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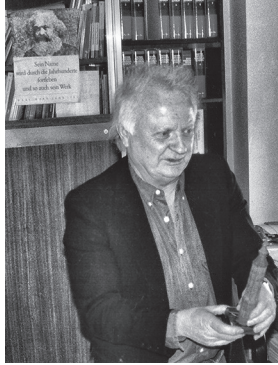
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IN MEMORIAM

**Benno Hübner
(1931-2016)**



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Benno believed in many things: friendship, dialogue, tedium, leisure, the goodness of mankind (especially womankind, I hear him add). And he strongly disbelieved in other things, dogmas, for example, nationalisms, ‘competitive consumerism’, high-handedness in all its shapes and forms... High on his list of good things was the pleasure of conversation, whether in traffic-stopping *capazos* or at *cierzo*-chastised *chaflanes*, art galleries, bars or classrooms. (On occasion it might be difficult to know whether the session was a walkabout class or a pub-crawl). A genuine peripatetic and a true urban *flâneur*, he liked nothing better than to progress through the Casco Viejo, visiting key points and key people, taking the pulse of the city, seeking ‘l’*éternel du transitoire*’ (as he once put it).

Benno was a born conversationalist and I have often thought that he had something of the Pied Piper of Hamelin magic about him. What he had to say was often not fully intelligible to his audience (it was high-flying philosophy with non-German and non-Latin speakers limping behind), but they/we would ask for more. We instinctively felt that here was a man who when he talked, talked of things very close to him, a man whose life was congruent with what he was saying and consequently what he said was *ipso facto* important.

Towards the end of his life Benno spent more and more time working on Heidegger’s philosophy. Heidegger had been Benno’s teacher and Benno felt that there was unfinished business between them. (In an interview he said that he had

come to bury his erstwhile master). At weekly lunches with Benno we would raise the question (already knowing the answer) “Who is the third who walks *always* beside you?” and he would admit —yes— that he and Heidegger were coming close to a showdown. Eventually the day came when Benno felt moved to stand up in the restaurant and proclaim *urbi et orbi*, arms outstretched “¡El Ser no es – el ser no es!” He added by way of a footnote “¡La Metafísica es Antropología! ¡La Teología es Antropología!” In 2009 Benno wrote *Heidegger, un loco del ser* and his last (unfinished) book was on the same subject. Heidegger at least served us as a catalyst for the exchange of the much prized *Streicheleinheiten*, as an ‘objective correlative’ for many an intellectual excursus.

Benno by all accounts was adept at finding common ground with his students – half and eventually one quarter his age. He and I paradoxically found comfort in the common ground of having both ‘taken part’ in World War II: Britain was blitzed by the Luftwaffe and we children, standing in the blackout, listening to the planes overhead, learned from the drone of their engines to distinguish friend (outward bound Lancaster bombers) from foe (incoming Luftwaffe heavy bombers). Meanwhile, on the other side of the channel, Benno aged 14 was sent with his school to Pforzheim, a zone of relative safety near the French border. In virtue of his age, he was appointed a *Jungenführer* and on the last day of the war, 1945, since he could speak French, he was designated to go to the house where the French officers were billeted, knock politely on the door and then say, loud and clear: “Messieurs, la guerre est finie”.

The war is over: may he rest in peace.

TIMOTHY BOZMAN

A Benno lo conocí en 1992. Entonces ejercía de profesor de lengua alemana para historiadores (¿o era para geógrafos?). Eran los tiempos en que, según Benno, “los que querían aprender aprendían y los que no... aprobaban”. De esta época recuerdo sobre todo los cafés en el bar de la Facultad y que estos iban casi siempre acompañados de conversaciones sobre filosofía alemana. Por su parte, al menos que yo recuerde, sobre Kant. No puedo presumir de haber entendido todo lo que decía. Eso sí que lo recuerdo bien.

Recuerdo el día que lo jubilaron con fecha del día de su cumpleaños (6 de abril). Antes de lo que él esperaba, ya que le habían asegurado que podría terminar el curso académico. La noticia lo sorprendió recién operado del corazón. Cualquier otro probablemente se habría encerrado con una manta y un brasero en su casa a rumiar su descontento y amargura. Pero alguien que en su niñez había aspirado

a ser Papa no podía reaccionar así. Benno inauguró una nueva etapa en su vida: aprendió ruso, se fue a Rusia (¿o era Bielorrusia?), estableció y revitalizó sus contactos con la intelectualidad y el mundo del arte (bielor)rusos...

Las historias de esta nueva fase son apasionantes y reflejan tanto sus ganas de vivir como su capacidad para hacer pensar a los demás. De esta época es la historia de su brillante intervención en un congreso de Culturología. Creo que no exagero si digo que llegó a ser un referente de la nueva filosofía rusa del post-marxismo. Le gustaba mencionar con orgullo más que justificado que sus obras estaban recogidas en la *Biblioteca de los Filósofos*, junto con los autores rusos consagrados. Benno no fue profeta en su tierra, no. Pero sí más allá de sus fronteras. Este es el periodo más fructífero en cuanto a publicaciones se refiere, y es una lástima que no llegara a ver su último libro traducido al español.

A pesar de sus muchas publicaciones en alemán, español y ruso y a pesar de las conferencias que dio, más que al intelectual y filósofo, en el último Benno yo seguía viendo al niño curioso que en la casa paterna de Moncada y Reixac movió un mueble (con la ayuda de su hermano, eso sí), para descubrir un tesoro inesperado: una pistola y unas fotos en blanco y negro que no entendió hasta muchos años después. Estaba también el casi adolescente al que hicieron formar en el patio del internado al final de la guerra para dar vítores a un Tercer Reich que ya se estaba desmoronando (“zum letzten Mal: Sieg... Heil!... y por delante del colegio veíamos pasar los tanques de los aliados”). Seguía habitando el alumno y exdiscípulo de Heidegger. Un alumno que despertó en cuanto tuvo tiempo (algo bueno tenía que tener la jubilación forzada) y que se dedicó a revisar el concepto del *ser* y el *devenir* en Heidegger; a cuestionar las teorías de su maestro hasta el final. Hasta que finalmente lo “asesinó” (Benno dixit).

Si hay algo que recuerdo de Benno es su capacidad para estar en contacto con la realidad sin dejar de cuestionarla nunca. Y si hay algo que admiro en él es su energía y curiosidad (no solo intelectuales) y su valor al reconocerse vulnerable ante los demás. Es lo que hace que lo eche de menos. Yo, cuando sea mayor, quiero ser como él.

CLARA UBIETO

Articles

“YOU GOTTA ADMIT YOU HAD IT COMIN TO YOU”: TRAUMA, GENDER VIOLENCE AND FEMALE BONDING IN MARSHA NORMAN’S *GETTING OUT*

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1. Introduction

Although nowadays nobody would dare to argue against the relationship between literature and gender violence, this has not always been the case. In this paper, I intend to analyze Marsha Norman’s first play *Getting Out* (1977) focusing on the traumatized protagonist, Arlene/Arlie, and trying to identify the possible causes of her trauma as hinted at in the play. Additionally, I will try to show that this play also offers a possible means of recovery from trauma through female bonding, illustrating the importance of female bonding in cases of gender violence and how women can reconcile themselves with their community. The analysis of the characters Arlene/Arlie will focus on the family conflict (especially the mother-daughter relationship), examples of gender violence, and the power of friendship among women.

The very mention of the words *gender violence* opens up a long-running and unresolved debate as to the origins, causes and consequences of such violence. This debate is partly the result of the inexactitude and confusion of a number of controversial terms here. One example is the indiscriminate and interchangeable use of the terms ‘marital violence’, ‘domestic violence’, ‘patriarchal abuse’, ‘patriarchal terrorism’, and ‘gender violence’ to describe a situation in which a woman is attacked. Hence, as gender violence law expert Ana Rubio has noted,

this diversity of terminology confuses rather than clarifies: “the disparity of terms used to refer to violence against women —domestic violence, sexist, patriarchal, gender violence— has the effect and intention of confusing rather than clarifying”¹ (2010: 149). The first thing that needs to be established, then, is what exactly is meant by gender violence and what types of violence it includes:

Gender violence encompasses a wide range of human rights violations, including sexual abuse of children, rape, domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking of women and girls and several harmful traditional practices [...] Violence against women has been called ‘the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world’. (United Nations Population Fund in Harne and Radford 2008: 18)

Thus the term *gender violence* can refer to domestic violence, sexual abuse and a wider range of abuses committed not only against women, but also against children, typically the forgotten victims of this type of violence. However, it has to be clarified that, when I speak about children as victims of gender violence, I am referring to the violence exerted against women’s children in a domestic environment as part of the continuum of violence directed at damaging these women. This violence can be explicitly directed against these children, for example by hitting them or, even killing them because, this way, women are harmed too. But it can be an indirect type of violence too in the sense that children suffer when they see the violence exercised against their mothers and, thus, are also psychologically damaged. Therefore, it is different from specifically-directed child abuse committed by adults and that, as UNICEF acknowledges, refers to any type of abuse either physical, psychological or sexual committed by an adult against a child. Child abuse includes also neglect and abandonment of children, and any kind of exploitation (child soldiers, children working in very bad conditions and children sexually exploited). Child abuse can occur anywhere, at school, in the streets, at home, or at any other place and it can be committed by any adult ranging from relatives, to teachers, caretakers or family friends. In this essay, I will be dealing with child abuse and, at the same time, with a girl who was not only abused by her own father but who also witnessed her mother’s abuse within the home.

Ana Rubio also explains that the confusion of terms concerning gender violence today occurs through the tendency of news media to make indiscriminate use of terms such as gender violence, domestic violence, and patriarchal violence without considering that they correspond to different subtypes of the wider term gender violence.

As a consequence of the daily media attention which this problem has come to receive, gender violence has been considered as the social plague of the twenty-first

century society. While this consciousness raising is partially due to the prevalence of cases of gender violence in the media, it is also a result of the publication of statistics by institutions such as the *Instituto de la Mujer* (Institute for Women’s Affairs) in Spain and similar organizations around the world such as the UN Women Amnesty International or several feminist organizations which specify the number of women abused, of women killed, and the estimated percentage of women who do not denounce their assailants. However, it is also undeniably the case that the situation of women has been questioned throughout history, especially in literature, although this fact seems to have been ignored by scholars over a long period of time, until the emergence of feminist movements in the 1970s.

Surprising as it may seem, then, although the visibilization of gender violence in literature became an established literary topic in the 1970s, the relationship between literature and the social denunciation of gender violence² goes as far back as nineteenth century literature. Women writers of that period tried to question the role models imposed on them, and the ‘punishments’ they had to suffer if they did not behave as was expected. Despite the fact that many episodes of abuse were known by neighbors and family, and were described by these witnesses, such acts did not carry any sociopolitical or moral reprobation, and were ultimately condoned by society. Women continued to denounce violence and to claim their rights as human beings during the successive decades of the twentieth century. However, it was not until the 1970s that the situation was fully exposed, with an explosion of women writing about and denouncing gender abuse. Some of these women, such as Betty Friedan, bell hooks, Adrienne Rich, and Audre Lorde did so from what can be considered a theoretical point of view. Others chose to write about gender violence from a more fictional perspective. Among these, playwrights such as Ntozake Shange, Sonia Sanchez and Marsha Norman write specifically about this type of violence. However, as Sharon Friedman points out, the explosion of women playwrights writing on women’s issues during the 1970s in fact began at the very start of the twentieth century, due to the freedom of expression that the dramatic genre permits:

It is against the background of twentieth century American drama —a developing native theatre that, in conjunction with the early women’s movement, prompted more women to write for the stage, and encouraged new playwrights to pursue a certain freedom of expression— that one can see very clearly the ways in which the self-awareness of the woman writer has expressed itself in the drama. (1984: 71)

One example of this denunciation tendency provided by literature could be *Trifles* (1916) by Susan Glaspell, where a woman goes to prison after killing her husband, and through the characters of two women neighbors, the audience can guess that she has been the victim of continued abuse throughout her marriage. The

determining factor that leads this woman to kill her husband is that he kills the only company she had: a canary.

Moreover, theatre is essentially performance through physical bodies. It is a genre written to be performed, not only to be read, and a reaction from the audience physically watching the performance is also expected. In this sense, the preference of women for the dramatic genre during the twentieth century is not hard to understand, since the medium offered them a way of writing for, about, and through their own bodies:

Alone among all literary productions, the theatre's medium is the physical body — the virtual corporality of the text makes the drama unique. Since it is primarily women's bodies that have been politicized in systems of exchange, the textualization of the female body poses special problems and potential for the woman playwright. (Hart 1989: 5)

Nonetheless, the 1970s was not only important for women because of the attention paid by dramatists to female issues, it was also a key decade for the improvement of the situation of women in general. This decade witnessed an explosion of women writing about gender violence with the clear purpose of denouncing and displaying this prolonged abuse, which previously had been, let it be said, protected by social controls such as privacy and shame, factors that had prevented the authorities from intervening. The usual defense was that, in his own home, a man could do whatever he wanted with his wife, daughters, and even sisters, in that he was shielded by the patriarchal system. It is not surprising, then, that one of the main objectives of feminist movements was to denounce this situation of blatant abuse that so many women underwent. However, feminism was not the only movement concerned with this situation. During the last decades of the twentieth century, the discipline known as Trauma Studies was developing an extensive evaluation of the causes and consequences that gender violence had on women. In fact, gender violence ranks third of all psychological traumas to surface “into public consciousness”, along with hysteria and shell-shock, as Judith Herman notes:

Three times over the past century, a particular form of psychological trauma has surfaced into public consciousness. Each time, the investigation of that trauma has flourished in affiliation with a political movement. The first to emerge was hysteria, the archetypal psychological disorder of women. [...] The second was shell shock or combat neurosis. Its study began in England and the United States after the First World War and reached a peak after the Vietnam War. [...] The last and more recent trauma to come into public awareness is sexual and domestic violence.³ (1997: 9)

Health professionals started to observe that not only soldiers, who returned home after war, presented a range of symptoms typical of post-traumatic stress disorder

that made them incapable of adapting to life in society again. These professionals noted that more and more people were affected in a similar way by other traumatic events that also affected their lives. Among them were included rape and child abuse (forms of gender violence):

As a consequence of the increasing occurrence of such perplexing war experiences and other catastrophic responses during the last twenty years, physicians and psychiatrists have begun to reshape their thinking about physical and mental experience, including most recently the responses to a wide variety of other experiences, such as rape, child abuse, auto and industrial accidents, and so on, that are now often understood in terms of post-traumatic stress disorder. (Caruth 1996: 11)

In so far as trauma is of interest to psychiatry, psychology and public health, it is also of great importance for historical and literary studies. Its relevance here is closely tied up with the inherent political, ethical and historical dimensions of trauma, in the sense that traumatic events “often happen due to social forces as well as in the social world” (Marder 2006: 1); that is, because it occurs within society, it thereby has relevance for historical and literary research.

Trauma Studies is a discipline that has its origins in Freudian psychoanalysis, and in the literary output resulting from more recent overwhelming and devastating events such as the Holocaust. Scholars of Trauma Studies start from the premise that trauma is a special issue in that it crosses all physical and psychic borders. Although the original meaning of the word *trauma* in Classical Greek was literally ‘wound’, referring to an actual physic wound that could be healed, it soon took on the meaning of a less fleshy wound, one that affected the psyche and was not easily healed (if trauma can ever be said to be healed) in medical contexts. This kind of wound affected the present lives of the individuals but because of something that had happened in their past. Thus, as Freud⁴ proved in his research, the study of trauma was something different due to the special features accompanying its development in the individual, affecting his/her way of living and even his/her language:

What is at the heart of Freud’s writing on trauma, both in what it says and in the stories it unwittingly tells, is that trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language. (Caruth 1996: 4)

In this context of exploring solutions and ways of dealing with trauma and all the special issues it leads to, a group of scholars started to look at literature, more

specifically at narrative, and discovered that literature is an ideal medium for the re-enactment that is part of the traumatic process, a re-enactment that is easier to bring about through fiction, using fictional characters and fictional language, rather than by expressing our feelings and fears directly when we usually cannot find the appropriate language. It was from this first group of researchers that Trauma Studies took their start.

Trauma Studies as applied to literary texts has developed since the early 1990s especially through the work of two groundbreaking specialists in the field of comparative literature: Cathy Caruth and Shoshana Feldman. They shifted attention to the fact that literature, in contrast to legal discourse, functions as a means of bearing testimony, a way of expressing in words that which is normally or traditionally left unsaid. Such studies serve to demonstrate the commitment of the world of the arts to individual and collective suffering, as explained by Sonia Andermahr and Silvia Pellicer-Ortín:

Trauma Studies has highlighted the fact that art in its different manifestations has frequently been used as a healing device by writers, minorities and society in general, either because of the things that are explicitly said or because of the way in which it draws attention to what has been silenced [...]. The awareness that art is capable of representing pain and suffering in a conscious or an unconscious way requires a new conception of representation. Trauma Studies works from the premise that narrative and storytelling can contribute to the healing of a traumatised individual or group. (2013: 2)

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This healing power of art will be the main focus of the present study, in that Trauma Studies not only aims at explaining the social, historical and political circumstances associated with the emergence of this trauma, but also tries to provide solutions for victims and to help them in their recovery from trauma, or at least it tries to identify solutions that have not previously been explored.

2. Exploring Trauma in *Getting Out*

Getting Out is the first of a group of three plays in which Marsha Norman explores issues concerning female identity, the struggle against patriarchy, and the right to achieve autonomy in a society that still tries to restrict women's rights. Although the prospect concerning these matters at first looks pessimistic, the possibility of hope is offered through connection with other women:

These plays focus on female characters, address a female audience, and foreground issues of female identity. All three consider the problem of surviving in a patriarchal society, find limited hope in the connections between women, and chart the devastating emotional consequences of "self-realization" in a society that still defines and determines the feminine subject position negatively. (Spencer 1992: 148)

Getting Out is not a conventional play. From the beginning the audience is forced to confront a protagonist suffering from a split personality disorder, and as a consequence, the past and present intermingle in the characters of present-day Arlene and young Arlie. Note, for example, the stage directions: “light comes up on Arlene, walking around the cell, waiting to be picked up for the ride home. Arlie is visible, but just barely” (Norman 1978: 9).

Arlene is a former prostitute who has just got out of prison, having been convicted for accidental murder (she kills a cab driver who has tried to take sexual advantage of her). But she is also Arlie, her younger self, a malignant, naughty child who enjoys watching others suffering while she tries to put her own miseries out of mind. Watching the two of them together is important because the audience will discover two opposite characters who are nevertheless the same person. As Spencer observes, Arlene and Arlie represent the masculine and the feminine part of a split self:

The self is split almost entirely along lines associated with gender differentiation: the tomboyishly “masculine” (aggressive, angry, violent, willfull, and “bad”) Arlie is juxtaposed to the “feminine” (meek, quiet, withdrawn, indecisive, and “good”) Arlene. (Spencer 1992: 153)

Through this technique of presenting two different actresses portraying the same character, Norman leads the spectator into feeling the same distress that Arlene/Arlie feels. However, what the audience does not know at this stage is that lying behind her state of mind is a traumatic experience buried in her early childhood, a trauma she has been trying to repress: being sexually abused by her own father, and subsequently being abandoned by her mother. As Jenny Spencer has argued, these traumatic events, along with other sordid episodes in her life, can be traced back to the existence of a patriarchal order:

Raped by her father, exploited by her boyfriend, sexually harassed by the prison guards and emotionally manipulated by the chaplain, Arlene’s female identity is shaped, damaged, conditioned and reconstructed by and for the representatives of patriarchal authority. In other words, no separation is made between self and sexual identity: Arlie’s sex determines the particular forms of abuse she suffers, just as Arlene’s rehabilitation depends on the management of her sexual behavior and the appearance of a presentably feminine demeanor. (Spencer 1992: 154)

It is no wonder, then, that Arlene/Arlie is a traumatized woman, and it is only natural that the spectator will appreciate some symptoms of trauma when the character is on stage. The coexistence, side by side, of Arlene and Arlie is the clearest of these, since one of the most characteristic symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the constant recalling of the past, specifically the scenario of the trauma itself. Yet some hints of a process of recovery can also be detected within the play.

Thus it can be argued that there are two clearly recognizable symptoms of the trauma that Arlene is experiencing onstage, and that the audience can appreciate: the presence of Arlie, in the form of constant flashbacks that prevent Arlene from going a step further, and the fact that her relationships with males will be marked by the prolonged abuse suffered in her early childhood. Since she was sexually abused by her father, thus a victim of child abuse, she has come to assume that, for men, she is a mere sexual object:

The reenactment of the relationship with the perpetrator is most evident in the sexualized transference that sometimes emerges in survivors of prolonged childhood sexual abuse. The patient may assume that the only value she can possibly have in the eyes of a powerful person, is as a sexual object. (Herman 1997: 139)

Even when she tries to rebel against this label of being sexually accessible, for example when she kills the cab driver who has tried to rape her, she is punished with incarceration and is treated like an animal by the prison guards. For this reason, it is not until she leaves prison that she needs to find and redefine her place in society. She tries to do so by denying her old self, Arlie, and trying to be Arlene, a new person. She needs to recover her family bonds to prove she is now Arlene, but this is not going to be an easy task.

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Reconnection with the ones you love and the ones who presumably love you is one of the steps towards recovery. At the very beginning of the play, Arlene expresses the importance of regaining her mother's faith and of being considered part of the family again. When her mother comes to visit her, on her first day out of prison, Arlene subtly asks to be welcomed back into the family fold and to take part in the normal routine of family life:

ARLENE: (A Clear request) I'll probably get my Sundays off.

MOTHER: Sunday... is my day to clean the house now. (Arlene gets the message, finally walks over to straighten the picture. Mother now feels a little bad about this rejection, stops sweeping for a moment.) I woulda wrote you but I didn't have nuthin to say. An no money to send, so what's the use? (Norman 1978: 25-26)

What these words seem to suggest is that Arlene is in fact not welcome back into the family at all; her mother evidently feels wholly detached from her, and has come with the sole purpose of doing what society would consider to be correct, rather than because she really feels the need to get closer to her daughter. Besides, when Arlene tries to recall sweet memories from her childhood, her mother can only remember the naughty and dangerous things Arlie used to do:

MOTHER: [...] Little Snotty-nosed kid tryin to kill her daddy with a bologna sandwich. An him being so pleased when you brung it to him... (Laughing.)

ARLENE: (No longer enjoying the memory.) He beat me good.

“You Gotta Admit You Had It Comin to You”...

MOTHER: Well, now, Arlie, you gotta admit you had it comin to you (Wiping tears from laughing.)

ARLENE: I guess. (Norman 1978: 24)

As far as I can see, Mother seems to be incapable of recognizing the true motives for Arlie wanting “to kill” her father by putting toothpaste in a sandwich. Moreover, Mother even supports Father’s decision to beat Arlie because she “had it comin to her”. Hence, it seems that Arlene is not able to enjoy her childhood memories because they are full of stories of violence, not only of her father’s abuse, which is only hinted at through Arlie’s words and is never explicitly shown on stage, but also because of the physical violence her mother suffered:

MOTHER: You remember that black chewing gum he got you when you was sick?

ARLENE: I remember he beat up on you.

MOTHER: Yeah, (Proudly) and he was really sorry a coupla times. [...] (Norman 1978: 19)

Arlene’s mother was not only incapable of helping her daughter when she was raped by her father, but also of recognizing and fighting against the situation of abuse that she herself suffered. Mother, as she is called in the play, without being given a name, is a woman who has fought for her family. Her husband, who does not earn money to support the family, is a despicable man who abuses his daughter and his wife too. Mother despises Arlene for both accusing her father and for being a prostitute and the truth is that she is very familiar with these two situations since she has been forced to resort to prostitution herself to have enough money to eat. This situation is described in Arlie’s words:

ARLIE: she drives the cab to buy us stuff, cause we don’t take no charity from nobody, cause we got money cause she earned it. [...] (*More angry.*) She drives at night cause people needs rides at night. People goin to see their friends that are sick, or people’s cars broken down and they gotta get to work at the ... nobody calls my Mama a whore. (Norman 1978: 24)

Thus, Arlie finds justification for her mother, something that Arlene no longer can do. This extract comes in the form of assorted memories while Mother is visiting Arlene. They have more things in common than may appear at first sight but, whereas Arlene is ready to forgive her mother, Mother is not capable of forgiving her. Mother is an abused woman who is used to working hard in order to support her family. However, she is incapable of seeing that Arlie is just another victim and blames her for the terrible things that happen to her. In fact, Mother accuses her of being malignant and she even reaches the point of talking to the principal of the school with a view to putting Arlie into a special school because of her behavior.

It would seem, then, that the mother-daughter relationship in *Getting Out* challenges Greiner's claims as to the existence of a stronger bonding between females: "The pivotal moment in female bonding may be the birth of a daughter; some clinical theorists conclude that mothers bond more forcefully with daughters than with sons" (1993: 34). It might be supposed that this type of bonding occurs because mothers were once daughters and that the identity of the mother might be preserved to some extent in the daughter. However, any such bond, which would constitute a huge step in Arlene's recovery, is completely broken in this play, with Mother wholly unable to believe in her daughter's new opportunity in life. A crucial moment in the play, one in which we observe the extent of the damage to the mother-daughter relationship, happens when Mother finds a man's hat in the apartment. Arlene explains that the hat is Bennie's, the guard who brought her from prison. Mother immediately gets furious because she thinks that her daughter is working as a prostitute again, and strips from her daughter any belief that she really has changed:

MOTHER: [...] I knowed I shouldn't have come. You ain't changed a bit.

ARLENE: Same hateful brat, right? (Back to Mother.)

MOTHER: Same hateful brat. Right (Arms full, heading for the door)

ARLENE: (Rushing toward her.) Mama...

MOTHER: Don't you touch me. (Mother leaves. Arlene stares out the door, stunned and hurt, finally, she slams the door and turns back into the room.) (Norman 1978: 30)

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Thus it can be inferred that Arlene has finally understood that she has no possibility of establishing a bond with her own mother; indeed, Mother cannot even stand being touched casually by her daughter. Arlene learns, then, that although she has moved from imprisonment to freedom, her life has not really changed. As Spencer notes:

Despite the apparent progress that Arlene's release from prison involves, we find that life "outside" is comprised of the same daily rituals as life inside: Arlene moves into a cell-like apartment, cleans up a mess she didn't make, eats food she doesn't want, fends off undesired sexual advances, and awakes to the noise of a loud siren. (Spencer 1992: 151)

It seems that there is no chance for Arlene to be part of the family again. Her mother distrusts her and does not want her back because she would be a bad example for the new children (one of which is Arlene's, born while she was in prison and taken away from her). In this sense, the breaking of biological female bonds here might reflect the fear that such female bonds provoke in males, being interpreted as an intrusion into and a destabilization of the patriarchal order: "if the friendships of women are considered at all, and that is rare enough, they

intrude into the male account the way a token woman is reluctantly included in a male community” (Heilbrun 1990: 99). Thus, it could be thought that Norman is ringing the changes on feminist and patriarchal conventions. Indeed, it might be recalled that she was accused of anti-feminist sentiments and of using conventional values in her plays. Nonetheless, although she decided to deal with a difficult case of a mother-daughter relationship in the play, she does in fact afford the character of Arlene a chance to recover and reconstruct her life through female bonding.

3. Female Bonding as the Way towards Recovery

Although the possibility of biological bonding does not appear to be open to Arlene, and thus does not afford her a means of recovering from her traumas, the possibility, indeed the need, for establishing sociologically based female bonding seems undeniable. In this respect, I agree with Janice Raymond who insists on the fact that women can change culturally acquired habits through this sociological female bonding:

Women bond [...] not because of biological needs but because of cultural conditions [...] Biological differences among the sexes are not an issue, and male dominance is not an unredeemable given inherited by humanity since the early moments of the race when the sexual division of labor resulted in the contrast between man-the-hunter and woman-the-gatherer. Culture is a construct. Constructs can be changed. (Raymond in Greiner 1993: 41)

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In fact, in order to reconcile the two sides of her own self, to join together the new Arlene and the old Arlie, Arlene needs the help and the unselfish friendship of another woman. This woman, it transpires, is her neighbor from upstairs, Ruby. As Noelia Hernando-Real points out, “even though she has no family to count on, and bonding with her own mother or sister is not dramatically possible, the play ends as Arlene befriends another ex-con, Ruby, who will help her get a job” (2012: 49).

When Ruby appears on stage, looking for Candy (Arlene’s younger sister), Arlene feels an immediate distrust towards this stranger, despite the fact that she comes with the offer of help. Arlene is even incapable of extending her hand to greet her neighbor, as the stage directions explain: “RUBY: [...] It’s Arlie, right? / ARLENE: It’s Arlene (does not extend her hand.)” (Norman 1978: 46). It is important to note here how Ruby highlights Arlene’s new identity, pointing out that “you [Arlene] don’t seem like Candy said” (Norman 1978: 48). Ruby knows about Arlene’s situation and offers her a job as a dish-washer, more decent work than prostitution although not so well paid. However, Ruby forces her to confront reality and is bluntly sincere when she tells Arlene that “[...] you can wash dishes to pay the rent on your own ‘slum’, or you can spread your legs for any shit that’s

got ten dollars” (Norman 1978: 60). Moreover, this is part of what Carol P. Christ calls “the consciousness raising ritual” and “the consciousness raising group” (although in this case it is only Ruby who helps Arlene). Through this ritual, women tell each other about their experiences, they dare to express things never said aloud before said, and it is definitely the first step to female bonding, that is, to recovery:

The consciousness-raising group [...] can be seen as a ritualized setting in which women gather together to share their stories. In consciousness-raising, women “hear each other into speech”, as Nelle Morton says. Her phrase captures the dynamic in which the presence of other women who have had similar experiences makes it possible for women to say things they have never said before, to think thoughts they would have suppressed [...] In consciousness-raising new stories are born, and women who hear and tell their stories are inspired to create new life possibilities for themselves and all women. (1995: 7)

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The problem is that Arlene cannot trust anybody, a point that she admits to Ruby during the play. She rejects Ruby’s invitation to lunch and her offer of bringing some groceries from the shop, and even refuses to play cards with her neighbor. Arlene is clearly unsure of Ruby’s true intentions. She is a hurt being who is still not ready to believe in the disinterested offers of good people, although this attitude is not going to last forever. Arlene’s understanding of Ruby’s intentions changes as soon as Ruby comes and defends her from Carl, Arlene’s former pimp and a mirror image of her perverse father, a man who not only exploited her but also sexually abused her, as Hernando-Real explains: “Carl [...] is a double of Arlene’s father, they both abuse her and make her home a brothel” (2012: 49). This man appears on stage suddenly, and tries to force Arlene to return to her work as a prostitute, first telling her that it is the easiest way of earning money, and then using violence:

CARL: God, ain’t it hot in this dump. You gonna come or not? You wanna wash dishes, I could give a shit. (Now yelling.) But you comin with me, you say it right now, lady! (Grabs her by the arm.) Hugh?

RUBY: (Knocks on the door.) Arlene?

ARLENE: That’s Ruby I was tellin you about

CARL: (Catches her arm again, very rough.) We ain’t through!

RUBY: (Opening the door.) Hey! (Seeing the rough treatment.) Goin to the store. (Very firm.) Thought maybe you forgot something.

CARL: (Turns Arlene loose.) You this cook I been hearin about?

RUBY: I cook. So what?

CARL: Buys you nice shoes, don’t it, cookin ? Why don’t you hock your watch an have something done to your hair? If you got a watch.

RUBY: Why don’t you drop by the coffee shop. I’ll spit in your eggs. (Norman 1978: 57-58)

Ruby is very worried about Arlene, and Arlene comes to perceive this. She even asks Ruby to stay with her until Carl eventually gets the message and leaves her house. After this episode, Arlene discovers that Ruby has gone through similar situations to her own, and that because of this Ruby can understand her. Arlene's pain is thus eased somewhat, and she explains that she cannot go on unless she becomes reconciled with Arlie, her old, hateful self. Meanwhile, Ruby explains that, “You can still love people that's gone” (Norman 1978: 62). Both share an intimate moment of conversation and Arlene finally discovers that life has offered her another chance. Finally she accepts Ruby's friendship, having learned the importance of being together as a means of surviving her new present situation, because, as Christ observes, once women talk about their stories and find the connections, they are empowered to create a new life for themselves, taking this new chance for their survival:

When one woman puts her experiences into words, another woman who has kept silent, afraid of what others will think, can find validation. And when the second woman says aloud, “yes, that was my experience too”, the first woman loses some of her fear [...] Their act creates new possibilities of being and living for themselves and for all women. With the creation of a new language, the possibility that women will forget what they know is lessened. (1995: 23)

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Recovery from trauma, then, can only occur after the traumatized person feels empowered enough to talk about his or her experience: “Recovery, therefore, is based upon the empowerment of the survivor and the creation of new connections. Recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation” (Herman 1997: 133). The presence of Ruby in the play is fundamental because, besides helping Arlene to trust again in people and to believe in the power of union, she helps her to come to a reconciliation with her own past. At the very end of the play, Arlene and Arlie are together, symbolizing that the process of recovery through female bonding is starting to work. Arlene could never set out on such a process of recovery without reconciling herself with her past, and this in turn requires her to stop denying it.

