for teachers who want a course that teaches learners the English they will need outside the classroom. Centred on purposeful, real-life objectives it prepares learners to use English independently for global communication. (http://www.cambridge.org/gb/cambridgeenglish/catalog/adult-courses/adult-general-english/english-unlimited)

However, explicit claims to this effect are not borne out when we consider the model of English being promoted, which continues to be somewhat exclusive and not particularly international. Despite considerable discourse about globalism, the language syllabus itself has not been modified to reflect this. The focus on language in contemporary materials appears to make no provision for language diversity or for any of the pragmatic strategies found to be important in lingua franca interaction, such as the use of accommodation skills. As mentioned above, far from being the most appropriate models of language use in ELF settings, it can often be the NSs who have most to learn when it comes to adjusting their speech for lingua franca interaction.

Yet in existing pedagogic resources, being a NS of English continues to be predominantly regarded as having inherent value. The approach taken in *English Unlimited* and *Global* reinforces this notion. Although in both textbook series NNSs are present in the syllabus, and even though NNSE (non-native speaker English) is described as "authentic" in the

teacher's guide, there is little evidence of this being taken up in practice. In *Global* approximately 50% of the units for each level contain a section entitled "Global English." These consist of short texts and reading tasks with a focus on various contexts of English use worldwide, designed for the purpose of raising better awareness of the diversity of English globally. However, in most of these the vocabulary samples are taken from varieties that are predominantly located in contexts that would conventionally be defined as NSE.

There are also sections in some of these units that are entitled "Global Voices," which consist of listening tasks based on recordings of NNSs. This at first glance seems very promising from an ELF perspective. However, the audio recordings tend to be relatively short when compared to those appearing in other units, and they are quite limited in number (for the intermediate level course book only 17 out of a total 91 audioscripts included in an appendix involve recordings of NNSs). Most significantly though, the NNS audioscripts are in no way exploited pedagogically and the NNSs are not positioned as models of English. They simply seem to be present in order to add a little "color"—not a particularly "global" approach to English then. In short, all language modeling is NS-based, and is particularly norm oriented—each of the listening tasks is followed by accuracy-based language activities (such as gap-fills etc.). There is no account of how these speakers might communicate in English with each other (all the "Global Voices" are monologues).

In *English Unlimited* there is a larger proportion of NNS voices present in the listening materials, and these comprise relatively longer passages of text. This is encouraging. In addition, the teacher's guide explicitly describes the importance of this from the point of view of awareness raising. Listening sections use recordings of speakers with a range of accents, in order to familiarise learners with the experience of hearing both native and non-native speakers from a wide variety of places. The teacher's guide then goes on to state the following about the NNS audio recordings in the coursebook: "all non-native speakers are competent users of English and should provide learners with strong and motivating role models to help them progress and achieve greater confidence in English."

In both *Global* and *English Unlimited*, the inclusion of NNSs in the audio recordings is clearly an encouraging development. Both textbook series provide a relatively diverse range of speakers from quite varied linguacultural backgrounds, particularly *English Unlimited*, which deliberately sets out to extend the types of English that learners will encounter. As can be seen in the above extract from the teacher's guide, the authors appear to do this from a principled position—one that is compatible with an ELF perspective.

Nevertheless, the extent to which NNSE is regarded as a valuable pedagogic resource is once again very limited. After introducing the principle of familiarizing learners with a variety of English speakers, the teacher's guide eventually explains that all NNSE present in the materials has been carefully monitored to ensure that it is "error free." There is thus a strong juxtaposition of NNESs as "competent users" on the one hand with reference to their language in relation to the extent to which it contains or does not contain "errors." The authors also state that "for the purpose of language production, taught grammar,

vocabulary and pronunciation follow a British English model;" in other words, not exactly an English that is "*un*-limited."

The two book series considered demonstrate that in (many) contemporary materials there is thus some value assigned to language variety (although almost exclusively in relation to accent). In summary, NNSE is regarded as a resource, but only in so far as this can raise better awareness of accent differences. However, language that is not produced by NSs is simply still not seen as a potential source of pedagogic models, which is a considerable pity. From the point of view of ELF research, especially in terms of what this has told us about the value of NNSE in lingua franca interaction, it remains unclear how uniquely promoting a British English model for language production can enhance a learner's ability to communicate.

It is also the case that teaching resources and approaches are increasingly linked to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), which, as has been widely observed, is heavily biased towards reproducing "target" NS norms (see e.g., Mauranen 2012 for a critique). Despite some claims to the contrary in its introduction, the CEFR defines learner competence predominantly in relation to "native-like" or "near native" language use. The reference scales and descriptors used to determine levels of proficiency rely heavily on assumptions about NSE that are somewhat idealized. There are no accounts anywhere of what "native-like" is in fact, but the reliance on the term is in evidence throughout the CEFR document (see also Dewey 2014 on this matter). That our concepts of language competence are still so inextricably tied to NS norms belies the promotional discourses of ELT materials publishers, who are increasingly making claims about the global diversity of English but continually basing language resources on NSE models. There is thus relatively widespread awareness of the lingua franca status of English but very limited take up of this in any practical sense. The implications of adopting an ELF perspective in pedagogy are not being realized particularly well. The language ideologies underpinning ELT materials and methods production are both pervasive and resilient.

5. Investing in Criticality: A Sociocultural Approach to Teacher Development

To understand the continued attachment to normativity and to rather narrow definitions of what it means to learn and speak English, the concepts of prestige, status and social learning as discussed in evolutionary psychology offer valuable insight. Henrich and Gil-White (2001) for example explain that prestige is an indispensable human trait that is fundamental to how we have evolved socially. Prestige is an evolutionary consequence of direct social learning capacities. In other words, our perceptions of status and prestige are central to the development of human cultural capacity, which will of course include language. Henrich and Gil-White postulate that the flow of information within a given society is facilitated by assigning prestige. This is also undoubtedly a central aspect of the

way knowledge and skills are approached conceptually in language teaching and language teacher education.

In one study reported in Henrich and Gil-White (2001), for example, research participants were found to more accurately recall what was said by an individual when told he or she occupied a position of authority. It has also been found that we are more likely to be influenced by the attitudes and opinions of others where these differ from our existing beliefs if these are assigned to individuals who are reported to be in high-status positions. In short, "prestigious" individuals are perceived as being: highly competent; instrumental in the diffusion of novel ideas and practices; and ultimately influential not only in relation to—but also beyond—their own domain of expertise. The assignment of prestige is undoubtedly of considerable relevance to our evaluation of language use (see especially Milroy and Milroy 2012 on "authority in language"). Applied to second language pedagogy it is not difficult to see how an imagined "native" speaker is attributed status and influence, including in contexts (such as lingua franca settings) where they may not in fact have any demonstrable expertise.

One very important way language ideologies and notions of prestige operate in ELT can be seen in the relative levels of value ascribed to NESTs (native English speaking teachers) and NNESTs (non-native English speaking teachers). Despite NNESTs comprising the large majority of English language teachers worldwide, in many contexts teachers continue to report experiences of discrimination in current recruitment practices and quite widespread inequity with regard to conditions of employment. NNESTs' knowledge, expertise, professionalism and qualifications can become undermined by what has been termed the "myth of the native speaker" and ideologized notions of NES competence. Despite efforts to dispel this myth (see e.g., Llurda 2005), perceptions continue to disproportionately favour NESTs, and to usually do so regardless of levels and type of experience and professional qualifications. As the myth goes, NESTs are generally reified for the following: a supposed implicit knowledge of language rules; their "intuitive" grasp of meaning; their ability (which is perhaps best re-interpreted from an ELF perspective as the *permission*) to use language creatively; and their ability to pass judgment on acceptability. By contrast, NNESTs are positioned as having to defer to the NS for models and norms. They are conventionally considered to lack sufficient knowledge of language rules, to be less reliable judges of what counts as acceptable or appropriate, and are often as a result professionally marginalized. This leads to a situation in which many qualified and experienced NNESTs end up struggling to self-identify as legitimate and valued English language professionals (see e.g., Kirkpatrick 2007 on this).

Overcoming this state of affairs requires a considerable rethink in terms of the current situation regarding theory and practice. I have already argued that ELF entails a certain amount of reconceptualization of established views about language and the predominant assumptions underpinning approaches to learning and teaching. In relation to moving beyond the default position regarding prestige and professional expertise in ELT, there is much to be gained from engaging with sociocultural

perspectives (e.g., Johnson 2009; Lantolf 2009) and critical pedagogy (e.g., Norton and Toohey 2004; Pennycook 2001) in order to rethink current practices in second language teacher education in a way that better aligns these with research findings in ELF/Global Englishes.

A common perception among teachers—especially during higher-level in-service programmes—is that there is a strong divide between theory and practice (see Widdowson 2010 on closing this perceived gap). Teachers regularly complain that when they have opportunity to read about and discuss theories and approaches to teaching, this is on a university campus, that is, when they are separated from their particular teaching context and removed from day-to-day classroom realities. This is especially true of undergraduate degrees in pedagogy and MA TESOL programmes. When there is a practicum or internship this is often at the very end of a programme, and when there are more integrated practical components, microteaching is the most common means of achieving this. But microteaching has many shortcomings (c.f. Johnson 2009): First, teaching is conceptualized as a discrete set of behaviours, which can thus be isolated and imitated; it lacks professional authenticity as a pedagogic context since the complex nature of teaching cannot be accounted for; and finally, the ultimate impact on teacher development may be quite negligible. Most importantly for my discussion, the social, institutional and historical factors endemic to teaching are absent.

Adopting a sociocultural perspective is one way in which we can move beyond a technicist view of teacher preparation and take much better account of the relevant social factors. In relation to adopting a sociocultural approach, Johnson and Arshaksaya comment that "the responsibility of teacher education, from a sociocultural perspective, is to present relevant scientific concepts to teachers but to do so in ways that bring these concepts to bear on *concrete practical activity, connecting them to their everyday knowledge and the activities of teachers*" (2011, 169; emphasis added).

The key is, though, how do the relevant concepts we want teachers to consider connect with or may be made to connect with everyday practices and activities? One important means of working towards this is through further engagement with teachers' existing beliefs. As argued by Borg (2006), teachers enter the profession with certain notions about how and what to teach. These may not be articulated by novice teachers, but according to Borg they may nevertheless be deeply ingrained. Another essential factor to bear in mind is the extent to which these beliefs are constructed socially. As Reiss (2011) comments, the social construction of beliefs is subject to empowering and disempowering discourses in which the professional identities that are seen as legitimate may be very narrowly conceived.

For professional development to properly occur through a process of making connections between theory, research and everyday practices, it is thus essential that teachers are encouraged (and given necessary support) to develop critical awareness and critical practices. Without a critical perspective, it seems unlikely that the gap between classroom realities (as underpinned by language ideologies and socially inherited notions

of prestige) and recent research findings can be sufficiently reduced to enable teachers to rethink their practices.

6. Critical Professional Development Through Narrative Inquiry

There is considerable value potential in drawing on narrative inquiry (see e.g., Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Clandinin 2007) as a means of developing a more pedagogic response to ELF and global Englishes, especially with regard to the *what* (the nature of the subject matter itself) rather than the *how* (matters related to methodology) in ELT. Through a narrative inquiry approach teachers can be prompted to produce personal stories of experiences, an enterprise which can enable the re-examination of beliefs and practices. This is key for further teacher development. Undertaking a narrative inquiry entails teachers becoming compelled to confront how their understanding of teaching came about in the first place. This is, according to Johnson and Golombek (2002), a question of "re-seeing" both *what* and *how* teachers know in practice. Professional development thus consists of "reshaping" teachers' existing knowledge, beliefs and practices rather than simply imposing new theories, methods or materials (Johnson and Golombek 2002, 2).

However, despite substantial developments in language teacher education, with much greater account given to teachers' individual pedagogic beliefs and practices, for the most part there has still been very little attention drawn to the subject matter itself, English. In terms of the language syllabus, there has thus far been relatively little account of content knowledge in studies that have explored teacher beliefs and narrative accounts. In the remainder of this section I will report on a project which adopts a narrative inquiry approach to explore teachers' experiences of language learning and teaching, with a specific focus on teachers' notions of language knowledge and competence. The principal aim of my work in the project was to explore teachers' perceptions of English in order to develop critical awareness of the current mismatch between how English is used around the world and how it continues to be defined in pedagogic theory and practice. Ultimately, my concern is to explore how teachers might use research findings in ELF to reconfigure existing classroom practices.

The data reported in this section was gathered as a result of my involvement in a European project in which there were seven partner institutions collaborating on the collection of language autobiographies in a project entitled PLURI-LA (Plurilingualism–Language Autobiographies), which was funded with support from the European Commission as part of the Lifelong Learning Programme (for more details, visit the project website at http://pluri-la.webnode.pt/). My involvement consisted of collecting written narratives and conducting interviews with NNESTs, with a particular focus on their experiences of migration and professional practice as NNESTs working in a NEST dominated environment. The narratives were approached as a means of enabling teachers to recognize what beliefs they held about their own professional expertise and

subject knowledge as English language teachers. The purpose of this was to explore the consequences of these beliefs with regard to current practice.

Participants talked often, both in written and oral accounts of their experiences, of what they saw as a struggle to assert a professional identity as expert language teachers. A number of participants commented on how they had experienced moments in which their level of expertise was either questioned (including by potential employers, colleagues and existing students) or explicitly negated. One participant in particular, a Korean English language teacher, Taehyun (her pseudonym), commented at some length on how her level of professional preparation and her knowledge base had been a matter of some concern at various stages of her career. At the time of the study Taehyun was coming towards the end of her doctoral thesis in the UK, after having previously lived in Australia and the USA for, respectively, her undergraduate and taught postgraduate studies in linguistics and language teaching. Taehyun positions herself as someone who has traveled extensively and who is thus different from typical expectations of what it means to be considered a Korean. In her written autobiography she says the following: "These experiences of staying abroad in conjunction with very liberal and Western culture of my family made me a very different person compared with Koreans who had no or limited contact with Western culture. The way I act is very different from normal Koreans."

Taehyun also refers to her own "peculiarity" and of experiencing feelings of not "belonging" when she considers how she identifies and is identified by others as Korean. She also reports on having feelings of not belonging to what she describes as "group oriented Korean traditional culture" when discussing her professional development in the interview. What is of most interest here though is a particular episode she recounts in her interview in which she comments on completing her MA degree in the US and then returning to Korea to take up her English language teaching career.

Extract 1

T: so: then (,) after I graduated my: university I became English teacher right away (,) and I started teaching (,) and one of the incidents that lead me to study in Hawaii is the (.) so: the government started to: expect- I mean ask the English teachers to teach *in* English in: (,) from 2001(?)
R: yeah
T: an:d (.) even before that there was an encouragement instituted informally
R: hm (,) so you were meant to teach the entire class in English?
T: yes (.) an:d so I tried this

Taehyun refers here to the growing trend among education policy makers to promote (in many cases impose) the use of English as the medium of instruction in schools. This is in part a reflection of the continued globalization of English and the resulting importance that ministries of education are attaching to instruction in English. It is also though a reflection of the expanding influence of what can be described as western TESOL based

practices (in this case the influence of a communicative methodology in which exposure to the target language is maximized by teaching English in English) on long established local practices. In numerous contexts, it has been shown that implementing communicative language teaching (CLT) can conflict directly with existing beliefs and practices (see e.g., Choi 2013 on the impact on Korean teachers of an educational policy aimed at promoting communicative methodology). In contexts where CLT is actively promoted, teachers are expected/required to use English (sometimes *only* English) as the medium of instruction, creating additional pressure in relation to teachers' perceived levels of proficiency. The impact this has on Taehyun's experience can be seen in the following extract, a continuation of the interview quoted above.

Extract 2

T: and one of the students when I was teaching English (,) he was a boy and he was acting out he was really mean and he said "why don't you stop trying to speak in English and just teach in Korean?" . . . which kind of shows that he was not happy with my: you know like kind of saying "your English is not good enough" you know...

In this passage it is clear how Taehyun's professional expertise, and more than that her right to position herself as a speaker as well as teacher of English, is openly challenged in the classroom by one of her own students. The promotion of a non-traditional, communicative based methodology is thus implicated in the institutionalized ideologies of language which privilege certain types of English language proficiency and denigrate other types of proficiency, further influencing in a negative way common perceptions of NNESTs' levels of expertise.

Taehyun also though talks about how she has been able to re-evaluate her own sense of professional identity and expertise as a result of her experience as a doctoral student in which she came into contact with critical accounts of current theory and practice. Her personal narrative includes several episodes where she comments on how her thinking has developed in response to her exposure to a critical perspective on pedagogy. She comments in her written narrative, for example, that coming into contact with recent research has helped her to reconsider her self-perception regarding English, explaining that this "has made me wish that the agendas put forward by researchers of ELF and World Englishes to be realized in reality because I get to see that it is not possible for me to 'master' the norms of English as used in England." She then goes on to comment on how this has begun to influence the way she sees her role as a professional.

Extract 3

T: Also, as a teacher trainer, I will try to help Korean English teachers to feel more confident with their own English use. Finally if I am given to change English education policy in Korea, I will make it sure that people do not necessarily be stressed out their idiosyncratic use of English.

The experiences reported by Taehyun provide an illustration of the value of engaging in narrative inquiry. It provides teachers with a means of pursuing professional development in a particularly reflective manner, facilitating, in my view, the adoption of a critical perspective on existing beliefs and practice.

7. In Summary

Research in ELF has inspired considerable debate regarding the pedagogic implications of the globalization of English and the role of the language in lingua franca interaction. There are numerous ways ELF has relevance for current practice in language pedagogy, but any implementation of change is a complex matter. For these implications to develop into classroom application, substantial re-examination—from a critical stance—of current approaches to language and pedagogy is required. Modifying syllabus content in response to ELF is particularly challenging given the extent to which findings in ELF contravene conventional notions of language competence. For teachers to consider how we might develop materials and tasks that better incorporate the language use patterns and pragmatics of speakers in lingua franca interaction, it is necessary to reflect at length on current beliefs.

Narrative inquiry is one way in which this critical reflection can be undertaken systematically and in depth. Engaging in narrative inquiry can provide a powerful alternative to more traditional knowledge-transmission based teacher education. Traditionally teachers were marginalized in discussions of the nature of professional knowledge and expertise. Recent developments have seen teachers becoming re-positioned as "knowing professionals" (see e.g., Johnson 2009), and as agents of pedagogic change in their own right. As a result, a traditional "knowledge transmission model" can be disregarded as a decontextualized, exceptionally limited way of promoting professional learning.

Language and professional practice biographies and narrative inquiry can serve as a means of overcoming the limitations of more conventional approaches. This in turn can promote movement towards an informed but individually relevant pedagogy. Teacher choice—where there is any at all—has though generally been limited to decisions about methods and activity types rather than about the language models provided in class. There is thus still considerable scope for critical, reflective thinking to turn its attention to the linguistic and pragmatic aspects of teachers' knowledge and practice.

Theory and research can provide the empirical evidence from which teachers can construct personal, practical pedagogic principles. Theory and research can suggest new insights that may challenge assumptions and "intuitive" practice. However, the practice-relevance of these insights cannot simply come about as the result of exposure to ideas. Theory and research need to be carefully mediated so that pedagogic practices can be effectively reconstructed, and preferably by teachers and researchers working in collaboration, and from a critical perspective. This is especially relevant in the case

of ELF and the potential controversies this represents when seen from a traditional perspective.

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Exploring the Combination of Language, Images and Sound in the Metaphors of TV Commercials

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Drawing into research on multimodal metaphor, the first objective of this paper is to provide an analysis of the multimodal metaphors in four commercials selling alcoholic drinks, cars and computers to illustrate ways in which metaphor may be instantiated *via* sound, image and language. The question addressed is whether the metaphorical rendering of these products results from combining several communicative modes or rather relies mainly on one mode on which the others depend. Based on the results of a questionnaire completed by sixty informants after watching the commercials, the second objective is to explore the way viewers react to, and interpret, multimodal metaphors in advertising discourse.

Keywords: advertising; commercials; multimodal metaphor; metaphor interpretation; culture

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Explorando la combinación de lenguaje, imagen y sonido en las metáforas de anuncios televisivos

Partiendo de la investigación realizada sobre la metáfora multimodal, el primer objetivo de este artículo es ofrecer un análisis de las metáforas multimodales presentes en cuatro anuncios televisivos de bebidas alcohólicas, coches y ordenadores, todos ellos ilustrativos de cómo se expresa la metáfora a través de sonidos, imágenes, y lenguaje. La pregunta a la que se intenta dar respuesta es si la presentación metafórica de dichos productos resulta de la combinación de varios modos comunicativos o, por el contrario, viene dada por un modo principal del cual dependen los demás. Haciendo uso de los resultados de un cuestionario completado por sesenta informantes tras ver los anuncios, el segundo objetivo es explorar la forma en la que la audiencia reacciona e interpreta las metáforas multimodales usadas en el discurso publicitario.

Palabras clave: publicidad; anuncios televisivos; metáfora multimodal; interpretación; cultura

1. Introduction

The well-known adage "A picture is worth a thousand words" became a cliché in the twentieth century, and nowhere has this been more exploited than in advertising. However, this is also the domain where such a cliché may be called into question, particularly when figurative devices (metaphor, simile, etc.) are used as a selling strategy. This is because, although visual metaphors are commonplace in print adverts (e.g., the Nespresso coffee machine rendered as a skyscraper, as discussed in Forceville 2012), images seldom occur alone. Rather, adverts often use language to anchor their message, avoid any confusion as to the product advertised and, in the case of metaphors, cue the source and/or target domains involved (Forceville 2009a, 2009b; van Mulken, le Pair and Forceville 2010). This visual-verbal combination is particularly conspicuous in the promotion of certain products such as wine: here the focus is placed on the sensory properties of wine which are difficult to translate in visual form (e.g., their aromatic and flavour profile) and, therefore, language remains paramount to understand the adverts and spot the metaphors involved (Caballero 2009). The situation becomes more complex in commercials where montage (i.e., dynamic images), music and sound are also used to render the products in question in metaphorical terms. Indeed, the sophistication of current advertising requires an exploration of the ways in which modes other than the visual or the verbal (e.g., sound and music) may contribute, on the one hand, to the success of some commercials and, on the other, to their figurative quality.

The present paper deals with the ways in which four commercials exploit metaphors instantiated by diverse modes for promoting wines, (computer) operative systems and cars, as the preliminary step to investigate viewers' reaction to the metaphors thus used. The first objective is to explore whether the combination of several modes is what "creates" the metaphors in the commercials or, rather, their metaphorical quality is mainly triggered or cued by one mode on which the others depend. The growing combination of modes to cue metaphor is a powerful strategy in contemporary commercials, but also adds to their complexity and, therefore, may hinder their interpretation (Forceville 2008a). In this regard, the second objective is to examine the way people react to and interpret the multimodal metaphors in the commercials under study.

2. Metaphor in Advertising

Imagery is a conspicuous component of advertising, and marketing practices in general. Together with contributing to the innovative and, in many cases, highly aesthetic quality of adverts and commercials, it is also a powerful strategy at the service of persuasion and, therefore, selling practices. Indeed, as discussed by marketing scholars (Ward and Gaidis 1990; MacInnis, Moorman and Jaworski 1991; Goodstein 1993; McQuarrie and Phillips 2005), aesthetics and persuasion go hand in hand when figurative devices are used: by imposing a higher cognitive load on understanding what is being advertised, metaphor,

simile and the like increase the potential consumer's motivation, affective response and pleasure, which presumably results in bigger sales.

The critical role of metaphor in advertising has given rise to a vast amount of research, broadly driven by two—often related—types of concern. One line has principally been involved with exploring the metaphors used to promote abstract entities such as brands, both private and corporate (Koller 2009; Trong Tuan 2010) as well as more concrete objects like beauty and hygiene products, underwear, cars or soft drinks (Thornburrow 1998; Piller 1999; Amouzadeh and Tavangar 2004; Chattopadhyay 2005; Velasco-Sacristán 2010), and looks into the ideological implications derived from choosing certain metaphors at the expense of others. The second line of research is more typologically driven, i.e. it is mainly concerned with developing analytical frameworks to explain the diverse figurative devices involved in the rhetoric of visual advertising (Forceville 1996, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b; McQuarrie and Mick 1999, 2003; Phillips and McQuarrie 2004; among others).

Together with offering several, often related, taxonomies, scholars have also explored the audience's reaction to imagery in advertising from a more experimental perspective (e.g., MacInnis, Moorman and Jaworski 1991; McQuarrie and Mick 1999, 2003; McQuarrie and Phillips 2005; Jeong 2008; van Mulken, le Pair and Forceville 2010). The general consensus is that, although the use of metaphors in adverts often involves a certain degree of cognitive elaboration or effort on the part of the intended audience, this is ultimately advantageous rather than a strategy to be avoided. Thus, such adverts are more aesthetic and engaging, which makes people more curious as well as receptive to their message and, presumably, more positively predisposed towards the products involved. In other words, and in compliance with Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995; Wilson and Sperber 2004), audiences confronted with advertisements relying on metaphor ultimately get a reward for their cognitive investment in interpreting them (Tendahl 2009; Tendahl and Gibbs 2008).

While most of the research mentioned above has dealt with figurative devices in print adverts, Forceville (2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b, 2012) has moved from print to audio-visual advertising or commercials, reworking his initial model of pictorial metaphor to accommodate figurative schemas cued by dynamic images, music and sound. He distinguishes four main types of pictorial metaphor: (a) metaphors where one of the metaphorical components needs to be "retrieved" from the context (*contextual metaphor*), (b) metaphors whose sources and targets are partially represented in pictorial form (*hybrid metaphor*), (c) metaphors where source and target are pictorially represented in full (*pictorial simile*), and (d) metaphors represented as a unified object or gestalt (*integrated metaphor*). When occurring in print advertising, all four types are monomodal since their sources and targets are partially or exclusively rendered through images, i.e., rely upon a single mode. In contrast, contextual, hybrid and integrated metaphors become multimodal when their "target[s] and source[s] are not, or not exclusively, rendered in the same mode" (Forceville 2012, 16). Interestingly, multimodal metaphors can be simultaneously cued

by several modes (e.g., a combination of language, visuals and sound), a co-activation or multiple cuing which, according to Forceville, often involves a greater cognitive effort on the part of their targeted audience and, hence, enhances the metaphors' communicative, emotional and memorability potential. On a cautionary note, however, Forceville (2007, 2008a, 2012) points to the need for more research which focuses on the way cultural and national factors may also affect people's comprehensibility of and emotional response to this type of metaphor (see also McQuarrie and Mick 1999; Van Mulken 2003; St Clair 2006; van Mulken, le Pair and Forceville 2010).

Two important insights may be drawn from Forceville's work, both relevant for the discussion in this paper. The first is his classification of figurative phenomena and the fact that they may all be linguistically, visually and/or aurally cued in their multimodal dimension. The second is his emphasis on the formal aspects of multimodal metaphor in commercials, i.e. how the choice of one or several modes or channels may determine the way metaphors are created, identified, interpreted and reacted to.

Drawing upon Forceville's work, in this paper I first analyse how different modes combine to create a metaphorical picture of the products sold in four commercials. This is followed by a qualitative study addressing the ways in which this combination may affect their understanding by and impact on their potential viewers.

3. Metaphorizing Wines, Computers and Cars in Commercials

For the present study, I chose four commercials dealing with computers, cars and alcoholic beverages (one dealing with wine and one with *cava*). The adverts were chosen due to their heavy reliance on metaphor to promote the products at issue, and their exploitation of the possibilities of several modes in this figurative rendering. Thus, after briefly describing the commercials, I provide an analysis of the metaphors used in them and the modes involved.

My view of metaphor follows the standard CMT definition of metaphor as *mapping* knowledge from one domain of experience (the *source*) onto a different domain (the *target*), which is construed in terms of the former. In line with Forceville's definition of multimodal metaphor, in order to identify the metaphors in the commercials under analysis I considered the modes involved in representing, cuing and/or suggesting the sources and targets in them, i.e. whether the commercials drew upon a combination of images, language, sounds, framing and camera movements, etc. in presenting their respective products as something else (as captured by the customary formula A IS B used in metaphor research).

3.1. Commercial 1: Navarra D.O. Navarra Reds, sons of our land

The commercial "Navarra D.O.: Tintos de Navarra, hijos de nuestra tierra" (Navarra D.O.: Navarra Reds, sons of our land) belongs to the 2004 campaign designed by the Spanish advertising company formerly called Bassat Ogilvy (its current name being

Ogilvy & Mather Publicidad). The spot advertises Navarra D.O. (designation of origin or *appellation*) and its red wines, and opens with a man talking to someone—hidden from the audience—in the following terms:

> You're leaving tomorrow. The world awaits you and I'm sure that when they know you they'll love you. We're proud of you at home. We know that you'll become one among the great. Some won't appreciate your worth: pay no attention. Mmm... Others will see a winner in you: don't boast. Don't be afraid of time: it will make you mature and, when you grow old, do it with dignity. Always remember the land where you were born. Son, I've given you everything I know. I'll miss you. OK, enough. You have a long trip tomorrow. NAVARRA REDS, SONS OF OUR LAND.[1]

The commercial combines camera angles and language in order to convey a kinship metaphor that may be formalised as NAVARRA D.O. IS A FAMILY, whereby the different wineries are presented as (CARING) FATHERS and the region's wines as SONS. Since the purpose in this advert was to advertise the whole region (the D.O.), the emphasis is placed on the father: a middle-aged man mainly shown through close-ups of his head and hands and engaged in a monologue with an unseen son about to leave home. The "son," a bottle of wine on a table bearing the generic label "Tintos de Navarra," is unseen until the very end, when the father caresses it before leaving the room. The commercial ends with a voice-over announcing the product advertised: "Navarra's reds. Sons of our land."

The commercial illustrates a multimodal metaphor where part of the target, i.e., Navarra's red wines rather than the whole region, is rendered visually and the source domain FAMILY (or FATHER-SON) is, strictly speaking, cued verbally. Nevertheless, the commercial's emotional and rhetorical effect largely rests upon the performance of the actor playing the role of the father—a performance which could well be viewed as a visual strategy for cuing the metaphor. The metaphor is finally "disclosed" when the bottle-son is shown at the end of the commercial, a delay strategy often used in advertising for the sake of effect, i.e., to surprise audiences or, in relevance terms, exploited to achieve optimal relevance. Thus, after seeing the bottle-son in the commercials, people presumably revise their previous assumptions, using interpretive strategies in order to achieve optimal relevance, all of which may enhance the impact of the commercial.

3.2. Commercial 2: Mac versus PC. Viruses

This commercial was launched on 2 May 2006, and belongs to the *Get a Mac* series featuring actors John Hodgman and Justin Long in the roles of PC and Mac respectively (www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQb_Q8WRL_g). Like the rest of the campaign, the commercial is crafted in a very simple way: it shows a spare, white background where two characters, PC and Mac, engage in a brief interaction, and finishes with the image of a Mac

[1] Author's translation from Spanish. Reproduced with permission.

computer. In this sketch, PC is feeling terrible due to a bad cold, and warns Mac to stay away from him so that he does not get infected. While doing so, he falls backwards and faints. The dialogue is the following:

MAC: Hello, I'm a Mac.
PC: And I'm a PC. Atchoo! Atchoo! Atchoo!
MAC: Gesundheit! Are you okay?
PC: No I'm not okay. I have that virus that's going around.
MAC: Oh yeah.
PC: In fact, you better stay back. This one's a doozy.
MAC: That's okay I'll be fine.
PC: No no, do not be a hero. Last year there were 114,000 known viruses for PCs.
MAC: PCs. Not Macs.
PC: Hey I think I'm going to crash.
MAC: Hey, if you feel ...

The sketch illustrates the metaphor COMPUTER SYSTEMS ARE PEOPLE, but here both source and target are cued verbally—unless we regard the brief cut of a Mac computer at the end as instantiating the metaphorical target. However, as in the case of the Navarra commercial, the way the metaphor is "performed" by the very opposite characters impersonating a PC and a Mac is of great interest and enriches what would otherwise be an instance of monomodal metaphor. As such, while PC is a middle-aged, formally suited individual, Mac is casually dressed, young and carefree—a highly connotative presentation presumably at the service of persuasion. This personification of PCs and Macs appears combined with the, also metaphorical, terms *crash* and *viruses* conventionally used to refer to computer problems, and somehow resuscitates their originally metaphorical—anthropomorphic—status and specifies those problems as human problems, e.g., a bad cold or fainting because of it.

3.3. Commercial 3: KIA Sorrento

This spot is from the 2007 campaign featuring tennis player Rafael Nadal (www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GQQlVP5rcI). The commercial is more complex than the previous two discussed, both film- and metaphor-wise. For the sake of description, I have segmented it into five parts, i.e. the opening and end sequences, and three "middle" sequences which are labelled according to the written caption which appears at the end of each (i.e., Powerful Stroke, Technological Edge and Dynamic Leap). The arrows in the table represent shot transitions within each sequence.

The commercial rests upon a clever montage where the car and the tennis player are shown in quasi-simultaneous fashion (represented by the arrows in the table), and which instantiates the simile THE SORRENTO MODEL IS LIKE A (SUCCESSFUL) TENNIS PLAYER. However, the transition in the first scene where Nadal hits a ball that quickly cuts into

Table 1. Summary of KIA commercial

Opening Sequence
Shot of car; its image gradually blurs into a white roundish shape which gives way to a close-up of Nadal (focus: white bandana and eyes)

Middle Sequence 1

Images:
Nadal poised to serve ⇢ hand grips a steering wheel
Nadal launches ball upward ⇠⇢ hand changes gear
Nadal hits ball ⇠⇢ car shoots forward on a dust track leaving a dusty trail
ball appears on screen + Nadal hits it ⇠⇢ car moves along track + language caption

Sounds: car accelerates + Nadal grunts while serving + sound of bells ringing [race? train?]
Language: Powerful Stroke [caption]

Middle Sequence 2

Images:
Nadal runs sideways to hit ball ⇢ car on track
Nadal's foot slides on line of court ⇠⇢ car borders edge of track by a cliff
Nadal hits ball ⇠⇢ car speeds on track at the edge of cliff

Sounds: sliding sounds + bells ringing [race? train?] + Nadal's grunts when hitting
Language: Technological Edge [caption]

Middle Sequence 3: Dynamic Leap

Nadal jumps to hit ball ⇢ car jumps in 4x4 fashion
car lands and traces a dusty white circle before stopping

Language: Dynamic Leap [caption]

End Sequence

Voice-over + caption written within circle: "The quest for perfection continues"
Nadal reties bandana and says "Who's next?"
Sound of an eagle + shot of Nadal standing in front of the car on the edge of a high, steep cliff overlooking the scene below
Voice-over with name of the brand KIA

the car may also be interpreted as instantiating A CAR IS LIKE A TENNIS BALL. In both cases, the simile is visually cued and reinforced (*anchored*) by means of language.

Regardless of the different metaphorical interpretations of the first sequence, the sound effects throughout the commercial equate the car with the player, which enhances the simile's multimodal quality. Particularly interesting in this regard are Nadal's characteristic grunts when serving and hitting the ball, which suggest the car's power and acceleration, and the sounds of both Nadal and the car when sliding on clay and skidding in a sharp bend respectively. A final potentially meaningful sound is the eagle cry at the end of the commercial, which may suggest the heights reached by both car and player as well as the sense of freedom often associated with the type of car advertised (a 4 x 4 model).

3.4. Commercial 4: Freixenet. El Color Reserva

This is the 2009 version of a commercial first launched in 2008 featuring the Spanish Olympic synchronised swimming team accompanied by a *zapateado* (i.e., a particular Spanish kind of tap-dance) by flamenco dancer Flora Albaicín (www.burbujasfreixenet.com/spot_esp.html). The commercial basically relies on images and sound; language is only used at the beginning and at the end to introduce the wine ("Freixenet introduces the Reserva Colour"), to wish the audience Merry Christmas, to recommend drinking in moderation and to show the *cava's* alcohol content (the latter two in short, written captions). The spot opens with a bottle of *cava* emerging from an ice bucket, followed by a glass full of *cava*. The camera then zooms into the glass taking the audience in among the bubbles of the drink. These dissolve until one of them, personified in a synchronised swimmer, shoots out from the surface of the *cava* to then splash back down into a crown of bubble-synchro swimmers. The rest of the commercial shows a bubble-synchro swimmer routine performed to the tempo of a *zapateado*, a dance that grows in intensity until the grand finale echoing the first scene: a bubble-swimmer launched upwards and splashing back amidst a crown of bubble-swimmers. The commercial ends with a fade out giving way to a cut of a bottle of *cava* in an ice bucket while an off-screen voice wishes the audience Merry Christmas, and a final cut where the team, arranged like a Christmas tree, toasts the viewer with a glass of *cava*.

The main protagonists here are the wine's golden and stylised bubbles, personified by the swimmers of the successful Spanish Olympic-medal-winning team. The winning character of the *cava* is evoked by the "champion" status of the synchronised swimming team. The metaphor BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS also points to one of the key indicators of a *cava's* quality, i.e., its characteristic crown of froth that quickly dissolves into bubbles which must last as long as possible and travel vertically along the glass until breaking the surface again, a behaviour replicated in the swimmers' leaps, plunges, and splashes. Indeed, the metaphor BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS may be interpreted as metonymically profiling one component of *cava* (BUBBLES FOR *CAVA*) and, by so doing, foreground its quality (BUBBLE PERFORMANCE FOR *CAVA* QUALITY). Interestingly, while both personification and metonymy are suggested by the visual images in the commercial, the soundtrack points to the whole experience of drinking *cava* (the popping noise when uncorking the bottle, the bubbles' effervescent sound inside the glass, etc.), an aurally cued metonymy which may be formalised as *ZAPATEADO* FOR *CAVA* (OPENING AND POURING) EXPERIENCE. The *zapateado* also brings to mind the typical noise of fireworks, a typical component of many festivities in Spain, particularly at Christmas. Finally, the iconic quality of the *zapateado* used in the commercial may be mapped onto the *cava* it advertises; however, this requires an audience highly familiarised with this type of dancing both within and outside Spain.

In summary, while the commercial essentially presents the Freixenet *cava* via visual metaphor and metonymy, its combination of image and sound triggers all manner of associations related to the festive occasions when this drink is consumed. However, these are most obvious when the commercial is framed in a cultural context, e.g., awareness of the use of fireworks in many Spanish celebrations may help construe the *zapateado* as metonymic with regards to *cava* versus the more metaphorical, and cross-domain formula

A *ZAPATEADO* IS A *CAVA* EXPERIENCE—more congruent with the definition of metaphor as a cross-domain mapping, yet more neutral or "culture-free," and hence more relevant for non-Spanish viewers, should they relate that sound with both this dance and drinking *cava*.

3.5. A brief summary of the commercials

The figurative schemas exploited in the four commercials and the modes involved may be summarised as follows:

Table 2. Figurative schemas and modes in commercials

Commercial	Figurative schema	Modes
Navarra D.O.	metaphors NAVARRA IS A CARING FATHER, NAVARRA'S RED WINES ARE SONS	language + images
Mac vs PC	metaphors COMPUTER SYSTEMS ARE PEOPLE, MAC SYSTEMS ARE HEALTHY PEOPLE	language (+ images)
KIA Sorrento	simile(s) THE SORENTO MODEL IS LIKE A SUCCESSFUL TENNIS PLAYER A CAR IS LIKE A TENNIS BALL	images + sound + language
Freixenet	metaphor BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS metonymies BUBBLES FOR *CAVA*, *ZAPATEADO* FOR *CAVA* EXPERIENCE	images images + sound

As shown in Table 2, the four commercials exploit figurative devices of varying degrees of complexity and multimodality: from the classical language-image combination in the Navarra and Mac vs. PC clips to the various modes involved in KIA and Freixenet. While all four are certainly interesting and innovative in their use of metaphor, and despite the already mentioned claims that the cognitive "challenge" involved in metaphor may have an affective and rewarding effect on viewers and guide them towards buying the products thus advertised, the opposite remains a possibility, i.e., viewers not understanding or liking the metaphors. The issue is addressed by Forceville (2008a: 199-201) when outlining an agenda for further research, and may be summarized by the following questions: How do viewers construe the metaphors in commercials? How successful are those metaphors? In order to explore these issues, I conducted a small experimental survey where I gathered the reactions of sixty informants towards the four commercials, which forms the topic of the following section.

4. Viewer Response to Metaphor in Commercials

The four commercials were shown to sixty students all enrolled on courses on either eye-tracking techniques (Lund University) or English Linguistics (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha). Given the topics and metaphorical qualities of the commercials I chose those who might be interested in the products at issue (i.e., who were drivers, consumed alcohol and used computers regularly) and were familiarised with disciplines relating to human

communication (i.e., were able to elaborate on the questions about the commercials). The participants were from diverse nationalities (Swedish, Italian, German, Uruguayan, Ukrainian, Welsh, Spanish and Australian) and all aged between 20 and 30. Finally, in order to avoid any possible bias in their response to the commercials and the related questions, none of the participants were specialists, although all of them knew what a metaphor was in its most basic form.

The participants were asked to watch the four commercials twice and fill in the questionnaire in Appendix 1 where they had to assess the commercials (i.e. rate them for relevance, quality and difficulty of interpretation, and say whether they had liked them or not) as well as identify the metaphor(s) used. The data relating to the informants' evaluations of the commercials is shown below.

Figure 1. Difficulty

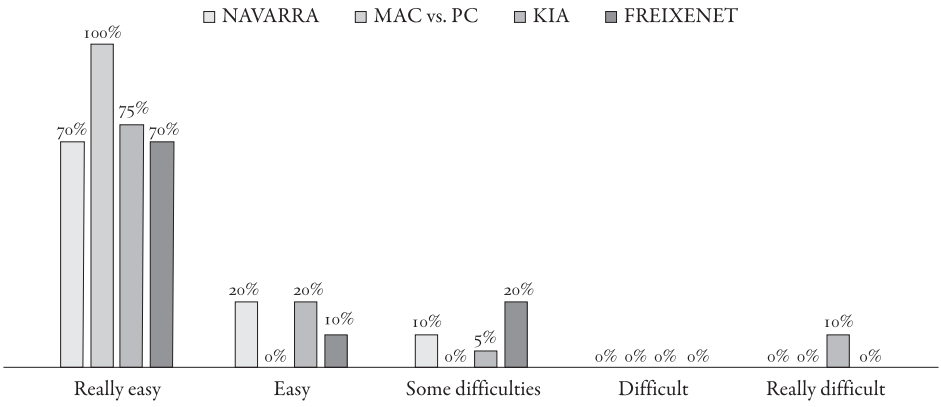


Figure 2. Quality

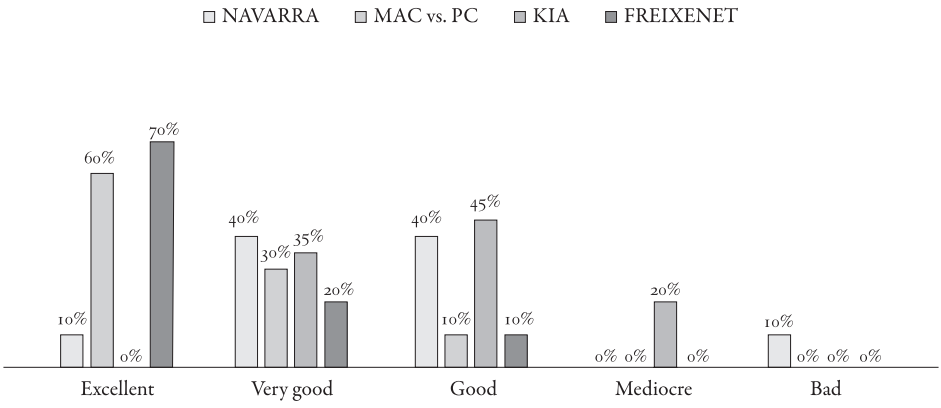
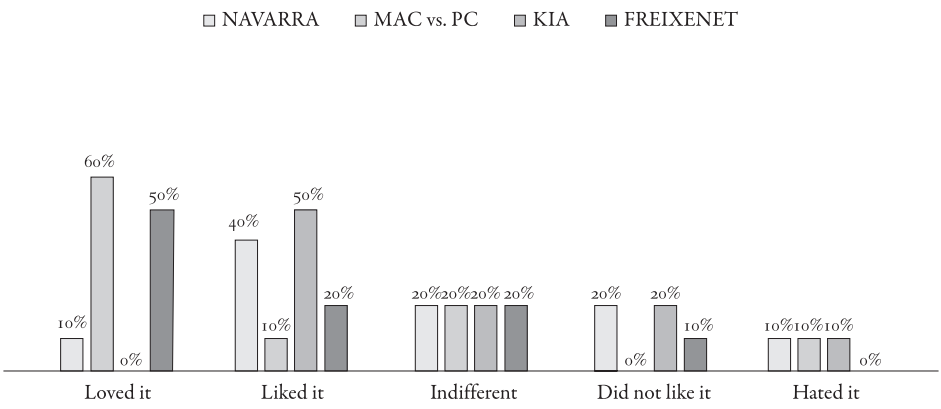


Figure 3. Personal Reaction



The commercials which were rated highest with regard to quality and aesthetic value are Mac vs. PC and Freixenet. Overall, the informants also found these two commercials easy to understand—contrary to what has been said in terms of the correlation between cognitive effort and aesthetic pleasure by some scholars (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005; Jeong 2008; Tendahl and Gibbs 2008; Tendahl 2009). As to the effect of metaphor on the ratings, this is particularly noticeable in the participants' explanation of why they liked or disliked the commercials, especially those for KIA and Freixenet. It would seem that the success of the Freixenet advert is attributed to its clever and/or unexpected use of imagery, as shown in the following comments retrieved from the responses in the questionnaire:

> It doesn't try to tell you anything explicitly, but it is clear. The metaphor is that these girls dancing in the water is the spume of a champagne bottle, but more striking is the complex interaction between this metaphor and the information represented through a metonym – opening champagne bottles is part of special and jubilant events. Clever!

> Of course, synchronised swimming has nothing much to do with drinking alcoholic beverages, and yet it showed attributes of Freixenet. The movements of the swimmers looked very flowing and explosive, dynamic, just as when you uncork a bottle of Freixenet. The sequences of scenes look like a cork popping and the sparkling wine popping/flowing out, imitating the behaviour of sparkling wine.

By contrast, KIA's relatively low scores may be attributed to what some participants qualified as a "dull" and/or "unclear" metaphor:

> The connection between tennis and cars is a little obscure.
>
> If the metaphors were more deep and more unique to the celebrity used they [KIA] could have gotten away with it. In general, I notice that most of the metaphors need text in order to be understood, which I think is a sign that they are a little weak. [*sic*]
>
> I found myself wondering about tennis and about the fact that it must be perceived of differently in some sub cultures. Not afternoon tea and homemade lemonade on a Sunday afternoon – my image of tennis. I don't suppose wondering about tennis is the aim of the ad ☺ Frankly, the metaphor sucks. [*sic*]
>
> From a film point of view it is really well made and has nice pictures and nice editing, but I did not understand it at all: I did not in the least understand the link between tennis and cars.

Another reason that may have influenced the participants' responses was their greater or lesser interest in cars, tennis, synchronised swimming or specific operating systems. For instance, one participant acknowledged that he would have rated the Mac vs. PC commercial higher if he were not a Linux user; another rated the quality of KIA's commercial very high, yet found it too aggressive for his taste and, hence, gave it a low score in terms of personal reaction; finally, one participant reacted negatively towards the swimmers in the Freixenet advert, claiming that, although attractive, they "have clips on their noses, so they look a bit odd for advertising champagne." In contrast, Nadal's aggressive style in the KIA commercial and the presence of the Spanish team in the Freixenet campaign were regarded very positively by many of the Spanish students filling in the questionnaire, who were well aware of the sporting personalities and their achievements and, in general, liked their appearance in the commercials.

A second batch of questions asked the participants about the message of each commercial, the metaphors chosen to convey it and the modes involved in these. The participants not only spotted the metaphors briefly described in section 3, but were particularly vocal about the strategies followed by the advertisers. Table 3 shows a summary of the results (the numbers stand for the number of participants "voting" for the modes involved in the metaphors in question):

Thus, the wine-son in the Navarra commercial was generally seen as a nicely brought-up adolescent from a wealthy, cultured traditional family—a qualification prompted in the most part by the actor's voice and the setting chosen for the commercial, both overlooked in my own analysis. They also paid great attention to the filmic—visual—qualities of the commercial, i.e., the setting and camera movements, and regarded images as a key strategy in the metaphor. The rest of the commercials follow a similar pattern. In the case of the Mac vs. PC sketch, most participants saw the virus metaphor as multimodal, e.g., two people commented that the faint piano music backgrounding the dialogue further contributed to Mac's simple, cool features, and six people related PC's sneezing to its propensity to

Table 3. Imagery in commercials

NAVARRA		
Figurative schemas	**Traits highlighted**	**Modes**
Metaphor		
WINE IS (ADOLESCENT) SON GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD	Good upbringing/origin = wine's quality and promising future	language* (37), image (4),
WINEMAKERS ARE FATHERS ⇒ WINES ARE SONS	Tradition + experience + care = high-quality and expensive wines + producers' pride	language + image (20)
EVERY SINGLE BOTTLE OF WINE IS ONE OF OUR SONS ⇒ MAKING WINE IS BRINGING UP A CHILD		* content + father's voice (quality, pitch, etc.)

MAC VS. PC		
Figurative schemas	**Traits highlighted**	**Modes**
Metaphor		
COMPUTERS ARE PEOPLE	Mac is immune to viruses + dynamic + cool + simple + youthful + modern + friendly	language (21), image (29), language + image (4), language + image + music (5), sound/sneeze (6)
COMPUTER PROBLEMS ARE ILLNESSES (contagion metaphor)		

KIA		
Figurative schemas	**Traits highlighted**	**Modes**
Metaphor		
CAR IS A SUCCESSFUL TENNIS PLAYER, A HIGH-PERFORMANCE CAR IS A HIGHLY-TRAINED ATHLETE	Power + speed + control + style + lightness + aggression + emotion Technology + macho image	image* (20), language (19), image + sound (18),
A POWERFUL CAR'S ENGINE IS LIKE A STRONG AND POWERFUL TENNIS STROKE	Responsiveness, endurance + manoeuvrability + stability + quality of performance Cool, sporty, successful "human" car	language + image + sound (4)
A HIGH-TECH CAR IS (LIKE) A MOUNTAIN/ WILDERNESS/IMPRESSIVE NATURE		*inc. lighting, colours etc.
A PERFECT CAR/MACHINE IS (LIKE) A HUMAN BODY		
DRIVING THIS CAR IS REACHING THE EDGE OF THE WORLD		
DRIVING THIS CAR IS BEING THE BOSS (LIKE NADAL IN TENNIS)		
CAR IS TENNIS MATCH, CAR IS A TENNIS BALL		
No metaphor (1 participant)		

FREIXENET

Figurative schemas	Traits highlighted	Modes
Metaphor		
CAVA IS AN EXPLOSION OF FRESHNESS, CHAMPAGNE'S BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS	explosiveness + elegance/class + freshness + luxury + traditional/	image (4), image + sound (36),
DRINK HAS A CHARACTER AND CONTROLLED ENERGY	timeless + spark + rhythm + energy	sound (21)
MOVEMENT OF *CAVA* WHEN OPENING BOTTLE IS DANCE	dynamic + sensual/sexual "bubbling"	
Metonymy	happiness/festiveness of	
SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING FOR OPENING AND DRINKING *CAVA*	drinking cava + unavailability (hard to obtain, only at Christmas	
flamenco from brand origin = Olympics)		
Simile		
WINE IS SPARKLING, SUCCESSFUL AND ELEGANT LIKE SWIMMING TEAM		
Synaesthesia		
SENSATIONS OF *CAVA* INSIDE MOUTH ARE SWIMMERS		
EACH SIP OF *CAVA* IS THE POUNDING RHYTHM OF FLAMENCO		

viruses, to which MAC computers are not victim. They also identified more metaphors than personification in the KIA and Freixenet commercials, and construed the metaphors in them from several modes.

Indeed, although the participants' comments on metaphor may well have been guided by the questionnaire itself (e.g., they were asked explicitly about the modes cuing the metaphors in the commercials), overall, they understood the metaphors in a holistic way in the sense that all modes appear to have contributed to cueing the metaphors discussed in the questionnaire. The only exception here is the Navarra commercial which, as pointed out by all the participants, has language as the mode instantiating the source in the metaphor (i.e., the FAMILY scenario) and only reveals the metaphorical target (the wine) after the camera shows the bottle on the table. When discussing the metaphors in the remaining commercials, the participants were less specific, and appeared to draw information from several sources or modes at once. This is particularly interesting with regards to the combination of images and sound, mostly because the latter mode remains relatively unexplored in multimodal metaphor (but see Forceville 2008, 2009a, 2012), yet its contribution to the metaphorical quality of the commercials was easily identified and commented upon by some of the participants, as will be discussed below.

As to the interpretation of the metaphors in the four commercials, the participants spotted the basic metaphor in each commercial, even if they differed in their degree of elaboration of some of the metaphors and, above all, in their comments on the modes

involved in their instantiation. Overall, all the participants appeared to be comfortable discussing visual cues, e.g., close ups, colours, light, or explicit images like, for instance, the final tree-like arrangement of the swimmers in the Freixenet commercial, which six people related to Christmas (hence, proposing the metaphor FREIXENET IS CHRISTMAS). However, not all of them were so aware of the metaphorical potential of sound or music in advertising. In this regard, familiarisation with the source domain involved in the metaphors seemed to play a major role, and was particularly noticeable in comments—as well as in the lack thereof—about the KIA commercial. Some of the participants' comments are reproduced (verbatim) below:

> THE CAR IS RAFA NADAL Nadal's qualities are exploited in order to describe the car. As the Spanish tennis player is a symbol or power and strength, it could be said that THE CAR IS POWER. Besides, Rafa Nadal is well-known for his precision; consequently, THE CAR IS PRECISION. In addition, Rafa Nadal is defined by his resistance and body coordination; THE CAR IS DURABILITY, THE CAR IS STABILITY (easy to be driven). Metaphors are also present in the slogan. "The quest for perfection" Rafa Nadal is perfection like THE CAR IS PERFECTION.

> In this case, it is the movements of the player that carry most of the metaphors. For instance, when Nadal is serving, the car is being started, when he is returning the ball, the driver is changing gear (i.e. the more powerful the stroke, the more power the engine gains), he jumps for returning just like the car leaps over a slope. Besides, the audience can hear how Nadal's feet slip when the car is skidding. Furthermore, the astounding advancements in motor industry are represented in relation to the hawk-eye technology in tennis. What is more, "The quest for perfection continues" stands as a clear referent to the constant innovation developed in this industry as well as to the player's continuously training. Nadal's statement "Who's next?" is obviously defying both his and the company's competence. That is why, at the end of the commercial, both player and car are standing on the edge of the precipice.

> Nadal (one of the best tennis players of the world) symbolizes the quality of the car. The movements of the tennis ball represent each of the movements of the car. The service represents the moment in which the car starts. The moment in which Nadal stops represents the moment in which the car brakes. Nadal's leap symbolizes the moment in which the car jumps a little. The agility of Nadal's movements represents the efficiency of the movements and power of the car.

> This adverts compares the movements of a sportsman with the movement of a car, the skidding, accelerating, jumping through the mountain and the low hills is similar to the movement of Nadal running, jumping and changing direction in the court.

These passages suggest that the students were familiarised with tennis in general (e.g., their knowledge of the hawk-eye technology used in tournaments to check whether a given shot is in or out) and with Nadal in particular, which made it easier to identify

the traits of the car foregrounded in the commercial via the tennis metaphor. The role of cultural background and/or knowledge in interpreting the information transferred via metaphor is even more noticeable in the case of the Freixenet commercial. Before taking this point further, I would like to consider the following passages—all of them from Spanish students:

> In this commercial the drops of water represent the bubbles of the champagne. The force of the water is the same as the strength of Freixenet and the girls are representing the sensations that the Cava produces in the mouth. Each of their one perfect movement describes the perfection of Freixenet and the swimsuit of the girls is as luxurious as the champagne. Additionally, the music is very representative of Spain and represents the power of each sip.

> In this advertisement most of the metaphors are conveyed by means of images and scenes of dances by the synchronised swimmers of the Spanish team. Nevertheless, we can find the first metaphor in the ad when the narrator makes reference to "el color reserva." The "reserva" colour does not exist but this is a way to show that Freixenet is a sparkling wine and that "reserva" is a type of best wine. The swimmers' movements simulate first the uncorking of the bottle of Freixenet, and then the bubbles and froth of the drink. The force and power of the product are accomplished by means of the extremely fast dynamic movements and jumps of the girls. To make the audience think that the swimmers are inside the wine glass, their garments, make-up as well as the color of the water is goldish. The music accompanying the spot consists of a very Spanish heel stamping since the company has in mind the target audience to which they want to address the product. Last but not least, the girls are mentioned at the end of the ad as if they were medals instead of people reflecting the success of Freixenet.

> Freixenet 2009: the opening and the ending of the dancing when a light rises portrays the cork of a *cava* bottle when opening . . . the music and the contrast between a fast running of the ad with some slow images suggest a good party night where the music is like heartbeats.

> At the beginning we can see how the swimmers represent a Freixenet bottle: the way in which it is uncorked, the drops they splash when you open it, and the girls' movements can be associated to the sensations that people feel when they drink it. Besides, at the end the way the girls are placed simulates the shape of the bottle. Finally, the soundtrack of the ad has to do with the sound that bubbles make when you open a bottle of champagne. There is no Christmas without Freixenet.

Indeed, synaesthetically relating the dynamism of the swimmers to "the sensations that the Cava produces in the mouth," pointing to the quality implicit in the Reserva label, equating the commercial's soundtrack to "a good party night" as well as regarding it as a consumer-oriented strategy, and claiming that the whole commercial suggests that "there is no Christmas without Freixenet" points to the students' familiarity with both the source and target in the metaphor.

The comments above, suggest, therefore, that viewers' reactions to advertising campaigns and the metaphors included in them are very much influenced by the knowledge they have of the domains which provide the sources in the metaphors—regardless of the way those are cued or instantiated. This, in turn, reflects the impact of cultural factors in metaphor interpretation—both those characterising broad cultural milieus as well as those particular to the more "local" cultures which articulate them like, for instance, Castilla-La Mancha, where *flamenco* is as popular as it is in Andalucía and is frequently played at parties. Accordingly, the greatest elaboration of and personal involvement with the metaphors in the KIA and Freixenet commercials came from Spanish participants familiarised with tennis (and, particularly, clay court tennis), Rafael Nadal, flamenco, and *cava*. These were the participants who related Nadal's grunts and clay-sliding noises to some of the car's properties (regardless of the explicit connection between them in the commercial), and recognised the sound in Freixenet as a zapateado, which forcefully cues the sounds of *cava* insides a glass or the celebratory quality of this wine.

In summary, although the advertisers' choices of metaphor did not seem to affect the message conveyed by the different commercials, it did have an impact on the participants' personal reaction towards it—KIA and Navarra wines being a case in point of easy, yet slightly less appealing commercials when compared to the other two. Neither did the number of modes involved seem to influence the intelligibility of the metaphors expressed, despite some participants (particularly, non-Spanish students) missing some of the cues, especially the aural cues. Rather, the participants' reaction appears to be highly motivated by personal factors, i.e. their familiarisation with the entities involved which are closely related to their cultural background as well as personal inclinations, hobbies, consumption practices, etc.

5. Concluding remarks

The main aim in this paper has been to analyse the ways in which imagery may be instantiated *via* language, images, sounds etc. in commercials, and the contribution of these modes to the metaphors, metonymies and similes used to promote alcoholic drinks, cars and operating systems. The combination of language, sounds and images is seen as enhancing the figurative portrayal of these products, while also underlying the complexity of the metaphors involved. This is particularly the case in the KIA and Freixenet commercials, both of which show various—related—metaphors cued by a combination of images, language and sounds plus montage effects.