It is very important to keep in mind that, although I am speaking here of female bonding in the same terms as Robin Morgan does, the trend nowadays is to speak of female *coalition* following the research achievements of critics such as Bernice Johnson Reagon. The main difference between the two theoretical approaches is very well explained by Chandra Talpade Mohanty when she says that

[w]hile Morgan uses the notion of sisterhood to construct a cross-cultural unity of women and speak of planetary feminism as the politics of the 21st century, Bernice Johnson Reagon uses coalition as the basis to talk about the cross-cultural commonality of struggles, identifying survival, rather than shared oppression, as the ground for coalition. (Mohanty 1992: 84)

Although some people may consider it more appropriate to use this more recent theoretical framework to analyze this play, I think that, taking into account the context of production of the play, using the analysis as female bonding is accurate. Moreover, these two women at the very end of the play represent the sisterhood proposed by Morgan since they become united by their sharing of the experience of being ex-convicts. Therefore, in this case, I prefer to use female bonding rather than coalition to refer to the relationship between Ruby and Arlene.

4. Conclusion

Bonding among women is a necessary means of survival in a patriarchal society which does not forgive women when they do what society establishes as wrong. That is to say, since Arlene is a prostitute, she has to be punished in some way for her actions. The fact that she is a traumatized, abused child, and that her conflictive behavior is a simple reflection of the enormous emotional charge that she has had to bear, is not taken into account. Arlene's only possible escape from the bad memories of her childhood was through behaving aggressively. Having been continually told that she was a bad child, she just assumed this 'evil' identity and behaved as expected. Until the end of the play, when she finds Ruby, she is incapable of speaking about what happened to her. But female bonding is not only useful as a way of recovering from trauma. This play also shows that it is necessary to help women to become reconciled with their own selves at times when this step is vital for them to take control of their own lives, though at that moment they see escape as being impossible.

Regarding mother-daughter relationships, it can be said that they have tended to be conflictive throughout literary history. Although the existence of a natural or biological bonding between mother and daughter exists, I have seen that in this particular case (as in other works, such as *Night, Mother* (1983), also by Norman) the bond is completely broken. Arlene's mother prefers to go on believing in the supposed badness of her own daughter, rather than listening to her and providing her with support. Yet despite the disappearance of this biological bond, the existence of a different, sociocultural bond is affirmed. And it seems that this type of bonding proves to be more effective when it comes to dealing with cases of recovery from gender violence.

In summary, then, with respect to female bonding this play bears out the insistence of feminists and sociologists on the importance of bonding with one's fellows. The female bonding depicted proves to be the only possibility of renewal and redemption for the protagonist, and opens her eyes to a new chance in life outside prison, one which prevents her from a return to her old sordid and traumatic existence.

It should also be noted that what Norman has achieved with this play is, first of all, to place ‘the woman question’⁵ as the main focus of its attention. However, there is no real and unmitigated forgiveness for Arlene in the play, and its ending is both open and extremely ambiguous. It is not known whether Arlene ultimately follows Ruby’s advice. Nonetheless, after the many adversities she has faced, it is preferable for the audience to believe that she is in fact redeemed, and that she has a real chance to survive in a world that has constrained her so absolutely for so long. The success that Norman achieved with *Getting Out* is not only a result of the experimental technique used. It has to do with the fact that she chooses everyday characters, ones that are easily identifiable to the audience, as are the emotional responses which these characters provoke:

Norman’s plays are woven from conventional material, using traditional forms, and embedded in cultural assumptions that both the form and content carry with them. Moreover, their emotional effect depends on an immediate recognition of reality on the part of audience members, and Norman goes out of her way to maintain that illusion with onstage clocks keeping real time, familiar sets and dialogue, and the tempo of domestic routine. (Spencer 1992: 162)

To conclude I would like to borrow the words of María Dolores Narbona-Carrión, in her reflections on the role of literature and the issue of gender violence, words which I feel accurately summarize the content and intentions of Marsha Norman’s play:

Literature in general and theatre in particular has the responsibility of portraying, promoting, and stimulating the creation and reinforcement of female bonds, because they have the possibility of constituting one of the political means of neutralizing violence against women. (2012: 64)

Notes

1. My translation: “la disparidad de términos empleados para referirse a la violencia contra las mujeres —violencia doméstica, machista, sexista, patriarcal, de género— tienen el efecto y la intención de confundir más que de clarificar.”

2. The most accurate term to use in the nineteenth century context would probably be marital cruelty. I use the term gender violence here because it is perhaps the best known nowadays, and includes a wider range of abuses, including domestic violence within the broader term violence.

3. Although the term used in this essay will be gender violence, at the time Judith Herman first published *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence —from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (1992) the most common term used was domestic violence. For more information about the chronology and use of terms see Johnson 2005: 1126-1130.

4. For more information about this author’s research on trauma, see Freud 2003 (1920).

⁵. 'The Woman question' is the term used by Betty Friedan in her feminist volume *The Feminine Mystique* to refer to

those situations, especially of abuse, which confronted women and which were not taken into account by society.

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APPROACHING THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN LITERARY STUDIES: ON THE NOTIONS OF FRAMEWORK AND METHOD (AND THEIR APPLICATION TO KURT VONNEGUT'S *SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE*)¹

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1. Introduction

One of the main problems that academics in the Humanities may experience is the low esteem in which the quality of our work is sometimes held, not only by our students but by colleagues in other disciplinary domains and also by the academic and political institutions that provide the 'scientific' domains with funding to the detriment of research and teaching innovation in the Humanities. We are often told that this is so because we do not show sufficient scientific rigor, meaning by that our discipline-specific lack of application of the so called 'scientific method', a procedure that, since the times of the Enlightenment has imposed a method of academic analysis characterized by the deployment of a systematic, well-developed number of strategies from which scholars should not depart when validating the hypotheses derived from observation of facts. The effects of such low evaluation often impinges negatively on our budget and, more importantly, on our visibility in the academic world. Thus, 'method' is a key issue in the scholar's work. But, as rightly argued by Gross (1990: 85), the difference between the humanities and the more 'scientific' fields is that experimental approaches in the sciences domain are inductive (i.e. "a series of laboratory or field events leading to a general statement about natural kinds"), while approaches in the Humanities are deductive; the student or reader is "presented with a series of deductions whose conclusions imply confirming observations" (1990: 85). Whether we choose one type or the

other, applying a method is a basic key for carrying out the analysis of the facts or corpus under exploration and its presentation in the classroom.

In experimental research, scholars are expected to develop a logical structure of analysis where the working hypothesis, based on the literature review, is presented at the beginning of the research proposal, together with an explicit statement of the method for carrying out the analysis. Once the analysis has been completed, researchers highlight the main findings, discuss their work in relation to previous research, and support their conclusions on the basis of both the results provided by the application of the method and the interpretation of the results according to the underpinning theoretical framework. Such evidence can either validate the initial hypothesis or deny its validity. Unresolved issues and suggestions for future research tend to be explicitly stated as limitations in the work (obviously because of the provisional quality of scientific facts). As a result, middle ground is not acceptable for the results and is, therefore, rejected.²

However, the field of Literary Studies falls under Becher and Trowler's label of 'soft pure science' (as is also the case of history or anthropology, for instance) because of their particular ethos, defined as "reiterative, holistic, concerned with particulars [...] personal, value-laden" (2001: 36). Accordingly, it is hard, if not impossible, for scholars in the field to apply the scientific method in their teaching and publications following all the premises indicated above because the facts explored are frequently of a more elusive nature and they cannot be mathematically measured or tested. On the contrary, the facts under exploration are built upon a network of ideological implications, a characteristic that might lead novice scholars of Literary Studies to reach what only qualifies as liminal, hybrid or inconclusive views and results. Initial hypotheses may result only in further hypotheses or provisional results open to the questioning and revision of other peers in the field. In this respect, it is worth noticing John Swales' contention (2004: 207-40) that in the science fields, researchers tend to use the so-called CARS (Create a Research Space) model, which explains the competitive nature of the field. However, work in the humanities tend to adhere to the OARO (Open a Research Option) model. Hardcore scientists notwithstanding, Swales argues that opening a research option also helps to make advances in the field in that it contributes to a better understanding of the complex nature of the things we see. However, while in agreement with Swales' views, the OARO option can be misleading. This rhetorical model—deductive by nature, as stated above— involves the following: a) it offers a line of inquiry, b) it discusses current problems, or c) it expresses interest in an emergent topic. These possibilities may merely lead researchers and teachers in the field to description and divulgation of the obvious, without considering the application of a method and a framework.

Paradoxically, the enduring attraction in Literary Studies of hypothetical and middle-ground results has also been sustained in the last fifty years by the advancement of scientific research in the field of physics, which has offered strong support to the notion of postmodern ‘uncertainty’ (Nadeau 1981: 17-64; Solomon 1988: 15). Scholars in literary theory or in historiography, for example, have been persistently stressing the uncertainty of existence and the problematization of human life, social options, and moral consequences of literary or historical phenomena. That is to say, they have been doing just the opposite of what is expected of a hard-science researcher. Consequently, our work has not been taken seriously enough by many academics in other scholarly areas and often not by our own students. Possibly, in our field we may not expect to come to definitive views on the human condition but at least we should consider the need to study and teach our corpus following a logical structure of analysis that may enable us to reach a sustainable, even if only partial understanding of the corpus and topics we analyze.

In the more specific case of English and American Studies, at least as they are now understood in many non-English speaking European countries,³ we have to further differentiate the work being done by two different groups of academics (Becher and Trowler 2001: 14). On the one hand, there is the field of English Linguistics (applied linguistics, linguistics and language acquisition, computational linguistics, lexicography, pragmatics, etc.); while on the other lie the fields of Literary and Cultural Studies (including American, British, Post-colonial, Film, Gender, Queer Theory, etc.). Scholars belonging to the first group are shifting their place to become members of the community of soft sciences; nowadays some if not many of them may question their classification in the field of the Humanities because of the experimental quality of their research.⁴ Meanwhile, academics dedicated to the teaching and study of culture and literature may still be considered to carry out a type of research that is “not scientific enough” because, as is common belief, they do not explicitly apply a well-knit methodical approach of the type that may bring about convincing, even though debatable, well-argued lines and results for their teaching and research. Through lack of awareness or insufficient emphasis on methodology the job of some novice academics often merely involves describing plots, listing writers who are becoming famous here or there or supporting arguments as obvious in our political context as the need for equal rights for everybody. The lack of analytical rigor of such arguments may eventually lead to inconsistent teaching approaches and to rejection from publishers or funding authorities because they tend to neglect the principle that in the field of Literary Studies any research model should also be based on a rigorous framework and on the use of a clear methodology. Descriptions and digressions are not sufficient *per se* unless they are supported by a well-knit argumentation based on evidential facts

(quoted examples, use of plausible sources, etc.) and on the interpretation of those facts using a sustained theoretical framework and an appropriate methodology.

What can be understood as a subjective approach to the object of study is perhaps still too common in teaching and publication in the Humanities. What seems to be most striking in this matter is that even for novice academics in the field of Literary Studies it would probably not be too difficult to adapt their work to the demands existing in other sciences. Scholars in the field, then, still have to reach results by importing and adapting, when necessary, the rigor and methodology of the hard sciences (Peer, Hakemulder and Zyngier 2008; cf. Heiman 2013: 107-08).

The specific aim in the rest of this essay is to explore some ways to clarify the meaning of the notions of ‘Theoretical Framework’ and ‘Method of Analysis’ for the field of Literary Studies, as these two concepts often seem to be confused or even ignored in the classroom and in research proposals. In clarifying these yet unresolved issues for the field, this paper sets out to contribute to improving teaching strategies as well as increasing rates of approval for research projects and other academic proposals. Later, the essay presents an example of the working of these two notions applied to Vonnegut’s well-known novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

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2. Theoretical Framework and Method

Broadly speaking, we may tentatively define the framework of a contribution in any scientific field as the number of theoretical assumptions or approaches from which the scope and subject of one’s study can be defined and the data can be interpreted (see note 2). However, in the shifting sands of literary analysis the issue is more difficult to tackle. If, as contended earlier, the facts explored in literature studies are frequently of an elusive nature and they cannot be mathematically measured or tested, what sort of frame should we use? As also indicated above, our objects of study—i.e. the texts or concepts that constitute our corpus—are always built upon a network of ideological implications. Therefore, a theoretical framework in our field represents the ideological assumptions from which somebody contemplates and evaluates certain given aspects of life and history (the corpus), assumptions that are established by a number of theoretical works written by the founding parents of the framework or theory and later revised by other academics. Of course, such a definition necessarily demands a preliminary clarification within the scope of our field: the use of a framework affects at least two agents, the scholar and the creative author object of the analysis, and both agents do not necessarily have to share the same framework. Furthermore, nowadays writers of creative literature are frequently familiar with critical theory and apply it to their works. Therefore, the first issue academics should become

aware of is the need to avoid confusing their own theoretical framework with that of the author they study. Accordingly, then, two types of activities should be differentiated even if both can be found in the same piece of research: the first would be to apply a particular framework to the understanding of the target work. The second would try to unveil the frame—and, therefore, the ideological implications—within which the creative author understands and represents life in his/her work.

At this juncture, we can identify a number of theoretical frameworks currently used in Literary Studies. Above all of them still stand the globalized political perspectives known as Capitalism and Marxism, which Lyotard famously associated with his notion of *métarécits* (master narratives) in his influential essay on the postmodern condition (1979). Since the turn of the 19th century, other more restricted frameworks have come to the fore from which both creative authors and academics have approached their interpretations of life: Modernism, Structuralism or Feminism are among the most relevant ones, together with a broader spectrum of intellectual frames that have been amply developed since the 1960s, such as a new wave of Feminism, as well as Queer Studies, Post-colonial Studies, Psychoanalytical Criticism in different versions (Freudian, Lacanian, Post-Lacanian Feminist), Myth Criticism, Eco-Criticism, Studies in Masculinity, Identity Matters, Chaos Theory, and, more recently, other (post-)poststructuralist ideological positions such as the Turn to Ethics or Trauma Studies. Obviously, borders between them are not clear-cut due, as already stated, to the specific ethos of the field. In Literary Studies, theoretical frameworks can be combined or complement one another, and so lead to multidisciplinary approaches to literature and culture. The possibility of a 'Post-Lacanian Feminism' has been already mentioned, for instance. Frameworks, even if they are self-contained, may merge with other frameworks in order to provide more integrative lines of enquiry or more accurate interpretations of the corpus under analysis. However, even when that happens, multidisciplinary frames of reference should be clearly indicated in the classroom, as well as in every academic paper or proposal, as these are the foundations giving critical support to our views.

The different theoretical frameworks that have been cited so far in this paper involve a perspective or world-view from which either creative authors or scholars, or both, contemplate the world and, more specifically in the case of criticism, the data under examination. It is from this world-view that academics also draw personal conclusions. This indicates that the framework is a basic concept for understanding the type of final observations we may reach and teach our students but it also supports the view that there might be a plurality of answers to the same problem whether it be in real life or in literature. Answers are always deeply

associated with the scholar's—or the creative author's— initial framework; if the framework changes, the tenor of the results also changes. In this sense, then, there is not just one possible and categorical answer to every question raised in literature or in culture but myriad lines of enquiry. However, in adhering to this 'Open a Research Option Model' we should not forget that the results should be consistent with the referential framework the scholar uses. Obviously, one does not expect a feminist critic to teach and analyze a certain text and conclude that men are naturally wiser and smarter than women. From there, it follows that the tenor of the scholar's results also supports the frame she or he is using.

Academics aware of the frame from which they are going to interpret the data must also opt for a given analytical tool, or method. A method is not the same as a theoretical framework, even if the choice of the one may lead to the implementation of the other. The method can be defined as the specific set of strategies or analytical tools that scholars deploy to carry out their textual—and ideologically framed—analysis. Of course, in the field of Literary Studies a method is also found in the works of the author the scholar selects for conducting their study: different authors use different methods to accomplish their intended aims, and the evaluation of such authorial strategies may also constitute the subject of teaching and research. In class or in a critical work it is important to define the scholar's analytical method but also to reveal and analyze, if necessary, the method authors under scrutiny have used to write their work. Scholars should clearly state their own methods of analysis and differentiate them from the methods used by the authors they study.

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To illustrate the distinction and application of the concepts of theoretical framework and method we may resort to notions pertaining to psychoanalytical criticism. Psychoanalysis is a method devised by Sigmund Freud more than one hundred years ago to cure mental diseases. Why is it, then, that there was an earlier mention in this paper of 'psychoanalytical criticism' as a referential framework? The reason is that psychoanalytical criticism provides a perspective of a human being whose actions are deeply related to unconscious factors that she or he—student or reader— needs to discover in order to mitigate the effects of mental problems or distress. However, the number of strategies used by actual psychoanalysts to enable those unconscious forces to be retrieved and repossessed by individual consciousness is what constitutes the specific psychoanalytical method: it can be classic Freudian, including the couch and the interpretation of symbols, or it can follow more updated therapies, such as group sessions. Similarly, within the field of Literary Studies, scholars who work from a psychoanalytical frame may resort to different methods for their analyses, for example, to narratology or deconstruction.

However, once again, boundaries between the concepts of framework and method

are not strict and clear-cut. The field of Literary Studies offers abundant cases of 'interference' between frames, methods, and even areas of research. On the one hand, methods are necessarily motivated by theoretical frames and by the corpus under analysis. Scholars can use narrative analysis when teaching contemporary fiction, for example, but they cannot use narrative analysis in an experiment on gravitational forces or in an attempt to reach a substantial understanding of symbolist poetry. Furthermore, the situation becomes more complex when we deal with neighboring fields of study. A certain method for analyzing written fiction may also be used to carry out research in Film Studies, for example. Let us imagine a critic in the process of analyzing *Psycho*, by Alfred Hitchcock: possibly she will have to resort to theoretical frames related both to a psychoanalytical understanding of the human being and also to the fact that the object of her study is confined in a cinematic frame, while at the same time she may draw on strategies for her analysis taken from a specific psychoanalytical method, such as the interpretation of symbols, as well as from the analytical method of narratology. Both frames and methods may coexist in the same study, a situation that may become further complicated depending on whether the scholar's aim is to convince her students that Hitchcock's film belongs to a given framework, or that the director used a particular method to present the plot, or that she is testing her own beliefs in the psychoanalytical frame, for instance. Interference is, then, a notion that scholars should also keep in mind every time they analyze a literary work in the classroom or prepare their research.

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Some brief considerations about different critical methods used in Literary Studies for the last few decades may give an indication of the difficulties facing academics when attempting to clarify the complexity of our field. Throughout the 20th century the strategies of analysis used by the New Critics were, for many years, commonly used in North American literary criticism. These strategies were based on the analytical method defined as 'close reading'. Meanwhile, in Europe methods of analysis based on the framework provided by structuralist linguistics were applied to non-linguistic areas of knowledge such as anthropology and literary criticism. In myth-criticism, the well-known method of identifying the existence of alleged universal motifs or *mythemes* in a given literary work is an example. The method came into effect in the 1960s as a result of the interference from the works of influential anthropologists, psychoanalysts, and scholars such as James Frazer, Carl Jung, Vladimir Propp, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell. More recently, other methods of analysis started to displace or were generated from the frames of structuralism, post-structuralism or phenomenology, such as narratology and deconstruction. These are methods that pay considerable attention to the text as a linguistic artifact and that have developed their own precise and sophisticated terminology and strategies. In this sense, we can say that they *look* very scientific indeed.

3. The Case of Trauma Studies and Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*

In order to illustrate the need to differentiate framework from method so as to increase teaching efficiency and critical awareness, but also to prove the inherent difficulties that interference brings into the field of Literary Studies, the following pages offer a summary of the steps taken by the author to structure his research and teach Kurt Vonnegut's renowned novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* to students of a Master of Arts in English Studies.

3.1 The Scholar's Frame and Method: Trauma Studies and Narratology

Following the need to clarify for students the importance Vonnegut's novel has for a better understanding of the postmodern ethos, the first class—out of four two-hour sessions— starts with a short presentation of the academic framework and aims to be reached in the unit—an essential part of teaching for the multiple goals it proposes.⁵ As reported in this presentation, the primary didactic aim should be to evaluate Vonnegut's novel as proof that postmodernist experimental fiction, even when it is used in a trauma narrative, is not necessarily a type of literary representation only motivated by the psychological effects allegedly present in a writer's traumatized mind. In any case, the presentation already informs students that the analysis will be strongly supported by the framework provided by Trauma Studies. Narratology is also explicitly presented as the method of analysis. Obviously, bibliographical references are also necessary to provide the writer's critical view, to corroborate initial considerations about the data under analysis, and to offer a clear line of enquiry into the topic. Accordingly, teaching also relies on previous studies of Vonnegut's novel by critics who may have used different theoretical frames as well as on other more recent criticism that also evaluates his book from the frame of Trauma Studies.

This framework has become very popular in recent years among Literary Studies scholars, to the point that some already affirm the existence of a trauma paradigm (Luckhurst 2008: 5), and *Slaughterhouse-Five* offers an excellent model for explaining the framework to students of this level. The framework had its turning point when the first definition of the Post-traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD was incorporated in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (3rd ed.), published by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. This represented the official recognition in the United States of a mental disease that Hermann Oppenheim had investigated as 'traumatic neurosis' as early as 1890 but that still lacked official recognition, which meant of course that it also lacked all the administrative and judicial implications that recognition entailed. Psychological trauma is diagnosed when a number of symptoms associated with it are

recognizable. Such symptoms, defined as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), are usually characterized by states of anxiety, silence, repetition, nightmares, ghostly presences, or states of panic, among others.

Students are informed that psychological trauma is motivated by an event or experience so overwhelming that the victim cannot assimilate it on a conscious level. Its description resists language or any other form of logical conscious representation. As Joseph Flanagan states (2002: 388), the victim “is unable to recall the traumatic experience not because she has repressed its memory but because the very neurobiological processes that are responsible for encoding experiences into consciousness are damaged by the event”. The traumatic event may be suffered by one or more individuals but there are also collective or historical traumas, such as the Holocaust, wars, ship or airplane accidents, or natural catastrophes. Some critics also argue the existence of a structural trauma resulting from the realization of the intrinsic mortality of the human condition, a type of trauma that would be manifested by frequent states of anxiety and melancholia (LaCapra 2001: 76-85; Caruth 1995: 4-6).

Students with a certain background may also realize that ideologically the understanding of life that comes from the framework provided by Trauma Studies can be summarized in the classic motto *homo homini lupus*: man is wolf to man, a notion that also brings the framework closer to the recurrent presence of naturalism in American fiction. However, what underlies Trauma Studies research is mainly its alleged therapeutic capacity to recognize, evaluate, and provide some help in a variety of situations that originated in traumatic experiences that have not yet been fully assimilated by the victims. One of the key-notions here is the ability of textual representation to act as a pain-reliever. If PTSD occurs because the victim has not been able to assimilate the traumatic experience yet, then writing down the fragmented recollections one may have from such an experience may set in motion a process of working through the symptoms and eventually it may stimulate the release of the unconscious obstacles that are causing the trauma to continue. While on this matter, the teacher should stress the fact that Trauma Studies deals with (literary) writing not only as mental therapy but also as a means of political and humanitarian denunciation, frequently centering the analysis on the role of the witness as writer, on the capacities of the victim to write, and on the limits existing between victim and perpetrator, to mention a few of the focuses. It is a framework that strongly relies on the power of narrative and invites, therefore, a method of narrative analysis.

Some of the main founders of Trauma Studies had for years been critics and theory experts, often trained in the Yale School of Criticism, and they had been consistently centering their research on the analysis of the manifestation of PTSD in memoirs

and testimonies written by real trauma victims. Criticism from this perspective foregrounds the importance that non-realist or experimental narrative strategies allegedly have in trauma reports. The victim cannot fully articulate the traumatic experience and therefore its representation in narrative form is frequently accompanied by the existence of gaps, repetitions, lack of chronological order and other 'non-realist' ways of representation that are understood as textual symptoms of the victim's posttraumatic stress disorder.

In the past few years scholars also interested in the analysis of fiction started to evaluate the implications that Trauma Studies has also for the field of creative literature (Whitehead 2004: 6-8). From this perspective, some research has centered on biographical attempts to conclude whether such and such a writer suffers or has suffered from PTSD, which would explain the use in her or his novels of experimental strategies such as the above-mentioned use of gaps, repetitions, or anachronisms, blanks in the page, etc. It is within this particular understanding of the framework that, in the case of Vonnegut's novel, the first specific critical aim in class is to clarify the role of non-realist devices by stressing that PTSD is *not* necessarily the only source for narrative experimentation.

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In order to accomplish such an aim, narratology is selected as the critical method of enquiry. This well-known textual method for narrative analysis starts with the recognition of the existence of two different ontological levels in any narrative text, the story and the discourse or narrating process; and it also attaches great importance to the different elements for the construction of the narrative world: the type of narrator, the focalization or point of view (also recognizable in various forms), and the use of space and temporality (see Genette 1980).

3.2 Frames and Methods in the Analysis of *Slaughterhouse-Five*

The following issues were addressed in the presentation of the topic, to be further developed in the course of the different sessions:

- 1) The initial assumption is that a narratological analysis—a first indication of the teacher's method— frequently points to an erosion of the limits between the narrator's report of the factual or believable and his or her use of literary invention and experimentation in the type of fiction written by authors who are both literary creators and victims or witnesses of actual traumatic experiences.
- 2) In order to support the initial contention, the teaching approach should then focus on Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969) as the grounds where traumatic experiences also coexist with the writer's personal framework, an authorial perspective that abandons traditional realist premises and methodically resorts to experimentation to identify a profound cultural and ideological shift.

That is to say, students are made aware that the writer's framework and method are distinct from the frame and method deployed in class by the teacher.

- 3) Both trauma studies and an understanding of reality filtered by contemporary post-Newtonian physics and postmodernism are found to share a number of experimental devices that result in the enduring ethical effect that has accompanied Vonnegut's famous novel since its publication in 1969.

Once the aims of the unit dedicated to *Slaughterhouse-Five* have been presented to students, bibliographic indications are given by enumerating relevant critics in Trauma Studies who have set the main bases of the framework; well-known scholars such as Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub, and Dominick LaCapra. Then, the teaching approach narrows down towards greater specificity. This is done by indicating that the existence of disrupted stories in many of the narratives analyzed by these trauma theorists point to strategies related to the representation of disordered time, silence, ghostly episodes, repetitions, and a general erosion of logical narrative order. The predominance of strategies that traditional criticism had systematically labeled as 'experimental' is so notable in western narratives of trauma that one of the teaching aims has also become the re-evaluation of their use from the angle of creative literature and its criticism. Arguments have been put forward to the effect that literary criticism should clarify whether the presence of experimentation in fictional narrative texts where traumatic events are reported responds exclusively to the need to deal with traumatic conditions or whether there may be other reasons for this. This has the effect of foregrounding the ultimate impossibility in narrative of fully separating the report of the factual from the report of invented or subjective events and personages, as poststructuralist critics contended for many years. Subsequently, the well-known case of Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* is offered as a case in point, an impressive example of the capacity of creative fiction to move present-day readers and cope with the horrors of a war that started more than seventy years ago and had as a direct witness the writer himself.

Gradually, it is explained to the students that the analysis of some techniques deployed by Vonnegut in his novel throw light on the use of narrative experimentation with the aim of reproducing the effects of trauma and also of functioning as a literary source to further a scientific understanding of reality: Vonnegut writes his famous novel 'framed' in a postmodern perspective that, 'drawing from' from scientific premises, stresses the ultimate incapacity of the human being to know reality. The novelist 'methodically' presents such a postmodern frame by resorting to a number of metafictional techniques and strategies—or, in traditional terms, by resorting to 'experimental' devices. Furthermore, metafictional experimentation seems to question even the book's own validity as a truthful report of the narrated

events, therefore looping back upon the idea of the impossibility for any report to ever represent reality in truthful terms. Further debate on the issue should lead to a relevant question for a critical analysis of the novel: Why does *Slaughterhouse-Five* still have such an impressive ethical effect on its readers if it seems to highlight its own ‘fictional’ condition? To answer the question, the teacher has to scrutinize two issues attentively: first, the history and quality of the experimental devices used by Vonnegut and other contemporary writers in their fiction; and secondly, the use of experimental devices in *Slaughterhouse-Five* in the author’s working through his own traumatic experiences. By stressing the second issue, the figure of Vonnegut is also localized as a victim of trauma. In other words, teaching should propose an evaluation of Vonnegut’s double framework —the postmodern ethos, mediated by scientific perspectives, from which he writes his fictional story— that includes an analysis of the method he uses to support this frame (metafiction and other experimental devices). However, the instructor should also clarify his/her teaching frame (Trauma Studies) and method (narratology) as distinct from the ones deployed by the novelist.

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Having set these preliminaries, students are offered a summary of the ways in which in recent times art and culture have departed from the considerations imposed by classic realism. The link existing between war and experimental art is added to the fact that the stressing of the experimental in contemporary art is also thanks to new scientific notions about our understanding of reality. After following up the links between art, war, science and experimentation, emphasis is given to the notion that late modernist and postmodernist writers carried out a sustained use of the experimental in fiction as a literary correlate of the pervasive (and poststructuralist) concept that the human being is trapped in a semiotic web, the world as text, from which it is impossible to escape. Although the notion that people cannot have direct access to reality is not a new one —let us remember Plato’s well-known myth of the cavern— it needs to be pointed out that its popularity in contemporary fiction and critical theory has been so evident that relevant theorists of postmodernism, such as Patricia Waugh (1984), Linda Hutcheon (1988), and Brian Stonehill (1988), stressed the point that experimental strategies are frequently the result of metafictional practices related to the understanding of life as the prison-house of language. On the other hand, criticism on postmodernist literature has not responded sufficiently to the two other issues that have been previously referred to as important sources for explaining the use of experimental or neo-realist techniques in contemporary fiction: namely, the impact of post-Newtonian scientific views and the effects of traumatic experiences, such as war. For their part, influential trauma theorists seem to have forgotten that experimentation may also be the result of an ideological scientific shift in the current perception of reality.

The remainder of this paper offers a description of the different steps taken to teach students the methods Vonnegut followed to construct his experimental story from a postmodern framework that frequently mixes with post-Newtonian science. Then, the critical perspective of Trauma Studies is taken into consideration, in order to provide students with one more reason that explains the existence of experimental strategies in the novel.

Thus, the analysis is substantiated by highlighting the presence of two frames: Vonnegut's mixed framework (new physics, postmodernism) and the teacher's own (trauma studies). Both perspectives converge to clarify the use of experimental devices in the novel. Additionally, narratology provides the necessary technical tools to understand Vonnegut's own frame (an interference of Post-Newtonian views and the postmodern ethos) and also to clarify the writer's use of experimental and metafictional strategies (i.e. his own method of presenting his framework on life and reality).

The use of narratology reveals that the novel is strikingly metafictional, that is to say, it deploys devices that guide readers to think about the pervasive importance language has in our understanding of life. The notion that language seems to mediate everything explains why Vonnegut designed a novel sharply divided into two parts by his narrator: Chapter One and the rest of the book. In Chapter One the writer's persona introduces himself as narrator, a figure that, despite his human condition, from Chapter Two onwards will prove to be omniscient and become the voice that traditional criticism denominates the 'third-person narrator' —that is to say, a heterodiegetic narrator in Genette's terminology (1980: 228-45). In Chapter One, though, the narrator is still a 'first person' or homodiegetic voice, which allows Vonnegut to introduce his own persona and his intention as a writer: none other than to write a book about the fire-bombing of the German city of Dresden in February 1945, in whose Slaughterhouse number 5 he was kept imprisoned after having been captured by the Germans at the battle of the Bulge. The condition of being trapped in the slaughterhouse together with other prisoners of war meant for him and his companions escape from the certain death that befell thousands of people, mostly civilians, during the Allied bombardments of the city. In Chapter One narrator Vonnegut insists on his long-lasting incapacity to write about the massacre he witnessed in Dresden, a condition of narrative blockage that is already of interest to any scholar teaching from the premises of Trauma Studies. In order to release what qualifies, given these premises, as the unconscious repressed forces that disturb the writer-as-witness since the massacre, he visits his war buddy O'Hare and has an interesting conversation with O'Hare's wife from which he emerges ready to write the story that is reported in Chapter Two

in the novel. The first chapter in the book is, then, a story about the paths the author took to write the story of the massacre, a clear metafictional device that the teacher should link to other strategies in the book that systematically question any realist representation of the events. So, for instance, the narrator refers to his own presence in the story with expressions such as “Somebody behind [Billy Pilgrim] in the boxcar said, ‘Oz’. That was I. That was me” (Vonnegut 1989: 100). Or he addresses the reader directly with a “Listen!” Apparently, what the author’s narrative persona wishes his readers to know is the story of Billy Pilgrim, the fictional protagonist of the book from Chapter Two onwards. In Billy’s story, where many references to post-Newtonian physics can be found, lies proof that Vonnegut is using a complementary framework to interpret the traumatic events he experienced. The narratological analysis discloses that from Chapter Two onwards, Billy Pilgrim’s story is reported in a very fragmented manner: the episodes are brief and they are not presented in chronological order. Apparent disorder in time and frequent jumps from one place to another become the norm. The reason for that is given at the end of Chapter One and repeated at the beginning of Chapter Two: Billy Pilgrim is unstuck in time. That is to say, he cannot fix his position in time or in space; he jumps from present to past to future without warning; and he travels apparently at random from America to Germany and then to another planet called Tralfamadore. However, Billy’s condition is not a mere narrative game nor is Vonnegut’s aim to write a fantasy-ridden story. The stylistic presentation of events in the narrative is also disorderly, that is to say, experimental: it does not follow the rules of realism. Billy’s condition is presented as openly fantastic or unbelievable. However, this condition has a possible explanation that readers can find within the text itself provided they are familiarized with the frame of reality offered by post-Newtonian physics. In his travels Billy sometimes goes to planet Tralfamadore, as mentioned above, and there he meets extraterrestrial beings who are characterized by their ability to perceive life in the fourth dimension. That is, for the Tralfamadoreans there is no difference between past, present and future, a condition that offers the reader a first hint of Vonnegut’s roots in Einstein’s physics. The novel becomes a metaphor of some of the implications of Relativity Theory, namely the notion that space and time are not absolute, separate categories, and that our apprehension of reality is not the only valid one: knowledge is always subject to the observers’ experienced conditions and to their instruments for evaluating reality. In other words, in *Slaughterhouse-Five* the writer is also playing with a notion that represented a significant change of framework in 20th-century physics. In line with post-Newtonian physics, different species experience life in different ways, and truth and falsehood cannot be absolute opposites anymore. Following this

revolutionary understanding of the Universe, Vonnegut also experiments with his protagonist and provides him with the condition of the quantum particle. Billy's leaps in time and space, reflected in the peculiar bouncing narrative structure in which his story is presented, are also the metaphor of a scientific claim that has become quite popular even in the field of literary theory: Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle.