Since complexity is generally regarded as having an impact on the way viewers interpret and react towards the metaphors involved, the second objective of this paper was to explore the views of sixty people on the commercials examined. Their answers suggest that, although the cues provided by some modes may go unnoticed, complexity is not an issue with regard to their attitude towards the commercial. Again, the participants'

commentary on the KIA and Freixenet commercials suggest that, overall, the reaction of viewers relies heavily upon their knowledge and preference towards the sources in the metaphors used and, in cases like *cava*, also the targets involved. The research presented here is, however, but a small contribution to what remains a fairly underexplored field within Cognitive Metaphor Theory.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire

(1) Do you think this is a good commercial? Evaluate its quality
1 (excellent) 2 (very good) 3 (good) 4 (mediocre) 5 (bad)
Justify your answer

(2) Did you find it difficult or easy to understand? Evaluate its difficulty
1 (really easy) 2 (easy) 3 (some difficulties) 4 (difficult) 5 (really difficult)
Justify your answer

(3) Did you like the commercial?
1 (loved it) 2 (liked it) 3 (indifferent) 4 (did not like it) 5 (hated it)
Justify your answer

(4) What message(s) is this advertisement giving?
(5) Which traits of the product are particularly highlighted? How do you know?
(6) Is there anything that particularly strikes you in the commercial?
(7) The commercial exploits a metaphor. Can you describe it? Which are the cues for the metaphor in the commercial (language, images, sounds, etc.)?
General comments (if any)

Name:
Age:
Nationality:
Do you give your consent to publish the results of this questionnaire?
Signature:

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The Syntax of the Confirmatory Pragmatic Particle *Innit*

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In the present paper a syntactic analysis is put forward for the particle *innit* within a cartographic approach to pragmatic particles and a theory of speech acts. I claim here that when functioning as facilitative and epistemic, *innit* is not a non-canonical question tag, but rather a confirmatory pragmatic particle that requires the addressee to confirm that the proposition asserted is treated as common ground. Furthermore, the fact that the confirmatory particle *innit* is inherently negative explains some parallelisms between the syntax of declarative clauses containing *innit*, the syntax of questions with question tags and the syntax of negated polar questions where negation is interpreted high (outside Tense Phrase).

Keywords: *innit*; pragmatic particle; speech act; Force Phrase; common ground; illocutionary operator

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La sintaxis de la partícula pragmática confirmatoria *innit*

En este artículo se propone un análisis sintáctico de la partícula *innit* mediante un enfoque cartográfico de las partículas pragmáticas y la teoría de actos de habla. Defendemos que cuando *innit* funciona como partícula facilitativa e epistémica no es una *question tag*, sino una partícula pragmática confirmatoria que requiere que el interlocutor confirme que la proposición ha de ser tratada como parte del *common ground*. Además, la negatividad inherente de la partícula confirmatoria *innit* explica algunos paralelismos entre la sintaxis de las oraciones declarativas con *innit*, la sintaxis de las preguntas con *question tags* y la sintaxis de las preguntas polares negadas donde la negación se interpreta en una posición alta (fuera de Sintagma Tiempo).

Palabras clave: *innit*; partícula pragmática; acto de habla; Sintagma Fuerza; common ground; operador de ilocución

1. Introduction

The particle *innit* has been defined in the literature as an invariant question and follow-up tag that behaves non-canonically (Sailor 2011; Palacios Martínez 2013).[1] Although it is frequently used in British English, it is also attested in other varieties of English such as Malaysian English, Hong-Kong English, Indian English and White South African English among others (Kortmann and Lunkenheimer 2011). In this article, I argue that when a speaker uses *innit* to request the addressee's confirmation on the asserted proposition, as in (1)—where S1, S2 and S3 indicate three different speakers—it should be analysed as a pragmatic particle that constrains a higher-level explicature (Espinal 2011, 65). That is, in (1), *innit* indicates that S2 expects the asserted proposition (*It is a lot*, which repeats the assertion made by S1 *That's a hell of a lot of people*) to be the most relevant in the discourse context. In addition, by using *innit*, S2 seeks the addressees' confirmation of the asserted proposition, *p*, which s/he obtains, since S3 replies with a confirmatory answer. The claim that *innit* is a pragmatic particle has implications for its formal and pragmatic analysis.

(1) S1: That's a hell of a lot of people.
S2: It is a lot, innit.
S3: Yes. (BNC, JT3 367)
(Krug 1998, 155)

As argued in Krug (1998), *innit* has resulted from a process of lexicalisation (Traugott 1994): the invariable tag question *isn't it* has become monomorphemic and opaque, and is, therefore, no longer divisible into the three lexical items that it comprises, namely the third person singular present form *is,* the negative marker *not* and the third person singular neuter subject pronoun *it*. In this respect, *innit* is different from other invariant tags or pragmatic particles such as *right*, *yes*, *no* and *eh*.

Before lexicalising into *innit*, however, the tag *isn't it* extended to persons other than the third person singular, to subjects in the main clause other than *it*, and to other tenses in the main clause other than the present. In fact, this change is, according to Krug (1998, 149), not exclusive to the tag *isn't it*, as the same phenomenon is also attested in other tag questions in different non-standard varieties of English. For instance, the forms *don't* and *doesn't* often merge into *don't* for all persons in non-standard English, whereas *ain't* may replace several negated auxiliaries (e.g., *be*, *do* and *have*) (cf. Anderwald 2002). There would therefore seem to be a tendency towards the simplification of the English question tag system.

Different pragmatic functions have been identified for *innit* in the literature (cf. Krug 1998; Andersen 2001; Stenström et al. 2002; Palacios Martínez 2011, 2012 and

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2013); the most common are listed in (2a-f) for the so-called *question tag innit* and in (2g and 2h) for the *follow-up tag innit*. Each of the listed functions is illustrated in (3).

(2) a. Facilitative: it asks for the speaker's agreement.
b. Epistemic: it asks for the speaker's verification.
c. Challenging: it expresses aggression.
d. Filler: to keep conversation going.
e. Dramatic effect: it introduces something important in the narration.
f. Softening device: it functions as a request.
g. Emphatic: it emphasises something.
h. Emotional: it expresses surprise and incredulity.
(adapted from Palacios Martínez 2012)

(3) a. Those old games, they're so shit, *innit*? (Andersen 2001, 119)
b. You told your mum yesterday, *innit*? (Andersen 2001, 119)
c. A: Got any new games for your computer?
B: No, it's fucked, *innit*? You must have fucked it up. (Andersen 2001, 119)
d. W1: yeah, but the insurance company are probably gonna pay erm, through me *innit*?
W2: oh yeah {unclear} {nv} laugh {/nv} COLT, 56-57
(Stenström and Jörgensen 2008, 647)

e. Susie: (...) But I was walking down <??> the street </> and this Turkishman, scratching his nose and, listen, <nv>mimicking bringing up phlegm and spitting </nv> in front of me, there's me, ah ah what are you doing! He started talking to me <unclear>
Ryan: <unclear> [<nv>laugh</nv>]
Susie: [Through his nose *innit*?] Listen, my cousin does, sometimes goes, watch this ... through his nose. (...) (Stenström et al. 2002, 171)
f. Grace: What Mothercare was it? What Mothercare?
Samantha: All I'm looking for [<unclear>]
Dawn: [<unclear> it's wicked, there's only one Mothercare *innit* Grace.
(Andersen 2001, 124)
g. Lynne: He thought we were lying. <nv>laugh</nv>Can you imagine, <unclear> [lying?]
Caroline: [*Innit*! Oh my god] I would just die! (140804/1:33)
(Andersen 2001, 146)
h. A: I've never, I've never heard Jim's voice before.
B: *Innit*?
A: Never. (COB132707/302) (Palacios Martínez 2011, 120)

In this paper, I only focus on (2a and 2b), the facilitative and epistemic functions of *innit*, which I will group under the label *confirmatory innit*, as they both have in common the fact that, by using *innit*, the speaker is ultimately double-checking on the truth of the expressed proposition. As Palacios Martínez (2012) puts it, in the case of epistemic *innit*, the speaker double-checks the truth of *p* or *not p*, whereas by using facilitative *innit*, the speaker is double-checking the addressee's agreement with the truth of *p* or *not p*. Other so-called invariant question tags such as *right*, *yes*, *no* and *eh* fulfil a similar function. Hence, it seems highly plausible that the formal account developed in this work is also applicable to them.

The paper is organised as follows. In section two, I report three pieces of evidence discussed in Palacios Martínez (2011, 2012 and 2013) that show that *innit* departs from the usual behaviour of other question tags in English. Section three is devoted to introducing some theoretical background on pragmatic particles and speech acts that will be central to the account of the syntax of confirmatory *innit* that I put forward in section four. Finally, section five concludes the article.

2. The Non-canonical Behaviour of *Innit* as a Question Tag

By analysing the data in the Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Language (COLT) and the London Linguistic Innovators Corpus, Palacios Martínez (2011, 2012 and 2013) describes a number of crucial respects in which *innit* does not behave like a canonical question tag. These are the following.

Firstly, *innit* may appear as a tag to clauses with *be*, as in (4a), *have*, as in (4b), or replacing *do* in the question tag, as in (4c). It can also occur as a tag to clauses with modal verbs like *can,* as in (4d), *could*, as in (4e), *will, would,* as in (4f), *might,* as in (4g), *must*, as in (4h), and *should*, as in (4i).[2]

(4) a. if as long as her clothes look alright underneath then it's not too bad *innit*? (CO/135201/67)[3]
b. Oh, she got A levels, *innit*? (CO/B133203/385)
c. told, you told mum [yesterday *innit*?] (CO/B139610/9)
d. you can have it for Friday, *innit*? (CO/B138301/332)
e. could have got a bigger size *innit* Dawn? (CO/B134901/297)
f. [oh my god] I would just die, *innit*? (CO/B140802/46)
g. She might wear her shorts thing *innit*? (CO/135201/67)
h. they must have the wrong place, *innit*? (CO/B135205/15)
i. should be in all day *innit*? (CO/B138301/20)

[2] Palacios Martínez (2012) analysed 305 tokens of *innit* in COLT and found that 171 (68.95%) occurred with *be* in the main clause, 42 with *do* (16.93%), 15 with *have* (6.05%), 6 with *can* (2.42%), 3 with *will*, 3 with *might* and 3 with *would* (1.21%), 2 with *must* (0.87%) and a single token each of *should* and *could* (0.4%). The category "Other" was also included, with only 1 token (0.4%).

[3] All the examples in (4) are taken from Palacios Martínez (2013), as are the examples in (5) and (6).

Secondly, *innit* occurs with clauses that have *it* as their main subject, as is the case in (4a), but it also occurs with other pronouns, such as *I*, in (4f), *you*, in (4c, d), *s/he*, in (4b, g), *they*, as in (4h), and also the expletive *there*.[4]

Thirdly, the particle *innit* may not agree with the tense of the main clause, as illustrated in (5), where the verb is in the past.[5]

(5) You forgot your book *innit* (CO/135201/67)

Finally, *innit* may optionally exhibit polarity reversal. That is, while *innit* can occur with positive sentences (thus showing reverse polarity with respect to the main clause it tags), it can also occur with negative sentences, as illustrated in (6).

(6) a. If as long as her clothes look alright underneath it's not too bad *innit* (CO/135201/67)
b. didn't have a hair cut then *innit*? (CO/B134803/141)
c. A: No, don't give anyone else the work then.
B: No, that you haven't marked, that you haven't marked *innit*. (CO/B134401/311)
d. You wouldn't think so *innit*? (CO/B132707/149)

In the present article I pursue the idea that confirmatory *innit* is not a question tag at all, although it is obvious that its use often yields an effect similar to that of a canonical question tag. This is shown in (7), where some of the sentences with *innit* from (4) have been paraphrased with canonical question tags.

(7) a. Oh, she got A levels, didn't she?
b. told, you told mum [yesterday], didn't you?
c. you can have it for Friday, can't you?
d. [oh my god] I would just die, wouldn't I?

Syntactically, however, *innit* is best analysed as a pragmatic particle (Espinal 2011) that encodes linguistic information that is relevant to the interpretation of the utterance, but that does not directly contribute to the truth-conditions of the proposition (Wilson and Sperber 1993, Espinal 2011).

As shown in (8), sentences with *innit* can also be paraphrased with what Krifka (forthcoming) labels as *negated polarity questions*, which are polar questions where

[4] According to Palacios Martínez (2012), out of a total of 252 clauses with an overt subject, 152 had *it* (60.32%), 34 had *you* (13.49%), 20 had *he* (7.94%), 15 had *they* (5.95%) and 15 had *she* (5.95%), *I* was the subject in 8 clauses (3.17%), 7 had *we* (2.78%) and 1 had expletive *there* (0.40%).

[5] 18 out of the 260 analysed tokens contained past tense.

negation is interpreted high in the clause (i.e. in a position outside the proposition) (Ladd 1981; Romero and Han 2004; Asher and Reese 2007; Krifka forthcoming; among others). Therefore, a formal analysis of *innit* should also be able to capture this parallelism.

(8) a. Oh, didn't she get A levels?
b. told, didn't you tell mum [yesterday?]
c. can't you have it for Friday?
d. [oh my god] wouldn't I just die?

In the next section, I first present Espinal's (2011) account of pragmatic particles and then discuss Krifka's (forthcoming) analysis of negated polarity questions within a framework for the interpretation of speech acts. Reviewing these two particular pieces of research is crucial for the syntactic and pragmatic characterisation of confirmatory *innit* that is given in section four, where I defend the view that the confirmatory pragmatic particle *innit* does not behave like a canonical question tag because it is not a question tag syntactically speaking. Such a claim has an important implication for the study of question tags: namely, that *invariant* questions tags (e.g. *innit*, but also *right?, eh?, yes?*, cf. Sailor 2011), as they have been referred to in the literature (Tottie and Hoffmann 2006; Columbus 2009a, 2009b; Torgersen et al. 2011; among others), do not exist as a separate class of question tags. Rather they are pragmatic particles that fulfil a communicative function that is similar to that served by question tags.

3. Theoretical Background: Espinal (2011) and Krifka (forthcoming)

Addressing the syntactic and semantic nature of pragmatic particles in Catalan—a Romance language—Espinal (2011, 49) mentions a number of characteristics that are common to them. These characteristics are listed in (9), and can be used to evaluate whether *innit* qualifies as a pragmatic particle or not.

(9) a. They constitute a closed class.
b. They do not belong to any of the three basic classes of lexical categories: Nouns, Verbs and Adjectives.
c. They are clearly functional.
d. They codify different types of linguistic information relevant for utterance interpretation.
e. They have the possibility of occurring as parenthetical expressions, or simply as isolated syntactic items.
f. Their meaning is underspecified by grammar.
g. They do not contribute to truth-conditional effects.

For a start, it is clear that *innit* fulfils the property in (9b): it is not a Noun, a Verb or an Adjective but a lexicalised expression. Palacios Martínez (2012) provides data, reproduced

here as (10) and (11), which leads to the conclusion that *innit* can occur parenthetically (i.e. not as part of the host structure), as in (10a-c), or in isolation, as in (11), thus aligning itself with pragmatic particles through meeting the condition (9e).

(10) a. Zack: everyone needs to calm down. Carved out
Alex: *innit*. Need to calm down a little. (LIDHAVY)
b. no I'm not that bad though but there is *innit* there's a scary one in the club (LIDHAVY)
c. Tina: #2 /er he goes after/ everyone *innit* every single person (LIDHAVY)

(11) Zack: but yeah when you're trying to do good man don't wanna see that though
Alex: *innit*? (LIDHAVY)

Furthermore, *innit* also seems to fulfil the property in (9g): it clearly does not contribute to truth-conditional effects, as its presence/absence does not alter the proposition that is being asserted; and it also meets (9f), as illustrated by the fact that the same particle exhibits a wide range of functions or meanings, something that has been noted previously in the literature (Krug 1998; Andersen 2001; Stenström et al. 2002; Palacios Martínez 2011, 2012 and 2013).

Later in the section, it will become clear that *innit* is clearly functional (9c), and that it codifies linguistic information that is relevant to utterance interpretation, (9d): by using it the speaker is double-checking either the truth of the proposition asserted or double-checking whether the addressee agrees with the proposition asserted by the speaker, both of which are functions related to procedural information that constrains the communicated proposition.

For all the reasons discussed above, and given the striking differences between the behaviour of canonical question tags and that of *innit*, I conclude that it is more desirable to put forward an analysis of *innit* within what we know about the syntax of pragmatic particles than doing so within the syntax of question tags. To do so, it is pertinent at this point to outline the main aspects of Espinal's (2011) analysis of pragmatic particles, with special emphasis on those that are defined as confirmatory.

Espinal (2011) makes use of Rizzi's (1997, 2001, 2004) and Cinque's (1999, 2002, 2006) cartographic projects to analyse the various pragmatic particles that exist in Catalan. The cartographic approach aims at establishing "the right structural maps for natural language syntax" (Cinque and Rizzi 2008, 42) and it endorses the view that the V(erb) P(hrase), the I(nflection) P(hrase) and the C(omplementizer) P(hrase) are split into a number of dedicated functional heads that allow different syntactic features to be appropriately checked.[6] Following these scholars, Espinal (2011) proposes the clausal structure in (12).[7]

[6] See Larson (1988) and Pollock (1989) for arguments on split VP and split IP, respectively. See also Cinque (1999) for a hierarchy of Adverb Phrases in the IP domain.

[7] The heads Voc(ative) and Excl(amative) are occupied by vocative and exclamative particles.

(12) [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{VocP}}$ Voc [$_{\text{ExclP}}$ Excl [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ Force [$_{\text{TopP}}$ Top [$_{\text{FocP}}$ Foc [$_{\text{TopP}}$ Top [$_{\text{FinP}}$ Fin [$_{\text{PolP}}$ Pol [$_{\text{IP}}$ Infl]]]]]]]]]]

(Espinal 2011, 50)

Pol^{o} (Laka 1990) encodes the polarity of the clause, whereas Fin^{o} expresses whether the clause is finite or non-finite. Foc^{o} hosts foci and *wh*-phrases, whereas Top^{o} hosts topics (either below or above Foc^{o}). Both Foc^{o} and Top^{o} are optional. Force^{o} determines the illocutionary force of the clause (declarative, interrogative, relative, imperative), and Ground^{o} (Bianchi 2004) is occupied by known or presupposed material.

In the specific case of confirmatory particles, these are assumed to occupy the Specifier of ForceP, in line with Hernanz and Rigau (2006) and Prieto and Rigau (2007). This is illustrated with the Spanish particle *verdad* lit. "truth" in (13) and with Catalan *oi* in (14). The complementizer *que* is the head of ForceP (Espinal 2011, 65).

(13) a. ¿*Verdad* que Pedro es inteligente? (Spanish)
PART that Pedro is intelligent
'Isn't it true that Pedro is intelligent? / 'Isn't Pedro intelligent?' / 'Pedro is intelligent, isn't he?'

b. [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *Verdad* [$_{\text{Force}}$ que [$_{\text{IP}}$ Pedro es inteligente]

(14) a. *Oi* que ha arribat en Pere? (Catalan)
PART that has arrived the Pere
'Isn't it true that Pere has arrived?' / 'Hasn't Pere arrived?' / 'Pere has arrived, hasn't he?'

b. [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *Oi* [$_{\text{Force}}$ que [$_{\text{IP}}$ ha arribat en Pere]

Both (13) and (14) are also possible with the particle occurring in a sentence-final position. This is illustrated in (15).

(15) a. Pedro es inteligente, *¿verdad?* (Spanish)
Pedro is intelligent PART
'Pedro is intelligent, isn't he?'

b. Ha arribat en Pere, *oi*? (Catalan)
has arrived the Pere PART
'Pere has arrived, hasn't he?'

Espinal (2011, 65) argues that by using these confirmatory particles, the speaker assumes that *p*, the proposition asserted, is part of the *common ground* and seeks confirmation for the truth of *p*. Such particles may occur both with affirmative and negative sentences. With affirmative sentences, as in (13)-(15), the speaker expects to confirm *p*, whereas with negative sentences s/he intends to confirm *not p*, as in (16), which contains the negative counterparts of (15).

(16) a. Pedro no es inteligente, *¿verdad?* (Spanish)
Pedro not is intelligent PART
'Pedro is not intelligent, is he?'

b. No ha arribat en Pere, *oi*? (Catalan)
not has arrived the Pere PART
'Pere hasn't arrived, has he?'

In the remaining part of this section, I summarise the main points of Krifka's (forthcoming) analysis of negated polarity questions within a theory of speech acts, with the aim of showing, in section four, that the combination of Espinal's (2011) account of pragmatic particles and Krifka's analysis of biased questions allows us to explain not only the non-canonical behaviour of *innit* as a question tag, but also the points that it has in common with both. Herein lies the novelty of the present account, which distinguishes it from other descriptive and/or purely pragmatic approaches to *innit*: not only does it constitute an attempt to offer new insights into the grammar of *innit*, but it also relates its syntax with that of other structures with which *innit* has not previously been shown to relate.

Before looking at the details of Krifka's proposal, however, let us introduce the problem he focuses on. As previously noticed by Ladd (1981), a sentence like (17) is ambiguous in the sense that it allows negation to be interpreted outside the proposition, as in (17a), or inside the proposition, as in (17b). That is, the reading in (17a) would be understood to follow from the fact that negation is expressed in a position that is high in the clause and external to the proposition, whereas (17b) would be analysed as containing an instance of negation that is internal to the proposition.

Actually, the question in (17) can be easily disambiguated by means of the positive polarity item (PPI) *too* and the negative polarity item (NPI) *either*. As the licensing requirements of PPIs and NPIs involve a very particular (anti-)licensing relationship with negation, testing which reading of (17) is associated with *too* and which with *either* can be taken as a diagnostic for the position of negation in the clause. As is well known, PPIs cannot occur under the scope of negation, whereas NPIs are ungrammatical if they are not bound by negation. A sentence such as (18), therefore, can only be grammatical if negation is not part of the proposition and does not bind the PPI *too*. Hence, the only interpretation of (18) is (17a).

(17) Isn't there a vegetarian restaurant around here?
a. Speaker wants confirmation that there is a vegetarian restaurant around here.
b. Speaker wants confirmation that there is no vegetarian restaurant here.
(Krifka forthcoming, 1)

(18) Isn't there a vegetarian restaurant around here, *too*?

A sentence such as (19), by contrast, can only be grammatical if *either* is bound by clause-mate negation, as required by NPIs. This disambiguates its meaning towards (17b).

(19) Isn't there a vegetarian restaurant around here, *either*?

After Ladd (1981), a number of scholars have developed other accounts that try to make sense of the ambiguity in (17) (cf. van Rooij and Šafařová 2003; Romero and Han 2004; Reese 2007; Asher and Reese 2007; Repp 2013). However, as discussed in Krifka (forthcoming, 3 and ff.) they are all problematic to varying extents.

For van Rooij and Šafařová (2003), for example, when a polarity question is based on a sentence denoting a proposition *p*, then *p* is of more pragmatic utility than *not p*. Hence, in the case of a negated polarity question like (17), the interpretation in (17a) becomes possible if the question is assumed to be based on the negation of the sentence *There is a vegetarian restaurant around here* (i.e., ¬'there is a vegetarian restaurant around here'), for which *not p* is of more pragmatic utility than *p*. While this view easily accommodates the bias of negated polarity questions, it cannot explain why the negative polarity item *either* cannot co-occur with (17) when the intended interpretation is (17a).

In Romero and Han's (2004) account, by contrast, the ambiguity in (17) is assumed to follow from the scope of a pragmatic operator, VERUM, with respect to negation. VERUM indicates how strongly a proposition can be taken to be part of the common ground (CG), and interacts with negation to yield the ambiguity in (17): while in (17a) negation takes scope over VERUM (¬VERUM[ϕ]), thus expressing (20a), in (17b), VERUM takes scope over negation (VERUM[¬ϕ]), hence expressing (20b).

(20) a. ¬VERUM(ϕ): 'It is not for sure that ϕ should be added to the CG'
b. VERUM(¬ϕ): 'It is for sure that ¬ϕ should be added to the CG'

(Krifka forthcoming, 3)

Again, Krifka (forthcoming, 4) discusses a number of problems with Romero and Han's (2004) proposal: first, it is not clear how VERUM becomes available by proposing negation to an auxiliary; secondly, the authors do not explain why questions like (21) are biased (their interpretation is like [17b]); and finally, given the fact that VERUM is a pragmatic operator and not a proposition, it is not clear how or why it can be negated, as in (20a) (¬VERUM[ϕ]).

(21) Is there no vegetarian restaurant around here?

In Repp (2013), another operator is postulated alongside VERUM. This is FALSUM, which, indicates, as does VERUM, whether the proposition should be considered part of the CG. Repp asserts that in (17a) high negation expresses FALSUM, thus indicating that the proposition should not be considered part of the CG. Since (17) is a question, the speaker is asking the addressee to consider the degree to which *p* should not be added to the CG. In other words, the speaker is asking the addressee whether s/he would deny *p*. One issue that is not, though, clarified in Repp's proposal is why it is possible for

negation to be propositional—as in (17b)—or the pragmatic operator FALSUM, as in (17a).

Finally, in Reese (2007) and Asher and Reese (2007) negated polarity questions are claimed to be a combination of an assertion and a question that is a request for the addressee to acknowledge, contradict or confirm the speaker's assertion. This analysis has some advantages, such as, for instance, the fact that it correctly predicts that NPIs like *either* should not be possible in negated polarity questions (which are assumed to be non-negated assertions), or the fact that negated polarity questions are compatible with an expression like *after all*, which occurs with assertions. However, Reese's and Asher and Reese's analysis has a crucial problem: it does not explain how syntactic high negation contributes to the assertion that is then tagged by the question speech act.

In order to explain the ambiguity in (17), Krifka proposes an analysis of outer negation within Cohen and Krifka's (2011) theory of speech acts as transitions between commitment spaces. While he builds on Ladd's (1981) intuition that high negation is syntactically high enough to scope over the whole proposition, he also aligns himself with Romero and Han (2004) and Repp (2013) in assuming that negation takes scope over a speech-act operator ASSERT. Unlike previous accounts, however, Krifka explicitly discusses which mechanism is involved in the negation of a speech act. In line with Reese (2007) and Asher and Reese (2007), negated polarity questions are assumed to involve both an assertion and a question, with outer negation serving the purpose of allowing the speaker to ask whether the addressee would refrain from asserting *p* (Krifka forthcoming, 2). In the case of assertions, the type of speech act of interest in this paper, two commitments are expressed: first, a commitment to the proposition by the speaker, and second, a call on the addressee to share such commitment to the proposition, such that the proposition *p* becomes part of the CG (i.e., so that the addressee accepts the truth of the proposition).

In line with Krifka (forthcoming, 11), I assume propositions to syntactically correspond to Tense Phrases (TP). These are rendered speech acts thanks to the presence of illocutionary operators, which are assumed to be located in ForceP, in the left periphery of the clause. The syntax of an assertion like (22) would be (23), for instance, where *ASS* stands for the speech-act operator ASSERT. Notice that, in this particular respect, Krifka's account coincides with the assumptions made in Espinal (2011) (cf. (12) above) for clausal architecture.

(22) There is a vegetarian restaurant here.

(23) $[_{\text{ForceP}}\ [_{\text{ForceP}}\ \textit{ASS}\ [\text{TP}\ \text{there is a vegetarian restaurant here}]]]$

(Krifka forthcoming, 11)

Krifka (forthcoming, 24) introduces another speech-act operator when discussing the syntax of declarative questions like (24) (cf. Gunlogson 2002). This is REQUEST, which

operates on ASSERT *p*, as shown in (25), and constitutes an alternative to QU(estion), an operator used in interrogatives that involves movement of the copula, as in (26). [8]

(24) There is a vegetarian restaurant here?

(25) [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* [$_{\text{TP}}$ there is a vegetarian restaurant here?]]]
(Krifka forthcoming, 25, example [49])

(26) [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *QU*+Is$_i$ [$_{\text{TP}}$ there t$_i$ a vegetarian restaurant here?]]]

The declarative question in (24) is biased towards *p* being true. According to Krifka (forthcoming, 25) this is so because (24) involves REQUEST. By constructing the question with REQUEST and not by means of a *QU* operator, the speaker who utters (24) is indicating that s/he does not take *p* and *not p* to both be possible; rather s/he shows that only the option where *p* is asserted is considered.

Negated polarity questions like (17) (with the interpretation of [17a]) are analysed as "a request question, with a denegation that scopes over the assertion operator" (Krifka forthcoming, 29). This is shown in (27), where negation is a speech-act operator rather than an instance of propositional negation.

(27) [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{NegP}}$ is$_i$-n't [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* [$_{\text{TP}}$ there e$_i$ a vegetarian restaurant here]]]]
(Krifka forthcoming, 29, example [60])

By using a negated polarity question like (17) (interpreted as [17a]), a speaker asks whether the addressee would reject the assertion of *p* (Krifka forthcoming, 30). As discussed in the next section, I show that a declarative clause with the confirmatory particle *innit* achieves the same effect. I also show that an analysis along the lines of Krifka's makes it possible to explain why declarative sentences with *innit* can be interpreted not only as declaratives with canonical question tags, but also as negated polarity questions with high negation.

4. A Syntactic Analysis for Confirmation *Innit*

Given that, as has been noted earlier in the paper, most of the sentences in (4) (some of which have been repeated in [28] for convenience) can be paraphrased with declaratives followed by a canonical question tag, as in (29), and with negated polarity questions, as in (30), an analysis of the sentences in (28) that accommodates these similarities in a straightforward manner is highly desirable.

[8] Krifka (forthcoming, 25) assumes ForceP to be recursive in cases where a speech act needs to contain another speech act (e.g., *REQUEST* needs to embed another speech act, such as an *ASSERTION*). Hence, the (im)possibility of a given speech act to contain another regulates the recursivity of ForceP, thereby preventing its over-generation.

(28) a. Oh, she got A levels, *innit*? (CO/B133203/385)
b. told, you told mum [yesterday *innit*?] (CO/B139610/9)
c. you can have it for Friday, *innit*? (CO/B138301/332)
d. [oh my god] I would just die, *innit*? (CO/B140802/46)

(29) a. Oh, she got A levels, didn't she?
b. told, you told mum [yesterday], didn't you?
c. you can have it for Friday, can't you?
d. [oh my god] I would just die, wouldn't I?

(30) a. Oh, didn't she get A levels?
b. told, didn't you tell mum [yesterday?]
c. can't you have it for Friday?
d. [oh my god] wouldn't I just die?

Krifka (forthcoming, 27) argues that questions containing question tags, which are biased questions, involve the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition and restrict the addressee's reaction to either accepting *p* as part of the CG, or to asserting *not p* without having to reject treating *p* as CG. As such, they are more conciliatory than assertions without the question tag. Krifka does not however include any syntactic analysis of questions with question tags, so I propose one here.

I will assume, in line with Sailor (2011) and Barros and Craenenbroeck (2013), that questions with question tags involve VP ellipsis. That is, question tags are adjoined to the host clause (an assertion), and then affected by VP ellipsis. The syntax of the question tag in (28a) above is assumed to be as in (31) below, where the strikethrough indicates ellipsis.

(31) [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{NegP}}$ Did$_i$-n't [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* [$_{\text{TP}}$ she e$_i$ ~~get A levels~~]]]]

Notice that the analysis is very similar to the one Krifka (forthcoming) gives for negated polarity questions such as the one in (32a). As can be seen in (32b), ForceP contains a REQUEST operator that acts on the ASSERT operator (i.e. it requires the addressee to consider whether s/he can also be committed to the truth of *p* so that *p* can be taken to be part of the CG). As negation scopes over ASSERT, the speaker is actually asking the addressee whether the assertion of *p* (*She got A levels*) is to be excluded in favour of *not p* (*She didn't get A levels*).

(32) a. Didn't she get A levels?
b. [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{NegP}}$ Did$_i$-n't [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* [$_{\text{TP}}$ she e$_i$ get A levels]]]]

Let us now provide the syntactic structure I assume for (28a), which was produced with *innit*. Recall that Espinal (2011) claims that confirmatory particles occur in ForceP.

Adopting the clausal structure that she proposes, (28a) could be initially represented as follows:

(33) [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ she got A-levels]]]

Since the TP *she got A-levels* is an assertion, an ASSERT operator would also be present in ForceP (see footnote 8 above). This is illustrated in (34).

(34) [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ she got A-levels]]]]

My claim is that the particle *innit* triggers the presence of the REQUEST operator, as it requires the addressee to consider the truth of the asserted *p*.[9] The sentence in (34) is equivalent to a biased negative question such as (32a) due to the fact that negation (which is inherent to the particle *innit*, see section one) is in a scope position over the operator ASSERT. The same happens in (32b) after auxiliary movement.

(35) [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ she got A-levels]]]]]

One last point to clarify is how the correct word order for a declarative with confirmatory *innit* is derived. As shown in the examples in (4), (5) and (6), confirmatory *innit* tends to occur word-finally. However, in the structures in (33)-(35) it occupies a position to the left of the TP. After Spell-Out, however, *innit* surfaces to the right of the asserted proposition.

In what follows, I claim that the surface position of *innit* with respect to the TP it relates to crucially depends on the functional category GroundP, which, as can be seen in (12) above and in (33)-(35), is part of the clausal structure assumed in Espinal (2011). If one takes seriously the idea that the presence of *innit* indicates that the proposition (i.e., the TP) should be considered CG, then, it is possible to assume that a fourth step takes place in the derivation of a sentence like (28a) in addition to the three steps illustrated in (33)-(35). As shown in (36), the last step in the derivation of (28a) would be movement of TP to GroundP. Such movement would be motivated by an Edge Feature in the split CP, which attracts the TP to Spec, GroundP.[10]

[9] Krifka (forthcoming, 27) states that "REQUEST can also be expressed syntactically, in a similar way as QU, by triggering head movement of auxiliary verbs or copulas," as in (31). He also assumes that REQUEST can be expressed prosodically, specifically, by using the prosodic contour H% (cf. Beckman et al. 2005 for details on the ToBI prosodic annotation system).

[10] Remnant movement of IP to the Specifier of GroundP has also been proposed for other discourse-related phenomena that affect the surface word order of the sentence, such as right-dislocation of topics in Italian (cf. Frascarelli 2000 and ff., Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Samek-Lodovici 2005), French stylistic inversion (Poletto and Pollock 2004) and instances of sentence-final sentential negative marker NO in Italian (Poletto 2010). Furthermore, Yang (2008) relates Edge Feature-movement to discourse-effects.

(36) [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ She got A-levels$_{i}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ t$_{i}$]]]]]

Recall that by using the confirmation particle *innit*, the speaker is not only requesting the addressee to consider whether the assertion of *p* is to be excluded or not, but also whether *p* is to be taken as CG. I argue that *p* is in fact considered to be part of the CG by the speaker. If this situation is translated into syntactic terms, the entire TP should occupy a position in GroundP, the functional projection reserved for linguistic material that qualifies as CG. Assuming a copy and deletion theory of movement (Chomsky 1995), the relevant structure would be (37).

(37) [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ She got A-levels Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ she got A-levels]]]]]

While the Phonetic Form interprets the highest copy, as in (38a), resulting in the confirmatory particle *innit* surfacing to the right of the TP, the Logical Form interprets the lowest copy, as in (38b), with REQUEST scoping over *innit*, ASSERT and the TP, and *innit* scoping over ASSERT and the TP.

(38) a. [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ She got A-levels Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ ~~she got A-levels~~]]]]] (PF interpretation)
b. [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ ~~She got A-levels~~ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ she got A-levels]]]]] (LF interpretation)

As shown in section one, there are three ways in which *innit* and canonical question tags clearly diverge. First, *innit* can occur with a main clause containing auxiliaries other than *is*. Second, *innit* can occur with a main clause that contains a subject other than *it*. Third, *innit* can occur with a main clause that contains sentential negation. While these characteristics of *innit* are problematic for its analysis as a question tag, they are perfectly compatible with the proposal presented in this article, namely that *innit* is a pragmatic particle. As such, it is invariable and does not involve any VP ellipsis mechanism (cf. (31) above), nor does it require a mechanism of polarity reversal.

When *innit* occurs with a negative clause, as in (6d), repeated here as (39) for convenience, the syntactic and interpretive mechanism that has been developed for affirmative clauses with *innit* is the same.

(39) You wouldn't think so *innit*?

In (39), what is asserted is *not p*, as the affirmative sentence *I would think so* is negated by means of the negative marker *-n't*, which occupies a syntactic position within the TP. The operator ASSERT, therefore, scopes over the TP-internal negation, as shown in (40a). *Innit* is merged in ForceP, as shown in (40b).

(40) a. [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ you wouldn't think so]]]
b. [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ you wouldn't think so]]]]

As was the case in (35), the inherent negation in *innit* motivates the presence of a REQUEST operator, as shown in (41a). Finally, the TP moves to GroundP, as illustrated in (41b). By uttering the sentence in (6d)/(39) the speaker requires the addressee to consider whether *not p* (*You wouldn't think so*) is part of the CG and whether *not p* is to be excluded in favour of *p* (*You would think so*).

(41) a. [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ you wouldn't think so]]]]]
b. [$_{\text{GroundP}}$ you wouldn't think so$_{\text{i}}$ Ground [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *REQUEST* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *innit* [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *ASS* Force [$_{\text{TP}}$ t$_{\text{i}}$]]]]]

5. Conclusion

In this article I have shown that *innit* can be analysed as a pragmatic particle that does not contribute to the truth conditions of the clause it occurs with. Rather, *innit* is a confirmatory particle that asks the addressee to provide confirmation of the proposition being expressed (either *p* or *not p*).

As *innit* is not a question tag involving VP ellipsis, it is not surprising that, as has been discussed in section one, it does not exhibit the restrictions that apply to these syntactic structures. Unlike canonical question tags, *innit* occurs with a variety of different auxiliaries (not just with the third person singular present form of *be*), with a variety of different subjects (not just with third person singular neuter pronoun *it*), and with affirmative and negative main clauses indistinctively. If one wished to maintain the idea that *innit* is a question tag, these facts would certainly force the characterisation of *innit* as non-canonical or invariant. However, it seems to me that separating canonical question tags from invariant question tags (Sailor 2011) is unnecessary, since invariant or non-canonical question tags can actually be best analysed as well-behaved pragmatic particles.

I have modelled the syntax of the confirmatory pragmatic particle *innit* along the lines of Espinal (2011), who, adopting Rizzi's (1997, 2001, 2004) and Cinque's (1999, 2002, 2006) cartography of the left-periphery of the clause, locates this kind of particle in the Specifier of the functional projection ForceP. This view is compatible with Krifka's (forthcoming) account of questions with question tags and of negated polarity questions in English, which are assumed to involve two speech-act operators known as ASSERT and REQUEST, and which have much in common with sentences with *innit*. As I have shown, sentences with *innit* can be paraphrased by a question with a canonical question tag, but also by a negated polarity question where negation is interpreted high in the clause (i.e., in a position outside the proposition).

These parallelisms fall into place in the analysis presented here. On the one hand, both the speech-act operators REQUEST and ASSERT have been argued to be involved not only in the syntax of a declarative sentence with *innit*, but also in the syntax of canonical question tags. The latter, though, are crucially different from declarative sentences with *innit* in that they involve VP ellipsis.

On the other hand, the REQUEST and ASSERT operators are also involved in the derivation of negated polarity questions. The effect of high negation that is obtained by means of auxiliary movement in negated polarity questions is also observed in declarative sentences with *innit* due to the interaction of two factors. First, as *innit* is a confirmation pragmatic particle, it is merged high in the syntactic structure, namely in Spec, ForceP, which necessarily outscopes TP. Second, *innit* is inherently negative as it lexicalised from a negative question tag structure. Hence, the presence of *innit* in Spec, ForceP is comparable to the presence of high speech-act negation (expressed by means of an *-n't* affix on the auxiliary) scoping over the TP.

English has other so-called invariant question tags like *right, yes*, *no*, *eh* to which the present account can be extended. However, *innit* is probably the most puzzling of all, as it has transformed from a genuine question tag to a pragmatic particle. My proposal does not invalidate previous (pragmatic) accounts of *innit*. Rather, it offers some new insights on the syntax of at least two of its functions, namely the facilitative and the epistemic, while preserving the intuition that the syntax of the particle *innit* is to a certain extent connected—though not identical—to the syntax not only of question tags, but also of negated polarity questions with high negation.

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Cultural Values and their Correlation with Interactional Metadiscourse Strategies in Spanish and US Business Websites

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The present paper explores the way in which the cultural dimension of individualism is reflected in the interactional discourse of Spanish and US business websites. This cultural dimension is concerned with the way individuals from a particular culture define their own identity and their relationship with other people. Considering the scores of Spain and the US on the individualism index, the objective of this study is twofold: (a) to analyse the type of interactional metadiscourse strategies used on the presentation pages of Spanish and US toy company websites, and (b) to determine whether the individualism index scores of Spaniards and North Americans are reflected in different interactional metadiscourse strategies when companies establish a social relationship and persuade a potential customer to purchase their products. The results obtained confirm that there are important differences in the interactional discourse of this digital genre, which may be a valuable source of information for export companies that wish to introduce their products abroad by means of their business websites.

Keywords: intercultural communication; cultural dimension; digital genres; interactional metadiscourse strategies

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Los valores culturales y su correlación con las estrategias del metadiscurso interaccional en las páginas web de negocios españolas y estadounidenses

En este estudio se explora en qué medida la dimensión cultural del individualismo se refleja en el discurso interaccional de páginas web de negocios españolas y estadounidenses. Esta dimensión se relaciona con el modo en que los miembros de una cultura conciben su identidad y su relación social con otras personas. Según el índice de valores culturales con que España y los Estados Unidos de América responden a la dimensión cultural del individualismo, en este estudio intento alcanzar dos objetivos: (a) analizar el tipo de estrategias metadiscursivas interaccionales que se emplean en la página de presentación de la empresa en páginas web de negocios españolas y estadounidenses y (b) examinar si el índice de valores culturales individualistas de España y de los Estados Unidos de América se muestra en estrategias metadiscursivas diferentes en el momento de establecer una relación social y persuadir a un posible cliente a comprar los productos de la empresa. Los resultados obtenidos confirman diferencias en el discurso interaccional de este género digital, que pueden ser útiles para empresas exportadoras que desean introducir sus productos en países extranjeros a través de sus webs de negocios.

Palabras clave: comunicación intercultural; dimensión cultural; géneros digitales; estrategias del metadiscurso interaccional

1. Introduction

From an anthropological perspective the concept of culture has attracted the attention of many scholars for over a century. The first definition of this term correlated with "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a man as a member of society" (Tylor 1975, 21). Culture has also been defined as "a shared system of attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour" (Gibson 2000, 7) or "the software of the mind or collective mental programming" (Hofstede 1991, 4). Although various definitions have been provided throughout the decades, it is commonly accepted that the theme of *shared values* is central to any definition of culture (Hofstede 1991; Singh and Pereira 2005; Guillén 2009). In other words, culture refers to the way in which, in a particular group, people are trained from a very early age to internalise the behaviour and attitudes of the group.

Researchers interested in the field of intercultural communication have proposed different theoretical paradigms to identify the basic social problems that affect all societies—*cultural dimensions*—but for which members of different societies may have different answers—*cultural values*. One of the most noteworthy models developed within the framework of cultural dimensions theory is the Dutch anthropologist and social psychologist Geert Hofstede's (1991) five value dimension paradigm (*individualism, power distance, masculinity*, *uncertainty avoidance* and *long-term orientation*).

In this study, I intend to focus on the cultural dimension of individualism, i.e., concern for yourself as an individual as opposed to concern for the group to which you belong (Hofstede 1991; Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1993; Walker, Walker and Schmitz 2003; Loukianenko 2008). Within a society, cultural groups can be seen to favour a preferred strategic orientation along a *continuum* between the two extremes, which are often referred to as *individualistic* and *collectivist* cultural orientations.

In his ground-breaking work *Cultures and Organizations*: *Software of the Mind* (1991), Hofstede states that individualism pertains to societies in which "ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family." At the other extreme, meanwhile, collectivism is characterised by societies in which "people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (1991, 51).

Hofstede analysed a large database of information collected from IBM between 1967 and 1973, covering more than 70 countries, related to the values of their employees. He used the data to measure the degree of individualism or collectivism of people from different countries using a 0 to 100 scale (0 corresponding to the most collectivist society and 100 to the most individualistic society). The empirically verified results gave Spain a score of 51 points, while the US scored 91 points, confirming a strong cultural difference between the two countries.

Even though Hofstede's research has latterly attracted a lot of criticism for being old-fashioned and liable to promote cultural overgeneralisation as well as lead to stereotyping

(Loukianenko 2008), other scholars (Clark 1990; Simon 1999, Guillén 2009) are of the opinion that Hofstede has provided the most comprehensive and influential study to date of how values in the workplace are influenced by culture at a collective level.

Advances in social anthropology and social psychology in the final decades of the twentieth century paralleled the reaction against the alleged universalism of certain linguistic theories formulated by Anglo-Saxon academics (e.g., Grice 1975; Brown and Levinson 1987). In the 1970s this resulted in the emergence of the new discipline of *intercultural pragmatics* focusing on the descriptive and contrastive analysis of the culture-specific pragmalinguistic conventions ruling speech acts, social interaction, and discourse strategies across languages (see Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Wierzbicka 1985, 1991; Trosborg 1995; Márquez 2000; Díaz 2003; Hickey and Stewart 2005; Nuyts 2006; House 2009).

However, in my view the studies cited above which analyse the intercultural use of language lack an underlying theory to explain why the principles of interaction that speakers from different societies hold are motivated by the cultural values by means of which speakers from different countries solve many of the cultural dimensions shared by all human beings, particularly the cultural dimension of individualism. In fact, since the 1990s, there has been increasing academic interest in this research question (Kaplan 1966; Clyne 1994; Scollon and Scollon 1995; Loukianenko 2008; Guillén 2009; Ivorra 2009, 2012).

Based on the view of writing as a social and communicative engagement between writer and reader, the concept of *metadiscourse* deals with "the ways writers project themselves into their discourse to signal their attitude towards both the content and the audience of the text" (Hyland and Tse 2004, 156). It can be defined as "the linguistic resources used to organize a discourse or the writer's stance towards either its content or the reader" (Hyland 2000, 109). Two principal strategies are involved which are either (a) *interactive* or (b) *interactional*. Whereas the former helps to organize the discourse by indicating topic shifts, signalling sequences, cross-referencing, connecting ideas and previewing material, the latter modifies and highlights aspects of the text and gives the writer's attitude to it through the use of hedging, boosters, attitude, engagement or self-reference markers (Hyland and Tse 2004).

Here I will concentrate on the second function of metadiscourse, that is, those interactional strategies that alert readers to the author's perspective towards both propositional information and the readers themselves. This clearly relates to the *tenor* of the discourse (Hyland 1998), concerned with controlling the level of personality in the text. The starting point of my study is the interactional metadiscourse strategies model developed by Hyland and Tse (2004), depicted in Table 1 (next page).

This model has been employed in numerous intercultural studies which analyse the interactional metadiscourse strategies used in different countries focusing on various fields such as business, tourism or journalism (Valero 1996; Dafouz 2006, 2008; Shokouki and Talati 2009; Mur 2010, Suau 2010). However, in my opinion, a deeper evaluation is needed which may shed light on the influence of cultural values on the divergent interactional metadiscourse strategies preferred by different countries and cultures.

Table 1. Interactional metadiscourse strategies model (Hyland and Tse 2004)

Hedges	withhold writer's full commitment to proposition	e.g., may/might/perhaps/possible/ about
Boosters	emphasise force or writer's certainty in proposition	e.g., in fact/definitely/it is clear that
Attitude markers	express writer's attitude to proposition	e.g., unfortunately/I agree/ surprisingly
Engagement markers	explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader	e.g., consider/note that/ you can see that
Self-mention markers	explicit reference to author (s)	e.g., I/we/my/our

As a result, I deem it necessary to go beyond the interactional model of Hyland and Tse (2004) to include other types of interactional strategies, not contemplated in their model. For instance, as regards engagement markers and self-mention markers it is useful to quantitatively analyse not only their frequency, but also how often they may be avoided in different ways, such as employing depersonalisation strategies and references to a third person in discourse.

2. Objectives and Hypotheses

The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of the individualism cultural dimension on the interactional metadiscourse strategies used on the presentation page of Spanish and US business websites by means of which social interaction with a prospective customer is established.

In line with the different scores of Spain and the US on the world dimension of individualism (Hofstede 1991), it is hypothesized that the different values held by the two societies will foster different professional cultures on business websites. As such, Spanish companies will identify themselves as more collectivist entities than their US counterparts and consequently use interactional metadiscourse strategies that enhance more collectivist cultural values while the US companies will take a more individualistic approach.

3. Methodology and Corpus

This research is empirically based on a corpus of 100 business websites (50 from Spain and 50 from the US) belonging to toy companies. Data were collected during December 2013, making use of different Internet directories such as www.aefj.es, www.uschamber.co.uk, or www.kompass.es. One reason for choosing the toy sector was the fact that it is currently one of the leading industrial export sectors.

As far as the analysis is concerned, on the one hand, a qualitative analysis is carried out in which I examine both corpora of business websites, paying attention to the type

of interactional metadiscourse markers found on the firm's presentation page. While on the other, a quantitative analysis is conducted using the computer program Textworks 1.0 which enables the absolute frequency of occurrence of each interactional metadiscourse marker to be determined. In addition, I have calculated the relative frequency, i.e., the absolute frequency divided by the total amount of words contained in each corpus of websites. However, as the two corpora are, inevitably, of unequal size (Spanish corpus: 9,353 words and US corpus: 12,247 words), the absolute frequency of each interactional marker analysed is also computed per 1,000 words, a conventional way of standardising results of corpora of different sizes.

These results are then submitted to statistical analysis using the Chi-square test of homogeneity in a contingency table using the computer program SPSS Statistics 18 Software.

4. Results

4.1. Hedges

According to linguist Alcaraz Varó, the concept of *hedging* consists "in graduating the message content, reducing the degree of uncertainty of the things uttered by the speaker or lowering the level of imposition that the utterance may have, either explicitly or implicitly" (2000, 170). Hedges are also used to help speakers and writers indicate more precisely how Gricean's conversational maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relevance are observed in assessments. Following Wang (2010), these interactional strategies can also be used to express fuzzy meanings. For the purpose of my research, I find it interesting to understand the term *hedging* as a communicative strategy used to convey linguistic politeness (Lewin 1998) for the reasons explained in the next paragraph.

The obvious aim of a company's presentation page on its business website is to provide information on the firm's foundation, history, international reputation, daily work, description of the company's products and, most importantly, to persuade a potential customer to purchase what is offered on-line. In this latter issue, it is worth considering the degree of linguistic politeness employed in attempting to establish this interpersonal relationship between the company and the potential consumer. If we conceive of *hedges* as linguistic politeness strategies, they may be used to reduce the level of imposition perceived by the consumer in the company's efforts to persuade him/her to buy the product and its effect on the consumer's *face*. According to Goffman (1967, 61), the term *face* makes reference to "the public self-image that every member of a society wants to claim for him or herself."

In terms of a digital genre such as a business website, this persuasion can be achieved by means of different speech acts (Searle 1975): (a) assertive (e.g., companies inform the consumer about their entities and they also describe the products they make); (b) directive (e.g., companies request, advise or suggest that the consumer buy the product); (c) commissive (e.g., companies commit themselves to take a particular action by means of

promises); or (d) expressive (e.g., companies express their attitudes or emotions towards the information they are transmitting). It must be pointed out that directive speech acts (Blum-Kulka, et al. 1989; Trosborg 1995) are considered the most paradigmatic case of a speech act in which there is clear intrusion in the personal territory of the consumer (Márquez 2000).

For the current study the following categories of hedges were selected: (a) *modal verbs* (e.g., *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *will*, *would*, *should*, *ought to/puede*, *podría*, *puede que*, *podría que*, *debería*, *etc.*); (b) *probability adverbs* (e.g., *probably*, *likely*, *improbably*, *perhaps*, *maybe*, *possibly/quizás*, *tal vez*, *probablemente*, *posiblemente etc.*); (c) *epistemic expressions* (e.g., *it is likely/es probable*, *etc.*); and (d) *de-emphasisers* (e.g., *in no way*, *it is not true/de ninguna manera*, *no es cierto*, *etc.*) (Hyland and Tse 2004, 169). Table 2 shows the frequency of occurrence of each category on Spanish and US business websites studied:

Table 2. Frequency of *hedges* in the business websites studied
(*p=.05; **p<.05; ***p<.01)

Interactional Meta-discourse Strategies	Spanish business websites		US business websites		Chi-square test
Hedge Category	Absolute frequency n= 9,353	Relative frequency (per 1000 words) %	Absolute frequency n= 12,247	Relative frequency (per 1000 words) %	Spanish business websites-US business websites
Modal verbs	9	0.9%	22	1.8%	5.537 (.019)**
Probability adverbs	2	0.2%	0	0%	2.002 (.157)
Epistemic expressions	0	0%	1	0.1%	1.001 (.317)
De-emphasizers	2	0.2%	0	0%	2.002 (.157)

The frequency of *probability adverbs*, *epistemic expressions* and *de-emphasizers*, in both corpora is very limited, or even nil in some cases. However, the frequency of *modal verbs* in the US corpus (22/1.8%) is significantly higher than on the Spanish websites (9/0.9%) (x^2=5.537, p<.019).

On the US toy websites, companies try to convince and persuade the customer to buy the products offered using modal verbs to tone down the imposition that direct speech acts, like requests, suggestions or advice, might have on customers. As stated previously, in this type of speech act there is always an intrusion into the personal space of the receiver of the action. The modal verbs therefore might act as linguistic politeness strategies which

offer consumers the necessary freedom of action to decide for themselves to acquire the toys provided on-line.

Despite the low occurrence of modal verbs in the Spanish corpus, directive speech acts are indeed used to persuade customers to purchase their toys. However, rather than minimizing the imposition that these acts may have on the customer through the use of modal verbs, the Spanish websites prefer to include performative verbs. In this sense, the illocutionary purpose of the directive speech act is made explicit. Some examples from the websites selected will be considered to illustrate this point:

On this US toy website (Example 1),[1] modal verbs like *can* or *would* were present, as well as probability adverbs like *maybe* acted as mitigating devices to convince consumers about the value of the company's toys and persuade them to make a purchase. In using these linguistic markers, the company is offering the consumer the possibility of choosing or rejecting the products it provides, that is, the consumer has freedom of action to decide for him or herself.

Example 1 (www.thehappykidcompany.com):

Maybe you'*d raid* the linen closet and take all your Mom's best tablecloths outside for an impromptu canopy, under which you*'d spend* the afternoon daydreaming . . . . Now kids *can build* any fort anywhere ... They *can traipse* outside with their Fortamajigs without worrying about . . . . With Fortamajig, kids *can build* and play to their heart's content and parents *can feel* great knowing that their children are exploring the worlds.

The use of modal verbs and adverbs of probability can also be observed in Example 2, also from the US. As in Example 1, this company also resorts to hedges to reduce the obligation on customers to purchase its goods.

Example 2 (www.mybabycantalk.com/content/company/aboutus.aspx):

How *would you feel* if you were unable to communicate that need to that person? Do you think that *you might be reduced* to tears and screams if you were unable to have this basic need fulfilled? . . . How *would you order* a meal or find a hotel? Your self-esteem and confidence *would be challenged* at every turn and you *would likely become* more and more frustrated.

Different linguistic strategies are found in Example 3, below, from a Spanish website in which the company tries to convince the customer by means of performative verbs, that is, verbs that explicitly state the illocutionary purpose of the speech act (Scollon and Scollon 1995, Vázquez 1995, Márquez 2000). In sharp contrast to the US corpus, the use

[1] The visualization of the business websites and references made to individuals has been omitted for reasons of data protection rights.

of these performative verbs acknowledges the firm's invasion of the customer's personal territory.

Example 3 (http://www.essentialminds.com/quienes%20somos.php):

Desde X *te animamos* a experimentar con tu bebé, *mirar* el mundo con sus ojos, y *llevarle* al viaje de los cinco sentidos. [2]

English translation:[3] From X *we encourage you* to experiment with your baby, *look* at the world through his/her eyes, and *take him/her* on the trip of the five senses.

4.2. Boosters

Whereas hedges mark the writer's reluctance to present propositional information categorically, *boosters* "imply certainty and emphasize the force of propositions" (Hyland and Tse 2004, 168). In this study the following categories of boosters have been selected: (a) *emphasizers* (e.g., *in fact*, *it is clear that/de hecho*, *está claro que*, *etc.*); (b) *amplifying adverbs* (e.g., *certainly/seguramente*, *etc.*); (c) *superlatives* (e.g., *the most beautiful*, *the greatest*, *the best/el más bonito*, *el mejor*, *etc.*); and (d) *hyperboles* (e.g., *splendid*, *magnificent*, *universal/espléndido*, *magnífico*, *universal*, *etc.*). The frequency of occurrence of boosters in both corpora is given in Table 3:

Table 3. Frequency of *boosters* in the business websites studied
(*p=.05; **p<.05; ***p<.01)

Interactional Metadiscourse Strategies	Spanish business websites		US business websites		Chi-square test
Boosters: Categories	Absolute frequency n = 9,353	Relative frequency (per 1000 words) %	Absolute frequency n = 12,247	Relative frequency (per 1000 words) %	Spanish business websites-US business website
Emphasizers	5	0.5%	2	0.1%	1.290 (.256)
Amplifying adverbs	7	0.7%	1	0.1%	4.518 (.034)
Superlatives	53	5.6%	81	6.6%	6.271 (.012)**
Hyperboles	10	1.0%	18	1.4%	2.318 (.128)

2 The letter X has been used to avoid mentioning the name of the company.

3 English version taken from The Spanish website.

As far as boosters are concerned, we can note that the absolute and relative frequencies of *emphasizers* and *amplifying adverbs* are very low, although the frequency in the Spanish corpus is slightly higher than in the US corpus. In relation to *superlatives* and *hyperboles*, frequencies increase, especially the former, and both linguistic markers are more frequent in US than Spanish websites, although only difference between the frequency of the superlative forms are statistically significant (x^2=6.271, p<.012).

Example 4 is a representative example of a US toy website on which superlatives are repeated constantly:

Example 4 (http://www.jojollc.com/page.php?pg=aboutus.php):

X has been manufacturing and distributing *high* quality toys . . . . We have established ourselves as a *premier* supplier of *leading* plush toys . . . . It is our pleasure to now offer our *world-class* quality products . . . which are made of *the finest* quality fabrics available.

Superlatives are also found in the next Spanish toy website:

Example 5 (http://www.limitsport.com/main_skip.html):

X es el fabricante de disfraces de calidad y diseño *más experimentado* de España . . . más de 40 modelos a los *mejores precios* . . . todo el año en las *mejores jugueterías* . . . The use of a hyperbole is also included, e.g., . . . crear un *universo* visible de magia y celebración.

English translation:[4] X is *the most experienced* manufacturer of high quality fancy dress costumes in Spain . . . more than 40 outfits at *the best prices* . . . all year long in *the best toy stores* . . . create a visible *universe* of magic and celebration.

4.3. Attitude markers

Attitude markers, also called "expressive markers" (Dafouz 2006, 71), represent a personal and subjective appraisal of the content of the text, that is, the writer of a particular text uses them to provide his or her opinion about what he or she is stating. According to Biber et al. , attitude markers can be defined as expressing "personal feelings, attitudes, value judgements, or assessments" (1999, 966).