In the field of quantum mechanics, the theories of Max Born and Werner Heisenberg peaked in the year 1927 with the latter's proclamation of the famous Indeterminacy or Uncertainty Principle, which states that pairs of quantities (i.e. the position and momentum of a particle) are incompatible for measurement and cannot have precise values simultaneously. The physicist can choose to measure either quantity, and obtain a result to any desired degree of precision, but the more precisely one quantity is measured, the less precise the other quantity becomes (Nadeau 1981: 52-3). In plain terms, this means that the electron or quantum particle has a very jumpy nature and does not abide by Newtonian laws. What is perhaps more important in Heisenberg's formulation is its anti-categorical nature. The particle is and is not at a given time, it stands and does not stand at a given place, always depending on the ways used by the observer to measure it (Davies and Gribbin 1991: 201-03). Scientific relativity brings forth ontological relativity, which is metaphorized in Vonnegut's book by means of an experimental presentation of the characters and the events in the story: in the writer's personal interpretation the postmodern prison-house of language also becomes the post-Newtonian relativity of all knowledge; that is to say, from his perspective as author, Vonnegut combines in the novel two different but, at times, complementary frameworks from which to interpret the world.

Protagonist Billy Pilgrim may behave metaphorically like an electron, but at the time he wrote his famous novel, the writer obviously did not know about Trauma Studies because this framework had not been developed yet. However, many of the symptoms that characterize PTSD are recognizable not only in Billy's but also in the narrator's character. In support of this contention, the teacher may include quotes from the work of relevant critics such as Susanne Veas-Gulani (2003) and Alberto Cacicedo (2005), who have already evaluated *Slaughterhouse-Five* within the framework of Trauma Studies and argued that both narrator and protagonist suffer from PTSD. From this critical framework, we might also infer that the invention of Tralfamadore (which already appears in Vonnegut's earlier novel *The Sirens of Titan*, 1959) is related to the author's traumatized condition and to the role of literature as a therapeutic strategy to soothe the pains of posttraumatic stress. The extraterrestrial world of Tralfamadore provides, also from this

perspective, an escape route for the author to avoid facing his daily life as a veteran who had witnessed a devastating firebombing where his own Forces destroyed a beautiful city, killed thousands of civilians, and almost killed him and many other prisoners of war. Within the story, the reader is offered further data by Billy's daughter, the traumatic implications of which can explain the protagonist's strange behavior: she says that her father only started to think of Tralfamadore after having survived an airplane crash in 1969—a second traumatic experience that would accelerate the psychic consequences of his war trauma. Actually, it is only when Billy is in hospital recovering from the accident that he becomes a fan of sci-fi writer Kilgore Trout. One of the stories Billy reads while in hospital is remarkably similar to the experiences he reports about being kidnapped by Tralfamadoreans and put in a zoo with a sexy woman (Vonnegut 1989: 90). Science-fiction, the narrator confirms, helps Billy to construct a new life for himself (1989: 70), openly pointing to the capacity of literature to create a new reality but also, as trauma theorists eventually confirmed, pointing to narrative as a therapeutic way to alleviate posttraumatic pain.

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In the analysis of the opening chapter in the novel, Trauma Studies also helps students to mark Vonnegut's persona as a traumatized being. In a symptomatic way, the narrator presents his own role as witness to the Dresden massacre and his belief in the irrationality of all wars by 'repeating' certain tags and phrases. Within the frame of Trauma Studies, verbal repetitions—that textually introduce further experimental devices in the novel—are interpreted as a manifestation of the narrator's process of *acting out* the traumatic experiences he had to undergo (see Goldberg 2000: 2). His two most remarkable symptomatic tags of "so it goes" and "poo-tee-wee?", his calling himself Yon Yonson, or his insistent comment that his own odor is of "mustard gas and roses" have been interpreted by trauma critics (Cacicedo 2005: 360-61; Veas-Gulani 2003: 178) as correlates of Vonnegut's obsessive repetition or reenactment of the most traumatic events that befell him in the war. Readers who are familiar with other novels by Vonnegut may realize the recurrence of certain motifs and situations. Within the framework of Trauma Studies this can be interpreted also as an indication that down through the years Kurt Vonnegut was insistently repeating those motifs in an attempt to get rid of the traumatic distress that had been haunting him since the Dresden massacre. Additionally, it should be pointed out that in *Slaughterhouse-Five* only two or three pages are actually dedicated to describing the Dresden firebombing itself: after so many years trying to write a book about the massacre, Vonnegut could only write a few pages about it, in this way confirming that he had not been able to get rid of his creative blockage completely.

4. Concluding Remarks

In cases such as *Slaughterhouse-Five* experimental strategies may respond to the use of different, interfering frameworks on the part of the writer but they can also be analyzed by the scholar as symptoms of a traumatized condition. In any case, frameworks and methods have to be clearly indicated in both our teaching and research even when a tested method such as narratology may lead us to the discovery of an extraordinary framework in which one is and is not at one and the same time. Hopefully, the views provided in this paper may contribute to a better understanding of the concepts and applications of framework and method in the field and also, borrowing John Swales' words (2004: 243), to assisting teachers and scholars "to gain competence and confidence" in our academic endeavors.

Notes

¹. The writing of this article has been funded by the Spanish Ministry of Education (FFI2012-32719) and the Aragonese Regional Government (H05).

². Compare with Wolfs' definition of the scientific method (2009: I & II) as "the process by which scientists, collectively and over time, endeavor to construct an accurate (that is, reliable, consistent and non-arbitrary) representation of the world". Traditionally, the scientific method is expected to follow four steps: "1. Observation and description of a phenomenon or group of phenomena. 2. Formulation of a hypothesis to explain the phenomena. In physics, the hypothesis often takes the form of a causal mechanism or a mathematical relation. 3. Use of the hypothesis to predict the existence of other phenomena, or to predict quantitatively the results of new observations. 4. Performance of experimental tests of the predictions by several independent experimenters and properly performed experiments"

³. In them, English departments frequently cover English Language and Linguistics, as well as Literary, Film and Cultural Studies.

⁴. UNESCO has relocated Linguistics as a discipline on its own (# 57), being related also to other social sciences like Anthropology or Law, while Literary and Cultural Studies still belong to the area of the Arts and the Humanities (# 62).

⁵. Which, for teaching, could be compared to the importance the abstract has for a research article. According to Huckin (2001: 93), "Abstracts have at least four distinct uses. First, they serve as stand-alone mini-texts, giving readers a quick summary of a study topic, methodology, and findings. Second, they serve as screening devices enabling the reader to decide whether to read the article as a whole. Third, for those readers who do opt to read the article as a whole, abstracts serve as previews, creating an interpretive frame that can guide reading. Finally, abstracts serve as aids to indexing by professional indexers for large database services"

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FOOL FOR LOVE Y LA ESTIRPE DE LOS FANTASEADORES EN EL TEATRO DE SAM SHEPARD

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I'm haunted by your scent
When I'm talking to someone else

I'm haunted by your eyes
In the middle of brushing my teeth

I'm haunted by your hair
By your skin
When you're not around

Are you visiting me

Am I dreaming you up

Sam Shepard and Joseph Chaikin, *Savage/Love*

1. Introducción

Fool for Love se estrenó en el Magic Theatre de San Francisco el 8 de febrero de 1983, dirigida por el propio Sam Shepard. Junto con *True West* (1980), es la obra de Shepard más representada en los Estados Unidos e internacionalmente. Como sugiere Bottoms (1998: 182-83), aparte de poder interpretarse con un reducido

reparto, supuso una variación estilística en la producción del dramaturgo. En los dos textos teatrales mencionados, Shepard abandonó deliberadamente su gusto por lo contradictorio, por las extravagancias, los excesos lingüísticos y las reflexiones metadramáticas para crear obras aparentemente más cercanas a las convenciones dramáticas del realismo y, por lo tanto, más accesibles al gran público. Shepard ya había explorado el amor y las relaciones sentimentales en la obra experimental que escribió con Joseph Chaikin en 1979, *Savage/Love*, descrita por Chaikin como “common poems of real and imagined moments in the spell of love” (Shepard 1997: 321) pero esta nunca llegaría a tener la repercusión que alcanzó *Fool for Love*.

La obra escenifica el reencuentro entre dos viejos amantes, May y Eddie, en la austera habitación de un motel situado al borde del desierto de Mojave. Desde el primer momento, tanto el diálogo como el lenguaje gestual de los protagonistas anticipan y nos hacen comprender lo apasionado y tormentoso de su relación. Al comienzo de la representación, vemos a May durante varios minutos sentada al borde de la cama, frente al público, sin levantar la cabeza y mirando al suelo. La fuerza con la que, aun sin apartar la mirada del suelo, May se aferra a las rodillas de Eddie cuando él se le acerca y le asegura que no se va a marchar, prefigura ya la intensidad del reencuentro. Con este gesto tan tierno como exasperado, May no eleva una súplica ni le ofrece su sumisión incondicional al que fuera en otros tiempos su gran amor; en cambio, sorprende al público con una actitud desafiante, literalmente combativa y crítica hacia un hombre que cree que, por el mero hecho de haber conducido durante 2.480 millas para llegar hasta ese motel en el que ella vive, tiene derecho a irrumpir en su vida y reclamarle inmediatamente ese amor despedazado por el paso de tiempo, los celos y el dolor producido por las constantes separaciones. El enfrentamiento que dramatiza la obra es tanto dialéctico como corporal. De hecho, dentro del repertorio de los clásicos contemporáneos, *Fool* destaca porque exige un gran esfuerzo físico, pues hace gran hincapié en lo visceral de la atracción entre May y Eddie. En el montaje original, protagonizado por Kathy Baker y Ed Harris, junto a Dennis Ludlow y Will Marchetti como Martin y The Old Man, para aumentar el impacto emocional de la pugna entre los amantes, Shepard hizo colocar tras las paredes del escenario micrófonos conectados a amplificadores que intensificasen el efecto de los portazos y de los golpes que los actores se daban contra las paredes. Además, hizo que se colocaran altavoces bajo los asientos del teatro para que los espectadores pudiesen sentir aquellos sonidos aún más cerca. Esta amplificación del sonido no es estrictamente necesaria, pero los actores tienen que conseguir transmitir lo irremediable y lo incontrolable de su pasión.¹

Shepard explicó, en una entrevista concedida al *Sunday Times* en 1984, que desde comienzos de los ochenta se había interesado por la música *country* y que pensaba que este género musical reflejaba mejor que cualquier otra forma artística la verdadera

relación, “terrible e imposible”, entre el hombre y la mujer americanos (Fay 1984: 19). Dado que *Fool for Love* comienza y termina con temas musicales de Merle Haggard, *Wake Up* y *I’m the One Who Loves You*, Bottoms (1998) sugiere que la naturaleza trágica e imposible del vínculo entre sus protagonistas es también el tema principal de *Fool for Love*. May y Eddie se complementan y se necesitan pero, al igual que Austin y Lee en *True West*, su relación también los destruye: “as ever in Shepard’s work, duality leads not to a healthy balance, but to perpetual division. Like the eagle and the cat in *Curse*, these pairings are both interdependent and self-destructive, caught in an impossible bind of mutual incompatibility” (Bottoms 1998: 191).

Identificar qué es exactamente lo que hace imposible la relación de May y Eddie en *Fool for Love* es crucial para entender la complejidad de la obra. A lo largo de la obra se va desvelando que son más de uno los motivos que impiden el establecimiento de un vínculo duradero y satisfactorio entre los protagonistas. El más evidente en un primer momento es la tendencia de Eddie a desaparecer y abandonar a May para luego reaparecer y pretender que ella lo esté esperando sumisa sin cuestionar ni su actitud ni su relación con ese misterioso personaje, The Countess, que nunca aparece en escena, pero que se deja sentir entre bastidores. A pesar de lo visceral y efectista de la pugna entre los amantes, el problema subyacente que la obra explora con mayor originalidad es la dicotomía entre la predisposición de Eddie a vivir inmerso en sus fantasías y la pretensión de May de mantener una relación arraigada en la realidad o, al menos, no tan contaminada de visiones idealizadas. *Fool* ha recibido una amplia atención por parte de la crítica; sin embargo, no se ha incidido lo suficiente en la importancia de su discurso metaimaginativo ni en las implicaciones de este en la obra de Shepard. A Eddie lo describe explícitamente en el texto teatral como un “fantaseador”: su condición de tal no solo confirma el interés recurrente del dramaturgo, a lo largo de toda su carrera, por representar y comprender la fuerza de la imaginación humana y por mostrar su iconografía y su función, sino también el modo en el que el autor iría renovando las estrategias dramáticas para abordar y reconocer su tremenda ambivalencia. Por ello, en el presente artículo me propongo indagar en esa vertiente del texto para vincular y cuestionar la relación de la ambivalencia de la imaginación con la representación y la interpretación crítica del determinismo genético en la obra que aquí se analiza y otras del mismo autor estadounidense conocidas como “familiares”.

2. It’s all fantasy / That’s realism: la figura del fantaseador

El enfrentamiento entre May y Eddie en *Fool* parece plantear, de primeras, una oposición irreconciliable entre la fantasía y la realidad, como si fuesen necesariamente antitéticas. Esta falsa oposición será pronto desmantelada. Lo primero que la celosa

May le recrimina al recién llegado Eddie es su relación con otra mujer, pero, cuando él intenta convencerla de que ha venido a buscarla para llevársela a Wyoming, donde quiere montar un rancho, es precisamente su persistencia en invocar como modo de vida una fantasía pastoral inspirada en el mito de la frontera lo que le enfurece a May: “I hate chickens! I hate horses! I hate all that shit! You know that. You got me confused with someone else. You keep comin’ up here with this lame country dream life with chickens and vegetables and I can’t stand any of it” (Shepard 1984: 23).² El discurso de May incide recurrentemente en esa idea:

MAY: [...] How many times have you done this to me?

EDDIE: What?

MAY: Suckered me into some little dumb fantasy and then dropped me like a hot rock. How many times has that happened?

EDDIE: It’s no fantasy.

MAY: It’s all fantasy. (24)

Pese a que May insista en el carácter ilusorio de las fantasías de Eddie, uno de los aspectos más significativos de *Fool* es que la reflexión presente en el texto sobre la privilegiada función de la fantasía en la vida psíquica, esta se articula dramática y discursivamente, sin embargo, a través de la relación de Eddie con el misterioso personaje que entra a escena a continuación, The Old Man, y no en la discusión de los amantes: esta última muestra más bien los ‘efectos’ destructivos del deseo de posesión masculino. Cuando el Viejo interviene en la acción, apenas May sale del escenario para encerrarse por segunda vez en el baño, lo hace para interpelar a Eddie y reafirmar, precisamente, su naturaleza de fantaseador:

THE OLD MAN: I thought you were supposed to be a fantasist, right? Isn’t it basically the deal with you? You dream things up. Isn’t that true?

EDDIE: (*stays on the floor*) I don’t know.

THE OLD MAN: You don’t know. Well, if you don’t know I don’t know who the hell does. I wanna show you somethin’. Somethin’ real, okay? Somethin’ actual. (26-27)

Las acotaciones de la edición impresa indican que este personaje “*exists only in the minds of MAY and EDDIE, even though they might talk to him directly and acknowledge his physical presence. THE OLD MAN treats them as though they all existed in the same time and place*” (15). Por ello, aunque para los espectadores esto no quede claro aún, cuando el Viejo irrumpe en el escenario —abandonando la plataforma anexa al escenario desde la que observaba la acción sentado en una mecedora— introduce un plano de acción simultáneo e independiente del que hasta entonces se le había mostrado al público. El despliegue de diferentes planos de acción paralelos y aparentemente contradictorios, enfatizado por los cambios en la iluminación escénica, es una técnica que Shepard ya había usado en *Suicide in B-Flat* (1976). En aquella pieza, el uso de dicha estrategia en la estructura

dramática, inspirada en la libertad compositiva del jazz, revelaba un deseo de evitar tanto la lógica de la significación unívoca como la búsqueda de certezas y resoluciones, propia de las narrativas postmodernistas. En *Fool for Love*, el espacio que el Viejo ocupa añade un plano que puede denominarse de ‘lo imaginario’ en el que, pese a la inestabilidad ontológica del personaje, su presencia física es determinante.

Shepard hubo de redactar doce borradores del manuscrito hasta que tanto él como el director artístico del Magic Theatre, John Lion, quedaron satisfechos. Lion sugiere que cuando leyó el decimoprimer borrador en el que aún no figuraban los personajes de la Condesa (que por entonces se llamaba *The Princess*) o del Viejo, fue él quien instó al dramaturgo a ir más allá:

I was convinced it would play like gangbusters, but it somehow seemed “square”. (I don’t mean the attitude, I mean the shape). It was pretty linear unusual for Sam, and I remarked on it. “Maybe it needs a three-quarter circle surrounding three points square”, I said. Three weeks later, we had the complete script, with “the old man”. (Lion 1984: 6)

Aparte de liberar a Shepard de las constricciones que le imponían las convenciones dramáticas del realismo, permitiéndole que, como sugiere DeRose (1993: 122), la obra quede suspendida entre la fantasía y la realidad, la incorporación del personaje del Viejo consigue además ejercer otra función determinante: articular plenamente por qué la unión de May y Eddie resulta imposible: ambos son sus hijos. Cuando el Viejo aparece de nuevo en escena para interponerse entre ellos, los planos de acción simultánea dejan de concurrir en paralelo y como sugiere Putzel: “This is Shepard rather unstable method of signifying by a physical barrier the social taboo, the common paternity that turns [May and Eddie’s] passion into tragedy” (1987: 156).

Las escuetas intervenciones del Viejo, sobre todo la primera, tienen una importancia cuyo mérito no se ha reconocido del todo, pues son las que permiten que emerjan “*suspended moment[s] of recognition*” (49), como reza una de las acotaciones en las que se indica la aparición del personaje. Vázquez Negro sostiene que su presencia “determina el marco en el que interpretar la obra” (2011:180), lo cual es cierto, pero cabe preguntarse cuál es exactamente ese marco. También Geis (1993: 83) cree que la argumentación en torno al fantaseador se erige en paradigma interpretativo de la obra, pues con ella el Viejo sugiere que la verificación de la representación no depende necesariamente de una prueba visual o física, sino de la *creencia* en su certeza: una proposición que se puede aplicar a todo lo que acontecerá después. El Viejo, en efecto, le pide a Eddie que mire una pared vacía en la que supuestamente hay un retrato de la famosa cantante de *country* y popular actriz en la década de los ochenta Barbara Mandrell:

THE OLD MAN: Well, would you believe me if I told ya' I was married to her?

EDDIE: (*pause*) No.

THE OLD MAN: Well, see, now that's the difference right there. That's realism. I am actually married to Barbara Mandrell in my mind. Can you understand that?

EDDIE: Sure.

THE OLD MAN: Good. I'm glad we have an understanding. (27)

El marco, o el paradigma, que Shepard introduce con la figura de The Old Man, aparte de lo anecdótico de su fantasía, no es ni más ni menos que el de la compleja categoría de la imaginación humana, un marco que permite sobrepasar el mero reconocimiento de la percepción subjetiva de la realidad para enfatizar la ambivalencia y la enorme influencia de las imágenes de la mente en la vida cotidiana.³

En el diálogo entre Eddie y su padre, la tranquilidad con la que el primero entra en el juego del segundo aceptando el pacto imaginativo que conduce a la visualización de Mandrell no resulta sorprendente, pues visualizar otras realidades u objetos ausentes se considera desde la antigüedad una de las facultades de la imaginación. Lo que de verdad resulta inquietante es la determinación con la que el Viejo defiende el 'realismo' de su mente. En el artículo "La imaginación en el discurso y en la acción", publicado originalmente en 1976, Paul Ricoeur sostiene que el espacio bidimensional de las teorías sobre la imaginación puede medirse según dos ejes de oposición: por el lado del objeto, el eje de la presencia y de la ausencia; por el lado del sujeto, el eje de la conciencia fascinada y de la conciencia crítica, según sea el sujeto de la imaginación capaz o no de asumir una conciencia crítica de la diferencia entre lo imaginario y lo real: una variación determinada, por lo tanto, por el grado de creencia. The Old Man se encuentra claramente en el extremo del eje correspondiente a la conciencia crítica nula, en el que se confunde la imagen con lo real e incluso se la toma por ello, "la potencia de mentira y de error denunciada por Pascal [y] también, *mutatis mutandi*, la *imaginatio* de Spinoza, infectada de creencia" (Ricoeur 1988: 96). No cabe duda de que la actitud del personaje está muy lejos de alcanzar la distancia crítica consciente de sí misma que usa la imaginación como instrumento de crítica de la realidad, pero la claridad, la determinación y la férrea voluntad con la que el Viejo defiende su creencia es muy significativa. El discurso del personaje y su defensa de la ética del fantaseador no se corresponden con lo que el filósofo francés denomina el estado de confusión "característico de la conciencia que, *sin saberlo*, toma como real aquello que, para otra conciencia, no es real" (1988: 97; la cursiva es mía). En el caso del Viejo, la defensa que hace del 'realismo' de su fantasía revela una conciencia plena de su postura y sus consecuencias.

Pese al empeño con el que defiende la validez de la fascinación imaginativa como instrumento lícito con el que afrontar la realidad, puede que lo más problemático

de este personaje sea su propia irrealidad. Como sugiere Geis (1993), el Viejo es simultáneamente potente e impotente, capaz de captar la atención de otros personajes y del público y, sin embargo, incapaz de superar el ser ex-céntrico en la acción dramática: “Given his status as both visible and invisible, ‘actual’ and imaginary, it is fitting that the figure of the Old Man plays a role in the validation of (and, later, in the attempt to discredit) narratives that may or may not be ‘merely fictional’” (1993: 83). Su ambiguo estado, no obstante, puede que sea precisamente lo que sintetiza de una manera más clara la ambivalencia de la fantasía. Como apunta Lapoujade, esta última es en general, “la operación de las funciones psíquicas por la que se crean imágenes que ni reproducen, ni reconstruyen la realidad, sino que la alteran, en sentido literal, la hacen devenir otra” (1988: 136). La inestabilidad de The Old Man encarna la duplicidad que la propia etimología de la palabra fantasía, proveniente del griego φαντασία, encierra: pone de manifiesto la doble vertiente de un concepto que por un lado alude al ‘fenómeno’, es decir, lo que aparece y se hace visible, y por otro lado alude al ‘fantasma’, lo que aparece, se manifiesta, pero como engañoso, como trampa. Desde un análisis complementario a este, Hardison Londré (1993) argumenta que la obra escenifica la conciencia dividida de unos personajes que se encuentran entre el sueño y la vigilia, de modo que el motel donde acontece la acción se convierte en una metáfora escénica de su estado mental. La representación distorsionada y alterada que se les presenta a los espectadores a través de las percepciones subjetivas de los personajes permite pensar que May y Eddie bien podrían erigirse en una proyección mental o en un sueño del Viejo, un personaje cuya inestabilidad y presencia turbadora consiguen, sin lugar a dudas, poner en evidencia el extraordinario poder de las imágenes de la mente para ‘alterar’ la realidad, rompiendo así esa falsa oposición inicial entre dos órdenes, el de lo real y el de lo imaginario, que no son independientes.

El Viejo defiende imperturbable su aprehensión imaginativa de la realidad —lo que acredita la imposibilidad de establecer una distinción entre lo real y lo no-real como opuestos en nuestras mentes (Andrews 2014: 6)— y se erige en la figura que, sobre el escenario, encarna esa ambivalencia. Su actitud parece contrastar con la actitud mundana de Eddie y la violencia con la que este reclama la entrega de May. Eddie no llega en ningún momento a ejercer la violencia física sobre su amante, pero la violencia psicológica con la que, irritado por la indiferencia de ella, invade su espacio vital, es abrumadora, tanto que Bottoms habla de “an extended process of rape” (1998: 198). Cuando May le explica a su inesperado visitante que tendrá que marcharse porque ya ha quedado esa noche, la reacción del celoso Eddie es ir a por su escopeta, dispuesto a no moverse de la habitación de May. A partir de este momento, el repertorio de acciones que Eddie desplegará para mostrarle a su antiguo amor su virilidad no se limitará a dejar bien visible sobre la mesa un arma de fuego: además traerá sus espuelas, enlazará uno a uno los postes

de la cama para hacer ver que no está desentrenado como ‘cowboy’, beberá tequila sin cesar, y permanecerá en la habitación para imponerse sobre Martin, el apocado y bonachón pretendiente de May. Aunque las actitudes de Eddie y el Viejo parezcan muy distantes, cabe preguntarse si acaso la obra plantea un vínculo entre la epistemología de la posesión imaginativa de la realidad del padre y la impetuosa intimidación del hijo y, si es así, de qué modo se revela dicho vínculo.

3. La maldición de la herencia genética y la transgresión femenina

Resulta casi irónico y algo cargante que, en la incursión shepardiana en la investigación dramática de la pasión amorosa, el conflicto entre padre e hijo ocupe un lugar tan significativo o, dicho de otro modo, que el dramaturgo no pudiera desprenderse de la influencia de ese fantasma paterno ni siquiera durante el período en que se interesó por lo que él denominó “el lado femenino de las cosas” (Rosen 1993: 8). Si la presencia de *The Old Man* en *Fool for Love* desestabiliza la distinción entre fantasía y realidad, el personaje desempeña aun otra función fundamental: la de conectar de manera ostensible dos obsesiones recurrentes en el teatro de Sam Shepard que hasta entonces habían discurrido en paralelo y que aquí quedan, sin embargo, íntimamente vinculadas: la indagación intuitiva en la función de la vida imaginativa de los personajes y la relación traumática entre el padre y el hijo. Más allá de lo cual, la predisposición de los personajes masculinos a imponer sus fantasías, que la obra articula principalmente como una herencia genética, revela también, no obstante, ansiedades propias del contexto sociocultural en el que emerge. Como veremos, *Fool* indaga y ahonda de un modo intuitivo en cuestiones que generaron un intenso debate a partir de la década de los ochenta en los Estados Unidos, sobre todo en el ámbito de los estudios sociológicos y culturales, coincidiendo con la aparición de los estudios sobre la masculinidad, que reclamaban la necesidad de reevaluar el concepto de género, la construcción social de la identidad y los modelos hegemónicos de masculinidad que hasta entonces no se habían cuestionado.

En el teatro de Shepard, la aparición recurrente de un conflicto entre un padre y un hijo, presente ya en la primigenia *The Rock Garden* (1964) y también en *The Holy Ghostly* (1970) y *The Tooth of Crime* (1972), cobraría una relevancia sin precedentes en las que se conocen como ‘obras familiares’ del dramaturgo, sobre todo a partir del estreno de *Curse of the Starving Class* en 1976, cuando empezó a percibirse como una maldición transmitida de modo inexorable entre los personajes masculinos. Varios estudios críticos (Taav 2000; McDonough 2002) han incidido en la importancia de una obsesión que tiene su origen en la difícil relación del

dramaturgo con su padre alcohólico. Las estrategias simbólicas que Shepard utiliza para explorar ese patrón dramático son numerosas, pero resulta primordial individuar en qué habría de consistir esa maldición y qué es exactamente lo que, transmitido de padre a hijo, se convierte en motivo de decadencia. En las obras familiares anteriores a *Fool for Love* encontramos el reconocimiento de esa transmisión y su identificación como maldición, así como su asociación a una violencia indómita. En *Curse of the Starving Class*, Weston reconoce ser portador de un ‘veneno’ heredado de su padre, y el diálogo que mantiene con su hijo Wesley es indicativo de la insistencia con la que quiere mostrar la ‘inevitabilidad’ de su transmisión: “I never saw my old man’s poison until I was much older than you. Much older. And then you know how I recognized it? [...] Because I saw myself infected with it. That’s how. I saw me carrying it around. His poison in my body” (Shepard 1997: 167). Sin embargo, hay una clara reticencia a indagar en la naturaleza del veneno:

WESLEY: What is it anyway?

WESTON: What do you mean, what is it? You can see it for yourself!

WESLEY: I know it’s there, but I don’t know what it is.

WESTON: You’ll find out. (Shepard 1997: 168)

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Al igual que en *The Rock Garden*, en *Curse of the Starving Class* se presta más atención al ritual mediante el cual la herencia maldita se transmite de padre a hijo que a la naturaleza misma de aquello que se transfiere. En *Curse*, como en la obra en un acto incluida en el programa doble con el que Shepard se estrenó como dramaturgo en el Theatre Genesis de St. Mark’s Church in the Bowery en 1964, el rito de pasaje se expresa mediante el acto de vestirse y desvestirse. Solo cuando Wesley se pone la ropa sucia y vieja que su padre llevaba en los dos primeros actos de la obra, comprende que ese gesto aparentemente cotidiano se ha convertido en portador de una revelación y en el acto simbólico de aceptación de un legado ineludible:

WESLEY: I started putting all his clothes on. His baseball cap, his tennis shoes, his overcoat. And every time I put one thing on it seemed like a part of him was growing on me. I could feel him taking over. [...] I could feel my self retreating. I could feel him coming in and me going out. Just like the change of guards [...] I didn’t do a thing [...] I just grew up here. (Shepard 1997: 196)

Tanto *Buried Child* como *True West*, las obras familiares posteriores a *Curse* y anteriores a *Fool for Love*, también volvían a explorar la imposibilidad de escapar a las redes de influencia de los vínculos familiares dejando claro que la naturaleza de ese veneno heredado del padre consistía, sobre todo, en la erupción de una violencia aparentemente imposible de reprimir. En *Buried Child*, el joven Vince visita la casa familiar, pero nadie le reconoce. Solo cuando, totalmente ebrio,

irrumpe con violencia en la casa “crashing through the screen porch door up left, tearing it off its hinges” (Shepard 1997: 125), vociferando el himno de la marina estadounidense y lanzando botellas vacías de whisky contra el porche, lo reconocerá su abuelo. Vince vuelve transformado en “the Midnight Strangler! I devour whole families in a single gulp!” (Shepard 1997: 126), dispuesto a enfrentarse a todos sus impertérritos familiares si fuese necesario, y a convertir la casa en un auténtico campo de batalla. Hasta que no sufre esta repentina metamorfosis —que lo convierte en una víctima de la fuerza entrópica y visceral de su propio cuerpo, de sus instintos y de la violencia específicamente masculina que hasta entonces había reprimido— no reconocen sus familiares a quien ya no se reconoce a sí mismo. También en *True West* Austin sufre una transformación parecida. Igualmente, la imagen de los hermanos al final de la obra, en el instante en el que están a punto de estrangularse el uno al otro, es representativa de esa violencia heredada del padre alcohólico al que se alude con frecuencia, un padre que determina profundamente el conflicto entre Austin y Lee, si bien no figura en el elenco de los personajes dramáticos. Sus hijos, los dos hermanos se definen a sí mismos por el modo en que establecen una relación afectiva con ese progenitor común y ausente.⁴

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Llegados a *Fool for Love*, en cambio, la escenificación del conflicto paterno-filial revela un deseo de abordar con mayor madurez la reflexión acerca de la naturaleza de lo que se transmite de generación en generación y de las posibles causas de la violencia típicamente masculina que el hijo hereda de su progenitor, dado que Shepard las vincula, por primera vez, con las funciones psíquicas de la imaginación humana. En primer lugar, sitúa al Viejo en un plano mental que es el plano de la imaginación de los otros personajes —tal vez solo en el de Eddie, pues May no se dirige a él directamente en ningún momento, o acaso en el de todos ellos alterando la percepción de las fantasías y recuerdos de unos y otros. En segundo lugar, la radicalización del discurso de *The Old Man* en defensa de la superioridad de la fascinación imaginativa supone también una alteración notable en el modo de articular, escenificar y entender la herencia patriarcal. La obra revela y reconoce el poder de lo imaginario en los procesos afectivos y cognitivos de todos los personajes dramáticos, pero la actitud que cada uno de ellos muestra hacia esta cuestión es muy diferente. La defensa a ultranza por parte del Viejo de una creencia deliberada y absoluta en las imágenes de su mente queda asociada a un modelo de masculinidad problemático y en última instancia fallido porque, como apunta Hall (1993) desde una perspectiva feminista, la predisposición a darles un papel primordial a las fantasías es nociva si además corre pareja con la insistencia en imponerla como única visión de la realidad amparándose en la posición privilegiada que tradicionalmente ocupan los varones en una sociedad patriarcal. La postura de *The Old Man* contrasta con la honestidad con la que May le confiesa a su hermano y

amante el enorme impacto emocional que tienen sus visiones y la dificultad que le supone librarse de ellas:

MAY: I don't understand my feelings. I really don't [...] How, no matter how much I'd like not to hate you, I hate you even more. It grows. I can't even see you now. All I see is a picture of you. You and her. I don't even know if the picture's real anymore. I don't even care. It's a made up picture. It invades my head. The two of you. And this picture stings even more than if I'd actually seen you with her. (28)

Influyentes estudios críticos (Hall 1993; McDonough 1997) llamaron la atención ya en la década de los noventa sobre la importantísima función crítica y transgresora del personaje de May en *Fool*, pese a que al final de la obra Eddie no quiera aceptar su exigencia de un compromiso y de una relación afrontada con madurez y prefiera huir con la Condesa, cuya principal característica es, como sugiere Vázquez (2011: 171), su propia irrealidad. El único momento en el que May parece “triunfar sobre la epistemología masculina” (Vázquez 2011: 172) es cuando da su versión de la compleja historia de adulterios que les une a los tres personajes, y le cuenta a Martin que su madre “just turned herself inside out. [...] She'd pull herself up into a ball and just stare at the floor” (53), mientras que la madre de Eddie se pegó un tiro al ser incapaz de soportar más las infidelidades del Viejo. Esta confesión es tan impactante como reveladora y, de hecho, tiene como efecto inmediato que el Viejo, sintiendo amenazada su autoridad, interfiere en la acción dramática para rogarle a su hijo que narre “the male side a' this thing” (73) y hable en su nombre para representarlo. Eddie, no obstante, no puede sino confesar ante la fantasmal figura de su padre: “It was your shotgun. Same one we used to duck-hunt with. Browning. She never fired a gun before in her life. That was her first time” (73). La importancia de esta escena no puede obviarse pues en ella queda escenificada e identificada con crudeza no tanto, o no solo, la obstinación con la que el padre intenta imponer una visión y una ‘versión’ masculina de los hechos, aunque estas estén fundadas sobre vanas fantasías, sino, sobre todo, la aceptación del hijo de ese legado, pese al inesperado enfrentamiento con el progenitor forzado por May. Si en las obras anteriores el legado genético se había identificado con una maldición oscura e incompresible, en *Fool* la referencia a un ‘pacto’ introduce un grado de volición inédito: “Now tell her”, le suplica el Viejo a su hijo, “Tell her the way it happened. We've got a pact. Don't forget that” (73). El pacto que se representa en escena bien podrían imaginarlo Eddie o su padre, pero ha de entenderse como un pacto imaginario entre varones para justificarse a sí mismos: no solo para no enfrentarse con madurez a una relación adulta, sino para no asumir las fatídicas consecuencias que los actos de uno y otro tuvieron y tienen en las vidas de las mujeres que los amaron.

4. La estirpe de los fantaseadores

En el ámbito de las obras familiares de Sam Shepard, *Fool for Love* es la obra que por primera vez incorpora un discurso metaimaginario para incidir en el enorme potencial que tienen las imágenes de la mente para alterar la realidad. Hay en la obra un claro intento de vincular la imposibilidad o la renuencia de los hombres a desprenderse de sus fantasías —o del realismo de su mente, como lo denomina el Viejo— con la violencia física o simbólica que ejercen sobre las mujeres de su entorno, derivada de la necesidad de imponer y afirmar su visión. Tan importante como este reconocimiento fue el poner en boca del personaje de May un discurso transgresor y una oposición beligerante a la dominación física y mental que sobre ella ejerce Eddie. No obstante, como apunta Vázquez Negro, Shepard no dota finalmente “a May de una fuerza imaginativa que pueda competir con la visión masculina del mundo” (2011: 180), pese a la falta de profundidad psicológica de su contrincante. Si, en efecto, la fuerza imaginativa del personaje femenino no logra imponerse todavía al lado masculino de las cosas, el incesto tampoco emerge como un tropo de transgresión, sino como un modo de reforzar otra vez, en el universo shepardiano, el sentido de inexorabilidad de la herencia genética, reiterando la inminencia del fracaso en la lucha del hijo contra la preponderancia del padre y en la pugna del presente contra la imposición del pasado.

El incesto se puede entender simultáneamente como un lugar de fascinación, por el acercamiento a lo prohibido, y por lo tanto como un tropo de transgresión, y también como un elemento paralizante, al convertirse en símbolo de la incapacidad para romper con el círculo familiar. Entre la crítica psicoanalítica, la teoría más influyente es todavía el voluminoso estudio que Otto Rank publicó en 1912 en alemán, y que apareció en 1991 en su traducción al inglés con el título *The Incest Theme in Literature and Legend: Fundamentals of a Psychology of Literary Creation*. En el análisis de Rank, el incesto entre hermanos estaba entendido esencialmente como una repetición de la relación con los progenitores:

It is only through the primary parent complex that the significance of the sibling complex can correctly be appreciated and understood. This is because one's relationship with siblings is revealed by psychoanalytical research to be a “second edition”, less intense but unchanged in content of the etiologically earlier relationship with one's parents. (Rank 1991: 363)

Incluso queriendo escapar a la lógica ‘esencializante’ y ‘universalizadora’ de la teoría freudiana aplicada por Rank en su monumental estudio, en el que el complejo de Edipo gobierna todas las fases del desarrollo psicosexual, esta lógica es sustancialmente coincidente con los estudios críticos de *Fool* que amplían las perspectivas psicoanalíticas (Carveth 1997; McDonough 1997). Carveth sugiere

que la repetición compulsiva del patrón de dependencia hostil, reunión y separación violenta de los amantes que dramatiza *Fool for Love* estaría vinculada, en una lectura lacaniana, a la imposibilidad de haber llevado a cabo satisfactoriamente un proceso normal de ‘edipalización’,⁵ pues en el origen de la relación incestuosa entre May y Eddie parecen estar las continuas desapariciones del Viejo, que abandonaba repetidamente a sus esposas y a los hijos habidos con ellas. Por otra parte, el final de la obra —en el que se deja intuir que May, pese a saber que Eddie es incapaz de asumir una relación no corrompida por la herencia patriarcal, no podrá evitar perseguirlo aunque él la abandone una y otra vez— también lleva a McDonough a proponer una lectura muy similar, pues Eddie parece abocado a reiterar la incapacidad para comprometerse con las mujeres de la que adolecta su padre y May a recapitular los movimientos de Eddie, yendo de ciudad en ciudad, de motel en motel perseguida por un amante celoso:

The audience is left to assume that Eddie and May’s encounter will be repeated again in some future motel room or trailer as the characters “do nothing but repeat” themselves. However, a further rub is that these two lovers are not really repeating themselves as they are repeating the lives of their parents —her mother and their father— recapitulating a pattern of interaction they have inherited rather than created and upon which they have structured their identities. (McDonough 1997: 62)

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Estos análisis reafirman la percepción de que en *Fool for Love* el tropo del incesto refuerza el sentido de ineluctabilidad de la herencia genética en detrimento de la visión crítica que emerge en la obra a través del reconocimiento del dañino potencial de la ilusión imaginativa y la voz transgresora femenina. El incesto se convierte en un elemento paralizante que disminuye el impacto producido, en la representación escénica, por una identificación más compleja, más perspicaz y más clara que en las piezas previas de una verdadera patología masculina, que en la siguiente obra del dramaturgo, *A Lie of the Mind* (1985), ya se denomina sin ambages una “mentira de la mente”. A pesar de ello, es importante destacar el hecho de que en *Fool* se identificara por fin ese veneno, aún no reconocido por Weston y Wesley en *Curse of the Starving Class*, con la creencia ciega de los hombres en sus propias fantasías. De este modo se reconoce que los padres y los hijos de las obras familiares constituyen, esencialmente, toda una estirpe de fantaseadores. Pero *Fool* deja claro que la condición de fantaseador, lejos de ser una herencia incontrolable, ha de ser aceptada y asumida por los fantaseadores para que la tradición patriarcal pueda perpetuarse. Para ser fantaseador no es preciso imaginar simplemente y creer ciegamente en el “realismo de la mente”, sino narrar, y por lo tanto, articular plenamente, la defensa de una autonomía imaginativa como la que propone *The Old Man*, o como la que defendía el excéntrico personaje de Henry Hackamore en *Seduced* (1978). Todos ellos son lo que podríamos denominar “willing fantasists” (Fernández-Caparrós 2014: 270).

La voluntad de asumir una herencia familiar y patriarcal ya se puede atisbar en *Buried Child*, otra obra en la que Shepard también recurre, aunque de un modo diferente a en *Fool*, al tropo de la sexualidad dirigida peligrosamente hacia el interior de la familia y lo explora. La visión narrada por el personaje de Vince se ha entendido tradicionalmente como una expresión de la irrevocabilidad genética, si bien es igualmente lícito interpretarla como un ejercicio de autoafirmación y adhesión deliberada a un linaje maldito en el que hasta ese momento se le ha negado la entrada, pues cuando el joven llega a la lóbrega casa familiar, tanto su abuelo como su padre se niegan a reconocerlo. El violento regreso de Vince en el acto tercero es finalmente significativo para sus familiares porque, semejante derroche de agresiva vitalidad, como si de la resurrección de un moderno Osiris se tratara, trae consigo una virilidad que se había extinguido.⁶ El joven le revela a su novia, Shelly: “I’ve gotta carry on the line. I’ve gotta see to it that things keep rolling” (Shepard 1997: 130), pero como la memoria familiar se ha negado y desplazado, se la sustituye por una visión imaginada. Vince narra ante el público cómo tras ser expulsado de la casa familiar, al descubrir su reflejo en el retrovisor del automóvil cree estar viendo a otra persona, “Studied everything about it. As though I was looking at another man. As though I could see his whole race behind him. Like a mummy’s face. I saw him dead and alive at the same time”. Su soliloquio continúa así:

And then his face changed. His face became his father’s face. Same bones. Same eyes. Same nose. Same breath. And his father’s face changed to his Grandfather’s face. And it went on like that. Changing. Clear on back to faces I’d never seen before but still recognize. Still recognized the bones underneath. The eyes. The breath. The mouth. I followed my family clear into Iowa. Every last one. Straight into the Corn Belt and further. Straight back as far as they’d take me. Then it all dissolved. Everything dissolved. (Shepard 1997: 130)

En una obra llena de ambigüedades, es difícil concluir si el personaje realmente llega a reconocerse a sí mismo en la sucesión de rostros que conforman su visión. Vince, en su discurso, hace uso tanto del pronombre de la primera persona del singular como de la tercera (his face/my family), lo que acentúa la extrañeza que le produce su imaginado desdoblamiento. Por otra parte, el complejo entramado de ecos míticos con los que juega la obra es perceptible para el público pero no necesariamente para un personaje que, lejos de alcanzar la anagnórisis, se erige, vivo y muerto a la vez, como en su visión, en la reencarnación simbólica del misterioso niño enterrado en el pasado por sus familiares.

La incorporación de Vince a un linaje maldito a través de su visión imaginada le convierte, al igual que a Wesley en *Curse*, a The Old Man y a Eddie en *Fool* y después a Jake en *A Lie of the Mind*, en un fantaseador poseído por su propia visión, cuya maldición no es tanto la de no reconocer el potencial crítico de la

imaginación cuanto la de ampararse ciegamente en su capacidad para la fascinación y transformarla en una obstinación tal que termina desembocando en violencia física. En 1993, durante una entrevista concedida a Carol Rosen, Shepard explicó que cuando comenzó a incorporar sus obras personajes femeninos consistentes “algo comenzó a tener más sentido también para los hombres” (Rosen 1993: 8). En *Fool for Love*, pieza en la que se establece una distinción explícita entre la visión masculina y la femenina del mundo, la presencia de May propicia, en efecto, el inicio de un reconocimiento importante, si bien aún no asumido plenamente por los personajes masculinos: que la predisposición de los hombres a perpetuarse como fantaseadores puede conducirles a situaciones aciagas, para ellos mismos y sobre todo para las mujeres que los rodean. En realidad, las obras tempranas y experimentales de Shepard, sobre todo las de la década de los sesenta, muestran claramente que su teatro siempre estuvo poblado por soñadores y fantaseadores compulsivos. En el caso de *Chicago* (1965), *Cowboys #2* (1967), *The Mad Dog Blues* (1971) y otras, sin embargo, al convertir las ensoñaciones y la narración imaginativa de los personajes en el motor de la acción dramática, la escenificación de la “acción imaginante” (Bachelard 1958: 9) de unos visionarios elocuentes fue un vehículo para abrir la escena hacia lo posible dotando así de sentido, aunque fuese momentáneamente, a la experiencia de unos personajes tragicómicos desprovistos de coordenadas y certezas. Con *Fool for Love* la identificación del fantaseador y la alusión explícita a él abrieron una vía para ahondar con mayor lucidez, valga la contradicción, en los engaños de la mente.

Notes

¹. En su crítica del montaje del Riverside Studio de Londres en enero de 2010, Michael Billington lamentaba el error de anteponer un reparto con rostros conocidos por el gran público —Sadie Frost y Carl Barat, miembro de la banda de rock The Libertines— a actores de envergadura: “I first saw the play in New York in 1983 and have never forgotten how the original performers hurled themselves at both the motel walls and each other with a frenetic violence. It is difficult for English actors to produce that innate physicality, and Frost and Barat rarely suggest they have been much further west than Truro. Frost tries hard

and even sports, in a gesture towards characterisation, a bruise on her leg. But she never conveys the character's bruised soul or the desperation of May's naked jealousy at Eddie's affair with another woman” (2010).

². Todas las citas de la obra están tomadas de esta edición y se indicará solo el número de página entre paréntesis.

³. La imagen, como explica Durand (2000), puede abrirse al infinito a una descripción, a una inagotable contemplación, no puede ser bloqueada en el enunciado neto

de un silogismo, de ahí que, si bien Aristóteles reconoció pronto que no hay pensamiento sin imágenes (Sepper 2013), en una tradición filosófica occidental dominada por la lógica y la razón, el potencial de la imaginación para alterar lo que se entendía tradicionalmente como el orden natural de las cosas siempre se haya visto con suspicacia.

⁴. McDonough (1997) en el análisis lacaniano de *Fool for Love*, que puede extenderse a todas las obras shepardianas en las que emerge el conflicto de la ley del padre, apunta que el poder de la figura paterna es mayor cuando el padre está ausente y la ley que representa ha sido interiorizada por los hijos.

⁵. Carveth define el proceso de edipalización como "Lacan's idea that the paternal function performed by the symbolic father (the father) is essential to the formation of social identity and that the failure of this function leaves the subject enmeshed in a narcissistic state of fusional identification with the mother and with mirror images of the self" (6). El artículo de Carveth, pese a ser un ensayo de psicoanálisis comparado acerca del narcisismo patológico en *Paris, Texas* y otras obras de Shepard, no se ciñe exclusivamente a una perspectiva edípica con ideas de Marcuse y Lacan, sino que también toma en consideración problemas culturales más amplios y determinantes en lo que el crítico denomina la psicopatología de nuestra

época, que en las obras de Shepard encuentra una representación simbólica y formal particularmente sugestiva y emblemática.

⁶. *Buried Child* recurre a esquemas míticos y a su posterior deconstrucción, al igual que *The Waste Land* (1922) de T. S. Eliot. Las alusiones a la leyenda artúrica del Rey Pescador y a los mitos de vegetación y fertilidad, que fueron analizados por Sir James Frazer en *The Golden Bough* (1890), se convierten en una fuente de creatividad insospechada en esta obra dramática. Shepard recurre a un "método mítico" similar al empleado por Eliot, en el que el uso de referencias ya asentadas culturalmente concede un mayor espacio al desarrollo del significado emocional de la obra. De acuerdo con estas referencias, Dodge sería un soberano moderno, descomponiéndose en el trono de su sofá, cuya afección y falta de vitalidad han afectado la infertilidad de su tierra. Los impotentes hijos de Dodge, Tilden y Bradley, que intentan arebatarle su posición, tampoco son capaces de restituir la vitalidad a la familia. No es casual que Halie exclame indignada en el acto tercero: "What's happened to the men in this family! Where are the men!" (Shepard 1997: 124). La redención tiene que provenir de otro lugar, y la llegada inesperada de Vince, el hijo pródigo, parece que podría llevar a la restauración de un nuevo y vital heredero, así como a la posible renovación de la tierra hasta entonces baldía.

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**TAKE THE LAW INTO YOUR OWN HANDS:
MODERNIST AND DETECTIVE FICTION
IN WILLIAM FAULKNER'S *INTRUDER
IN THE DUST* AND *LIGHT IN AUGUST***

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William Faulkner's *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August* are not conventionally associated with genres of crime and detection. Nevertheless they include multiple homicides, false accusations, ethnic conflicts, feeble enforcement of the law, and a nearly total failure to carry out impartial justice within a narrative setting. Just as an ongoing controversy swirls around the topic of whether justice is meted out on the basis of equity, so unbridgeable racial disparities have adversely impacted the legal proceedings in court. In order to examine the complex interconnections between race and law, this paper reflects a modernist approach to Faulkner's works by revealing the entangled relationships between modernism and crime writing.¹ There is hardly any need to insist on the well-established intertwining of detective fiction and modernism. This essay will rather focus upon parsing out their literary commonalities and differences, with great attention also to investigating myths about the administration of justice in Faulkner's fictional world and to unveiling the ambiguity, which characterizes the judicial process, and which is generally shown in sharper focus on Faulkner's refreshing stance toward modernism.² This in turn will encourage an integrative perspective, which certainly expands beyond the narrow focus on "a binary opposition between 'order' and 'disorder,'" between black and white (Klages 2005: 3). In so doing, we first might be able to crack the shell of the mysterious world full of murder and quickly figure out "whodunit(s)", and then simply pause, before we envision the

modernist version of an easy-to-crack “whodunit” and succumb to the lure of the recent popularity of the aphorism: “let the punishment fit the crime” in ethics and law, and to profoundly ruminate on the fact that Faulkner’s stories have a flair for making a happy ending on a sardonic note, it is pretty clear that, upon reviewing arbitrary arrest, torture, and discriminatory enforcement of the law, we should perhaps mull over the theoretical and practical limitations of modernism, whose binary construction is not as solidly grounded as we have presumed.

It should come to no surprise that at the end of *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August* there can be undercurrents, churning beneath a fulfilling sense of closure, which often do not get talked about, while the conventional detective genre tries to keep its literary mission alive and growing by restoring social order and promoting independent justice in a changing world. Certainly, the emphasis placed upon assuring the reader of a happy closure by putting things back to normal has become one of the defining features of modernism. However, Faulkner, though sometimes classified as a modernist, may not have had any intention of echoing the moral preaching, maintaining an ironic tone essential to crime literature, or of fostering greater social harmony in a fictional universe. Faulkner, to be sure, had a higher calling than becoming a mainstay writer for classic crime fiction. Hence, ideals of compensatory justice displace those of retribution as a justification of punishment. In consequence, Faulkner’s fiction has a shocking effect in its sharp and muted irony, so either within or outside the parameters of the law, there are vivid depictions of the roles, played by race, gender, religion, and social class, as determinant factors at various stages of the criminal justice process. On the one hand, Faulkner’s unconventionality does not stop here with unsolved homicides, incomplete detection, weak enforcement of the law, and dysfunctional systems of justice, for he seemed to cater to “the expectations of the reader” by cracking murder cases and by restoring the social fabric of a community (Tani 1984: 40). Nevertheless, to the general public, modernism, detective fiction, and two of Faulkner’s novels, on the other hand, probably appear to be a literary amalgam with unplumbed depths, by virtue of the fact that even some widely read and respected crime novelists have done their best to bolster their fiction by claiming alliance with modernists exclusively in order to raise their literary standing amid harsh criticism and degrading remarks.³ This literary tendency to exalt integration into a mainstream trend makes me wonder if Faulkner went with the flow, and how he managed to curb any desperate tendencies to kick his writing up a notch, yet at the same time to carve a new path (i.e. writing detective fiction) in a “convenient territory” (i.e. a “coherent alternative to the arrogant certainty of modernism”), while the dogma that “modernists were many connoisseurs of irony”, has evolved into a vigorous worldview defense, which best accommodates the needs of the modernist culture, and which is often “found buried underneath

the highly satirical surface” by bridging the seemingly irreconcilable opposites (Hensen 2011: 2; Bell 1999: 5; Björnsson 2009: 14).

The wonder lingers on; nonetheless, perhaps more insight into the interlocking themes of *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August* reinforces my argument when no “triumph of justice” at the end, virtually dripping with irony, has set out to give readers a mystical blend of emotions, so they can never settle down in superficial peace (Tani 1984: 44). After a hypothesis gets built around the aforementioned candid observation, we wind up with the conclusion that somehow Faulkner also chose to endorse “the conventional (archivally prescribed) ending” by reinforcing “its attempt to resolve the plot in an ideologically satisfying way”, so his fiction is able to “reach a satisfying point of closure” (Spanos 1987: 20). There can be no doubt, these two novels are steeped in stereotypes and rely heavily on racial conflict to carry the plots along, although Faulkner, on some level, unveiled alternative sanctions in the criminal justice system by dissolving the use of polarization, the concise distinction between crime and justice. For instance, in a critical essay, “Faulkner, Trauma, and the Uses of Crime Fiction”, Greg Forter asks us not only to decipher “the enigma of Joe’s racial identity”, but also to re-identify suspects in the alleged murder of Joanna. As Forter points out, “nothing in the novel is murkier than the ‘fact’ of Joe Christmas’s black blood. Everything turns on it, yet nothing proves it” (2007: 381-382). As opposed to a painstaking effort to unravel the mystery surrounding Joanna’s death, “the murder scene taunts us with the threat of solution at the mere mid-point of the novel”, so “We *cannot* know who killed Joanna for the simple reason that Faulkner does not tell us” (Forter 2007: 381). All of this boils down to the fact that Faulkner, who probably had a hard time counteracting the dominance of modernism in crime writing, ultimately “appropriated the conventions of detective fiction in order to explore” the hazards of binary thinking (Thompson 1993: 175). As a result of raising the issues with respect to the diametrical opposites for discussion, and by easy extension, confronting as well as critiquing the pervasiveness of binary thinking, Faulkner’s *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August* share “a generic formula”, which “ultimately enforce[s]—rather than” erasing the line, ending the “conventional social-racial (and sectional) divisions” (Forter 2007: 377).

In order to review evidence of the association between modernism and detective fiction, this research paper gives rise to a fresh perspective that “in the same sense the popular detective thriller is modernist fiction’s sister-genre” (McHale 1987: 59).⁴ The search for a newer, surer way of interpreting Brian McHale’s remarks opens the debate with a convincing comparison, which reinforces ties between modernism and detective fiction: “The detective story is epistemological in that it obviously focuses on such questions as the interpretation of evidence, the methods

of finding things out, and so on. The struggle to interpret the world is also a central theme of many modernist texts” (Horsley 2005: 2). Nonetheless, the literary ties between modernism and detective fiction seem to dissolve, on a certain level, in Faulkner’s alternative narrative world, for he might ponder over the true usefulness of “epistemological doubt —uncertainty about how we know, and what we can know” (Horsley 2005: 3). Consequently, perhaps satirical skepticism might be an idea worth exploring. This essay highlights the shift in the understanding of the encounters between modernism and detective fiction, regardless of the fact that the change has long seemed to be in eclipse but is still in the process of unfolding. That is to say: when police homicide investigations falter, then the journey for justice, on many levels, creates a culture of critique, for example combating institutional racism and “challenging the sheer arrogance of modernist epistemology”, while readers hope to discover “whodunit(s)” through “the corrosive effect of implicit bias on the presumption of innocence and the beyond a reasonable doubt standard” (Carson 2003: 16; Smith 2015: 884).

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As we conclude with a look at a kind of Faulknerian cyclical and meandering quality of the narrative, certain core values of modernism, within the variety and deviation, remain constant in Faulkner’s novels, so he was able to continue his presentation of dystopian social stability with a close look at the theory and practice of modernism. Thus it is that Faulkner’s writing ultimately brings a surprising twist, which aims to help individual readers move forward with “a sense of an ending”, even though his novels convey a great deal of bitter sarcasm directed at racial inequality and legal loopholes, due to which murder cases are almost stymied, or the crippled court system nearly punishes an innocent scapegoat and permits the defendant to remain at large for a long time (Spanos 1987: 20). For one reason or another, to many eager to seek justice, the exclusive right to use violence can justify completely unethical and unlawful behavior in virtue of its being for the greater good, such as promising the quick dispensation of justice, contributing to the betterment of society, and thereby making the world a better place. Notwithstanding, a series of interlocking coincidences, misplaced public anger, and fragmented information from private investigations all have a say in how the judicial system should administer justice. As a result, “The murder-mystery is solved, however, not through epistemological processes of weighing evidence and making deductions, but through the imaginative projection of what *could* —and, the text insists, *must*— have happened”, as we witness that in reality, racial hatred, which constitutes a massive threat to judicial independence, yields “stronger associations between black and ‘guilty’ and white and ‘not guilty’ as opposed to black and ‘not guilty’ and white and ‘guilty’” (McHale 1987: 10; Smith 2015: 884).

Intruder in the Dust can be juxtaposed with *Light in August* for a comparison of further thorny legal issues on an elevated “whodunit” level. As stated in McHale’s book, modernist novels showcase a set of epistemological features, involving “the multiplication and juxtaposition of perspectives, the focalization of all the evidence through a single ‘center of consciousness,’ virtuoso variants on interior monologue” (1987: 9). Adding McHale’s interpretation, in whatever fashion, to the hidden ground rules, which have long governed traditional crime writing, we learn that “sift[ing] through the evidence of witnesses of different degrees of reliability in order to reconstruct and solve a ‘crime’” runs deep in classical detective fiction (1987: 9). In fact, part of Faulkner’s success lies with his multiple plotlines, multipersonal narration, and the technique of the “stream of consciousness”, used to describe the state of mind of Hightower, which is often meditative in nature. While it seems highly likely that the disruption in the flow of a narrative may be experienced as jarring and puzzling, Faulkner held open the possibility of a writing strategy shift, namely “transfer[ring] the epistemological difficulties of its characters to its readers” (McHale 1987: 9). Indeed, an obsessional preoccupation with the fine line which exists between crime and punishment as well as guilt and innocence, is woven not only into our consciousness, but also into the fabric of the classic, conventional detective fiction formula of conflict-crisis-resolution, consequently “dislocated chronology, withheld or indirectly-presented information”, every possible red-herring, and dangling plot threads should not pull our attention away from the otherwise “very same problems of accessibility, reliability, and limitation of knowledge that [also] plague” fictional characters in Faulkner’s works (McHale 1987: 9-10). In the aggregate, regardless of the fact that there is always a logical modernist tinge to Faulkner’s fiction, which accurately portrays a distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, black and white, a general air of disillusionment simultaneously prevails. The fact that much about Faulkner’s writing is so reasonably clear and easily traceable that it appears to ease concerns about social disorder, after addressing central types of violence waged against blacks, even though an array of variables, which are considered to give rise to rushed investigations, controversies in law enforcement, irrepressible public outrage and botched execution attempts, has somehow disturbed the rational, teleological narrative, significantly hampered forensic investigations, and potentially raised questions about law-enforcement accountability.

In addition, the heart of this paper calls into question the potential function of the criminal justice system, which has been a race-based institution, directly targeting African-Americans, or which frequently casts blacks as the primary killers of whites. Even worse, whenever ethnic tension arises, certain court rulings have been the staple of mainstream moral judgments, despite considerable progress in the matter of racial equity and integration over the past several decades. In this manner, if one

expands the purview of the law, the passion for the truth, the passion for justice illuminates various attempts made by modernists to halt the decline and reduce the level of social unrest. Simply stated, modernism has realized “an attempt to restore a sense of order to human experience under the often chaotic conditions of twentieth-century existence” based on Daniel Joseph Singal’s precise interpretation, or in layman’s terms, has made a strenuous effort to de-clutter the cluttered world (1987: 8). With an emphasis on putting things back in order, not only modernism, but also detective fiction seems to fit this description. One can see that as opposed to postmodern thinking, its “refusal to achieve closure”, modernists and crime writers have done their best to bring this about, even though a bumpy road to racial reconciliation lies ahead of them (Singal 1987: 22).

The path towards closure, the central theme of modernism and detective fiction, on some level, involves an appropriate measurement of performance in law enforcement settings, as we find expressed with pathos and satire in *Intruder in the Dust*. In judicial and deliberative contexts, equality and fairness can be seen as a farce when Lucas Beauchamp’s extrajudicial search, which might seem a ‘minimalist’ approach in modernist terms, sets out the ‘maximalist’ challenge to public bigotry and ineffectual law enforcement (Levenson 1999: 3). As noted above, one should recall that the full compass of his unauthorized investigation and its striking result “startle and disturb the public” (Levenson 1999: 3). That Lucas makes a small gesture not only for himself, but also on behalf of the marginalized black in general accidentally carries out modernist goals of “stimulating the ‘useful anger’ of the public”, especially after the townsfolk learn of Crawford’s suicide in jail (Levenson 1999: 2). Against the sweeping and distorted accusation, only the concrete outcome of scientific investigations is persuasive enough to wake up a group of baffled and self-righteous people, in this story, represented by the prejudiced townspeople. And this stress placed upon the town-wide animosity, which totally raises Lucas’s awareness of his own social footing, falls under the logically narrow scope of an individual, when he turns into a private eye with “a mixture of deep popular knowledge and close observation” to get the unauthorized investigation started (Knight 2004: 73). Very likely, the gap between ‘minimal’ means and ‘maximalist’ ends is bridged by Lucas’s and his team’s “deep, sometimes even dour, seriousness”, akin to “the earnestness of their [modernist] resolve”, in order to “carry on through private hardship” (Levenson 1999: 5).

In addition to solving Vinson’s homicide, the outcome of Lucas’s extrajudicial search not only teaches the lynch mob a lesson, but also delivers a slap in the face to majority-white law enforcement. In quick succession, too, the value of Lucas’s ‘minimalist’ approach, in one way, is associated with “continued blurring of once-

distinct racial and ethnic divisions”, after “the maxim, innocent until proven guilty, has had a good run in the twentieth century”, which leans heavily on a core faith: all human beings are “created equal regardless of what sexuality or race” (Perez 2009: 17; Pennington 2001: 50; and Shoo 2011: 1). And then, Faulkner’s stories, in another way, hold the public evermore firmly in the grip of the long-term aftermath of a double-murder case, of the days following the loss of white privilege, and perhaps of the slow, reluctant steps toward racial harmony, because “it took an uncommon intelligence to solve crimes” and more importantly to sustain a triumph over racist opposition (Panek 2006: 59). Essentially calm and indifferent as he is, Lucas nevertheless oozes growing confidence in the material evidence, which virtually counteracts unsubstantiated allegations and accelerates the collapse of white supremacy.⁵ For one thing, continuing threads of modernist minimalism in the detective fiction genre run through Faulkner’s novels as a set of small gestures, which creates a powerful ripple effect, along with providing a larger potential stage for maximalism. Faulkner’s accounts of “values, norms” and “evaluation of a whole culture or society”, enlarge “the social base of the novel outward from a highly localized murder (or similar mystery)” to judicial fickleness and the perversity of human nature, since “mysteries more closely reflect human society than other forms of popular literature” (Thompson 1993: 175; Erisman 1980: 1). Quite clearly, the number of attacks against the traditional binary system, including black and white, innocent and guilty, has disturbed the entrenched modernist practice and has stimulated extensive controversy on this. That being the case, the dichotomous partitions and irresolution dictate the structure of Faulkner’s fiction and give it its characteristic mode of expression, although he tantalized his readers by proposing no practical solutions to the dichotomy paradox.

While there exists no easy way to resolve the deeply ingrained dichotomy, Faulkner incorporated into *Intruder in the Dust* with “the insistence on death as the major crime” (Knight 2004: 67) one prominent feature of crime fiction, the admissibility of evidence in a court of law. It is certainly worthy of our attention that *Intruder in the Dust*, in many respects, encapsulates thematic metamorphoses of crime writing in the novel, unfolding its progression from a literary foil to a towering literary work and from a dearth of scientific evidence to the increased interest in the area of forensics in a whole new way of rendering authenticity. From this standpoint, Crawford’s timber theft is the “trigger incident”, which sparks the homicides of Vinson and of Jake Montgomery, fires up on a deliberate attempt to evade justice, and foments regional violence. Nevertheless, Faulkner’s full-scale attack on racial prejudice and social injustice definitely overrides local criticism and punishment for stealing wood. Similarly, since the start of the nineteenth century, American crime fiction, urgently needing to attract a wide readership and generate

substantial interest, in particular targeting male readers, has made steady progress toward the goal of creating an “extended plot” (Knight 2004: 67). Once we understand the literary formula, the more tension a writer creates, the more compelling the plot will be structured because “a more serious crime than jewel theft and mysterious murder allow[s] the involvement of more characters and so fill[s] more space” (Knight 2004: 67).⁶ Taking up the new literary practice and imbuing it with conventional or formula plots, Faulkner elaborated, with varying degrees of legality and complexity, on the concept of “identity-conscious[ness]”, such as Lucas’s unyielding racial idiosyncrasy, the Gowrie’s monopoly power, and white racial dominance, instead of shedding light on the “bloodless and money-linked crime” and making it the center of attention (Knight 2004: 68). Just as Faulkner followed scientific breakthroughs in crime fiction and kindled a great deal of racial controversy, so we dwell on his vivid portrayal of legal complexities and a debilitated police force. Largely as a result of these two distinctive characteristics, Faulkner’s vastly dynamic modernity not only “leaves an indelible mark on the most basic assumption of detective fiction”, but has also won genuine respect for the challenge, which Faulkner’s fictional honesty poses (Stumme 2014: 36).