Six categories of attitude markers were selected for this analysis: (a) *comparatives* (e.g., *better than*, *as good as/mejor que*, *tan bueno que*, *etc.*); (b) *attitude adjectives* (e.g., *it is absurd*, *it is surprising/es absurdo*, *sorprendente*, etc.); (c) *phrasal adverbs* (e.g., *fortunately*, *unfortunately/afortunadamente*, *desafortunadamente*, *etc.*); (d) *exclamations* (e.g., *incredible!*, *best prices!/¡increíble!*, *¡a los mejores precios!*); (e) *deontic verbs* (e.g., *have to*, *must*, *needs to/hay que*, *deben*, *hace falta*); and (f) *cognitive verbs* (e.g., *I think*, *I*

[4] English version taken from the Spanish website.

believe, *I feel/creo*, *pienso*, *estimo*, *etc*.). Table 4 shows the results for the use of attitude markers:

Table 4. Frequency of *attitude markers* on the business websites studied (*p=.05; **p<.05; ***p<.01)

Interactional Metadiscourse Strategies	Spanish business websites		US business websites		Chi-square test
Attitude markers: Categories	Absolute Frequency n = 3,953	Relative Frequency (per 1000 words) %	Absolute Frequency n =12,247	Relative Frequency (per 1000 words) %	Spanish business websites-US business websites
Comparatives	7	0.7%	29	2.3%	13.691 (.000)***
Attitude adjectives	95	10.1%	187	15.2%	34.941 (.000)***
Phrasal adverbs	0	0%	1	0.1%	1,001 (.317)
Exclamations	4	0.4%	16	1.3%	7.273 (.007)***
Deontic verbs	7	0.7%	4	0.3%	,823 (.364)
Cognitive verbs	1	0.1%	13	1.06%	10.358 (.001)***

Except for the use of *deontic verbs*, the frequency of occurrence all the attitude markers analysed is significantly higher on the US business websites. The results, in descending order of frequency, are as follows; *attitude adjectives* (x^2=34.941, p<.000), *comparatives* (x^2=13.691, p<.000), *cognitive verbs* (x^2=10.358, p<.000) and *exclamations* (x^2=7.273, p<.000).

The US website in Example 6 is a good example in that it uses exclamations and cognitive verbs as well as comparative forms. All these attitude markers serve for the company to express its view on the information being transmitted:

Example 6 (http://www.sanrio.com/about-sanrio):

Small gift, big smile! . . . It's *more than* just a catchy phrase . . . . At X we *believe* that a gift is *more than* just a gift

Similar attitude markers can also be observed in the following example drawn from the US corpus (Example 7). In this particular case, it is interesting to see the predominance of comparative forms:

Example 7 (http://4kidslikeme.com/About-Us.html):

> Our relationship with toy manufacturers means *better* prices, *better* availability, and exclusive promotions . . . . That means we have *better* control over our inventory, resulting in *fewer* backorders.

4.4. Engagement markers

Engagement markers have an important interpersonal function since "they build an explicit relationship with readers" (Hyland and Tse 2004, 169). For this analysis four different categories of engagement markers were chosen: (a) *second-person pronouns* (e.g., *you/usted/ustedes*); (b) *rhetorical questions* (e.g., *Is this the game that you were looking for? /¿Este es el juego que buscabas?*); (c) *imperatives* (e.g., *contact us*, *see our catalogue/contáctenos*, *vea nuestro catálogo*); and (d) *references to a third person in discourse* (e.g., *products to delight children*, *toys to be used by parents and children/productos para deleitar a los niños*, *juguetes para que jueguen padres y niños*). In this respect I must clarify that, in the case of the Spanish corpus, not only second-person pronouns are counted but also second-person references in the verb ending are included since Spanish is a pro-drop language. Table 5 shows the frequency of occurrence of these categories of engagement markers on the business websites selected.

Table 5. Frequency of *engagement markers* in the business websites studied (*p=.05; **p<.05; ***p<.01)

Interactional Metadiscourse Strategies	Spanish business websites		US business websites		Chi-square test
Engagement markers: Categories	Absolute Frequency n= 9,353	Relative Frequency (per 1000 words) %	Absolute Frequency n=12,247	Relative Frequency (per 1000 words) %	Spanish business websites-US business websites
Second-person pronouns and second-person references in the verb ending	51	5.4%	169	13.8%	71.113 (.000)***
Rhetorical questions	3	0.3%	12	0.9%	5.441 (.020)**
Imperatives	2	0.2%	45	3.6%	40.287 (.000)***
Reference to a third person in discourse	111	11.8%	166	13.5%	12.676 (.000)***

The results show that US toy websites have higher frequencies of all four categories than their Spanish counterparts, all of which are statistically significant.

The overall frequencies for the use of *rhetorical questions* and *imperatives* are lower than for *second-person pronouns*; however, once more, their frequency is higher on the US business websites: rhetorical questions: US 12/09%-Spain 3/03% (x^2=5.441, p<.020); imperatives: US 45/3.6%-Spain 2/0.2% (x^2=40.287, p<.000). Likewise, the difference is statistically significant in the case of rhetorical questions and highly significant in relation to imperatives. These categories of engagement marker seem to be used by US companies to address the consumer in an explicit and direct way.

Although Spanish toy websites also resort to the types of engagement markers mentioned above, the results indicate that they use, in a greater degree, references to a third person in discourse (111/11.8%) in order to avoid the explicit reference to the consumer. Nevertheless, it is clearly observable that US websites also include a third person (166/13.5%), even more than their Spanish counterparts. As far as this last strategy is concerned, we could say that in the US toy websites the inclusion of a third person in discourse so as not to address the consumer in a direct way is used in combination with explicit references through the use of second-person pronouns. In contrast, in the case of the Spanish corpus, the use of a third person in discourse is much more recurrent than second-person references. This last issue leads me to establish differences between both corpora.

The following US website (Example 8) is useful to see how the company addresses consumers directly, establishes a link with them, and involves them in the discourse and the message through the use of *second-person pronouns*:

Example 8 (http://www.carrom.com/index.php/Site-Content/about-us):

> At X we strive to make available to *you*, our customer, this most popular . . . . To maintain the satisfaction of our relationship with *you*, our current customers . . . . Our commitment will always remain with the emphasis on *you*.

The use of *imperative constructions* is shown on the following US website (Example 9) where, apart from making use of the second-person pronoun, the imperative is used to address the consumer in a straightforward manner:

Example 9 (http://www.funexpress.com/h3-aboutus.fltr):

> *Contact* one of our representatives to place your order . . . . *Make* an impression. *Utilize* our award-winning artists and designers . . . . *Take* advantage of our one-stop shop . . . . *Visit* with our market-specific trained representatives

By contrast, on the Spanish website below (Example 10) a third person is included in the discourse to avoid addressing the consumer explicitly:

Example 10 (http://www.saicatoys.com/app/empresa/empresa.asp?idioma=es):

hemos ido actualizando nuestro catálogo pensando *en los más pequeños* . . . disponemos de una amplia gama de productos para *los más pequeños* que no sólo son atractivas para *los niños*, sino que también cumplen las expectativas *de sus padres* con artículos que potencian el desarrollo socio-cultural *del niño*:

English translation:[5] we have been updating our catalogue thinking especially of *the children* . . . we have a wide range of products *for children* that are not only to appeal to *children*, but also to meet the expectations *of their parents* with various aspects; among others we can mention the socio-cultural development *of the children*.

4.5. Self-mention markers

Self-mention markers are those interactional metadiscourse strategies "used to refer to the writer of a text in an explicit way" (Hyland and Tse 2004, 169). In this analysis three main linguistic categories were selected: (a) *first-person singular pronouns* (e.g., *I, my, mine, me/ yo, mío, mi, etc.*); (b) *first-person plural pronouns* (e.g., *we, our, us/nosotros, nuestro, etc.*) and (c) *depersonalisation strategies*. In relation to the latter, two important strategies seem to recur in the corpus of my study: the use of personifications (for instance, the name of the company or the word "company" is often attributed human qualities) and, exclusively in the Spanish corpus, *verb*–se passive constructions. In addition, I have also taken into account first-person singular and plural references in the verb ending when analysing the Spanish corpus. Table 6 summarises the main results found in relation to self-mention markers in both corpora.

The frequency in the use of *first-person singular references* is low compared with the use of plural forms and the US websites make greater use of these linguistic devices (28/2.2%) than do the Spanish (5/0.5%) (x^2=16.299, p<.000).

The *first-person plural references* are very interesting, being high in each corpus, although slightly higher on the Spanish than the US websites (Spain: 362/38.7% and US: 430/35.1 %) (x^2=9.666, p<.002). Nonetheless, I believe that whereas the Spanish websites could be making use of this marker to refer to the members of the company as a collective group of individuals, in the case of the US websites there may be just one person, generally the manager of the firm, who is actually speaking on behalf of the company. I offer the following reasons to support my thesis:

In many of the presentation pages of the Spanish toy company websites there is a hyperlink, which often takes the form of a noun phrase like "empresa" (company) or "nuestra empresa" (our company). In addition, there is sometimes a photo of the premises of the firm, its employees, or capital letters and different colours are used to highlight the name of the company and make it stand out from the rest of the text. These aspects

[5] English version taken from the Spanish website.

Table 6. Frequency of *self-mention markers* in the business websites selected for the Analysis (*p=.05; **p<.05; ***p<.01)

Interactional Metadiscourse Strategies	Spanish business websites		US business websites		Chi-square test Spanish-US business websites
Self-mention markers	Absolute Frequency n = 9,353	Relative Frequency (per 1000 words)	Absolute Frequency n =12,247	Relative Frequency (per 1000 words)	
First-person singular pronoun and first-person reference in the verb ending	5	0.5%	28	2.2%	16.299 (.000)***
First-person plural pronoun and first-person reference in the verb ending	362	38.7%	430	35.1%	9.666 (.002)***
Depersonalisations: Personifications (e.g., the company is attributed human qualities)	157	16.8%	159	12.9%	.344 (.558)
Depersonalisations: (-se passive constructions)	18	1.9%	0	0%	18.163 (.000)***

suggest that first-person plural references may be used to make reference to the staff of the company, including the manager, as a collective entity that works together.

On the other hand, the US websites use this plural pronoun together with other communicative strategies that would seem to suggest that there is only one person who is speaking about the company. For instance, a photograph of the manager of the toy company is often included, quotation marks are used to reproduce direct speech or the name of the manager and his/her signature appears at the bottom of the page. On the basis of this, I would assert that the identity of the US company websites could be rendered as individualist, whereas that of the Spanish websites could be interpreted as collective. Let us consider some examples from the corpus to illustrate these aspects.

In Example 11 we observe a toy website taken from the US corpus where the identity of the company is perceived from an individualistic perspective. Linguistically speaking, this individualistic identity is mainly conveyed by the use of first-person singular pronouns which are combined with a photographic image of the manager and his name at the end of the message:

Example 11 (http://www.princessplayhomes.com/who-we-are.htm):

This is one of the reasons why *I* insist that . . . *I* began to work at X . . . *I* enjoy seeing the happiness each house brings to every child.

Different linguistic strategies are found on the Spanish website in Example12, where first-person plural references seem to make allusion to the group of people that work for the company. Furthermore, the photographic image of the staff of the company that appears at the bottom of the site reinforces the collectivist identity of the firm:

Example 12 (http://www.falca.es/Paginas/quienes_somos-I60.html):

somos expertos en la fabricación de muñecas . . . . *Nos* encanta que regales una muñeca . . . porque *nosotros* también *tenemos* familia, y *nuestros* hijos también lo han vivido . . . X ha contado con el apoyo incondicional de todos sus empleados, personas que han compartido con *nosotros* alegrías y penas . . . el cual *agradecemos* sinceramente . . . no *habríamos* podido llevar a cabo *nuestra* labor, porque al final, todos *formamos* un *equipo* . . . . *Tenemos* la voluntad de seguir aquí al menos otros 50 años, e intentar *adaptarnos* a las necesidades de las nuevas generaciones . . . . *Queremos* darte las gracias por continuar con *nosotros*

English translation:[6] *we* are experts in the manufacture of dolls . . . . *We* love that gift a doll . . . because *we* too have families, and *our* children have lived it too . . . X has had the unconditional support of all employees who have shared joys and sorrows . . . they have given *us* their trust, without their support, which *we* thank sincerely, *we* would not have carried out *our* own, because, in the end, *we* are a very big *team* . . . . *We* have the willingness to stay here at least another 50 years, and try to adapt to needs of new generations . . . . *We* want to thank you for continuing with *us*

Finally, in relation to the use of *depersonalisation* strategies, both corpora use personifications, with no statistical difference between countries (Spain: 157/16.8% and US: 159/12.7%; x^2=.344, p<.558). These are mainly used to attribute human qualities to the name of the company or the word "company." The lack of statistically significant differences in the use of this marker may be due to the fact that this strategy could be commonly accepted in a digital genre like a business website in general and/or in toy selling websites particularly. However, while the use of personification is more or less the same in the websites from the US and Spain, if other factors are considered simultaneously a different picture emerges: the Spanish websites tend to use personifications but without resorting to first-person singular references, whereas the US websites tend to use personifications along with first-person plural and first-person singular pronouns.

[6] English version taken from the Spanish website.

The results also reveal that the Spanish websites also include *–se passive constructions* as another type of depersonalisation strategy, even though the frequency of occurrence is not very high (18/1.9%). This is best illustrated with a couple of examples from the websites studied.

Example 13 shows the use of personification, human qualities being assigned to the company to avoid using self-mention markers explicitly. We can also see the presence of *–se passive* constructions, used to depersonalise the discourse, as well the use of first-person plural references:

Example 13 (http://www.colomaypastor.com/coloma-y-pastor):

X es una empresa familiar dedicada a la producción de juguetes desde su fundación . . . . Desde entonces *la empresa ha mantenido* un crecimiento constante . . . el diseño de todos *nuestros* productos *nos* ha permitido aumentar *nuestra* productividad . . . . Todo esto *ha permitido a X tener* un reconocido prestigio . . . faceta que no ha decaído desde que *se inició* . . . *X inició* su andadura produciendo triciclos . . . . A principio de los 90 *incorporamos* . . .

English translation:[7] [X *is a family run company that has specialized* in the manufacture of toys since its foundation ... Since that time, *the company has enjoyed* constant growth ... the design of all *our* products has enabled *us* to increase *our* productivity levels ... All this *has enabled X to achieve* a prestigious reputation ... an aspect that has grown steadily since *it began* ... *X initially began* by producing tricycles ... At the beginning of the nineties, *we* incorporated . . .

In the US website in Example 14 we can perceive how both first-person singular and plural pronouns are used together with personifications, and where the company is also assigned human qualities:

Example 14 (http://www.buffalogames.com/President-s-Message/presidents-message.html):

Today *X is one of the leading* party games . . . . *We* pride *ourselves* on creating games that are fun to play . . . *I'm* often asked "What's the key to your success?" *My* answer is always the same –*our* people . . . . Since 1986 *we* have experienced many changes . . . but *we* have always held true to *our* core purpose . . . . *I* hope you've had as much fun as *we* have.

5. Discussion

Based on the results described in the previous section, I believe that the higher occurrence of hedges, boosters, attitude, engagement and self-reference markers observed on the presentation page of the US toy websites studied may be related to the high individualism

[7] English version taken from the Spanish website.

index score of North-Americans (91), whereas the scarce presence of these interactional metadiscourse strategies on the pages of the Spanish companies considered may be due to the moderate score (51) of Spaniards on this cultural dimension (Hofstede, 1991, 53).

It would appear that politeness considerations concerning the use of "positive" or "negative" aspects of linguistic devices seem to influence the way the Spanish and US toy selling websites examined here use more or less direct or indirect speech acts to socially interact with prospective customers, something which appears to be particularly relevant is the case of hedges. The different results for the two nationalities of websites studied may be linked to the two types of social self-image that the linguists Scollon and Scollon (1995) established in their study of linguistic politeness from an intercultural perspective: (a) *involvement* and (b) *independence*. The former is related to the speaker's right and need to be a cooperative member in any communicative act. In other words, the interlocutors of communication need to share their opinions and wishes, and cooperate with each other (*positive image*). The latter, on the contrary, highlights the speaker's right to be free from the imposition of others and keep his or her own space (*negative image*) (Brown and Levinson 1987; Scollon and Scollon 1995).

On the US toy websites examined hedges such as *modal verbs* are used to "minimize the illocutionary purpose of the speech act" (Spencer-Oatey 2008, 25-27), which consists in encouraging customers to make a purchase. By means of this type of interactional markers, companies try to not impose themselves on consumers, thereby safeguarding the latter's negative image, and offer freedom of action in the customer's decision. Similar results have been found in other studies focusing on the use of hedges as mitigating devices in different genres such as academic discourse (Hyland 1998, 2004; Moreno 1998) and doctoral research papers (Myers 1989; Salager-Meyer 1994). However, it would be interesting to consider, in future research, which types of hedges are more or less frequent compared to other genres (e.g., use of can, may, might, likely, probably, etc.).

In relation to the Spanish toy selling websites analysed, the persuasion is linguistically achieved in a different way. In the Spanish corpus, performative verbs or verbs that explicitly state the illocutionary purpose of the speech act are more frequently used. The use of these verbs points to a culture in which directive speech acts are interpreted as positive linguistic politeness strategies. In other words, in societies more oriented to collectivist cultural values, like Spain, it is normally assumed that the receiver will carry out the act asked by the sender of the message (Vázquez 1995; Márquez 2000; Díaz 2003). In this way, the positive image of the consumer is emphasised more than in the US corpus.

However, in relation to the hypothesis presented at the beginning of this paper, one must be cautious since individualism and collectivism are considered learnt values, whereas interactional markers of the types examined are not only influenced by these dimensions, but also by others which are based on communication and not values. I am particularly referring to "high versus low context communication" (Hall 1976). These cultural orientations examine how people express and convey meaning. In this way, Spaniards have been found to operate highly on context. As fairly high-context communicators, Spanish

people rely on nonverbal, symbolic, and situational cues more than on spoken or written communication. This is the reason why they seem to favour implicit communication. In contrast, as low context communicators, North Americans tend to believe that written messages and detailed communication have more importance than information that is transmitted orally or personally (Walker, Walker and Schmitz 2003, 223).

The high score of individualistic cultural values of the US and its low-context cultural orientation are reflected in the US websites studied in the predominance of attitude markers, boosters, engagement and self-reference markers. The use of *exclamations*, *attitude adjectives*, *comparisons*, *cognitive verbs*, *superlatives*, *second person pronouns* and *imperatives* together with *first-person singular pronouns* might imply that the company is transmitting its own opinions to the person visiting the website.

The predominance of these interactional metadiscourse strategies in the US corpus can be related to one fundamental point: the explicit communicative style that speakers from individualistic societies make use of to communicate (Caillat and Mueller 1996; De Mooij 2000; Usunier and Lee 2005). In individualistic cultures saying what you really think about what someone feels is considered to be a virtue, that is, the free expression of one's own thoughts is a sign of sincerity and honesty (Hofstede 1991; Walker, Walker and Schmitz 2003).

The lower frequency of occurrence of these interactional metadiscourse strategies on the Spanish websites may be due to the implicit communicative style used by collectivist speakers to communicate. In societies like Spain, which hold low or moderate individualist cultural values people are more likely to take into consideration "nonverbal, symbolic, and situational cues than spoken or written communication" (Walker, Walker and Schmitz 2003, 223).

Although the Spanish corpus also resorts to the interactional metadiscourse strategies proposed in the model of Hyland and Tse (2004), the frequency of this is lower than in the US corpus. As such, the results reveal that on the Spanish pages an implicit communicative style is preferred, where engagement and self-mention markers seem to be avoided in various ways such as the inclusion of a third person in discourse or depersonalisation strategies such as the personification of the company and *–se passive* constructions.

In the same vein, I have also noticed that the US websites also include references to a third person in discourse as well as personification strategies at high frequencies. This may lead us to think that the use of these strategies might form part of the constraints imposed by the conventions of this particular digital genre (Moreno 1997; Garcés-Conejos et al. 2010) and not the peculiarities of Spanish or US written cultures. Nevertheless, from an intercultural perspective, the results indicate that the Spanish corpus shows, for instance, a very low frequency of use in first-person singular references.

As far as *first-person plural references* are concerned, their frequency of occurrence is high in both corpora, albeit significantly higher in the Spanish corpus. As mentioned previously, this could be interpreted as meaning that whereas the Spanish websites make use of these first-person plural references to refer to the company as a group of individuals

that work together (De Mooij 2000; Walker, Walker and Schmitz 2003; Marcus and Baumgartner 2004; Loukianenko 2008), the US websites may use this same marker from the manager or founder of the firm, who speaks on behalf of the company; however, I feel that more empirical evidence is required from future research for this interpretation to be supported.

6. Conclusions

The results obtained in this study point to the different individualism index scores of Spain and the US being reflected in the different types of interactional metadiscourse strategies found on the presentation page of the websites of the US and Spanish toy companies studied. However, other cultural values, like the low or high-context dependence of each society, need to be addressed in this analysis.

The Spanish websites analysed have been found to make little or no use of hedges, boosters, attitude, engagement or self-mention markers, which are the metadiscursive strategies most frequently used on the US websites studied. In fact, these linguistic strategies confirm the particular view that the English language has about the interpersonal function since, by means of these interactional strategies a social relationship is established between the company and the consumer in order for the former to persuade the latter.

These results are supported, on the one hand, by the fact that in individualistic cultures, like the US, more value is placed on the liberty of the individual and his or her freedom of action. For this reason, its speakers try to communicate information by means of an explicit style, and the use of these interactional metadiscourse strategies makes it possible for the company to convey its own ideas to the consumer.

In contrast to what happens on the US websites, the communicative style used on the Spanish websites is more implicit since, in less individualistic cultures like Spain, more value is placed on the context surrounding the message. This leads to depersonalisations and third person references being used more often in discourse than, for example, first-person singular references.

The explicit and implicit communicative styles found in the US and Spanish corpus respectively might seem contradictory when addressing issues of "positive" and "negative" linguistic politeness strategies. The results suggest that Spanish toy websites make use of performative verbs that explicitly state the illocutionary purpose of the direct speech act. As I stated in the discussion, the more collective cultural orientation of Spaniards could support the idea that Spanish companies treat consumers like friends or colleagues. In this way, Spanish firms could expect that potential customers will accede to the former's wishes, showing, in this case, "positive politeness." However, this does not necessarily imply that the customer will finally agree to purchase the product.

In contrast, the highly individualistic cultural values of the US may explain why US companies consider it important to respect the personal space of customers in social interactions. For this reason, the US toy websites analysed mitigate the intrinsic imposition

that direct speech acts may have on the consumer's face by means of hedges like modal verbs or probability adverbs. In this sense, they tend to be more in favour of "negative politeness."

All in all, the results derived from my analysis seem to indicate that the two cultures studied use metadiscourse differently although this does not invalidate the model proposed by Hyland and Tse (2004). For the purposes of this study it could be said that Hyland and Tse's model needs to be extended in order to see in what ways the interactional metadiscourse strategies they propose are shared by other countries or, on the contrary, avoided. And if they are avoided, what types of interactional strategies are used instead.

I am fully aware that this study has only focused on examining the cultural dimension of individualism and business websites belonging to the toy sector. It would therefore be interesting to conduct further research on the possible influence that other cultural dimensions (e.g., Hall's context cultural orientations 1976) may have on the interactional discourse of business websites from other industrial sectors such as food, cleaning, beauty products, etc. to check genre differences or similarities. In addition, I suggest that personal interviews with company managers from different countries are carried out in order to shed light on the impression they have when reading and interpreting the interactional discourse shown on business websites from different countries. This last issue would lead to a much more sociolinguistic study.

Finally, I would like to mention that the interdisciplinary nature of pragmatics has been one fundamental reason for carrying out this research. I hope that this study may help Spanish and US toy manufacturers to understand the professional culture of their websites, mainly with respect to the translation and linguistic adaptations that are often carried out in the internationalisation phase of the company. As we have noticed in the examples illustrated above, the Spanish websites often provide a literal translation from Spanish into English in the English version without considering the appropriate interactional metadiscourse makers that make up the particular cultural framework of the US.

Firstly, this study could help Spanish and US toy manufacturers to become aware that there are linguistic and stylistic differences in the interactional discourse of their websites. Secondly, it could enable them to identify which aspects are different and how cultural values contribute to these differences. Lastly, manufacturers could apply this knowledge to communicate efficiently and appropriately in their international business transactions and acquire intercultural communicative competence.

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The Reception of Doris Lessing's Novels in Franco's Spain

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Nobel Prize winner Doris Lessing's serious concerns with political and social issues, as well as her constant experimentation with genre and style, have made her a highly prestigious literary figure in the English language. In Spain, her work was recognised in 2001 when she was awarded the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters. However, for years, some of her novels were practically unknown to Spanish readers. The first Spanish version of *The Golden Notebook* appeared in 1978, sixteen years after its publication in London. Why did it take so long? Did Spanish publishers ignore Lessing in the 1960s and 1970s? Did her controversial spirit clash with the traditional views of Franco's censors? This article describes information found in censorship office files in an attempt to provide an explanation for the attitudes to Lessing's novels in the Franco era. They contain valuable data regarding publisher and bookseller interest in Lessing at the time, with reference to Spanish and imported editions of her work, and, more importantly, provide some insight into the censors' opinion of her fiction.

Keywords: Doris Lessing; fiction; reception; censorship; Spain; Franco

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La recepción de la narrativa de Doris Lessing en la España de Franco

Doris Lessing, ganadora del Premio Nobel de Literatura en 2007, es una escritora prolífica cuyo interés por temas sociales y políticos, junto a sus innovaciones en el tratamiento de los géneros y el estilo, la han convertido en una figura destacada del panorama literario inglés. En España, la obra de Lessing fue reconocida en 2001 cuando se le concedió el Premio Príncipe de Asturias de las Letras. Sin embargo, durante muchos años sus novelas no llegaron al lector español. La primera traducción al español de *The Golden Notebook* apareció en 1978, dieciséis años después de su publicación en Londres. ¿Por qué tardó tanto? ¿Ignoraron las editoriales españolas a Lessing en los años sesenta y setenta? ¿Chocaba su espíritu controvertido con los puntos de vista de la censura establecida por el régimen de Franco? Este artículo tiene como objetivo explorar los expedientes de censura de la época con el fin de analizar las actitudes de los censores españoles hacia las novelas de Lessing. Estos expedientes proporcionan información muy valiosa sobre el interés de las editoriales y los libreros por la obra de Lessing, las ediciones publicadas o importadas en aquellos años y, lo que es más importante, las opiniones críticas de los censores sobre su narrativa.

Palabras clave: Doris Lessing; narrativa; recepción; censura; España; Franco

Doris Lessing's international reputation as a novelist and short story writer was established during the 1950s and 1960s with the publication of works like *Martha Quest* (1952), *The Golden Notebook* (1962) and *African Stories* (1964). Her prolific literary career culminated in her winning the 2007 Nobel Prize for Literature, just before her 88th birthday. The Swedish Academy described her as "that epicist of the female experience, who with skepticism, fire and visionary power has subjected a divided civilization to scrutiny."[1] Her work reflects a long history of controversial issues concerning colonial Africa and communism, as well as engagement in detailed examinations of women's issues through their personal experiences and sexual relationships. Lessing's early work, set in Africa, denounces the colonialist oppression of the black population, exposing the sterility of white culture. Her outspoken views on racism attracted the attention of the government of white South Africa, who declared her a "prohibited alien" in 1956 (Lessing 1956).[2] A member of the Communist Party for several years and a campaigner against nuclear weapons, Lessing also wrote radically on social issues in the 1950s, returning to them in *The Good Terrorist* in 1985. Similarly, characters like Martha Quest in the "Children of Violence" series and Anna Wulf in *The Golden Notebook* shocked readers with their desires and frustrations, representing for some critics some of the "early voices of the feminist movement" (Whittaker 1988, 8). Later novels, like *The Summer before the Dark* (1973) and *The Memoirs of a Survivor* (1974), also expose the thoughts and feelings of her heroines in detail. Lessing's serious concerns with political and social issues, as well as her constant experimentation with genre and style, have made her a highly prestigious figure in the English language (Klein 2000, 252).

In Spain, Lessing's work was recognised in 2001 when she was awarded the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters (Premio Príncipe de Asturias de las Letras). The judges declared her a major figure of world literature, "a passionate fighter for freedom who has spared no effort in her commitment to Third World causes."[3] Today, Spanish readers have access to a wide selection of her novels and short stories, and Spanish scholars, critics and reviewers have examined her work from many different perspectives.[4] But this has not always been the case. In 1987, Fernando Galván painted a very different picture in his introduction

[1] See the official website of the Nobel Prize: http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/2007/press.html

[2] Lessing provides a more general discussion on censorship in a chapter first included in Derek Jones's *Censorship: A World Encyclopedia* (2001) and reprinted in her collection of essays *Time Bites* (2004).

[3] In the English section of the website of La Fundación Príncipe de Asturias, the full quotation from the record reads: "The Jury thus recognises not only one of the unquestionably major figures of world literature, whose work is the fruit of a lifetime's dedication to the narrative, but also a passionate fighter for freedom who has spared no effort in her commitment to Third World causes, both in her literature and in the personal experience that her eventful life has provided her."

[4] See Andreu Jiménez (1991), Anievas Gamillo (1994 and 1995) Arias Doblas (2002), Concha Muñoz (2006), Durán Rico (2000), Galván Reula (1982), García Navarro (2001 and 2003), Halbach (1994), Hidalgo Andreu (1981 and 1984) and Moya (1992).

to the *Doris Lessing Newsletter*. He described Lessing's work as "partly unknown and partly misunderstood" in Spain, adding: "Although she achieved some renown in the later seventies with the translation of *The Golden Notebook* and the first volumes of the *Children of Violence* series, her reception after that date has been very weak" (1987, 2).[5] Indeed, the first Spanish version of *The Golden Notebook* appeared as *El cuaderno dorado* in 1978, sixteen years after its publication in London. Why did it take so long? Did Spanish publishing houses ignore Lessing in the 1960s and 1970s? Did her controversial spirit clash with the traditional views of Franco's censors? This article describes information found in files from the censorship office in an attempt to provide an explanation for the attitudes to Lessing's novels in the Franco era. They contain valuable data regarding publisher and bookseller literary interest in Lessing at the time, with reference to Spanish and imported editions of her work, and, more importantly, provide some insight into the censors' opinion of her fiction.[6]

The first attempt to introduce Lessing to Spanish readers was in 1953, when Editorial Spinelli applied to import 20 copies of an English edition of *The Grass is Singing*, her first novel. Published in Britain three years earlier, in 1950, *The Grass* examines the issue of racism in colonial Africa through the relationship between a black servant and an unhappy white woman, the wife of a colonial farmer. In it, Lessing highlights the cruel and exploitative nature of colonialism, an undoubtedly unwelcome criticism of her native Southern Rhodesia (then a British colony, now Zimbabwe). It was accepted by the Spanish censor, who authorised the import, describing the novel as "excellent" and justifying this verdict by stating that the immoral behaviour of the adulterous wife was rightly punished: "Death is the price of her crime," he wrote.[7] Following this precedent, ten more censorship importation reports in the 1960s and 1970s were also favourable. In fact, when the publisher Seix Barral decided to print a Spanish version of the novel with the title *Canta la hierba* in 1964, the censor approved it again, praising Lessing's "appealing style."[8] Curiously enough, although the censorship office gave permission for the publication of *The Grass is Singing* in Spanish, Seix Barral did not in fact bring it out until 1968. When the censors reconsidered the work in that year, they were decidedly more complimentary:

[5] Following on from this introductory note, the newsletter also includes Galván's article "The Spanish Confusion: The Reception of Doris Lessing in Spain"; a revised and enlarged version of this essay is also included in *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing* (1990).

[6] On censorship in post-war Spain, see Abellán (1980), Beneyto (1977) and Cisquella (1977). Most censorship files of this period can be found in the Archivo General de la Administración (Alcalá de Henares, Madrid). I am indebted to the archive staff for their unstinting help and friendly guidance on how to find my way through the complexities of these files.

[7] "Excelente novela sobre la vida en el interior de Sudáfrica y las relaciones entre blancos y negros. El código no escrito, pero inexorable, que regula estas relaciones se cumple al faltar una mujer casada, que ha perdido la conciencia de su propia personalidad por la tremenda soledad en que se encuentra, a las normas de convivencia con los negros. La muerte es el precio de su delito, y el negro objeto de sus preferencias liquida con el puñal la inminente fuga de la mujer. Creo que se puede autorizar." See File 2190-53, Reference (03)50.02SIG21/10275.

[8] File 7456-64, Reference (03)50.02SIG21/15742.

"A novel of great quality, written with perfect knowledge of background and types, and with enormous literary dignity."[9]

It is interesting to note the apparent acceptance of Lessing's condemnation of European colonialism on the part of the Spanish censors. They did not seem to object to her harsh criticism of the brutal colonisation of Africa or her attacks against the gross injustices of racial inequality and prejudice. We should take into account that twentieth-century Spain also had colonies in Africa; Equatorial Guinea, a central African nation under Spanish rule for 190 years, did not gain its independence until 1968. Similarly, Spain waged colonial campaigns in Africa at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, and Francoist discourse made much of "Spain's African vocation," a concept that was to be central during the postwar period (Nerín 1997, 11). Clearly the censors who read *The Grass is Singing* believed the target of Lessing's criticism was the British Empire, never considering the possibility that Spain's colonial policy could also be construed as an object of Lessing's satire.

The next novel to attempt the journey into the Spanish literary world was *The Golden Notebook*, a daring narrative that presents a detailed description of the life of a sexually liberated woman, Anna Wulf, and the crises she faces, both personal and professional. Anna, a 40-year-old writer and single mother, reflects frankly on her youthful wartime experiences in Africa, her later life in London's leftist circles, her troubled relationships with men and her attempts at writing fiction. A book fusing sex with politics would surely encounter difficulties with the Spanish censors. Indeed, the publisher Seix Barral was subjected to objections in 1962 when they applied to publish 4,000 copies of *El cuaderno dorado*. A first censor identified over sixty pages which he found offensive to morality or to the regime. After a brief description of the novel, he stated two main reasons for banning the novel: first, its "sexual degeneration," which included adultery, homosexuality, masturbation, Freudianism, etc.; and secondly, its politics, with communist characters portrayed as "idealistic, completely human characters."[10]

The publisher appealed, explaining that the story actually showed great respect for Christian morality principles by clearly demonstrating how "a woman who attempts to evade her true mission in life inevitably heads for neurosis." He added that the publication of this already important book, given Lessing's prestige as one of the best contemporary British novelists, would be of great interest to readers. Despite these arguments, a new ecclesiastical censor confirmed that the protagonist's immoral behaviour and her links with the Communist Party were enough in themselves to prevent publication of the novel.[11] It is worth noting that the Spanish publisher intended to publish *The Golden*

[9] "Novela de gran calidad, escrita con un conocimiento perfecto del ambiente y de los tipos y con una enorme dignidad literaria. No hay absolutamente nada que objetar." See File 4753-68, Reference (03)50.06SIG21/19001.

[10] See File 3486-62, Reference (03)50.05SIG21/14016.

[11] "Diario de una mujer divorciada, que aspira a vivir una vida libre. Tal vida se mueve en el amplio campo de la más perfecta amoralidad: perfecto libertinaje en las relaciones sexuales, adhesión (no bien definida) al partido comunista. . . . Se mantiene, es cierto, fiel a unos principios en los que estima consiste la dignidad humana, pero el nivel de los mismos es

Notebook in 1962, the very same year in which the novel came out both in Britain and the United States, clearly demonstrating the publisher's keen interest in Lessing, and in this book in particular. It is also interesting that while in Spain Lessing was being banned for her communist characters, in the Soviet Union she was having similar problems, but for the opposite reasons.[12] Her work was banned by the Kremlin because she had left the Communist Party when the Soviets invaded Hungary in 1956. After a very positive reception of the Russian translation of her African stories and *Martha Quest* in the 1950s, she was now "a traitor," and was banned in the Soviet Union between 1957 and 1977 (Peterson 1990, 142).

Following Seix Barral's frustrated request to publish *The Golden Notebook* in Spain, some booksellers ventured to import the novel in the 1960s and 1970s. There were eleven importation requests altogether, for a total of 327 copies in English, and only two were refused.[13] In 1964, two booksellers were allowed to sell the book, although some censors still found it problematic. There were clear discrepancies between the views of the censors: whereas one insisted that the novel should be banned for being "Crude, immoral, descriptive," with "clear communist connections" written into the plot, another was more favourable: "In the form of a diary or notebook, the author expresses her thoughts on women and their problems: feminism, love, marriage, religion, politics, etc. Many points are opinions and therefore open to interpretation. I believe that there is nothing to cut. In any case, it is an import in English. IT CAN BE AUTHORISED."[14] The description of the book in this report is worth reading in detail. What was previously described by the first censor as "sexual degeneration," "libertinism," "adultery" and "communism," here is referred to as "love," "marriage" and "politics." Eventually, this request was granted, only on this occasion. But they authorised only fifty copies, and in English, so very few Spanish readers had access to this work since French, rather than English, was the language taught in schools at the time.

As of 1968 the ban on *The Golden Notebook* was permanently lifted. This time, a very different interpretation of the book prevailed. Although the protagonist's belief in free love was deemed immoral, the story did contain a moral: "it was Anna Wulf's need for happiness and the impossibility of finding it that drove her to the search for new and useless sensations."[15] This is an early psychological approach to *The Golden Notebook*

tan bajo y tan fuera de lo que normalmente se entiende por principio, que prácticamente carecen de vigencia, y la obra transcurre al margen de toda moral. Abundan además las escenas íntimas descritas con desenvuelta crudeza."

[12] I briefly wrote about the paradoxes and radical changes of censoring attitudes towards some of Lessing's novels that ocurred in various European censorship systems in "The Censorship of British Fiction in Twentieth-Century Europe: Paradoxes and Inconsistencies" (Lázaro 2012).

[13] See File 742-64, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6455, and File 254-67, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6478.

[14] "En forma de diario o libro de notas, la autora va exponiendo su pensamiento sobre la mujer y sus problemas: feminismo, el amor, el matrimonio, religión, política, etc. En muchos puntos son opiniones muy discutibles. No creo que haya nada suprimible. De todas las maneras se trata de una importación en inglés. PROCEDE SU AUTORIZACIÓN." See File 670-64, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6455.

[15] "Aunque el tema es escabroso y el ambiente de la novela amoral (la protagonista, Ana, practica libremente el amor y la unión sexual con cuantos hombres le agradan), apruebo la obra por su conclusión moralizadora: a pesar

that later critics would also include in their discussions of the novel.[16] The door was now open for this very controversial book to be imported five more times before the publication of Spanish versions, by Noguer in 1978 and then by Luis de Caralt the following year. By then Franco had died, and, although the censorship system was still in place, the previous regime's strict policy concerning morality and political correctness had disappeared.

If *The Golden Notebook* encountered difficulties in the censorship office, the first in the "Children of Violence" series, *Martha Quest*, met with more problems. This comes as no surprise, as the story of Martha Quest, a young girl growing up in a British colony in Africa just before World War II, once more focuses on the protagonist's relationships with men, and her reactions to sex and politics. This time, several passages were censored after a publication request by Ediciones 62 was examined in 1965.[17] The report notes the literary value of the novel and the celebrity of the author, but points out unwelcome references to birth control and abortion. Nevertheless, the banned passages actually referred to improper political comments about Franco and the Spanish republican government during the Civil War, as well as a number of "nearly pornographic" love scenes involving the sexual awakening of the protagonist. The political passage referred to is in fact an apparently harmless conversation in which Martha has a political argument in her office and tries to explain to Mrs Buss that those who led the coup against an elected government in Spain in 1936 were not the republicans, but Franco's army:

> Martha said the Government in Spain was not Communist, but Liberal. Mrs Buss looked blank for a moment, and then said that was what she had said all the time, the Government was Liberal, so why did Abraham have to go and fight it? Martha was confused, then she understood, and said that Mrs Buss was making a mistake, Franco had never been elected, but... Mrs Buss listened, frowning doubtfully, while her hands rested on the keys, her bright face looking stubborn. (Lessing 1965, 244)

The censor noticed the author's sympathy for the Spanish Republican government rejecting the use of the label "Liberal" for the government that Franco had overthrown, the official line being that Franco's troops saved the country from the communists. The publishers were asked to omit these passages, something they refused to do and the book was not published.

Nevertheless, *Martha Quest*'s luck changed the following year. From 1966 to 1972 five importation requests made it through without a hitch. One hundred and eighty copies

de su libertad sentimental y sexual, Ana nunca envidió la felicidad; fue su necesidad de ésta y la imposibilidad de encontrarla la que críticamente le impelía a la búsqueda de nuevas e inútiles sensaciones." See File 565-68, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6490.

[16] See, for instance, Jeannette King's reading of this novel in "*The Golden Notebook* and Reflective Form" (1989) and Linda Kauffman's "*The Golden Notebook*: Anna Wulf's Schizoanalysis" (1992).

[17] File 4005-65, Reference (03)50.06SIG21/16293.

of the Signet and Panther editions arrived in Spanish bookshops. So when in 1973 Seix Barral took the risk of publishing a Spanish version of *Martha Quest*, the censors did not pose too many objections. On this occasion, despite a request to remove one of the sexual passages, another more tolerant censor decided to approve the novel.[18] Censorship relaxed somewhat during the 1970s and of the seven allegedly obscene passages of the previous report only one, in which Martha is in bed with Douglas, her future husband, continued to be seen as problematic: "He pulled aside her dress, and fell in an ecstasy of humble adoration on her breasts, cupping them in his hands and explaining how they were so sweet" (Lessing 1965, 265). It is tempting to suspect that the Spanish translation of those "nearly pornographic" passages spotted by the censor in 1965 had been deliberately "moderated" in an exercise of self-censorship. However, I have investigated this and have come to the conclusion that the translator, Francesc Parcerisas, submitted a faithful version of the text to the censors.

The remaining four novels of "The Children of Violence" series did not attract the interest of Spanish publishers during Franco's regime. It was only at the end of the 1970s, beginning of 1980s that the publishers Argos Vergara decided to release the continuation of Martha Quest's experiences, struggles and intellectual development: *Un casamiento convencional* (*A Proper Marriage*) in 1979, *Al final de la tormenta* (*A Ripple from the Storm*) in 1980, *Cerco de tierra* (*Landlocked*) in 1980, and *La ciudad de las cuatro puertas* (*The Four-Gated City*) in 1982. By then Franco's censorship machine was a thing of the past. What is surprising is that the Archive holds no previous record of these novels in its database. Did Spanish publishers ignore the less popular novels of the series? Were they afraid of a negative response and did not bother to try? It is difficult to say. What we know is that three of these novels—*A Proper Marriage*, *A Ripple from the Storm* and *Landlocked*—were allowed to enter Spain in the 1960s, since several import requests were granted without objection. A request for only 150 copies of *The Four-Gated City* was banned in 1970, and again in 1972, due to an "erotic passage" in the second chapter, in which Martha is in bed with her friend Jack.[19]

Another novel by Lessing which did not attract the attention of Spanish publishers was *Retreat to Innocence* (1956). In this case, it is reasonable to assume that, given the propagandist nature of the work, no publisher deemed an application to the censors worthwhile. It is the story of Julia Barr, a young girl from the English provinces and daughter of a wealthy baronet, who has an affair with a Czech communist refugee, Jan Brod. Socialist ideas abound, in the form of the contrast between old leftists who had opposed fascism in the 1930s and 1940s, and the younger, non-political generation. It includes a long eulogy of Stalin, in which Jan Brod compares him with the Messiah. It is difficult to understand how the censors could have allowed this book to see the light

[18] File 13558-72, Reference (03)50.07SIG73/02543.

[19] See File 1346-70, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6519, File 1354-70, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6519, and File 617-72, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6534.

of day under Franco's regime: No publisher even tried.[20] Furthermore, it was not a very well known novel, since the author herself had actually disowned it (Lessing 1997, 214). All I could find in my investigations was an import file from 1967, granting 25 copies of the book in English.[21] This was the sum of the interest the novel awoke in Spain.

Contrary to what occurred in the case of the "Children of Violence" series, *The Summer before the Dark* triggered an immediate response from the Spanish publisher Seix Barral. The very same year the novel was published in London and New York, 1973, the Barcelona firm that had already published *The Grass is Singing* and *Martha Quest* decided to print 6,000 copies of *El último verano de la Sra. Brown*, translated by Francesc Parcerisas. It is the story of a middle-aged housewife from a London suburb, Kate Brown, who is offered a summer job abroad and has an affair with a young American, Jeffrey Merton, while examining her past and present life at the same time. In Kate Brown we find another of Lessing's female characters who, escaping traditional roles and values, lives her life fully in terms of her femininity, her sexuality, and, in this case, her own ageing process. Once more, Spanish censors rejected passages from the novel proposing the censorship of five pages. Curiously enough, this time they found no fault with Kate's adultery nor with the explicit references to her sex life. Only a couple of offensive phrases in which the vulgar use of the word "screw" occurs and some critical comments about Spain were considered problematic.[22] The first of these anti-Spanish comments described the way Spain had changed under the pressure of the tourist trade: where previously bikinis were not allowed on the beach, now people even made love openly, "in the warm, treacherous, increasingly odiferous waters—sometimes copulating as openly as cats and dogs." Then, a few lines later, the same kind of criticism is made more explicitly: the country was "sold to tourism," it was "corrupted, ruined, debased." The chapter in which Kate and Jeffrey are in Spain contains numerous negative observations about the country and its people. It is strange that the censors did not ask for the many insulting remarks to be eliminated, since foreign attacks on Spain were usually rejected.[23] However, the publisher agreed to remove the five offending passages and an expurgated version of *El último verano de la Sra. Brown* appeared in 1974.

However, the ban on the English language version of this novel continued for another year. Three import requests submitted in January and July 1975, a few months before Franco's death, were not approved. Again, the reason was that Lessing "speaks badly of

[20] There is, however, a Spanish version entitled *Regreso a la inocencia*, published by Zig Zag in Santiago de Chile in 1969.

[21] File 870-67, Reference (03)52.117SIG66/6482.

[22] File 11795-73, Reference (03)50.07SIG73/03546.

[23] For instance, one can read that in 1970s Spain men were "still owning women's sexuality" (1973, 78), and twenty years earlier, Kate, one of the first tourists in Spain, had seen massive poverty and despair, "children in rags and without shoes, children with sores and with flies crawling on their faces and into their eyes, children with the swollen bellies of malnutrition" (1973, 80).

Spain."[24] It seems that morality issues were no longer a matter of concern for the censors, but they still kept a tight control on texts which dealt harsh blows to the image of the country. The ban on *The Summer before the Dark* was eventually lifted in 1977, although this in no way represented a watershed moment in the reception of Lessing's works in Spain. It simply meant that 50 copies of a Penguin edition could freely circulate among Spanish readers.[25]

Several years would go by before the unexpurgated Spanish version of the novel came out. It was in 1984 that a new translation by J. Manuel Álvarez Flórez and Julia Ángela Pérez Gómez was published by Argos Vergara. By then, Franco had died, the censorship system had vanished and publishers were taking advantage of the new right to freedom of speech to publish those books that had not been authorised before. One would therefore expect to find this new Spanish version of Lessing's *The Summer before the Dark* to not contain the shortcomings of the previous version. However, a careful look at this new translation reveals that the passages of the original text considered improper were, to a great extent, moderated. Had Franco's censors read this new version ten years earlier, they might even have approved the book without alterations. Vulgar language, for instance, disappeared. If the censor had frowned on Francesc Parcerisas's sentence "Dios mío, si lo que quieres es que te jodan, ¡hazlo y ya está!" (1973, 36), perhaps he would have accepted the new wording in which the swearword disappeared, "¡Por amor de Dios, si lo que quieres es acostarte con él, hazlo de una vez!" (1984, 56):[26] the new translators discreetly using the expression "go to bed with him," instead of "get yourself screwed." Similarly, the other instance of offensive language detected by the original censors was also transformed in the new translation. See the three texts below:

Lessing's text:

"She [Mary] thinks we are all crazy. You fancy a man, he fancies you, you screw until one or the other is tired, and then goodbye, no hard feelings" (1973, 220)

Banned text, by Francesc Parcerisas:

"Cree que estamos todos locos. Te gusta un tipo, y tú le gustas a él, pues a chingar hasta que uno de los dos se canse, y luego adiós y si te he visto no me acuerdo" (1973, 135)

Accepted text, by Álvarez Flórez and Pérez Gómez:

"Cree que estamos locos todos. Te gusta un hombre, a él le gustas tú, lo hacéis hasta que uno u otro se cansa y luego adiós, no hay por qué guardar rencor ni por qué lamentarse" (1984, 189)

It is interesting that even the passage from the 1974 translation in which the word "joder" ("fuck") was used by Parcerisas is again moderated in the new Spanish text. Kate is thinking

[24] See, for example, File 28-75, Reference (03)50.07SIG66/6567.

[25] File 365-77, (03)50.07SIG Reference 66/6591.

[26] "Kate imagined her [Mary] saying. What's wrong with you? For God's sake, if you are going to get yourself screwed, then do it!" (1973, 65).

about how her friend Mary and her husband end their quarrels and says: "she [Mary] screams at him a little and then they make love. Well, sex" (1973, 221). Parcerisas had used more explicit language: "le grita un poco y luego se ponen a hacer el amor. Bueno, a joder" (1973, 135). However, Álvarez Flórez and Pérez Gómez prefer the more politically correct expression "to have sex:" "ella le chilla un poco y luego hacen el amor. Bueno, tienen relaciones sexuales" (1984, 189). Even the critical remarks about Spain were slightly modified so as to sound less pejorative. In the passage where Kate thinks that Spain has been sold to tourism, there was an offensive sentence which the Spanish censor asked to be removed:

> The country was corrupted, ruined, debased, compared with when he [Jeffrey] had first come here. (1973, 79)

Parcerisas had provided a good literal translation:

> Comparado con la primera vez que había venido, el país estaba corrompido, arruinado, deshecho. (1973, 45)

However, the text by Álvarez Flórez and Pérez Gómez is slightly different:

> Comparado con lo que era cuando había estado allí la primera vez, el país le parecía corrompido, destrozado, degradado. (1984, 69)

Note the substitution of the verb "estaba" (was) by the less certain "le parecía" (seemed) in the later version. In the same way, the comment about Spanish "men still owning women's sexuality" in the 1960s, which Parcerisas translated as "los hombres todavía poseían a las mujeres sexualmente" (men still owned women sexually) (1973, 92), is rendered with more formal language: "los hombres aún eran los propietarios de la sexualidad de las mujeres" (men were still the owners of women's sexuality, 1984, 69), which though still sounding very chauvinist, is less harsh than in the original.

If this translation by Álvarez Flórez and Pérez Gómez had been written some years earlier, it would have been interpreted as a clear example of conscious self-censorship tactics due to fear of the work being sanctioned or banned by the censors. However, published in 1984, when the censorship system was already dismantled, the choice of wording here appears to be determined by other factors. It is still a case of conscious self-censorship, but instead of being concerned with the censors, the translators might have adapted Lessing's language to conform to the expectations of the market. That is to say, Lessing was not writing for a Spanish audience, so she felt quite free to include negative descriptions of the country and its people; but Argos Vergara was publishing the book in Spain and in Spanish, and so might logically have anticipated some kind of disapproval or even indignation among Spanish readers, perhaps even rejection of

the author.[27] Other plausible explanations for this type of self-censorship could be that the translators avoided explicit vulgar expressions in deference to the sensibilities of their target readers or even as a matter of personal taste. It is difficult to say whether the self-censorship is conscious or unconscious. The translators may have been trying to avoid embarrassing or offending their readers. Perhaps they were already engaging in political correctness, the so-called "dictatorship of the well-meaning and pure of heart" (Dickstein 1993, 554). In recent decades, political correctness has sometimes been more effective in controlling language than any other kind of institutional proscriptions. Perhaps Álvarez Flórez and Pérez Gómez did not want to use Lessing's explicit language because they simply did not like it. It is impossible to say. Such is the complexity of literary translation and such is the ambiguity of self-censorship.

During the 1970s, Lessing became more interested in psychology and mysticism. Her new novels, such as *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* (1971) and *Memoirs of a Survivor* (1974), engage in cosmic fantasies and dreamscapes portraying the breakdown of society. The first describes the experiences and visions of Charles Watkins, who is supposedly "mad" and in a psychiatric hospital where doctors are trying to restore him to sanity. The second shows the life of Emily, a young girl who grows up fighting for survival in a barbaric and anarchic future society. No explicit political doctrines or idealised communist characters appear in these novels. What is more, although sexual references are in evidence throughout both stories, they did not prove too explicit for the Spanish censors. Thus, a Spanish version of *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* was authorised in 1974.[28] However, the censor's report included in this 1974 file is quite critical of Lessing's writing. He describes the novel as extremely complicated and confusing, without reaching any transcendent conclusion. And, while not to his taste, "the explanations given about certain sexual anatomical features of animals, strange creatures from dreams and nightmares, cannot reasonably be marked as objections."[29] In contrast, by the time *Memoirs of a Survivor* arrived in Spain, it was already too late for censorship difficulties to have impeded its importation. In July 1976, nine months after Franco's death, the censors approved the publication of *Memorias de una supervivivente*. Even so, the censor could not help referring to what in the past might have prevented its publication: "[Emily] lives in a neighbourhood in which the social conditions are rather low and free, where absolute liberty prevails, strange ambiences in which young people are mixed up with leaders who advocate free love and liberty; there is some drugs and sexual freedom, but without actually constituting a serious matter".[30] It is

27 Carmen García Navarro in her essay on the translation of Lessing's writings in Spain explains that the author certainly is an "uncomfortable figure for some sectors" of society (2001, 249).

28 Three import requests of *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* in English had also been granted in 1972.

29 "Las explicaciones que hace de ciertas formas anatómicas sexuales animales, bichos rarísimos de sueños y pesadillas, no pueden razonablemente marcarse como reparos." File 324-74, Reference (03)50.07SIG73/03749.

30 "[Emily] tiene que soportar el ambiente de un barrio y en donde se dan unas circunstancias sociales un tanto bajas y libres, aquí predomina una libertad absoluta, ambientes extraños, en donde se mezclan gente joven con una especie de líderes que preconizan el amor libre y la libertad, hay un poquito de drogas y de libertad sexual, sin llegar a

worth noting the recurrence of the terms "liberty," "free" and "freedom" in this report. The censor might be missing the focus of the constraints of the old regime.

All this information provides some answers to the questions posed at the beginning of the article regarding the reception of Lessing's novels in Spain during Franco's regime. The interest of Spanish publishers and booksellers in Lessing's work, and the novels available to Spanish readers are summarised in the following table:

Table 1. Interest of Spanish publishers and importers in Lessing's novels

Novel	Publication request	In the bookshop	Import request	In the bookshop
The Grass is Singing (1950)	1964	1968	1953	1953
Martha Quest (1952)	1965	1973	1966	1966
A Proper Marriage (1954)	1979	1979	1966	1966
Retreat to Innocence (1956)	—	—	1967	1967
A Ripple from the Storm (1958)	1980	1980	1966	1966
The Golden Notebook (1962)	1962	1978	1964	1964
Landlocked (1965)	1980	1980	1967	1967
The Four-Gated City (1969)	1982	1982	1970	—
Briefing for a Descent into Hell (1971)	1974	1974	1972	1972
The Summer before the Dark (1973)	1973	1974	1975	1975
Memoirs of a Survivor (1974)	1976	1976	1976	1976

This table shows that more than half of the novels were requested and were either imported or published in Spain within three years of the original date of publication,-whereas only four took over ten years to become available to Spanish readers. It is interesting to note that of these four novels, three belong to "The Children of Violence" series; the fourth is *Retreat to Innocence*, whose English version is now out of print and was rejected by the author herself, as mentioned above. Not so *The Golden Notebook* and *The Summer before Dark*, which emerged as soon as they were published in London. Finally, this table shows that Spanish publishers and importers were most interested in those novels published in the 1960s and 1970s; that is to say, at the end of Franco's regime.

If we compare Lessing's reception in Spain and in other European countries, such as France or Germany, there is very little difference. As Claire Sprague points out in *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing: Nine Nations Reading* (1990), *The Grass is Singing* was first published in France in 1953 and after that nothing else by Lessing was translated into French until 1976, when a French version of *The Golden Notebook* appeared (Jouve 1990,

constituir materia grave." File 7637-76, Reference (03)050SIG73/05566. Two import requests, for a total of 850 copies of *Memoirs of a Survivor* in English, were granted in 1976.

102-12). Her reception in Germany was not much better. In what was then known as West Germany, Lessing was largely ignored until 1978, when *The Golden Notebook* was published, and *Martha Quest* did not appear until 1981. On the other hand, her departure from communist orthodoxy made Lessing unwelcome in the communist East Germany of the time, then the German Democratic Republic, until the mid-1980s (Knapp 1990: 113-27). The table below gives information about the first translations of the famous novel *The Golden Notebook* (1962) in four European countries:

Table 2. First editions of *The Golden Notebook* in Europe

Country	Title	Year
Italy	*Il taccuino d'oro*	1964
France	*Le Carnet d'or*	1976
Spain	*El cuaderno dorado*	1978
West Germany	*Das Goldene Natizbuch*	1978

Despite all this, Franco's censorship is clearly one of the key factors that negatively affected the reading, translation and publication of Lessing's novels in Spain. The table below, showing the novels which were banned or authorised by the censors, confirms that most of the novels that came under the censors' scrutiny were granted permission to be imported or published in Spain. Of the ten novels examined before 1975, only three were banned—*The Golden Notebook*, *The Four-Gated City* and *The Summer before the Dark*—and two were authorised with cuts—*Martha Quest* and *The Summer before the Dark*. However, most of the authorised files were import requests for only a few copies of the novels in English, and very few Spanish readers were at the time capable of understanding them.

Table 3. Lessing novels banned and authorised (import and publication), 1950-1975

Novel	Banned	With cuts	Authorised
The Grass is Singing (1950)			x
Martha Quest (1952)		x	x
A Proper Marriage (1954)			x
Retreat to Innocence (1956)			x
A Ripple from the Storm (1958)			x
The Golden Notebook (1962)	x		x
Landlocked (1965)			x
The Four-Gated City (1969)	x		
Briefing for a Descent into Hell (1971)			x
The Summer before the Dark (1973)	x	x	x

If we ignore the import files and look only at the publication of Lessing's novels in Spanish, the picture is quite different. Three novels were authorised and three were problematic.

Table 4. Lessing novels banned and authorised (publication only), 1950-1975

Novel	Banned	With cuts	Authorised
The Grass is Singing (1950)			1964
Martha Quest (1952)		1965	1973
The Golden Notebook (1962)	1962		
Briefing for a Descent into Hell (1971)			1974
The Summer before the Dark (1973)		1973	

The conclusion that emerges from all this is that Franco's censorship system had a considerable negative impact on the reception of Lessing in Spain. It is not simply a question of the number of books banned. The fact that *The Golden Notebook* had to wait for sixteen years to be published is highly significant. It is likely that many more publishing initiatives would have been taken had it not been for this strict censorship.

Another interesting issue that the censorship files reveal is that Spanish censors objected to Lessing's novels mainly on political and moral grounds. They intervened to forbid explicitly sexual scenes, adulterous relationships and premarital sex. One censorship action refers to immoral behaviour seasoned with crude language, then there were also a few politically incorrect comments in some novels and, of course, the denigratory images of Spain in *The Summer before the Dark*. Had Lessing begun her career with science fiction novels instead of realistic stories reflecting her communist ideas intertwined with explicit sexual scenes, perhaps she would have fared better with the Spanish censors. Fantasy worlds and science-fiction scenarios are often more successful in concealing controversial issues than realistic narrative in which the author's points are made more simply and obviously.

Strange though it may seem, Lessing's devastating criticism of colonialism and the feminism implicit in the portrayal of her female characters found no hostility in Franco's censorship office. This is especially surprising considering Spain's colonial vocation and the efforts of the regime to preserve traditional roles of women as good Christian wives and Spanish patriots, through the activity of the Feminine Section of the Spanish Falange.[31] The censors were not really concerned with Lessing's feminist characters as long as they did not get involved in explicit sexual scenes or immoral behaviour.

Finally, although Spanish censors took issue with Lessing's treatment of political and sexual matters, they also commended her art and writing. Apart from the censor who read *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* finding it complicated and confusing, on the whole Franco's censors praise the quality of Lessing's novels: on three different occasions *The Grass is Singing* is described as an excellent novel, with an appealing style and written

[31] For an illuminating discussion of the situation of women during the Franco regime, see Gallego Méndez (1983)

with enormous literary dignity. Similarly, the report on *Martha Quest* highlights its great literary value. There is no reference made, however, to the quality of the much-admired *The Golden Notebook*. Perhaps the erotic scenes involving Anna prevented the censors from appreciating its importance as a literary work.

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"The Pandora Effect:" James Cameron's *Avatar* and a Trauma Studies Perspective

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The controverted responses to James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009), as well as its use to support a variety of political and ideological agendas, seem to imply that there is something in this film for almost everyone. An analysis from the perspective of trauma studies suggests that the key to its impact may lie in the way the movie reflects the fundamental fear of human alienation from nature, which is part of the wounded condition of our contemporary culture. This article embarks on a study of the representation of and working through of trauma in the movie, both based on the reiteration of stereotypes and the recreation of ecotopia. It also reflects on the implications of the phenomenon known as the Pandora Effect, or the reported feelings of depression at discovering the impossibility of real immersion after watching the movie. It ends with a problematizing of the uncritical application of the trauma paradigm and a revision of the model into a culturally sensitive trauma theory that avoids neo-colonial appropriation and takes into account the historical unresolved grief of colonized peoples.

Keywords: *Avatar*; trauma studies; Indian stereotypes; Native Americans; historical unresolved grief; postcolonial trauma

. . .

"El efecto Pandora:" *Avatar*, de James Cameron, y una perspectiva de los estudios de trauma

De las respuestas controvertidas a *Avatar* (2009), de James Cameron, así como de su uso para apoyar diversas agendas políticas e ideológicas, parece desprenderse que hay algo en esta película para cada espectador/a. Al analizarla desde el punto de vista de los estudios de trauma se observa que la clave de su impacto puede residir en el modo en que el filme refleja el miedo fundamental a la alienación humana de la naturaleza, lo cual formaría parte de la cultura contemporánea herida. Este artículo emprende el estudio de la representación y resolución del trauma en la película, basadas en la reiteración de estereotipos y la recreación de la ecotopía. Ofrece asimismo una reflexión sobre las implicaciones del fenómeno conocido como Efecto Pandora, o los sentimientos depresivos relatados tras ver la película y descubrir en ella la imposibilidad de inmersión real. Culmina en una discusión crítica de la aplicación del paradigma del trauma y en una revisión del modelo hacia una teoría del trauma que sea sensible a las diferencias culturales, que evite la apropiación neo-colonial y tenga en consideración el sufrimiento histórico sin resolver de los pueblos colonizados.

Palabras clave: *Avatar*; estudios de trauma; estereotipos de los indios; nativos estadounidenses; sufrimiento histórico no resuelto; trauma postcolonial

"Pandora Effect"
A condition causing one to feel a strange mix of emotions (which may include awe, disappointment, giddiness, emptiness, warmth, and most of all depression) after watching James Cameron's *Avatar* movie. For many it has changed the way they see the world and life in general.
(Urban Dictionary)

1. The Controverted Responses to *Avatar*

More than three years after the release of *Avatar* (James Cameron, 2009), its impact, far from diminishing, has continued to grow at all levels.[1] While it remains, as of today, the highest-grossing film ever made, new DVDs, games and merchandising keep adding dollars to its already astonishing takings. The number and variety of people who have watched it all over the world make it by no means an exaggeration to also consider it the most effectively global film ever made. On the other hand, from the very moment of its release, reactions to *Avatar* have been as diverse as Pandorian wildlife, though by no means as harmonious, ranging from unconditional praise to total rejection of, even anger at, the film. It is both the scale of its impact and its controversial nature that call for a close critical analysis of the movie.

The fact that, in the characterization of the Na'vi, the film recycles "a set of shopworn tropes about indigeneity in general, and American Indians in particular" (Starn 2011, 179) has been widely recognized by reviewers and critics. In spite of some authors' references to the elasticity of the Na'vi (Morris, *Globe*, 10 January 2010), who have been seen by one reviewer as "a mélange of Native American, African, Vietnamese, Iraqi and other cultural fragments" (Brooks, *New York Times*, 7 January 2010), and who could be "American Indians, Polish Jews, or bald eagles" (Morris, *Globe*, 10 January 2010), the film has generally been interpreted as "a sort of a Native American parable" (Edelstein 2009). There seems to be no doubt, in fact, that "these are alien versions of stereotypical native peoples that we've seen in Hollywood movies for decades" (Newitz 2009), and the connection—even to the point of imitation—to movies like *Dances with Wolves* (1990) or *Pocahontas* (1995), has also taken up much of writers' attention.[2] Emphasis has often been laid on "the commonplace figure of the 'ecological Indian'" (Adamson 2012, 144), and the references to the Native American holocaust (Cokinos 2010) and the "crime

[1] The research carried out for the writing of this article is part of a project financed by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO) (code FFI2012-32719). The author is also grateful for the support of the Government of Aragón and the European Social Fund (ESF) (code H05).

[2] Although these are the two movies that come up most often—and in the case of *Dances with Wolves*, Cameron has actually acknowledged the connection (*Los Angeles Times* [Latimesblogs], 14 August 2009)—other examples are explored by Brooks (*New York Times*, 7 January 2010); Burr (*Boston Globe,* 17 December 2009); Caviaro (2010); Feeney (*Boston Globe*, 10 January 2010); Reelz (2009); Newitz (2009); and Westfahl (2009).

scene of white America's foundational act of genocide" (Newitz 2009). But it is when writers refer to the formulaic nature of the script that criticism becomes harshest. Put very simply—but then, the plot *is* strikingly simple—this is just another going-Indian narrative: the white hero, discovering that the indigenous peoples he is supposed to be fighting are spiritually superior to his own corrupted race, rejects his origins and chooses to take sides with the Natives, finally becoming their leader with the help—and love—of the indigenous princess. Even as they acknowledge the amazing technological innovation used to tell it, reviewers and critics have characterized the plot as predictable (Starn 2011, 179), frustrating (Justice 2010) and even "totally offensive" (Brooks, *New York Times*, 7 January 2010). Not surprisingly, there have been many negative responses to the movie as a whole because of the stereotyping and colonial presuppositions that support it. Angry reactions to *Avatar* because of its racism are linked to references to the "white man's burden" (Barnard, *Toronto Star*, 11 January 2010), the movie's emphasis on "the usual presumed radical divide between us and them" (Starn 2011, 179) or its being "a fantasy about race from the point of view of white people" (Newitz 2009).

But speaking only about the negative responses to *Avatar* would be a terrible simplification of the reactions it has originated. People from all over the world, both indigenous and non-indigenous, have also watched *Avatar* enthusiastically, and some are even using it to support their particular vindications. Joni Adamson explores examples of how the film is playing a very important role in global environmental justice struggles (2012, 146). Besides the relevant motivation of making the ill-treatment of nature more visible, authors mention the values emphasized in the movie like relatedness and connection (Good Fox 2010), and involvement, activism and environmentalism (Barrionuevo, *New York Times*, 11 April 2010). Perhaps most strikingly, Bolivia President Evo Morales has stated that the movie "depicted the resistance against capitalism and the fight for the environment" (*Buenos Aires Herald*, 12 January 2010). In fact, "the indigenous acceptance of *Avatar*'s capacity to depict their contemporary strife" has not escaped authors like Briones, who have also referred to this as an interesting contradiction (2011, 314).[3]

Apart from making *Avatar* fit a series of political and ideological agendas, a number of fans have expressed a desire to escape their own lives and live on Pandora, some reacting by admitting to reaching the point of depression and thoughts of suicide after watching the movie (Sodahead 2010; Piazza 2010). As Mulrooney has noted, *Avatar* makes people so sad that new terms have been introduced into the vernacular: "Post-Avatar Depression," "Avatar Blues," or "The Pandora Effect" (2011, 201). Starn interprets the *Globe* headline "WARNING: AVATAR CAN MAKE YOU SICK & SUICIDAL!" and the ensuing article in which some viewers indicated "they'd rather DIE than return to Earth's gritty reality," as an obvious exaggeration, but also as "a reminder of just how a certain idealized vision

[3] Other interpretations include Hillis' (2009) analysis of *Avatar* as an example of the "contemporary resuscitation of Neoplatonism," or the presence of the movie in discussions of the current role of anthropology in, for example, the work of AbdelRahim (2009), Briones (2011), Clifford (2011), Simpson (2011) and Starn (2011).

of indigenous peoples answers to the longing for Otherness, a space of freedom outside modernity and the West" (2011, 197-98). This would explain why, after watching *Avatar*, some viewers may have experienced a "sort of hunger for our virtual selves, our avatars to take on . . . the final frontier, which is maybe in our own minds" (Edelstein 2009). The virtual and the real are less clearly distinguished in some reviewers' expressed desire that a movie like *Avatar* will encourage research to make this fantasy real in the future (Sodahead 2010) or that "it will someday not only be possible, but even desirable, to give up one's natural identity and assume an artificial identity" (Westfahl 2009).

Some of these responses are more understandable than others, but what such diversity suggests is that *Avatar* may be functioning like a sort of Melvillean white whale, a blank surface on which each viewer inscribes his or her own interpretation, and which acts like a mirror that reflects back on individuals, telling us something about ourselves in what we each see in the movie. In order to explore the full potential of this dynamic, an analysis from the point of view of trauma studies seems especially useful, because the fact that there might be something in *Avatar* for everyone may be related to the way it reflects on the traumatized nature of our world. In "Trauma within the Limits of Literature," Geoffrey Hartman (2003) characterizes contemporary society as deeply wounded, especially due to its incapacity to assimilate and express pain, and he notes that it is the role of literature to make silence audible and verbalize pain in order to express that repressed suffering. If we look at *Avatar* as a narrative that reflects and expresses the wounded condition of our contemporary culture, it becomes relevant to examine the way it embarks on the articulation of traumas that are very much alive, and simultaneously assess the effectiveness of the images it presents and whether or not they succeed in achieving some kind of healing.

2. "A Hole in the Middle of my Life:" Representing and Working through Trauma

The first reference to trauma in *Avatar* comes with the protagonist's initial view of himself as having "a hole blown in the middle of [his] life." Jake Sully (Sam Worthington), a paraplegic ex-Marine who travels to Moon Pandora to take his dead twin brother's place in the avatar program, is both physically and psychologically wounded, and his numbness, his confusion of dream and reality, as well as his desire to escape and avoid the traumatic event, all fit the common definition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Caruth 1995, 4). Jake's pain is also directly related to the fact that he has lost his physical link with the land, not only because his legs are paralyzed, but also because, as he says, there is no green left on Earth anymore. The displacement of the Earth's wound onto Pandora and the relevance of Jake's individual trauma for the human race as a whole become obvious, as this hole in the middle of his life is visually articulated as a huge crater that the humans are digging in Pandora to extract unobtanium, a mineral that is considered the solution to the Earth's energy crisis. The parallelism of the two holes becomes a symbol of the inassimilable and

unexpressed pain which is articulated in the narrative, namely, the fundamental fear of human separation and alienation from nature.

A useful theoretical support to this reference to trauma in the film can be found in the distinction between the acting out and the working through of trauma, which LaCapra takes from Freudian psychoanalysis in order to engage with historical problems like that of the Holocaust (2001, 141). For LaCapra, acting out emphasizes traumatic memory, that is, the compulsive, repetitive re-enactment of the traumatic event, which remains an open wound, whereas the working through of trauma, or narrative memory, is the overcoming of traumatic symptoms through the distinction of past and present experience, which ultimately leads to healing. Of special relevance for our analysis is LaCapra's understanding of the two options not as opposites but rather as part of the same process, as well as his concern with avoiding both a sublime acting out, in which trauma is magnified, on the one hand, and a redemptive narrative, in which trauma is denied, on the other.[4] The point, therefore, is to examine the way trauma is represented in *Avatar* as well as how it is worked through; in other words, we need to look into the narrative strategies used to fill in those two symbolic holes—the one at the center of Jake Sully's life, and the one on Pandora—as well as the ideological implications of the particular choice of strategies.

The narrative is set 200 years into the future, when the worst predictions by today's environmentalists have been confirmed: the Earth has been completely colonized and its natural riches plundered to the extent that humans have to look for resources elsewhere, which results in the expansion of imperialism towards space, the new frontier. The motif that sustains *Avatar* is precisely the conflict between the human invaders, who come to exploit the resources of Pandora, extremely rich in biodiversity, and the indigenous inhabitants of the place, who struggle to defend their way of life. Following the idea that humans are intrinsically superior to all other beings, and that nature can be controlled and appropriated without asking or giving anything in return—an idea that will be challenged as the plot develops—the members of the Resources Development Administration, a corporate and military entity, are looking for unobtanium, which sells for twenty million a kilo. The only problem they need to overcome is the resistance of the indigenous Na'vi, who are getting in the way of the humans' lucrative operation, because the biggest reserve of unobtanium is right beneath Hometree, the epicenter of the Na'vi. In Colonel Miles Quaritch's (Stephen Lang) initial conceptualization of their enemy, the Na'vi are characterized as "blue monkeys," "savages that live in a tree," or as the threat that is linked to the inhospitable land they are trying to conquer: "Out beyond that fence," says Quaritch, "we have an indigenous population of humanoids called the Na'vi. They're fond of arrows dipped in a neurotoxin that'll stop your heart in one minute. . . . They are very hard to kill." By promising him an expensive operation that will heal his legs, Quaritch convinces Jake to learn about the Na'vi from the inside in order to gain their

[4] For the full account of these definitions, which LaCapra has also dealt with in *Representing the Holocaust* (1996), see especially *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2001, 43-85; 141-53).

trust so that the humans will discover "how to force their cooperation, or hammer them hard if they don't."

In fact, Jake—who refers to himself as being an empty vessel, an aspect of his personality that makes him a symbolic blank page on which new meanings can be easily written—starts out with a confrontational view of the Na'vi, but soon goes through a radical process of transformation. He is offered an opportunity to leave his wounded body behind temporarily and use a new, virtual one, by means of which he recovers his mobility and consequently his link to the land: in the scene where he is trying out his avatar, he runs freely in Pandorian nature and, in a very symbolic move, buries his feet in the earth, feeling it. His new body also allows him to breathe in an atmosphere that is toxic for humans, and to approach the Omaticaya tribe of the Na'vi. A good example of the frontier-man type, Jake is rough but noble: he embodies the qualities of his dead scientist brother and his own training as a Marine, being, in his own words, "a warrior who dreamed he could bring peace." When Neytiri (Zoe Saldana), the Na'vi version of the American Indian princess Pocahontas, sees a sign from Goddess Eywa and saves Jake Sully—who shares much more than the initials with Captain John Smith—from the jungle, she introduces him to the tribe. As well as his guide in this unknown land and a teacher of the Na'vi way of life and values, Neytiri ultimately becomes both a partner and a symbolic mother to Jake, visually exemplified in the scene in which she holds his limp and minuscule human body in her arms towards the end of the movie. After moving between one world and the other for much of the narrative, in the end, Jake Sully actually becomes fully Na'vi, symbolized in a ceremony of acceptance by the Omaticaya. He rejects his real/human self—his body, his wounds, his race—and embraces his virtual/Na'vi self, staying in Pandora and starting a totally new life with a new stronger body and life purpose in his helping of the Na'vi, uniting the various clans in the fight against his former people. Jake's wound is thus completely healed and his trauma has been worked through.

The crater on Pandora, excavated on a massive scale by people like Jake Sully before his conversion, does not, unfortunately, heal as easily. The wounds on Pandora—the destruction of Hometree by a monsterlike army being the most dramatic example—cannot be avoided by the Na'vi, even with the help of Jake Sully and the forces of nature, which fight together for the first time in Na'vi history. The pain of massive natural destruction is made more obvious by the overwhelming beauty of Pandora, which encourages viewers to distance themselves from Quaritch's military and imperialistic view and take sides with the defence of the environment and the ideal of tribal living exemplified by the Na'vi. This is the key aspect that connects *Avatar* to current environmental issues in general and the concept of ecotopia in particular. Ecotopia, defined by Lisa Garforth as a "self-conscious ecological utopianism," which emphasizes "ways of living with rather than at the expense of the natural world" (2006, 8), incorporates the themes of ecocentrism—"the displacement of human consciousness from its privileged position at the centre of knowledge and value"—sufficiency—or the emphasis on "a philosophy of enough" that favors "an enhanced and vibrant relationship with the natural world"—and embeddedness—which focuses on

the need to recover proximity to nature, "both in the sense of physical closeness to the earth and in terms of cultivating an ethics of empathy and interconnection with all living things" (9). A good example of ecotopia in these terms, Pandora is a remote and idealised land in the line of the mythical Atlantis or El Dorado, a no-place where a perfect balance among all beings is preserved—or was, before the men from the Earth arrived. The world of Pandora—in the creation of which, as mentioned above, a number of images related to the Natives of the United States have been used—is inherently ecocentric in the sense that the Na'vi are by no means the center of knowledge or power, but only part of a network of flowing energy in which all beings, including animals and trees, the living and those already gone, communicate and relate on equal terms. The key to Na'vi life is interconnection, embodied by their goddess Eywa, and materialized at relevant places like Hometree or the sacred Tree of Voices, where ancestors can be heard and prayers made, something that the human scientists try to explain as some kind of electrochemical communication between the roots of the trees. As for sufficiency, it soon becomes clear that there is nothing that humans have that the Na'vi could possibly want, for they live in perfect harmony with the environment, which provides for all their needs. Neither material possessions nor human learning will be of any real value to the Na'vi, whose life, strongly centered on ritual and spirituality, is characterized as the opposite of expansion or consumption. The most obvious example of embeddedness is what the Na'vi call *tsaheylu*, or the bond, a link that is established between different creatures so that they can communicate and become complementary. This happens with the Pandora equivalent of horses and the *ikram*, the flying creatures that, once dominated by the young hunter in a rite of passage, will be her/his life companion.

To imagine this kind of world and to desire an escape into it as Jake manages to do is the only possible healing that is offered in *Avatar* for the trauma of human alienation from nature. At the end of the movie, when the good humans in their avatar selves are expelling the villains from Pandora, one may wonder what is going to happen to people on Earth now that unobtanium cannot be obtained anymore, but the solutions the movie offers are only available for the lucky few who can blend with their avatars, escape their previous lives and become inhabitants of this ecotopia. Pandora here is functioning as a projection of wish fulfilment, an imaginary Edenic world through which, by means of a tribal ideal that has been oversimplified, open-minded humans like Jake Sully—and with him, open-minded viewers—can find a chance of environmental reconciliation that is already impossible on Earth. James Cameron has commented on the utopian component of the movie, saying in an interview that "the Na'vi represent something that is our higher selves, or our aspirational selves, what we would like to think we are," and that even though there are good humans in the film, the humans "represent what we know to be the parts of ourselves that are trashing our world and maybe condemning ourselves to a grim future" (*Telegraph*, 18 August 2009). This conflict is articulated through the struggle between Colonel Quaritch, as an embodiment of human exploitation of nature, and Jake Sully's disposition to let himself be transformed by the land. As we see in the final battle between

the two, the triumph goes to the man who simply rejects his old identity and embraces a new self, the virtual becoming the real to him when he becomes his avatar. Rieder has referred to the "emotional satisfaction" (2011, 46) that this ending provides through the "fetishistic identification" of the scapegoat figure of Quaritch (41). He notes how popular resentment and generalized anger towards the status quo are addressed not to "the group directly responsible for the world's affairs," but to "some fictional, demonized object" (43), the result being a "displacement of the revenge fantasy object" (43) that represses the hero's "own participation in the same project as the villains" (47). Apart from pointing at its own impossibility as a feasible response to trauma in the real world, the resolution of *Avatar* is disappointingly simple insofar as it excludes any reflection on the complications of the self, the old and the new, and allows Jake to distance himself from the part of his identity which is at least partially responsible for what has happened on Earth and what is now happening on Pandora.

Although this may be considered a happy ending by some, when looked at critically, we see that the emphasis is laid on a totalization of the kind that LaCapra warned against in his account of the working through of trauma: that is, a radical overcoming of traumatic symptoms in the form of a fictional closure aimed at redemption but that, when looked at closely, shows a series of unresolved traumatic threads through its fissures. One way in which this totalizing narrative is articulated in the film is by repeating a well-known series of commonplaces and stereotypes related to Native Americans. Besides resorting to feathers, bows and arrows, war paint and howling for the characterization of the Na'vi, their extra-terrestrial version of horses makes the final battle more colorful; we also have a rite of initiation for the young warrior, as well as exotic song, ritual and ceremony. The cinematic *Indian* roles that are recovered in *Avatar* include the expected types: the Pocahontas-like Indian princess Neytiri, who starts by saving the hero and is the helper at the service of the white man; the warrior chief Eytukan (Wes Studi), who follows in the dying *Indian* tradition; the spiritual mother Mo'at (C.C.H. Pounder), who immediately recognizes the value of the human hero; and the young rival Tsu'Tey (Laz Alonzo), who takes time but ultimately accepts Jake's leadership, and who also dies in a courageous fight. There is mention of different clans, those of the Plains and of the Eastern seas, which implies the presence of some Na'vi diversity. The only absence in the usual cast is the bad *Indian* type, which can be explained by the movie's romanticized focus. Needless to say, it is hard to expect deep critical analysis or real healing from the systematic and unquestioned repetition of essentialisms and stereotypes. In fact, rather than an effective working through or overcoming of traumatic symptoms, which would have required a much more complex development of the plot, the possibility of leaving one's identity behind that Jake Sully chooses is more of a regression, an expression of a nostalgic vision of a simpler way of life. Regression is the first of the three interdependent stages of the response to trauma that Granofsky locates in fiction dealing with trauma, the other two being fragmentation and reunification. It implies a return to a more protected and less independent existence, often a return to childhood

or an assimilation of the individual to "inferior [*sic*] ways of living," which "may stem from disabling fear or from an inability to cope with a perceived responsibility for the occurrence of a traumatic event, in other words, with overwhelming guilt" (1995, 108). Jake Sully's return to a world that lives according to values that could be considered primitive is an obvious example of regression, a form of denial which is, unfortunately, far from the accommodation or change in the worldview that is required for a plausible healing of trauma in real life.

3. The Pandora Effect: Psychic, Cultural and Virtual Trauma

It could be argued that science fiction should not be expected to provide realistic responses to trauma or any other serious issues. However, a critical view is not only justified but also urgent insofar as we are considering a movie that represents trauma in a way that surpasses the boundaries of fiction and becomes part of some viewers' reality, most notably those claiming to be affected by what has been called the Pandora Effect. The fact that a good number of people are reporting depression, thoughts of suicide and anxiety at realizing that Pandora is not a place they can inhabit, as well as a feeling of alienation with respect to the real world they live in, extends the connection of this movie to trauma in intriguing ways. In this respect, one issue that we necessarily have to consider is whether one can truly be traumatized after watching a movie or reading a text. Kalí Tal stresses that the traumatic event that "displaces [one's] preconceived notions about the world" (1995, 15) needs to be experienced first-hand and not vicariously perceived or mediated through any textual conduit, such as a book or a movie (5-6). In the same vein, Horvitz affirms that second-hand or vicarious perception of trauma is not tantamount to experiencing it (2000, 21). In principle, then, it would be risky, to say the least, to consider *Avatar* as the direct cause of someone's depression or to equate its viewing to the suffering of, say, colonized peoples like those represented in the film. However, when analyzing the Pandora Effect we are not exactly talking about experiencing a traumatic event that psychologically wounds some viewers—that is to say, *Avatar* is not, and has never claimed to be, a traumatic event in itself—but rather about an event that may trigger a previously existing trauma, something that re-opens a wound that was already there in those viewers' minds. The framework through which to understand this process is the belated nature of psychic trauma, observed by Freud and articulated by Caruth as the haunting of an individual by a past event which was unassimilated or unknown at the time (1996, 4). The first trauma in this case would be the individual's view of him/herself as disconnected from nature, alienated in this technological world, and isolated from both people and the environment. The watching of *Avatar* would then be the triggering force, or second wounding, that could bring this previous traumatized condition to the surface.

Since the Pandora Effect is not merely individually but also collectively experienced, being as it is articulated by a community of viewers that are giving voice to their individual pain, especially through blogs and forums, and engaging in some kind of group therapy in

the process, another concept that may help us further understand the Pandora Effect is the idea of cultural trauma. As opposed to psychological or physical trauma, cultural trauma refers to a loss of identity and meaning affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion (Eyerman 2004, 61). Cultural trauma is defined by Alexander as a socially mediated attribution (2004, 8), with the emphasis falling not so much on trauma itself as on the way certain phenomena are believed to have affected collective identity and are therefore interpreted as traumatic (10). The focus here is on the sociocultural process that attributes meaning to a certain event, making it traumatic, and the role of imagination in the very process of representation of trauma, irrespective of whether the reference is to something that has actually occurred or not (9):

> Sometimes . . . events that are deeply traumatizing may not actually have occurred at all; such imagined events, however, can be as traumatizing as events that have actually occurred. . . . Trauma is not the result of a group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity. Collective actors "decide" to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they want to go. (8, 10)

In addition to this definition of cultural trauma, Redfield's account of "virtual trauma" is also helpful in understanding the Pandora Effect brought on by *Avatar*. The virtual trauma concept was introduced "to describe the ambiguous injury inflicted by the September 11 attacks as mediated events" (2009, 2). Although one can only take the comparison of an object of entertainment with the visual experience of a very real and painful terrorist attack so far, the idea of the virtual as suggesting "the trembling of an event on the edge of becoming present: one that is not fully or not properly 'actual,'" as in a virtual threat that has arrived "without quite (yet) arriving" (2), further illuminates our analysis of the movie. The roots of the impact of *Avatar* can be traced to a large extent to the threat of ecological disaster and the total rupture of any balanced relation with the environment. Pollution, the energy crisis and global climate change are already very present in our lives, but the potential for destruction within the current dynamic of the exploitation of resources announces many more terrible scenarios to come. In other words, to most people today it would seem quite realistic to imagine a future in which there is no longer any green, unless we do something to stop the current way of dealing with things, and in this sense *Avatar* does reflect a virtual threat. Just as the people who watched the September 11 attacks on TV were not generally traumatized in the technical or psychological sense (Redfield 2009, 2), *Avatar* fans cannot claim—or should not claim—to be suffering from a real trauma. Nevertheless, virtuality here, as in the terrorist attacks, functions "as both a consolation and a threat, retaining the power to haunt, sharing something of the force of the kind of wounding we call 'traumatic'" (2). In this approach to the movie, the perpetrator is today's technological, dehumanized world and the victims are the individuals who feel there is nothing they can do to change it.

4. Problematizing Trauma: *Avatar* and Indigenous Peoples' Historical Unresolved Grief

Again, telling the story exclusively from this point of view would be a problematic simplification, one reason being that, in the characterization of cultural trauma, we should always expect a great deal of contestation among the different groups involved, since "the answers to the questions of who are the victims and who is responsible for the victimizing are always central," and this is the reason why no traumatic story "can be told without tracing these themes of suffering and blame" (Smelser 2011, 282). In the tracing of such themes, when referring to the different groups involved in identifying with this movie, a reflection on its impact on indigenous peoples and their representation is also necessary, and such a reflection goes hand-in-hand with a problematizing of the application of the trauma paradigm. As seen in the controverted responses to *Avatar*, no generalization can easily be made about indigenous peoples' responses to the movie, since they have varied from unconditional praise to harsh criticism. However, in all cases, the identification of the alien Na'vi with the indigenous peoples of the Earth has come automatically, and although the trauma of colonization as it is seen in Pandora is not exclusively related to a particular human group, as mentioned above, most references have been made to the case of Native Americans.

According to Native critics involved in the study of American Indian trauma, the massive loss of lives, land and culture derived from European contact and colonization have resulted in a long legacy of chronic trauma across generations, a phenomenon known as "historical unresolved grief" that has contributed to "the current social pathology of high rates of suicide, homicide, domestic violence, child abuse, alcoholism, and other social problems among American Indians" (Brave Heart and DeBruyn 1998, 56). It is obvious that, when watching what happens to the Na'vi in *Avatar*, Native Americans may see a direct reference to their own history of massive death through military action, the destruction of the natural environment, the separation of the people from places sacred to them, the disintegration of Native life and other dark features of the American continent conquest. With respect to this trauma, understadably, "for American Indians the United States *is* the perpetrator of [their] holocaust" (61). The Pandora Effect, as mentioned above, implies an abstract perpetrator that could quite automatically be associated with the United States and what it symbolizes in terms of capitalism, consumerism and technology. This points at an interesting connection of different communities of victims—viewers alienated from their world and Natives suffering from historical unresolved grief—that become allied against what they perceive as a common victimizer. If this allegiance leads to real changes in the state of things, that is, if it is aimed at making a difference, few objections will of course be raised against it. However, there are several problematic points that derive from this connection that ought to be critically considered.

The Pandora Effect can already start to be questioned from within the perspective of trauma studies, for some trauma critics attend to the risk of over-identification with the

victims of a trauma, which may problematically lead to an appropriation of the experience of the other (Whitehead 2004, 9). When considering this risk, LaCapra offers a useful distinction between the desirable empathy, "which should be understood in terms of affective relation, rapport or bond with the other recognized and respected as other" (2001, 212-13), and identification "or fusion with the other" (212), which is to be avoided because it would lead to "identifying with the victim to the point of making oneself a surrogate victim" (Whitehead 2004, 14). As trauma critics have often emphasized, "the experience of transmitted trauma should necessarily differ from the trauma experienced by the survivor" (2004, 9). Jill Bennett develops this idea more fully when she claims that in postcolonial literature, theory and politics, it is an ethical imperative to share suffering "via a form of heteropathic identification" (2003, 181), in other words, that art and its reception should avoid an identification with the pain of the other based on sameness which is centered on the self and risks annihilation of the other's experience, and promote instead a relationship of identification at a distance that acknowledges the other as other.[5] This does not seem to be the case with viewers' reactions to *Avatar* when they are claiming the traumatic experiences of genocide and ecocide as theirs to some degree, making these claims very problematic. In addition, Daniel Heath Justice, in his acute review of *Avatar*, calls the film ultimately "a story about 'those bad guys who aren't us,'" which distances the audience "from any complicity with these evils in our world" and therefore fails at approaching what is really required "to effect real and lasting change." While recognizing that the genocide perpetrated against the Na'vi is undeniably evil and despicable, he reminds us that "genocide isn't enacted only by wicked, bloodthirsty soldiers—mundane, ordinary people participate in all kinds of atrocities at home and abroad, knowingly and unknowingly, every day." What is lacking in *Avatar*, then, is a view of the sense that "good intentions can actually be far more destructive to a people (and have much more lasting impacts) than shooting napalm into the Hometree" (Justice 2010). From our twenty-first-century perspective we know that the history of white Americans' longing for Otherness, the projection of Western discontent on the Natives, and the claim for a more legitimate link to the land by associating with the Indian—from the going-Indian to the wannabes—is not only as long as the history of colonization, but also, very importantly, just as complicit with its disastrous effects on the Natives. Not only is this point not addressed in *Avatar*, but, on the contrary, by encouraging both a distanced position from those held responsible for the evils of colonization and an identification with their victims, the movie ultimately becomes complicit in this history of colonial appropriation.

Trauma theory, regarded as "one of today's signal paradigms" (Visser 2011, 270) has been the focus of critical controversy, the most heated debates on its adequacy coming from the field of postcolonial studies, which questions the possibility of applying it to

[5] Jill Bennett is here drawing from Kaja Silverman, who in turn recovered the distinction between idiopathic and heteropathic identification from the German philosopher Max Scheler.

non-Western contexts.[6] The first acknowledged problem of the trauma paradigm is its difficulty "to recognize the experience of the non-Western other" (Craps 2012, 15), which requires an attention to traumas on non-Western or minority groups in their own right, and an approach to them which comes from a culture- and context-specific perspective. The second, related, problem of an uncritical application of the trauma paradigm is the risk of preventing rather than allowing for real political transformation (124-26), a risk present in both the aporetic, deconstruction-oriented trend, characterized by Cathy Caruth and Geoffrey Hartman, which considers trauma an inaccessible and unspeakable experience, and in the therapeutic, working-through oriented trend, associated with the work of Judith Herman, who, according to Visser, argues "that narrative is a powerful and empowering therapeutic tool, enabling integration of the traumatic experience and aiding healing and recovery" (2011, 274).[7] The analysis of the representation of trauma in the movie requires close attention to these problems.

An uncritical application of the trauma paradigm to *Avatar* would interpret Jake Sully's wound—a projection of the white man's pain—as a stage that can be overcome or worked through by means of connection, the right choice of values and an escape into a utopian world where his technological, capitalistic, consumer-oriented and environmentally unfriendly origins can be left behind and forgotten about. Jake's rejection of his old self, the repetition of stereotypes and the recreation of an ecotopia are offered as a way to achieve connection, but they ultimately reinforce alterity. One undeniable positive element in the movie is the recognition of both the values and the suffering of indigenous peoples, but we are also in the presence of an appropriation of those values and suffering. The "I see you" idea, which condenses the act of spiritually connecting in the film, illustrates this ambivalence. This is supposed to be the sign that Jake Sully has finally learned to understand the true value of the Na'vi way of life instead of staying on the surface of things. However, "I see you," in the end, also means that "I can know you and become you when I want," in an unequal relation where the opposite is not possible, and the "you" is not a subject, but just a convenient object of the white man's desire. As Seegert has pointed out, Cameron has missed the opportunity of construing the "seeing into [another] in terms of regard, as acknowledgement of another in her or his Levinasian otherness rather than in terms of complete access in transparent fullness" (2010, 121). The film may be functioning as a catalyst for white pain, as an attempt to expiate colonial guilt, but, needless to say, the appropriation of the values and trauma of another cannot possibly help the latter in the healing of their own trauma and, in this respect, it becomes obvious that the representation of trauma is articulated from a clearly Eurocentric, neo-colonial perspective that makes the white man's trauma the protagonist, denying ongoing colonial suffering.

[6] For relevant analyses of the debates on postcolonial trauma theory, which fall outside the scope of this paper, see Borzaga 2012, Craps 2012 and Visser 2011.

[7] Critics have referred to these two contrasting—to the extent of being opposed—views of trauma as "the trauma theory contradiction" (Luckhurst 2008, 82; Visser 2011, 274).

A simplified view of trauma like that we find in *Avatar*—with the possibility of total and complete healing or working through—becomes available for possession and assimilation into discourses of therapeutic recuperation and it runs the additional risk of critical appropriation and misrepresentation, or what Spivak called epistemic violence. As Jo Collins argues, using western paradigms of trauma "may seem like an ethical act of recuperating memory, but may ultimately be a way of appeasing guilt about the West's imbrication in such trauma without impelling real intervention" (2011, 14). When viewers of a movie or readers of a text—both critics and the general public—are allowed to find some disavowed salvation in the narrative, they can deal with guilt from a safe distance, which precludes real political engagement. In this way, a totalizing, redemptive kind of narrative—as found in *Avatar*, and what we would be promoting in an unquestioned application of the trauma paradigm—may become a form of traumatic denial. As is often the case with established paradigms, we need then to consider whether, in its current mainstream use—as has been noted when applied to the postcolonial situation—"'trauma' becomes more of a barrier than a fruitful epistemological tool" (Borzaga 2012, 68). Being critical of the trauma paradigm—especially of its Eurocentrism and its risk of restricting political transformation—does not entail, as Craps contends, that trauma theory needs to be abandoned altogether, but rather that it should be expanded into "an inclusive and culturally sensitive trauma theory" (2012, 127). In other words, an analysis of a work of fiction like *Avatar*—which is an example of how the trauma paradigm, including narratives and criticism, has become so extended as to be at the point of being formulaic right now—should pay close attention to the cultural and context-specific features of the people whose characteristics it incorporates, as well as an awareness of the political implications of that analysis, in such a way that it makes possible—as opposed to hindering—transformation. Needless to say, the global impact of this particular movie makes this need more compelling.

Avatar is successful as a spectacular entertainment object, and one that has sold very well. It is precisely by voicing—and selling—contemporary preoccupations that it helps make visible an unfair reality which needs to be considered and, if possible, stopped; namely, the ill-treatment of indigenous peoples and the environment. In this respect, it is undeniable that *Avatar* has made many people think, especially some that would probably not be considering these issues otherwise. But the movie also—and problematically—succeeds, by means of a simplistic, stereotypical and formulaic representation of traumatic events, which allows for a somewhat gratifying feeling for the victims of genocide and ecocide, a self-distancing from the perpetrators of those very real crimes and a related wished-for expiation of colonial guilt. The problematic nature of this element lies in the fact that it buttresses conformity as opposed to attempting to make a true difference. This is the aspect of *Avatar* which can be most clearly called a failure: because of the themes it deals with, it promises much but then proves disappointing, both in its representation of traumatic realities and in the resolution that is offered. It could have included a lesson for real, positive change, but it stays on the surface of things instead. One cannot help wonder whether *Avatar* succeeds commercially in spite of its faults, or whether it is precisely thanks

to those faults, which make the film so disappointing for some of us, that it has succeeded. In the end, when watching *Avatar* we should always wear, in addition to the 3-D glasses, the critical lenses that help us consider whether this mass-consumption cultural object offers an opportunity for the end of injustice, or whether it is simply, as we have seen so many times before, contributing to perpetuating it.

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The River Runs Red! Is it a Miracle, Is it an Ecological Disaster? Ito Romo's *El Puente/The Bridge*

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The implementation of the NAFTA agreement in 1994 precipitated unrestrained industrial growth on the Mexican side of the US-Mexico border, massive overpopulation, and the subsequent militarization of the area. The *maquiladoras* which now comprise part of the "natural landscape" of the border zone, determine the lives and destinies of those who work in/for them, and have brought about the severe environmental degradation of the region. Ito Romo's *El Puente/The Bridge* (2000), a "minor story of major environmental protest," provides a resounding denunciation of this situation and gives voice to the polluted Rio Grande and the inhabitants of the *maquiladora* zone. The effective use of simple language, simple people, and simple facts and acts assembled around a bizarre event provides the novel with a very effective vindicatory tone, turning it into the voice of a dying society which is gradually being ravaged, in the name of progress, by the vast industrial machinery of the *maquiladora* industry.

Keywords: US-Mexico border; ecology; Mexican/Chicana women; *maquiladoras*; militarization; violence

. . .

¡El río está rojo! ¿Es un milagro, es un desastre ecológico? *El Puente/The Bridge*, de Ito Romo

La implementación del acuerdo NAFTA en 1994 provocó el crecimiento incontrolado de la industria en la frontera mejicano-americana, su superpoblación, y la militarización de la zona. Las *maquiladoras* se han convertido hoy en día en parte del "paisaje natural" de la frontera, marcan las vidas de sus trabajadores, y producen un enorme deterioro medioambiental en la zona. La novela de Ito Romo *El Puente/The Bridge* (2000), "una pequeña historia con una gran denuncia medioambiental," trata de dar voz al contaminado Río Grande, así como a los habitantes del área de influencia de las *maquiladoras*. El uso de un lenguaje sencillo, gentes sencillas y hechos sencillos, que se reúnen en torno a un hecho extraordinario, proporciona a la novela un tono reivindicativo muy efectivo y la convierte en la voz de una sociedad tocada de muerte por la influencia de la gran maquinaria industrial y el progreso.

Palabras clave: frontera mejicano-americana; ecología; mujeres mejicanas/chicanas; maquiladoras; militarización; violencia

1. The Socio-historical Context

The implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 precipitated unlimited industrial growth in the US-Mexican borderland, massive overpopulation and the subsequent militarization of the area.[1] The *maquiladoras* are today part of the "natural landscape" of the border zone.[2] They determine the lives and destinies of those who work in/for them and induce unprecedented levels of environmental damage in the region. Consequently, for nearly two decades, many Chicana/o artists have endeavored to denounce the miseries and hardships in the lives of border inhabitants which are brought about by these megafactories as well as the impacts on the environmental and political realities of this area. Romo's *El Puente/The Bridge* (2000), an excellent documentary on life on the contemporary border, giftedly addresses this issue. The novel targets major issues of political justice through the narration of the "simple facts" of the lives of "simple people"; it denounces the hypocrisy of the political and economic agenda of the border zone, whereby industrial profitability is more highly valued than the subsistence of its residents and the environmental health of the natural landscape.

In Anzaldúa's words, "The US-Mexico border es una herida abierta where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country, a border culture" (1997, 3). As a conceptual space, the US-Mexico borderland defines a sociocultural and geographical terrain, an abstraction which marks the "state of mind" of the borderlanders. Furthermore, and most importantly, the US-Mexico border is the homeland of its inhabitants, the space that determines the existence of its residents, both in a negative and a positive way. Mary Pat Brady (2008) defines the creation of space as an act that also "involves the processes that shape how these places are understood, envisioned, defined, and variously experienced. . . . Interactions with space are not merely schematic but also highly affective; places are felt and experienced, and the processes producing space therefore also shape feelings and experiences" (7-8).

The origins of this particular space, an open wound in a perpetual and constant process of healing and re-opening, date back to the nineteenth century, when the divisionary nature of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) became a tangible reality and "manufactured" line that separated the United States from Mexico. This line divided the terrain into *un lado* and *el otro lado*, concomitantly classifying its inhabitants in terms of us/them, north/south, rich/poor, hosts/immigrants, forever.

The subsequent history of the US-Mexican border is the history of the industrialization, overpopulation and militarization of the zone. The noticeably tense institutional

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[2] According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a maquiladora is "a foreign-owned factory in Mexico at which imported parts are assembled by lower-paid workers into products for export."

relationship between the two countries, with its resulting manifest tensions and conflicts, are today symbolized by the building of a 1,951-mile wall at the border, constructed under the Secure Fence Act in 2006. Prior to the act, the emergence of the *maquiladoras* in the 60s and their proliferation after the signing of the NAFTA agreement in 1994, which aimed to blur the commercial borders between the USA, Canada, and Mexico, had turned this area into a highly industrialized zone. Thus,

> Since 1985, the number of *maquiladoras* has increased 17 percent per year, from 785 plants employing 218,000 employees to over 2,400 plants employing 650,000 employees in 1996. In 1991 the *maquiladoras* generated over $1.5 billion a year in exports and in 1996 that figure rose to over $31 billion. *Maquiladoras* located across the US-Mexico border, add substantially to the business activity on the U.S. side of the border. In the McAllen–Edinburg–Mission area it is estimated that the *maquiladora* facilities contribute 14,000 jobs, generating $283.4 million in annual retail sales and $1.3 billion in annual total expenditures. About 1 of every 10 area jobs can be linked to *maquiladora* operations. (Coronado de Anda 2005)

Similar data collected during the major industrial growth of the 1990s prove the obvious positive socioeconomic impact of the *maquiladoras* but fail to reveal the negative environmental and health effects of this industrial phenomenon on the border landscape in general and its inhabitants in particular. In this sense, Professor Solis Ybarra (2009) posits that "considering the bioregional, ecological aspects of the US-Mexico borderlands expands our understanding on how colonization, exploitation, and racism impact the land and its people" (176). The history of the *maquiladora* industry is intertwined with the physical and conceptual nature of the US-Mexican *frontera*. The end of the *Bracero Program*, which provided the US agricultural industry with cheap labor, provoked an uncontrolled rise in unemployment in the border zone. The ensuing urge of the Mexican government to industrialize the border area favored the implementation of the *Programa Industrial Fronterizo* (Border Industrialization Program, PIF), which encouraged companies to settle there, in obviously *easy* conditions, as "the maquiladora regime allows the importation of these goods, free of value added tax and in many cases, free of duty taxes. The exportation of the final products manufactured in Mexico, is almost free of taxes" (Mejía 2013).

The expansion and development of these megafactories on the Mexican side of the US-Mexico border have resulted in uncontrollable levels of population growth in the area, and according to Political Science Professor Edward Williams, "population has burgeoned in the binational Borderlands, particularly on the Mexican side. While Mexico's rate of growth equaled 22 percent in the 1980-1990 *decenio*, the eight most important Borderlands cities almost doubled that rate at 43 percent. Tijuana may well be the world's most rapidly burgeoning large city, having grown 61 percent in the 1980-90 period" (1995).

This has resulted in the non-articulated, unplanned creation of working-class quarters, *colonias,* where even the most basic human living conditions are nonexistent, where wooden shacks with no running water, electricity, and/or other basic facilities

have become home for many of the *maquila* workers. What is more, the majority of the *maquiladora* workforce is made up of young, single women who are forced to work in harsh conditions for long hours at minimum wage and who "may find their work situation unrewarding. The heavy competition for these positions tends to drive wages down to the federally mandated minimum which is barely sufficient for subsistence" (Tiano 1984, 366). In fact, the obvious "genderization" and "racialization" of the target workforce of the *maquiladora*s, together with the hazardous effects of the massive industrialization of the zone, driven by neoliberal economic interests which pay no heed to environmental and human justice rights issues, turn the *maquiladora* phenomenon into what Bullard describes as "toxic colonialism" (1993, 18) and in Westfall's words, "neo-slavery" (2009).

Similarly, the ecological degradation, threat and waste generated by the factories is ever-present in the lives of the inhabitants of the area; pollution, water contamination and other kinds of environmental hazards have become part of the natural landscape of the border zone, turning it into one of the most polluted areas in Mexico (Bolterstein 1999). In 1979, long before the beginning of the *maquiladora* boom of the 1990s, Dr Herbert Abrams, Emeritus Professor of Radiology at the Stanford School of Medicine, expressed his concern at a US-Mexico Border Health Association meeting in Reynosa, stating that "It is not difficult to see problems developing. In Nogales, the sewage system is inadequate. Some *maquiladoras*, otherwise new and attractive, are discharging their waste into the open ground. We already know of at least one asbestos textile plant which last year was reported to have gross exposures not only to the workers within the plant but to those living in the neighborhood of the plant" (qtd. in Moure-Eraso et al. 1994, 314).

This process of mass industrialization, furthermore, has precipitated the progressive, and seemingly unstoppable, militarization of the borderland. A place where, for many, *dangerous illegal crossers* and drug-smugglers find refuge, the border is being gradually and violently occupied by diverse military and police forces, such as the Border Patrol and the army. In the last two decades, the evident and ostensibly uncontrollable levels of unpunished crime in the area (e.g., the Juárez femicides which Chicana scholar, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, openly names the "Maquiladora Murders" [2003, 1], or the violence provoked by the *narcotráfico* and its protagonists) have transformed this space into a violent, militarized zone, as highlighted in the following figures:

> In 1984, elite Border Patrol squads known as Border Patrol Tactical Teams (BORTACS) began receiving special paramilitary training, and by 1989 Congress had authorized 5,000 federal troops for border duty. Fences and walls have gone up, as has the number of Border Patrol agents and the institution's budget. In San Diego County, for example, the number of agents patrolling the county's 66-mile strip of border has risen from 890 in 1993 to 2,350 in 1998. . . . The military continues to provide assistance to immigration authorities in the areas of aerial reconnaissance, personnel training, engineering and document analysis. Some 600 U.S. Marines and army troops, moreover, are building and upgrading helicopter pads and roads, making them suitable for "enhanced operations." These troops are also involved in the

> construction of miles of steel and concrete walls that may one day extend from San Diego to Brownsville. (Nagengast 1998, 38)

The situation today is no better. Under the pretense of maintaining peace and order in an intrinsically "convulsive" zone, unstoppable military presence on the border has declared a covert and subtle "low-intensity warfare against immigrants" (Palafox 2006). In this same light, institutional measures, such as the recently signed controversial Arizona SB 1070 Immigration Bill (2010), are also reinforcing the military occupation of the area and putting some of the most basic human rights of the residents of the area at risk.

2. Ito Romo's *El Puente/The Bridge*

Chicana/o literature, conceived and developed in the context of the *Movimiento Chicano*, has, from its origins, conveyed high doses of protest, vindication and defense of the culturally rich and complex identity of the group and, therefore, a strong commitment to the concerns affecting the Chicano collectivity. Within these, environmental justice issues have long been part of both the Chicano political agenda and its artistic and literary production. For example, the California farm workers' strikes—led by César Chávez and the United Farm Workers Union, source and origin of the *Movimiento Chicano*—were accompanied by extensive theatrical productions, such as those in Luis Valdez's *Teatro Campesino*. The contrast between the traditional *campesino* lifestyle and the impact of urban life on communities and individuals, the physical and spiritual attachment to the *tierra* (land) and the public denunciation of environmental justice issues, such as the effects of pesticides upon the *braceros* (farm laborers) or the ecological hazards associated with the *maquiladoras*, have been portrayed in the literary productions of Chicana/o authors, such as Rudolfo Anaya, Ana Castillo, Helena María Viramontes and Ito Romo, among others. Romo's first novel, *El Puente/The Bridge* follows this tradition and tells the story of a border town where the river suddenly flows crimson red. This event is used by the author to expose the life-story of fourteen women who gather at the river to observe this unexpected, miraculous phenomenon. Moreover, the novel gives voice to the bridge that connects the US and Mexico spanning the sick, polluted Rio Grande. By so doing, the novel attempts to *popularly* denounce the high level of environmental damage in the area and the intense, inhuman militarization of the border zone. The inexplicable, menacing red taint of the Rio Grande provokes diverse interpretations by the residents of the area, the media and each of the fourteen women who are the voice of the borderlanders and their precarious living situations. These "common" women are drawn to the bridge, which becomes a place of reunion and prayer, of life and death, of friendship and violence, and a symbol of life in its purest, most humane form. The series of short stories, which recount each protagonist's approach to the bridge, gradually reveals the source of the tainting of the river: the mulberry powder that Tomasita, the central character, has thrown into the river.

The novel, written in a simple, yet intricate style, with a cast of simple characters, serves as an emphatic denunciation of the living and working conditions of its protagonists, of the appalling environmental damage caused by the *maquiladoras* and of the military occupation of the region in the name of peace and order, which provokes the subsequent "violentization" of the area and of the lives of its inhabitants.

Romo's choice of intermingling "common" people, whose lives and actions are seemingly irrelevant, with an almost miraculous event provides the novel with a strength that many critics have considered extraordinary. The apparent day-to-dayness of the acts performed by the women who gather at the river is narrated with a language and style that, according to Julia Alvarez, are "deceptively simple" "funny as a fotonovela, triste as a telenovela and wild as any Fellini" in Sandra Cisneros' words , and "with (a) mix of closely observed reality imbued with deep spirituality" (Good Reads 2014).

The novel as a whole, its setting, characters, as well as its style and language, indeed continuously cross and challenge definitions of simplicity and extraordinariness, and symbolically represent the permeability of boundaries (both real and metaphorical). None of the lives of the characters is as ordinary and simple as they seem, the women being as they are the direct products and victims of an unordinary, transnational and transcultural space. The setting of the stories is probably not as simple as "just a bridge." It is the bridge that connects the first and third worlds; it is Gloria Anzaldúa's "open wound;" it is "a passage, plain and simple, from one country to another" (Romo, qtd. in Sadowski-Smith 2008, 36). The reminiscences of magical realism in the novel are finally counterbalanced by an ordinary act because "as in much magical realism, . . . the river's transformation is also attributable to realistic events" (Sadowski-Smith 2008, 36). In sum, the author's choice of these simple characters, setting and relevant theme imbues the novel with a superb aesthetic and contextual quality.

2.1. Life in this border town is harsh

Tomasita is cleaning her burnt pot in the river. This opening image provides the reader with an immediate awareness of the woman's despair; recently widowed, her husband has died of a cancer that originated from the dreadful working conditions in the *maquiladora*. This hazardous health environment was already accounted for in the decade of the 1990s, when "noncommunicable diseases are also a growing concern among border populations. Mortality from all cancers combined was 62.9 per 100,000 population in the Mexican border zone in 1990, compared with 50.8 in the country as a whole; mortality due to cancers of the trachea, bronchi, and lung was 70 percent higher in the border municipalities" ("1994 Health Conditions in the Americas").

In this same way, the other characters featured in the novel exemplify everyday situations on the border; they portray the sadness and harshness of life in a terrain that has become a no-man's land and a source of sorrow for and alienation of women. With a vignette-like structure reminiscent of Cisneros' highly-acclaimed *The House on Mango Street* (1989), *El Puente/The Bridge* maps out the lives of these fourteen

women who become the voice of the voiceless, the spokeswomen of a dying land and a tainted river, symbolic of the human destruction of nature. The narrative thus paints a picture of an inhumanly industrialized society that crushes its weakest members and uses them as a means to acquire progress and wealth in a highly Machiavellian way. The quotidian and completely non-extraordinary lives of these fourteen women and their natural assimilation of their living conditions and existence gives the novel a decidedly vindicatory tone which impacts strongly on the reader, provoking deep reflection on the consequences of "progress."

The second chapter establishes the conflict of the novel with the inclusion of an extraordinary fact that is evocative of magic realism (Sadowski-Smith 2006, 275) when the Rio Grande, the core and living, moving heart of the city, suddenly flows a deep red color. The bizarre, though stunning sight gives way to diverse interpretations by the different characters/protagonists; some interpret it as a miracle, others as a political conspiracy. Interestingly, almost no one sees it as a warning of the contamination and impending death of the river and human life provoked by the proliferation of *maquiladoras* in the border area. The urgent call of the river draws each of the characters, each of them from a different "common," quotidian space (a workplace, home, a convent, a dental surgery, etc.), to the bridge, the embodiment of Anzaldúa's bleeding wound. Thus, the author delineates a multifaceted picture of female life and the social and personal impact of the growing industrialization on the US-Mexico border.

In particular, the central protagonist of the novel and the symbol of the destruction of human dignity in the name of progress, Tomasita, personifies the terrible effects of this unbridled industrialization and its consequent degradation of human life through the inhuman working conditions at the *maquiladoras*, the sociocultural and economic poverty they induce and the irreparable environmental damage they cause. The novel addresses the factories' symbolic and factual ownership of the lives and destinies of their workers, mirrored in the fact that, once Tomasita's husband dies, she has to abandon the house the factory rented to him. Widowed and homeless, she suddenly finds herself in the position of having to "return to nature" in search of shelter and is forced to move to a wooden shack her friends build for her next to the river, which lacks the most basic infrastructure, such as electricity and running water.

> She finished washing her dishes and emptied her washtub into the Rio Grande, far to the west of the city, where the houses were barely houses, close to the small stream that came from the huge American factory.
>
> She was alone. . . . When he died, she had lost the small cinder-block house that the factory had rented to them. Her friends had built her a two-room home by the river. She cooked a pot of beans for them the day they came to build it; a pot of beans was the only gift she had to say thanks for the wooden planks, cardboard, and green corrugated fiberglass sheets that were her home, right there by the river. The river was her backyard, her toilet, and her bath. (Romo 2000, 128)

The description of Tomasita's loneliness, sorrow, poverty, humbleness and yet her grateful offering of "just a pot of beans" depicts the severity of the living conditions of the *colonias* that surround the *maquiladoras*; inhabitants wholly depend both economically and personally on the big factories. In this same respect, member of the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice Teresa Leal, interviewed by Joni Adamson, explains that "colonias are a phenomenon that developed simultaneously all along the US-Mexico border. When the maquilas came in, they did not have a social agenda; maquila officials didn't give a hoot about the influx of people or where they were going to live" (2002, 49). The cruelty of the *maquiladora* in depriving Tomasita of a *decent* place to live after her husband's death exposes the reality of the factories' total possession of not only the labor of their employees, but of their lives as a whole. The border region is defined as a completely disorganized area in terms of urban planning, environmental hazard control, and human-safe living conditions. Indeed, Tomasita's new "home" is built next to the river without any kind of institutional control and/or health regulations being met. As US economist Khosrow Fatemi argues, "Poverty is the defining feature of life for the new industrial masses living in the colonias around the *maquiladoras*. . . . Colonias resemble vast temporary camps. Families cram into single-room, wooden shacks. Some lack roofs and dirt floors are extremely common. Homes lack indoor plumbing and electricity; there is no running water and no toilets. The hot dusty communities are comprised of dirt roads that lack garbage disposal and sewer services" (qtd. in Martínez 2004, 6-7).

2.2. Life in this border town is highly industrialized

Romo's work, which follows the tradition of his predecessors regarding the indispensable social role of literature, vehemently condemns the impact of the *maquiladoras* on the lives and destinies of the border dwellers. He exposes a territory ruled by the very pulse of the industrial economy, the source of all the wealth and, ironically, the poverty and environmental damage of the area. The novel never provides the reader with a direct description of the ever-present *maquilas* or even the actual pollution of the air, river and the nature around them; instead, it ingeniously uses the "miraculous" fact of the tainting of the river as an excuse to gather fourteen women around the river, whose life stories subtly but clearly expose the dirtiness of the area. The source of the conflict presented in the novel is the death of Tomasita's husband. Its cause is not discovered until the closing chapter, but develops into the underlying denunciating message of Romo's work: "Her husband had begun to complain about a pain on either side of his face right under his ears during that cold, cold January, two years after he had started working as a waste disposal superintendent for six dollars a day for the new factory. Two purple bulbs kept growing, as if he had the plague" (2000, 128)

Once again, these apparently simple words powerfully depict the working and living conditions of the *maquila* workers. Furthermore, this extreme example of the negative impact of the presence of *maquiladoras* is supported throughout the novel as the author introduces short, almost unnoticeable statements that provide the final picture of a

damaged, polluted, and inhuman city. For example, Carlota, who "every night, . . . sat in her rocking chair in her living room and stared at the long line of honking cars, trucks, and eighteen-wheelers in front of her house, all of them heading for the bridge two blocks away" (6); or Cindy's dentist who "poured a cup of purified water for Cindy from a plastic jug (she did not feel that it was safe to use the water from the faucet since infection might set in)" (33); or Perla who "really did not care about her own drinking problem, but if what they said was true, then she had to get some water for her little granddaughter who was born with a spinal defect. . . . One of the doctors, the one from the American side, said that it was probably because Perla's daughter had drunk water from the tap during her pregnancy instead of the water from the plastic jugs" (62-63).

The present but unnoticed and unconsciously accepted hazardous quotidianity is, however, immediately observed and broadcast by the journalists who gather at the bridge and publicize the "potential environmental disaster of catastrophic proportions" which "is still unraveling in South Texas as a joint team of scientists from the Centers for Disease Control, and the Environmental Protection Agency continued its investigation" (27-28). Remarkably, the interpretation of many border residents that the color of the river is a spiritual message, a miracle, is simultaneously advanced with the portrayal of the bridge as the place where the most innate human activities, such as dying and being born, occur simultaneously with the loud, aggressive honk of an eighteen-wheeler (symbolic of industrial growth and the crossing of goods at the *frontera*). Thus, some of them are startled and forced to move by the violently speeding truck, others fall, and, in Pura's case, "the shock made her heart beat even faster, intensifying the pain. . . . Suddenly the pain stopped, her legs went weak, she slid down slowly, almost gently, against the rail, down the cement sidewalk, closed her eyes, took one last deep breath of mulberries, and died" (94). At the same time as Pura is dying, Soledad "stepped onto the bridge, she felt a sudden pain, like a blow. Someone was helping her. She was so grateful. She squatted immediately, naturally, instinctively. As she looked down, over her belly, between her legs, the skin tore as if it were a piece of paper, her dark pubic hair was soaked in blood, and she saw her child's head break through" (120).

2.3. Life in this border town is highly militarized

The conclusion of Romo's novel confirms Nagengast's previously quoted words on the militarization of the border, as well as the inhumanity of the relationships that prevail as a result of the patent tensions in the area. The military and the police, upon discovering that the source of the "miracle" is the dried mulberry powder that Tomasita has thrown into the river, initiate her prosecution as a dangerous criminal and, ironically, an environmental terrorist who needs to be apprehended.