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Faulkner enforced uniqueness of another skill when he introduces a mutually reinforcing cycle of acts of subtle anti-racism and pursuit of social justice is frequently found in *Intruder in the Dust*. This novel, on the one hand, recites the “FBI” formula, which stresses team-oriented scientific crime-solving techniques, and which bears a great resemblance to the specific features of the popular CSI television series. On the other hand, Faulkner complicated the story to make the crime-related issue secondary to a satirical look at the legal system, in addition to its focus on an interracial friendship. In the aggregate, justice could not be served, if it were not for a white boy’s underlying emotional debts, which are owed to a Negro, and which the boy has just begun to pay off in a nonverbal display of emotion. In particular, when we situate human callousness (“crime is nobody else’s business”) in a broader context of moral ambivalence and ethnic antagonism, it is definitely not a teenager’s responsibility to wrangle a black man free of a legal system which seems racially tilted in favor of the Caucasian race (Panek 2006: 113).⁷ To begin with, Chick finds himself entangled in an awkward interethnic relationship as his debt to Lucas has remained outstanding for years ever since the prompt rescue. Being unable to minimize the awkwardness of the situation, Chick fails to deliver practical and logical solutions, for he cannot call it even, and nor can he let it run its course. On a more sophisticated level, it is not until Lucas, who is wrongfully accused of taking another life, decides to undertake a full-scale investigation into the homicide with Chick’s assistance, that Chick establishes some sort of low key payback plans.⁸ The possibility of ongoing retroactive

obligation, compounded by its consistent effect on Chick’s mind, ironically is achieved, when Chick regains his lost pride and self-esteem in claiming Lucas’s innocence. At this delicate juncture, a brief overview of the interracial entanglement unveils an augmented reality that through the fact-finding process, the socially immobilized and physically stuck Lucas and the physically unrestrained Chick, has facilitated a tacit understanding in the context of cross-racial dialogues. With certain momentum, which they can maintain, Chick and Lucas edge a baby step closer to racial integration at the personal level. However, Faulkner’s work throws a fresh spotlight on judicial processes that attempt but which cannot fully resolve social conflicts, but it somehow intensifies racial polarization at the community level. As a result, this novel reaches its maximal twist when a white boy tries to repay a huge debt of gratitude to a black man —just the opposite of the popular literary formula when a black boy is dramatically rescued by a white man. In a manner analogous to this literary twist, the collaborative entanglement frequently lies at the heart of the struggle for anti-racist justice when the novel explores racism as a framework for challenging social injustice rather than constituting the practice of law as a ‘backup’ friend of racial justice.⁹

Together with genuinely expressing his gratitude to Lucas and fully satisfying his inmost desire to restore a sense of racial equilibrium, Chick takes on in various roles, starting as a young beneficiary of Lucas’s generosity and then setting moral action in motion primarily in order to wipe out the almost unpayable and indescribable debt.¹⁰ Not only is Faulkner’s use of sarcasm and irony notable in Chick’s stubborn insistence on unloading a significant amount of emotional burden, but it permeates the characters’ exchanges and speeches. Police patriarchal powers are so entrenched that they sometimes fail to operate outside the law. Specifically, understanding the nature of sarcasm in Faulkner’s fiction fills us with a feeling of happiness, which may get intermingled with sadness and disillusionment when Chick, a local boy, is able to bring us the unadulterated truth about manhood: “Men cant listen. They aint got time. They’re too busy with facks” (Faulkner 1994: 70). It might also be noted that many local authorities are in fact men of words, and not necessarily men of action. Due to the fact that Chick’s team effort yields some decent results, and almost nothing could possibly make their top-notch investigation less than perfect, we can visualize the teamwork with the same effortless immediacy that very likely the corroborative evidence, unearthed by amateur citizen investigators, not only eliminates the risk of false incrimination, but also gives a weak local judicial system and ineffective law enforcement agents a sardonic wink. For one thing, in considering the dire circumstances which surround Lucas, Chick has to take extra measures to get Lucas released without having to wait for a conviction. Owing to time restraints, digging up the coffin on their own has become an extralegal method to clear Luca’s name and, thus, an

exception to standard rules. After Chick and his team members have also navigated a wide area of potentially threatening circumstances, they come to a conclusion that it is impossible to carry out their rescue plan in full through legal and bureaucratic channels. It is feared that members of the white mob then will try to break into the county jail and demand Lucas's death before the coffin is exhumed.¹¹ Moreover, familiar with human nature, Chick knows that men play by the "rules and cases", whereas women and children work through any extenuating "circumstances" (Faulkner 1994: 110-111). No concept lies more firmly embedded in Chick's mind than this appraisal of human nature, and it is no wonder that his extralegal team consists exclusively of two children and a woman.¹² Nevertheless, even though Chick and his team are able to achieve their goals with the highest degree of efficiency, their main contribution is widely considered to be a "private and community-based action", which lacks the full legal capacity to expedite the release of Lucas, but to a large extent it engenders cynical disrespect towards the judicial process (Sassoubre 2007: 203). In this regard, there is a scene in which Chick, a bystander, ultimately finds himself drawn into the investigation, and in which Faulkner's stories "illustrate the virtues" of a group of amateur sleuths and "the incompetence and impotence of established authority" (Panek 2006: 190). Efficient and reliable though they definitely are, the kinds of qualities demonstrated by Chick and his teammates in general do not necessarily hold their ground against law enforcement officials, not even when mixed with a good dose of sarcasm and irony. Or could it be possible, from the perspective of later generations, that Faulkner was paying a tribute to the police, who are initially wimpish, but who finally gather the momentum and overcome procrastination?

The plot gradually unfolds a murder mystery, which comes to symbolize the lingering racial trauma in America, and the race-related stress often boils down to one major factor: the refusal of the Caucasian race to afford a black man the dignity of equality. In order to discuss Lucas's false murder accusation, compounded by the existing racial tensions, let us for an instant stretch the truth a little and dim the light that stands for the values of justice. Then, the following scenario becomes possible: if Chick and his team went through the criminal justice system, they probably would wind up absolutely nowhere. On second thoughts, the members of Chick's group do not lose contact with reality, as they turn to Gavin Stevens and Sheriff Hampton, the legal authorities of the town, for help, in order to launch a new lawsuit. In one way, we are pleased to see that Lucas is finally exonerated, although the efforts and accomplishments of Chick's team are never publicly acknowledged. In another way, it can be a very harsh awakening as we realize that without detection, reporting, or notification of appropriate authorities, the solid evidence, which is furnished by Chick and his team, cannot stand up in a court of law. Maybe the townsfolk are not very interested in the process of retrieving

evidence or proper trial procedures, when Gavin Stevens notes, “We are after just a murderer, not a lawyer” (Faulkner 1994: 231). Acting upon empathy, Chick and his team initiate an investigation, which not only restores racial harmony to the community, but also directs satire at the judicial bureaucracy. As Sassoubre deduces, “Once a humble and courageous few set the change in motion, local legal authority will begin to follow by finding solutions within the established norms of the community” (2007: 204). Just as Chick’s material evidence ultimately draws public attention to an almost sealed murder case and forces this case to be reopened, so fortunately the empathetic touch here maximizes Lucas’s chances of a positive legal outcome.

While Chick deserves great credit for helping to prove Lucas’s innocence, we might question whether refuting all allegations against a negro suspect is too heavy a burden for an adolescent to shoulder or not.¹³ Without a doubt, Lucas’s case has marked one undeniable moment of change, and also a set of circumstances, such as “exhuming a body, hiding Lucas at the sheriff’s house, [and] entrapping the real killer”. This not only alters Chick’s world, but also accelerates his process of his mental maturity at an accelerating rate (Faulkner 1994: 431). Yet, just as we are left wondering if the court system would evolve through a series of changes, which could lead to the possibility of racial harmony and equality, so the ending offers no suggestions of judicial improvement at all; only a touch of insight and humor lightens the mood and eases racial tensions. In many respects, Chick’s involvement in the ongoing criminal investigation (for he believes that Lucas should have a chance to go free), exemplifies in all aspects the meaning of the literary term, *Bildungsroman*, in which through a series of events, a young individual undergoes an emotional metamorphosis and emerges as a mature person, or, briefly, an novel recounting “an individual’s maturation and development” (Hsiao 2006: 12). In other words, Lucas’s alleged criminal act, to a considerable degree, has accelerated Chick’s psychological metamorphosis in response to a hierarchical society and legal loopholes. Chick becomes increasingly involved with issues of racial and social justice and provides a tragic parallel to Joe Christmas’s wrestling with questions of racial identity in *Light in August*. Like Chick’s gradual journey towards emotional maturity, Joe Christmas’s inward conflict is triggered by his disoriented sense of personal identity in the midst of omnipresent racism and internal community squabbling. To replace a happy ending, Faulkner bolsters the novel’s conclusion with a realistic portrayal of the endemic anarchy and challenges to great extent the notion of a post-racial America.¹⁴

The potential conflict between justice and revenge now eclipses racial strain and friction between black and white as the greatest source of tension, for the long entrenched boundary between legal and illegal is shifting in southern communities

in general, even when the boundary remains debatable. In the townsfolk's eyes, it is not a misguided attempt to transform any vindictive sentiment into retributive justice. In stark contrast to local townspeople's burning thirst for revenge, the long conflict resolution process, akin to Chick's social awakening, does not come to an end until an ultimate epiphany hits Christmas. Christmas, in a flash of inspiration, attains supreme enlightenment to the effect that he cannot get away with Joanna Burden's murder. As he murmurs to himself, "But I have never got outside that circle. I have never broken out of the ring of what I have already done and cannot ever undo" (Faulkner 1932: 321). One can see that running parallel to Christmas's distorted life, "violence is compulsively re-enacted, multiplied, compounded", and "there is no escape from the corrosive effects of crime" if one enlarges the scope of reading (Glover 2003: 145). In like manner, perhaps Christmas's bone-breaking cruelty and racial exploitation in his southern upbringing meet with persistent impunity which only serves to embolden Percy Grimm. The apparent transparency of this observation belies our expectations. While readers have long assumed that under normal circumstances, justice should put an end to Christmas's evil behavior, get him a fair trial without denying him any legal rights, and mete out proper punishments to this real offender, the truth tells us otherwise, since the racial tensions and the broad injustice within the community have expedited Christmas's death. Just as Christmas's inner torment, for some reason, is alleviated in what seems to be unsparing and unrelenting nature, so the reader is subsequently reminded of a cruel irony of his death which does not occur in isolation, but rather in combination with other disorders, for instance Christmas's mindless escapade, the severe racial intolerance of the townspeople, and the opportune appearance of Percy Grimm to capture Christmas. Hence, Grimm's punitive action, if we understand public acquiescence and support for on-duty extralegal police violence in this case, is able to fend off a future persecution and cut the police investigation short by escalating the cycle of violence. When we take a deep reflective look at Christmas's condition in the light of a continuous stream of violence and killing in the local community, *Light in August* displays alleged police brutality attack against Christmas, one of the classical signs of police force gone bad in the real world. From this perspective, the satirical nature of Christmas's passive-aggressive behavior and his premature demise further characterize the gray side of law enforcement while Chick's team attempts to meet the legal challenges tossed in the way of maintaining Lucas's innocence.

And indeed, *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August* illustrate the dysfunction of the criminal justice system. In a manner, *Light in August* also results in Faulkner's irreversible enlargement of the 'textual space', a writing technique which may not be considered an archetype for detective fiction, for his novel is not a literary compendium of measures to de-emphasize 'social issues' and equate them to "the

moralistic simplifications of crime and punishment” (Priestman 2003: 3; Cawelti 2004: 290).¹⁵ There are many instances of illegality. Namely, that Percy Grimm takes the law into his own hands is highly illegal and punishable by law not only because it facilitates the police transition from neutrality to ferocious support of extrajudicial executions, but also because it unveils the hidden reality that justice cannot counteract a racially inflammatory and powerful *lex talionis* which goes in crescendo in the face of extreme challenge. The shocking revelation in *Light in August*, in essence, is the disclosing of a harsh reality when the revelation tries to ferret out the motivations for seemingly inexplicable, and often violent behavior, to defuse Joe Christmas’s racial identity crisis, and to enumerate the consequences of illegal acts committed by a crooked cop (Percy Grimm). Thus, the townsfolk’s tacit acceptance of extralegal violence tempts Percy Grimm into situations, which call for the wanton use of excessive force, because they frequently involve blacks being perceived as disrespectful of white people, not of the police. In practical terms, the textual space is so extensive that when Faulkner subsequently created a tense standoff between the police and the man wanted for Joanna’s homicide, he embellished “the means of death, making it the focus of the [unresolved] enigma” surrounding Christmas’s questionable identity and America’s deep-rooted racism (Panek 2006: 85).

Perhaps the concept of textual space makes room for unprecedented changes, so Faulkner quickly fills it up with perceived legal missteps and extralegal police aggression rather than recognizing the accomplishments of law enforcement. For example, Grimm’s irreparable mistakes not only doom Christmas to a premature death, but also rapidly sabotage the investigation into the murder at a tremendous rate. It is the expansion of absent presence, which has increasingly absorbed our attention. I wish to explore further what follows, for instance the hasty crime scene tracking and footprint evidence recognition, an inability to gather and document all evidence related to the crime, and a vicious miscarriage of justice by a toothless legal system.¹⁶ If we give full rein to our imagination, dreadful missteps of procedure such as those mentioned above, one after another concretely confront the racist-fueled anger, which exacerbates the lingering legal certainty in resolving Christmas’s criminal case, though a \$1000 reward’s put forward for any information leading to the arrest.¹⁷ However, the improprieties, such as improperly handled evidence and breached procedures, as part of an ongoing investigation, cannot entirely disassociate this novel from conventional crime writing, since occasionally crime or detective stories “explore the depiction of crime with no necessary detective element”, and in many cases with greater intensity than ever before, they “hardly concern crime at all” (Priestman 2003: 2-3). This literary exegesis apparently does not set us on “the quest for purely detective writing”, but instead it enables us to delve into racist violence and expulsion, issues which often become

buried beneath the glorification of crime-fighters (Priestman 2003: 3). Because the idea of textual space has come into consideration, unsavory characters or even villains begin to act out their evil deeds upon the living under ghostly circumstances. Likewise, textual space is great for avid readers and busy professionals alike, for them to ponder over the ongoing racial strife addressed in this novel.

In essence, never has *Light in August* become the escapist refuge of racially frustrated groups while “escapist mass literature [...] seeks and finds easy solutions to social problems” (Cawelti 2004: 290). Just as many literary critics are still inclined to equate conventional detective writing with a sub-genre of fiction and to alternately criticize it for making the small-scale structure of the scene, for losing touch with reality, and for providing one more example in sum of the unpragmatic utopianism, so Faulkner’s story confronts the deep and haunting predicament of racial justice which seems to remain forever controversial, indecipherable, and unsettled even today. If we grasp the intricacies of changing racial dynamics, when they come under heavy public scrutiny, the entanglement transcends the dichotomous notion of “exterior simplicities” versus “interior complexities” (Cawelti 2004: 137). In retrospect, Joe Christmas, “a half-breed a white man”, is considered a “white Negro” in extreme forms of racial stratification (Faulkner 1932: 4). Again, Faulkner used a caricature to great effect when he described the emotional outbursts of Christmas’s maternal grandfather (Mr. Hines). Mr. Hines grows yet more importunate and clamorous in his demands and echoes the calls for harsh punishments to be handed out despite the fact that he preaches regularly in the black neighborhood. Akin to Mr. Hines, Gavin Stevens (the District Attorney), who is unable to stay objective and unbiased, provides elliptic and partial explanations of the intractability of Christmas’s behavior when duty calls.¹⁸ On a purely symbolic level, Stevens seems to have a lever to pry open the eyes of the world to the painful plight of Christmas’s racial confusion, yet his remarks are often generated from underlying racist beliefs and practices: “And then the white blood drove him out of there, as it was the black blood which snatched up the pistol and the white blood which would not let him fire it” (Faulkner 1932: 424).

I imagine that for most readers the beginning of the novels is permeated by a balanced outlook on life, regardless of various subplots. Nonetheless, the townsfolk’s tacit consent to Grimm’s hate-motivated behavior shapes the reasons for our concern as racial disparities and social injustice lurk beneath the surface. Once we move beyond a misplaced and widespread sense of loss at Joanna Burden’s death, we attain a sound understanding of the townspeople’s twisted imagination in which they visualize themselves as self-appointed jurors who are forced by the exigencies of Christmas’s case to hand down a guilty verdict without much deliberation. After Christmas’s case has become a public scandal, the determination

of guilt or innocence and the administration of punishment are prescribed by the court in this instance to echo the increasingly popular sentiment which has become a public outcry. Thereafter, Joe Christmas’s existential anxiety and aggressive behavior, reverberating with tragic resonance, suggest unremarkable lives of unrelenting grimness and desolation a mark of Faulkner’s work. This way, this novel employs variation in escapist literature, for it explores the extent and nature of racial violence, the critical local factors, and dysfunctional police performance. As opposed to “a determined and totalized conclusion”, such as utopian visions for restoring racial harmony and enhancing social justice, which are the most popular, recognized literary devices in escapist fiction, the tacit approval of physical abuse by Grimm against Christmas gathers strength by judicial irresolution and inaction (Wang 2008: 121).

The aforementioned novels are not often categorized as classical detective or crime fiction, yet they include crime scene investigation, hot pursuit of suspects, and recovery of evidence. In the aggregate, the transition to a full-fledged court scene entails a long and bumpy road full of pitfalls and contradictions as Faulkner’s stories, to some extent, often bring an odd coexistence of anarchy and the law possible. A great deal may be said about Faulkner’s novels, such as *Sanctuary* and *Requiem for a Nun*, as well as to *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August*, which have begun preparing for the worst-case legal scenario when the wanted fugitives and absconders remain at large, and felony is pinned on innocent civilians. Those who accidentally stumble across murders and are indicted on charges connected with the homicides, for example Lee Goodwin in *Sanctuary* and Lucas Beauchamp, are intimidated by the harsh face of reality that their innocence frequently hinges on an enormous amount of evidence, eyewitness testimony, and most importantly, by a once-in-a-lifetime lucky coincidence, in order to turn the wheels of justice and get their convictions overturned. At first, if the first two key elements, for some reason, are ruled to be inadmissible before the court, then the prime suspects probably have to pray hard for a coincidental factor, or as Loren D. Estleman renames it “some sardonic twist of fate”, or “a stroke of luck”, to step in and compensate for their apparent lack of legal aid and knowledge (2003: vii; Lee 2004: 19). Take Lucas Beauchamp as an example: he spirals down into greater racial hardship and legal subjugation than ever after he is arrested on suspicion of involvement in the murder and is thereby a fatal and impudent blunderer. A tidal wave of public indignation sweeps the community because clearly it has something to do with Lucas’s perceived marginalization and the townsfolk’s commitment to upholding white supremacy. Lucas is unhesitatingly denigrated as the intruder while many townspeople believe that until then they had been living in a state of continual harmony and concord which ensures local dynamic stability. When the title of the novel drops hints that Lucas Beauchamp is being labeled as the

“Intruder in the Dust”, in many ways, Faulkner’s play on the word, “dust”, casts a coldly critical eye on the justice system. Unsettled dust is, so the town and the legal system have acted arbitrarily and capriciously in administering justice.

To weigh the ethics of sticky legal situations and grapple with the signaling complexities engendered by interacting factors, for instance homicides, race groups, law enforcement, and public sentiment, which make the administration of strict justice so difficult, the following imaginative scenario might be proposed as an aid to a full understanding of the existing legal system. A splash of human blood is left behind at a crime scene, and gradually the ground surface is covered with layers of mud and blood. Then, a small puddle of blood, dust-like in appearance, lingers and accumulates. In a metaphorical sense, Faulkner’s novels explore the hypocrisies and idiosyncrasies of the ineffective legal system, which in theory is supposed to resolve issues related to criminal justice. Yet, the exploration tells us otherwise, since the system not only remains relatively unchanged over time, but also ironically it leads to more social instability and confusion than ever before. On the one hand, as time goes by, the blood congeals in a matter of hours, engenders the inseparability of the dysfunctional legal system and ceaseless criminal actions, and afterwards carves a nonseparating cycle path of good and evil.¹⁹ On the other hand, it is certain that, whilst the hot discussion about the ongoing legal uncertainty shows that the criminal justice system is sometimes mysteriously unable to render judgments, an ambivalence of law nevertheless does not mean sabotaging the common target of the administration of justice. Nor does it lead to an elevated violent crime rate in order to boost the court’s reliability. Thanks to the polemical nature of their dealings, crime and justice move beyond the narrowly constructed black-white dichotomy, as the dynamics of their coexistence ultimately resolve a long-lasting conflict by reaching some kind of middle ground.

Without a doubt, Faulkner’s works express opposition to social injustice and reflect an implicit endorsement of racial equality, while the general public presupposes that justice and injustice should form a pair that is mutually exclusive, not because of a tautology, but because of the determination of innocence or guilt and then the punishment for criminal mischief. However, in recognition of social reality, we have to admit that it is actually quite a mind-bending concept to meet: that sometimes justice and injustice pose as mutually exclusive alternatives in a never-ending cycle of violence. Simply put, justice, to a great extent, works in tandem with injustice. This new legal relationship generally boils down to a double-sided and substantially interchangeable embodiment of good and evil because justice and injustice, like good and evil, are concepts of value, an arbitrary human inventions. The reading public does not recognize or resist the subtle and covert embodiment perhaps thus upholding a set of social ethics and preserving moral

integrity. An alternative literary hypothesis might be that Faulkner further magnified the attractiveness of injustice and the unattractiveness of justice as allowed him to relish his moment of hesitation about fully endorsing “a reassuring ending” in which the perpetrators should be punished with the full weight of the law while innocent men ought to go free (Glover 2003: 144). Instead of making a barely credible commitment toward pursuing justice, Faulkner showed the juxtaposition of an overwhelmingly Caucasian criminal justice infrastructure with the low socio-economic profile of the ethnic groups on the periphery. The juxtaposing by public opinion of crime with justice and the hierarchical design of the legal system proves the restoration of public order, protection of “the common good”, and the revival of local communities to be more formidable than assumed (Lee 2004: 11).

To some extent, readers might have lost their faith in the justice system if they remain sensitive to the rising tide of public outrage as being directed not at reckless homicide investigations, but for all practical purposes, at swaying the verdict one way or the other. Just as readers cannot isolate the effect of the variables, for instance racial bigotry, the unreliability of eyewitness testimony, and the broad popular sentiment against non-white suspects, so the number of associated variables is presumed to be constant. Regardless of the fact that all these variables very likely pose a challenge to the impartiality of the judicial system and overrule any hard physical evidence presented in court, Faulkner’s stories truly provide by far the most modernist closure, in which everything returns to normal. For instance, *Light in August* ends with an amazing synthesis of the feminine softness and maternal strength of Lena, who goes on a long journey with her newborn baby and Bryon Bunch. After the final pages of the novel have revealed something less figurative, Lena’s glow of motherhood, in a broad sense, deconstructs the legal ambiguities and racially motivated conflicts inherent in the horrifying tragedy of Joe Christmas. And at this point while extending modernism to include Faulkner’s works, it is worth recognizing a subtle resemblance to the ending of *Intruder in the Dust*. Faulkner’s occasional use of twist-endings brings this masterpiece to an unexpected close, in which Lucas and Chick’s uncle are haggling over a price, options, and a fair settlement for “corrupting a minor and him for practicing law without a license” (Faulkner 1994: 468). Certainly the rapid de-escalation of racial tension gives a light-hearted twist, so a ‘minimalist’ approach chosen here makes Lucas’s case for a ‘maximalist’ change, though it is not a total overhaul, and helps to reinstate the dignity of black. By the same token, it is sufficient to say that at first sight, many human factors discussed above not only lead to judicial inconsistencies or legal indeterminacy, but also appeal to racial prejudice and emotions of the populace. But akin to the artistic endeavor of modernists and crime writers, who strive to restore social order and promote

ethnic harmony, fulfilling the promise of equal justice under law involves a combination of circumstances, people, evidence, and investigations. That is to say: epistemological modernism seems to have something crucial, which can be applied to help catch criminals via “the jigsaw-like process of sifting through evidence to piece together the crime scenario”, whereas Faulkner’s fiction enlightens the reader by scrutinizing the binary polarization and by undermining epistemological certainty, when a sarcastic sign with a twist of humor not only establishes a fulfilling sense of closure, but also reminds us to look beyond the surface.

Notes

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¹. Though the effectiveness of our justice system depends, in large measure, on public confidence, the system has been recognized as a neutral independent legal sovereignty by various law enforcement agents, for example Henry C. Lee. Lee remarks on the ever-changing nature of the criminal justice system and presumably the possibility of improvement: “Most Americans know that this country’s justice system is imperfect. To paraphrase the British statesman Sir Winston Churchill, I have found the American justice system to be full of pitfalls, complexities, and even some contradictions, but our criminal justice system is still as good as any that can be found throughout human history” (2004: 245).

By investigating conflict resolution and peacekeeping, Henry C. Lee, “with an unflagging faith in reason, a belief in the gradual, inevitable perfection of humanity”, has reinforced his belief twice in the same book (McGill 2016: 2). Rather than manipulating and brainwashing readers, Lee also reflects upon professional experiences that faith and human frailty have always proved a volatile mixture in the dynamics of legal systems: “Our legal system is designed to protect the innocent, while prosecuting and punishing the guilty. As a component of the human equation, this justice system is not perfect, but it is the best that we can do” (2004: 284). Lee often makes his points in a positive tone and with the power of positive

thinking throughout his book and offers reasons why we will soon live in a modern utopia, in which “potential perpetrators will think twice before committing a ghastly crime”, for “enormous technological progress” in forensic science will ease public concern by enhancing criminal investigations and empowering law enforcement to nab the suspected criminals and exonerate the innocent (2004: 287).

². Because the immeasurable extent of the real world may affect crime writing, the real world has a direct impact on the materials used for writing. John Cawelti codifies the ground rules of detective stories. As stated in Cawelti’s book, the traditional elements, which hold this genre of fiction together, are: “a crime, an investigation, a solution, and a denouement. In the solution section, the detective explains the crime and puts the events surrounding it in their proper perspective. Then, as denouement, the criminal is apprehended and justice is meted out” (2004: 272-73). In one way or another, Cawelti’s theory expounds the prevalence or the nature of crime in general. Multiple social factors and other variables, such as poverty, emotional appeals, social climate, and race, are just but a few examples.

Compared with Faulkner’s closure with a twist, conventional detective stories usually come to a definite end, namely “a closed structure”, prior to which a captivating story-telling voice spells out the crime

committed and provides a brief description of the nature of the crime. Then, “the discovery of the criminal” and “the re-establishing of order” highlight the tremendous subtlety and depth of detective fiction, so the effect of which will be to make the characters behave accordingly to ensure social harmony (Marcus 2003: 248).

³. In common with the great intention of many writers to uplift the status of their works, detective fiction aims to earn public recognition from the mass audience as a classical example of serious high-brow literature opposed to a once definitely low-brow outsider. Known for its unswerving dedication to defusing tensions during times of social unrest and turning chaos into order at the end, modernism also has a long-standing reputation for supporting the basic tenets of the genteel tradition, which impinges precisely upon the doctrine that “the traditional canon is elitist” (Ruland 1993: 428). No wonder, in this respect, leading crime-fiction writers, apart from addressing the root causes of criminal behaviour and detailing their movements toward the ultimate goal of administering true justice, have announced their intent to merge with modernism in the high hope of morphing into “a legitimate form of literary expression” (Panek 2006: 211).

⁴. In his lucid and engaging book, Brian McHale adopts a whole new view of the role played by the kinship metaphor possibly in an attempt to demystify the bond between detective stories and modernism, although his exploration of kinship networks, in practice, has run into problems of accountability. For instance, one Taiwanese scholar, Yuan-Shuan Lin, elaborates on the possible flaw, which very likely has deconstructed McHale’s argument and identified his questionable assumption: “麥克海爾認為偵探小說是現代主義文學作品的姊妹類型。[但] 深究麥克海爾對偵探小說與現代主義文學作品的關連如何建立 [McHale believes that detective fiction is the sister genre of modernist literature, but we have to explore their literary relationship in greater depth]” (Lin 2013: 111). For this reason, the assertion of a conclusion, based on Lin’s observations, seeks to establish the fact that McHale somehow is unable to provide the critics with a cohesive and compelling rationale to

support his conjecture, which could have reinforced an otherwise sound argument. A look at the original text tells all: “the popular detective thriller is modernist fiction’s sister-genre” (McHale 1987: 59). Perhaps after the failure of the alliance between detective fiction and modernism meet expectations of crime writers, a number of them have instead added a touch of realism to their writing. To this shift has been added the sheer grit and determination of detective story writers to rewrite the canon of crime fiction, so that their works will fit into the category of “serious fiction” (Kinkley 1993: 56).

⁵. To craft defense strategies against criminal charges, Lucas first tells Chick that the gunshot wound found in Vinson’s body does not match his Colt 41. Following up all possible leads, Chick and his groupies plan to exhume Vinson’s body, but by accident they stumble upon the corpse of a lumber dealer, Jake Montgomery. The only salient feature of Lucas’s private investigation in his move beyond scepticism into deep cynicism about the high level of racial bias in police behaviour, which ironically underscores the importance of a diametrically opposite approach, the efficient collaboration among ordinary unarmed civilians. Because Lucas and Chick look beyond the law and apply extralegal standards to solve the murder mystery, Faulkner’s fiction, aside from grappling with long-existing racial tensions, aims to expose the terrible legal wrong wrought through their extralegal actions.

⁶. In order to expand readers’ appetite for detective fiction, fire up their imagination, and encourage them to follow an investigation through to completion, the trend line, videlicet the move toward a more upscale market position, appears to indicate continuous improvement over time in the American pulp publishing industry. As a result, “sanguinary standards of what constitutes a good mystery” should have a potent effect in captivating “the most blood-thirsty” reader (Estleman 2003: xvii).

⁷. Due to a long-standing racial controversy, there would seem to be plenty of reasons why Lucas’s accidental encounter with a white boy should not escalate into direct embroilment, after he rescued Charles (Chick) Mallison from a frozen creek. The entanglement

of race turns into a genuinely affecting plot, which thickens and gradually reveals a deep well of nastiness and ugly hypocrisy. For example, without a shred of supporting evidence, Gavin Stevens subconsciously harbors negative feelings toward blacks, so Lucas is automatically assumed to be guilty. Any way, Lucas's lack of gratitude adds embarrassing insult to emotional injury, when Chick considers himself a loser in more ways than one. Not only does Chick feel a great sense of degradation and rejection, but he is also in desperate need of a mechanism to foster racial reconciliation, so he can pay off the 'emotional debt'. On the one hand, Chick's emotional distress, to a large extent, obscures the underlying racial tension and institutional structures which fan the fire. On the other hand, it also brings the cumulative stress of racism back to the foreground. The myth of racism probably has overwhelmed many readers, as Chick and Gavin Stevens are completely unaware of internalized racism, whose patterns feature so prominently in fiction.

Gavin Stevens drops quick, sarcastic comments, and predicts doom for Lucas's case, when "finally the ideology of racial superiority serves to reinforce individual beliefs in white supremacy" (Vysotsky 2014: 6). Stevens explicitly foreshadows Lucas's impending doom. His remarks are more than a slip of the tongue: the chances of obtaining justice look bleak, unless "Lucas lives long enough to be tried by a judge and a 'District Attorney,' who 'don't live within fifty miles of Yoknapatawpha County'" (Sassoubre 2007: 202).

⁸ While listening to Lucas's speculation about the murder weapon, Chick tries to convey Lucas's specific message to Gavin Stevens, but the latter doubts the accuracy and validity of the information. Accordingly, Chick initiates further remedial actions so they dig up Vinson's coffin with the assistance of his friends, Aleck Sander, and the old spinster, Miss Eunice Habersham. Gavin Stevens does not take part in the graveyard investigation until Chick locates Jake Montgomery's body buried in Vinson's coffin. Gavin Stevens and Sheriff Hampton decide to conduct a joint investigation into the suspected unlawful killing now with a heightened sense of urgency.

⁹ I am indebted to Ticien Marie Sassoubre, whose insights into Lucas and Chick's interethnic relationship put all possible perspectives together. Looking through a historical lens, Sassoubre associates their cross-age friendship with racial reconciliation and community cooperation on a large scale: "Faulkner intends this relationship between Lucas and Chick to provide a model for a new regime of race relations in the South: continued mutual interdependence" (2007: 202). Sassoubre's conclusive remark, though it gives a broad overall idea of race, seems to make a sweeping assumption about fierce racial divisions and attempts to soften racial antagonism, before the local residents are willing to accept Lucas's individuality and idiosyncrasy.

¹⁰ All night long Chick's conscience keeps him awake, so he spends hours tackling Lucas's uncertain future. As Chick questions, "Will he die or not?" (Faulkner 1994: 314-315).

¹¹ Chick does not give out any information regarding exhumation to his uncle beforehand. If he did so, Gavin Stevens would immediately go to "the sheriff's house and convince him and then find a [Justice of the Peace] or whoever they would have to find and wake and then convince too to open the grave" (Faulkner 1994: 73). In practice, as there seems to be a tacit understanding that Chick's extralegal actions do not unduly exaggerate concerns for Lucas's safety, it takes approximately "six hours" for police officers to obtain a search warrant, before they conduct a permissible search or make an investigatory seizure, following police protocol (Lee 2004: 150).

¹² Chick arrives at a conclusion based on a set of observations: "if you ever needs to get anything done outside the common run, don't waste your time on the menfolks; get the womens and children to working at it. Men cant listen. They aint got time. They're too busy with facks" (Faulkner 1994: 70).

¹³ Lucas's case entails an excessive moral burden on Chick. The reader might take pity on him because "He is, after all, a mere boy forced into taking on a role of adult responsibility and shares with them a

terror of being entrapped” (Seelye 1986: xiii). Never has Chick had a chilling encounter with murders; nonetheless, his courage and persistence in seeking justice gather momentum to make dramatic changes in Lucas’s criminal convictions.

¹⁴. The motive for Joe Christmas’s murder and later his directionless decision points, in juxtaposition with the rising hatred in an ironic display of white supremacy, indicate that he has totally messed up his life beyond redemption. We should not be in denial of the fact that in a figurative sense, Christmas’s long ignored or maybe outright denied existence also dissolves into individual randomized trails, when his mind is as scattered as footprints found in different places. The escape routes, charted by the disoriented Christmas, offer no journey out of his own isolation, while he remains stuck in that small town mentality, and “he has lost account of time and distance” (Faulkner 1932: 321). Following the escape trails, which leads him nowhere, Christmas never actually leaves the immediate neighborhood of the crime scene, in which “the legal presumption of innocence” can be overturned “in the face of public demands for vengeance” (Albon 1995).

¹⁵. Taking a broad view of detective fiction, Ming-Fong Wang, a literary critic, argues that crime writing extends well beyond the representation of descriptive realities, although crime writers occasionally lapse into an altered state of reality: “The content of detective novels is not merely a hide-and-seek game between the master detective and the cunning criminal; it also depicts the social and everyday life” (2008: 52).

¹⁶. In stark contrast, the presence or absence of evidence aims to expose the particularity of “indirect forensic evidence”, also known as “missing forensic evidence”, owing to which an investigation could very likely wind up taking several wrong turns (Lee 2004: 115). By all odds, examples of human recklessness or the adverse impact of inevitable natural phenomena, such as rain washing away the bloodstain prior to retrieval with sufficient evidence, “may inadvertently interfere with evidence collection and hinder police efforts to file criminal charges” (Lee 2004: 115). While looking into the probability of detection and

conviction, Lee provides some degree of immunity against uncertainty: “The absence of evidence is equally as important as the presence of evidence”; for “the absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence” after all (Lee 2004: 116).

¹⁷. Joe Christmas finally meets his demise when a minor character, Percy Grimm, who does not even appear in the first half of the novel, shows up near the end. On some level, Grimm becomes increasingly seen as a controversial figure to add complexity. While we ponder over Grimm’s delayed appearance, Richard Moreland performs in-depth historical analysis of Faulkner’s fiction. As he explicitly states, Grimm, a symbol of an “apparently meaningless slaughter of World War I”, not only defies “a presumed cultural consensus”, but also poses major challenges to “the world’s most civilized nation”; when he employs extreme “archaic violence toward Christmas” (1995: 21).

In order to ease insertion of an unusual character, the brutal Percy Grimm, David Glover puts forth an argument for the simple reason, because he does not equate “less important figures” with “any loss of suspense” (2003: 144). Instead, he indicates that Faulkner presented a distorted view of police actions involving deadly force and a cruel, egomaniacal captain of the State National Guard. In this light, “villain, victim, and private detective” are thoroughly intertwined in the plot, which identifies a recurring feature within modernism. The feature is also “characterized by a sense of chaotic instability rooted in the revelation”, but it launches an ultimate attempt to resolve a conflict associated with binary opposites (Glover 2003: 144).

¹⁸. Gavin Stevens is no stranger to Faulkner’s readers, because he reappears in novel after novel, for instance in *Light in August*, *Intruder in the Dust*, *The Town*, *The Mansion*, and *Go Down, Moses*. Gavin Stevens, who runs counter to the essential value of law enforcement, in practice is a male figure with an incurably romantic disposition. Not only is he portrayed as an “ineffectual lawyer in love”, but he also “resembles an escapist precursor-at-law in Yoknapatawpha, Horace Benbow” (Watson 1993: 224).

¹⁹. The age-old adage, which expounds reciprocally interlocking relationships between crime and justice, suggests that “no hurt, no foul” should stand for “no crime, no punishment” in simple language (Panek 2006: 42). Contrary to our expectations, Panek’s comments shed new light on the reciprocal impact and on the close correlation between crime and justice, whose highly controversial nature will ignite further debate. Literally speaking, is it just a

coincidence or maybe an odd juxtaposition that the good qualities of the legal system, supposed to counterbalance the evil qualities, have in the course of time become watered down by their diametric opposition? A close examination would yield comparable results: “crime and punishment were a simple equation. They, in effect, cancelled each other out; for God or for society, judicial decision and punishment cancelled out the crime” (Panek 2006: 110).

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NATIVE AMERICAN THEATER: A CONCISE HISTORY

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1. Introduction

Although contemporary Native American¹ theater emerged during the second half of the 20th century, its origins draw from an extensive oral tradition which was mainly based on Indian traditional storytelling. Stories of all kinds about Native tribes and cultures were passed down from generation to generation for purposes of education, entertainment and the preservation of the Native American cultural heritage. Most of these stories were performed and dramatized by Indian storytellers for their audiences, suggesting the first literary, historical and cultural antecedents of contemporary Native American theater. When American Indian writing emerged in the 18th century, Native Americans went from telling stories to writing them down, using different literary genres, such as the novel, poetry, autobiography and short story. However, indigenous theater was absent in Native writing during this period and the multiple reasons given for this nonexistence usually reflect a long history of silencing, discrimination, oppression and displacement exercised towards the genre. Therefore, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that Native American playwrights and various indigenous theater companies started to write and produce Native plays, leading to the emergence of contemporary Native American drama. The proliferation of Native theater plays continued well into the 21st century with scholarship starting to be

prominent in the field, paving the way for the consolidation of a diverse, vibrant and evolving genre that continues to expand, making itself more available to both Native and non-Native audiences.

2. Oral Native American Traditions: The Antecedents of Contemporary Native American Theater

Since ancient times Native Americans have relied upon a diverse and vibrant oral tradition, which has often been categorized as Native American oral literature. This type of literature consisted of numerous stories, accounts, tales, myths, legends, epic narratives and songs about indigenous cultures that were orally transmitted in order to educate, entertain and preserve Native American cultural traditions. When these stories were told, they were usually accompanied by songs, dances, music, pictographs, wampum, dramatic presentations and a close and direct communication between the storyteller or performer and the audience. Native storytellers practiced their own art by giving life and voice to different tribal stories and by making use of certain theatrical elements such as distinct intonation patterns and rhythm, visual images, introductions to tales, word exaggeration, gestures and body movements, which, handed down from generation to generation bear witness to the performance and dramatization of Native American oral storytelling traditions and their similarities and closeness to theater. In this sense, the Native American art of storytelling consisted of a solo performer, who had no props or costumes, telling a story to an audience and passing down important cultural values and tribal histories through the generations.

Examples of this Native American oral literature include the ‘dream songs’ developed by the Native American cultures of southern California and southern Arizona (Bahr 1996). These songs entered the dreams of indigenous peoples and they acquired an important oral narrative sense as Native Americans used to describe their dreams through these songs, which were generally sung, danced to and accompanied by some kind of performance, such as “teasing and lovemaking” (Bahr 1994: 86).

Other examples of early Native American literature include the historical epic narrative known as *The Wallam Olum or Red Score*. Originally created by the Delaware or Leni Lenape tribe, *The Wallam Olum* consisted of 183 mnemonic pictographs painted in red on birch-bark, each accompanied by some words in the Delaware language (Vaschenko 1996). Through these mnemonic symbols, the Delaware Indians recalled their tribe’s history and preserved their traditions through the generations. Although this old manuscript was first translated into

English by Constantine Samuel Rafinesque in *The American Nations; or, Outlines of a National History; of the Ancient and Modern Nations of North and South America* (1836), several translations have been published by different authors, giving rise to a much-discussed debate about its authenticity². One of the main aspects of this debate arises from the difficult nature of writing an accurate translation of the pictographic symbols painted by the Delaware Indians. Even though some Native Americans were called to help and collaborate in these translations, certain questions remain unanswered: How was this manuscript received or acquired? Are these translations reliable? Which is the most adequate and accurate translation? Although these questions are difficult to answer even nowadays, the translations made by these authors have clearly contributed to Native American history. *The Wallam Olum* is one of the greatest Native artistic expressions that has handed down Native American history through the centuries and the interpretations and translations of its symbols have been culturally and historically influential.

Of equal importance are the Kiowa and Sioux calendars, commonly known as ‘winter counts’. They were basically spiral-shaped drawings painted on buffalo hides during the winter months, mainly intended to account for the most important events of the past year. In order to design these winter counts, the elders of the tribal community gathered annually to speak and discuss the most important events of the past year. It then became the responsibility of a person, who was usually referred to as the keeper, to draw a pictograph representing the major events of that year. Like *The Wallam Olum*, tale telling through pictographs became an important and effective means to preserve oral traditions —since all those stories were dramatized or represented— and was used to offer greater visual and vivid evidence of what Native Americans were trying to maintain and transmit over the generations.

Similarly, the narratives of the Great Iroquois League, one of the most sophisticated social and political systems among Native American cultures, relates the founding of the Great League Confederacy through the unification of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga and Tuscarora Indians (Vaschenko 1996). Songs were sung during certain parts of this historical narrative and wampum was also used to describe, perform or represent important facts. Although widely used in treaties to declare war or make peace, in funerals, in social invitations, in festivals, and in compensation for crimes, wampum was originally used as a symbol representing memory. The beads, symbols and figures woven onto these belts conveyed different messages, recorded events and represented transactions or treaties, whilst also contributing to the development of legal and historical narratives through the oral tradition.

Finally, the narratives of the Plains Indians —which usually contain a variety of categories such as accounts of human heroes and stories of creation— should also be considered as remarkable examples of Native American oral literature. These narratives include the mythological epic poems developed by the Native Americans of the Dhegiha Confederacy, concretely the Osages (Vaschenko 1996). Many of these stories were told during winter and the storytellers made use of different and varied theatrical styles and techniques, such as singing, hand gestures and body movement (Frey 2011) that took the listeners on a journey during which traditional values and histories were evoked and preserved over the generations.

The existence of this vibrant oral literature contrasts with the traditional Western conception that Native American cultures did not have a history. This belief is grounded in the fact that Western society has come to establish the written word as the dominant form by which historical records are kept, thus classifying American Indian cultures as nonliterate societies. This, however, is far from the truth, since the presence of these oral manifestations demonstrates that Native peoples had a systematic mode of writing through which they recorded their history and preserved Native traditions. At the same time, the existence of storytelling and its performance in early Native American oral traditions and literature has been of such relevance that many critics and authors have come to agree that contemporary Native American theater comes from the tradition of storytelling. The Oneida/Chippewa playwright Bruce King states that “theater is about storytelling” (2000: 168), whereas the American scholar and professor Christy Stanlake talks about the “close connection between Native American theatre and Native storytelling” (2009: 23). In the same line, the Cherokee playwright Diane Glancy suggests that “story-telling in the oral tradition could be called an early form of theatre, a one-character play. The action or plot was the voice telling the story that was integral for survival” (personal communication, September 20, 2007). However, it seems more accurate to refer to indigenous storytelling as a one-actor play, since these stories deal with the community at large and are performed by a storyteller.

In addition, while it seems logical to think of these traditional tales and stories as early forms of Native theater because of their oral and performative dimension, the notion of considering or categorizing them as theater still remains debatable. Although many Native playwrights admit that storytelling is a central part of their work, they have never categorized or defined this art form as theater itself. As Wilson (2006: 4) points out, storytelling “has gained recognition as an art form in its own right and has developed largely separately from theater”. In addition, whereas critics and scholars agree that there are several similarities between storytelling and theater, they also see fundamental differences that keep them apart

(Wilson 2006; Borowski and Sugiera 2010). For this reason, it seems more appropriate to talk about these stories as being the first literary, historical and cultural antecedents of contemporary Native American theater. As can be seen through the diverse field of Native theater plays, storytelling has become a central element in the works of Native playwrights, whose numerous stories have come to be performed and dramatized on stage.

3. The Emergence of Native American Writing: The Dark Age of Native American Theater

When Native American writing emerged in the 18th century, Indian authors began to produce and compose a wide range of literature in English. They started to write about their own stories in a diverse and expanding literary field³, including novels, poetry, autobiographies and short stories. However, Native theater was not being published and thus became the only main literary genre absent in the great proliferation of Native American literature starting in the late 18th century.

Among the multiple reasons given for this nonexistence of Native theater in early Indian writing are those related to the absence and discrimination of theater itself from the literary canon of North America. According to Dāwes, “one of the oft-cited reasons for this is the obvious problem of representing a dramatic event by simply reprinting its text—which has to leave out the performative dimensions such as stage sets, movements of bodies and objects, music, sound effects, and the spoken word” (2007: 29). Another reason for the secondary role of drama in the United States is the inheritance of the Puritan tradition in the late 16th and 17th centuries. The Puritans disapproved of theater in general and thus contributed to the discrimination against drama of every form. This unsound standing of theater as a literary genre seems to have continued into the 21st century as there are some anthologies of American literature, which scarcely contain theatrical pieces. Such is the case of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* and *The McMichael Anthology of American Literature*.

This nonexistence of Native American theater in the early stages of Native literature is often matched by the visible separation between Western and indigenous theater, a separation that was absolutely harmful for Native American performance once it had been repeatedly categorized as inferior. As Dāwes points out, “indigenous theater has often been separated from Western performance by formal criteria, often hypothesizing that the former uses more ‘primitive’ or simple forms (or, in Virginia Heath’s words, ‘the low and the base’ [414]), while the latter relies on technically sophisticated equipment” (2007: 67). This categorization seems inappropriate, since there is, for example, evidence that some tribes on the

Northwest Coast produced elaborate stage effects for some of their dramatizations (Wilmeth and Miller 1996).

Another reason for the absence of Native theater plays during this period revolves around colonialism itself (Däwes 2007). Most of the Native American languages, traditions, customs, rituals and ceremonies had been suppressed and prohibited from the start of European colonization. As a consequence, the development of Native American theater was silenced for more than two centuries, and Native performance and oral traditions were weakened. For this reason, it seems appropriate to pay attention to the influence of the authoritative Western perspective and its strong and forceful refusal to acknowledge the existence of Native American theater prior to European contact. This dominant influence of white colonists has made it difficult for Native American theater to develop and be acknowledged. As the indigenous writer Cat Cayuga points out, “when the first colonists arrived they considered our art forms crude and primitive. They had the idea that no form of Native Theater existed prior to the ‘discovery’. It is this attitude which has made the development of our art difficult for us. The dominant society has always used its own terms to define art” (1989-1990: 37).

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The effects of colonialism also explain the restriction or relegation of Native theatrical traditions to the fields of anthropology, religious studies and ethnology (Däwes 2007). Whereas Native theater has been addressed as ritual drama by some anthropologists and “established as different from theater (or as theater’s Other)” (Däwes 2007: 3), many indigenous performative traditions have also been explored in the realm of ethnology “either synchronically associated with exotic difference, or diachronically stored in the past and thus objectified as primitive, remote, and lost” (Däwes 2007: 3). This is why none of the Native performance traditions were explored in the domain of theater, and placing them in the realm of other disciplines definitely contributed to the silencing and displacement of Native theater until the 20th century. In fact, the only theater play possibly written by a Native American author before the 1900s is *The Indian Mail Carrier* by Go-won-go Mohawk and Charlie Charles. However, as Hunhdorf states, “only a copyright record dated 1889 remains; the script has been lost, and little is known about Go-won-go, an Indian actress of dubious origins” (2006: 294).

During the first years of the 20th century, there was no publication or production of Native American theater plays either, but there were some Native American theatrical performances on traditional storytelling, which again could be considered as being among the antecedents or predecessors of contemporary Native American theater. A clear example is Te Ata’s one-woman performances of Native American traditional stories and legends making use of Indian props, “including a drum, a bow and arrow, and a costume” (in Stanlake 2009: 2). Although Mary “Te Ata” Thompson Fisher

had her problems and difficulties as a Native American performer, her professional career went on for over 70 years, and not only did she get “to make a living as an entertainer, but also to educate audiences about the diversity across Native America by presenting accurate information about Native cultures” (Stanlake 2009: 3). Hence it was that Indian traditional storytelling came to be performed and dramatized again, and although Te Ata did not achieve the theatrical influence that would later lead to the emergence of contemporary Native American theater, her performances should not pass unnoticed in a history of the genre in the United States.

On the other hand, it was not until the 1930s that the first two Native American plays were produced. Rollie Lynn Riggs, a Native playwright of Cherokee origin, wrote *Green Grow the Lilacs* (1931), the play on which Rodgers’s and Hammerstein’s musical *Oklahoma!* (1943) was based, and *The Cherokee Night* (1934), a theatrical piece offering a portrayal of Native life in eastern Oklahoma during the 1920s. Although the author gained nationwide popularity with his plays, he often neglected to point out his Indian heritage and “the public of his time (the 1930s and 40s) did not perceive him as Native (Däwes, personal communication, November 25, 2007). Therefore, Lynn Riggs did not achieve the literary impact that would later lead to the emergence of contemporary Native American theater around the 1970s, but he certainly paved the way for the development of a contemporary Native theater movement.

4. The Native American Renaissance: The Emergence of Contemporary Native American Theater

The second half of the 20th century saw the resurgence and renewal of Native American traditions that “slowly beg[an] to generate creative energy and vision for a new phase of Indian people’s journey” (Geiogamah 2000: 159). The rise of the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s and 1970s also contributed to this reawakening of Native cultures since it appeared as a movement in which minorities demanded an end to discrimination and the right to speak for themselves. In addition, there were a series of social and political incidents that helped increase and renew Native American cultural and ethnic pride. This period of social and political upheavals is widely known as the Red Power period and includes major events such as the occupation of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay on November 1969, the so-called Trail of Broken Treaties in 1972, the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Washington D.C. on November 1972 and The Longest Walk across the United States in 1978.⁴

Within this context of self-expression, social and political movements in favor of Native American cultural traditions, performances and ethnic renewal, a period of

literary brilliance for Native literature emerged under the name of the Native American Renaissance, a term originally coined by Lincoln (1983) that refers mainly to the literary works following N. Scott Momaday's 1969 Pulitzer Prize for *House Made of Dawn*. During this literary period, indigenous writers were not only telling their stories in novels, autobiographies, poetry and short stories, but also bringing their storytelling and performing traditions to the stage through the writing and production of various contemporary theater plays.

When these contemporary Native plays started to be written during the 1960s and 1970s, many of them were performed and produced for and by various Native American theater companies. Since their emergence in the 1960s, these Native drama companies have been numerous and absolutely relevant to the development of contemporary Native American theater. Besides setting present-day Native American drama on the road to success, these theater companies have also helped promote and produce numerous theatrical works by Native dramatists in the United States. According to Huntsman (2000), the first to form Native companies with indigenous actors was Arthur Junaluska in New York during the 1950s. One decade later, Jay Silverheels, George Pierre, Noble 'Kid' Chissell and others created the Indian Actor's Workshop in Los Angeles, a company intended to prepare "Indian actors for film work", while also mounting "some stage productions" (Huntsman 2000: 95). In addition, the foundation of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) during the 1960s is also considered to be one of the earliest and most significant contributions to Native American drama. The IAIA developed a theater program that established certain bases for the development of contemporary Native American theater, "sought to balance the education of students with training in both Native American and European theatrical forms, and was dedicated to developing a 'contemporary Indian Theater which has meaning to contemporary Indians'" (Haugo 2000: 235). Similarly, the Institute of American Indian Arts created an amphitheater for the performance and representation of theater plays, such as Monica Charles's *Mowitch* (1968), a theatrical piece about Indian Shakers (Heath 1995), and Bruce King's *Evening at the Warbonnet* (1989), a play dealing with political issues, especially those related to the AIM.

Several years later, in 1972, the American Indian Theater Ensemble was founded by the Kiowa/Delaware dramatist Hanay Geiogamah with the help of Ellen Stewart of La MaMa Experimental Theater Club. Later known as the Native American Theater Ensemble (NATE), this Native theater company was founded upon Geiogamah's belief that "plays for and about Indians, their past, their despairing present, their hopes and dreams and daily lives, presented by Indian artists could be of inestimable value in uniting and uplifting the 850.000 Indian

people in the United States” (in Brown 2000: 170). One of the most prolific Native playwrights and a crucial figure in the history of contemporary Native American drama, Geiogamah created the first all-Indian repertory company, which produced his first play *Body Indian* (1972). Dealing with the problem of alcoholism and self-destructiveness among Native Americans, *Body Indian* became the most highly acclaimed of Geiogamah’s theatrical pieces and was later included in the first collection of Native plays, *New Native American Drama: Three Plays* (1980). This collection also contains Geiogamah’s *Foghorn* (1973), a play dealing with Indian stereotypes, and *49* (1975), a theatrical piece that provides a blend of contemporary and traditional elements in Native American cultures. Both theater plays were performed and produced by NATE along with Robert Shorty’s and Geraldine Keams’s *Na Haaz Zaan* (1972), focusing on the Navajo myth of creation; Geiogamah’s monologues *Grandma* (1984) and *Grandpa* (1984); and Bruce King’s ghost story *Whispers from the Other Side* (1985).

By the mid-1970s, the Kuna/Rappahannock Muriel Miguel founded the Spiderwoman Theater, a feminist theater company which recruited various groups of women from different ethnic backgrounds and that mainly intended to promote and foster Native women’s contribution to Native American theater (Haugo 2000). Based on the story-weaving technique, which “combines the philosophies and styles of feminist theater with a traditional understanding of the power of storytelling and oral history” (238), Spiderwoman Theater created and produced several plays that combined traditional Native storytelling with the procedures of contemporary Western theater. Examples of these theater plays include *Women in Violence*, *The Three Sisters from Here to There* (1982), *Reverb-ber-ber-rations* (1991) and *Power Pipes* (1992), which mainly focused on gender issues, oppression, poverty, racism and violence.

By the 1980s, the Colorado sisters of Mexican-Indian ancestry created the Coatlicue Theater Company. After praising Spiderwoman Theater for “having inspired them to perform together” (Haugo 2000: 242), Elvira and Hortensia Colorado wrote and produced different theater plays that bridged and linked both traditional and contemporary stories. “With a process similar to Spiderwoman’s storyweaving”, Haugo explains, “Coatlicue Theatre Company weaves traditional stories, such as the origin story which begins *1992: Blood Speaks*, with contemporary stories of who we are as urban Indian women surviving in New York City” (2000: 243). These plays include *1992: Blood Speaks*, which deals with the significant role that Christianity played in the oppression of Native Americans, and *A Traditional Kind of Woman: Too Much, Not ’Nuff*, a play that centers on the stories and experiences of Native women as they struggle with issues such as alcoholism, violence and rape.

In the 1990s several other Native American theater companies emerged in response to the needs of individual playwrights. Such is the case of the Red Eagle Soaring Theatre Group, which was founded in Seattle in 1990 and aimed particularly at “[educating] Indian youth on contemporary issues, such as AIDS” (Heath 1995: 220). This company created and performed Kenneth Jackson’s *Story Circles*, a one-act play centered around a group of Native American high-school students, which was first performed in Vancouver, Canada. Another example is the Red Path Theater Company in Chicago, which was founded around 1995 and produced plays mainly focused on contemporary American Indian urban life such as Two Rivers’s *Old Indian Tricks*, *Shattered Dream*, *Shunka Cheslie* and *Forked Tongues* (Heath 1995).

Besides the emergence of these Native theater companies, festivals of Native American plays also started to take place. The Native Voices Festival was first held at Illinois State University in 1994 under the leadership of Randy Reinholz and Jean Bruce Scott, and it became the resident theatre company at the Autry in Los Angeles in 1999. In an attempt to produce plays by Native American writers, both Randy and Jean managed to gather several Native playwrights and organized staged readings at ISU. In the following years, they were able to host festivals developing and producing plays by Native American writers from both the United States and Canada. In addition, one of the most important initiatives in Native American theater was the creation in 1996 of Project Hoop (Honoring Our Origins and People Through Native American Theater), which emerged as “a national, multi-disciplinary initiative to advance Native theater artistically, academically, and professionally” (“Project HOOP”, para. 2). Although it was originally funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Project Hoop is currently funded by the US Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and aims particularly at “establish[ing] Native theater as an integrated subject of study and creative development in tribal colleges, Native communities, K-12 schools, and mainstream institutions, based on Native perspectives, traditions, views of spirituality, histories, cultures, languages, communities, and lands” (“Project HOOP”, para. 2). It is safe to say, then, that Project Hoop stands out as the living proof of the great effort to revive, establish and promote indigenous drama in the United States.

The emergence of all these Native American theater companies, the celebration of festivals and initiatives in Native American drama helped promote the great proliferation of Native plays⁵ across the United States. As Dāwes confirms “there are currently over 250 published and far over 600 unpublished plays by some 250 Native American and First Nations playwrights and theatre groups on the North American market” (2013: 13). It might be added that most of these theater plays have been included in collections and anthologies thus proving the abundance of

contemporary Native American drama plays since its emergence in the Native American Renaissance. Among such works, Hanay Geiogamah’s *New Native American Drama: Three Plays* (1980) stands as the first collection of Native theater plays; The Institute of American Indian Art provides three plays written by its own students in *Gathering Our Own: A Collection of IALA Student Playwrights* (Dickerson et al. 1996); and Diane Glancy’s *War Cries: Plays by Diane Glancy* (1997) offers nine plays, which combine both a vision of contemporary life and traditional aspects that connect Indians with their past. In addition, some of the theater plays produced by Native American women started to be collected under the creation of the Native American Women Playwright’s Archive. This archive was founded in 1996 at Miami University of Ohio’s King Library in order to gather and collect original materials and manuscripts by Native American women playwrights, while also containing “a large volume of historical materials relating to the groundbreaking work of the Spiderwoman Theater troupe” (Howard 1999: 109). Besides this archive and the aforementioned collections, two volumes of anthologies appeared in 1999: *Seventh Generation: An Anthology of Native American Plays*, which includes five theatrical pieces by Native American authors, one play by a Native Hawaiian dramatist and another play by a First Nation playwright; and *Stories of Our Way: An Anthology of American Indian Plays*, which contains eleven plays by Native American dramatists.

5. The Twenty-first Century: The Path towards the Consolidation of Contemporary Native American Theater

The publication of Native American theater plays continued progressively into the 21st century and several playwrights saw their works published in anthologies and collections of Native American theater plays. In 2003 the first anthology of Native women’s plays was published under the name of *Keepers of the Morning Star: An Anthology of Native Women’s Theater*. It was published through Project HOOP and it contained various theatrical pieces by Native women in the United States and Canada. This work was followed by another anthology, entitled *Staging Coyote’s Dream: An Anthology of First Nations Drama in English* (2003), which was the first collection to be published in Canada, including Native Canadian theater plays and some theatrical pieces by Native American playwrights and theater companies. In 2009, the second volume of *Staging Coyote’s Dream* was published, including seven plays by Native Canadian playwrights and one theatrical piece by Spiderwoman Theater’s founder, Muriel Miguel, and another theater play published by her daughter, Murielle Borst.

The contributions of the Native American Women Playwrights Archive also brought out some anthologies during the 2000s. *Footpaths and Bridges: Voices from the Native American Women Playwrights Archive* was published in 2008, appearing as the second collection of Native plays by indigenous women in the United States and Canada—including a theater play by a Native Hawaiian dramatist as well—and designed to display samples of the archive's holdings. The NAWPA 2007 conference "Honoring Spiderwoman Theater/Celebrating Native American Theater" also made possible the publication of another anthology entitled *Performing Worlds into Being: Native American Women's Theater* (2009), containing several theater plays, interviews, production histories and academic articles.

While the publication of these anthologies is from every point of view praiseworthy, it also laid bare the first discrepancies of opinion as to the geographical, political and cultural boundaries of the genre. As can be observed, some anthologies on Native American theater include First Nations drama, but exclude Native drama from Hawaii. This seems to suggest that there are no cultural boundaries between the United States and Canada when dealing with indigenous experiences through Native theater. However, the case seems to be different for Hawaii, a state whose Native drama is usually excluded from American Indian theater for cultural, political and sociological reasons. Although it seems to be difficult to reach an agreement about this controversy, the mapping of contemporary Native American theater should be refined, since whether to include Native drama from Canada and to exclude indigenous theater from the 50th state of the union continues to be debatable. In this respect, one should take into consideration that both Native Americans and Native Hawaiians experience a similar social, economic and political status in the United States (Iyall Smith 2006), whilst also sharing and dealing with similar issues and concerns through their Native theater plays.

Several authors saw their works published not only in these anthologies but also in individual collections of Native American theater plays. Such is the case of William S. Yellow Robe, Jr.'s *Where the Pavement Ends: Five Native American Plays* (2001), which combines stories of the hard lives and experiences of Native Americans in Fort Peck Indian Reservation with comic relief, in matters dealing with Native identity, tradition and oppression. Similarly, E. Donald Two-Rivers's *Brief-Case Warriors: Stories for the Stage* (2001) offers a series of theater plays focusing on the contemporary lives of urban Indians who are especially concerned with their survival, with alcohol problems and discrimination. Occasionally alternating between prose and poetry, Diane Glancy's *American Gypsy: Six Native American Plays* (2002) contains different theater plays with a great poetic sense that include traditional and contemporary stories about Native Americans, whilst being mainly concerned with themes of gender, acculturation, survival, generational relationships and the tensions and

confrontations between Native American traditional values and white American values, customs and religious beliefs. Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl’s *Hawai’i Nei: Island Plays* (2002) brings together three plays dealing with issues concerning her Native cultural heritage, while providing insights into Hawaii’s culture, history and contemporary life. Equally important to note is Bruce King’s *Evening at the Warbonnet and Other Plays* (2006), an individual collection of plays that includes great moral content and a sense that the characters are struggling between good and evil. In addition, King offers a combination of traditional and contemporary elements such as humor, music, debate, histories and experiences, which take the reader on an impressive journey through Native cultures.

This abundance of primary sources is even made more accessible through Alexander Street Press’s *North American Indian Drama*, a collection of digital theater plays which contains more than 250 plays by both Native American and First Nations playwrights. The collection starts in the 1930s with Rollie Lynn Riggs’s first Native American theater plays to be published and produced in the United States, and progresses through the 20th century including contemporary playwrights and theater companies.

Especially in the wake of this diversity and proliferation of Native American theater plays came a considerable body of scholarship in the field that started to be noticed at the beginning of the 21st century. Thus, the first book of essays on Native American theater appeared in 2000 and it was published and co-edited by Hanay Geiogamah and Jaye T. Darby under the name of *American Indian Theater in Performance: A Reader*. Besides serving as an overview of the genre and offering different analyses, articles and interviews by several Native and non-Native critics and authors, this book represents the first step towards the development of Native American theater as a field of study. The collection was followed by Birgit Däwes’s *Native North American Theater in a Global Age: Sites of Identity Construction and Transdifference* (2007), a monograph that addresses the most relevant theoretical aspects of contemporary Native North American theater, including an historical overview of the genre, its categorization and definition, the controversies about its geographical, political and cultural boundaries, while also providing in-depth analyses of 25 plays by playwrights, both Native American and First Nations. Two years later, a revealing theoretical work on the genre was developed through the critical examination of Native American dramaturgy in Christy Stanlake’s *Native American Drama: A Critical Perspective* (2009). The author provides a critical methodology for contemporary Native American theater by focusing on four distinctive elements of Native theater plays: platiality, based on Native philosophies of place and identity; storying, defined as “the action of telling Native American stories” and as “a

discourse that encompasses concepts about language from Native American intellectual traditions” (2009: 118); tribalogy, based on LeAnn Howe’s theory, which refers to the space where the stories of Native Americans have helped influence or explain how America was created (Howe 1999: 118); and survivance, grounded in Gerald Vizenor’s theory, which refers to “the ability to resist defined categories than can easily turn into stereotypical representations” (Stanlake 2009: 30).

In addition, since the last years of the first decade of this century several publications about Native American performance have started to appear. Besides including contemporary Native American theater as a genre, Native performance appears to be a growing field of research that also includes indigenous dance, performance art, film, video and multimedia. Such is the case of S.E. Wilmer’s edited volume *Native American Performance and Representation* (2009), which came out as a comprehensive study of Native American performance both historically and in the contemporary world as a result of the papers presented at the 23rd American Indian Workshop on the theme of “Ritual and Performance”. In 2010, Hanay Geiogamah and Jaye T. Darby edited a new book entitled *American Indian Performing Arts: Critical Directions*, a volume of essays on Native American performing arts that provides an analysis of Native American theater, dance and music performances through the perspectives of different indigenous writers and critics as well as recent established scholars. Following the same line in the study of Native American performance, Hanay Geiogamah’s new book *Ceremony, Spirituality and Ritual in Native American Performance* (2011) approaches Native American theater as ceremonial performance and examines the elements of myth, spirituality and ceremony and the way they are integrated into dramatic performances. In addition, the Native playwright introduces and establishes the difference between contemporary theater, involving those drama plays that follow the forms of traditional Western drama, and traditional theater, which he later refers to as “ceremonial American Indian theater” (Geiogamah 2011: 3), including those theater plays that contain music, dance, costumes, stories and masks that make up a ceremonial performance. Whereas this latter categorization certainly reflects the religious or ceremonial character of Native American performance, it might be an obstacle to the production of indigenous plays as it may bar outsiders from producing such material for fear of infringing on certain rules. This has also hampered the development of Native American theater down through history and it certainly explains the counter-productive effect of reserving emerging Native American drama for indigenous companies and audiences; this measure both stimulated and restricted the wider dissemination of the dramatic output.

More recently, contemporary Native American theater has again been approached as a genre that continues to evolve and to be explored from different perspectives such as historiography, cultural memory; likewise it has had to meet challenges like funding, training and networking, sites of reception, the problems of representation, cultural transmissibility and the transnational promotion of the genre. To this purpose, Birgit Däwes's edited volume *Indigenous North American Drama: A Multivocal History* (2013) serves as an excellent source of information on this matter. It is a valuable collection of essays in the field that offers a comprehensive outline of Native North American theater, including surveys of major developments of the genre, contributions of different playwrights who provide their visions and experiences, and different critical perspectives, methodologies and histories of the genre developed by different writers and scholars from the United States, Canada and Europe.