> When the helicopter finally flew away, in the distance she saw Mexican soldiers dressed in protective clothing poking at the stream with long, shiny steel poles that had little, stainless steel buckets attached to their ends. They carried shiny black machine guns too. . . . The Mexican

> government boarded up Tomasita's house, sealed the door and windows with adhesive notices expressing the gravity of breaking in, placed a soldier on twenty-four-hour guard, and sealed off the area with orange ropes, cardboard signs warning of contaminations hanging from them. (131-32)

The irony of this description and the moment itself are evident. On the one hand, Romo's words carry a manifestly sarcastic tone as he describes and even ridicules the military in its quest to deal with the supposedly (for them) most dangerous terrorist attack ever, yet they are simply persecuting a poor, humble widow who has just emptied "the sorrow in her soul" (3) into the river, in a beautiful, metaphorical way. On the other hand, the conceptual source of the novel itself, the tainting of the river with mulberry powder, is paradoxical in its attempts to highlight the gradual but devastating effect of the industrial activity on the US-Mexico border, which remains unaffected and uncontrolled, produces wealth only for a few and causes death and maims the health of the vast majority who sacrifice their lives in order to maintain its inequitable *status quo*.

Consequently, the dramatic conclusion of the narration, where Tomasita, aware of her fatal end, is killed by a nervous young soldier, is an act that symbolizes the death of the people in this soiled, violent, and hostile environment. The novel states it thus:

> Tomasita slowly turned around to face her destiny. Just as she turned around to face him, his sweaty, nervous finger slipped, and a shot rang out. The gunfire exploded in a flash. Tomasita followed the slow motion of the bullet, like a comet on fire, coming toward her.
>
> When the police and the solider arrived to try and control the crowd from further rioting, and the siren of the coming ambulance parted the throng down the middle, and the newspaper, reporters, TV cameras, and helicopters surrounded Tomasita, the young soldier knelt next to her and cried. (147)

3. Conclusion

The subtle but reverberating political essence of Ito Romo's *El Puente/The Bridge* turns the novel into a minor story of major environmental protest. Its characters, ordinary, normal, working-class women, with whom the reader immediately empathizes, are the involuntary victims of the harsh living conditions at the US-Mexico border where tension itself becomes the protagonist, together with monumental levels of environmental damage and violence, both personal and institutional. The effective use of simple language, simple people, and simple facts and acts assembled around a bizarre event, which becomes even more extraordinary because of its live broadcast by the mass media (producers and transmitters of ideology and interpretation of reality in our modern times), infuses the novel with an incredibly successful vindicatory tone, turning it into the voice of a dying society that is being gradually ravaged, in the name of progress, annihilated by the colossal industrial machinery of the *maquiladoras*.

The novel and its clever and incredibly effective denunciating tone are thus reminiscent of the works of the first Chicano authors who endeavored to fight against the harsh circumstances of farm workers, the indiscriminate use of pesticides, and the terrible working conditions in the fields of the Southwest, among other environmental issues, because, as stated by Flys Junquera, "Nature, *la tierra*, is central to the Chicano worldview and is found in virtually all its literature" (2002, 120). In this sense, Romo's work epitomizes the evolution of a people's exploitation and represents a despairing documentary on the gradual, negative evolution of human development. The use of progress for the benefit of a small minority, the inhuman utilization of human labor, the excessive military and police control of an area that has become a violent site, the institutional obscurity concerning the border and its dwellers, and the overall environmental, socioeconomic and cultural damage that the big factories and the system that supports them exert on the lives of common people are thus at the core of a novel that exposes our allegedly modern, progressive life and makes visible "the conditions under which neoliberal globalization is emerging" (Sadowski-Smith 2006, 720). Moreover, the novel highlights the clear gender, ethnic, and class-specific environmental exploitation occurring in the US-Mexico borderland, which has become a "pollution haven" (Daly 1993), favored by the NAFTA agreement, thereby confirming the idea that "placing environmental burdens in the social spaces of the poor and people of color communities is an expression of the ways in which the inhabitants are valued by the more powerful decision-makers in our society" (Figueroa 2002, 317). The inhabitants of Tomasita's border town, however, acquire value and dignity through Romo's words as "each is finally portrayed, fully explained, lovingly rendered" (Tim Carvalho, *Tuckson Weekly*, 4 January 2001) and serve the author's purpose of celebrating life and community in the border, regardless of its dirt and violence.

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Re(claiming) Subjectivity and Transforming the Politics of Silence through the Search for Wholeness in *Push* by Sapphire

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Post-positivist realism contends that there is a need to theorize not only identity but also agency. Identity is hence understood from the dialogic perspective of engaging the world from the vantage point of agency, facilitating wholeness, or the dialogic interaction between self and other, past and present. The search for wholeness with the aid of re-memory, double consciousness and agency becomes the trigger for an active expression of Black women's subjectivity throughout the African diaspora. Women's subjectivity consists of giving emphasis to the importance of women being the owners of their destinies when they engage in the building of their identities, which are shaped by the interaction of time, community and experience, claiming that identity is performative, indeterminant and multiple. Sapphire's novel *Push* will be analyzed as a text that counteracts the politics of silence, transforming fear and difference into speech and telling, adding to the liberatory discourses of contemporary Black women writers.

Keywords: identity; agency; wholeness; re-memory; double consciousness; incest novel

. . .

Re(clamando) la subjetividad y transformando las políticas silenciadoras a través de la búsqueda de la unidad ontológica en la novela *Push*, de Sapphire

La teoría del realismo post-positivista crítico defiende la necesidad de teorizar no sólo el concepto de la identidad sino también el de la agencialidad. Así pues, la identidad es entendida desde la perspectiva dialógica que nos proporciona una visión del mundo desde el ventajoso punto de vista de la agencialidad, facilitando una aproximación al concepto de la unidad ontológica, interpretada como la interacción dialógica entre el sujeto y el otro, el pasado y el presente. La búsqueda de la unidad, con la ayuda del recuerdo, la doble conciencia y la agencialidad, supone un punto de partida para la expresión activa de la subjetividad de la mujer negra en la diáspora africana. Esto conlleva enfatizar la importancia de las mujeres como dueñas de sus destinos en la tarea de la construcción de sus identidades, cuyo proceso se nutre de la interacción entre el tiempo, la comunidad y la experiencia, defendiendo que la identidad es indeterminada y múltiple. La novela de Sapphire titulada *Push* y publicada en 1996 se analizará como un texto que, teniendo como eje principal el incesto, contrarresta las políticas silenciadoras, transformando el miedo y la diferencia en lenguaje y discurso, aportando matices a los discursos liberadores de las escritoras afro-americanas contemporáneas.

Palabras clave: identidad; agencialidad; unidad ontológica; recuerdo; doble conciencia; novela de incesto

> Every Black woman in America lives her life somewhere along a wide curve of ancient and unexpressed angers.
>
> Audre Lorde

1. Introducing the Post-positivist Realist Theory of Identity and the Dialogics of Agency in African American Literature

Audre Lorde's call to consciousness considering desire as a flux, as a site where the origin of the self is constantly renewed as an actual path in our search for wholeness, pushes our quest for personal freedom from cultural determinations and factors such as time and space, gender and race, which constitute the matrix of the subject's identity.[1] This paper explores the ways in which the post-positivist realist theory of identity helps explain how we can distinguish legitimate identities from false ones. As Mohanty (2000) proposes, one's identity may be constructed but it is not arbitrary: we can strive for better and more accurate knowledge of ourselves and of our world and this is done through our agency. Furthermore, the post-positivist realist theory accounts for cultural decolonization, which involves an interrogation of the epistemic and affective consequences of our social location, of historically learned habits of thinking and feeling (2000, 63). Given the situation of "internal colonization" that, as Michelle Wallace contends (1990, 2), affects the African American individual in contemporary US society and culture, the present paper introduces post-positivist realism, with its focus on identity, agency and cultural decolonization, as an effective tool to analyze the literary expressions of Black Americans and by extension also those produced by members of the African diaspora. Since the nineteenth century, writers of the African diaspora have given expression to an African self that functions in Western civilization as simultaneously a "colonized" other and an assertive "self." Due to the continuing ordeal of the African diaspora, this self is caught between the binaries proposed by the material and the spiritual world, seeking the balance where the person can become whole.

According to Johnnella E. Butler (2006), provost of Spelman College in Atlanta and a leading scholar in US higher education, African American literature is a discipline in search of a theory, which would be in dialogue with the complexity of African American social and cultural reality. Thus, the need arises to approach the reading of African American literature in ways that allow the African American experience to be part of a theory that accounts for the epistemic dimensions of identity.

As Mohanty points out, whether we inherit an identity—masculinity, being Black—or we actively choose one on the basis of our political predilections—radical lesbianism, Black nationalism, socialism—our identities are a way of making sense of our experiences. Identities are theoretical constructions that enable us to read the world in specific ways.

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Our access to our remotest personal feelings is dependent on social narratives, paradigms, even ideologies. We interpret our experiences through the framework provided by these social narratives as well as our past attempts to understand our experiences and lives.

Thus, within this perspective, grasping individual agency, that is, the person's socially acknowledged right to interpret and speak for himself/herself, opens up the possibility to create valid identities, to grow morally and emotionally and to achieve wholeness. Within African American scholarship the search for wholeness is understood as the process of gaining balance and harmony within one's identity, gathering an understanding of the whole as made up from the interdependence of the different parts, going beyond the binaries and into unity and dialogue (Castro 2011). Thus, achieving wholeness, a constitution of the whole self "by the mutual interaction and relation of its parts to one another" (Hames-García 2000, 103), comes from "recognizing the multiplicity of one's self and theorizing from experience" (Butler 2006, 184).

The search for wholeness links historically to the African slave's search for freedom and agency during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the processes of colonization and neo-colonization. Going beyond the dialectic binaries implied by double consciousness, and moving forward in its commitment to multiplicity in the relationship between the African self and the Western other, the search for wholeness functions as a venue where re-memory, as conceived originally by Toni Morrison (1987), becomes a link to a past which is understood as powerful and useful, once we are ready to confront it and to accept it through the wise guidance of ancestry. The search for wholeness is informed by the principle of polarity, which dictates that the different parts of a whole complement each other, once we approach them with the right frame of mind. It implies looking beyond the binary in order to create movement and change and pointing out towards the transformation of cultural oppositions which may occur on several levels of experience.

2. Challenging the Politics of Silence in Sapphire's *Push*

This essay offers a post-positivist realist theoretical reading of identity and its key role in the process of the search for wholeness in Sapphire's novel *Push*. Sapphire's 1996 novel, and its film adaptation of 2009, *Precious,* represent the "ancient and unexpressed angers" which Lorde claims shape the life of "every black woman in America" (1984, 145). Sapphire's first novel was very well received. The book was the winner of the Book-of-the-Month Club's Stephen Crane Award for First Fiction, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association's First Novelist Award, and in Great Britain, it received the Mind Book of the Year Award. *Push* has also enjoyed substantial appeal outside the US and the novel has been translated into thirteen languages.

Precious Jones tells her life story as a liberatory act, and it forms part of what Angelyn Mitchell calls "liberatory narrative" (2002, xii), because the possibilities for regeneration and healing start in the telling of those aspects of African American realities which are too dangerous, too shameful or too terrible to confront. It is in their recognition and their

telling that the conditions for social transformation in the Black world lie: in Sapphire's desire, to activate language in order to utter the unspeakable things which, much to our distress, are left unspoken. The politics of silence, as Doane and Hodges remind us, function "to legitimize forms of gendered inequality within the family that have been linked not only with incestuous abuse but with slavery, a white paternalistic system in which dependents are 'cared for' and also sexually and economically exploited" (2001, 32).

Within the politics of silence, the voice of the Black woman writer becomes "the expression of a desire that was silenced by the master and by patriarchal discourse," a desire which is "constitutive of a loss, a pure absence striving for an impossible completion . . . but which is also a pure production of the action that creates things, makes alliances and leads to resilience" (Van-Peteghem 2011, 24). Resilience is rooted in strength, in spiritual wholeness, in resistance and in forgiveness.

The journey of Precious Jones is intended not only to overcome the trauma of racism, and the consequent fragmentation of the self, but also to find ways of escaping the abuse coming from her own father and mother. What Precious Jones has to confront is an oppression that goes beyond the "double jeopardy" (Beale 1995, 146) the Black woman had to put up with historically, being, on the one hand, the other in a racist society and on the other, the feminine in her own community. Thus, the dynamics of double consciousness increase in complexity when gender is taken into account in its movement towards multiple consciousness, which implies the fragmentation of the self and the splitting of identity in order to account for cultural decolonization and healing from trauma and oppression. This movement or growth broadens the perspective of Blackness, as reflected in the cultural and the psychological, in its relationship with Western culture.

Precious is the victim of rape by her father and abuse from her mother. This experience turns lethal, as the victim, Precious, lacks the vocabulary to understand the context of the violence and is unconscious of her own vulnerability and exposed to the disruption of Black family life.

Sapphire's story of incest is told from the perspective of the voiceless victim. The strength of the novel resides in this fact because she does not fail in her attempt to shape a silence "while breaking it" (Doane and Hodges 2001, 41).[2] The author refuses to present Precious as a helpless victim who lacks the instruments necessary for her physical and spiritual survival. Sapphire in this way introduces herself as the holder of a strong Black female literary tradition devoted to filling in the gaps and pushing that tradition forward towards the future. *Push* has been considered by critics such as Riché Richardson (2012) and Carme Manuel (2000) to be a neo-slave narrative, because implicit in the motif of

[2] This is in fact what Toni Morrison attempted to do with the character of Pecola in her novel *The Bluest Eye* when she tried to tell the violation from the point of view of the girl in the story. Interestingly, commenting on her own work in the afterword of the novel, Morrison pointed out that she had failed in her attempt due to the difficulty of the task. In Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, the actual rape of Pecola is focalized through the father, Cholly, not the daughter, which made it highly problematic for many critics.

the journey is the quest for being. Literacy becomes part of the political compromise of the text. Precious learns to read and to write, with a critical attitude, and in so doing joins literacy with identity, freedom and wholeness. According to Francis Kazemek, literacy is "an ethical endeavor that has as its goal the liberation of people for intelligent, meaningful, and humane action upon the world" (1988, 467). Besides learning to read and write, Precious is required by her teacher to also write in her diary.

In this sense, as Carme Manuel points out, "*Push* becomes a bold narrative experiment directly inspired by one of the most challenging practices in the educational setting—dialogue journal writing. This methodology certainly aids Precious Jones on her journey of self-discovery and emancipation, towards her own conscience to retrieve her role as individual and social subject" (2000, 220).

In African cosmology, it is through Nommo, the mastery of the word, that the self becomes revealed unto itself, ready to enter the transformative leap into what Paule Marshall calls "the true true" self. This is necessary, according to Marshall, because there "are so many fraudulent images of black women which have been projected in the literature" (1992, 282). As both Paul Carter Harrison (1972) and Molefi Kete Asante (1987) explain, Nommo involves the generative tensions between matter and spirit, good and evil, male and female, etc., and suggests the existence of a state in which the physical and spiritual fuse. This state corresponds to the time when gods walked the earth, when people had divine knowledge, and in African American folklore, when people could fly. Tricksters, conjurers, ancestors and the power of myths in African American tradition are all very much part of the everyday cosmology in which the spiritual world interacts with the real world.

The challenge of journal writing helps Precious deal with the frightening past, where she is a thing, a slave: her father abuses her and she bears two of his children, and her mother, besides abusing her sexually too, despises her for stealing her man, keeping her locked in the house, a de facto slave, isolated and illiterate. Precious's first child, a daughter from her incestuous relationship with her father when she was twelve years old, has Down's Syndrome, and the continued raping by her father results in her becoming infected with HIV. As a result of this situation, Precious feels invisible on the one hand and terribly guilty on the other. She has learnt not to expect any protection from her mother, who sent her the message "your father first, you second" (Herman and Hirschman 1977, 746).

As a consequence of this, the mother-daughter relationship is severely disrupted, and Precious recalls her mother as implacably hostile and critical of her. Susan Brownmiller, in her study of what she calls "father-rape" (qtd. in Kaye 2005, 165), stresses the coercive aspect of the situation and states that the father's sexual approach is clearly an abuse of power and authority, and that the daughter almost understands it as such. But, unlike rape, it occurs in the context of a caring relationship. The victim feels overwhelmed by her father's superior power and unable to resist him; she may feel disgust, loathing and shame, but at the same time she often feels that this is the only kind of love she can get, and prefers it to no love at all. The daughter, in this view, is not raped: she is seduced

(Herman and Hirschman 1977, 748). This is Precious's situation at the beginning of *Push*: she feels fear, disgust and intense shame about the sexual contact, but acknowledges that she feels some degree of pleasure during the sexual act, a feeling which only increases her sense of guilt and confusion. A direct consequence of this is that Precious feels different from the other children in school, gaining too much weight and remaining distant from ordinary people. Her sense of isolation and her inability to make human contact drives her to have extremely conflicted relationships with teachers and other children, impairing her ability to learn to read, write and learn numbers, so she sits at the back of the class and pees herself. During the sexual episodes with her father, Precious tells herself that "this isn't really happening," passive resistance and dissociation of feeling seemingly the only defenses available to her. At times, she also escapes into her fantasy world, pretending she is not there, imagining herself as a pretty girl, "like a advertisement girl on commercial, 'n someone ride up here in car, someone look like the son of the guy that got kilt when he was president a long time ago or Tom Cruise . . . and I be riding like on TV" (1996, 35). At the beginning of the novel, Precious feels she deserves to be beaten, raped, neglected and used. As she states, "Then my body take me over again, like shocks after earthquake, shiver me, I come again. My body not mine, I hate it coming" (111).

This leads to intense feelings of shame, degradation, and worthlessness. She has learnt with the years to distrust her own desires and needs so much so that she does not feel entitled to care and respect. As Mohanty points out, "emotions provide evidence of the extent to which our deepest personal experiences are socially constructed," referring "outward to the world beyond the individual," thus redefining the contours of our world(s) (2000, 34). Precious's emotions—her anger—are, as Ronald de Sousa has proposed, her way of "paying attention to the world" (qtd. in Mohanty 2000, 37). Her anger comes out of her knowledge of the socio-cultural circumstances of her world, which define her sense of self. For instance, she learns she has very few choices in life as a poor, abused, black girl. Going to the alternative Each one Teach one school, she learns about the range of personal capacities she is able to "exploit and exercise" (Mohanty 2000, 36), which she does through the process of learning to trust her judgements about herself, recognizing how others like her have done the same. Thus, both emotions and experience provide Precious with knowledge about the world around her: therein lies their cognitive nature.

Dialogue journal writing creates a path for Precious to literally write herself into being,[3] as she learns for the first time to exteriorize and to claim her emotions, finding a venue not only for acknowledging them, but also for giving them form and expression. When Precious learns to read and write she feels that her life starts flowing. It is a way of saying to herself that she feels loved, accepted, approved. In fact, Precious admits that writing

[3] There is an explicit relationship between literacy and freedom in *Push* which recalls the basic structure of the nineteenth-century slave narrative genre with major representatives such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Ann Jacobs. However, Jacobs and Douglass are exceptional, because most slave narratives were written/transcribed by amanuenses not the slaves themselves. Thus, the classification of *Push* as a neo-slave narrative is accurate in this respect.

in her notebook is helping her more than talking to her social worker. This is because the journal writing establishes a relationship of confidence and trust between Precious and Ms Rain—her teacher, since Ms Rain follows non-intrusive methods of correcting, in line with Paulo Freire's "attitude of dialogue" (Manuel 2000, 223). While Ms Rain openly says to Precious over and over that she is "intellectually alive and curious" (1996, 124), Ms Weiss, the social worker writes in her report that Precious suffers from "obvious intellectual limitations," asserting that "she is quite capable of working as a home attendant" (1996, 124), thus relegating Precious and the thousands of women like her to "a life of slave labor" (1996, 122). Knowing that the social welfare system is not a long-term solution for the lives of these women, Ms Rain encourages Precious to continue to write in her notebook, especially at times when Precious feels discouraged by her difficult circumstances:

> I don't have nothing to write today—maybe never. . . . Feel like giant river I never cross in front me now. Ms Rain say, You not writing Precious. I say I drownin' in river. She don't look me like I'm crazy but say, If you sit there the river gonna rise up drown you! Writing could be the boat carry you to the other side. One time in your journal you told me you had never really told your story. I think telling your story git you over that river Precious. (1996, 197)

Within this context, according to Henze, grasping agency, that is, the "person's socially acknowledged right to interpret and speak for her/himself" (2000, 230) is pivotal for Precious to achieve any degree of identity. Experiences do not contain meaning in themselves; it is the way that we interpret our experiences through the framework provided by the social narratives among which we live, as well as our past attempts to understand our experiences and lives that gives them meaning. This is what Precious is encouraged to do when Ms Rain tells her to write her life story in her diary in a conscious exercise of re-memory in order to lay claim to a past which is the source of Precious' trauma,[4] her displacement, her fragmentation and her isolation. Dialogue writing puts Precious in touch with her past and triggers in her a desire for independent thought and action. The task of re-memory linked to the written exercise of dialogue writing point toward the uses of literacy in the building of a true wholesome self, towards the healing of both spirit and body. The achievement of a consciousness as a worthy human being, as a mother, represents for Precious a movement towards change and the acquisition of a valid language creating a liberatory discourse that enables her growth towards maturity and wholeness.

For Precious, the cognitive task of re-memory is thus dependent on an emotional achievement, on the labor of trusting herself, her judgements and her companions (her classmates and Ms Rain). In short, re-memory is a process linked to the feeling of belonging.

[4] According to Toni Morrison, re-memory involves the re-creation of the untold and unwritten interior lives of Black people and of their ancestors, and consists of the gathering of "the memories within," as well as "the recollections of others," engaging through the imagination in the reconstruction of the world "that these remains imply" (1987, 12).

Identity-based politics becomes a necessary first step in knowing what an oppressive social and cultural system hides. There is a shift in values which Precious needs to account for in her new experiences with the alternative school program led by Ms Rain. Precious looks up to the social model defended by Black-nationalist Louis Farrakhan, together with the homophobic image of men he supports. As Sapphire explains in an interview with Mark Marvel, Precious accepts the teachings of Farrakhan because she "needs a positive view of black men . . . . Precious doesn't understand the ramifications of black nationalism. She doesn't know that there's something negative about Farrakhan. She doesn't know that hating gay people or hating Jews or hating foreigners is detrimental to her. What's been detrimental to her is being poor, being abused, and being illiterate" (qtd. in Manuel 2009, 157).

Precious is in fact amazed when she learns that not only the principal character of her reading class assignment, Alice Walker's Celie in *The Color Purple*, is homosexual, but so is her own teacher and one of her classmates too:

> But jus when I go to break on and go to tell class what Five Percenters 'n Farrakhan got to say about butches, Ms Rain tell me I don't like homosexuals she guess I don't like her 'cause she one. I was shocked as shit. Then I jus' shut up. Too bad about Farrakhan. I still believe allah and stuff. I guess I still believe everything. Ms Rain say homos not who rape me, not homos who let me sit up not learn for sixteen years, not homos who sell crack fuck Harlem. It's true. Ms Rain the one who put the chalk in my hand, make me queen of the ABCs. (1996, 81)

This discovery drives Precious towards the realization that she is entering a new community, one she can call her own, away from social narratives, paradigms and even ideologies which seem harmful now that she is awakening into consciousness and accepting her personal feelings in order to create her identity. Sapphire is clearly offering a harsh critique of homophobia, inscribing *Push* within the lgbt (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual) genre and furthering the African American tradition of Black feminism. Through the character of Ms Rain, "the committed lesbian teacher" (Michlin 2006, 183), Sapphire introduces a valid model for the community that counteracts the false model provided by Louis Farrakhan.

Although incest has been dealt with by previous African American writers, such as Toni Morrison in her novel *The Bluest Eye* or Alice Walker in *The Color Purple*, it is Sapphire's emphasis on telling the story from the point of view of the Black woman/child suffering from incest and rape that makes this novel unique: "By giving voice to the victim herself—a phenomenon virtually unheard of in Black sociological, or imaginative literature—the root causes of the incest are interrogated and the agency of this violence is spread as far as possible" (Liddell 1999, 137).

African American novels of incest, as Doane and Hodges point out, "give shape and visibility to forms of 'unbeing' that are gendered, racial, economic and social," contributing to create a body of literature which successfully breaks a "culturally enforced silence"

(2001, 45). Thus, *Push* "secures a safe space for the recovery of the traumatized female self" because the telling becomes a "location used for women's empowerment and recovery" (Myles 2012, 16).

3. The Transformation of Female Desire through the Search for Wholeness

The acquisition of literacy through the therapeutic method of diary journal writing, and accepted therapeutic practices such as the confrontation between daughter and mother, relieves Precious of her feeling of responsibility for the incest. In this face-to-face conversation, the mother admits to her daughter that she has been the victim of poor parenting, thus allowing Precious's plight towards liberation to start.

Precious is empowered by her growing ability to deal in a successful way with letters and numbers, as when she wins the literacy award and she starts writing poems. She is endowed with the power to speak out in front of her class, realizing how common incest is. By attending the incest survivor group, she gains the power to choose her destiny when she decides going through high school and college and abandoning welfare. Precious enjoys the company and care of an extended family who, although not her blood kin, truly love her and will help her to endure the difficulties the future might have in store for her. After going out with the incest survivor group to have drinks (first time in her life), Precious feels loved and delighted in the company of the girls: "I'm alive inside. A bird is my heart. Mama and Daddy is not win. I'm winning. I'm drinking hot chocolate in the village with girls—all kind who love me. How that is so I don't know. How mama and daddy know me sixteen years and hate me, how a stranger meet me and love me. Must be what they already had in their pocket" (1996, 131).

Finally, Precious regains legal custody of both her children, Mongo—who had already been confined to an institution for retarded children, and Abdul, and finds in motherhood the best present life has for her. She proudly admires the innocence of her beautiful baby son: "Look his nose is so shiny, his eyes shiny. He my shiny brown boy. In his beauty I see my own" (1996, 140). As Sapphire suggests with her novel, no adult woman will be free until children are free, hence her emphasis on education. Like prostitution and rape, father-daughter incest will disappear only when male supremacy ends. As Paule Marshall contends in her novel *Daughters*, the true difference will be made when Black women and men push shoulder to shoulder, on equal footing to forge their destinies and their children's destinies, to accept the fact that notwithstanding slavery and all its horrors, Black women and men "had it together, were together, stood together" (1991, 94). Stellamaris Coser adds that this is "a version of history that emphasizes the strength and determination of slaves under oppression and assigns central roles to black people" (1994, 70). In the end, Precious realizes that forgiveness has many layers, many seasons, almost one lifetime for her. For Precious forgiveness is not a gift, but rather a skill that she learns over time, gaining vitality and sensitivity as she overcomes the difficulties in her

life. She needs to learn that forgiving does not necessarily involve forgetting, but laying the emotion surrounding the memory to rest. Precious learns that "final" forgiveness is not surrender, but a conscious decision to cease to harbour resentment. Precious has two children from her father, who has died from AIDS, and she learns to accept that there has been enough payback, and in doing so she enters the path towards wholeness. Through the transformation and re-creation of female identity based on female agency, this narrative finds sustenance in the idea that the movement towards wholeness involves change. The novel's "speakerly authenticity" (Michlin 2006, 184) joins the continuum of Black women's writings as part of what Farah Jasmine Griffin has called "textual healing," empowering the eye of both reader and character, transforming the "politics of silence" into speech and telling, opening to dialogue and rendering desire loose as a "resource within each of us that lies in a deeply female and spiritual plane" (Lorde 1984, 53).

4. Conclusion

Supporting the claim that African American literature is a literature in search of a theory (Butler 2006, 171), this paper has analyzed the novel *Push*, taking into consideration the interaction among key theoretical concepts such as re-memory, double consciousness and the search for wholeness. The article has also applied the theory of post-positivist realism to the reading of *Push* to show how this theory is a possible path for the analysis of African American novels and specifically of those novels dealing with the impact of incest in the lives of young Black women and children. This theoretical approach sheds light onto several aspects of this type of literature that need to be closely observed because of their impact in the construction of identity, a conception of identity that takes experience into account, arousing consciousness about subjectivity, away from the limitations of a western colonizing discourse based on silence and abuse.

The process of re-memory enables Precious, the protagonist of *Push*, to effectively deal with the pain originated in her past as it triggers the search for wholeness which entails acquiring literacy and creating alternative liberatory discourses that allow her to obtain a certain degree of freedom to move forward in life and create a sense of a possible future.

The post-positivist realist theory of identity allows us to explore the shifting identity of individuals within a well-established ethnic group, as is the case of *Push*, on the one hand, and to claim experience, on the other, because of the many changes in which it is generated, as the source of objective knowledge. As post-positivism contends, identities are ways of coming to terms with our experiences: in them and through them we learn to define and reshape our values and our commitments, and we give texture and form to our collective futures (Mohanty 2000, 29-66). There is, therefore, a need to theorize not only about identity but also about agency as "the conscious and on-going reproduction of the terms of our existence while taking responsibility for this process" (Alexander and Mohanty 1997, xxviii). Identity, then, is understood from the dialogic perspective of engaging the world from the vantage point of agency, facilitating wholeness, or the

dialogic interaction between self and other, past and present. The search for wholeness with the aid of re-memory, double consciousness and agency becomes the trigger for an active expression of Black women's subjectivity throughout the African diaspora. This consists of giving emphasis to the importance of women as the owners of their destinies when they engage in the building of their identities, which are shaped by the interaction of time, community and experience, suggesting that identity is performative, indeterminate and multiple.

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"Love Letter to My Ancestors:" Representing Traumatic Memory in Jackie Kay's *The Lamplighter*

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Jackie Kay's *The Lamplighter*, published in 2008, was first broadcast on BBC radio in 2007 to coincide with the commemoration of the bicentenary of the abolition of the African slave trade in Britain. Kay's dramatised poem or play, as it has alternately been defined, focuses on the female experience of enslavement and the particular forms of dehumanization the female slave had to endure. Kay's project can in fact be described in terms of Marianne Hirsch's concept of "postmemory," or more specifically of "feminist postmemory." As such, literary devices are employed to emulate the traumatic events at the level of form such as intertextuality, repetition and a fragmented narrative voice. While commemorating the evils of the past, Kay simultaneously wishes to draw attention to contemporary forms of racism and exploitation in the pursuit of profit. Through re-telling the story of slavery, *The Lamplighter* can ultimately be regarded as Kay's tribute to her African roots and the suffering endured by her African forebears and contemporaries.

Keywords: slave trade; traumatic memory; postmemory; Africa; Britain; Jackie Kay

. . .

"Love Letter to My Ancestors:" La representación de la memoria traumática en *The Lamplighter*, de Jackie Kay

The Lamplighter, de Jackie Kay, publicado en 2008, fue retransmitido por la BBC en 2007 coincidiendo con la conmemoración del bicentenario de la abolición del tráfico de esclavos y esclavas africanos en Gran Bretaña. Este poema dramático y obra de teatro, como ha sido definido alternativamente, se centra en la experiencia femenina de la esclavitud y en las formas particulares de deshumanización que las esclavas padecían. El proyecto de Kay puede, de hecho, describirse mediante el concepto de "postmemoria" de Marianne Hirsch, o más concretamente, como "postmemoria feminista." Como tal, emplea técnicas literarias para emular los acontecimientos traumáticos en el plano formal, tales como la intertextualidad, la repetición y una voz narrativa fragmentada. Al tiempo que conmemora los males del pasado, Kay busca simultáneamente dirigir la atención hacia las formas contemporáneas de racismo y explotación en busca del beneficio económico. Al volver a contar la historia de la esclavitud, *The Lamplighter* puede en última instancia considerarse el tributo de Kay a sus raíces africanas y al sufrimiento experimentado por sus antepasados y antepasadas africanos y contemporáneos.

Palabras clave: comercio de esclavos; memoria traumática; postmemoria; África; Gran Bretaña; Jackie Kay

My story is the story of sugar. / My story is not sweet.
JACKIE KAY, *The Lamplighter*

Several decades after the first twentieth-century female slave narratives appeared in the United States, a number of Black British women writers published so-called "neo-slave narratives" to mark the 2007 bicentenary of the abolition of the African slave trade in Britain. Jackie Kay's *The Lamplighter* (2008), which has been described as a dramatised poem, a multi-layered epic poem or simply as a play,[1] focuses on the female experience of enslavement and the particular forms of dehumanization that the female slave was forced to endure. Apart from stressing the dialectics of memory and forgetting and providing silenced female voices with an identity and a past, Kay makes it a point to commemorate how slavery financed and powered the industrial revolution and how Britain, and thus her native Scotland, profited and prospered from the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Based on extensive research, *The Lamplighter* is a conscious effort to write back at history and to set the record straight. However, the play not only serves as a powerful reminder of the evils of the past, but it also resonates for the present when one of the characters states, "My story is the story of Great Britain / The United Kingdom, The British Empire" (81). In this effort, *The Lamplighter* forms part of a network of texts referred to as "contemporary narratives of slavery" or "neo-slave narratives,"[2] which serve as a reminder of "proceedings too terrible to relate" (Morrison 2004, 2293), and are at the same time committed to "breaking the silence of the past in order to promote a new understanding" (Beaulieu 1999, xv). Jackie Kay clearly subscribes to such a conceptualization of representations when she says in her essay "Missing Faces:" "I thought of all the silences— the silences from African people . . . and from white people . . . . The history of the slave trade is not 'black history' to be shoved into a ghetto and forgotten, or to be brought out every 100 years for a brief airing, then put back in the cupboard. It is the history of the world. It concerns each and every one of us" (*The Guardian*, 24 March 2008). Ultimately, Kay's act of resistance exhibits what bell hooks has argued of oppressed people who "resist by . . . naming their history, telling their story" (1989, 45).[3] In this narrative or rather dramatic re-enactment of untold stories, gender is of paramount concern in the formulation of a decidedly female perspective with a focus on the specific physical and psychological indignities that enslaved women were subjected to, such as sexual exploitation, forced reproduction and subsequent loss of their children.

[1] See, for example, Amanda Nadalini who refers to the text as a "radio play, epic poem, or dramatized poem" (2012, 51), or Gioia Angeletti, who calls it a "radio and stage play, a polyphonic epic poem" (2013, 215) and an "epic play" (218). Jackie Kay herself refers to *The Lamplighter* as a "play" ("Missing Faces," *The Guardian*, 24 March 2008).

[2] Compare Amanda Nadalini's discussion of the subgenre (2012, 52 and 52, 53).

[3] Compare what Paul Gilroy says about the significance of "telling your story" in *The Black Atlantic*: "The telling and retelling of these stories [narratives of loss, exile, and journeying] plays a special role, . . . striking the important balance between inside and outside activity–the different practices . . ., that are required to invent, maintain, and renew identity" (198).

The Lamplighter was first broadcast on BBC radio on 25 March 2007 to significantly coincide with the date—25 March, 1807—on which the bill to abolish the British slave trade was signed, and was later published in book form accompanied by a CD of the radio play. While the text establishes a dialogue with original and contemporary slave narratives and appropriates existing conventions and themes of the genre, such as the first-person voice and descriptions of the horrors of the Middle Passage and life on the plantations with its attendant hardships,[4] it is precisely in this dramatic/auditory dimension in conjunction with its fragmentary, poetic form and the gendered focus on the female experience that *The Lamplighter* most obviously and originally differs from other contemporary narratives about slavery. At the same time, in *The Lamplighter* Kay re-works dominant themes which she has consistently addressed during her writing career, such as a pronounced feminist concern, explorations of the issue of belonging, her status as a black Briton, race relations and her relationship to her African ancestry; pressing issues—relating to the past as well as to the present—which are interwoven into the representation of the British slave trade.

Before embarking on a closer textual analysis of *The Lamplighter*, it seems noteworthy to consider that Jackie Kay initially refused the BBC's offer to write about slavery for the abolition bicentenary, because, she argued, "it sounded exactly the sort of thing black writers were expected to do" (Nick Thorpe, "Jackie Kay. Interview," *Sunday Times*, 25 March 2007). When she eventually agreed to the project, she "realised [she]'d almost been hiding from it" and felt that she was "being renewed," as if she "got that energy back" (Thorpe 2007). Kay's reluctance, which could be interpreted as an unconscious refusal to address the memory of slavery, and the subsequent experience of renewal appears to be a process one could usefully describe in terms of trauma scholar Marianne Hirsch's well-known concept of "postmemory," which refers to the memory of traumatic events that affects those future generations that did not experience them directly and enables the understanding of a traumatic experience that is inherited rather than witnessed first-hand (2008, 8).

Jackie Kay's explanation that her work on *The Lamplighter* eventually became "a sort of obsession," and that she was writing "out of a need, out of things you feel strongly about" (Thorpe 2007) further illustrates Hirsch's emphasis on an ethics of empathy, on the affective dimension of postmemory—which in Hirsch's understanding is significantly not restricted to immediate relatives of survivors of traumatic events but operates "across the differences of gender, race, and generation (2002, 89).

While Kay's immediate ancestors did not experience slavery directly—especially not in the Caribbean to which most of the play refers, unlike the forebears of other British writers of contemporary works about slavery such as Caryl Phillips, Fred d'Aguiar or

[4] See Nadalini's comments on Kay's "appropriation of the conventions and forms of the literary subgenre of the neo-slave narrative . . . and disregard of others" (2012, 53) and Bringas López's observation that the text "both echoes and diverges from the traditional slave narratives" (2010, 3).

Andrea Levy—she places herself within the discourse of slavery from the perspective of someone who is both British-Scottish and African, that is from a highly complex, hybrid subject position. In relation to the question of belonging and the decision to write *The Lamplighter*, Kay explains: "In a sense I was on a trail back to my own past. A lot of original Africans were taken from the West Coast of Africa, where my father came from. So I was thinking if I trace back my family tree far enough I would find slaves" (Thorpe, 2007). In continuation, when pondering the "very complex question" of home and belonging, she states in the same interview that "everything that I write somehow feeds into that question" (Thorpe 2007). It is thus from the point of view of her mixed-race heritage that she sets out to explore both her connection to her African ancestry as well as her position in the British context.

It seems worthwhile to note that this interplay between explorations of the slavery past and contemporary concerns of racial inequalities has been articulated in Kay's earlier work on some of the few occasions on which she addressed the topic of slavery. For example, the poems "Even the Trees" and "Finger"—both included in the collection *Other Lovers* published in 1993—bridge the gap between the past and the present by ending with a reference to current evils of race relations. "Even the Trees" closes with a prophetic warning expressing the fear of repetition, "Everything that's happened once could happen again" (2007, 70), while "Finger" finishes with the following lines: "They say it doesn't exist anymore. / This is another century. Take my fingerprint" (2007, 114), which points to the high number of Black people checked at borders, arrested or imprisoned, and hence calls attention to new forms of slavery and racism in a different guise. In other words, Kay's enquiry into the terrors of the past is a reflection of an ongoing struggle, of the "battle to represent a redemptive critique of the present in the light of vital memories of the slave past" (Gilroy 1993, 71).

With its primary focus on the lives of four women slaves, Mary, Constance, Black Harriot and Anniwaa, alias the eponymous Lamplighter, the play chronicles the condition of slavery from capture to eventual freedom. Even though the Lamplighter—who was initially abducted in Africa and received her name from an Inn in Avonmouth of the same name where she was sold after she had run away—can be regarded as the main voice in the text, her story is consistently accompanied by the stories of the other three enslaved women to create the impression—as indicated early on in the stage directions—"that any single story is a multiple one" (15). In a compelling interaction of discourses of the oppressor and the oppressed, interspersed between the personal testimonies by the four female characters is the "official"— and only—male voice of MacBean, who is significantly of Scottish background and appears to be a representative of all white male, mostly pro-slavery, discourse. Significantly, however, more space is given to the women's voices, which suggests a shift in power relations or at least the claim to space and the demand to be heard.

As the voice of white, male authority MacBean provides the "Shipping News" in the form of reports on weather conditions juxtaposed to a recording of the loss of slave lives

which are reduced to mere numbers in the economy of trade, dispassionate descriptions of the conditions on board of the slave ships (44, 45), forms of corporeal punishment (48), excerpts from the journal of a plantation owner (50), but also adopts the role of a slaver at a slave auction (17) or communicates other "facts" pertaining to the slave trade.[5] While throughout most of the play MacBean represents the voice of pro-slavery discourse, at the end of the text it is he who announces the termination of the slave trade and transforms into the voice of abolitionist discourse. The text thus also reflects the changes in western thought on the institution of slavery and even points towards possibilities of racial and gender reconciliation—echoing Sojourner Truth's famous speech "Ain't I a Woman?:"

> MACBEAN: Am I not a Man and a Brother?
> LAMPLIGHTER: Am I not a Woman and a Sister? (89)

On the audio recording MacBean's "protean" identity is reflected to great effect in the speaker's experimentation with different accents and an adjusted tone of voice. As other critics have pointed out, in its composition of multiple discourses, MacBean's voice could be said to serve the function of the *Zeitgeist* of the time (Bringas López 2010, 4; Angeletti 2013, 216). As illustrated in the brief analysis of the representation of the "character" of MacBean above, the employment of a multiplicity of discourses emerges as one of the text's dominant structural principles. Ana Bringas López notes that Kay's use of multiple discourses contributes to "building up a complex structure which mirrors the intricate social structure of slavery" (2010, 4). Rather than focussing on the aspect of a reflection of the social organization of the institution of slavery, I suggest to conceive of the textual strategies employed in *The Lamplighter* as an attempt at the literary representation and textual mimesis of the trauma of slavery. If, as Marianne Hirsch has pointed out, the task faced by the belated witness, affected by the "transgenerational transmission of trauma" (2008, 103) is to make decisions about how to best mediate the "psychology of postmemory" (107), I wish to illustrate in the following pages how specific textual strategies are employed in *The Lamplighter* to emulate the trauma of slavery from a decidedly contemporary or even postmodern perspective. In her study *Trauma Fiction*, Anne Whitehead succinctly summarizes this contemporary (literary) approach when she writes: "The impact of trauma can only adequately be represented by mimicking its forms and symptoms, so that temporality and chronology collapse, and narratives are characterised by repetition and indirection. Trauma fiction overlaps with and borrows from both postmodern and postcolonial fiction in its self-conscious deployment of stylistic devices as modes of reflection or critique" (2004, 3). In other words, literary devices are deployed to emulate the traumatic events at the level of form

[5] For the logs attributed to the character of MacBean, Kay used the log book of James Newton, a British slave ship captain who incidentally wrote the famous popular song "Amazing Grace" (see Kay, "Missing Faces," *The Guardian*, 24 March 2008). Note that Caryl Phillips's *Crossing the River* (1993) also draws on Newton's logbook.

while simultaneously eliciting an emotional and critical response in the reader. The key stylistic features Whitehead identifies as foregrounded in most trauma narratives are intertextuality, repetition and a dispersed or fragmented narrative voice (84), adding that a text's multiplicity "implicitly allies it with the act of memory . . . . Intertextuality can suggest the surfacing to consciousness of forgotten or repressed memories" (85). Amanda Nadalini reaches a similar conclusion when she says that "Kay's use of intertextuality is above all a mode of encoding memory—a traumatic memory" (2012, 54).

In *The Lamplighter*, it is first and foremost the overt generic reference to the literary tradition of the female slave narrative which establishes a conscious connection to a traumatic past. Hence, "any interpretive effort regarding *The Lamplighter* needs to place the text within the genealogy of black female narratives of slavery, since such contemporary works—and Kay's is no exception—tend to work as intertexts for one another" (Nadalini 2012, 53). The relation to this specific literary genealogy is most obviously confirmed through the direct quotation of the first line of Harriet Jacobs's alias Linda Brent's narrative *Incidents in the Life of Slave Girl: Written by Herself*: "Reader, be assured this narrative is no fiction" (15). This reference to the conventional assertion of authenticity found in original slave narratives further raises the central issue of self-representation to which I will return at a later stage of this discussion.

In an unpublished part of an interview with Jackie Kay conducted by the author of this article in March 2013, she declared her fascination with people like Harriet Jacobs and all those early, particularly women's, slave narratives but also with the work of contemporary black writers such as Jamaica Kincaid and Toni Morrison which led her to summarize that she thinks that she would definitely fit into a tradition of black women's writing. As far as more specific allusions to Black female writers of slave narratives are concerned, the Lamplighter's account of "hiding in the hole of a roof" (76) brings to mind Harriet Jacobs's hiding place in the attic of her grandmother's house; the description of Anniwaa's abduction as a child is reminiscent of Phillis Wheatley's capture into bondage as a young girl; and a slightly altered version of Sojourner Truth's question "Ain't I a Woman?"—referred to above—is repeated three times in the text: "Am I not a woman and a sister?" (87, 89, 90).

In keeping with Kay's mnemonic project of writing back to a tradition of silences and countering "postcolonial amnesia"—to echo Leela Ghandi—the central character Anniwaa,[6] alias the Lamplighter, is elevated to an allegorical, quasi-mythical figure who as a representative of all female slaves and their suffering brings light and symbolically illuminates dark times:

> I carried the light to light the lamps
> The lamps across the wide dark sea . . .

[6] See Leela Ghandi: "postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering, and, crucially, interrogating the colonial past" (1998, 4).

They call me the Lamplighter.
They call me the Lamplighter. (42, 43)

Preceded by Mary's line "We call her The Lamplighter" (42), the character is in fact represented as providing the other women with "the light," that is, with the power to endure the hardships inflicted on them. In this instance she supports Constance, whose little baby girl and other children before her were sold away from their mother.

LAMPLIGHTER:
I carried the light from the day
You lost her.
A bright light across the deep dark sea.

CONSTANCE:
I carried a light for my sons, my daughters. (42)

Apart from emphasising the effect of trauma as resulting in a splitting of identity, the portrayal of the Lamplighter, alias Anniwaa, as a double personality furthermore suggests an allegorical reading with Anniwaa speaking as the voice of Africa—the name is almost a homophone—and the Lamplighter symbolizing life in captivity. As a character in the play, Anniwaa could more specifically be conceptualized as the embodiment of Africa, as the violated female body, an understanding which intertextually recalls Maya Angelou's well-known poem "Africa" in which the continent is described in terms of the body of a conquered and desecrated woman.

The circular structure of the text, which begins and ends with Anniwaa's memories of her native village in Africa and subsequent capture into slavery, can be interpreted in psychoanalytical terms as an indication of the recovery of wholeness "to recompose her fragmented identity" (Angeletti 2013, 227) or as a suggestion that slavery is not over yet (Bringas López 2010, 9). With Africa providing the frame to the narrative, the use of this framing device seems to reinforce the connection to Africa that Kay so persistently seeks in her writing and thus draws attention to the prominence of Africa as the place from where slavery took its beginning and from where the suffering started. In this way, Kay firmly anchors the experience and traumatic memory of slavery in an African context.

Anniwaa's insistence on remembering her name in her dialogue with the Lamplighter—that is in an interior dialogue with the two parts of her self—provides, on the one hand, further evidence of the traumatic identity split, but also of the dialectic between the constant desire for oblivion, as represented by the Lamplighter, and the pressing need to remember her African origins as urged by Anniwaa/Africa:

ANNIWAA: My name is Anniwaa.
LAMPLIGHTER: There are things I can't help but remember.

ANNIWAA: Remember my name is Anniwaa.
LAMPLIGHTER: There are things I wish I could forget.
ANNIWAA: Don't forget my name is Anniwaa.
LAMPLIGHTER: These are the things I cannot stop remembering;/ these are the things I cannot stop forgetting. (35)

The conceptualization of Anniwaa as an incarnation of the women's African past is further reinforced when towards the end of the play she says, "I am the ghost of the child past. I am your past" (81). As this line is not addressed to any of the characters in particular, it could in addition be understood as an appeal to the reader/audience for identification and empathy, to assume responsibility as slavery forms part of everyone's history.

Structured around the three-legged trajectory of the Middle Passage—Africa, the Caribbean, Britain, Africa—with Africa forming the central part of this infamous passage, references to the Atlantic Sea emerge as a central trope in *The Lamplighter*, predominantly in the six scenes titled "Shipping News" and in Anniwaa's account of her confinement in the slave fort.

BLACK HARRIOT:
Into the howling, moaning Atlantic.
Into the open-grave-green sea.
Into the choppy waters, another body.
Another stiff black wave into
the tight black waves of the sea.
Into the turbulent waters,
another body yet. (12)

LAMPLIGHTER:
Into the shark infested Atlantic,
The black deaths slipped. (44)

While the frequent use of the adjective "black" evokes Paul Gilroy's concept of the "Black Atlantic," and thus points towards the diasporic reach of *The Lamplighter*, it is the high death toll of captured Africans during the transatlantic passage that is consistently commemorated through the employment of the image of the sea, culminating in a description of the deplorable incident of the slave ship Zong when live slaves were thrown overboard into the "early, unmarked, grave of the sea" (55).

From Anniwaa's child-perspective, resonating with all the fright and anxiety of a desolate child who cannot make sense out of where she is and what is happening to her, "the Sea" turns into a "wild monster" (10), a "big monster" (13). In fact, the creation of an African child self for the main character has allowed Kay to bring home the horrors

of captivity and transportation to an unknown destiny in its full force. Anniwaa's pre-traumatic memories of her family and native village, introduced by the fairy-tale formula "once upon a time," and the expression "a time now ago" (9) provide a powerful sense of nostalgia, not only about the tragic personal loss of kin and home, but also about a time of innocence that is forever lost.

As has become apparent in the discussion so far, throughout *The Lamplighter* Kay enters into critical dialogue with a large variety of literary and other texts. These intertexts include official records such as slave codes (30, 63) and facts garnered from historical documents (i.e., 75, 81, 84,) but also song lyrics (75, 76) and quotations from religious discourse (31, 37), which are deployed with critical intention either to reverse or to destabilize received notions and ultimately to denounce the institution of slavery. In contrast—at other moments—intertextual references are used to reinforce and pay homage to black cultural expressions such as the myth of the flying African (42) or the musical tradition of spirituals (37-38, 51, 57).

In the following, I would like to provide a more detailed discussion of a few selected intertextual references which acquire a particular prominence in the text.

In several instances, Kay appropriates the form of the nursery rhyme or permutates well-known popular rhymes into sinister ones to address themes such as imposed servility, hard labour and sexual exploitation:

> CONSTANCE:
> Lord, Lady, Sir, Master, Misses, Miss,
> Yes, No. Yes Miss, No Miss. Yes Sir, No Sir.
> Three bags full sir. (27)

> CONSTANCE:
> In the house: I learned: sewing, spinning, steaming, boiling, hot.
> Wiping, cleaning, polishing, spick and span.
> The Man can have you any time he can.
> Shimmy shammy. Hand on foot. Rub a dub.
> Three men in a tub. Shimmy shammy. Mammy.
> Mammy. Mammy. Filthy, dirty. Dirty, dirty, clean. (40)

The appropriation of this particular genre is especially compelling as nursery rhymes are traditionally associated with the innocence and purity of childhood. The clash between such expectations of conventional nursery rhymes and the re-written and re-contextualized version of the children's rhymes in *The Lamplighter* provokes unease in the reader/audience and brings all the corruption, indeed the "filth," of slavery forcefully to the fore. Kay's counter-hegemonic use of nursery rhymes can hence be regarded as an act of undermining and destabilising a specifically Western form of literary discourse. In an essay on Karen King-Aribisala's *The Hangman's Game* (2007), Bénédicte Ledent suggests

that the "subversive power" of nursery rhymes is "part of an attempt to go beyond the surface of things and disrupt the established order" (2008, 64), an attempt that seems to be confirmed in Kay's contestatory employment of the genre.[7]

In a similar act of cultural appropriation and cynical re-contextualization, Kay quotes from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, that is, from a key canonical western text by *the* writer representing quintessential Britishness, to address the precarious condition of a slave's bare life:

> Constance
> Visible. Invisible. See. Be not Seen. Hear be not heard.
> To be seen and not heard.
> To be or not to be, that is the Question. (32)

Due to its canonical status in world literature and prominent role in the colonial education system, used to inculcating "Western" values into the "natives," Shakespeare's work has served as a primary intertext for numerous efforts of postcolonial writers to "write back" to "the centre." In a Caribbean context, it is mainly *The Tempest* and the figures of Caliban and Prospero that have functioned as a basis for a critical interrogation of the dynamics between the colonizer and the colonized, between master and slave, as articulated for example in Kamau Brathwaite's work or in George Lamming's *Water With Berries* (1971), while from a Black British perspective *Othello*, as in Caryl Phillips's *The Nature of Blood* (1997) or Shakespeare's sonnets to the Dark Lady, as in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), have been re-fracted to explore issues of belonging and race relations in a British or European context.

Interestingly, Kay's reference to *Hamlet* evokes yet another intertextual allusion. Following the Chinese box principle, Wole Soyinka's poem titled "Hamlet" comes to mind, in which the corruption reigning in Denmark reflects the rotten state of affairs in Nigeria at the time of the writer's imprisonment. In view of this web of citations, Kay's allusion to Shakespeare's play can be read as an analogy to Britain's sickness and rottenness during the times of slavery and—again with an additional contemporary ring to it—as a pointer at the current state of the nation.

When considering that Hamlet found himself in a situation beyond his control, contemplating the possibility of suicide, the quotation moreover seems to call attention to the conundrum of death over slavery, of the "turn towards death as a release from terror and bondage" (Gilroy 1993, 63) to escape the condition of the "living dead" reflected in the Lamplighter's words: "I am dead and alive" (57). The theme of "death as agency" (Gilroy 1993, 63), which most immediately evokes Sethe's desperate act of infanticide in

[7] See also the counting rhyme on page 31. For the use of nursery rhymes in the context of slavery note also Erna Brodber's novel *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* (1980), which is structured around various forms of nursery rhymes.

Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*, is most hauntingly expressed in the Lamplighter's words, which she repeats four times in the course of the play: "I would rather die on yonder / Gallows than live in slavery" (23).[8]

Along with intertextuality, the frequent employment of repetition in the text emerges as another prominent technique closely linked to trauma and memory. Following Anne Whitehead, "One of the key literary strategies in trauma fiction is the device of repetition, which can act at the levels of language, imagery or plot. Repetition mimics the effects of trauma, for it suggests the insistent return of the event and the disruption of narrative chronology or progression" (85). Besides *The Lamplighter's* circular plot structure already referred to, repetition works predominantly at the level of imagery, and in particular of language, as seen in the above example. Throughout the narrative Kay keeps revisiting crucial topics such as the Middle Passage, sexual and other physical and emotional exploitation and abuse in order to portray the haunting power of a traumatic past. But it is especially in terms of language and subversive word play that Kay—who is after all predominantly a poet—employs repetition to represent the symptomatology of trauma. For example, central terms such as "I remember" (63), "imagine" (25-26) or the two corresponding terms "runaway" and "running away" (62-63) are reiterated numerous times in a matter of just a few lines.

In other instances entire passages are repeated—as in the example below, which addresses the recurrent theme of escape and freedom, in a matter of just two pages:

> Black Harriot:
> Runaway runaway, country or town.
> Runaway, runaway, don't slow down.
> Runaway, runaway, girl or boy.
> Runaway, runaway, freedom is joy. (66, 67)

Reminiscent of the already discussed pattern of the nursery rhyme, the rhythm of this lyrical passage is similarly suggestive of the haunting effects of trauma.

Frequently Kay employs the device of repetition through the use of key words which in turn trigger an entire chain of associations in order to simulate the workings of traumatic memory:

> Macbean
> The Ship Building Industry. Shipping.
>
> Constance
> Ship bread, ship biscuit, ship breaker, slaver, ship broker, ship fever, ship store, slaver, ship cargo, ship stowage, stow away, ship rat, slaver, ship days.

[8] See also pages 45, 69, 90.

MACBEAN
Ship: to put or to take (person or things)
Ship: to shoulder a burden

CONSTANCE
HardSHIP, WorkmanSHIP, WorSHIP, relationSHIP, authorSHIP! (72)

The use of alliteration in the first passage attributed to Constance turns it into a bit of a tongue-twister and thus powerfully re-enacts the stress symptoms on the level of oral expression while the employment, or rather the compulsive repetition, of the key terms "ship" and "slaver" reflect the repeated establishment of the traumatic scenario on board the slave ships. It seems significant to note that Constance, the speaker of these lines, did not only lose her speech—like Anniwaa at the beginning of the text—but is also reported to have suffered from frequent convulsions following the loss of her baby girl (67). When in an interview titled "Living Memory," Toni Morrison states that "black women had to deal with post-modern problems in the nineteenth century and earlier," and mentions in particular "certain kinds of dissolution . . . [c]ertain kinds of madness, deliberately going mad . . . 'in order not to lose your mind'," and further refers to these "strategies for survival" as a "response to predatory western phenomena" (qtd. in Gilroy 1993, 221), it is precisely this kind of fragmentation, or these "kinds of madness" that are reflected in Constance's verses. The intensity of the traumatic experience is also compellingly captured in the pun on "ship" as a bound morpheme versus a noun and further stressed through the use of capitalization. What adds to the force of this passage is the contrast established between Constance's voice of distress and MacBean's articulation of emotionally detached, factual pieces of information in relation to the meaning of the word "ship," especially in its relevance to the slave trade.

The trope of the ship, in fact, occupies a primary place, not only in this passage, but throughout the entire text of *The Lamplighter*, predominantly in the scenes titled "Shipping News" through the descriptions of the voyage across the Atlantic sea. Special attention is drawn to the ships at the beginning of scene twelve with the enumeration of the names of slave ships, taken from key systems of western civilization such as ancient mythology (the *Diana*), literature (the *Othello*), Christianity (the *Angel*, the *Jesus,* the *Grace of God*), or female first names (the *Bridget*, the *Charming Sally*) and western virtues (the *Perseverance*); a strategy which powerfully exposes the hypocrisy of the slave trade supposedly acting in the service of "civilization" (68).

The centrality given to the image of the ship in *The Lamplighter* indeed posits a link to Paul Gilroy's comment on his use of the trope of ships "as a central organising symbol" for his seminal study *The Black Atlantic*: "The image of the ship—a living, micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion—is especially important for historical and theoretical reasons. . . . Ships immediately focus attention on the middle passage, on the various projects for redemptive return to an African homeland, . . . as well as the movement

of key cultural and political artefacts: tracts, books, gramophone records, and choirs" (1993, 4).

Aside from articulating in formal terms the impact of trauma, intensifications such as those discussed so far communicate a sense of urgency to the readers/listeners with the effect of involving them in the story and thus, by extension, in the history and experience of slavery.

The most striking affect-generating feature foregrounded in *The Lamplighter* is, however, the focus on descriptions of physical sensations, which has not escaped the notice of other critics.[9] Considering that in its original Greek meaning "trauma" is a wound levied on the body, the focus on sense impressions to communicate the emotional and bodily experience of slavery is only consistent. In the context of postmemory, "postmemorial work . . . strives to *reactivate* and *reembody* more distant social/national and archival/cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression . . . . Memory signals an affective link to the past, a sense precisely of an *embodied* "living connection" (Hirsch 2008, 111; emphasis added).

Jackie Kay writes that "we don't want to imagine how slavery would affect each of the five senses" ("Missing Faces," *The Guardian*, 24 March 2008), and it is precisely the immediate physical effects of the violent enslavement of human beings that *The Lamplighter* concentrates on in many of its passages. This heightened corporeal perspective is frequently adopted with specific reference to the five senses in order to capture the memory and the horrors of slavery: "I can still stretch my arms back and be able to touch it again, / smell it again, taste it again. Slavery. The feel of it" (20), or—in contrast—to depict pre-traumatic memories of a life that has subsequently been numbed: "The life before, the life I lived, / the life when I could breathe, / when I could smell the smells / and taste the tastes" (24).[10] Kay writes a new embodied history—or "herstory" (Bringas López 2010, 7)—in which the bodies of the enslaved women become a central feature through descriptions of hard physical labour, child breeding, corporeal punishment and rape, but also of hunger, thirst, weight (19) or diseases (56, 57). In many passages the violence inflicted on the victims is intensified through the use of enumeration: "Torn, yanked, pulled, pushed, kicked, stamped, branded" (33) to produce affect in the reader/audience. Again following Marianne Hirsch: "These 'not memories' communicated in 'flashes of imagery' and 'broken refrains,' transmitted through 'the language of the body,' are precisely the stuff of *postmemory*" (2008, 109).

References to the terrors of the Middle Passage, the scarcity of space on the ships and the death toll, equally emphasize the sensuous, physical experience and culminate in a passage which foregrounds the repulsive odour of human bodily excretions:

[9] In her discussion of the text, Ana Bringas López, for example, stresses the fact that through the strategy of "building up an embodied herstory . . . Kay brings slavery home in its full horror" (2010, 7). With reference to the work of Hortense Spiller's distinction between "body" and "flesh," Amanda Nadalini discusses the "reduction to flesh" (2013, 62) in relation to *The Lamplighter*.

[10] See also pages 36 and 68.

MACBEAN
Two days before docking in
The slave galley could be smelled,
The putrescence of blood, faeces, vomit and rotting bodies,
Wafting downwind,
The smell of the dead . . . . (45)

Kay's careful orchestration of a veritable invasion—or even assault—of the corporeal shocks the reader/audience into an awareness of the institution of slavery in all its cruelty, rawness and physical reality.

One should not forget that *The Lamplighter* was also written to be broadcasted on the radio as well as performed on the stage. Apart from the spoken word, it also contains songs, sounds and, of course, on the stage, the bodies of the actors. With the choice of the dramatic genre Jackie Kay reinforces literary language or verbal representation through auditory and visual evocations and thus employs a sensory textuality which enables the transmission of emotional and physical memory. In addition, by opting for the dramatic form, Kay connects to the distinctly oral nature of black cultural expression as can also be said about the use of repetition mentioned above. In this context it seems interesting to relate Kay's strategy to Paul Gilroy's emphasis on the histrionic aspect in his discussion of "transfiguration" and the role it plays in the vernacular cultures of the black Atlantic diaspora: "The politics of transfiguration strives in pursuit of the sublime, struggling to repeat the unrepeatable, to present the unrepresentable. Its rather different hermeneutic focus pushes towards the mimetic, dramatic, and performative" (1993, 38). In view of Gilroy's further observation of the "public significance of lynching as a spectacle . . . as a popular theatre of power" (118), Kay's preference for the dramatic mode may also be regarded as an uncanny reminder not only of the "performance" of public lynchings but also of the public exhibition of captured Africans on the auction block.

As art historian Jill Bennett suggests, "in sense memory [the] past seeps back into the present, becoming sensation rather than representation" (2000, 92). This focus on sensation is emphasized when considering for example the following stage directions in scene thirteen, "British Cities:" "(*The women should speak fast in this section and overlap each other, to give a sense of the city being built, brick by brick, in words*)" (70; emphasis added). That is to say, in this passage language and the physical world in the form of sensations are intertwined to simultaneously elicit an affective and sensory response in the reader/audience. The language of sense memory leads to an increased immediacy and seems to be intended to address the reader's/audience's own body memories since, as Marianne Hirsch has argued, "The past is in the present, spatially in the room" (2002, 86). In one instance, the women's focus on the "mouth"—similar to the example of the image of the ship—triggers off a chain of associations:

CONSTANCE:
Avonmouth, open mouth.

BLACK HARRIOT:
We were sold . . .
At the slave ports of Lancaster, Whitehaven, PortsMOUTH,
PlyMOUTH, DartMOUTH.[11] (16)

While Gioia Angeletti reads this passage as "suggesting a social and economic system that devours humanity" (2013, 227), an interpretation which is supported by the use of the names of cities regarded as complicit with the slave trade, I would argue that, in addition, the dwelling on the "mouth" points to the more immediately physical act of (food) consumption. Numerous times in Kay's epic poem attention is drawn to the cargo—primarily tobacco, rum, and coffee (23, 55)—but above all sugar in its various manifestations (45) that is shipped to the western world in order to cater to the "British sweet tooth" (44). In his seminal work *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois significantly identifies "debauchery"—which for the sake of the current argument would translate into "gluttony"—as one of the evils characterizing the "contact between European Civilization with the world's underdeveloped peoples" (1989, 114).

Through the employment of multiple sensory impressions, Kay invites her audience to participate in a cultural act of remembrance. In this way, *The Lamplighter* engages in a sensory discourse of trauma which compels one "to perceiv[e] history *in one's own body*, with the power of sight (or insight) usually afforded only by one's own immediate physical involvement" (Felman and Laub 1992, 108).

In consideration of the marked physical presence of the female characters and the consistent emphasis on their corporeality, the fact that MacBean is not physically present as a character but only as a disembodied voice makes for quite a striking contrast. His absent presence could be said to very effectively capture the commanding, haunting omnipresence of the invisible, god-like power of the institution of slavery and, in effect, of white, western, male oppression and patriarchy in general.

In addition to the literary devices of intertextuality and repetition, with the use of a collective narrative voice, *The Lamplighter* employs yet another technique central to trauma narratives. Seen in comparison to other polyphonic contemporary slave narratives, for example Caryl Phillips's *Crossing the River* (1993) or Fred D'Aguiar's *The Longest Memory* (1994), the originality of Kay's rendition of slavery rests predominantly in its specific dramatic form of an interactive chorus of voices which according to Bringas López "renders the play profoundly heteroglossic and dialogical" (2010, 5). Building on this observation, one could further argue that Kay's

[11] Note also the references to other vital body parts ("lips, teeth, chest, heart, lung") in the same passage and especially the pun on chest: "CHESTer" (16).

text eludes any attempt at generic classification as it is not a usual play with a linear plot structure or conventional dialogue, but rather a loosely connected sequence of scenes that—despite their apparent chronological order—consists of fragmented, dislocated narratives—which, however, constantly converge and intersect to weave a common story representative of the experience of all enslaved women. This form of anti- narrative organization in fact aligns Kay's text with a type of subversion that, following Madhumita Purkayastha, finds particular expression in feminist discourses: "It seeks to challenge ordered and coherent narrativity and deconstruct hegemonic forms and structures of monologic and phallocentric discourse" (2014, 2). Unlike in the original slave narrative which is restricted to the perspective of a single narrator, Jackie Kay orchestrates a chorus of interacting female voices so that what Anne Whitehead has concluded in a discussion of Kay's novel *Trumpet* (1998) also seems to apply to *The Lamplighter*: "The narrative voice is dispersed or fragmented so that each of the protagonists takes up the story, adding to it . . . her individual perspective. The multiplicity of testimonial voices suggests that recovery is based on a community of witnesses" (88). It should be observed in this context that the voice of MacBean also closely interacts with the voices of the women who frequently take up and re-contextualize the exact same words or phrases used in his speech as for example in this extract from the captain's log:

> Macbean:
> Biscay. Southwesterly veering westerly. Very rough or High.
>
> Lamplighter:
> Very rough or High. (22)

This interweaving of the voices of the female slaves with the "master's" voice seems to reflect the closely knit texture and interdependence of the regime of slavery, implicating both sides—however differently—in the process.

Apart from sharing the experience of slavery, with each of the women recounting her own specific story, through her elevation to the level of myth, the Lamplighter performs an additional symbolic function. As Morna Fleming aptly observes, "Lamplighter is 'Herself', at once her own person, her own identity, and a representative of all enslaved womankind. Her experience is typical of that of the other women, but is *her* own experience, as each of them has her own experience" (2011, 2). In keeping with this observation, in *The Lamplighter* much emphasis is placed on self-articulation and self-representation:

> Black Harriot: This story was written by Herself.
> Mary: This is Herself talking . . .
> Lamplighter: Nobody ever told my story before. (15)

While mimicking and implicitly referencing the Ur-form of the autobiographical slave narrative with its emphasis on the authenticity and veracity of the slave narrator's story, this insistence could also be interpreted as a self-reflexive comment which draws attention to the fact that any retrospective narration—as is the case with the present text—is unavoidably and consciously a re-articulation of the slave experience from a contemporary perspective. The Lamplighter's phrase quoted above could thus be extended to read: "Nobody ever told my story before – the way it is told here."

Kay sensitively portrays Anniwaa's gradual awakening from the trauma of capture and enslavement, following her progression from the pathological response of speechlessness, "I stop talking" (10), to self-articulation and self-assertion through textual testimony:

LAMPLIGHTER
This is the story of the Lamplighter:
One day, I finally managed to tell
My story. I wrote it down.
It was printed and reprinted
And told.
And retold again. (92)

In line with the stress on the contemporary nature of *The Lamplighter* pointed out above, the emphasis placed on "*re*printing" and "*re*telling" in this passage suggests a link to Toni Morrison's concept of "rememory," which has been defined as a narrative "strategy of subversive representation" (Purkayastha 2014, 1). The connection to Morrison can be extended when considering the following exchange between Constance and the Lamplighter:

CONSTANCE
The *passing on*, quick – quick, of an idea
Is irrepressible.

LAMPLIGHTER
I can write it down! I will write it down and *pass it on*. This is a letter from me to my ancestors.

CONSTANCE
This is the story of the Lamplighter. (84; emphasis added)

The use of the phrase "pass on" in this passage can be identified as an overt intertextual reference to the repeated assertion in the epilogue of Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* that "this is not a story to pass on" (275). However, unlike in Morrison's text in which "pass on" is used ambiguously to signify both forgetting and remembering in the sense that this story should not be repeated, but also not "passed on," that is "skipped," omitted or

repressed, Kay's narrative emphasises the power of the written word and the responsibility of passing the story on in honour of the dead ancestors in an act of communal memory.

Kay's presentation of the Lamplighter's story as a testimony of black female empowerment, a celebration of the power of self-fashioning through narration, can be related to the idea articulated in trauma theory which regards writing as an "inherently curative process" (Whitehead 2004, 87). Following Anne Whitehead, "Conversion from traumatic memory to narrative memory represents the process of recovery from trauma" (87). Kay's emphasis on storytelling is critical for her reconstructive project as it points to the possibility of recovery from a past of trauma and pain if one can arrive at a narrative articulation that enables reflection and renegotiation.

As already mentioned at the beginning of this essay, communal memory is not limited to the descendants of victims of the slave trade but speaks to the entire British nation and, indeed, to the world at large. If, as Sofía Muñoz Valdivieso contends, "narratives of the British nation have traditionally managed to shift the focus away from the participation of Britain in the institution of slavery to highlight its role as a European leader in the movement to do away with the slave trade" (56), Kay's play is a further contribution to the rectification of this narrative as portrayed in the already existing body of contemporary slave narratives. *The Lamplighter* is pervaded with references to the economic motivation behind and the profit gained by the slave trade, both of which are specifically addressed in two scenes entitled "Sugar" (scene eight) and "British Cities" (scene thirteen) respectively.

> Black Harriot:
> We were sold for sugar in the coffee.
> Sugar in the tea.
>
> Mary:
> We were sold for tobacco and rice.
> Sold to make the cities rise. (17)

Leading us back to the text's emphasis on corporeality discussed above, in her portrayal of the unholy alliance between the economies of trade and the cannibalization of human beings turned into "commercial objects" (Paul Gilroy, "12 Years a Slave," *The Guardian*, 10 November 2013), Kay consistently draws attention to the physicality and the brutalization of the slave's body:

> Mary:
> There is not a brick in this city
>
> Lamplighter:
> But what is cemented with the blood of a slave. (79)

BLACK HARRIOT
My story is the story of sugar.
I was stolen for sugar.
I gave my body up for sugar.
I nearly died for sugar.
Sugar is my family tree.
I have no sugar daddy. (49; emphasis added)

The central role assigned to "sugar," which is repeated in every single line of the passage summarizes in brevis the history and hardships of slavery—capture, physical and sexual exploitation, death, loss of familial bonds—with sugar providing the prime motive in this cynical pursuit of "La dolce vita!" (46). The final pun on "sugar daddy" places special stress on the specifically female experience of forced sexual submission. This is to say, *The Lamplighter* consistently draws attention to the body as merchandise or to what Paul Gilroy has labelled the slaves' condition as "capital incarnate" ("12 Years a Slave," *The Guardian*, 10 November 2013). As the prime motivator powering the trade, "money" is repeatedly referred to frequently through the device of enumeration, associative word-play, proverbs and even sound:

CONSTANCE:
Ten twenty thirty forty fifty sixty seventy eighty one hundred
pounds, ten twenty thirty forty fifty sixty seventy eighty.
Two hundred thousand pounds. (*And so on*.)

FX:
(*We hear the sound of money being counted*.) (73)

CONSTANCE:
Money makes the world go round.

BLACK HARRIOT
Money makes the man. (76)

This specific reference to the musical *Cabaret* with the persecution of the Jewish population as its historical backdrop seems to suggest an association between the ideological and capitalist nature of both slavery and the Holocaust. In placing these two histories of human suffering relative to one another, Kay appears to propose that anti-Semitism and racism are closely connected. In an attempt to counter arguments that wish to view these experiences as unique and incomparable, Gilroy, for example, also advocates that "a combined if not comparative discussion of its horrors and their patterns of legitimation might be fruitful in making sense of modern racisms" (1993, 214).

Throughout scene thirteen "British Cities" (70-82), Kay encourages her readers/audience to realize that British cities were only able to rise and prosper on the backs of enslaved Africans who now lay claim to and demand their inclusion in the cities implicated in the slave trade: "CONSTANCE (*sings)*: *Bristol belongs to me* . . . / BLACK HARRIOT (*sings)*: I belong to Glasgow and Glasgow belongs to me!" (79), culminating in the enumeration of all the cities associated when Black Harriot says, "London, Liverpool, Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow belongs to me!" (80).

While various critics have pointed out that the inclusion of Glasgow as a major slave port in the above list highlights Kay's particular concern with the involvement of her native city in the institution of slavery, most exhaustively discussed in Gioia Angeletti's article titled "The Plantation Owner is Never Wearing a Kilt" (2013), and have furthermore observed that the line "I belong to Glasgow" refers to the eponymous popular Glaswegian music-hall song, it should be added that the assertion "Glasgow belongs to me" is an adapted, oblique quotation from Lord Kitchener's famous Calypso "London Belongs to Me." Apart from stressing the claim to affiliation and belonging, with this particular quotation the text enters into a dialogue with the history of migration from the Caribbean as an immediate consequence of slavery and colonization while simultaneously pointing to the persistent problem of contemporary racisms.

With its particular focus on the exploration of slavery and the slave trade through the lens of gender, *The Lamplighter* constitutes a specifically feminist contribution to the corpus of contemporary slave narratives that wish to make an intervention into British memory politics by reminding the country of its imperial past and presenting this legacy as integral to British mainstream history. Kay's sensitive re-inscription of the history of slavery from the point of view of black women can in fact more accurately be defined as "feminist postmemory," which Hirsch describes as a "particular mode of knowledge about the other, a particular intersubjective relation or 'allo-identification,'" as a question of "how memory is constructed, of what stories are told, to whom, and by whom" (2002, 88), which Hirsch summarizes as "an ethical and political act of solidarity and, perhaps, agency on behalf of the trauma of the other" (89).

As I have tried to show in my analysis of *The Lamplighter*, partly guided by interpretive categories provided by trauma theory and studies of the literary representations of trauma, the questions articulated by Hirsch above are addressed and fictionalised in the original use of generic and narrative strategies employed in Kay's imaginative re-articulation of the slave experience. In dialogue with past and contemporary narratives of slavery, Kay participates in the (paradoxical) project of black writers who enquire "into terrors that exhaust the resources of language amidst the debris of a catastrophe which prohibits the existence of their art at the same time as demanding its continuance" (Gilroy 1993, 218). Seen from this perspective, *The Lamplighter* can be conceptualized simultaneously as a historical reclamation and as a challenge to contemporary forms of racism, enslavement and the enduring exploitation of human beings in pursuit of profit. Through an imaginative return to Britain's slavery past, Jackie Kay provides a critique

of the present moment, since "slavery and unfree labour are still far from over" (Gilroy 2013). Finally, with its emphasis on storytelling, on the telling and re-telling of the story of slavery, and the focus on the African origins of the slave trade, *The Lamplighter* can ultimately be regarded as Kay's tribute to her African roots and the suffering endured by her African forebears. Indeed, as Jackie Kay affirms in her article "Missing Faces" about the process of writing the play: "I felt as if I was writing a love letter to my ancestors" (*The Guardian*, 24 March 2008).[12]

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[12] Significantly, a slightly permutated version of this phrase is also used by the Lamplighter in the play: "This is a letter from me to my ancestors" (84).

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The Unresolved Spaces of Diasporic Desire: An Interdisciplinary Critique of Haruko Okano's Work

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This article explores, through the analysis of recent Asian Canadian critical and creative work, the unresolved nature of diasporic modes of cultural production in contemporary Canada. It starts by offering a metacritical discussion of Asian Canadian literary scholarship, with a focus on those works that define the field in terms of the quandary between resistance to various modes of cooption and the residual desire to belong. The second part of the article proposes an interdisciplinary critique of the poet and multimedia artist Haruko Okano's work as providing an instance of these contradictions, as well as exemplifying the potential of creative practices to provide answers to critical and theoretical impasses. Okano's disconcerting writing and artwork have invariably revolved around the unresolved condition of cultural hybridity, often betraying the traps as well as the possibilities of the search for modes of expression that fall outside normativity. Her production may thus be read metacritically, in that it thematizes and speaks to the theoretical debates that surround the condition of the diasporic subject in Canada.

Keywords: Haruko Okano; Asian Canadian Studies; Canadian literature; interdisciplinarity; diaspora

. . .

El espacio inconcluso del deseo diaspórico: Una crítica interdisciplinar de la obra de Haruko Okano

Este ensayo explora, a través de un análisis de la obra crítica y creativa asiático-canadiense, la naturaleza inconclusa de los modos diaspóricos de producción cultural en Canadá. Se ofrece, en primer lugar, un debate metacrítico de los artículos existentes en el campo, con especial atención a aquellos que lo definen en términos de un dilema entre la resistencia hacia varios modos de apropiación y el deseo residual de pertenencia nacional. La segunda parte del ensayo propone una crítica interdisciplinar de la obra de la poeta y artista multimedia Haruko Okano como un ejemplo tanto de las contradicciones como de las posibilidades que la creación diaspórica puede aportar al impasse teórico-crítico. La desconcertante obra de Okano siempre ha versado sobre la condición indecisa del hibridismo cultural, desvelando a menudo las cortapisas, pero también el potencial de buscar modos expresivos que transciendan la normatividad. Su producción, por tanto, se puede interpretar desde una perspectiva metacrítica, ya que tematiza y contribuye a los debates teóricos que existen alrededor del sujeto diaspórico en Canadá.

Palabras clave: Haruko Okano; estudios asiático-canadienses; literatura canadiense; interdisciplinariedad; diáspora

In her essay "Diasporic Citizenship: Contradictions and Possibilities for Canadian Literature," Lily Cho discusses the profound dissonance between the notions of diaspora and citizenship and outlines the implications of that dissonance for articulating the field of Canadian literature. Cho argues that this disparity "opens up a recognition of the contingencies surrounding our choice for citizenship. Diaspora allows us to be up against citizenship, to embrace it even as we hold it at some distance, to recognize it as both disabling and enabling" (2007, 108). Weaving this tension into the uneasy relationship between so-called majority and minority literatures in Canada, Cho proposes the need to explore "the messy places" of national narratives (where diaspora and citizenship clash against each other) "in order to enable memory to tear away at the coherence of national forgettings" (109). Such aporic and dissonant scrutiny of the notion of diasporic citizenship would reveal how histories of dislocation and racialization contradict and undermine narratives of belonging, a perspective which Cho claims would create a productive critical space from which to understand the contradictions in as well as the possibilities for Canadian literature.[1]

Implicit in Cho's argument is an approach to Canadian culture which is largely affected by the shifting contexts of present identitary formations through the overlapping of local and global networks, often leading to what Roy Miki, writing about the future of CanLit, has called "a multiplicity of unresolved desires" (2011, 274). The current article takes a specific angle on that shift and intends to explore, through the analysis of recent Asian Canadian critical and creative work, the unresolved nature of diasporic modes of cultural production in contemporary Canada. I will start by offering a metacritical discussion of Asian Canadian literary scholarship, focusing on those works that define the field in terms of the quandary between resistance to cooption and the desire to belong. In the second part of my article, I propose an interdisciplinary reading of the poet and multimedia artist Haruko Okano's work as representing such a predicament and, at the same time, as showing the potential that creative practices may have in providing a way out of critical and theoretical impasses. Okano's disconcerting writing and artwork have invariably revolved around the unresolved condition of cultural hybridity, and this trajectory has regularly exposed both the lures and the prospects of the search for modes of expression that fall outside normativity. Her production may be read metacritically in that it thematizes and speaks to the theoretical debates that have surrounded the condition of the diasporic subject in Canada. Paradoxically, her work has received almost no critical attention to date.

[1] This essay is part of the research work undertaken within the international project "The City, Urban Cultures and Sustainable Literatures: Representations of the Anglo-Canadian Post-Metropolis," a three-year research project fully funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology (FFI2010-20989), with the participation of Canadianists from Canada, the UK and Spain. Our work revolves around new ideas of representing Canada and has a sharp focus on the urban paradigm. An earlier, different, and much shorter version of this paper was presented at the ICCS Biennial Conference at the University of Ottawa in May, 2012, under the title "East of the Postmetropolis: Globality, Locality, Trance."

My choice of Asian Canadian as the field in which to examine these contradictions is meant as a case in point, for, as Smaro Kamboureli has argued, the field "has emerged as a powerful cultural and socio-political sign" in Canada. Moreover, she asserts, "its gradual emergence has also helped re-shape the overall understanding of Canadian literature as an institution, and thus raise important questions about knowledge production and power, literature and the nation-state, as well as diaspora and postcoloniality" (2012, 43). For Roy Miki, *Asian Canadian* has come to signify a space of transformative possibilities within the larger field of literary studies, since its "mirage-like form" may provoke "a radical rethinking of critical methodologies that can result in progressive social transformation" (2011, 266-67). Drawing on Miki's argument, the status of Asian Canadian texts in relation to CanLit could be defined by the subsidiary relation that the first term, *Asian*, installs in the normative canon alluded to by *Canadian*. It is that implicitly *hyphenated* existence, Tara Lee asserts, "that disconnects [Asian Canadian literature] from and yet connects it to the nation and its literature. This position leaves Asian Canadian literature in a state of unfulfilled desire as it strives to belong to something in which it seems for ever marked" (2006, 5). Christopher Lee considers that structure of unfulfilled desire in terms of lateness, a condition that, being intrinsic to the field, prevents the latter's full emergence: "In a reversal of the logic of 'being on time' whereby an academic discipline 'catches up' to its object of study, what becomes clear here is the illusoriness of the very desire, on the part of Asian Canadian Studies, to finally coincide with its own object" (2007, 4).[2] In this article, I wish to explore the space produced by the lack of coincidence implicit in the structure of desire as this lack applies to the distance between the creative work and critical expectation.

1. Criticism's Residual Desire: Asian Canadian Production

Much has been written about the failure of official multicultural policies to undo normative definitions of Canadianness. Some critics have stressed the need to devise modes of cultural difference that do not comply with multiculturalism's sanctioned spaces for diasporic representation. In the field of Asian Canadian literature, Roy Miki's critical work has been instrumental in drawing attention to the dangers of the normalization and appropriation of difference by both literary and cultural institutions and market forces.[3] But, although writers and critics alike have repeatedly proposed (or demanded from within their textual practice) an analysis that transcends systemic reading expectations based on

[2] Christopher Lee suggests looking at the field of Asian Canadian Studies through "its problem of lateness" (2007, 1), which he defines, following Donald Goellnitch, "not as a matter of failure but rather as an affective structure produced by the field's 'protracted birth'" (2007, 1-2; see also Goellnitch 2000). Other critics have defined the whole field of Canadian literature in terms of its belatedness (see Szeman 2000).

3 See, for instance, Miki (2008; 2011); the latter is a recent compilation of his most important essays on this topic. See also Lai (2004; 2008); Wong (2005); Cho (2007); Beauregard (2008); Ty and Verduyn (2008); Cuder, Martín and Villegas (2011); all of whom draw more or less explicitly on Miki's seminal work.

the authors' racial/cultural backgrounds, these efforts have not completely succeeded in their goal of liberating minoritized Canadian writing from the burden of representation (signalled by what Ty and Verduyn [2008] have called the "autoethnographic" expectation and the ensuing thematic critical practices).

The most traditional critical approach to Asian Canadian literature seems paradigmatic of this predicament. Novels by Joy Kogawa, Wayson Choy and Anita Rau Badami have often flowed into the mainstream of CanLit as representatives of the diversity of Canadian literary production and thus, implicitly, of the success of the multicultural project of the nation. Together with their works, largely autoethnographic, these authors have also become tokens of a model minority within a much wider institutional framework that remains largely unchanged in its intrinsic whiteness. They are, in other words, marketed and read within a more or less obvious racialized framework, and their arguably mainstream position is invariably encumbered with the burden of representation of the Japanese, Chinese and Indian Canadian communities they respectively come from and write about. In turn, this has evolved into what Guy Beauregard metonymically calls "Kogawa criticism," by which he refers to "the particular contradictions facing Canadian literary studies over the past two decades as critics have attempted to confront the difficult implications of reading a 'racist past' in a 'multicultural present'—that is, as they have attempted the genuinely difficult task of transforming the discipline of Canadian literary criticism to address representations of racialization and racist exclusion in Canada" (see Beauregard, "After *Obasan*," qtd. in Beauregard 2008, 8-9).

Genuine and difficult as these critical efforts must have been when they were made, they often failed to produce the desired transformation of the field of Canadian literature. In the 1990s, Beauregard comments, there was "a dramatic proliferation of articles on texts such as *Obasan*," yet this was not matched by a "similarly dramatic reflexive turn that could question the unselfconscious uses of Kogawa's novel and other Asian Canadian cultural texts as signifiers of multicultural inclusiveness in English studies in Canada" (2008, 9). As Beauregard's argument intimates, the tendency to read *multiculturally* is not necessarily inscribed in the texts themselves (although this may arguably be the case), but rather ensues from critical practices, market forces and the institutional powers associated with both.[4] In what follows, I offer a metacritical review of some of the most interesting practices that have tackled this predicament and attempted to circumvent what may at first glance look like a critical impasse.

Reading and writing practices in Canada have often been torn between their resistance to cooption through diverse modes of nation narration and "their residual desire for

[4] For an engaging and exhaustive critique of Beauregard's argument, see Kamboureli's "(Reading Closely) Calling for the Formation of Asian Canadian Studies," where she complains that Beauregard "does not engage directly with how Canadian literature and Asian Canadian studies might interpolate each other methodologically, as well as in terms of inter/disciplinary and institutional formations" (2012, 56). In this sense, Beauregard might be practicing the type of criticism that he himself finds fault with. The debate, although highly relevant, is well beyond the purpose of this article.

national affirmation" (Lee 2006, 5). Crucial to this dilemma has been the role of official multiculturalism in the reproduction of a domesticated version of identity differences within the nation-state (see Kamboureli 2000). It seems now clear that, as Tara Lee has argued, "the willingness of designated ethnic minorities to perform their difference for the multicultural state attests to the ability of the state to co-opt the racialized body into stabilizing its identity reproductions" (2006, 11).[5] But if those *overethnicized* modes of writing and reading Asian Canadian production have proven co-optive and ultimately unsatisfactory, the opposite, that is, the erasure of the racial and cultural difference of diasporic texts, may well have perverse results. In this regard, the case of Vancouver writer Evelyn Lau comes to mind as a well-known instance of potential perversion, as the conscious avoidance of a Chinese Canadian identity in her writing has also often produced reading practices that may reinforce racist stereotypes and replicate normative narratives of the nation.[6] As Rita Wong asserts in her discussion of Lau's controversial case,

> the disavowal of race and culture appeared to work to her publishers' benefit in that it appealed to a perceived "mainstream" audience. The general tendency to disavow or avoid race in Lau's writing yields a number of possible readings: one is a refusal to be pigeonholed as an "ethnic" writer, and another is that this work represents a yearning for acceptance that translates into assimilation, which is accordingly validated and rewarded. In the absence of racialized characters, the normalized power relations at work tend to default her characters into whiteness. The machine is larger than whatever Lau's intentions might be. (2005, 54)

Notable in their attempt to circumvent the logics of this seemingly critical dichotomy, and marking a firm departure from either form of criticism, two special issues of the academic journal *Canadian Literature* were published in 1999 (edited by Glenn Deer) and 2008 (edited by Guy Beauregard) that provided a fresh critical look at Asian Canadian Studies. Significantly, a comparative glance between them would unfold the shift in the critical practices that have shaped the discipline of Canadian literature in the past fifteen years, from the exhaustion of identity politics to an interest in the structural discourses that frame and assign the location of (diasporic) cultural production in Canada. Thus, whereas in the 1999 issue, Deer claims to be concerned with moving "beyond the constraints of racial categories" and "reasserting" the identity of "Asian North-American writers" "against the stereotypes of the public imagination" (14), in the 2008 issue, Beauregard and other prominent critics set out to counteract, undo and rethink the field of Canadian literature with a focus on the racialization processes at work at its base, which prevent

[5] Lee is echoing Donna Haraway's ideas on the reproduction of the national Self (1991, 61).

[6] Lau's choice for racial self-effacement has been the source of much controversy in Canada. She came to prominence in 1994 when she accused the organizers of the Writing Thru Race Conference of practicing reverse racism (see Lai 2008, 94-101). For a detailed analysis of the controversy surrounding the WTR Conference, see Sehdev (2002).

minoritized writing from fully entering the field. Combined, these two issues marked, I would suggest, an important methodological shift and shaped the direction of subsequent critical production in the field.

This crucial shift is towards a type of analysis that does not replicate state ideology. Some critics are redirecting their focus back to the practice of close reading, intent on avoiding the constraints of the institutional loop and in the belief that any paradigm shift must come from, and be inscribed in, the texts themselves. One of the most interesting literary modes to be born from the exhaustion of identity politics is the explicit contestation of the normative processes of the reproduction of national identity through the racialized body in Asian Canadian texts by women writers. Some texts enact this resistance by claiming a Harawayan cyborg identity which, by definition, empowers the racialized female body in that it enables unexpected critiques of national, racial, and gender forms of normativity, as in Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* or Hiromi Goto's *The Kappa Child* and *Hopeful Monsters* (see Miki 2009; Lee 2006; also Martín-Lucas 2012). In fact, implicit in Donna Haraway's articulation of cyborg subjectivities is an emphasis on the materiality of the in-between that, Tara Lee claims, well fits both Lai's and Goto's production of textuality "at points of border contestation" (2006, 27; and see Haraway 1991). Moreover, as a result of their emphasis on social critique, the texts' identitary logics are refused conclusion, their referential promise permanently postponed (see Miki 2001; also Lee 2007, 3). These textual practices demand a transnational perspective toward diasporic Canadian texts since their self-conscious analyses of racialization processes are almost always placed at the intersection of local and global spaces (as well as vis-à-vis not only a normative whiteness but also gender and other identitary constituents). In being produced "outside the womb," as Tara Lee argues in reference to the texts' tendency to undo the normative slots of racialized identities within the nation-state, these contesting modes of writing advance an alternative framework for rereading Asian Canadian literature (Lee 2006, 27; also Miki 2000, 2001 and 2008).

At the same time there is reassessment of previous Asian Canadian works that remain intriguing in their refusal of self-explanation. Illustrating this methodological shift, in his essay "Asian Kanadian, eh?" (2008), Donald Goellnicht shows how the multidisciplinary works of Roy Kiyooka and Fred Wah can be viewed as paradigmatic of the contradictions attending the rubric Asian Canadian and the tricky processes of (minoritized) literary canon formation. Goellnicht convincingly explains how, by focusing on the local and the transnational dimensions of art, both Kiyooka and Wah were ahead of their times in that they implicitly articulated a politics of race that transcended the binary structures of identity politics. In both cases, their interests fell beyond the borders of cultural nationalism, within which the formation of the necessarily minoritized Asian Canadian literature had been designed to take shape (see also Miki 2000, 56). Goellnicht further argues that "their often difficult multi-generic experiments and their particular concern with innovative usages of language explain in part their belated recognition as Asian Canadian artists, but these very

experiments constitute, to a considerable degree, Kiyooka's and Wah's racial politics" (2008, 72).[7]

The archival work presently being conducted as a result of this renewed interest in writers that had fallen, as it were, outside the box, has repositioned and modified the terms of Asian Canadian production itself, as well as its place within the larger context of Canadian culture. A rich instance of this is provided by the ongoing reassessment of Fred Wah's critical work, and, more specifically, his approach to the diasporic condition. Central to Wah's concern was the innovation of the form of the so-called ethnic writing in Canada by means of an "alienethnic" poetics (2000, 52), or a form of poetics that complicated the representation of cultural and racial difference in a practical sense by introducing linguistic (and identitary) fluidity. In this way, Wah, writing in the late 1980s, suggests, "the culturally marginalized writer will engineer approaches to language and form that enable a particular residue (genetic, cultural, biographical) to become kinetic and valorized" (2000, 51). An alienethnic poetics would open up the question of representation to include the reader, since, as Beauregard contends, it invites, "readers and critics to reflect upon what is potentially at stake in reading representations of diasporic histories and identities" (2005, 135). As such, it presents itself as a valid strategy through which to read and write the texts of diasporic Canada today.

Additionally, to revalorize Fred Wah's critical and creative work also implies a reframing of the threadbare debates of form versus content, or aesthetics versus politics, which have marred the field for years, leading to the implicit privilege of thematic criticism. For Wah, linguistic experimentation is always enmeshed in political action, which explains why form may be an essential constituent of racial identity. As Jeff Derksen has argued, the fractured form of much of Wah's writing signals a radical poetics in that it is identity politics "within rather than through language." This resists "the containable performances of race, class, and gender and rewrites the limits of identity," given that the refusal to abide by linguistic or literary form is also a refusal to abide by forms of racial oppression (1995-96, 72). The fact that his interest in formal experimentation has, until relatively recently, prevented Wah's production from being studied under the auspices of Asian Canadian writing betrays the thematic and restrictive focus behind the rubric. Moreover, Wah's connection with the Tish poets may have been seen as an obstacle to ethnicized thematic readings of his work, for, as Smaro Kamboureli has noted, "a lot of the *Tish* work about language, form, genre, and localism developed ways of reading the nation-state against the grain, hence the resistance they encountered at the time within conventional nationalist discourses" (2012, 66). The renewed critical attention on these works shows the extent to which they hinted at the exhaustion of certain forms of producing minoritized writing in Canada, as well as the need to inscribe forms of difference that destabilize the very notion of cultural difference by refusing institutional cooption.

[7] However, Goellnitch's Asian North American approach has been the source of some disagreement amongst critics. See Kamboureli (2012), for a powerful critique of Goellnitch's terms and methodology.

In his essay "Can Asian Adian? Reading the Scenes of Asian Canadian," Roy Miki calls for an ethics of reading that is able to promote a paradigm shift. The call, he writes, is "for critical practices that can negotiate the tensions between the material conditions of textual production that give a text its singularity and its power to see and the normative conditions of reception that shape the subject positions of readers and thereby influence what gets to be seen" (2001, 74). Later, in "A Poetics of the Hyphen: Fred Wah, or the Ethics of Reading 'Asian Canadian' Writing," Miki responds to his own call by proposing Wah's notion of the hyphen as "the most appropriate sign for a text that performs the critical limits of socially sanctioned identity formations, even while it opens the door to cultural, familial, and personal narratives that have been silenced by racialization, displacements and colonial history" (2009, 115). For Miki, the highest political and aesthetic potential of the hyphen as trope resides in its capacity to resist identitary closure (2009, 118): "Readers are then challenged to create critical frameworks and interpretative methods that will not appropriate [the hyphen's] quixotic powers and effects to service institutional ends" (2009, 121). In what follows, I wish to read Haruko Okano's poetry and multimedia work as paradigmatic of the contradictions as well as the potential involved in the production of diasporic identity as hyphen, that is, identity as a constant process of undermining its own referential impulse. Starting her career in the 1990s, a key decade in the transformation of identitary discourses in Canada, Okano's enigmatic and often disconcerting work exposes the messy areas of cultural representation, oscillating between the desire and the resistance to bridge the distance between diaspora and citizenship. In her interdisciplinary search for modes of representation that do not replicate the assigned modes of diasporic belonging, Okano's case is unique. Indeed, her work may be read metacritically in that it traces, from the creative position, the theoretical debates discussed above.

2. Haruko Okano's Transformative Practice

Haruko Okano is a Vancouver-based poet, performer, multimedia artist and activist. Born in Toronto to *Nisei* parents, she was mostly raised by white Canadians at various foster homes where she was removed from all contact with her cultural heritage.[8] These circumstances have always marked her textual and artistic production with a tendency towards the unfathomable facets of cultural identity, the explicit focus of her first works: "My Asian-ness is a secret even to me," reads the last line of her poem "Sansei" (1992, 42). In the early 1990s, at the peak of the cultural discourses of identity politics in Canada, Okano (2010) expressed her scepticism of those discourses as well as the ambivalence surrounding her own Canadianness: "As a visible minority in the arts, current identity politics and the movement towards self-representation have led to increased opportunities; however, I have found its influence getting in the way of my own creative development.

[8] Nisei means "second generation." Okano would be a Sansei, or a third-generation Japanese Canadian.

Instead of feeling culturally liberated, I felt I had stepped out of one restrictive description into another." Her work from this period is accordingly obsessed with the notion of identitary frames and cultural stereotypes, openly drawing the reader/viewer's attention to the rigidity of legimitized boundaries of representation:

> In a house I do not own
> In a country of isolation
> In a land that belongs to others
> I sit on folded legs, bent by cultural impulse.
>
> Even in my body so assimilated
> so pressured by Canadian history
> my stomach sighs with rice and bancha.
>
> Toes turned in to kick aside kimono hem
> a certain walk locked into limbs
> so strong as to defy western influence, and yet
> I have never been to the land of the sun. ("Sansei," 1992, 41)

Yet the poet's own stand towards dichotomous identitary positions seems ambivalent, for stemming from the poem's words is a query: How can a third generation Japanese Canadian who has been brought up in non-Japanese foster homes have inherited the body postures of her ancestral culture? Okano may be working with a notion of tradition not as essential inheritance but as the result of specific cultural practices, some of which are imposed by dominant discourses. In that case, there is the possibility of an ironic reading of the cultural essentialism initially expressed in the "toes turned in to kick aside kimono hem," the "certain walk locked into limbs." However, as Marilyn Iwama wonders in her thoughtful study of the notion of tradition in Japanese Canadian culture, "what happens when we consider the expression of perceived tradition as one step in a process of constructing and defining certain events or ideals as 'traditional?' In this case, such events and ideals may be made imperative by historical incidents, and so achieve status as essential components of cultural identity" (1994, 13). The line between essentialist and constructionist approaches to cultural identity seems fine, but each option leads us in a completely different direction. I would like to turn to Okano's 1992 multimedia work *Come Spring: Journey of a Sansei Series*, where the poem above appears, since it provides a telling instance of such aporias involved in the process of diasporic representation in the midst of hegemonic multiculturalism.

Mixing a wide range of materials, and combining poetry, autobiographical prose and artwork, the monograph offers, through the progress of the four seasons, an intimate and lyrical account of Okano's own life story, from a relatively happy early childhood ("Summer") to the first encounter with racial prejudice ("Fall") to the verbal and physical violence

suffered in various white foster homes ("Winter") to a sense of healing and regeneration through art and activism ("Spring"). The publication was funded by the Heritage, Cultures and Languages Program of Multiculturalism and Citizenship of Canada, and, in many ways, the work seems to replicate normative approaches to minoritized identity. Yet, in my opinion, the particular combination of texts and images seems to rather build up a tension between the work's meaning and critical and institutional expectation, whose overall effect is to overthrow the resolutory intent of state multiculturalism. On the one hand, the autoethnographic tone fits well within the assigned frames of representation in the early 1990s, and the teleological emphasis, signaled by the lyrical use of the four seasons, would seem to confirm the illusion of an identitary resolution based on the recognition of cultural specificity within a multicultural nation-state. This celebratory vision would be supported by such poems as "Haru" ("Spring"):

> Hope rises.
>
> Come spring,
> when rivers swell
> forests grow lush in greenery,
> beasts stir from slumber and
> seek each other out.
>
> My spirit is reborn (1992, 51)

On the other, however, the poem's contiguous location with the piece *The Gift of Heritage and Culture*, where the decorated and heavily inscribed back of a human figure appears inside a wooden box-like structure, problematizes the above interpretation.[9] That the very artist (unwittingly?) provokes an aporic moment could signal the extent and spectrum of those traps. After explaining that the Japanese calligraphy in the work corresponds to the history of her own family and is taken from the registry of the village in Japan where they came from, she claims that the piece represents the regenerative power of spring (1992, 44-45). Indeed, the assertion has a troubling effect, as the graphic clash between the work's title, echoing the language of the nation-state, and the actual choice of images, text and materials clearly alert the viewer about the traps of institutional cooption, thereby highlighting the rigidity of available identitary locations.

Additionally, despite the fact that the gradual transition from highly dichotomous to hybrid approaches to cultural identity is announced in the work's cyclical structure, this remains unresolved. Poems like "Tongue-Tied" speak of a burning repression and of the impossibility of diasporic subjectivity:

[9] This piece as well as the rest of the works I will be discussing below can be seen on Okano's personal website: www.harukookano.com.

Ghost words, like ice cubes
jammed against the back of my teeth.
Cold pain shoots up the roots of my teeth
into my brain. (1992, 30)

In this case, it is their silent nature that endows the ghost words with the ability to produce pain. Later, the renewed attempts at the articulation of a third space are not free from oppression and violence:

My syntax is Japanese-Canadian,
formed by generations of hushed voices.
Pressed white,
like manju. Pulling softly
from lips barely parted.
A sweetness of language lost. ("Sansei," 1992, 42)

The recurrent production of a highly racialized body in these poems marks an explicit engagement with normative processes of identity construction within the nation. But, in its highlighting of an unresolved tension, the residual syntax (the "language lost") mars the possibility of interpreting the overall work in triumphalist identitary terms and points to the unbridgeable distance between diaspora and citizenship. Besides, *White Rice* ("Winter"), a multimedia piece consisting of a wooden female sculpture of Asian complexion holding chopsticks and a bowl filled with tiny family photographs against the backdrop of a classic Japanese stamp, explores that distance like no other work. Visual and textual images impose highly dichotomous identitary options on the wooden body frame, signifying the extreme violence implied in the processes of cultural assimilation to a normative whiteness: while the superimposed images on the figure's head and face represent the glamorous female North American blondes that the artist grew up with, a text about cosmetic eye surgery (to westernize Asian eyelids) and breast augmentation is inscribed on the wooden skin. A "spirit curtain," meant in traditional Japan to brush the top of one's head and cleanse one's energy when passaging between rooms, is set in the doorway reinforcing the dichotomous representation of the two cultures. "I can't go into that world of Japan," admits Okano, "nor can I ever see Japan uncontaminated by my North American experience. At the same time, I am not free of the stereotyped imaged of the Japanese here, nor of the Eurocentric value judgments placed on me and my people" (1992, 35). Hence the work's exploration of the power of visuality vis-à-vis the marketing and consumption of racialized and gendered subjects for a still dominantly white male gaze (a recurrent issue in Asian Canadian works since this gaze till figures as a major form of institutionalization of racial and gender difference). Additionally, there is a self-conscious use of the connection between the racial and

the edible that has become a common means of probing the commodification of race within Asian Canadian production (to which I will return below). But what makes *White Rice* resonate today is its representation of the racialized subject's complicity with just those practices of institutionalization and commodification of racialized identity it portrays.

To a certain extent, then, *Come Spring* is typical of the complex and contradictory discourses generated by official multiculturalism, and the artists' own responses to, and possible concurrence with, them. At the same time, it is the presence of those unresolved moments of diasporic identity that endows the work with critical interest as it makes its implicit attempt to tackle the messy locations of Canadianness remain fresh.

A look at Okano's subsequent work evinces her own awareness of those traps and her continuous search for modes of representation that, being "minority-wise" (Miki 2001, 62), manage to escape the commodification of cultural difference. This has led her to experiment with much more radical forms of art such as in *Transvisceral Borders* (1997), a time-lapse process-based installation composed of mixed materials including fungi, natural latex and an odd collection of objects made of animal viscera, hair, and teeth. In this work, the artist's avoidance of textual modes of representation in favour of (arguably) more material media may disclose a desire to circumvent down-trodden text-based paths for the articulation of diasporic identity. Moreover, the explicit emphasis that some of Okano's key pieces place on time-lapsed natural processes, which constantly transform the installation's overall appearance and, in so doing, the work's potential meaning, sabotages the viewer's expectation of identitary themes. Yet, as Robin Laurence suggests (2007, 3), Okano's attention to the intricate modes of articulation of the diasporic continues to function as a subtle subtext.

Exploring the role of the skin as both container and threshold of identity, *Transvisceral Borders'* interpretative possibilities varied as the objects were being transformed by the decomposing fungus. According to the artist, the focus was the human skin and its "ambiguous role as both a 'barrier' and a 'link'. Perceptual shifts occurring through *Transvisceral Borders* acted as a catalyst through which [she] began to think differently about cultural heritage and ethnicity" (Okano 2010). The installation was designed to be touched, smelled and watched, since it incorporated texture, odor and time-lapse elements such as the decay of the fungus. Visitors were thus implicitly invited to attend the gallery more than once in order to achieve a more complete perspective on the piece's signification. Yet each visit was designed to contribute a certain degree of confusion and bring about a different, possibly contradictory, interpretation each time:

> Only if you took the time to watch and explore over several visits would you have been able to witness the subtler transformation of nature in movement as the fungus and natural latex casings deepened in colour to match that of the dehydrated pig's ears, or condoms that shriveled up as the contents were spent through evaporation. The weight and fullness drained slowly away,

> briefly drawing aside the curtain of illusion that separates life from death, plant from animal. (2010)

This disconcerting effect, I would argue, succeeded in drawing the visitor's attention to the extreme malleability of skin and, in so doing, to the instability of the identitary and cultural parameters often associated with it, "from the flaying of human skin to be used in lampshades and book covers by the Nazis of WWII to the Irezumi subculture of Japan where prized artwork of tattoo artists' on humans were collected by a special museum in Japan" (2010).

Okano has declared that *Transvisceral Borders* meant a turning point in her creative career, after which "instead of shaping materials around preconceived ideas, priority was given to exploring the nature of materials just on their own, allowing ideas to be generated by their process" (2010). I would further argue that this work also set the tone, elements and techniques of her later investigations of material and symbolic hybridity, for as Paula Gustafson asserts, "The ambiguities implied in *Transvisceral Borders* are embedded in the two-word title Okano devised for the exhibition. Like the symbiotic fungus chosen for her sculptures, she wordsmithed *transverse* (a situation arranged in a crosswise direction) and *visceral* (relating to inward feelings) into a hybrid descriptive, then supplemented her coined word with the us/them, inner/outer implications of borders" (1997, 38).

Implicitly understood is the possibility of applying these ideas to the representation of diasporic identity in Canada. Yet, in its undecidability, this process-based approach to the Asian Canadian paradigm would also complicate the representation of difference, shaking the present frameworks of cultural identifications and provoking what Roy Miki has called "a crisis of representation," a radical move that would necessarily "alter and transform the field of our reading practices" (Miki 2001, 75).

Okano's later projects have juggled, from various perspectives, the implications of this transformative approach to diasporic identity, putting forward a practice based on the incorporation of contradiction, the refusal of conclusion and the permanent postponement of the referential promise. Her collaborative installation and performance *High (~~bridi~~) Tea* (1998-2001), a joint text-based project with Fred Wah, explores the space of the cultural and racial hyphen (*~~bridi~~*) in those terms as fundamentally oxymoronic. Accordingly, the odd piece had a mixed reception, critics often torn between curiosity and confusion:

> Okano once cultivated a type of fungus called kombucha, which was served on paper plates for her collaborative installation and performance piece with poet and writer, Fred Wah, called *High (~~bridi~~) Tea*. The piece was about racism and contamination anxiety, an oddly hilarious work utilizing lots of white bread and mold. The kombucha, which is considered an edible fungus, had grown mold during the cultivation process, which rendered it inedible. When it dried for the installation, it acquired a thin, stiff consistency with the colour and texture of leather. (Keiran 2009)

The performance, first created during an Artist's Residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts in 1998, was hosted at various restaurants and venues in Vancouver. Randomly scheduled (it began when the twenty-six available seats were taken), the piece combined elements of previous works by both Okano and Wah to discuss racism and ethnocentrism through a partly serious and partly humorous autoethnographic discourse. "Our stories are told while serving up racialized words printed on white bread and pouring black tea for 26 members of the public . . . . The stories focus on the struggles of assimilation and language. Participants are invited to save their slice of bread, the menu, and the waiter's bill pad" (Okano 2010). Some of the lines of the performance interpellated the participant in unexpected and uncomfortable ways:

on the edge
~~hiding underneath~~
crowling up yr leg stuck

between the fingernails?
Is that a black hair in yr soup? (Okano and Wah 2000, 26) [10]

While some menu items highlighted the consumptive drive of identity politics ("Puffed Identity with Cream," 2000, 3), yet others denounced racial or cultural subjection ("Tied Tongue," or "Skin-Under-Gaze," 2000,12).

Simultaneously, the performative framework emphasized the material aspects of cultural and racial hybridity as it bridged the distance between the creative subject and its public, who are turned into audience, reader, viewer and restaurant customer by the performance's requirements. In this sense, while emphasis is carefully placed on those elements that do not fit in normative definitions of Canadian culture, there is also a parallel interest in the possibilities of producing a palimpsestic aesthetics of resistance and change. This is literally signaled in the printed menu's palimpsestic structure, in which reproduced historical documents (including the 1942 RCMP Notice to Male Enemy Aliens) underlie what seems an infinite play on words, composed of poems, menu items and drawings, dictionary definitions of special words running vertical on the sides. It is also evident in the use of pidgin words; for instance, behind the superimposed "Haikala/ hai collar/low colour/hai colour/noh collar," the participant can read "but . . . / it is not founded/ on fact" (24).

A similar forked-tongue strategy could be applied to the work's use of food as a means of discussion of identitary issues and, specifically, its frequent probing of the connection between the racial and the edible. But, if *White Rice* played on such a connection to eventually expose its intrinsic violence, *High (~~bridi~~) Tea* seems to work

[10] I am using the special limited edition of the printed menu produced for the performance that took place at Nice Café in Vancouver on 17 November, 2000.

with a notion of food not only as a form of consumption of the ethnicized other, but also as a possible link between minoritized and majoritized cultures. In fact, as Lily Cho has shown in her study of the case of Chinese restaurants in Canadian small towns, historically, Chinese food (as well as the spaces where it was served) became "one of the few consistently available spaces of cultural interaction between Chinese immigrants and their 'host' communities" (2010, 12-13) and thus signified the location for negotiations between "Chineseness and Westernness" (13). Rather than being perceived as a measure and reflection of Chinese culture, the Chinese restaurant must then be analysed as "cultural site that is a productive of Chineseness, Canadianness, small town Canadian culture, and diasporic culture more broadly," Cho affirms (13). From this viewpoint, I would argue that, in *High (~~bridi~~) Tea*, the genre of performance supplies the material and discursive sites for such cultural negotiations, although this is done to unexpected results.

In unmasking the collective assumptions underlying our daily eating experiences, the performance exposes deep discursive and contextual layers of orientalization. Yet the fact that it is the racialized subject that serves the racialized dishes problematizes the act, preventing a dichotomous reading of the piece, that is possible with *White Rice*. On the one hand, the serving moment marks the subject's complicity in the processes that have constructed her/him as a racialized other, while on the other, the fact that the mould words make the white bread inedible, or even poisonous, turns the apparent servility of the waiting "staff" into guerrilla warfare; and as a result of the conflict between complicity and resistance, the meaning of food as cultural sign becomes inconclusive. Similarly, the performative structure involves a potentially multiracial audience in the acts of attending, sitting, reading, ordering certain items from the menu, and eventually eating the xenophobic words moulded in the slices of white bread. Yet this collaboration is bound to be incomplete in as much as the items are rendered inedible, thereby increasing the audience's disconcert and adding a further level of undecidability to the interpretation of the work. The one thing that remains inalterable in this odd exchange is the process of the decaying kombucha, slowly eating its way through the white bread and, in transforming the piece's appearance, constantly interrogating its meaning: that is, in its relentless movement, the kombucha literally prevents closure, the performance's meaning never finally coinciding with its object. And, in this connection, the work itself stages the logics of lateness as an affective structure (see Lee 2007): the desire to arrive at a conclusion produces its constant deferral.

This type of work dramatizes the distance between meaning and critical expectation, between the writing/performing subject and what Miki, in the context of literary studies, calls "the formal boundaries of the text that produce the writer as subject." In Asian Canadian texts, Miki argues, this distance "brings out the complicated internal dynamics of the shifting constraints—historical, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural—out of which this writing appears. This textual condition helps account for

the often unnoticed but troubling tension between critical expectation and textual specificity" (2009, 117). In its process-based approach to the representation of the diasporic, Okano's work could act as a response to Miki's words. Her emphasis on the unstable and highly contradictory elements of cultural identity underlie her racial politics, and her attempts to transcend the boundaries of cultural assumptions and practices often push the limits of dominant critical frameworks of analysis. It is in that very tension and in the infinite contingencies that a process-based approach to cultural belonging would entail that "the messy places" of a normative Canadianness come to light.

That Okano's latest practice has veered away from explicit discussions of the diasporic condition and towards activist and environmental forms of artistic expression may be read as a sign of the exhaustion of certain modes of cultural identification. As Okano and Wah express in a highly ambivalent moment of their performance work:

> Erase...
> no more
> race,
>
> no colour.
>
> Silence
> no more.
>
> Colour
> E-race. ("Gomu," Okano and Wah 2000, 17)

Yet, at the same time, Okano's latest work confirms a continuing interest in the contradictory and inconclusive processes of identity formation, signaled by the stress on the ephemeral aspects of natural processes and the increasing need for interaction with the audience/viewer. Often betraying a tension between the need for radical self-expression and the pressure to comply, her production, I have argued here, may be interpreted on a metacritical plane, both thematizing and engaging the theoretical debates that have surrounded the diasporic subject in Canada. Intrinsic to her racial politics is, then, a definition of diasporic citizenship as "the necessary relationship between two discontinuous begged questions" (Spivak 2004, 531).[11] Hence the demand for critical and creative practices that remain lodged in the probing of these questions and in the unresolved spaces produced by this predicament.

[11] Gayatri Spivak is discussing these issues in the context of Human Rights. She marks the relationship between self and the other as intrinsically fraught with contradiction and as "a discontinuous supplementary relationship, not a solution" (531). I have slightly adapted her ideas to the context of diasporic citizenship.

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INTERVIEW

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Louise Welsh, Then and There

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From the publication of her first novel, *The Cutting Room* (2002), Louise Welsh (1965) became one of the most relevant narrative voices in the contemporary Scottish literary panorama. Winner of several literary prizes, including the Crime Writers Association Creasy Dagger and the Saltire Award, she has recently published her sixth novel, *A Lovely Way to Burn* (2014). This interview, which discusses issues of literary genre, character creation, reality and textuality, took place in The Briggait, Glasgow's city market for over a hundred years and now turned home to artists and writers, who find a space to create and exhibit their work or studios to write in, as is the case with Welsh.

EGA: *In most reviews of your novels, there is a tendency to classify you as a crime fiction writer, and you have won important crime fiction prizes. Are you actually a crime fiction writer*?

LW: I guess it is a circle, because, first of all, I don't mind being called a crime writer and I think part of that is because in the past some of this fiction has been snagged on and regarded as the thing you buy in a train station and you throw away. Part of that appeals to me because it is the kind of book that the man or woman on the bus or the train would read and they would feel frightened of them. I think there are good reasons why I am classed as a crime writer, because, at the same time, there is usually a strong story, you know, a narrator, and the kind of things associated with crime fiction. I guess that, especially in *The Cutting Room*, I used to be much engaged with the crime conventions. I think after that you establish something, genres usually take you much further than you are. With regard to that idea of the parameters of the genre, which were quite pleasing to me, there are also many things you can turn around, such as the idea of having a gay protagonist in a kind of genre that often denigrates gay people. So, yeah, I enjoy engaging with crime fiction, so I am not annoyed or distressed that people say that I was crime fiction. Also, I suppose it's done me a lot of good. I think possibly I wouldn't have sold so many books. So I don't mind all of that. I don't know how well I fit, you know, and I guess from the readers' perspective I think sometimes a reader may come to the book thinking: "Oh, I like those crime books, about murderers." So I guess that, in that aspect, I worry a little bit that somebody will want to get one thing and actually get something which is not. I guess that is my only reserve... nobody's ever said to me you can't do this because you're a crime fiction writer, so that would be what the problem was and I guess the authors I admire,

people I really like, like J.G. Ballard, people that did not know where to fit... sometimes he is kind of a science fiction writer... And I guess, in terms of getting better, that would be my dream to be as good a writer as someone like him, so yes, it is fine with me.

EGA: *However, there are also some elements from other genres: lots of Gothic in your writings, science fiction too, in a sense*.

LW: I guess if I had to class myself, I would say Gothic, which comes for me before the crime and I like all of that, the unsubtlety of it: I like those bright colours that things are painted in, not being scared to go a little bit further, to go over the top. But of course you try to pull it back so it does not become too cranky, you know, and I think I agree with that. I am quite interested in gender, sexuality... and the Gothic is always engaged with those subjects: sometimes the Gothic is very offensive, sometimes it is quite simpler and there is a lot of place in there for a writer to decide how to approach it. As I said, I like all of that. The Gothic is often associated with the supernatural, that, although I quite particularly enjoy, I don't particularly want to write about the supernatural elements, but the engagement with the past, the atmosphere, what's around the corner, that sort of stuff is pleasant to my taste.

EGA: *Actually, it is as if characters became kind of monsters. In* The Cutting Room*, Rilke is a Walking Dead, he is a Nosferatu impersonator, but in the same novel, the prostitute is a ghostly presence, as she is haunted by the house and simply can't go out. Besides, nobody can see her from outside*.

LW: It is true. Some of those things, as calling and comparing Rilke to Nosferatu – it's quite conscious, isn't it? In a way I'm quite unsubtle. You know that your reader knows these images so well... This idea of an old city in which all the different pasts lay on top of each other, and you can almost see and at the same time travel there. And the idea that we walk the same streets as each other but we don't necessarily see the same things and that there are criminal things that we ignore or depravation that we ignore and you get used to it. Sometimes in a city, especially somewhere like London, which is much bigger than Glasgow, you walk along and you see people that are sleeping on the street and we actually walk past and it's quite amazing that our compassion isn't such that we say . . . We don't do anything about it.

EGA: *Related to that, your characters seem to inhabit a kind of a small group in the city, like Rilke with his friends or when he is at the auctions; in the case of Jane and Petra in* The Girl on the Stairs (2012)*, they live surrounded by Petra's friends. Somehow they discover this outer world, a world of prostitutes, transvestites, people who kill their children, like Christie and, consequently, they discover that reality is not their reality but it's a bit wider*.

LW: Yes, It's funny, I guess that's it. In Rilke I was thinking mostly of people like Marlowe or Melmoth the Wanderer, who is the night surveillant: they walk alone in their societies, but I wanted Rilke to have a friendship network, so he has Rose, he has Les, the

people he knows from work... So he is alone but he is not completely alone and maybe that is quite a bit due to sexuality as well, as I wanted to show that it is not because he is gay that he is alone, he still has friends. With Jane and Petra, I wanted to reduce Jane's world and to picture what they were like in London before they moved to Berlin, with a more sociable world, and how she is currently living as in one of those photos where everything has shrunk to more or less those two streets: the apartment faces the graveyard, she goes to a market around the road once... it's very claustrophobic. Looking back, I think it is all the unconscious effect of writing about that, without even considering how Gothic that was. I guess the idea of the house with the buried body where she is carrying this child parallels the idea that she is in the house in the way that the child is inside. This is actually very female gothic, with the containment. And you are right: there is an outside world, but is it frightening? Is it not frightening? And I guess I wanted to count on that also with the other half, which is Petra's Thielo and his wife Ute. It is her Petra and Jane look down on very much, they like her but they are very condescending to her. However, she turns out to be quite nice, you know, she is possibly the most sensible person in the book and she has her priorities right. To that idea of the world as a good place which is not necessarily threatening and which can also be quite nice, I wanted to add an unpleasant and untidy environment in Thielo and Ute's house so that they do not think about aesthetics, and where children can live. In *Naming the Bones* (2010) Christie and Murray Watson are in the island of Lismore, which is very easy to get to, as you can travel there very fast from Glasgow, and yet it is a completely different world, and Murray feels very detached, as if he were a hundred miles away from Glasgow, but he is not, he is very close and he can easily come back. And when his brother... well, maybe there is some kind of connection between those two books.