Another exploration of contemporary indigenous theater from different perspectives is offered by Birgit Däwes's and Marc Maufort's edited collection, *Enacting Nature: Ecocritical Perspectives on Indigenous Performance* (2014). It is the first account of the impact of ecocriticism on indigenous theater, an issue that is especially welcome given that Native cultures have always been very close to nature. Although the book also includes essays on ecocritical issues expressed through indigenous dance and film, it mainly aims at exploring the relationship between indigenous theater and the environment, bringing together different analyses of Native plays from North America, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. At the same time, this collaborative volume supposes a step forward in the transnational promotion of indigenous North American drama and makes apparent the need to survey indigenous Native theater across the hemisphere, and at the same time discover clear links between indigenous cultures in different countries around the world.

These scholarly works, then, cover a wide range of issues and perspectives on contemporary Native American theater, reflecting the interest generated by the field and demonstrating how American Indian drama has moved from specific cultural communities into larger and more generalized audiences. At the same time, this significant amount of scholarship also provides a variety of styles that have helped shape contemporary American Indian drama itself, while certainly opening up the path for more voices, perspectives and angles in the years to come.

Contemporary Native American theater has been promoted not only by the availability of plays in publication and scholarship in the field, but also by various institutions. Such is the case of New York City's Public Theater, an institution that has been active in this promotion through the celebration of an annual Native

Theater Festival in which the works of Native playwrights, actors, directors and musicians are highlighted as part of the Native Theater Initiative initiated in 2007. Similarly, OCK Theatre Company has also been presenting an annual Native American Play Festival since its foundation in 2010, offering Native playwrights the opportunity to submit new plays, from which some are chosen for staged readings and one is produced and given a two week run. In addition, Native Voices at the Autry, America's leading Native theater company devoted exclusively to developing the work of both emergent and established Native playwrights, continues to offer an annual venue for the stage, production and performance of Native American plays.

Moreover there are other initiatives emerging to promote Native American theater. A good example can be found in a group of American Indian writers, performers and directors who have started to work on the creation and development of two organizations designed to promote and advance Native American theater: the American Indian Theater and Performing Arts National Alliance and The American Indian Playwrights Guild. Although neither organization has been fully functional yet—mainly through the lack of volunteers and funding—the first steps have been taken. There is evidence that “these two organizations will also create leverage for fundraising in an effort to provide critical support to American Indian artists and theater and performing arts organizations” (Project HOOP, in Geigomah 2013: 339). This situation suggests that one of the biggest challenges facing contemporary Native American theater nowadays is the lack of funding for the promotion and production of Native plays, which at the same time, may also betray a lack of support and commitment from the indigenous community itself. However, the abundance of primary sources, the growing field of scholarship and the efforts made by several institutions and organizations to promote this genre advocate greater visibility for Native American theater, which continues to grow and expand, while constantly exploring, addressing and providing new themes and forms of expression.

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6. Conclusions

Although Native American theater is a relatively new genre in the United States, the history of its development is extensive, complex and continuously expanding. Although, as pointed out in this paper, Native American theater emerged as a genre in the second half of the 20th century, its origins go much further back in time. Its beginnings are usually traced back to traditional Native storytelling and its performance, since most of the stories passed down through over the generations relied upon a dramatic presentation that can certainly be seen as constituting the first antecedents of the contemporary scene. During the

emergence of Native writing in the 18th century, theater became less and less present in the proliferation of Native American literary works, the result of multiple factors of silencing, oppression and displacement, which have certainly made it difficult for Native theater to develop and be recognized. In spite of those hard beginnings, contemporary Native American theater has a long and impressive history of indigenous theater companies and a vast number of theatrical plays, which have spurred considerable scholarship during the last two decades that continues to grow and explore this new field of research. Both Native and non-Native authors and scholars have contributed with their different perspectives, approaches and methodologies to the development of a literary genre, which has become one of the newest and most vibrant genres in the American literary landscape. However, this does not mean that the Native theater scene is trouble-free: obviously the lack of funding and support from different sources continues to be a serious limiting factor on the production of indigenous theater plays. In spite of this situation, the consolidation of the Native voices with the US stage remains a great potential as contemporary Native American theater gradually becomes a part of America’s multicultural literature.

Notes

1. While there are many different opinions on which terminology may be the most appropriate, the terms Native American, American Indian, Indian and indigenous will be used interchangeably in order to refer more broadly to indigenous peoples of the United States. However, whenever possible the specific tribal names will be used.

2. According to Ordaz Romay (2006), after Rafinesque’s first translation in 1836, the American ethnologist Daniel Garrison Brinton published his own translation in *The Lenape and Their Legends, With a Complete Text and Symbols of the Walam Olum, a New Translation and an Inquiry into its Authenticity* in 1884. More recently, David McCutchen published his translation in *The Red Record: Wallam Olum* in 1993.

3. For a sampling of literary works written by Native Americans since the beginnings up to the late 1970s, see Ruoff (1996: 145-154).

4. For a more detailed study on Native American social and political upheavals during the 1960s and 1970s, see Nagel (1997).

5. Most of these theater plays were compiled by authors such as Haugo (2000) in her “Contemporary Native Theater: Bibliography and Resource Material”, which was based on an earlier version of this bibliography in *Native Playwrights’ Newsletter* 6 (Fall 1994): 68-75. More recently, Däwes (2007) also offered a long list of drama plays by Native Americans in the bibliography section of her book, *Native North American Theater in a Global Age*. Finally, for access to digital collections, see Alexander Street Press’s *North American Indian Drama*.

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**FREDERICK W. LOWNDES,
MRCSE AND SURGEON TO THE LIVERPOOL
LOCK HOSPITAL: PROSTITUTION
AND VENEREAL DISEASE IN THE 1880S¹**

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The aim of this paper is to analyse the perpetuation of the myth of the fallen woman in the rescue work and the cure of prostitutes in Liverpool in the 1880s. To this end, Frederick Lowndes' 1886 publication, *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool*, will be discussed as an example of a text written by a medical authority concerned with sexual promiscuity and the spread of venereal disease. Prostitution had cultural and moral implications for Victorians, and prostitutes represented a threat to middle-class society as the very image of vice and public disorder itself. Lowndes offers an overview of the issue for the years leading up to the publication of his pamphlet, dealing with issues like the role of brothels and other places of accommodation for prostitutes, the causes of prostitution in Liverpool and the classification of these women into different categories. These were also matters of concern in the earlier decades of the Victorian era and they echo some of the ideas of previous moral reformers and medical men concerning the Great Social Evil. Lowndes had also published other pamphlets about venereal diseases and lock hospitals such as *Prostitution and Syphilis in Liverpool and the Working of the Contagious Diseases Acts, at Aldershot, Chatham, Plymouth, and Devonport* (1876), *The Extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts to Liverpool and Other Seaports Practically Considered* (1876) and *Lock Hospitals and Lock Wards in General Hospitals* (1882), together with a number of articles in specialised journals

such as *The British Medical Journal* or *The Lancet*. This paper sets out to analyse and compare Lowndes's writings on prostitution and venereal disease with a view to ascertaining whether there was any evolution in his thinking in those last decades of the Victorian period and whether any contradictions can be found in his writings.

In the 1860s the three Contagious Diseases Acts were passed; these had become the object of debate in the different discourses of the time in the 1870s. A feminist and social reformer established in Liverpool, Josephine Butler, became the charismatic leader of the repeal campaign that followed the promulgation of these Acts, designed to avoid the spread of venereal disease in the armed forces. The new law, then, required women who were suspected of being 'common prostitutes' to undergo compulsory medical examination; if they were found to be venereally diseased they were sent to a lock hospital where they had to remain till cured. Lock hospitals were created to control and cure 'deviant women'. One of these hospitals was the Liverpool Lock Hospital.² The year before Lowndes's *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool*, the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed in Parliament to put an end to child prostitution and white slavery. This followed the social uproar caused by the publication of the "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" in the *Pall Mall Gazette* by W.T. Stead. According to this article the virginity of children was sold in London's dens of vice to aristocratic villains who did not care about the suffering of the innocent poor.³ The role of the Social Purity Movement in the application of this Act and its influence on the ideas about the Great Social Evil in the years before the turn of the century were considerable. In this context, the function played by local laws in the containment of this public vice and of the Liverpool Lock Hospital in the treatment and cure of the diseases considered to be the result of prostitution will be analysed in the light of Lowndes's text and ideas. My intention is to prove that the continuation of the tendency to seclude deviant elements of society in an attempt to reform them, together with their classification and indoctrination were still present in the medical and moral discourses of the latter part of the Victorian period in a postmodern and post-structuralist sense.

For that purpose an understanding of Foucauldian notions concerning deviancy and discipline become essential together with Butlerian ideas about gender and sexuality in the context of Victorian respectability and womanhood. This notion of respectability was particularly associated with the innocence and purity generally attributed to women and children. Foucault's two foundational texts *Discipline and Punish* (1975) and *The History of Sexuality, Part I* (1976) offer the opportunity to interpret the treatment of prostitutes in the light of the discourses that dominated the Victorian period. Foucault considers that societies are not static

structures and that they are constructed on discourses of power that pervade them. The body becomes essential in this philosophical system and constitutes the object of surveillance and classification. As a consequence bodies form part of spatial relations that allocate them specific places and classify them as different depending on their gender, sex, class and race. The whole system is based on binary oppositions that allow those in power to exert control on 'deviant bodies' in multiple and complex ways (Foucault 1990: 92-98). Similarly, bodies show resistance to the way in which they are disciplined by institutions of power such as asylums, prisons, hospitals, schools, etc. As a result, disciplinary power becomes the most basic form of punishment for deviant bodies like those of prostitutes, trying to create useful and docile bodies that conform to the norms (Foucault 1979: 135-137). All these notions clearly apply to the lock hospitals and lock wards of the nineteenth century.

Butlerian ideas (*Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 1990; *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* 1993; and *Undoing Gender*, 2004) about gender performance and about gender acts as being 'citational' are also significantly relevant to notions of women's respectability and behaviour. Victorian women were supposed to conduct themselves according to the specificities of their gender which constricted them to the private sphere and to ignorance of all sexual matters. In this sense, they had to perform their role as a member of the female sex and be opposite and complementary with respect to the male sex. In other words, men and women had to perform their own gender roles by citation, that is, by the repetition of forms of behaviour that were appropriate to their sex. Butler establishes the idea of gender being a social and cultural construct which consists in repeating practices conducive to a certain gender identity. But, according to Butler, gender performativity is not only 'citational'; it also has aspects of theatricality as we represent gender for our social peers who constitute our audience. Therefore, women who did not comply with what was expected of them as the weaker sex were regarded as being outside the norm and this was the case of prostitutes.

Between the passing of the three Contagious Diseases Acts in the 1860s and their suspension in 1883 and later repeal in 1886, important changes were brought about by the state and moral and medical authorities. State medicine was in decline in the 1870s and by the 1880s state authorities had lost control of the regulation of sexuality. Traditional sanitary principles had been contested during the repeal campaign and moralists were bent on redefining the ways in which sexual issues would be approached. With the Local Government Act of 1871, the Privy Council Medical Office and the Poor Law Board became one and formed the new Local Government Board. This Board was more concerned with the investigation of epidemics than with other areas of social intervention. Thus, it was moralists and

feminists that became social authorities as far as sexual politics and policy in the last decades of the nineteenth century were concerned. They used a powerful language to oblige the state to take legislative measures, and according to them, “chastity, continence and self-control” were the foundation for sexual progress, and reason and the laws of human nature were essential in the process (Mort 2000: 83-87). This meant that medical authorities began to lose control of the social discourses concerning morality and sexuality, and social purists became the leaders in the fight for respectability and restraint in sexual matters. Their views not only affected women’s behaviour but it was also aimed at restraining the male sexual drive. And not only this, the education of the young boys and girls from all social backgrounds in sexual matters became an important means of making society decent and clean. The idea was to have a single standard of sexual morality (Hall 2013: 30-55). However, as I hope to prove, many of the concepts and ideas connected with women’s sexuality and respectability as reported by Frederick Lowndes had not changed that much. By the same token, I believe that he does not acknowledge the new role of social purists in the regulation of sexuality in the last decades of the nineteenth century, but rather he expresses his fears about the lack of efficient measures to curb the increasing numbers of prostitutes in Liverpool and the spread of contagious disorders.

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The Repeal Campaign (1860-1876) marked a turning point in the history of regulation of prostitution in the UK. Josephine Butler was a middle-class woman who married George Butler whose life was marked by misfortune. She first lived in Oxford with her husband and children, but when her only daughter died in an accident, the Butlers moved to Liverpool. There, Mrs Butler decided to devote her life to the rescue of fallen women and prostitutes, founding her Home of Rest. She believed that both men and women were on equal terms regarding spirituality and saw poverty as the main cause of prostitution in women (Butler 1954: 56). After her conversation with her friend Elisabeth Wolstenholme, she decided to embark on the crusade against the CD Acts with the support of her husband. Thus, she became the leader of the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts.

The Acts counted on the support of upper- and middle-class men, religious and academic authorities, many medical men and the police. However, feminists were against the compulsory physical examination of prostitutes and the degradation and discrimination that this implied. Contrary to male medical opinion, women repealers believed that it was men who spread venereal disease. But Josephine Butler also counted on the support of her middle-class sisters and even working-class men and women who were outraged by the humiliation their daughters and sisters were suffering. The idea was to keep the military and the male population

free of disease without taking into account the loss of dignity that such legal measures represented for the working classes (Boyd 1982: 78).

Nonetheless, the Repeal Campaign had two outstanding moments: the Ladies' Manifesto of 1870 and the Select Committee of 1879. In the first instance, the Women's Protest contained eight points that basically argued that women's reputation and freedom were in the hands of the police: only women and not men were punished for immoral sexual behaviour; the results of the Acts and proposed measures that promoted social reform were called into question; this stage culminated with Butler's unfortunate evidence before the Royal Commission of 1871 created to ascertain the application of the CD Acts (Butler 1954: 81-85). As a result there was an attempt in 1872 to pass a Bill, known as the Bruce Bill, to do away with the Acts but with no success. It was later, when another Select Committee was established in 1879 that the situation began to show signs of amelioration. This time, Josephine Butler's evidence was much wiser and balanced and the National Association's effort to make Parliament hear public opinion in favour of abolition was successful. The Contagious Diseases Acts were first suspended in 1883 and then repealed in 1886 (Bell 1962: 157-163). I think it is more than remarkable that all these events were taking place at a time when Lowndes was writing his pamphlets in defence of the application and extension of the CD Acts.

Lowndes was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England and Surgeon to the Liverpool Police and the Liverpool Lock Hospital at the time of the publication of his book on prostitution and venereal disease in Liverpool in 1886. He had previously worked as an honorary Assistant Surgeon to the Ladies' Charity and Lying-in Hospital and as the District Medical Officer of Liverpool Parish. Before that and according to his 1876 pamphlets he had been a local honorary Secretary to the Association for Promoting the Extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts. He was therefore very much involved in the medical movement for reform and in the treatment of illness in the poor. Lowndes had published two pamphlets in 1876, *Prostitution and Syphilis in Liverpool, and the Working of the Contagious Diseases Acts, at Aldershot, Chatham, Plymouth and Devonport* and *The Extension of the CD Acts to Liverpool and Other Seaports Practically Considered* as well as a volume entitled *Lock Hospitals and Lock Wards in General Hospitals* in 1882. In the first pamphlet he dealt with the issues of prostitution and venereal disease in Liverpool and the results of the application of the three Contagious Diseases Acts in some military and seaport towns; the social conditions of the individuals involved in the process was also analysed. In the second one, he considers the possibilities of extending the system of regulation to all British seaports—including Liverpool—as a measure to stop the effects of sexually

transmitted diseases in seamen following to a certain extent the European model of regulation. Finally his volume *Lock Hospitals and Lock Wards in General Hospitals* discusses the aims for which lock hospitals had been established: prostitutes and men who had been guilty of some form of immorality were the supposed beneficiaries of these voluntary institutions.⁴ In other words, lock hospitals were the places where patients were treated for ailments that were the result of “their own vicious indulgence”. Lowndes also talks in his 1882 publication about the main lock hospitals in the country such as the London Lock Hospital, the Westmoreland Lock Hospital in Dublin, the Glasgow Lock Hospital, the Manchester and Salford Lock and Skin Disease Hospital, the Bristol Lock Hospital, and the Liverpool Lock Hospital. He also mentions some lock wards in general hospitals and infirmaries which were specialized in these kinds of patients (Lowndes 1882).

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Focusing on the Liverpool Lock Hospital: the old Liverpool Royal Infirmary was opened in 1749 and then enlarged in 1752. It was the only institution in the city which accommodated patients of both sexes suffering from venereal diseases. The Infirmary was completed in 1824 with two separate wards for male and female patients with twenty-five beds each. With the increased demand for accommodation of this kind the Liverpool Lock Hospital was erected in 1834 and became a part of the Royal Infirmary under the management of the same committee. Nonetheless, the Hospital had its own surgical staff, superintendent, matron, nurses and so on. Their efforts were directed towards the rescue of fallen women, to induce them “to give up their wretched life”. Married women, young females who had “only just commenced an immoral life” and prostitutes were admitted (Lowndes 1882: 14-16). Lowndes makes a declaration of how he regarded his activity (and that of the hospital) in curing fallen women suffering from syphilis or gonorrhoea:

And I may here repeat, that in every one taken from off the streets while in a state of disease, and prevented from following her trade, a humane act is done to her, since she is prevented from making herself worse. At the same time she is prevented from spreading her disease to innocent as well as guilty people. (Lowndes 1882: 17)

It is clear from his words that he was in favour of regulation and that he considers the work done by these institutions as necessary to stop the spread of venereal disease and to avoid contagion. Both the decent and the immoral were affected, while the fallen woman had the further advantage of being taken off the streets and offered the change of leading a better life. Lowndes, however, laments that the limited accommodation makes it impossible to separate decent women infected by their husbands from the prostitutes who had voluntarily embarked on that way of life (1882: 15-16). The same ideas can be found in the Introduction to his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool*, despite the fact that he acknowledges

the existence of certain sectors in society who are against the application of harsh measures against dissolute women as these implied the recognition of prostitution as a necessary evil. In the same fashion, they also thought that regulation was tantamount to allowing all parties to behave immorally with no fear of consequences (Lowndes 1886: iii-iv). As I have stated before, this was one of the arguments put forward by the Ladies' National Association during the Repeal Campaign, but there is a clear contradiction in viewing prostitution as a necessity for the male military population and the benevolent idea of rescuing fallen women. Lowndes wanted to keep the prostitutes clean for the health of the (all-male) military personnel while simultaneously endorsing the idea of redeeming these fallen women from their sinful ways. As long as there was a demand, there had to be an offer.

The ideology of the double standard which had become prevalent in the first decades of the Victorian period was still conspicuously present in the 1870s and 1880s, maintaining gender stereotypes, so that "femininity became identified with domesticity, service to others, subordination and weakness, while masculinity was associated with life in the competitive world of paid work, strength and domination" (Purvis 1991: 4). The lives and work of prostitutes was very much in discord with the kind of behaviour expected of respectable women whose main responsibility was to be good wives and mothers. Chastity and purity were the terms applied to ideal femininity, and women were supposed to be ignorant of sexual matters before marriage whereas men were supposed to have a natural sexual drive that they could not control. Thus, unchastity was a pardonable sin in men but not in women who fell into disgrace by an act of unchastity. Sex in married life was oriented towards procreation, but husbands could be allowed an escape to temper their carnal instinct (Mahood 1990: 4). In the case of children, innocence was thought to be their main moral trait and as such it had to be preserved. All the women who did not conform to these middle-class ideals were considered deviant, and this was the case of prostitutes and fallen women.

Working-class women were thus at the other extreme of the spectrum. The working class was the largest social class in nineteenth century Britain; all the members of the family had to work in order to earn enough money to survive (Perkin 1994: 169). Life was very hard and parents could not get involved in checking their daughters' sexual behaviour. And not only this, premarital sex was commonly accepted among some sections of the working class throughout the period; girls had to prove their fertility before getting married. For this reason, a considerable number of illegitimate children were in fact the offspring of common-law unions. These practices were embedded in whole communities. Marriage was looked on as a necessity for the husband and wife's joint and personal survival. The

fact that women worked as prostitutes was viewed as being part of the ‘normal’ sexual and economic exploitation of women, no more, no less, partly due to the women’s restricted access to the labour market and partly due to sheer poverty (Perkin 1994: 178). Working-class women soon lost all interest in sex because of the fear of pregnancy and miscarriages and the lack of intimacy in a household full of children. Many of them were deserted by their husbands who were violent and often drunk. Their male partners frequently ran into debt or were in prison; or they were unemployed or simply died (Harrison 1977: 176-178). Despite all this, working-class women were believed to be sexually active, and the middle class tried to impose their moral values on them (Mitchell 1981: x-xiii).

Since Foucault’s analysis of sexuality as a historical construct, social and cultural historians have characterised the Victorian period as a time when different discourses produced definitions for different sexualities. He introduces the notion of discourse as “the set of concepts, values, and practices that define, inform, and justify a set of social relations” and according to him, “the history of sexuality is the history of what certain discourses have said about sex” (Mahood 1990: 6, 8). The term ‘common prostitute’ first appeared in the text of the Vagrancy Act of 1824, having been applied since then to women who exchange sex for money, thus becoming a commodity themselves. The Great Social Evil, as prostitution was known, represented a threat to decent society affecting the morality of the middle-class. In this sense, both married men and young males were believed to be the victims of corruption in virtue of the existence of prostitutes. However, the category of prostitute was not fixed or internally coherent; it could define any woman who transgressed the bourgeois code of morality (Nead 1988: 93-95). As a result, the categories of prostitute and fallen woman were blurred in Victorian discourses.

In *The Extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts to Liverpool and Other Seaports Practically Considered* (1876), Lowndes makes clear his position towards the extending of the Contagious Diseases Acts to other districts not contemplated in the legislation. In his opinion, in large seaports like Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, Cardiff, Dublin, and Glasgow the application of the 1869 CD Act would be extremely beneficial. He gives proof of the benefits reaped in the places where the Acts have been enforced. In his words, these “districts are sufficiently numerous and variable to enable us to judge the effects of the Acts in a medical, moral, and social aspect” (8). The city of Liverpool contained an enormous floating population of seamen who were not married and resorted to the services of prostitutes when they were on land. He tries to explain that in areas such as Blackman’s Alley or the streets around the Sailors’ Home the conditions in which women ply their trade is not that different from those of the women in the registered districts. They are in a state of disease and degradation that calls for

some action to be taken (31). However, what particularly strikes me about this debate concerning the extension of the CD Acts is the degree of ignorance on the part of those opposing the system with regard to its results and the prevalence of venereal disease on British soil; Lowndes also sings the praises of the European system that provides more than ample hospital accommodation for venereal cases throughout the continent (38, 59).

Lowndes therefore recommends the extension of the CD Acts to Liverpool in his 1876 pamphlet, proposing a number of measures which constitute the conclusions of many years working on the issue and collecting data regarding prostitution and venereal disease. Since Liverpool was a large merchant navy port, a Board of Trade should be appointed to administer the Acts. In his estimation, the city police force were well able to ascertain the number of prostitutes working in the district (60). He also advocates the treatment of venereal disease in male patients with the creation of Sailors' Homes and the enlargement of hospital accommodation. The Sailor' Homes would be dispensaries on a self-supporting principle (each seaman paying a shilling for each visit); enlarged accommodation would mean more beds in hospitals for diseased men admitted on a voluntary basis. The same would apply to women, increasing the number of beds in the Lock Hospital but they would only be admitted as in-patients. The figures left by surgeons like Dr Lane show the positive impact of the Acts on the women admitted for compulsory examination, in contrast to the figures for those women admitted on a voluntary basis. Lowndes describes the situation using Lane's words: "the severe and shocking cases which are so frequently seen in the wards of voluntary lock hospitals are almost unknown in the hospitals receiving patients under these Acts" (46). This is because women usually apply for admission when the illness is in so advanced a state that they cannot continue with their work. He insists on the importance of refuges, homes and penitentiaries for fallen women, making the places attractive for women seeking for redemption and reform. His final suggestion is especially innovative: the medical examination of all merchant seamen on arrival and departure from Liverpool should be made compulsory. In the event of being found infected with venereal complaints, they should be sent to hospital (73-78).

When Lowndes talks in his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* about the causes of prostitution which relate to men, he mentions juvenile precocity and immorality among males of the middle- and the working-classes as two of the most important ones. Similarly, he states that medical practitioners see many young boys suffering from venereal disease. According to him, this early vice is the result of overcrowding and lack of separation of the sexes in the case of the poor, and promiscuity at school in the case of upper- and middle-class boys. He even declares that vicious habits at an early stage are very difficult to eradicate and "the vicious

boy, as a general rule, becomes a vicious man” (Lowndes 1886: 22-31). Another factor explaining the prevalence of prostitution, as far as male sexual behaviour is concerned, was the late age at which middle-class men married: between 25 and 40. Like the other social investigators of the previous decades, Lowndes attributes this promiscuous conduct to the male sex drive which made sexual continence virtually impossible where bachelorhood was imposed by the economic circumstances. At the same time he asseverates that there are men who decide to remain single and married men who do not respect the sacred vows of marriage. Finally, Lowndes touches upon intemperance as “a very frequent exciting cause of immorality in men” (Lowndes 1886: 22-31). Perceptions, then, of the causes of prostitution where male behaviour is concerned do not seem to have changed very much in the course of the nineteenth century.

Among the causes that led women to prostitution, most social investigators of the early Victorian period established poverty as one of the most compelling ones. Nonetheless, middle-class reformers focused their attention on causes that had more to do with working-class behaviour. For example, William Tait divided the causes that led women into prostitution into two kinds, natural and accidental. In his 1841 study *Magdalenism. An Enquiry into the Extent, Causes, and Consequences of Prostitution in Edinburgh* he contended that moral failings such as licentiousness, irritability of temper, pride, love of dress, dishonesty, love of property, and indolence were natural causes; in the same fashion, features of lower-class life, such as seduction, ill-matched marriages, low wages, unemployment, intemperance, poverty, poor training, obscene publications, and overcrowded housing could be described as accidental causes (Walkowitz 1991: 38). A few decades later, William Logan, author of *The Great Social Evil; its Causes, Extent, Results and Remedies* (1871) and a temperance reformer, put the emphasis on drink, although he shared William Tait’s basic diagnosis of the causes of prostitution. He claimed that most prostitutes were dependent on gin and narcotics, and public houses had a serious responsibility in inciting male sexual instincts, making both these women and their clients drink to excess. Thereby, they profited from the sale of alcohol, as the existing licensing laws allowed them to stay open all day (Bartley 2000: 4, 6).

For Lowndes, many of these causes of prostitution were identifiable in Liverpool from the 1860s to the 1880s, but he believed that it was the immorality of the parents that explained the extreme youth of many of the girls. Like previous social investigators, he sees overcrowding, lack of parental control and the lack of supervision in mills, factories and workshops as causes of juvenile prostitution; at the same time, a craving for sex on the part of men and the evil influences of the street have to be taken into account. He also mentions ignorance, idleness and love of dress as characterising this kind of women. Many of them had been servants living a

life of complete drudgery and saw an escape in prostitution, but in his opinion, and in contrast to Logan, drink was not a major cause of prostitution in women. However, the seduction of a young woman desperately needing affection and the making and breaking of promises in many cases led to pregnancy and subsequent desertion by the man. Lowndes then gives credibility to the story of servants being seduced by masters, perpetuating the myth of the upper-class villain and the working-class victim that had been very popular in former years (Lowndes 1886: 22-31).

In this context, W.T. Stead's series of articles called "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" published in *The Pall Mall Gazette* in the summer of 1885 came to validate the theory of the existence of child prostitution and white slavery; similarly, the belief in the existence of a corrupt aristocracy that had no scruples in paying for sex with children was endorsed. According to Stead,

It is, however, a fact that there is in full operation among us a system of which the violation of virgins is one of the ordinary incidents; but these virgins are mostly of tender age, being too young in fact to understand the nature of the crime of which they are the unwilling victims; but these outrages are constantly perpetrated with almost absolute impunity: and that the arrangements for procuring, certifying, violating, repairing, and disposing of these ruined victims of the lust of London are made with a simplicity and efficiency incredible to all who have not made actual demonstration of the facility with which the crime can be accomplished. (1885)

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In these words, Stead denounces the trafficking of under-age working class women. This is the reason why he puts the emphasis on the innocence and ignorance of the victims who were sold by their own parents in many cases and become entrapped in the system of prostitution without having any choice in the matter. Stead also speaks out against the impunity with which these crimes were committed. As mentioned above, Lowndes contends in his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* that one of the most serious problems concerning public morality in this city was juvenile prostitution. The most important consequence of the social uproar that Stead's articles prompted was the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 in which the main issues were the criminalization of procurement and white-slavery and the raising of the age of consent for boys and girls to 16. As a result, many brothels were shut down and brothel-keepers were prosecuted. Moreover, working-class parents could lose the custody of their children if they were suspected of being involved in the transaction (*Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1885 (An Abstract)*). In relation with this act, Lowndes mentions that in Father Nugent's delivery to the House of Lords' Committee regarding the prostitution of young girls he gave testimony of the very shocking character of these juvenile prostitutes in Liverpool, just as captain Alfred Eaton from the School Board had given evidence about child prostitution in the lower classes. They both attributed the situation to "the gross neglect of their parents". Lowndes declares

his position to be in support of this Act and considers that these ‘basket girls’ of Liverpool are the victims of the “most unmerited abuse” (Lowndes 1886: 21-22).

In tune with the nineteenth century love of classification described by Foucault, there was a hierarchy of the different kinds of women who plied the trade (Foucault 1990: 17-35). The most widely accepted and accurate classification of the time was that of Henry Mayhew in his *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851), where he mentions several categories of these women. He divided prostitutes into six kinds, although he omitted the highest rank, that of courtesan. According to him, there were kept mistresses and prima donnas; women living together in well-kept lodging houses; women living in low lodging houses; sailors’ and soldiers’ women; park women; and thieves’ women (Perkin 1990: 220-228). This classification was based mainly on the an observation of prostitution in London in the middle of the century, but does not differ much from what Lowndes affirms for Liverpool in the 1880s. According to him, Liverpool prostitutes could be divided into three groups: upper-class women who resided in their own houses, mostly situated on the outskirts of the city as ‘kept women’ or ‘mistresses’; they were often intelligent and well educated and sometimes had some other employment or calling but wanted to avoid street-walking while practising prostitution. Of course, they were by no means free of disease but they shrank from entering the Lock Hospital to avoid being associated with a lower class of prostitute. For that reason, they sometimes resorted to private medical practitioners or chemists to conceal the fact that they were infected, and so spread the disease further (Lowndes 1886: 9-22).

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The second comprised the largest group of women working as prostitutes in the city; they were well-dressed and resided in brothels in well-built houses in quiet and respectable areas mostly in the city centre. Some of them were lodgers paying for bed and board out of their earnings; others handed over their earning to the landlords in exchange for accommodation, food and clothing, becoming in effect their slaves. In this group Lowndes similarly includes “the painted dressy women, who frequent the lower-class theatres, music halls, singing and dancing saloons, etc” (Lowndes 1886: 9-22). In his view, these women were the most difficult to rescue and reform and were mainly responsible for spreading venereal disease. They lived a reckless life subject to intemperance and surrounded by dirt and neglect, which favoured contagion. He saw them as the propagators of sexually transmitted diseases, but he admitted that these were infected in the first instance by men in contrast to the medical opinion of the earlier Victorian discourses. Some women in this group resorted to the Liverpool Lock Hospital where it was easier for them to obtain admission; the poorer ones sought admission to the lock wards of the workhouse; finally others obtained treatment from medical practitioners or chemists enabling them to continue their trade with a minimum of inconvenience.

The third group that Lowndes mentions was made up of the lowest class of prostitutes that clustered together in streets in the north of Liverpool, in Toxteth Park or in the south. They could be also found in the city centre; all these areas were known as 'Squalid Liverpool'. The brothels where they lived and plied their trade were also inhabited by thieves and other bad characters well-known to the police. In his opinion, these women were particularly low and degraded, "constantly appearing in the Police Courts as confirmed drunkards, as well as for soliciting and disorderly conduct; and being themselves especially liable to assaults from their drunken and degraded male associates" (Lowndes 1886: 9-22). Thus, local or general Acts of Parliament prohibited solicitation in the public streets, like 5 & 6 Victoria, c. 106, sec. 149, which read: "Every common prostitute or night-walker loitering or being in any thoroughfare or public place for the purpose of prostitution, or solicitation to the annoyance of any inhabitant or passenger, renders herself liable of a penalty not exceeding 40s". These acts also made it a crime for the owners of public houses or lodging houses to allow prostitutes to use their premises for their trade. Lowndes makes allusion in his text to the same Act again, where the following can be read: "If any licenced person is convicted of permitting his premises to be a brothel, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding Twenty Pounds, and shall forfeit his licence, and he shall be disqualified for ever from holding any licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors" (35 & 36 Victoria, c. 94, sec. 14) (Lowndes 1886: 31-36).

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Another classification of prostitutes can be found in the texts of William Acton who, in contrast with other social investigators and medical men, had a different view on prostitution. Like Lowndes, he was in favour of regulation and lock hospitals to contain and control venereal disease. He was also a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and was Surgeon to the London Lock Hospital for a time. In his two main publications of 1857, *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs in Youth, in Adult Age, and in Advanced Life* and *Prostitution Considered in its Moral, Social and Sanitary Aspects, in London and other Large Cities with Proposals for the Mitigation and Prevention of its Attendant Evils*, he endorsed the belief of the time in the lack of sexual drive in women and the inevitability of male desire. He saw prostitution as something that could not be avoided in society. Acton saw the prostitute as responsible for the moral and physical contamination associated with promiscuity in the 1870 edition of his *Prostitution* (Atwood 2011: 25-26). Like Lowndes and other social reformers he thought that poverty was the main cause of prostitution together with certain characteristics of working-class culture. Similarly, Acton also distinguished between upper-class and lower-class prostitutes, but he had a more optimistic view as he considered the activity as something transitory. He believed that these women could return to decent society. In *Prostitution* Acton questioned the myth of the downward path as he believed that prostitutes, or at least most of them, did not

end up in destitution and death. In his opinion, there were many who ended up getting married, getting jobs, running their own businesses, or resorting to emigration, and thus able to move out of the trade (Acton 1857: 64, 73).