EGA: *I was going to mention that, as in both of them, it is easy to notice the importance of the idea of the family. In Petra and Jane's case, it is motherhood and in the case of Murray and Jack in* Naming the Bones*, it is fatherhood, though both of them see their father in Jack's video art work, where he is displayed with his Alzheimer. He can remember them when they were kids but he cannot remember and recognize them now. There are also other kinds of fatherhood, as in Archie Lunan's poetry book, on which the scholar Fergus writes his name and publishes it as his own. Discovering this fact is like unveiling the paternity of the book in a sense*.

LW: Maybe the friendship and the family thing... In *The Bullet Trick* (2006), William Wilson has this mother: she is important to him and he is important to her but actually they don't speak in the way that families can. And with Jack and Murray Watson, they only have each other, that is the only family they have. Jack can produce art and Murray can only write about poetry, he cannot write poetry. Fergus as well steals the poems, with this idea of appropriation, which is taken art. Wanting to be an artist and yet somehow not being able to do it is a strange thing, isn't it? One wants to do something that you cannot. There are various jealousies between the brothers and Murray feels his brother has

exploited his father and yet it is also the opposite: he really wants to honour his father and he's done it his way. And that also gets Murray and the others too exposed.

EGA: *In Petra and Jane's case, they have Boy, who is a boy actually. Is there a certain connection with Tarzan films but with a new, different type of family? Tarzan was never the biological father of the boy, but here Petra is the real mother, no matter who the sperm donor is.*

LW: I didn't think about that, you know. I used to watch these Johnnie Weissmuller films all the time when I was a child and maybe... I guess Petra and Jane are not man-haters even if they live in a female world, I suppose. There's definitely some playing around with these ideas and these perceptions, you know, of two women living together. It is Dr Mann who lives next door, but it is also a very common name in German and Jane would have probably felt the same if she were a single mother with a daughter. There is a bit of hesitation and the questioning of responsibility: whose is our responsibility? Is it to our own family? Jane has this child who is coming and it should be one of her priorities and yet, does that mean that she should ignore the plight of this child who is next door? And I think people go in different ways, don't they? Sometimes they think, "I have a family and, my goodness, it makes me realize how many vulnerable children there are," and sometimes you simply ignore that. And there is always somewhere in between. And with Jane, I think the child coming but also her past...

EGA: *Jane also remembers her mother as a reflection in the mirror. Many of your characters do not see one another directly but via a mirror, like William Wilson in* The Bullet Trick*: he is the master of mirrors and he exposes himself but always reflected in them; or Jane's mother, who sees her daughter in the mirror but not directly: she does not open the door and check that she's sleeping there.*

LW: It's true. In my latest book, *A Lovely Way to Burn* (2014), Stevie finds the body of her boyfriend in bed. She has come to this house to collect some stuff and she opens the bathroom cabinet in the en-suite and she sees him in bed reflected in the mirror. So it freaks in a sense that we have seen this image in films, on television, the view through the window, which is also very common, but it is also as being not quite there. Maybe a little bit like the photographs in *The Cutting Room*, where you see the dead body but you don't quite see... she's not quite there but here. I guess in *The Cutting Room* I was just trying not to produce the dead body on the floor, which was less problematic for me.

EGA: *In the case of Sheila in* The Bullet Trick*, you never see her body. She is an absence in a photograph of Bill and Montgomery and you know she must be buried there but you have to guess it, as William actually does when he sees that picture. A picture is meant to show everything, as when you take a picture you think that is reality but, in this case, the reality is also hiding something in its image.*

LW: In terms of being a feminist I suppose, I want not to just use the image of the female body as entertainment and yet I am much, as I said, engaged with that genre. So

the photo, the image... With William Wilson, I was thinking about *Pandora's Box*,[1] and this idea of the past and that in the end she has to die. So you can enjoy all the excesses but she has to be killed, she is actually killed in the film by Jack the Ripper. In *The Bullet Trick* I wanted to resurrect her. She is not dead at all, she is there.

EGA: *She is a ghost coming back from the afterlife who wants to get her revenge and her story to be told.*

LW: She's very much that. And William is a manipulator in terms of vision, of dealing with things that we do not see, he's been at the centre of a different trick and it's as a result of her being dead that he goes through quite a lot.

EGA: *Now that you mention that, in your novels there are references that are not only literary, but, for instance, to the names of the characters: they are related to other texts, as in the case of Jane and Boy and the Tarzan films; Rilke and Rainer Maria Rilke; Marlowe in* Tamburlaine Must Die (2004) *is Christopher but he is also Philip; William Wilson, as in Poe's tale; Murray Watson, who is Dr Watson. However, his brother is never Watson but Jack. And then, names can be confusing: William is William, Will, Wilson, Bill.*

LW: Sometimes it has to do with vision as well, perspective, the point of view, even though it is third person, we are seeing it from Murray's perspective and to him his brother Jack is Jack. But these names can shift around: with Rilke I was much thinking about a poet that is used as detective. Names are quite hard. I usually try not to use too many fancy names. With *The Girl on the Stairs*, I was thinking for a long time on that book with that building in my head and it changed very much, but I think I always thought of *Jane Eyre*, and that's where this plain Jane's name came through: you just can't find a simpler name than this. And Jane has this imaginative capacity and she is somebody who reads a lot of novels. It is not that you have to trust her because she reads too many novels. But at the same time she is also a fairly practical person. I wanted readers to trust her and not to trust her altogether. I so often change names, and yes, it can be quite hard.

EGA: *There are also some characters whose names are gendered according to the person they are naming, as in the case of Leslie, which can be a male or female name, Kit in the case of Christopher Marlowe, or Stevie, which relates to women like Stevie Nicks and men like Stevie Wonder. There is some ambiguity in the naming of your characters.*

LW: Stevie is a very physically active character and it is almost like an adventure novel: she is very fast, like somebody who is a presenter in a shop television programme, the TV programmes that sell things to you. She is also very physically fit, very physically active. I think at some point she is eventually called Stephanie. She has got qualities that, although she is a quite feminine character, would be associated with men. In the book she physically

[1] A reference to the German film *Die Büchse der Pandora*, directed by Georg Wilhelm Pabst and based on the novels by Frank Wedekind Erdgeist and released on 30 January, 1929.

changes as it goes on. We meet her when she is about to go on a date, she is wearing this dress and she looks lovely, but by the end of the book she is much more masculine, much more beaten up. I think she goes through a transformation like the ones you see in action films.

EGA: *Thinking about names and references, there is a special case, Crippen, mentioned him in three of your novels. I assumed it was just a name until I started reading about the life of the real Crippen and how he apparently killed his wife, escaped to Canada and was sentenced to death. In a sense, his real life could be somehow read under a Poesque perspective. Reality sometimes resembles literature or perhaps it is that, through our readings, we read that reality*.

LW: It's also become one of those phrases that maybe the generation older than me would refer to, like parents and grandparents. It's also interesting to see a photograph of Crippen and he looked very creepy, like somebody that, if you were on the bus and there was a seat next to him, you might just stand, you know, even if it was the last seat. He is a classic case of British murderer that George Orwell writes about. He says, what else do you have to do than to sit down on a Sunday afternoon and read about crimes. You know, this is horrible, because there is an element of truth in this.

EGA: *Your novels are not very conclusive about reality. At the end I feel like "was it real?," "did it really happen?" I went to a reading club session on* The Cutting Room *and everybody seemed to have a different opinion on what actually happens in the novel in the killing of Roderick. As a reader, you do not know the facts so you have to trust the people who tell the story. However, they hide facts: for example, in the police records, they don't mention the people who are involved*.

LW: I like leaving enough space for the reader to take part in the story. In terms of plots, I want readers to be interested in them, so they also fill these gaps. I guess in *Tamburlaine Must Die*, we don't see Marlowe dying. The reader imagines, hopefully, what happens next, as I leave enough space. I think in each book there are moments the reader must decide and I guess the most extreme one is *The Girl on the Stairs*, where actually you can interpret that story in different ways. I have not been to any reading group. Sometimes, as a writer you get to attend a reading group and they can ask you, say what they think. You can answer some questions and the readers in some way decide: "Did he do it? Did he not? Was Jane right? Was she interfering?" I quite like that idea of the readers' opinion and experience: some readers say she was absolutely right and I am so glad that that man died. Somebody else may say she was interfering too much. I also think the story is much more straightforward, but there are people who do not know what happens and that is what life is like. I think you kind of promise to the readers to make some things up, you shouldn't just have that horrible killing at the end, and you think, "but I just wasted several hours and you told me you would tell me a story and you didn't tell me a story, you just left the ending." It must have a conclusion, but it does not need to be all explained. As you know,

I am very inspired by history and I suppose the gaps in history are part of its appeal. You have facts and then you have these things that remain for ourselves.

EGA: *At the same time, I have the impression that your characters could continue the story. In the case of* Naming the Bones*, it finishes with Jack introducing Murray to a girl, and he thinks, let's see what the future brings, so we ideally imagine there could be a second part to the novel, in a sense, that their story could continue. Your latest novel,* A Lovely Way to Burn *is actually the first part of "The Plague Trilogy." I must admit I had this need for a series on a character since I first read* The Cutting Room*. And I was not the only one, as some reviewers were expecting the next Rilke novel.*

LW: That was all I had with Rilke. That was the only thing and, commercially, it would have been quite good, but I did not want to, I did not feel the urge to. I sometimes get offered money to do things and I would like that money but I do not want to do it. So you have to keep faith in those characters. But I like the idea of an active ending and the idea of hope. With Rilke we have a similar feeling as with Murray Watson at the end. He has actually met someone [Professor Sweetman] and they could actually get together. There is hope for love. In Murray's case as well there is hope for love. If it is not her, maybe someone else. He is not such a bad person.

EGA: *I am also interested in the different gender constructions in your novels. The only reference to real girls is in the porn video in* The Cutting Room*, but all the other people are constructing their own genders, like Rose, who feels she looks like a man in drag and is very proud of that. There are drag queens, drag kings and burlesque girls, who are feminine but in a constructed way. Anna, in* The Girl on the Stairs*, can even choose when she wants to be a woman or a child.*

LW: I guess people go through that phase. You see that in teenagers wanting to be grown-ups and sometimes the edge they cross makes them really, really vulnerable, and that is the contradiction: we cannot interfere very much, because we cannot say, "Don't do that!," but at the same time it is actually something that they must do. As a society we are meant to keep them safe and you feel their vulnerability. I like dressing up much, I like the idea that people can change themselves. Yesterday I was sitting on the underground and I saw somebody sitting opposite me and I thought, "Oh, gosh, that dress looks good on that woman." It was a nice dress, perhaps a bit odd, and then I looked a bit closer and it was a man. And I would not have noticed if I had not been on one more stop. I like that people can decide they want to be something else, I suppose, I would like to live in a society where that was not dangerous. My partner Zoe [Strachan] works at the university and she has a student who is from a small town in America, and he says that, at the weekends, there are prostitutes at his doorstep. And she answers that no, they are not prostitutes, they are girls, they have probably been working hard during the week and they are now dressed up for the weekend with tiny mini-skirts, everything on display, as much make-up as they can put on their face, high, high, high heels and, no, they are only dressed up and they just want to

enjoy the weekend. That is okay, they drink too much, but they will not do you any harm. They only tease you. And he says, no, no, no, I can assure you these girls are prostitutes. I used to enjoy that when I was a girl, I don't do it much now. We used to go clubbing a lot, get as dressed up as you possibly could. We used to go to shops, figure outfits together, and sometimes they fell apart before you finished the night.

EGA: *Yes, I guess you control your image and you control what you want other people to see.*

LW: It is something that especially young people have to do because you're quite dependent on these things. Yes, it is fun to dress. I've been to Edinburgh and when I came back home, at about half past two, we were walking along all of the way to the train station and I used to see all these girls that started on those high heels and ended up walking barefeet, and that's a sign of having a good time. I guess the embrace of that, the heaviness of the enjoyment, a lot of this orchestrates in these books: drinking, some drug taking as part of that is also part of the Gothic, it is part of that genre.

EGA: *Marlowe is somehow writing his final will, his statement to the future, to a future reader that may understand his situation perfectly in an ideal world, somehow as if he were Isaac Asimov imagining a future society. Are we that future he was imagining?*

LW: To me, human nature has not changed much and I suppose that is part of the pleasure of reading the past, you recognize people or voice. Therefore, in the sense of technology, we are living in a world of science fiction and yet in terms of our motivations, like love, passion, greed, selfishness, they are all the same things that Marlowe and his contemporaries were motivated by. We read all of these elemental things in his plays and we recognize them, even though the language is different. I remember when I was writing in *Tamburlaine Must Die* how Marlowe was involved in a court case of a man who had killed somebody and he describes the words in the court case. The man he was with had a sword and he takes his sword and says, "come here if you want some of this," and I thought, you could see that on any city street but in the twenty-first century. You want this, so come here. I think he would be amazed that many things have not changed.

EGA: *In that novel, they are also stabbing each other constantly, even sexually, as in the case of Walshingham, who penetrates Marlowe the day before his departure. And Marlowe's is not the only body that is opened. In* The Bullet Trick*, William cuts girls in two and produces weird objects from their inside, or he creates kind of Frankenstein's monsters, half Ulla and half Sylvie, thus creating a perfect female body.*

LW: Yes, I guess that in the world of entertainment we want to see that and what is better than seeing women being cut up. And I suppose that's maybe a bit of fun on the genre, as well, you know, what is the next victim. In *The Cutting Room*, I was exploring the naked female body chopped up, and that is a little bit what William does on stage as well. I suppose when you are writing these books, you don't want to think consciously

on it because I think that if you think about it too much, then the idea can become too important and it's the story that should be important.

EGA: *At the end, William is the victim. He thinks he is the main magician but he is actually the male assistant and that is an interesting change as, up to that moment, women are kind of an accessory to the trick and, in this case, the idea that he is the accessory is necessary*.

LW: Yes, and when he sees Sylvie alive, he is pleased to see her. And even though he acknowledges he is furious, he is so really relieved. There is also sort of a love affair as well, that is maybe an element of loss, an element of weakness, which perhaps makes him nice after all he has experienced. It is a kind of active ending, and I guess it is about trying to take charge. And in *Naming the Bones*, I wanted Murray to have a different life. When Murray becomes more active, then things change. In William's case, when he becomes a more active agent he manages to resolve things. The passivity he has when he is in Glasgow is a real problem and he needs to be more active.

EGA: *Your characters are moved by others whose lives are completely unrelated. Rilke feels moved by the girl in the photograph, William is interested in knowing what happened to Gloria Noon. Jane is interested in Greta's life... and none of them has actually seen nor met them. And Murray too with Archie Lunan. However, they turn these people into their leitmotif*.

LW: Yes and much of that quest is maybe also displacement, you know, now we have something in our lives that perhaps we should tackle and think about, but we put them aside because they are too difficult and we go along this other path but you cannot necessarily escape this other thing. For Jane, I suppose, with this baby coming, she is left home alone, she is left without friends, away from the world that she knows... She is left without economic independence, which is a big thing. In my books, work is important, as it helps to define who you are, and Jane has given that up. She is completely left to rely on Petra and it probably seemed like a good idea when they were talking about it in practical terms. It made sense on paper. And Jane doesn't have anything to hold on to at this moment and if she had been in London and the same things had happened next door, she would have had more things to occupy her mind in, friends she could have talked about it to, she would have been able to explain herself better to the police...

EGA: *Eventually, she appropriates language. First she understands nothing, then she starts to understand some things and tries to speak German, but nobody pays attention to her. Eventually, she is able to command German, which also becomes her secret language with her newborn baby Boy, like a secret between a mother and a son. Language, as photography, implies that you never get the full picture of what happens*.

LW: That is interesting and, also, I guess, is that final picture a warm picture or is it a sinister picture? You know, the vision of the mother and child should be very nice, but I

was also thinking of the end of *Rosemary's Baby* and there is something comic about that, there is something funny. At the same time it is also very... ughh.

EGA: *Now you mention that, there is a certain similarity between the building where Jane and Petra live and the Bramford building in* Rosemary's Baby*: their neighbours. Every time Jane leaves the flat, she meets them. Everybody is constantly looking. Even Jane looks through the spyhole to see who is outside or to the hinterhaus to see what is going on there. It's a bit like a panopticon*.

LW: Yes, very much I suppose. In Glasgow you can see the centre of the city where most of the people live in apartments, and it is not so uncommon to live in them in Berlin, so this idea of looking at another apartment that you like and the question is you don't really know until you move in: is it okay? Are people noisy? It is also the idea of who you are living with and who has lived there before. Opposite my house there is a park and a little square where you can see the buildings with their windows shining. Even with the idea that people can see you, you see the windows of everybody. You see families living there, but at the same time you also think that, if you were in their flat, you would see me in the kitchen. If you wanted to be surveilling somebody, this is the kind of place to do it. And the truth is that we all do, we all are as in *The Rear Window* idea of this. If you had a broken leg, you would be sitting looking through the window to your neighbours.

EGA: *And knowing that they are also seeing you. People gaze and at the same they are also gazed at*.

LW: Yes. In Jane's case the backhouse is shadow and reflection, intimacy, I don't know, the body in the floor... I started to think about it at the beginning of my stay in an apartment block in Berlin which had this window to the backhouse. And to and fro, to and fro this girl goes to the backhouse. I was also thinking of the buildings opposite the square and the people who used to live in them before. It is a house in the east of the city, which is very close to the cemetery with these cobblestones with the names engraved of the people taken away by the Nazis. This is incomprehensible and you get an idea of these people who were taken away and murdered and they probably lived in the same house that I was. This idea is what happens to Jane with Greta and I suppose maybe she would not be so interested if it were not for the presence of Anna and the idea that what had happened to Greta could also happen to her. And then she feels this need to protect her because she is a child rather than a woman, even though Anna sees herself as a woman.

EGA: *Your novels also frequently use insults such as "poof" or, significantly, it seems to me, "whore." Jane hears that word through the wall, though in German; In* The Bullet Trick*, Sylvie is called "whore" when she is caught giving oral sex to Kolja. On the one hand, my question is whether insults create some kind of power relation between those who are insulting and those insulted. On the other hand, can this be compared to the way in which the word*

"queer," originally an insult, was appropriated. Sylvie says, "what's so bad about being called a whore?"

LW: In that book, that insult is really important. In the film, *Pandora's Box*, the woman played by Louise Brooks dies because she is a whore and that is one part of the narration: when she ends up in a situation alone with the man who is going to kill her because she is a prostitute herself. In the case of the morality of that story, the convention demands that she must be killed. But in my novel, she does not get killed and there are many, many, many worse things than being sexually open or free. It makes me think of a graphic writer who used a word and we asked, "what does it mean? What does that word mean?," and he said: "I can't tell you," but he eventually explained, "well, it is a girl who is a prostitute, but it is worse than that because she wouldn't take money for the sex." So this idea of morality is, you know, really important in that moment of the book. In terms of Jane, I guess I wanted to use a word she could recognize, her German is quite elementary, and the word is not so different. Some words carry better than others the meaning in just a one-syllable word that you might think you have heard or you might have not. Besides, you can imagine somebody saying that, but it would not mean that he is going to kill her, you know, she is at a point when she is discovering her sexuality and that can be very difficult. I wanted to leave the possibility that Jane might have heard that, she might not. Besides, it might not imply much, but it is definitely a word related to sex.

EGA: *When Jane confronts the skinheads, one of them is translating what Anna is saying in German into English and he states: "she says her father was a* whoremeister.*" This hybrid word might imply that he is dealing with prostitutes, but also that he is the husband of a prostitute.*

LW: Yes, it is that sort of ambiguity. And I like the idea that the skinhead is actually the speaking character. You quite often see young men like that in French, German trains, sitting and you never know if it is a style thing, sometimes you never know.

EGA: *Perhaps it is a kind of constructed masculinity in the same way as girls become burlesque.*

LW: There is also, as you know, this ultramasculine man that is also gay. You have that very difficult thing for gay men, who are meant to be very glamorous but in this case it is very masculine. There is a funny bit in *Trainspotting*, where one of the characters wants to look like his father and he grows a moustache, which is very masculine, but at that point in the 1990s is quite gay style. He does not realize that and he is quite pleased with it, but the next day the moustache is gone.

EGA: *I'm remembering now when Montgomery approaches William Wilson in the Irish pub in* The Bullet Trick. *They are sitting together, as Montgomery is holding a gun, and one of the punters in the pub says, "You're a pair of poofs." William sees in that his possibility to escape and he says he is being harassed. The punter keeps on insulting them until he discovers that*

Montgomery is a police officer. Then, he backs up and says, "I've nothing against gay people. As I say, live and let live."

LW: There is some comedy there. I picked a guidebook in a bookshop because I wanted to see what it said about Glasgow attitudes to gay people: if it were not a good idea to be gay or if everything was marvellous and people were happy. And it said that, in general, it is okay to be gay in Glasgow but you would not like to walk holding hands. And I thought it was quite right. All in all it is a very tolerant city, but not everybody is tolerant, so you know, you just have to be careful. So that idea of live and let live... You see there have been a lot of changes, but it has not changed the same all over the world, essentially with regard to prejudices and violence. When you think of your own country, you think things are okay, but they could change, with economic problems, a change of government, all that can change.

EGA: *Returning to your novels, there are characters who become commodities. Rilke is in the world of auctions and he knows how to sell things, but he also discovers the world of prostitution, where girls are sold as commodities. Or in the case of Sylvie, they say there is a rich American who is going to pay a lot of money to see her shot to death. Money can buy lots of things.*

LW: I guess, just about anything. I come from a normal background, everybody worked and if you enjoyed your work, that was a great thing, but it was a bit like going to school: you have to go but it was not expected that you enjoyed it. My father was a sales agent and he had the satisfaction of working, but his real life was the family life. For some other people, it would have been their hobby or being into nature. Work itself was not so satisfying. I guess that idea that you sell your labour is part of the way the system works. For me, I feel I find this incredible escape, this amazing escape. With my friends we used to play this game of what we would be doing in ten years' time, and I thought of myself as a very old lady cuddling drunks in return for a free drink... and you're right, the idea of commodification, of selling oneself. When I wrote *The Cutting Room*, I was aware of the women trafficking in Glasgow and that was quite shocking: we thought of ourselves as a country that had social problems, but we didn't think we had such a social problem as prostitution. The prostitution that took place was associated with drug-addiction, and that's horrible, because you could think that the problem would be solved if people stopped taking drugs, it would be solved. But the idea that there were people paying for girls is a real shock. Scotland has always been a largely socialist country and that does not go with it. I guess it is that idea of supply and demand, that there are these international gangs that are trafficking with these poor men and women. Here what is shocking is that we have people that somehow want to use these services and I guess it is the opposite to the burlesque, isn't it? There is fun in the burlesque, and it engages a set of boundaries, and that is something completely different. With regard to prostitution, it is the commerce, the violence of that commerce that is the horrible aspect of it.

EGA: *Now that you mention the burlesque, there is a difference between the shooting of Derek's porn video or the photographs that Rilke finds and Anne-Marie, who is very burlesque,*

forcing those attending her show in the Camera Club to use polaroids so that they can only take photographs which cannot be reprinted or manipulated, whereas other pictures can be manipulated or not. In burlesque there is this kind of control.

LW: Absolutely. I like Dita von Teese's style and attitude, she is just such a pleasure, and I guess this idea of the Camera Club is naturalistic and fun, literally fun. These camera clubs did kind of exist, not perhaps as elaborate as that, but in principle perhaps, photography clubs where men came and there was a model. I think there are also different elements in these camera clubs as these men may not have ever seen a naked woman before. I loved writing about that. Maybe there is an element, although they are very different countries, of that danger that Anna might feel, that Anna might have, I mean, this small element of danger of Anne-Marie as well, as she has this brother who is a bouncer, and yet she takes a step too far. This idea of stepping the line, which is part of the crime fiction and Gothic conventions: that last drink that you should not have had, that unwise moment when you do something which is wrong. I don't know what it is like in Spain, but you quite often read about these crimes, which I think it is a bit how I imagine that Christopher Marlowe died in real life. They were sitting there, drinking, on a very hot day, they had their swords, all these men together, they had this bragging... Most of the murders that happen in Glasgow are between friends: something has gone wrong and then everybody is very sorry and somebody is dead and somebody else is going to jail... a disaster, you know. These are the real murders, not the elaborate.

EGA: *In Spain we are really concerned about the violence against women, it is now a legal term and there is a law to prevent it... And maybe a family living next to your apartment and one day he kills her and he commits suicide, or not...*

LW: I guess we have similar campaigns here. When I was a child, for a man to beat his wife, the police would come round and the police would say, we cannot do anything about this, you have to solve it as it is part of the domestic problems. In the last fifteen, twenty years, it has completely changed, and the attitude towards it is that it is a crime.

Once the interview was over, Louise Welsh explained that there was a project afoot to have the bell of the Briggait tower working again, which according to her was an excellent opportunity to get access to the tower and have a privileged view of the city. On leaving the building, I started my walk towards Saint Mungo's Cathedral, under a heavier and heavier rain, leaving Louise Welsh then and there.

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REVIEWS

RESEÑAS

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Marta Sofía López. 2012. *Ginealogías sáficas: de Katherine Philips a Jeanette Winterson.* Bern: Peter Lang. 167 pp. ISBN: 978-3-0343-1125-0.

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Marta Sofía López's *Ginealogías sáficas: de Katherine Philips a Jeanette Winterson*, published in the Peter Lang collection "Spanish Perspectives on English and American Literature, Communication and Culture," constitutes a remarkable example of feminist scholarship. Its aim is to trace the long-lasting influence of the poet Sappho on the biography and literary imagination of a number of English-speaking women writers from the Early Modern period to our own times. López's project is not to write a history of women's writing, or even a history of lesbian writing. Instead, she tracks down the elusive symbolic presence of Sappho through the ages, explaining how, although taking different forms, it has consistently functioned as a blueprint for female authorship, against which women writers either measured themselves or were measured by others. The book starts by rehearsing what little is known of the writer from Lesbos, quoting her most renowned (though fragmented) poems in their Spanish translation, as well as discussing the way critics have either neglected or overemphasized her sexual orientation. Undoubtedly, Sappho is one of the mothers of women's literary tradition, indeed the very origin of the "g(y)nealogy" López constructs in her book, as her poems were the first to dwell on some of the most recurrent chronotopes in western women's literature (the garden, the female body, the sea, etc.). However, in López's argument, Sappho is above all "a complex constructed text" (12), and it is to the way this fascinating text slowly surfaces and acquires shape and weight that López directs her efforts, moving seamlessly through several centuries and often crossing languages (all quotes from English and French are translated into Spanish by the author herself), as well as countries, making detours whenever necessary in hot pursuit of her subject and forging productive connections across constricting borders of time and space.

After this appraisal of the historical Sappho, the book is organised into four chapters that analyse her impact in chronological order, from the Renaissance to our own times.[1] "Early Modern Sapphos" starts in France, where the poet is mentioned by both Christine de Pisan and Mme. de Scudéry, then crosses the channel to find Sappho lurking behind the figures of Katherine Philips, Margaret Cavendish and Aphra Behn. Although,

[1] All chapter titles are my translation from the Spanish original.

strictly speaking, Sappho only features in one text by Aphra Behn, López discusses at some length how the notion of a women's society, so closely linked to the Greek poet, applies to all these writers. In Katherine Philips, this takes the shape of the literary clique known as "the society of friendship," in which several women played a prominent role, while in Margaret Cavendish it stands out as the main plot of her play *The Convent of Pleasure*, which (like *The Female Academy* by the same author) addresses the possibility of women walking out of a patriarchal society and setting up a separatist community, an idea that Mary Astell would return to only a few years later. López's commentary follows authoritative interpretations, such as those of Faderman (1981) and Andreadis (2001), which pick up on the woman-loving-woman subtext. However, it neglects the ways in which these women writers were also engaging in the partisan politics of their place and time. In the following chapter, the book turns to "Romantic and Victorian Sapphos," among whom Mary Robinson embraces her literary foremother in a series of sonnets that convey the workings of passion and desire (*Sappho and Phaon*, 1796). However, López expresses her dismay at finding that the tragic image of a suicidal Sappho highlighted by Ovid obtained major currency by way of Alexander Pope in the nineteenth century, and this was the side of Sappho taken up in the works of three Victorian poets: Felicia Hemans, Letitia Elizabeth London, and Christina Rossetti. For López, these outstanding poets embody the strong contradictions between their exceptional talents and the constricting patterns of femininity they were forced to live within, a pattern that, as López remarks, would inspire Virginia Woolf's often quoted words on the tragic fate of women authors decades later in *A Room of One's Own*.

In the next section, "Sappho at the Turn of the Century," the tragic Sappho trope has happily run its course, and under their pen-name Michael Field, Katherine Bradley and her niece and lover Edith Cooper joyously celebrate her legacy, having re-encountered Sappho in Henry Wharton's 1885 translation. Like them, US writer Nathalie Barney and her Anglo-American partner Renée Vivien felt so galvanized by Sappho's example that they moved to the island of Lesbos for a while, and later, in 1920s-Paris, set up a Women's Academy with the purpose of promoting and circulating women's writing. The last two chapters dwell on Sappho's rich legacy throughout the twentieth century, following on from this fruitful beginning. "Sappho's Modernist Sisters" focuses on three compelling authors, Amy Lowell, H.D. and Virginia Woolf. Lowell felt a close connection with Sappho and recreated the trope of the garden as a *locus amoenus* for the meeting of (women) lovers, and she also valued poets such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Emily Dickinson, with whom she felt sisterhood. Following Rachel Du Plessis and other feminist critics, López stresses the importance of H.D. for the modernist movement and comments on the fascination that Sappho and other early Greek writers like Homer exerted over the poet. The chapter ends with a discussion of Virginia Woolf's well-known essays *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*, and of the short story "A Society." López outlines the writer's thoughts on the problems of female authorship and citizenship in the earlier books, while sketching the irony and humour with which Woolf critiques the views of

male scholars on Sappho, who happen to be more interested in the issue of her chastity (or lack of it) than in her writings.

Moving still closer to our times, "Postmodernist Sapphos" brings together a final group of authors (Monique Wittig, Olga Broumas and Jeanette Winterson), all of whom have redrawn the boundaries of the female body and lesbian identity. In Wittig and Zeig's *Lesbian Peoples: Materials for a Dictionary* (1980), Sappho's entry was a blank, signalling the historical invisibility of lesbianism that these writers had started to address in the 1970s. Consequently, lesbian desire is newly scripted and acknowledged, hand in hand with the problematization of the female body and the maternal that López also links to the writings of Hélène Cixous, Adrienne Rich and Elizabeth Grosz. Last but not least, the book turns to Jeanette Winterson's *Art and Lies* (1994), closing a circle, since this book started López on her journey of discovery and exploration of women's writing and queer identity (153). If, for Winterson, Sappho represents "the union of language and desire" (155), then for López she has probably meant even more, fifteen years of voyaging into self-knowledge, meditating on the related topics of women's writing, literary mothering and genealogies, lesbian desire and the spaces and voices of queer identity; all of them honestly and relentlessly explored in her book.

While there is a real wealth of information in its pages for those newly arriving at the subject, *Ginealogías sáficas* does not aspire to be an exhaustive text. As mentioned above, the author makes no claim to rewriting literary history, and the book does not try in any way to establish an alternative canon, or force the issue of the lesbian presence in literary history. Rather, it deploys the figure of Sappho to open up the canon and to look at connections thus far neglected, framing new questions. This is particularly the case with the selection of writers and texts that López brings together, which on the one hand is undoubtedly singular (conveying the author's personal investment and transmitting her literary *jouissance*) and on the other, follows an innovative approach in transcending borders in order to set up a trans-Atlantic paradigm, as scholars such as Kate Chedgzoy (2007) have recently also started to do.

In my opinion, it is in the final two chapters on twentieth-century writing that López excels, as she most capably interweaves the concerns that have shaped the books discussed throughout with the feminist theorists that first brought many of them to public attention. In contrast, the first chapter, "Early Modern Sapphos," suggests a comparative lack of enthusiasm. While it is a necessary starting point for López's project, it provides only a superficial account of the writers, which might have been made more interesting with the help of Emma Donoghue's groundbreaking essay *Passions Between Women* (1993).

In conclusion, *Ginealogías sáficas* goes beyond general expectations in the field of literary criticism because its author is not afraid to question the sexual politics of her subject and thus to engage us imaginatively in what has been and continues to be, after all, one of the most complex debates in feminist thought. But most of all, it invites us to (re) visit some of the most perceptive and delightful women writers in the English language,

and to ponder with them, yet again, the contradictions of the position that women have so far occupied as authors in western culture.

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Josep Maria Armengol, ed. 2013. *Embodying Masculinities. Towards a History of the Male Body in U.S. Culture and Literature*. New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang. vi + 187 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4331-1891-3

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The aim of *Embodying Masculinities: Towards a History of the Male Body in U.S. Culture and Literature*, as stated by its editor Josep Maria Armengol in the introduction, is to provide a diachronic study of the American male body, which in this book is understood as a "symbolic and gendered construction" (3), and its cultural representations. It also seeks to show how the male body has "recurrently been used as *a political tool*" (4; emphasis in original). In order to achieve this goal, the book is divided into nine essays, five focusing on specific decades (1920s, 1930s, 1950s, 1980s and 1990s), two on combined decades (1960s and 1970s on the one hand, and 1990s and 2000s on the other) and two more on the 2000s. As can be inferred, the 1990s, 1910s and 1940s are not analysed. The intention of this volume is, indeed, fairly innovative and so is its attempt to provide a diachronic analysis, although, as I will comment on later, there are inconsistencies and shortcomings that could easily have been avoided.

The first chapter of the volume, "The Complete Body of Modernity in the 1920s: Negotiating Hegemonic and Subordinated Masculinities in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*," is divided into two parts. In the first, Teresa Requena examines the notion of body wholeness and how it became an essential characteristic of hegemonic masculinity in the 1920s. In the second part, she analyses how other scholars have interpreted the male relations in Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) in binary terms (i.e., authentic and non-authentic representation of manhood). Requena's point, however, is to go beyond this dichotomy in order to argue that Jake and other men in the novel "strategically negotiate different hegemonic and non-hegemonic positions" (22) which prevent them from being encapsulated in a subordinated masculinity (23). After analysing how Jake and other characters perform "different masculine roles involv[ing] strategic subject positions" (27) she concludes that in *The Sun Also Rises* "hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculine positions are finally shown to intersect, and constantly interact with one another" (28).

In the next chapter, "Embodying the Depression: Male Bodies in the 1930s American Culture and Literature," Armengol analyses the complex representations of the male body during the Great Depression. As scholars have argued, the difficulty in finding a job and being a successful breadwinner made American men try to find alternative ways

to prove their manhood. One of them was through their bodies. Indeed, the New Deal public murals fostered by Roosevelt tried to prove that success and masculinity could be obtained by having a "strong, muscular brawny body" typical of the "working-class male" (33). This idea was fed by the creation of superheroes such as Superman and by the proletarian literature of the time, which quickly established a dichotomy between the body of the working-classes, regarded as truly masculine, and that of the upper classes, was seen as feminine (36-38). However, and this is what makes this essay especially interesting and original, Armengol argues that literature also provided alternative, "softer" representations of masculinity which were equally dignified. Documentary literature, for instance, respectfully presented "American bodies afflicted by deprivation, hunger, and the worst effects of Depression" (41). Likewise, John Steinbeck's works, especially *Of Mice and Men* (1937), portray small, less aggressive and more effeminate bodies, valuing "the strength and resilience of 'the people' above and beyond the individual body and its external image" (42).

The third chapter, which jumps to the 1950s (more on this later), "Invisibilizing the Male Body: Exploring the Incorporeality of Masculinity in 1950s American Culture," perfectly portrays the change in the notion of hegemonic male bodies that took place during the 1950s. As Mercè Cuenca argues, the Cold War and the subsequent importance of capitalism and consumerism in the US led to the male white-collar attitude and body being regarded as normative. Thus, the muscular body of the working-class was now associated with a lack of economic success and with sexual activity (53), which was regarded extremely negatively and was "to be avoided if one wanted to embody hegemonic masculinity" (52). Cuenca then proceeds to analyse how this shift was represented in *Death of a Salesman* (1949) and *Rear Window* (1954). She argues that both works depict the reticence and difficulty men had to both adapt and accept this new, virtually invisible hegemonic body of the white-collared man.

In the next chapter, "Breaking the Mold: Male Rock Performance, Glam and the (Re-) Imagination of the Male Body in the 1960s and 1970s," Esther Zaplana provides an analysis of how glam rock stars, particularly Iggy Pop, David Bowie and Lou Reed, used their body to express their rejection of the traditional, patriarchal, militaristic model of manhood (64-66). She examines the body performances of these musicians both in concert footage and song videos, their androgynous clothes and the lyrics of their songs, and argues that they can be interpreted "as a radical subversion of the meanings attached to manliness and its articulation through dress convention" (74).

Ángel Mateos-Aparicio takes the reader to the realm of the cyborg in the fifth chapter. He argues that the history of the cyborg is entwined with that of the human body (97). Thus, he believes that the portrayal of the cyborgs in the 1980s responded to a "moment of conflict and change between the subversive, postgendered vision of the cyborg dominant in the 1960s and 1970s . . . and the reaction of American conservative ideology in the Reagan era" (88). He then proceeds to examine the representation of the cyborg in some of the most successful 1980s films and novels. His analysis is divided into

two parts: on the one hand, he argues that the hybrid nature of the cyborg in *Saturn 3* (1980), *The Terminator* (1984) and *Robocop* (1987) attack different notions of patriarchy while presenting alternative masculinities, embodied by Kyle Reese's sensitivity in *The Terminator* (91) and by Murphy's caring attitude towards his children in *Robocop* (95-96). On the other hand, Mateos-Aparicio shows how this hybridity empowers the female protagonists in *Neuromancer* (1984) and *Empire of the Senseless* (1988), allowing them to subvert the patriarchal order.

In "Action and Reaction: The Villain's Body and Its Role in Shaping the Heroic Body in Hollywood Action Films of the 1990s," Amaya Fernández-Menicucci analyses how the representations of bodies of the hero and the villain changed throughout the 1990s depending on the political context in the United States. As she argues, prior to the 1990s, it was rather easy to represent the villains in films since America's "enemies" (Communism, Nazism) were easy to identify. Therefore, the body of the villain was "antagonistic" (110) and asymmetrical to that of the hero, and this polarity continued, albeit with some changes, until the early 1990s (110). Later on, the growing scepticism towards the government affected the representations of the hero and the villain in films, resulting in them becoming less "assymetrical." Indeed, she argues that from 1994 onwards the stress was "on the mimetic overalls, intelligent fabrics, technical footwear and assorted gadgets that cover up the villain's and hero's bodies" (116). This shift led to a progressive loss of the importance of the body, which eventually ended in its "virtualization" (117-19). Thus, the mind became "the true heroic weapon against ill-intentioned institutions" (120), as represented in *The Matrix* (1999).

In the seventh chapter, Sara Martín compares and contrasts the representations of the bodies of Leonidas and his men in Mate's film *The 300 Spartans* (1962) and in Miller and Varley's graphic novel *300* (1998), as well as in its 2006 film adaptation. She argues that the 1998 and 2006 representations of the myth actually dehumanize Leonidas and make him a hyper-masculine, homophobic, patriarchal character. Indeed, she believes that the massive muscular body with which Leonidas is represented in both the graphic novel and the 2006 film respond to a "politicized identification of idealized patriarchal masculinity with muscularity" (127). Likewise, his constant brutality can be linked to what Martín believes is the growing "new laddism" (134) in society at the time, which continues today. This brutality is entwined with his blatant, untameable homophobia, which, as Sara Martín argues, "further undercuts [the] patriarchal sexist discourse" (140). Martín thus concludes that the *300* graphic novel and film are "in antipatriarchal terms, a step backwards" (142).

The final two chapters of the volume analyse how the body has been used for racist purposes. Maria Isabel Seguro, in "Voicing the Father's Body in Janie Mirikitani's Asian American Poetry," argues how the hybrid body of minorities prevented them from achieving the "American Dream" and thus from climbing the social ladder (145). She analyses the early poetry of Mirikitani, a third-generation Japanese American, arguing that it portrays "the psychological devastation" (146) of racism through the portrayal of

the bodies of Mirikitani's father and of other Asian Americans. Mirikitani's poetry also shows the clichés attributed to the Asian American because of their hybrid bodies and the ordeals they had to face, which eventually engraved in their bodies solitude, sickness and emasculation (156). In "Contemporary Terrorist Bodies: The (De-)Construction of Arab Masculinities in the United States," Marta Bosch-Vilarrubias compares and contrast how Arab Americans and their bodies have been depicted in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She argues that during the twentieth century Arab-Americans were, on the one hand, invisibilized due to the fact that they were denied "a racial status [related] to people of Arab descent" (166) since the government regarded them as "white." This categorization therefore prevented them from "organizing a group against discrimination" (166) through which they could have made themselves visible. On the other hand, they were ascribed a series of pejorative attributes, most of them already stated in Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Ironically, as Bosch argues, these same traits were used to de-racialize the Arab Americans after 9/11 (180). She proceeds to examine certain films and novels which effectively show how there was an attempt to prevent the vilification of Arab Americans by proving wrong the clichés traditionally attributed to them (180).

The main problems I see in this work are three-fold. The first is that *Embodying Masculinities* presents itself as a diachronic study and yet it does not provide an analysis of the masculine bodies in the 1940s. No reason is given for this surprising decision. Likewise, there is no explanation as to why the 1900s and 1910s are not analysed. Moreover, the 1960s and 1970s are examined together in a single chapter, whereas the 2000s are devoted two and a half chapters. The second problem is that although the book focuses on the analysis of masculine bodies, the authors of the different chapters mainly use the general theory of Masculinities Studies instead of using and entering into a dialogue with the existing corpus of theoretical perspectives on masculine bodies. As a result, some classic works such as Pendergast's *Creating the Modern Man: American Magazines and Consumer Culture, 1900-1950* (2000) are not included in the theoretical background of the essays, even though to do so would have enriched the essays greatly. In fact, since such works are not taken into account, some of the essays do not provide completely new or original approaches and come through as repetitive. Likewise, the theoretical background of the articles seems to focus too much on Kimmel's works—especially *Manhood in America*, while other major authors and works such as Brannon and David's *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority* (2000), Barbara Ehrenreich's *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (1987) or Peter Filene's *Him/Her/Self: Gender Identities in Modern America* (1974) are not taken into account and are not cited even once in the whole volume. Finally, there are some typographical errors as well as missing bibliographical references that could have been avoided with a more careful proofreading.

However, despite such problems, the general impression of the volume is, indeed, positive, as the authors have provided a thought-provoking, profound and innovative analysis of a theme which needed further research. The balance between the analysis of literature, cinema and other cultural representations of the male body is perfect and helps

to create a more enjoyable and interesting reading. Also, some of the articles are a very good contribution to the existing research on masculine bodies theory and the use of male bodies as political tools. All in all, *Embodying Masculinities* is, beyond the shadow of a doubt, a very good contribution to the field of Masculinities Studies in general.

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Ángel Mateos-Aparicio Martín-Albo and Eduardo de Gregorio-Godeo, eds. 2013. *Culture and Power: Identity and Identification*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars. 265 pp. ISBN: 1443842001.

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Culture and Power: Identity and Identification is an edited volume of eighteen essays selected from the contributions presented at the 14th Culture and Power Conference. Organized by the Iberian Association for Cultural Studies (IBACS), this conference engaged an international group of scholars working transdisciplinarily in the field. The introduction of this type of cultural analysis in Spain has been the main aim of IBACS, this book demonstrating that, as Professor John Storey mentions in his preface to the volume, the attempt to keep cultural studies alive in Spain has successfully been accomplished. The importance of transdisciplinarity was previously highlighted by the editors of the first volume of *Culture and Power*, published almost twenty years ago: "Postmodern cultural analysis is more aware than ever of the irreducible diversity of voices and interests, while, at the same time, it also recognizes the increasingly globalized forms which seek to harness, exploit and even curtail – this diversity" (Cornut-Gentille and Hand 1995, 14).

The heterogeneous yet neatly edited compilation of essays successfully tackles the intricacy of this concept by providing different perspectives and methodological approaches. "Identity" as a form of cultural practice is often defined through a complex set of relationships which constantly shape and re-shape the contingent discursive construction of its categorization, depending on the context in which it is developed. Identities are thus artificially constructed in a matrix of power relations. In Stuart Hall's words, "identities can function as points of identification and attachment only *because* of their capacity to exclude, to render 'outside', abjected" (1997, 5; emphasis in original).

Basing his views on Hall's notion of "articulation" (1986, 128-29), Lawrence Grossberg maintains that the main objective of cultural studies scholars is to unravel fractures, differences and heterogeneous elements that have been fused in an apparently homogeneous and harmonious "whole" (2010, 22). Grossberg thus advocates a cultural analysis centred on a "radical contextualism" through which only an interdisciplinary, multifaceted approach can account for the complexity of the conjuncture; the conjuncture being understood as the complex formation of discourses and practices in a concrete historical moment (Koivisto and Lahtinen 2012, 276). In this sense, it is important to contextualise not only

the content of the analysis, but also the theorists' own arguments and positions; as Mica Nava states, it is not just a matter of a "cultural-history interdisciplinary approach," but a question of what Raymond Williams called "arguing against" (2013, 30).

The present volume provides insightful views on "questions of cultural identity"—to use Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay's title (1997)—by exposing fractures within apparently homogeneous cultural icebergs which can only be discovered if observed from various angles. The editors have divided the book into five thematic sections according to the main concern of the papers, although, as they admit, alternative arrangements might have also been possible, considering the intrinsic interrelations of discursive practices at stake in the construction of cultural identities. One of the strengths of the book therefore is that its sections and chapters could be read independently, depending on the reader's main concerns, or as a whole, which would provide the reader with an accurate overview of the recent multifaceted debates on identity formation.

The first section opens this debate with four chapters that set out to present an overview of the main discourses on identity in current postmodern and global societies. The first essay tackles the question of the crisis of the concept of identity, which also affects the contingent nature of past identities. Although lacking originality, it provides a general background which frames the concerns put forward in the subsequent essays. The author provides a good description of Bauman's theories on "liquidity." However, Bauman's recent works should have been included, especially *Liquid Fear* (2007), which would have enhanced the analysis of contemporary identity crises in the uncertain context of globalisation.

Leticia Sabsay's chapter on sexual politics and liberal individuals is strategically placed in second position, as her complex analysis on queer theory sheds light on most of the studies presented in the book. She warns against the re-ontologization of the subject which challenges the transgressive critique of queer theory in identity politics and ensures the centrality of heteronormativity. Sabsay hinges her argument on the Butlerian notion of the de-centred subject. According to Butler, the fixity of the body is constituted by its materiality, yet materiality can be understood as an effect of power which constructs the notion of the abject. The subject therefore, is constituted through practices of exclusion and abjection (Butler 1993, 2-3). This conception of the body as a crucial site for identity construction and transgression reappears in the following chapter, in which Begonya Saez Tajafuerce analyses the crisis of metaphysical subjectivity through the experience of non-identity and (self-)strangeness, or being one's own other, through Denis' film *L'intrus* (2004). The ideas raised in the chapter are quite promising; nevertheless, they are not supported by an appropriate theoretical background, although the previous chapter does actually provide this. The section is closed with a chapter on individual and collective identities shaping the concept of the nation in the colonial discourse. The chapter offers a basic overview on the topic which will be further developed in parts three and four.

The second section of the book compiles four articles that revise representations of womanhood in literature, historical records and films. María Eugenia Sánchez Suárez

and Beatriz González Moreno present contesting views of femininity in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature, respectively. While Sánchez Suárez proposes a re-reading of the eighteenth-century heroine, which endows her with stronger and more defiant attributes than those traditionally associated with such characters, González Moreno critically revises Mary Shelley's ambivalent bread-and-butter work. This recovery of "counter-histories" on femininity and female identity in Britain is then complemented by Maria Isabel Romero Ruiz's insightful study on the imposition of middle-class values on marginalized women through charitable institutions at the beginning of the nineteenth century and its social and political implications, which remained inscribed in the female diseased body.

Last, but not least, the section is closed by María del Mar Ramón-Torrijos, who returns to the question of the body as a site where contingent discourses of identity are developed, as represented in the phenomenon of chick-lit and, more specifically in *Bridget Jones' Diary* and its film adaptation. The chapter offers an excellent cultural analysis of the phenomenon against the background of postfeminist debates and contradictory messages about female identity. The analysis of the "post-feminist paradox," which combines pre-feminist and feminist values, recalls Angela McRobbie's "double entanglement" of postfeminism (2004, 255). This idea links the contingent female representations examined in this study with the different analyses of "feminine identities" carried out in previous chapters of the section.

Even though the essays in the third part of the book are devoted to the analysis of hybrid identities from a postcolonial theoretical approach, none of them leave aside the question of female identity. While Lukasz Hudomięt centres his analysis on the double standards of sexual politics during British colonial rule in Africa and the literal and metaphorical meanings of miscegenation, Carmen L. Robertson examines the polarized representations of Aboriginal women in the Canadian printed press as either passive and assimilated Pocahontas-like Indian princesses or threatening "squaws." Although Robertson narrows the scope of her analysis to articles published in the press from 1969 to 1973, her contextualized historical overview of the matter, within a postcolonial theoretical framework, facilitates an immediate association with the pervasive binary representation of female identity and forced identification within the colonies.

Particularly interesting is Salvador Faura's study on the female Moroccan author Najat El-Hatchmi and the novelist's portrayal of Catalonia as a "diaspora space" (Brah 1996, 178). Faura makes use of a postcolonial approach to analyse the multiple, hybrid identities at stake in El-Hatchmi's *L'últim patriarca*. Unravelling the complex influences and relationships established in *glocal* contexts, the essay examines how Catalan multiple identities intertwine with Moroccan colonial history as well as with an Islamic culture inherited by a woman who challenges some aspects of Muslim patriarchal tradition without fully subscribing to western values.

Part four gathers together four essays devoted to the study of collective identities in relation to the discourses of the nation. In the opening chapter of the section, Roberto del

Valle Alcalá provides a comprehensive and critical analysis of the intellectual abstraction and actual experience of "the common" as reflected in two novels by Raymond Williams. The complex analysis of the conjuncture in these two novels paves the way for the studies of representations of collective identities in the media presented in the following chapters.

José Igor Prieto-Arranz focuses his analysis on the representations of Spain on British television, exposing the stereotypical representations of Spanish identity in the British "imaginNation" and its socio-economic implications in the ITV series *Benidorm* (2007-). Guillermo Iglesias Díaz also delves into recent Spanish history to unmask the ex-centric meanings of Galician hidden identities, cleverly using postcolonial theories to carry out an in-depth analysis of the contested construction of these (re)imagined communities represented in Reixa's film *O Lapis do carpinteiro* (*The Carpenter's Pencil*).

Visual representations of collective identities are also Hugh Ortega Breton's target; however, the analysis of the British espionage melodrama *Spooks/MI-5* is carried out using a psycho-cultural approach, which succeeds in bringing out the importance of emotions in the processes of collective identification. Through the analysis of certain episodes from the series, the author drives the reader's attention to the political consequences of the tripartite paranoid discourses (victim-perpetrator-protector) on terrorism.

The book closes with a section devoted to print media, re-covering gender, class and national identity issues dealt with in previous sections. Caroline Bainbridge's chapter is closely related to the second section of the volume on women's identities as well as Carmen L. Robertson's essay on female representation in the press. Picking up the debates on feminism and postfeminism, Bainbridge warns of the denigratory turn on women taken by print media commentary in the US and UK press as a result of the patriarchal structures at stake in the journalist profession, as well as of the progressive "tabloidization" of the press. "Tabloidization" is also the main concern of María José Coperías and Josep Lluís Cómez-Mompart in their both comprehensive and detailed analysis of British broadsheets, pointing at the evolution of the press and journalism itself resulting from a deliberate process in which socioeconomic and politico-cultural interests endanger quality journalism, if not, indeed, journalism itself.

Roberto A. Valdeón continues in the same vein by foregrounding the evolution of journalism in the "infotainment society" and the importance of representations of self and other cultural identities in the press. Combining translation and cultural studies, he analyses the competing images of Spanish identity projected in the English version of *El País*. The images promote a vision of modernity, yet this is filtered through traditional imagery of Spain mainly targeted at tourist readers of the newspaper. This analysis is inevitably linked to the stereotypical portrayals of Spanish identity in the comedy *Benidorm* as exposed by Prieto-Arranz in part four.

Even though not all readers may be interested in every chapter of the book, and some essays lack originality in that they simply provide descriptive overviews of well-known concepts relating to identity, this compilation also includes some insightful analyses of a wide variety of cultural products in concrete contexts. The volume therefore invites

readers from different academic backgrounds to reflect on an enriching, multifaceted and transdisciplinary study of fissures and fractures which puts to the test hitherto unchallenged discourses on identity and identification.

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Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández and Antonia Navarro-Tejero, eds. 2011. *India in the World*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars. xvii + 305 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4438-3289-2.

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This comprehensive collection of essays, *India in the World*, sets out to explore beyond the conventional concept of the Indian diaspora as a dispersion of a people but rather makes an interpretation of "homeland" beyond land itself. From this viewpoint, diasporas are ungrounded cultural phenomena and exiles are processes in themselves.

The volume opens with a section on varied postcolonial issues. The first three essays look at the role of India in the Western imagination. Mark Bradshaw Busbee's "The Idea of India in Early Medieval England" proposes that the attempt at mapping India (interpreted as the East, Asia or even an Elsewhere) demonstrates both that an effort was made to locate it geographically and that it also occupied an ideological place in the Anglo-Saxon imagination, which was Christian-centrically determined. Elisabeth Damböck then analyses India as a product of the western imagination in the present context in "Exoticism Stops at the Second Hyphen," where she argues, in tune with Graham Huggan, that globalisation's alterity industry produces homogenised forms of the "exotic." Damböck's argument is powerfully clear: single hyphenation invites to exoticisation whilst multiple hyphenation explores this process at a deeper level. She maintains that multi-hyphenated authors like Neil Bissoondath, Farida Karodia and Shani Mootoo succeed in making use of "strategic exoticism" to raise awareness of ethnic categorisation akin to social stratification and racism. In the very well researched "All the Raj: French-Speaking Comics about India," Corinne François-Denève delights the reader with a virtual trip to India through Francophone comic strips. The pleasure lies in meeting so many (literally) colourful characters which the non-Francophone world is unlikely to be familiar with. The strength of the essay is that it contributes so knowledgeably to postcolonial studies in posing the question, to paraphrase the author, of why the road to India for the Francophone follows a British path (39).

The reverse direction of influence is examined in Shyama Prasad Ganguly's "Indian Response to *El Quijote*," which concentrates on matters related to orality versus academic impact, translation and vernacular languages and intermediation (English) from the perspective of reception studies.

Two essays approach the problems of terminology. In the first, "From Inscrutable Indians to Asian Africans," Felicity Hand discusses the process from discrimination to relative acceptance reflected in the terminology used to describe East Asians in Africa (the reader

may consider this chapter alongside Damböck's, since Hand uses M.G. Vassanji, another multiple-hyphenated author, as a literary case study). Also Laura Peco González's "The Redefinition of the Concept 'Anglo-Indian' in Contemporary Narrative" makes analogous analyses on the ideological and conceptual content of terminological choices. Peco González reflects, for instance, on strategic exoticisation (implicitly) and on hyphenation (explicitly). Taken together, these articles reveal the turns in postcolonial theory deriving from the recognition of the complexities and difficulties of conceptualisations such as memory, in-betweenness and diaspora.

The collection certainly provides continuity, with Juan Ignacio Oliva's contribution on South Asian women's literature in North America and the UK, using as his discursive tools principles of diaspora, memory (in line with Damböck's idea of an artificially constructed place of cultural heritage), critical assessment of multiculturalism and hyphenated space. Oliva makes relevant overviews and critical comparisons between white and black feminisms, supporting his view with varied examples which also capture the reader's attention for their being a less common material in postcolonial studies: poetry.

The section closes with Chris Rollanson's discussion on Poe's lesser known "A Tale of the Ragged Mountains," where Rollanson assesses Poe's Indological and Orientalist text against that of the historian Thomas Babington Macaulay on Warren Hastings, Governor-General of Bengal (1773-1785). The article's key point and merit lie in its positioning of each author regarding Orientalism, as the phenomenon (and its conceptualisation) has too often been subject to reductive homogenisations.

The second part of the volume is dedicated to literature and follows roughly the following tripartite logic: a section on diverse critical schools, one on Indian female identity and one on Rushdie. There is in fact not a clear-cut division and sections do actually intersect. For instance, in "Daughter Forsaken: *La Résistance* of the Indo-Mauritian Girl Child in Ananda Devi's Novels," Rohini Banerjee proffers a reading which is enticing because of its daring critical tool: the oppositional theory by Ross Chambers and Michel de Certeau. It suggests that the girl child in the acutely patriarchal Hindu society can cope with extreme forms of abuse through a mechanism of choice between the acceptance of her role as a prostitute or as an exploited outcast in the bosom of her own family; hard-line feminists will no doubt question whether there is an actual choice as this can be located at the level of the reaction but not of the alteration of the situation. Bannerjee herself responds in the affirmative.

Bhavna Bhalla's "Principles of Sanskrit Poetics in Contemporary Context: The *Rasadhvani* Approach to J.M. Coetzee's *Slow Man*" explicates—in a necessary but rather daunting manner for the non-expert—the principles of Sanskrit Poetics. According to Bhalla, Coetzee's novel displays the moral ambiguity needed for it to be approached through the prism of this poetics, which assesses the emotional response to art and language. Her challenging opinion is that the *rasadhvani* theory can be used in relation to any artistic piece as it puts primacy on emotion; this will likely make some critics twitch. Can we, as Bhalla suggests, apply Sanskrit Poetics to "any text, even if it is culturally alien" (141)?

Olga Blanco-Carrión's "Framing Interpersonal Violence in *A Married Woman*" uses a cognitive-linguistic approach and therefore her analysis of Manju Kapur's novel is permeated by the specific conceptual terms and methodologies of the field, providing a combined approach as it intertwines with the literary world. Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández, on her part, chooses Jumpha Lahiri's *The Namesake* to explore the fluctuations in identity (opposition, articulation and instability) as displayed in a name that partakes of three different geocultures: India, America and Russia. The article makes firm arguments regarding the cultural associations between the public and the private, as well as first- and second-generation migrants, but it leaves the reader wanting for a longer, and therefore deeper, analysis.

A sequence of articles on women's identity in India comes next. Emma García Sanz's "The Search for Female Identity in R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*" will please the reader because of the soundness of the investigation on the varied materialisations of femininity in the novel. The author clearly establishes the complicated meanders of wives, mothers, daughters and lovers in Hindu society, a society dominated by men, as well as of the latter's neglect and contradictions which affect women's identities in intertwining areas like education, work, independence, tradition, religion and family affairs. Similar issues are analyzed in "Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* and the Deconstruction of Traditional Binary Oppositions," where Javier Martín Párraga considers the dissimilar constructions of education, roots and family relations made by two different generations of women. They share in the subsequent deconstructions by using memory and fantasy for their purposes, but with very different consequences. This article is thus well positioned in this section, rather than next to Blanco-Carrión's, as it appears alongside articles with similar themes and approaches.

In her turn, Maria J. López succeeds in demonstrating the indebtedness to authors such as Woolf, Mansfield and Joyce in a number of novels by Anita Desai. In "'She had been Certain the River would Sustain her': Modernist Aestheticism in Anita Desai's Fiction," López goes on to show how Desai's characters' sense of discontentment towards their social environment and domestic milieu on the one hand, and their acute perceptivity on the other, can be traced back to modernist tradition, particularly to its "dark places of psychology," as Woolf described it (qtd. in 173), to put forth women's feelings of entrapment and constraint.

María Elena Martos Hueso moves away from issues of femininity to focus on the literary weight and political interests that distinguish Amitav Ghosh and Salman Rushdie and, by extension, their generations of writers. In her study of Gosh's *The Shadow Lines*, the author makes use of Bakhtinian theoretical resources, namely of heteroglossia and dialogism, owing particularly to the fact that Ghosh identifies the former as the core of Indianness (193). She defends Ghosh against conservative criticisms and argues, instead, that Ghosh presents innovative fiction: imagination retracing (not fictively reconstructing) the past.

Ana Cristina Mendes offers a perceptive reading of the literary treatment of rock and roll, as both a globalising cultural phenomenon and a critique of its processes (204), in

Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath her Feet*. Mendes proposes that Rushdie diversely rewrites, and therefore subverts, the history of this genre and she draws our attention to Rushdie's comments regarding the universe of cultural industries, its involvement with international economic policies and the culture of spectacle along the lines postulated by Baudrillard. The reader would be correct in seeing connections with the abovementioned formulations by Huggan on exoticism. In the novel, performance, immediatisation, and impersonation play key roles in exposing "the cracks and contradictions of globalisation" (207), leaving open the question of the "(un)feasibility of postcolonial strategies of resistance in the context of globalised multinational corporations" (206).

In "A Paradise Lost: Kashmir as a Motif of Rift in Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar The Clown*," Maurice O'Connor borrows the useful concepts of practical and categorical identities in his approach to the concept of Kashmiriyat and to the events (and their symbolism) in Pachigam (Eden). Briefly put, his argument is that the initially cohesive Hindu-Muslim community is coerced to polarisation by external forces. In O'Connor's view, Rushdie succeeds in presenting the Kashmiriyat philosophy but fails with regards to Islamic fundamentalism.

The third part of the book is dedicated to History and the Arts, although the essays tend to use a wide range of approaches. It is noticeable that the conceptualisations and discourses differ from those produced in postcolonial literary and cultural studies. Some of the terminology will not agree with the more sensitive palates of critics from this field, but one should be mindful of the different discursive specificities of each area.

The opening article, "The Internal Exile of Dalit Women in Andhra Pradesh" by Alida Carloni Franca, is primarily a sociological study on Dalit women in the said state. She considers their multiple discrimination (gender, caste and the Third World) in their daily fight to survive but also the internal contradictions of a national identity that rests on the concept of Mother India: these women are the pillars of society, but are made "to bear the burden of patriarchy" (227). Antonia Navarro-Tejero's article, "A Brief Overview on Feminism in India," provides a useful background to Carloni Franca's essay and constitutes an insightful piece on the feminisms in India, their histories, their theoretical and social battles as well as of their relations to feminist movements in the West. It presents to the reader exactly what it purports to in its title, in the habitual flawless, informed and well-researched style of the author. A third essay includes a reflection on the *sati* ritual starting with Sunny Singh's novel *With Krishna's Eyes*. The author, Rosalía Villa Jiménez, suggests an interrelated threefold analysis of ideology, tradition and culture. Villa Jiménez makes use of documented sources to elaborate on these rather monumental and risky concepts so as to demonstrate the extent to which authoritative power, and principally hybridisation, permeate *sati* in a postcolonial context.

Eva Fernández del Campo Barbadillo addresses the influence of Indian art on diverse areas of western culture, most notably the Fine Arts and Psychology. In her broad-ranging article, she demonstrates how the West turned to the East, and India in particular, to revitalise its own vocabulary. Acknowledging some more recent exceptions, Campo

Barbadillo shows that the West has continuously assumed an ethnocentric attitude, often by relegating Indian art to the category of "primitive" art, even when faced with contemporary production.

Two essays take us to the pictures. The first, by Joel Kuortti, focuses on a script by Arundhati Roy. "'City and Non-City': Political Issues in *In Which Annie Gives it Those Ones*" depicts the political idealism of students in the 1970s. "City and Non-City" is borrowed from the script itself and aptly reflects the core of the article (and the film): the conflicting polarities in Indian society. These refer mainly to urban and rural India but also to class divisions between labourers and executives. Esperanza Santos Moya's "Bollywood and South Asian Diasporic Films in the U.K.: Gurinder Chadha's Female Road Movie" approaches *Bhaji on the Beach* with the aim of enlightening the reader on the social value of such productions in transforming notions of Britishness. The aim of her analysis is twofold: to reveal the internal diversity of migrant groups while simultaneously asking us to witness and share the feeling of alienation in a society which aggressively insists on its white identity.

The volume comes full circle with the closing article by Fernando Wulff Alonso, "Nativism versus Imperialism? Debates and Interpretations in the Ancient History of India." Its focus on the historical construction of India shares preoccupations, albeit differently explored, of Bradshaw Busbee in the opening piece. The two models mentioned in the article's title are carefully discussed, providing ample and instructive information on the ideologies underlying the processes of historiographical production. Wulff Alonso asserts that an isolationist (Hindu- and imperial-related) or an essentialist (nationalist-related) interpretation do not significantly differ as both neglect to take into consideration the historical interactions with the "outside" world: "the reality of human history is made of mixture, contacts and diversification" (295). Both the present and the past, he concludes, are products of those elements.

India in the World does achieve its noble goal of promoting research at a high level in various fields of India Studies. For the most part, these articles succeed in developing their individual themes, enabled by the meticulous and structured editorial contribution which creates a network of interconnected knowledge and concepts.

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Eva M. Pérez Rodríguez. 2012. *How the Second World War Is Depicted by British Novelists since 1990. The Passage of Time Changes Our Portrayal of Traumatic Events*. Lewinston, Queenston, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen. x + 251 pp. ISBN: 13: 978-0-7734-2615-3; 10: 0-7734-2615-9.

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Eva Pérez's book, *How the Second World War Is Depicted by British Novelists since 1990. The Passage of Time Changes Our Portrayal of Traumatic Events*, is a study of novels that deal with World War II (WWII) and were published in Britain after 1990. Pérez provides an overview of the major concerns that the conflict has raised for contemporary British writers.

Although the World War II trend in criticism has never been dormant, it is subject to fluctuations of interest. Pérez's book belongs among the scholarly re-visitings of the war's mythology that, in a broader sociological context, were launched by Paul Fussell's seminal *Wartime. Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War* (1989) and have continued into the 2000s and 2010s, most recently with Marianna Torgovnick's *The War Complex. World War II in Our Time* (2005) and Edward Wood's *Worshipping the Myths of World War II* (2006). With its strictly literary realm and its British focus, there are some parallels between Pérez's book and Bernard Bergonzi's *Wartime and Aftermath: English Literature and Its Background 1939-1960* (1993), both of them covering a number of authors and operating within a well-defined timeframe. The most important study on the subject to date is Mark Rawlinson's *British Writing of the Second World War* (2000); however, while Rawlinson and others have dealt with *wartime* literature, the novelty of Pérez's undertaking is its dedication to modern British authors and their novels. *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of World War II* (MacKay 2009) includes a chapter by Petra Rau on contemporary WWII fiction by writers of various nationalities; some of the texts chosen by Pérez are already discussed by Rau, but in a more general fashion than in the volume under review. Even though Pérez's contribution to the field can be comfortably placed within the established traditions of academic interest in war writing concerned with WWII, her study inaugurates scholarly concern with second- and third-generation writers and their perspectives on a war they did not witness. As such, her book is, to date, unique in its precise focus and subject matter.

The book is divided into three parts. Their titles are largely self-explanatory: In part one, Pérez analyses the "debunking" and "preservation" of myths. In part two, she invites

us to "revisit history." Part three is about how individuals and nations cross paths. The novels chosen for close analysis are: Sarah Waters's *The Night Watch* (2006), Ian McEwan's *Atonement* (2001), William Boyd's *Restless* (2006), Sebastian Faulk's *Charlotte Gray* (1998), and Robert Harris's *Enigma* (1995), in part one; Tim Binding's *Island Madness* (1994), Owen Sheers's *Resistance* (2007), Peter Ho Davis's *The Welsh Girl* (2007), A.L. Kennedy's *Day* (2007), and A. McCall Smith's *La's Orchestra Saves the Word* (2008), in part two; Helen Dunmore's *The Siege* (2001), Rachel Seiffert's *The Dark Room* (2001), Martin Amis's *Time's Arrow* (1991), Louis de Bernières's *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (1994), Mark Mills's *The Information Officer* (2009), and Kazuo Ishiguro's *When We Were Orphans* (2000), in part three. Pérez's decision to examine sixteen novels testifies to her ambition to cover as much ground as the subject matter and the argument require.

Rather than dealing with soldiering, military tactics and campaigns, combat and warfare, or international diplomacy, the novels Pérez studies treat WWII as backdrop for stories of civilian lives. The sixteen novels are not war fictions—only four of the novels deal with "the vicissitudes of the front, and then only marginally" (2)—but tell stories of common lives warped by a wide range of war-related circumstances and war-induced problems. Pérez asserts the value of such a small-scale view of an epic event with the help of Jean-François Lyotard's idea of micronarratives, or *petit récits* (2), as opposed to large-scale or "macronarratives," such as the "master-narrative of Britain's participation in the Battle of the Atlantic" (80). Yet she does not ignore the broad arena, of which the reader is constantly reminded. Thanks to her competent and skilful use of factual information, we realize that the two perspectives—micro and macro—are not incompatible. Large-scale and military historiography needs to be complemented by small-scale histories.

Pérez structures the book to give an interpretive treatment to each of the sixteen novels. This critical egalitarianism has its merits; however, the chapters read as essays in their own right, at the expense of the unity of the whole work. Cross-references have been impossible to avoid and there are shared themes, some repeatedly and overtly made reference to in the book, others covertly apparent to the reader, but they are not summarized in more general discussions that would sufficiently elucidate them. For example, among the most conspicuous issues is the question of national identity (chiefly, of course, the British national identity), appearing in most of the novels under discussion; yet nowhere in the book is the subject given systematic treatment as a major overarching concern influencing British WWII writing, or, conversely, as an issue finding various and complex expressions in the books that may aid in defining just what the British identity is. (We shall return to this topic presently.) Despite the often captivating readings of the novels, in places her analyses tend to focus on minute details of plots, and due to lack of grouping and summing-up we sometimes lose sight of the broader context.

The modes of treatment of the literary material vary considerably. For example, *Atonement* is analysed mostly as a literary text, with much of the discussion centred on postmodern discourse. In some cases, Pérez stays attuned to what she regards as the novel's main feature or concern; in others, we receive summaries of plots and explanations of

the historical circumstances of events. Perhaps the undisclosed purpose is to be always in motion and to prevent one perspective or approach from monopolising the analysis. While some readers will like this quicksilver style, others may not.

To expand the point just made, Pérez pays considerable attention to the different types of narration, and specifically to how a novelist's "technical" choices influence the reader's understanding of events and situations. The book's title has already indicated that the scholar is concerned with how the passage of time affects a person's (and a nation's) way of seeing a traumatic event. The relations between a novel's formal aspects and the various ethical and historiographical issues they raise are in some cases especially intriguing, e.g., in *The Night Watch*, with its retrospective type of narration (22-23), and in *Atonement* (35). Pérez's foregrounding of narration, however, is not consistent. In some sections she applies the tools of narrative theory to examine an author's technique, while in others attention shifts to different matters.

Pérez's book offers a felicitous combination of accuracy and reader-friendliness; she avoids the kind of debate that the non-specialised reader might find tedious, yet never compromises the rigours of academic discourse. While the formal features of the book do meet the requirements of a scholarly study, in many passages the temptation to step out of academia was occasionally too strong for the author to resist. When Pérez reaches for theories, she tends to rely on secondary sources (e.g., Roland Barthes on page 48; Michel Foucault in note 29; Wolfgang Iser and Hayden White on page 35; and Jean-François Lyotard, as mentioned above). The overall impression is that Pérez takes a pragmatic approach to theory and is interested in ideas and conceptions that are useful in her analysis. Obvious also is her determination not to allow theory to obfuscate the subject matter in hand; war, in other words, is not to be an occasion to settle theoretical debates.

British identity and its shaky position is evidently an issue that attracts contemporary novelists to WWII. The different ways of addressing it in recent fiction (e.g., *Night Watch, Atonement, Restless*, *Enigma*, *La's Orchestra Saves the World*) suggest the impossibility of constructing a fixed and stable national character. This is especially interesting in view of today's resurgence of faith in the British pre-war spirit. It is to Pérez's credit that she is critical of attempts to define the "national character" (128). She never tires of pointing out what she calls "the dissonance between what the nation believed [and still believes] and the facts" (42). This kind of dissonance, disquieting as it may be, is perhaps unavoidable, at least as long as nations willingly inhabit what Salman Rushdie memorably described as "imaginary homelands" (1982).

We have commented already on the informational value of the book, surprising as this statement may sound when made in relation to a study of fiction. The reader will be impressed by the amount and scope of research that has gone into the book. Pérez is not only familiar with the textbook history of WWII, but also knows and shares many intriguing nuances the reader may be ignorant of or tend to ignore; these include the German occupation of the Channel Islands, the spy networks, the French and other

national allegiances or Poland's involvement. Pérez skilfully combines factual history with literary interpretations, making her readers more aware of the social and cultural issues the novels address.

Pérez's decision to study current fictional re-visitings through a workable sample is as interesting as it is justifiable. Although a relatively recent event, WWII as reflected in the novels is a field for the imagination, eligible for changes of perspective. The novelists have not witnessed the war themselves, which justifies the term second-generation imagination and supports her focus on myths and their cultural "lives." Alternative or fictional history is still read as history; and if understanding an event or a process requires the exercise of the historical imagination, then the reading of a novel may be justified as a way of putting this faculty to use. What is more, one of the issues that Pérez's book makes the reader confront is that imagination is a factor active in the very process of an event's coming into being. As we read in the first chapter, the novels help us address complex phenomena, not only that of "the country's collective imagination," but also those of "selective memory" and "historical inaccuracies" (17-18).

Pérez succeeds in convincing her readers, as a reflection of the literary material she looks at, that WWII continues to be re-visited in order to be re-interpreted, placed in new contexts and put to new uses. She assesses the current image of the conflict in popular culture (most of the novels seem to answer to this category) and shows her readers how the myth of WWII continues to thrive: how it is re-imagined and re-appropriated, and what stories it can accommodate. Some of the novels are evidently closer and more appealing to Pérez than others. The section on *Atonement* shows the scholar at work on a text that poses special challenges for her hermeneutic skills. In what reads as a superb essay in its own right, Pérez notes that a critical perusal of *Atonement* "becomes a virtually endless exercise in interpretation" (37); the wealth of issues that this novel raises does indeed come through in her analysis. In the foreword, Fernández-Corugedo remarks that Pérez's book encourages a person to read the novels it discusses; this is certainly the case with the analysis of *Atonement*, as well as a number of other novels she discusses and about the content of which she feels strongly.

WWII remains a theme that novelists regard as worthy of artistic exploration. Simultaneously, the way in which the temporal distance has affected perceptions and attitudes is another incentive, imaginatively, to travel back in time and explore the past. Perplexities inherent in any traumatic event of international magnitude are not only intriguing but almost overwhelming. In particular, what was then, and still is, at stake is a society's and a nation's identity. As the title of Pérez's concluding chapter suggests, the past may be "elusive," but history is "inescapable." Close or distant, historic events are not easy to grasp, but novels about them may help us to do the grasping, due to the generic demand for closure. At the same time, elusive as the past may seem, we find ourselves in its grip. Wars are times when the grip of history feels more like an iron hasp. Stories of the entrapment of lives in and by war make up the substance of war fiction and are a fascinating area for scholarly explorations.

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Juanjo Bermúdez de Castro. 2012. *Rewriting Terror: The 9/11 Terrorists in American Fiction*. Alcalá de Henares: Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin. 235 pp. ISBN: 978-84-15595-97-7.

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In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, many authors of fiction, filmmakers, journalists, public figures and scholars have attempted to narrate, recreate, explain, reflect on and theorize about the event and its aftermath. In the first decade after 9/11, over 164 fiction texts were published or distributed in the United States with 9/11 as subject matter, as well as 145 volumes of juvenile fiction and 1,433 non-fiction books, according to *Bowker's Books In Print* database in 2011. The number of fiction works (novels, comics, films, documentaries, etc.) has kept on growing and the corpus is indeed now very large. Likewise, many academic journals have devoted issues to 9/11, such as the *Journal of American History*'s special issue "History and September 11" (volume 89.2, 2002), *The South Atlantic Quarterly*'s 2002 issue "Dissent from the Homeland," edited by Hauerwas and Lentricchia (volume 101.2), and *Modern Language Studies*'s "Nine Eleven + Ten" in 2011 (volume 41.1), to name but a few of those cited by Bermúdez de Castro. Not surprisingly, 9/11 is a thriving research topic that is seeing incisive and exciting contributions, and offers a wide variety of approaches, perspectives and subject matters. Politics, ethics, terrorism, war, violence, history, identity, literature... all are subject to analysis in relation to 9/11.

In spite of the extensive critical production on 9/11, Bermúdez de Castro's work acknowledges the need for a volume that gives "priority to the similarity of ideological messages conveyed or the similar narratological strategies adopted, over the specific medium employed" (206). Accordingly, his analysis disregards any grouping of fiction works into the categories of novel, short story, comic or film, and explores, instead, what these various texts on 9/11 have in common. This strategy is based on the author's conviction that there is a lack of theoretical frameworks, such as history, literature and ideology "within the existing analysis of how 9/11 popular fiction does actually reconstruct the event [which makes] the readers/spectators reconfigure their ideological positions towards it" (206). Therefore, Bermúdez de Castro adopts a Foucauldian approach that conceives of fictional texts as "battlefields of multiple forces" which "act as another ideological state apparatus and impose particular versions of the 9/11 events" (12). The author's main contention is that these versions aim, ultimately and in most cases, at paying tribute to the white victims, at demonizing the terrorists or at staging a call for war. It can hardly be denied that the

cultural and political climate in the US during the first years after the attacks may have fostered such responses, but still, it could be argued that post-9/11 fiction is doing more than just that. Indeed, the author himself acknowledges this in the last chapter, where he reviews the academic production on 9/11. Nonetheless, Bermúdez de Castro has carefully chosen his corpus and he convincingly argues his case: that there is a need for a comparative analysis of 9/11 fiction works vis-à-vis the discourses that shape them.

In consequence, *Rewriting Terror* does not seek to be an all-encompassing overview of 9/11 fiction themes, but rather an in-depth analysis of one theme in particular: how that "quintessential" Other, the figure of the terrorist, is represented and constructed in American post-9/11 fiction. The aim is to explore how the perpetrators of 9/11 have been represented, misrepresented or underrepresented in novels, short stories, comics and film, and to expose and trace the origins of the ideological assumptions upheld by these texts. Based on the premise that "fiction does not only reflect relations of power but it actively participates in the creation of history and in the consolidation of certain ideological messages" (12), the most relevant contribution of this volume is its narratological analysis of selected fiction works against the backdrop of ongoing discourses about 9/11 and the theories that support them, particularly in relation to the figure of the terrorist. The author seeks to show how such discourses have been recreated in fiction and how fiction seems to validate said discourses; among these, former President Bush's rhetoric of "caves and evil," Samuel Huntington's theory of "The Clash of Civilizations" (1993), the analogy of 9/11 as the new Pearl Harbor, the framing of 9/11 as the new Holocaust, Bernard Lewis's "The Roots of Muslim Rage" (1999), or the powerful strategy deployed by the government and the mass media of turning victims into heroes. Thus, the volume's strength resides in its analysis of 9/11 fiction alongside the theories and discourses which shape (or aim at shaping) our response to the 9/11 events and the ongoing War on Terror, thus providing an insightful panoramic view of how the "official version" of 9/11 came to be—and is still being—constructed. Although "fictional terrorism" was prolific in the 1980s and 1990s, Bermúdez de Castro contends that September 11 set "in motion a whole ideological—and military—Western machinery which partly recovered that one-sided 'evil' portrait of the terrorist figure . . . this time even more racially, ethnically and religiously biased than before" (33).

Part one, "Minimal Portraits," is an analysis of the underrepresentation of terrorists in post-9/11 fiction, ranging from texts in which they are almost absent (Rubram Fernández's novel *September 11 from the Inside;* Frank Senauth's novel *A Day of Terror*), through minimal representation which seeks to attribute to them a threatening and exotic undertone (Paul Greengrass's film *United 93;* Peter Markle's FOX TV film *Flight 93*), to texts in which their representation is stereotypical (Don DeLillo's novel *Falling Man; The West Wing* episode "Isaac and Ishmael"). Bermúdez de Castro argues that this absence or minimal representation replicates the effects of the policies of racial profiling which were set in motion in the United States in the wake of 9/11 and which led to the effective disappearance of a frightened population from the streets due to the "intense wave of

racial crimes against Arabs, Muslims and whoever 'looked like' Middle Easterner in the weeks after 9/11" (60). This disappearance is, according to the author, significantly echoed in the pages of 9/11 fiction, which deals mainly with bereaved white widows or brave white firemen and policemen, and key in "the ideological production of each story" (39). This group of fictional works includes that most popular trend in 9/11 fiction, the heroic "plane narrative" about the events aboard the only plane not to hit its target (flight United 93, which crashed in the fields near Shanksville, Pennsylvania), which draws its popularity from representing an open confrontation between passengers and hijackers, thus giving meaning to "the ideological and discursive transformation of 'the 9/11 victims' into 'the 9/11 heroes'" (57). The claim of such films to be offering an "insider's perspective" of the tragedy and the pretension of telling the "truth" from the vantage point of the victim is their main advertising ploy, and this purported "veracity" leads, in the author's opinion, to the erasement of the terrorists, who only receive brief sketches which simply serve to demonize them (39).

One case in point that illustrates such erasement is, according to the author, Don DeLillo's novel *Falling Man* where, even though the terrorists are part of the narrative, Mohammad Atta appears as a "spectral presence" and his portrait is stereotypical and made "despicable" both to fellow terrorists and readers (72). The author argues that the eight pages dedicated to the terrorist Hammad are poor and superficial in content, and that the "stylish change of focalizer" (from Hammad in the plane to Keith Neudecker in the World Trade Center) at the moment of impact are not enough to counter the stereotypical portrait of the terrorists that DeLillo constructs throughout the novel (72), while focusing so extensively on the white victims. While this reading is plausible, authors have suggested that this potted representation may respond to DeLillo's attempt to represent the workings of psychic trauma and the impossibility of narrating the events coherently, thus his resorting to disruption, fragmentation and repetition as a narrative technique (Baelo-Allué 2012; Cvek 2011). This section concludes with a trenchant analysis in chapter four of how the apparatus of indoctrination is set to work in *The West Wing*'s special episode "Isaac and Ishmael" (aired in October 2001), which traces the root of the conflict back to Biblical times, upholding an inextricable and ontological confrontation between Christianity and Islam. The narratological analysis carried out in these first four chapters is revealing, and the author identifies and explains some of the narrative mechanisms used by these fictional works in order to achieve, successfully or not, that semblance of "veracity" that seeks to give credit to their ideological message.

After this probing analysis of how terrorists are under-represented in minimal, shadowy sketches, part two, "Terrorists in America," deals with terrorists' misrepresentation in the detailed portraits featured in John Updike's novel *Terrorist*, Martin Amis's short story "The Last Days of Muhammad Atta," Andre Dubus III's novel *The Garden of Last Days* and Stan Lee's comic "The Sleeping Giant." The inclusion of a non-American novelist, Amis, in the corpus to be analyzed responds to Amis's "canonical position in the US as 'the postmodern Anglo-Saxon writer'" (111). Furthermore, Bermúdez de Castro hints at the heated debates

Amis generated—most notably, with cultural critic Terry Eagleton—by the allegedly racist and Islamophobic comments in his collection of short stories, essays and journalism, *The Second Plane* (2008), which includes the short story reviewed in *Rewriting Terror*. The ideological assumptions put forth by the texts analyzed in this section, the author maintains, uphold that Islam is a culture of death opposed to a Western culture of life (Updike), that the terrorists are sexually obsessed maniacs (Dubus) whose sexual frustration (Amis) or animalistic nature (Lee) is to a large extent the motive behind their actions. In his analysis of *Terrorist*, for example, Bermúdez de Castro develops his argument against the theoretical works of Jean Baudrillard (*The Spirit of Terrorism*) and Slavoj Žižek (*Welcome to the Desert of the Real*), in an effort to explain why "a novel so negatively received by both press and academia was such a success in libraries" (108), a novel whose final message seems to be a celebration of American ordinary life and a warmongering appeal to the nation, when Updike concludes that "this is a country worth fighting for" (109).

Part three, "Terrorists in 'Hystoerical' Context," analyzes four fictional works (three comics and one novel) "which attempted in different ways to trace the origins—and ultimately the causes—of the 9/11 terrorist attacks" (145) but which, according to the author, "committed terrible errors when reflecting upon [the attacks] and especially when contextualizing them into history" (145). Huntington's West-centered theory of global politics as an inevitable cultural clash between the East and the West is replicated in David Swanner's novel *The Fateful Cause*, while it is contested by, among many others, Edward Said's essay "The Clash of Ignorance" (2001) and Hunt's "In the Wake of September 11: The Clash of What?" (2002). The inclusion of Swanner's biased text—if it can be classified as literature at all—in this analysis is somewhat baffling, but the whole section proves insightful in setting the tone of current contextualizations of 9/11 that serve to justify the ongoing War on Terror. The section is completed by the analysis of Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colón's *The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation*, Beau Smith's "Soldiers," and Sam Glanzman's "There Were Tears in Her Eyes."

Fortunately, Bermúdez de Castro does see some hope in 9/11 fiction's ability to transcend racially and ideologically biased interpretations of the terrorist attacks, and in the brief chapter "How to Resist Demonizing and Generalizing Discourses" he lists a number of fiction works that seem to offer a space for critical reflection, such as Igor Kordey's "Captain America Sheds His Mighty Tears: Comics and September 11," Lynne Sharon Schwartz's *The Writing on the Wall*, and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. To conclude, the bibliographical work behind *Rewriting Terror* is remarkable, and the reader will be glad to find three useful appendixes that list the most relevant works on 9/11 up to the date of publication of this volume: Appendix A on 9/11 fiction, which lists cartoons, comics, graphic novels, films, novels, performances, plays, poetry, short stories, series and docudramas; an extensive Appendix B on nonfiction texts; and Appendix C listing academic works (books, journal articles, newspaper reviews and articles) on 9/11 fiction. For anyone wishing to explore 9/11, Bermudez's mapping of the production is indeed enlightening.

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Russell Hoban, ed. 2011: *Dudo Errante*. Translated by David Cruz and M.ª Luisa Pascual. Madrid: Cátedra. 368 pp. ISBN: 9788437628943.

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Writing a science-fiction novel review is never an easy task. All too often, prejudice against the genre comes to burden the critique, leading it towards an apology for the genre rather than towards a proper critical analysis of the literary work. A related problem is that quite often the critics leave unexplained key questions that remain unperceived by lay readers, as well as other different and uncommon ways of reading the works. The reviewing process is usually worthwhile due to the satisfaction of facilitating access to excellent works of art for a wider readership who wouldn't have approached such titles otherwise.

Such is the case with *Dudo Errante* (in English, *Riddley Walker*), but it is further complicated by the numerous levels of interpretation that the novel invites. The translation of this work by David Cruz and María Luisa Pascual is published by Cátedra, within the Letras populares collection, edited by Ana Ramos and Javier Fernández, in an attempt to enhance the status of the genre.

Although the plot of the novel itself is not as important as the combination of the elements implemented in it, it is worth summarizing at this point: in two and a half thousand years' time, and after what seems to be a nuclear disaster, western civilization as we know it no longer exists: Technologically, humanity has reverted to the Iron Age; written texts barely exist and thus hardly anyone can read. In the midst of this devastation there are only tribal governments, with no complex organization or strong legislative or legal systems and, obviously, no separation of powers. The protagonist, Dudo, undertakes a personal investigation of the history of the world, travelling through different spaces. The *bildungsroman* plot itself, however, is perhaps not the most interesting feature of the novel. It is its style that proves more innovative and difficult to translate. That said, novels are not written with ideas but with words, and in this case words go beyond ideas. The following translated paragraph may suffice to convey the complexity of this task:

> Todo tiene su forma i tan bien la noche solo que no puedes ver la forma de la noche ni la puedes imaginar. Si stas predispuesto la puedes intuir. No con el saver de tu cabeça sino con aquel 1er saber. Donde las numerosas trepadoras crezen en las piedras muertas i la tierra sta dolida por las excauaciones de 3 dias la noche todauia conoce su propia forma aunque nos otros no la conozemos. A vezes la noche tiene forma de oreja mas no se trata de 1 oreja de la

> qual conozcamos la forma. Atenta a todos los sonidos que se nos han ido. Al murmullo de las ciudades muertas i a vozes anteriores a que las ciudades stuuieran alli. Antes de que hubiera yerro i fuego. Squcha lo que sta por venir tan bien. (90)

It took Russell Hoban five years to write *Riddley Walker*. While it is not always necessary to delve into the circumstances of an author's life in order to understand a novel, sometimes biographical data may help to enrich the reading. The writing of this novel, widely considered to be his masterwork, coincides with the author's divorce in the US and his move to live in England: a traumatic situation that forced him towards a complete reassessment of his opinions of the world and its sociocultural structures, as is explained in the introduction. In this regard, assertions about the assumed postmodernism of the novel are rooted in his manner of questioning any supposedly absolute epistemological system. His tempestuous personal process of questioning the world is thus transmitted through *Dudo Errante*.

The linguistic "clash" between his country of origin, the US, and England, his adopted country, enlightened him about the way in which language builds reality, leading him to write a novel with a "broken," "reconstructed" and imperfectly crafted language. This places the novel in what we might refer to as a despairing future, where neither normative English nor any kind of linguistic regularity exists. There is also a complete lack of real connection with the English language of 1980, the year in which the novel was finally published. The fragmentation and the re-creation of the English language establish the main resources of the novel at all levels, keeping readers in a constant struggle with the language through the numerous vacillations they encounter. The resulting difficulty in comfortably following the plot, due to this lexical and grammatical defamiliarization, produces a strong feeling of estrangement towards the world of the novel, which, despite the acute differences with our known world, invites us to identify with its social and intimate conflicts. The language of *Dudo Errante* is therefore a metaphor for all the irregularities of our own experience of the world, this way of reflecting our reality in comparison to another very distant one, normally placed in the future, being the main characteristic of science fiction, according to Darko Suvin's definition in his work *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979). Hoban uses numerous strategies characteristic of a particular science fiction subgenre: post-apocalyptic fiction. However, such impressive linguistic accomplishment is not frequent, even among the greatest works of this mode. A number of critics have praised Hoban's adroitness, and Harold Bloom included the novel in his work *The Western Canon* (1994), while the author Anthony Burgess wrote that *Riddley Walker* was exactly what literature should be (12). Many similar references are collected in the introduction of this Spanish edition.

Not only does the fragmented discourse complicate the reading of the novel, but it also merges with the protagonist's investigation of History, which is as fragmented as that we today have inherited from the ancient past. Deformations of Dudo's world, which sadden us and make us think about the ignorance of its wise men, draw attention to our own

ignorance. Hence, the novel is a projection of all the doubts we have in relation to our own knowledge, however we might understand it. The culture created by folklore is another way of understanding the world for Dudo. Hoban inserts this perspective into the novel through samples of oral literature from our world, a resource already brilliantly used by Ursula K. Le Guin in works such as *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) and *Always Coming Home* (1985). In this sense, it seems that folklore functions as both an alternative to history and as its complement, deforming and restructuring, embellishing and confusing our ideas about the past.

On the one hand, therefore, we are confronted with a hard, devastating work that does not make easy reading, but on the other we encounter a novel beautiful in its understanding of literature. Its severity reflects all there is to Western middle-class comfort and falseness, as has been described in some contemporary science fiction novels, such as the post-apocalyptic *The Road*, by Cormac McCarthy (2006) and *Plop*, by Rafael Pinedo (2007).

All the above is carefully explained in a detailed and thorough introduction to the Spanish edition by the translators: María Luisa Pascual and David Cruz. In the itinerary focused on their Derridian vision of the novel, the two translators establish the relations between the structure, the author, the narrator, the characters and the discourse, providing consistently accurate and clear clues to their interpretation of the work. The only issue which, in my opinion, is left unclear is the distinction between the dystopian and the post-apocalyptic genre. In contrast to in dystopias, the post-apocalyptic society does not form a state system based on the complex structure of legislation and social concepts. As a matter of fact, the examples of classical dystopias quoted by Pascual and Cruz in the introduction to this edition have very little to do with the scarcely civilized atmosphere and city dwellers of post-apocalyptic stories. The differences between the genre characteristics of novels such as *A Brave New World*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *We*, *1984*, *The Road, Earth Abides* and *A Canticle for Leibowitz* are quite obvious. The "dystopian element" normally appears in negative future scenarios, but not every negative future scenario is a dystopia. However, this confusion does not result from a lack of references, for the translators do indeed offer very interesting sources. One is the work of Carl Freedman on the relations between literary theory and science fiction, which is, however, combined with hardly enlightening and informative texts like those written by Sergio Gaut Vel Hartman. The former could have been developed more and the latter given less space. Nevertheless, the different theoretical perspectives from which this thorough analysis is approached are very enriching and prevent readers from getting lost within unnecessary labyrinths. The translators' introduction is a valuable and interesting tool for understanding the novel, as they bring the perspective of the expert literary translator who has intimately identified with the writer's obsession with the deconstruction of language. Their perspective stems from the language and it continues towards the very language, passing on its way through society, culture, history. That is to say, the overall context is considered to be language itself.

In this regard, their notes on the translation process, some of which were included in the previous Spanish edition of the novel published by Berenice, are priceless. This

apparently impossible work—translating Hoban's novel into Spanish—is shown to be that of goldsmiths and rightly won the Spanish Association for Anglo-American Studies Translation Prize in 2005. Further testament to their work is that Hoban had banned any kind of translation to another language, until he discovered and approved the project of Pascual and Cruz.

This amazingly crafted Cátedra edition is complemented with some of Hoban's drawings—he was also an illustrator—with detailed notes at the end of the introduction, a useful glossary and some of the annotations of the author himself.

In conclusion, this is by no means an easy text, but rather an arduous and deconstructive work. Nonetheless, it exploits the unsuspected limits of literature in a way that has been achieved by only a few of the writers of the British New Wave.

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María Luisa Calero Vaquera and María de los Ángeles Hermosilla Álvarez, eds. 2013. *Lenguaje, Literatura y Cognición*. Córdoba: SP U de Córdoba.

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Language, literature and cognition, as the three central themes of the book, stand for the different faces of a three-sided prism that lies at the core of the human being's linguistic and communicative ability and cognitive potential. Language and cognition are inseparable; language is one of our basic cognitive abilities and one of the most ostensible signs of human thinking power. And literature is nothing but language, a linguistic discourse imbued with artistic spirit, which expresses, construes and communicates knowledge and thought.

In the field of linguistics, the paradigm known as Cognitive Linguistics has in recent years become one of the most visible banners of the relationship between language and cognition. This paradigm embraces a multitude of approaches from different theoretical perspectives, but ultimately united in their common interest in the link between language and cognition. Of these approaches, those by linguists working from the US, such as Lakoff and Johnson's Theory of Conceptual Metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1993), Langacker's Cognitive Grammar (1987, 1991) or Fillmore's Frame Semantics (1976, 1982), are undoubtedly the most famous and widely recognised. That said, the cognitive postulate flourishes in Europe, resulting in a series of approaches that have contributed to widening our knowledge on language and cognition from their own particular perspective.

In this sense, this volume encompasses a wide spectrum of approaches developed, for the most part, by Spanish linguists, although homage is also paid to the theory of the French linguist Maurice Toussaint. It brings together fifteen papers that profile different cognitive approaches to literature and language in general, starting with two papers in tribute to Toussaint, whose linguistic theory—as outlined in the introduction to the book—inspired much of the work of the research group of the editors, *Lenguajes* ("Languages"). In the first, Francis Tollis describes how Toussaint's theory, inspired by laws of biology and physics, explains certain linguistic processes that may, at first sight, seem arbitrary. In fact, in the letter to the mathematician and creator of catastrophe theory René Thom that appears as the second paper in the volume, Toussaint himself underlines certain parallelisms between some of the mathematician's proposals and his linguistic model. Despite differences with cognitive approaches that led Toussaint to talk about "an anti-cognitivist cognitive neurolinguistics" (45), his attempt to explain the motivation

of linguistic processes through reference to nature has clear parallelisms with Cognitive Linguistics postulates.

The third paper of the volume places readers in the literary field at the hand of Mª Ángeles Hermosilla, who builds upon Reception Aesthetics and cognitive postulates in order to vindicate the dynamic nature of meaning. Unlike more traditional approaches which conceive of meaning as an objective entity that lies within the text, she defends the inter-subjective character of reading as a space where meaning is built during the interaction between reader and text.

The fourth paper is devoted to Ángel López's Liminal or Perceptive Grammar. This theory shares some basic cognitive principles with Cognitive Linguistics (such as the figure and ground principle or the parallelisms between linguistic processes and basic natural processes like vision), but also displays features (such as its simultaneous focus on language and meta-language) that distinguish it from other approaches. Another approach in the volume placed in the field of linguistics is the fourteenth paper of the volume, by Eulalio Fernández Sánchez, which advocates a multidisciplinary approach to the nature of the linguistic sign.

The fifth paper of the volume brings readers back to the literary field guided by Ángel Luis Luján, whose work is a vindication of the use of cognitive stylistics as valuable methodology with which to analyse literary texts. Such a methodology is based on the basic cognitive principles that advocate the continuity between literary and everyday language and between the iconic and the motivated nature of language. The seventh, twelfth and thirteenth papers of the volume also have a literary orientation. That by Mercedes Belinchón deals with the relationship between natural and literary language and suggests that it is a suitable field of research for cognitive linguistics and psychology as well as for literature. This is complemented by a paper by María Dolores Porto and another by Juani Guerra. Both work in the field of Cognitive Poetics, but whereas Porto's work provides a more general introduction to the leading principles of Cognitive Poetics, the paper by Guerra adopts a more interdisciplinary approach, placing the theory within the paradigm of Complexity Theories.

The sixth paper of the volume, by F. Javier Perea Siller, adopts a more historical approach in its historiographic application of cognitivism. It analyses the metaphorical motivation of the concept of nobility from the debates of sixteenth-century Spanish society and its relationship with the racist images surviving up to the eighteenth century. The metaphorical motivation of language is also the focus of the eighth paper, by Mª Paz Cepedello and Mª del Carmen García Manga, which points to metaphor as one of the most productive mechanisms for motivation.

One area with enormous potential for the application of cognitive theories is without any doubt that of Second Language Acquisition and the next paper, by Anna Sánchez Rufat, proposes a method to improve the learning of lexical combinations in foreign language teaching by building on three components or basic stages of cognitive processing, that is, retention, fixation and reutilisation.

Another area where there are numerous possibilities for the application of cognitive-oriented approaches is Discourse Analysis. The approach detailed in the paper by Antonio Barcelona regarding the notion of conceptual metonymy is particularly illuminating in this respect. He argues for the presence of metonymic operations, not only in many cognitive-linguistic processes (for instance, metaphors), but also in processes operating in discourse comprehension (for instance, in pragmatic inference and implicature).

After Barcelona's contribution on the notion of metonymy, we find the paper by Regina Gutiérrez on the notion of conceptual metaphor, another of the leading concepts in Cognitive Linguistics. Her work adopts an interlinguistic approach to the analysis of heart metaphors, arguing that the similarities found in its conceptualisation in different languages suggest the existence of a universal motivation based on a series of generic interlinguistic stereotypes of the human body.

Finally, the volume closes with a paper by Carlos Subirats on Frame Semantics, one of the most prolific approaches within the Cognitive Linguistics paradigm. His model builds on Fillmore's FrameNet project to create a Spanish model of this network by integrating Frame Semantics and Bergen and Chang's Embodied Construction Grammar (2007).

The main challenge the volume faces lies in its ambitious attempt to unify approaches that at times seem very different and not closely related. This may be what gives this work its rather eclectic character, which on certain occasions can be seen as a virtue, but on others becomes an obstacle to its aim to unify. Nevertheless, and despite the difficulties imposed by the diversity of the approaches encompassed in the volume, one of its main achievements is surely that of highlighting and vindicating the existence of other cognitive approaches developed in areas nearer Spain. It brings together a number of approaches that, while sharing a crucial set of cognitive assumptions, such as the union between language, literature and cognition, have still managed to find their own identity and postulate innovative and specific premises. On the one hand, one could argue that these European approaches have been somehow overshadowed by the notoriety—undoubtedly well deserved—of US linguists. But on the other, they have certainly managed to use the paradigm for their own purposes, turning it into a "more propitious breeding ground for their rise" (11). I hope that *Lenguaje, Literatura y Cognición* will become a standard addition to the bookshelf, alongside the US contributions and that it will contribute to fostering the growth and expansion of Cognitive Linguistics in Spain.

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Barry Pennock-Speck and María Milagros del Saz-Rubio, eds. 2013. *The Multimodal Analysis of Television Commercials*. Valencia: U de València. 214 pp. ISBN: 978-8-4370-9145-7.

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Multimodal analysis has received great attention in the last decade, partly due to the development of new ways of analysing complex text forms (i.e., Dreyfus, Hood and Stenglin 2011; Machin and Mayr 2012; Unsworth 2008), and *The Multimodal Analysis of Television Commercials* adds to this wealth of studies at the adept hands of two discourse analysts with a long experience in the description of media discourse. As Pennock-Speck and del Saz-Rubio state in the introduction, this volume aims to provide readers with "food for thought" and to "spark new approaches to the analysis of television advertising" (14). In order to achieve this, eight contributions are presented in an attempt to account for "the exegesis and explanation of TV commercials from several different cultures and from different theoretical stances" (14). As the editors explain, the motivation for this volume comes from the fact that previous studies, especially those focusing on gender and marketing, tend to reduce their analyses to only a small number of features and, therefore, cannot account for the complexities involved in advertising. Although the need for a multimodal approach to language produced and accessed through television is not surprising, considering its intrinsically multimodal nature, in the case of TV advertising it is also justified by the fact that there has been "a progressive shift in advertising strategies involving a greater use of images and music rather than words in order to influence the audience" (del Saz-Rubio and Pennock-Speck 2009, 2539), thus restating in practical terms that, in the so-called "era of multimodality," semiotic modes other than language are treated not only as fully capable of representation, but also for communication (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 46).

When trying to answer the question of how meaning is constructed in TV commercials, linguistics places the focus on the very core of semiotics. Hence, Pennock-Speck and del Saz-Rubio take into consideration the semiotic modes which are involved in getting meaning across in TV commercials. However, they do not restrict themselves to following a fixed theoretical meaning-making model of intersemiosis such as Halliday's (1978) hierarchical three-strata model of meaning construction, or the well-known non-hierarchical four-strata model developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), or even the model presented by O'Halloran, Tan and Marissa K.L.E. in chapter five of the book, developed for the multimodal description of advertisements.

On the contrary, in order to give room to all kinds of perspectives on the analysis of TV commercials, Pennock-Speck and del Saz-Rubio adopt a broad perspective on the interplaying semiotics, distinguishing three main modes which interact simultaneously in meaning-making in TV commercials: The "visual" (still and moving images); the "ear" (music, diegetic and extra-diegetic sound, and paralinguistic features of voice), which, according to Pennock-Speck and del Saz Rubio (2009), can be linked to features such as prestige; and the "structure" (lecture-type ads, montage or mini-dramas), which subsumes or informs the other levels, modes or strata. Considering the difficulties involved in the multimodal description of TV commercials, even from a comprehensive approach, the main questions that the editors set out to answer are whether it is possible to delve into each of the intersemiotically participating modes in the same amount of detail, and also whether it is possible to carry out analyses of ads on a large scale (14). The volume constitutes a positive answer to these questions.

Readers will find that the contents of this volume reflect both the inherent complexities, as well as the inspiring possibilities, involved in the multimodal analysis of advertising discourse. Although all the contributions deal with practical analyses of TV commercials, the theoretical frameworks employed are also sound and relevant, ranging from the above-mentioned model which O'Halloran, Tan and Marissa K.L.E. have developed for this specific type of communication situation, to the application of frameworks developed in other contexts, such as Fludernik's narratology (chapter four), or Riggoti's and Rocci's application of argumentation theory and congruity theory (based on Austin's and Searle's Speech Act Theory) in chapter seven.

In chapter one, Llorca-Abad analyses nine Catalonian commercials from channel TV3 in order to identify a Catalonian advertising model. In chapter two, Andersen studies the use of irony in advertising, a feature typically linked to Danish culture (44), analysing one advertisement from Danish TV and concluding that it is the ironic function of the music in the ad which allows the advertisers to engage with a broader audience than if the music had been presented as a form of testimonial (57). In chapter three, the 2012 Peugeot car campaign "Motion and Emotion" is discussed by Bouvier and Machin, focusing on the role of sound and music for communicating ideas, attitudes and identities. In chapter four, Martínez Martínez, Kraljevic Mujic and Hidalgo-Downing analyse two hundred commercials from the British channel ITV2 to show how the closure plays a crucial role in the projection of the storyworld narrated as well as in the pragmatic creation of the persuasive function, which is typically constructed multimodally by simultaneously coordinating language, image and sound. In chapter five, O'Halloran, Tan and Marissa K.L.E. use their theoretical social-semiotic approach to the multimodal description of advertisements, which distinguishes three levels of meaning-making (denotative, connotative and mythological), to analyse one advertisement ("Dreams") for the Republic of Singapore Air Force. In doing so they show how ad-hoc digital technology helps analysts obtain an integrated view of how these meanings are created multimodally. In chapter six, an ad for the Volkswagen New Beetle Cabriolet car from German TV is analysed

by Wahl. Although she considers all the modes interplaying in the advertisement, her analytical perspective focuses on the role that the music and the lyrics play in the overall construction of meaning. Rocci, Mazzati-Lurati and Pollaroli (chapter seven) emphasise the argumentative and dialogical nature of advertisements, as the argumentative superficial form is not "immediately transparent and explicit" (163). One advertisement for the Fiat Panda in Italian TV is analysed to illustrate how it "orchestrates arguments" (178) in order to persuade the viewer. Finally, in chapter eight, Hardin compares the slogans of Spanish commercials in three different countries, focusing on how "novelty" is reflected in slogans, concluding that its presence occurs in a highly conventionalised way, although with subtle differences in the meanings of the slogans with respect to the countries of origin.

The descriptions above show how, although there is a general emphasis on the need to analyse the relations which arise from the interaction of the semiotic choices made in each of the semiotic modes for the construction of meaning, this perspective which focuses on the intersemiosis of TV commercials, also gives room for analyses on the grammar of one specific semiotic mode (both chapters three and six focus on the "ear" mode, as realised in the commercials for two different cars). In addition, we also find analyses dealing particularly with one or more strata or "domains of practice" in which meanings are dominantly constructed (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001). Chapter one deals with features related to the stratum of design, which Kress and van Leeuwen understand as the means to realise discourses in the context of a given communication situation, whereas the stratum of discourse is also accounted for by some of the contributions, when it is understood as socially constructed knowledge developed in a specific social context in a way which is appropriate to the interests of social actors in that context (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 4). In this sense, specific meanings present in TV commercials are identified and analysed, including (Catalonian) identity (chapter one), irony (in Danish culture, chapter two), persuasion (chapter four), and also the construction of novelty in chapter eight, where it is interesting to see how novelty is "translated" as a process of resemiotization (Iedema 2001) in three different cultural settings which share the same language (Chile, Spain and the US). To sum up, readers will find within this volume, practical examples of all the array of concerns of the analysis and description of TV commercials in a wide variety of languages and in different communication settings.

The studies collected will be of interest not only to linguists concerned with media discourse but also to people with a general interest in how advertising is produced. In this sense, the volume does indeed provide food for thought for a variety of potential readers, its most outstanding assets being the variety and number of languages and cultures involved, and the quantity of commercials analysed. However, a flaw is the uneven distribution of these examples, some of the studies dealing with only a single commercial or campaign (chapters two, three, five, six and seven), whereas others attempt far larger-scale analyses; chapter four, for example, focuses on 200 British TV adverts and chapter eight considers 723.

As Machin and Mayr claim, language is a form of social practice intertwined with how we act and how our societies are maintained and regulated in such a way that "language is part

of the way that people seek to promote particular views of the world and *naturalise* them, that is, make them appear natural and commonsensical" (2012, 2-3). This is especially true when TV commercials try to convince consumers that they have a problem that a specific product will solve, thus trying to elicit a certain response (buying the product) by creating a previously non-existent need. Discourse analysts seek to answer the question of how meaning is constructed so that this process of naturalisation takes place successfully. In this sense, readers will clearly find this volume helpful in interpreting "the complex semantic space which unfolds within and across multimodal phenomena" (O'Halloran 2011, 121), of which TV commercials are a good example, and which O'Halloran has identified as one of the major challenges in multimodal discourse analysis. The contribution of this volume to the analysis of advertising discourse is beyond question.

The importance of this volume lies in the variety and richness of the data presented (a total of 214 advertisements, as well as 723 commercials in 6 languages, broadcast in 10 countries from which 629 slogans have also been analysed), which constitutes a unique contribution to the multimodal discourse analysis of this area of enquiry. However, the variety of analyses, together with a lack of uniformity of the features analysed, the variety of languages and cultures involved, and the range of products advertised, are at the same time its main drawback. The mixture of perspectives adopted, albeit reflecting the fruitful potential of the area, also implies a lack of systematicity. Even though this is also the case in other similar collections which avoid sticking to a pre-categorisation of the object of analysis (i.e., Royce and Bowcher 2007), readers will find that the mosaic of analyses makes it difficult gather a holistic view of how the results contribute to multimodal discourse analysis. However, after this warning to readers to be ready to deal with a sequence of chapters which may seem disconnected, all the contributions will be of interest for those who are curious about the making and meaning making of TV commercials. Advertising discourse analysts in particular, especially those with intercultural or cross-cultural interests, will find extremely valuable information for contrastive multimodal analysis.

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As stated in the Introduction, this book series "intends to address the interface between Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics and is conceived to offer a platform to scholars who combine both disciplines" (1). A previous volume by the same editor had already convened linguistic scholars who promoted the idea that a true understanding of pragmatic meaning in interaction could be achieved solely by contrasting pragmatic theory with representative language data (Romero-Trillo 2008, 1). Pragmatics has been a controversial and complex branch of Linguistics; Corpus Linguistics (CL) has proven to be a rigorous and representative method to respond to this controversy. The present volume takes one step further in creating a space that welcomes studies combining "the delicacy of pragmatics analysis with the guaranteed representativeness of corpus linguistics" (2). Furthermore, it calls attention to the phenomenon of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) as well as the still neglected spoken mode in language, which serves as the basis for Romero-Trillo's Corpus of Language and Nature (CLAN Project)®, presented in this volume, and which focuses on how cultural factors may influence the emotional aspect of responses to visual information. Romero-Trillo has also recently co-edited a volume on current issues in Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) and the primary application of intercultural interaction (Kecskes and Romero-Trillo 2013). Structurally, this volume is divided into four parts, each contributing to an understanding of the research potential that the aforementioned synergy can offer. Part one, "Current Theoretical Issues in Pragmatics and Corpus Linguistics Research," draws attention to current gaps in each field and how these may be filled adopting a joint approach. Part two, "New Domains for Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics," brings to the fore new communicative settings and how their study requires a new approach. Part three, "New Methodologies for the Pragmatic Analysis of Speech through Corpora," focuses on spoken language and proposes corpus-based methodologies for pragmatic analysis. Lastly, part four, "Book Reviews," includes appraisals of two books that cover the core topics of the present edition: the potential of corpus-based studies, and the impact of social and online networks on language and communication.

In the first chapter of part one, Callies stresses the need to widen the scope of ILP beyond politeness phenomena (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993; Trosborg 1995), usually conveyed

in language through the use of speech acts. This overextended focus on illocutionary acts has narrowed down the scope of pragmatic knowledge to sociopragmatics. Drawing on Barron's (2003) proposal and the current need to distinguish between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge, Callies provides his own definition for Second Language (L2) Pragmatic Knowledge (14). Furthermore, this study responds to the scarcity of corpus studies on emphatic *do* and cleft constructions in spoken learner language, which is surprising considering their rate of occurrence when compared to written language (Collins 1991; Oberlander and Delin 1996; Weinert and Miller 1996). This study broadens our pragmalinguistic understanding of information highlighting in English learner discourse.

Without leaving the domain of learner language, the second chapter, by Steve Walsh, adopts Conversation Analysis (CA) as an approach to Second Language Acquisition (SLA), a combination that has resulted in the field known as CA-SLA or CA-for-SLA. Even though this could be viewed as a challenge to the traditional focus of CA on informal spontaneous conversation, spoken interaction in a formal setting is based on the same procedures of ordinary conversation (Edwards and Westgate 1994; 42); moreover, it allows for research fields such as SLA or Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) being of a descriptive, as opposed to prescriptive, nature. Walsh's study reflects the potential of a corpus-based CA approach by identifying four speech exchange systems in the context of small group teaching (SGT).

The third chapter, by Vaughan and Clancy, compares the phenomenon of deixis in the family and working contexts on the basis of the exclusive or inclusive use of the pronoun *we*. The relevance of examining *we* resides in its ability to help define speaker identities and relationships, which is crucial in the understanding of context to avoid pragmatic "failure" (Thomas 1983). The findings seem to coincide with those of previous studies focusing on the complexity of an item's referential potential; in this case, the complexity of *we* has shown to be of a higher degree in the workplace setting as opposed to the family context. Furthermore, Vaughan and Clancy address the unfortunate scarcity of spoken corpora, a theoretical gap stressed throughout the volume, given the context-dependent nature of spoken language. The scarcity of spoken corpora is usually attributed to the amount of manual work required in its compilation as opposed to written corpora compilation; it has been estimated that forty hours of work are required for one hour of recording (Moreno Sandoval et al. 2008). Furthermore, spoken utterances require strict control of variables, which usually entails having to downsize the database; something that has often led to the results yielded being deemed inconclusive.

The first chapter in part two is an unprecedented study where two methods are applied to the same data. Following a thorough comparison of the phraseological, lexical bundle and comprehensive methods in terms of time-economy and quality, the two latter are applied to the spoken production of four groups: advanced Swedish learners of English and Spanish as L2s and their native counterparts. As opposed to previous studies of a similar nature, topic of conversation was controlled for by applying the same task to the four groups. Such an innovative approach allows for a comprehensive description of native-like

features: word combinations in context, topic, co-text and L2 usage are the ideal target for the comprehensive method, whereas the lexical bundle method proves more effective for "frequent building blocks in the construction of discourse" (87). The fine-tuning of native-like features in spoken language is certainly a step forward in defining a target level for second/foreign language teaching and learning.

CMC represents the backdrop for the remaining chapters of part two, which examine the different modes of e-language (e.g., e-mails, instant messaging, chat rooms) in various contexts and for different purposes. The second chapter focuses on the use of multi-word sequences (MWS) by Taiwanese L2 English speakers and British native English speakers in CMC and Face-to-Face (FTF) communication. Drawing on Nattinger and DeCarrico's (1992) taxonomy of lexical phrase functions (social interaction, necessary topics and discourse devices), it furthers our understanding of the phrasal nature of English (105). Based on the frequency of use, the author of this chapter demonstrates the highly interactional nature of FTF communication and how an increase in three-word MWS in social interaction in CMC parallels the growth of the relationship between participants. The third chapter, by Knight et al., uses Crystal's notion of the continuum of formality (2008) to classify e-language modes; achieved through the establishment of a comparison between the various modes of e-language, spoken language (placed at the informal end of the continuum) and written language (placed at the formal end of the continuum) based on the frequency and functions of hedging. Initial findings point to hedging similarities between e-language modes and the spoken mode; however, when compared separately, fewer occurrences of hedging were observed in e-language when compared to the spoken mode and a higher occurrence compared to the written. This evidence is used by the authors to support the argument for classifying e-language as an independent genre (147). The fourth and final chapter of part two attempts to redefine and expand on the current notion of commitment in email business communication; given the lack of participant-related information usually available in such a domain, empirical data is stripped down to linguistic forms. Nonetheless, it proves to be sufficient to provide findings which challenge current associations between linguistic forms and pragmatic functions, such as the absence of prototypical performative verbs (i.e., *I promise*) for commitments.

Part three proposes new methodologies combining Pragmatics and CL for the study of spoken language, a timely response given the theoretical gaps addressed earlier in the volume. The first chapter broadens Tannen's (1984) notion of *listenership*, i.e., engaged participation in conversation, to embrace the view of good listeners as enablers of a flowing discourse "in a manner satisfactory to all participants" (179). Since response tokens are viewed as the linguistic means to achieve this conversational continuity and flow, Amador-Moreno et al. developed a frequency-based framework of English response tokens. The authors conclude that such a framework can be successfully transferred to Spanish, although taking account of linguistic and cultural differences. The second chapter, by Romero-Trillo, presents the CLAN Project®. This project studies the extent to which culture influences emotionally-charged responses when observing natural

landscapes in photographs. Drawing on Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) theory (Goddard and Wierzbicka 2002), a set of landscape universals of evolutionary ecology, and a comprehensive background knowledge of participants (as of November 2012, a total of 597 participants from 20 countries), this project is a promising move forward in designing a cognitive map reflecting humans' relationship with nature.

The third chapter of part three returns to the EFL setting to analyze the regulatory functions in authentic classroom interaction; to do so, the author developed a network using Michael O'Donnell's *Systemic Coder* (1995). As expressed by Riesco-Bernier, the innovative component of this study results from understanding L2 language as a type of "goods and services" in the classroom context such that, the teacher is (often) performing a "request of verbal production" rather than a "demand for information" (235). In line with the role of culture and also drawing on NSM theory, the fourth and final chapter of part three, by Gladkova, first explores the semantics of the Russian praise words *molodec* and *umnica* then relates them to important themes in Russian culture and, finally, compares them to similar expressions in English and Chinese. This comparison offers interesting findings in relation to Russian cultural scripts which seem to contradict existing stereotypes (Lewis 1999).

Part four comprises two chapters, each reviewing a seminal work related to the main topics of interest of the present volume: the potential of corpora as a research method and CMC as an unexplored domain for Pragmatics. The first chapter is a review on McEnery and Hardie's volume (2011); Knight describes it as a critical and reflective reading of corpus linguistics as a research field, as opposed to a mere corpus compilation manual (275). After providing an account of the past and present of CL, readers are encouraged to think about the potential offered by applications of CL. This critical approach to CL falls into line with the present volume's approach with regard to corpus size. Contrary to the American-based Linguistic Data Consortium's motto "there is no data like more data" (Sinclair 2001: ix), corpus-based studies are now turning towards Godin's business metaphor "small is the new big" (Meunier 2010). The potential and reliability of smaller databases are in part due to the revisited notions of representativeness and balance; the former was defined by Biber as "the extent to which a sample includes the full range of variability in a population" in terms of register and mode (1993, 243; 56). Although the notion of a balanced corpus has been regarded as vague (Sinclair 2005) and as relying heavily on intuition and best estimates (Atkins et al. 1992; McEnery et al. 2006), the *Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus* (LSWE) is provided as an example of such, given that it contains "a manageable number of distinctions while covering much of the range of variation in English" (Biber et al. 1999, 25; 56). In the closing chapter of the book, Díaz-Pérez provides a chapter-by-chapter summary of Yus's contribution (2011) to the study of Internet-mediated communication through a pragmatics lens; this review will surely help readers of the present volume acknowledge the potential and topic range of Cyberpragmatics and question the traditional approaches to the study of language and communication.

The first volume of the series *Yearbook of Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics* will definitely appeal to newcomers in either field, considering the book's emphasis on current issues and gaps in both CL and Pragmatics. Furthermore, experienced researchers will benefit from the wide range of topics and domains covered that challenge the current approaches to the study of language and communication.

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