The number of prostitutes in Liverpool was certainly alarming and Lowndes believed that the number in a particular town or city depended on the number of inhabitants and on the existence of a series of circumstances such as the “the presence of soldiers, naval seamen, marines or merchant seamen”. Hence Liverpool, being “a very large seaport, with a large floating population” was no exception to this rule (Lowndes 1886: 1-9). Following the Annual Report of the Liverpool Head Constable for 1853, Lowndes shows figures for 1852 and 1853 that reveal an increase in this activity in general terms and an increase of crime associated with the trade. This table demonstrates to what extent the situation was worrying by the middle of the nineteenth century:

	<i>Number of brothels</i>	<i>Number of prostitutes</i>	<i>Houses of accommodation</i>	<i>Lodging houses</i>	<i>Brothels removed by Police</i>
1852	574	1,698			
1853	591	1,896	44	132	65

TABLE 1: Prostitution activity around the middle of the nineteenth century in Liverpool

Source: Frederick W. Lowndes, *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* (London: J. & A. Churchill; Liverpool: Adam Holden, 1886)

To this, he added the number of prostitutes who had been taken into custody for disorderly conduct in 1853: 1,123 of which 946 had been committed, figures which reflect the association that existed between the trade and delinquency.

Focusing on the birthplace of the women for 1853, Lowndes informs in his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* that most of these women were from Liverpool itself, specifically 295 of them. However, there were 208 from other parts of England, 497 from Ireland, 48 from Scotland, 52 from Wales, 15 from the Isle of Man and 8 from foreign countries. These numbers disclose two relevant facts regarding prostitution in Liverpool by the middle of the century: that mobility was an important feature of the business and that the situation of extreme poverty in Ireland was decisive in the significant presence of Irish women in the city. They were characterised as belonging to the lowest and most degraded class of prostitutes and by being in a deplorable condition physically and morally. They were also the ones “resorted to by the numerous negroes always present in Liverpool as ships’ cooks, stewards, seamen, and labourers” (Lowndes 1886: 1-9).

Again, these facts are very telling as to the distribution of the various classes of prostitute in Liverpool since it was an important seaport with large numbers of people coming ashore from the British colonies.

In the matter of how to treat venereal disease, the Liverpool Lock Hospital had the same policy as the other lock hospitals of the time. As we have seen earlier, prostitution was seen as the cause of the spread of sexually transmitted diseases through contagion. As a consequence, it had to be contained and this gave rise to a double view of the prostitute, both as victim and agent of sexual immorality (Nead 1988: 120-121). On the one hand, they were the living representation of public vice and were seen as a threat to the moral values that supported the social organization of the State and the Empire; in the same fashion they were associated with the Industrial Revolution and its consequences contaminating the cities and bringing social chaos (Bartley 2000: 10). Nonetheless, there was another definition of the prostitute as a social victim, a hopeless outcast believed to be on a downward path, making her the object of medical research and philanthropy. Thus, Lowndes argues in his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* that it is our humanitarian duty to provide charitable relief to men and women suffering diseases the result of their depravity. However, he acknowledges that this represents a pecuniary burden on philanthropists, ratepayers and local parishes (Lowndes 1886: 41-49).

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Although Lowndes does not discuss in his text notions of seclusion and indoctrination that formed part of the nation's strategy of containment of deviant elements, these aspects were present in the daily lives of hospital inmates, especially of female patients. In this respect, lock hospitals had rules that constricted patients' behaviour according to middle-class notions of propriety and respectability. These rules were aimed at controlling working-class habits associated with the lower orders of society, subjecting men and women to a moral code; in the case of female patients the model to be followed was their middle-class superiors. In other words, Victorian middle-class gender norms were to be articulated and explained as part of the reform and healing process of what Butler might have called the 'fallen angels' (Butler 1993: 18, 22).

Thus, the Liverpool Lock Hospital remained the only one of its kind in the city where both men and women with venereal disease were admitted freely, except for "foreign sailors from foreign vessels". Patients could enter and discharge themselves from the hospital voluntarily, but in most cases they were persuaded of the need to stay until cured, and, according to Lowndes, the majority did so. He states that the number of patients admitted for 1834 was 414 (218 males and 196 females) and for 1854, that is, thirty years later, 415 (263 males and 152 females) (Lowndes 1886: 41-49). It can be appreciated that there was no big difference in the numbers of lock patients over a time-span of thirty years. However, what these figures

certainly show is the prevalence of venereal diseases throughout the early and mid-Victorian period. The following table shows the numbers that he gives for the years between 1874 and 1885:

<i>Years</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
1874	312	144	456
1875	295	172	467
1876	336	150	486
1877	326	141	467
1878	391	183	574
1879	319	215	534
1880	333	291	624
1881	362	280	642
1882	352	287	639
1883	321	252	573
1884	405	195	600
1885	294	187	481

TABLE 2: Patients at the Liverpool Lock Hospital 1874-1885

Frederick W. Lowndes, *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* (London: J. & A. Churchill; Liverpool: Adam Holden, 1886)

As Surgeon to the Liverpool Lock Hospital, Lowndes gives the same numbers for the years 1875-1879 in an article about the prevalence and severity of constitutional syphilis in Liverpool published in the *British Medical Journal* in 1880. In his opinion, the numbers for women had considerably increased between 1879 and 1884, but with fluctuations. Despite this, the number of men was still substantially higher than that of women entering the Lock Hospital. This might be explained by the fact that Liverpool was a seaport and as a result the number of men who resorted to the services of prostitutes was significantly greater in comparison with other places where lock hospitals were found. There is also the fact that women only went to the Hospital when they were in an extremely deteriorated state suffering mainly from constitutional syphilis which prevented them from continuing with their trade. It can be similarly observed that the number of women who sought relief at the Liverpool Lock Hospital decreased after 1884. These women were not only prostitutes (who represented a majority in the wards), but also married women infected by their husbands and young girls victims of indecent

assaults (in smaller numbers in the wards). Both men and women received mercury treatment against syphilis in the Liverpool Lock Hospital. Lowndes also alludes to the popular belief that sexual intercourse with a virgin was a cure for venereal disease, and gives it as an explanation for the atrocities committed against girls of a tender age (Lowndes 1886: 41-49). This superstition had been widespread earlier in the century and still prevailed in the latter decades, as Lowndes's text proves. Likewise, it reveals that Stead's arguments about the sale of virgins and the involvement of their parents in the business were not as far-fetched as many social historians believe (Spongberg 1997: 110-116, 120-123).

In his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool*, Lowndes also reproduces some of the figures for male and female inmates of the Liverpool Parish Infirmary he had already gathered in his *Medical Journal* article for the years between 1875 and 1879. To these he added figures for 1874 and those for the period between 1880 and 1884. Infirmaries in workhouses usually had lock wards for the destitute with venereal disease and followed the principle of classification that pervaded the period. These special wards contained some of the men and women paupers infected with syphilis who could not obtain admission into the lock hospital (Longmate 2003: 59, 156-157). The following table represents the numbers that Lowndes gives for venereal wards in the Liverpool Workhouse:

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Years	Males	Females	Total
1874	182	213	395
1875	128	186	309
1876	149	175	324
1877	100	136	236
1878	98	234	332
1879	106	229	335
1880	165	288	453
1881	289	322	611
1882	273	387	660
1883	267	414	681
1884	337	426	763
1885	348	368	716

Table 3: Patients at the Liverpool Workhouse, 1874-1885

Frederick W. Lowndes, *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* (London: J. & A. Churchill; Liverpool: Adam Holden, 1886)

This table shows that the number of women in venereal wards is significantly higher in the Workhouse Infirmary than in the Liverpool Lock Hospital, with peak years and a general consistent increase over the last years of his analysis. These figures might be attributed to the fact that men could return to their former activities when they were released from the Lock Hospital whereas women had no other means of subsistence than prostitution and the streets. Another explanation is that very few women entered the Hospital at an early stage of the disease and consequently, in most cases, could not be cured. Hence, most of them ended up in the parish workhouse where they lived out the rest of their lives (Lowndes 1880: 727).

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Lowndes shows himself especially preoccupied about the prevalence of venereal disease in Liverpool in the years around the publication of this text. He believes that the figures for patients in the Lock Hospital and in the lock wards of the Workhouse Infirmary are just a faint indication of the true number of people affected by the disease, the tip of the iceberg. He supports his views with the testimonies of private doctors and specialists who bear witness to the numerous instances of men, women and children suffering from the different symptoms that are characteristic of these sexually transmitted diseases, syphilis in its secondary and tertiary stages being the most dreaded of all. Moreover, he makes reference to quack doctors “whose bills are still to be seen persistently in urinals and on walls with an effrontery to those unused to it” and to their “filthy pamphlets” which were “still distributed in our leading thoroughfares” (Lowndes 1886: 41-49). The demand for private practitioners and quacks testifies to the persistent prejudices against carriers of syphilis and their social rejection at this stage of the Victorian period. Lowndes attributes the state of physical deterioration and neglect of many seamen, labourers, and men from many other professions to a lack of cleanliness; the same happened with lads of all classes who in many cases “suffer most severely in the attempts to conceal the matter from their parents” (Lowndes 1880: 729).

As a proof of the incidence of venereal complaints in the population of Liverpool, Lowndes includes figures for the deaths from syphilis provided by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Taylor, and the Assistant Medical Officer, Dr. Hope. Nonetheless, he considers that the true numbers are far more appalling than those given in the following table:

<i>Years</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Infants under one year</i>
1874	50	42	92	77
1875	42	28	70	60
1876	47	33	80	66
1877	40	31	71	65
1878	33	34	67	61
1879	37	38	75	62
1880	43	46	89	67
1881	32	29	61	40
1882	33	40	73	59
1883	36	44	80	67
1884	34	41	75	57
1885	33	50	83	70

Table 4: Deaths from syphilis in Liverpool, 1874-1885

Frederick W. Lowndes, *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* (London: J. & A. Churchill; Liverpool: Adam Holden, 1886)

Again, these figures reflect the fact that there were reasons for Victorians to be afraid of the spread of venereal disease, although their prejudices were focused on prostitutes as the living representation of death and corruption, guilty of sexual excess. The numbers of infants under one year of age who died of related complaints similarly reveal the dramatic impact this disease had on this sector of the population. Although we now know that the disease can be transmitted to the baby during the process of childbirth, for most of the Victorian period, people believed that ‘congenital syphilis’ was a hereditary complaint. Also, as we have seen, many married women were the victims of their husbands’ promiscuity, but Lowndes does not show any explicit condemnation of male sexual behaviour.

I believe that many of the ideas in Lowndes’s writings reverberate in our contemporary societies. Issues like prostitution and human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation are still painfully present and are the object of concern and debate on a trans-national global level. As Lowndes’ text demonstrates, two different discourses around prostitution still prevailed for the later part of the Victorian period: that of the agent and that of the victim in the figure of the fallen woman. Despite some ideological changes and medical discoveries, all the moral debates around the issue emphasised these two sides of the same coin. Here, the task of reforming and curing

132 prostitutes of venereal disease, both at the same time, may be perceived to constitute a certain contradiction. Understanding aspects such as the causes of prostitution or the classification of women remained the same throughout the 1870s and 1880s, perpetuating traditional views on the matter and merely repeating the beliefs of social researchers and reformers of an earlier period. The inevitability of prostitution and male sexual excess became a more important factor in the moral and medical discourses of social purists so that emphasis on the seclusion and control of deviant elements was seen all the more as necessary to avoid the spread of disease and immoral behaviour. The passing of the three Contagious Diseases Acts in the 1860s and the articles published by Stead in the *Pall Mall Gazette* together with the implementation of the Criminal Amendment Act in 1885 in effect endorsed previous notions associated with the innocence of victims and the depravity of male seducers thus making the rescue of prostitutes and fallen women the main objective of middle-class reform campaigns. This also affected the work done in lock hospitals and lock infirmaries in workhouses devoted to the treatment and cure of venereal disease in the ‘deserving and undeserving poor’. And yet, decent middle-class wives and children infected by promiscuous husbands and fathers were also part of the philanthropic project of institutions like the Liverpool Lock Hospital and of medical reformers like Frederick Lowndes in the later decades of the nineteenth century.

By way of conclusion, Lowndes sadly states that the number of prostitutes and brothels had not diminished in those thirty years or so, the object of his analysis; on the contrary, the numbers had increased in Liverpool in the final decades of the Victorian period. In his opinion, there was no way of stopping prostitution and solicitation or disorderly conduct with the legislation in force at the time. We must remember that the CD Acts were not still in operation when he wrote his *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool*. Despite the increasing presence of the malady in the later years of the nineteenth century, many lock hospitals and lock wards in general hospitals were closed by the end of the Victorian era, including the Liverpool Lock Hospital, which disappeared in 1899 after Lowndes had been appointed consulting Surgeon and the reception of inpatients had ceased. And this happened despite the need for specialised treatment and the outstanding incidence of syphilis among the population. This is what the article “Reminiscences of the Liverpool Lock Hospital” published in *The Lancet* in 1907 tries to prove. By reading between the lines one can catch the new attitude to venereal disease, the result of the Social Purity Movement’s ideas and the most recent legislation concerning prostitution. One conclusion of this would be that “to provide for the treatment of venereal cases is to encourage vice” (306). Men now also had to repress their sexual drives, something that Lowndes tries to accept in his conclusion. However, it was not possible to avoid immorality in women who wished to follow so-called evil courses without giving powers to the police who would then need the support of magistrates and the rest of society.

Lowndes seems to be in favour of regulation extended to the whole civil population and throughout the country, but he finishes with a question which shows how influential public opinion can be in these matters: “Are the public prepared to see a law passed which shall make it penal for any woman to lead an immoral life?” (Lowndes 1886: 49-56). According to him, these matters deserve serious consideration, but it is still Foucault’s and Butler’s ideas that determine the analysis one can make of ‘deviant elements’ at the end of the Victorian period as far as notions of gender and discipline are concerned.

Notes

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². For a further development of the issue of the Contagious Diseases Acts and their application, see Howell (2009: 28-75).

³. For a further development of the issue of Stead’s campaign and the passing

of the 1885 Criminal Law Amendment Act, see Romero Ruiz (2011: 27-54).

⁴. Voluntary hospitals were hospitals run by voluntary subscriptions and therefore depended on the contributions of middle-class philanthropists who devoted their time and energy to the restoration of the health and moral reform of venereally diseased people. For more information about the running and functioning of lock hospitals, see Romero Ruiz (2014).

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Reviews

**IDENTITIES ON THE MOVE: CONTEMPORARY
REPRESENTATIONS OF NEW SEXUALITIES
AND GENDER IDENTITIES**

Silvia Pilar Castro Borrego and María Isabel Romero Ruiz, eds.

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Sixteen chapters might seem too many for a collection of essays, and the diversity of topics, objects of analysis, and theoretical frameworks found in the table of contents might, at a glance, suggest a degree of random incoherence. However, an attentive reading demonstrates that those factors constitute one of the main strengths of the volume. *Identities on the Move* travels with ease and smoothly from one chapter to the next in an engaging trip that gradually integrates a wide range of issues and analytical tools with two distinctly common denominators: the focus on gender and sexuality (as the book's subheading appropriately points out) and the interdisciplinary, politically committed frame of cultural studies. More significantly, the volume is further enriched by the shared interest of all the chapters in the intersectionality of identity, as they all center on the meaning and implications of the crossing of gender and sexuality with other axes constitutive of the so-off questioned notion of identity; namely: class, race, (post)coloniality, religion, location, and the socially-inflected assessment of intellectual ability.

Equally remarkable is the wealth in terms of the 'media' of (re)presentation that are discussed, as critical analyses range from literary approaches to narrative fiction, to post-human interpretations of science fiction films, queer readings of television series, or politically engaged historical perspectives on the status and condition of women in the hard realities of their daily lives. Thus, after a brief introduction by the editors, the volume opens with Laura Gillman's study of Alicia Gaspar de

Alba's 2005 detective novel *Desert Blood*: a necessary and long-awaited literary denunciation of the massive (and unpunished) 'femicides' of Chicana working-class *maquiladoras* in Ciudad de Juárez, as well as the systematic control of their bodies and reproductive capacities by their company owners. Borrowing Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano's coinage from Spanish *feminicidio* to emphasize a critical transborder perspective (2010: 4-5), Gillman unravels how the dehumanization of the *maquiladoras* as disposable brown bodies stems from the interrelated hetero-patriarchal ideologies of *marianismo* and *familismo*: the roles of virgins or of self-effacing mothers are the only choices for Chicanas unless they are ready to dishonor their families having the features of the *malinche* (the sexed, inhuman side of the goddess) attached to them, which apply to non-heterosexual and profession-oriented women.

María Isabel Romero Ruiz provides an in-depth study of the causes, defining features and evolution over the last two centuries of the phenomenon of human trafficking across borders, which involves —among other common factors— coercion and exploitation, in most cases sexual. She highlights the ideological bases for the shift of approach from the nineteenth-century, when the dominant colonial discourses saw 'white slaves' as innocent, pure victims as their unwillingness to become prostitutes and their whiteness were emphasized as symbolizing their chastity, to the present day, when the racial bias has been erased and only the gender bias remains. Romero Ruiz denounces the denial in official discourse of the human rights of the (mostly) women and children coerced into prostitution by trafficking mafias, since they are considered illegal immigrants in receiving countries, while the obvious link between poverty and vulnerability to exploitation is systematically ignored in first world countries.

The enslavement and sexual exploitation of autochthonous women in the European colonization of South Africa is the starting point of Cynthia Lytle's analysis of Zoë Wicomb's novel *The One that Got Away* (2008), as it explains the contrast in colonial representation between the pure white ladies' bodies and the dehumanized, immoral hypersexual black women's bodies in need of taming. The theme of sexual abuse extends to the next chapter, where María Elena Jaime de Pablos introduces a new factor, the Catholic Church, in her analysis of Edna O'Brien's *Down by the River* (1996). Based upon a real case, the novel explores the patriarchal domination of the female body in Ireland, where a girl victim of incest is denied the right to terminate a pregnancy, the result of being repeatedly raped by her father. The essay also constitutes a denunciation of the denial of child sexual abuse in Ireland, where it seems to be an endemic problem.

Focusing mainly on the issue of social class, Logie Barrow presents an engaging account of the many ways in which intellectual ability is used to create social

differences between groups and to justify discrimination against the less privileged. He claims that inclusiveness is the basis for collective action, so his proposal is to mobilize gender and ethnic dimensions alongside class ones. For Barrow, the ascription of an excessively high, or low, estimate to social groups has damaging consequences, since internalizing negative stereotypes may disable us: our abilities seem to diminish and we may then suffer from impostor syndrome. He adds an autobiographical angle to the discussion and focuses on his experience in and knowledge of the elitist system of public schools in Britain, calling attention to corruption in the form of the manipulation of external examining boards to maintain the status of exclusive public schools. This view is complemented with an account of how medical expertise was used to dismiss women's intellectual capacity during the suffragettes' struggle for women's franchise, exposing epistemology as an always ready-to-hand weapon of discrimination.

The volume centers the body as a site of struggle with Eduardo Barros Grela's focus on American performance artist Bob Flanagan's "deconstruction of the body as a holistic center of identity" (105) through the self-inflicted physical torture of his ill, hurting body, and the punishment of his penis allegedly to destabilize the privilege of the male in the gender hierarchy. The body is also central in Rocío Carrasco's post-human approach to US science fiction movies, which she analyzes under the lens of gender studies. Despite optimistic feminist readings of the concept of the post-human, Carrasco deftly proves how, over the last three decades, cinematic representations of cyborgs, the influence of information technologies, prostheses and other materializations of the notion, have merely reinforced gender stereotypes and dominant structures of power.

The following two chapters, by Lucía Gracia Magaldi and María José Coperías Aguilar respectively, offer complementary comparative studies of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and its post-colonial prequel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1986), by Jean Rhys. Though redundant at first sight, the combination of both articles turns out to be productive as Magaldi's applied interpretation of sexuality as "a cultural construct, subject to the influence of temporal and spatial location" (127) in its connection to power and gender relations is nuanced in Coperías' article with the post-colonial critique on the hyper-sexualization of the non-white body, and the paradoxical power status of the upper-class Creole woman: Antoinette/Bertha, in the case of the novels.

Silvia Pilar Castro Borrego offers an interesting analysis of Audre Lorde's essays and speeches on the discrimination of non-normative sexualities within the black community in the 1970s, in the homophobic context of black cultural nationalism. She pays special attention to Lorde's call for "difference as creative rather than divisive" (152) and focuses on black lesbian sexualities as a way of reclaiming the dehumanized black female body through women's desire and agency.

Attention moves from lesbian sexuality to queer identity in David Walton's essay, where he applies the notion of gender migration to his exploration of the performative character of gender as theorized by Judith Butler. He interrogates the results in two particular cases: hyperbolic body representations in three sketches from British TV series *Little Britain*, and Beatriz Preciado's *Testo Yonqui* (2008), the autobiographical account of her becoming transgender through hormone ingestion and adopting typically male behavior patterns. Walton's significant conclusions corroborate that, rather than jeopardize the stability of binary gender categories, the migration from one gender to the other does nothing but reinforce the existence of those two ontologically stable places.

Kate Joseph and Antje Schuhmann scrutinize the hetero-patriarchal and colonial ideological bias underlying the South African print media representations of black women's bodies when the Equatorial Guinea women's soccer team was accused of including men or 'too-manly' players in the 2010 African Women's Championship. Black identity and its relation to queerness is taken up by Inmaculada Pineda Hernández in her analysis of two plays by African American feminist playwrights Pearl Cleage and Cheryl L. West, where they denounce homophobia directed at gay men within the black community and AIDS-related discrimination.

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Angelita Reyes centers on the mixed feelings expressed by the reception of Kathryn Stockett's novel *The Help* (2009), which has been accused of being racist, sexist and offensive by African American critics and readers. Instead, Reyes highlights the agency, perseverance and dignity of African American domestic workers whose solidarity played an important role in the Civil Rights struggle in the 1960s. Set in the same context, Susan Straight's *I Been in Sorrow's Kitchen and Licked Out All the Pots* (1993) is explored by Concepción Parrondo Carretero in an essay that stresses the plight of a fat black female teenager who becomes a single mother and must take on masculine attitudes and features as a necessary means of self-defense as she tries to create her own sense of identity and survive in the hostile world of the Southern States in a period of convulsion.

Finally, in her approach to Muslim women immigrants living in Canada and Sweden, under the lens of Bhabha's notions of diaspora, hybridity and the third space, Mariam Bazi blames Orientalist and colonialist discourse for imposing stereotypes on Muslim women and thus creating in them a sense of split identity. She engages in a defense of Islam by unraveling how present day Islamic law regarding women's rights and status derives not from the Qur'an but from a distortion of Islamic religion. She concludes by admitting that the time has come for urgent reforms to be implemented with regard to women in the field of Islamic law.

This volume gathers valuable research on a wide variety of interconnected cultural issues and fields of study within the frame of cultural studies, providing a very rich,

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multifaceted perspective on the identity axes of gender and sexuality as they intersect with other constitutive elements, reminding the reader that difference is not a source of division but rather the opposite. One of its main contributions to this field, I would say, is its inclusive quality and the coherent way it develops the notions of migration and of the liminal nature of identity in present day societies. One question that may be raised by this collection of essays is the extent to which genders and sexualities may be described as 'new'.

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ECOCRITICISM ON THE EDGE. THE ANTHROPOCENE AS A THRESHOLD CONCEPT

Timothy Clark

London: Bloomsbury, 2015.

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The emergence of ecocritical theory, an area of cultural investigation that first saw the light in the 1990s, may be attributed to the rise of environmental awareness. Like other relatively new disciplines such as postcolonial theory, ecocriticism can often become opaque and excessively convoluted, which leads to a counterproductive situation. A discipline that demands an active participation in environmental policies on the part of scholars, students and the general public may actually scare off potential sympathisers. Any theory that is founded on a desire to create awareness should not become indifferent or oblivious to what we understand as the ‘real world’. An excess of theoretical jargon can work against any idyllic notion of changing the world for the better. Timothy Clark’s study *Ecocriticism on the Edge. The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept* is relatively reader-friendly although it deals with concepts that need determination to grasp and internalize. It contains nine chapters, plus concluding remarks, a complete bibliography and an index. Each chapter features a subsection, in smaller font, which defines in more detail one of the specific concepts that the author has discussed in the chapter. Chapter 1 “The Anthropocene — Questions of Definition attempts to clarify the concept of the Anthropocene as the “newly recognized agent of humanity as a geological force [which] is something indiscernible in any of the individuals or even large groups of which it is composed” (15). The human impact on the entire biosphere has “achieved an unprecedented and arguably dangerous intensity” (15) with the

result that scientists and the general public have been far too slow to recognize the complexity and challenges involved.

Clark warns us that ecocriticism entails a close reexamination of what it actually means to be human in the first place, a being that is “inherently parasitic and polluting” (153). This becomes a constant call of attention throughout the book. Clark spends a great deal of textual space in highlighting what he considers to be deficient ecocriticism. He does not mince his words, as he often refers to the current work in ecocritical studies as “vulnerable to delusions” (21).

Chapter 2 “Imaging and Imagining the Whole Earth: the Terrestrial as Norm” —and chapters 4 and 5 later on— calls for thinking on scales of space and time much larger than is the customary practice. Clark argues that we cannot continue to regard the Earth as an entity one can understand as a whole as we are permanently inside it and therefore are incapable of perceiving it from elsewhere. He asks how far human perception is bound to a normalized scale of embodied experience on the Earth. We live our lives without a real internalized sense of the Earth as a planet. Clark analyzes various texts, including some canonical works such as Keats’ “Ode to Autumn”, from the standpoint of the new beginning, the threshold, that the Anthropocene represents for the world and for humanity in general. In chapter 3 “Emergent Unreadability: Rereading a Lyric by Gary Snyder” the main issue that Clark takes up is how to continue to write literary criticism without this being an absurd exercise when we are on the road to wiping our species off the face of the earth. He argues that mainstream literary critics do not seem to take the Anthropocene and its challenges seriously enough, limiting themselves to playing the role of the cultural historian. In fact, his arguments are valid for any critique of most literary texts, regardless of whether they are contemporary or not. He claims that what most people would consider human advances —liberal values of individualism and personal freedom— are inextricably linked to environmentally destructive impacts such as increased consumption and the expansion of the use of resources and *Ecocriticism on the Edge* calls attention to the price modern humans have had to pay for them. One only needs to remember that the USA alone, with less than 5% of the global population, uses about a quarter of the world’s fossil fuel resources —burning up nearly 25% of the coal, 26% of the oil, and 27% of the world’s natural gas (Worldwatch Institute 2016).

Chapter 4 “Scale Framing” deals with what Clark calls “scale effects”, that is how numerous insignificant human actions, such as heating a house or flying in an aeroplane, “come together to form a new, imponderable physical event, altering the basic ecological cycles of the planet” (72). Overpopulation together with endemic poverty is singled out as another of the more pressing issues that affect our planet but, as Clark argues, any appeal to more economic development in

order to spread wealth more evenly around the world ignores “the moral claim to life of other species and assume[s] a total human entitlement to the planet” (81). The author draws on the work of various scholars from disciplines as varied as environmental studies, philosophy, sociology, political science, geography and economics, all of which inform current ecocritical work. Curiously, Clark obliquely accuses many ecocritics of discussing issues that are beyond their scope, while his own study bases many of its principal arguments on forms of expertise that have little to do with English, which is, of course, his own speciality.

In chapter 5 “Scale Framing: a Reading”, he contends that a story like Raymond Carver’s “Elephant” should be placed in a much larger time frame, as any narrower reading is simply evading the real issues at stake in our world today. Chapter 6 “Postcolonial Ecocriticism and De-humanizing Reading: an Australian Test Case” focuses on a short story by Henry Lawson, written in 1901. Clark bases his argument on the way critics of Australian literature, even those who include studies of race, gender and other competing human collectives, have virtually ignored non-human history. He suggests that a story like “Telling Mrs Baker” should no longer be understood as a founding text of Australian nationalism but rather as a chronicle of environmental degradation. Conventional post-colonial and ecocritical readings of this story are revealed as examples of what Clark calls “methodological nationalism” (123), as Lawson’s text needs to be read in relation to the imperialism that changed the world between 1600 and 1900. Moreover, colonization is not simply a human to human interaction as other species have been inadvertently involved in the wider project (Crosby 2004).

Chapter 7 “Anthropocene Disorder” argues that the problem with the Anthropocene is that it is never immediately visible but is in fact a kind of shorthand for a series of freak climatic events that the average person will happily identify as global warming. The disorder of the title of the chapter is the gap between what people can see and what is really happening on a global scale. One of the major demands in this chapter is for preconceptions about pleasant green nature to be buried once and for all. Clark gives exponents of material ecocriticism short shrift as he reminds us that it is the emergence of the human “a Leviathan more like a geological force than a reflective being” (147) that defies categories of ethics and politics, promulgated so passionately by ecocritics.

Chapter 8 “Denial: a Reading” and chapter 9 “The Tragedy that Climate Change is not ‘Interesting’” sum up Clark’s despair that “the human imagination [is] so depressingly enclosed [that it is] able to be captivated only by immediate images of itself” (178). In his conclusion Clark returns to the notion that “any text which simply perpetuates long-dominant assumptions about humanity and human society [...] must come to seem suspect” (195). If Clark wished to frighten readers

with this apocalyptic vision of the imminent future, he might as well have included other man-made phenomena which are spreading havoc all over the world and which may be regarded as further examples of what he calls “unacknowledged denial” (159).¹

It is a difficult task to do justice to all the valid points that Clark raises in his work but the main issue that he returns to repeatedly is the need to rethink what ecocriticism is doing and how the challenges of the Anthropocene cannot and should not be brushed aside. His appeal is for critics to take on board new readings of texts despite the alarming consequences of an inevitable crisis in current modes of thinking about ourselves and understanding culture. If indeed, climate change is inevitable, critics need to deal with the problem by facing it head-on and by encouraging people to continue to fight for a better future. This surely is the threshold that Clark means in his subtitle.

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¹. I am referring to chemtrails. See Global Research News.

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**METAHISTORICAL NARRATIVES AND SCIENTIFIC METAFICTIONS:
A CRITICAL INSIGHT INTO THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY POETICS**

Giuseppe Episcopo, ed.

Cronopio: Napoli, 2015.

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With *Metahistorical Narratives and Scientific Metafictions: A Critical Insight into the Twentieth-Century Poetics* Giuseppe Episcopo has edited an inspiring collection of essays which succeeds in engaging the reader in a thought-provoking discussion on issues currently at the core of literary debates about contemporary fiction and its roots in other fields of knowledge. The volume represents an illuminating study of classic notions pertaining to the metahistorical nature of contemporary narratives but here refreshed with metafictional approaches to scientific discourse.

Despite Episcopo's title for his foreword —“an untimely beginning”—, *Metahistorical Narratives and Scientific Metafictions* is a timely book for two main reasons. On the one hand, the collection evidences the present importance of the postmodern cultural turn in the understanding of history and problematization of historiography (White 1981). However, the different papers extend their historiographic focus on the literary production of the late twentieth century, also dealing with issues concerning the categories of time and space, and exploring their implications for historical structures and their representability. Thus, Episcopo's volume underscores the fact that contemporary writers' evolving engagement with the past demands from us a similar movement forward with regard to the critical tools provided by postmodern literary theory. The essays follow the lead of Linda Hutcheon (1988) and others in their quest to find a new critical vocabulary to interpret increasingly complex contemporary engagements

with the constructs of time and space. On the other hand, the collection accounts for an evolving attitude towards science in contemporary fiction, which has moved from the genre of classical science fiction and even cyberpunk to increasingly self-conscious engagements with scientific metaphors as well as with the philosophy and the history of science (Moraru 2011).

The volume is prefaced by Episcopo's own provocative Foreword, which provides an informative overview of the main issues that are dealt with in the course of the collection and highlights the main aspects that arise in the argumentative line of the book. In this foreword, the editor interestingly states the book's aim as proposing a critical theory while submitting a number of literary texts to critical analysis. The foreword ends with a number of open questions that the following chapters collectively attempt to answer, providing the collection with a high degree of cohesion despite the lack of a formal division of chapters into broader thematic parts.

The main body of *Metahistorical Narratives and Scientific Metafictions* consists of ten essays, one of them written by Episcopo himself, with Thomas Pynchon's fiction occupying a prominent place in several chapters, for obvious thematic and stylistic reasons. The first chapter, by Susan Strehle, surveys contemporary historical fiction to make the valid point that much of it is metahistorical, since it "summons, fractures, and re-invents history" (15). After establishing a number of key common features for contemporary metahistorical novels, she moves on to question two approaches used in the analysis of these features by contemporary criticism: postmodern criticism and trauma theory, providing relatively insightful arguments to this effect. A similar questioning of postmodernism is central to Simon de Bourcier's chapter. In his paper, de Bourcier explores Neal Stephenson's attitude toward postmodernism in two of his novels, specifically with regard to their stance towards the liberal humanist subject through the scientific metaphor of the Turing test. Despite the novels' postmodern and cyberpunk elements, de Bourcier aptly shows that the vision of the subject as 'embodied' is precisely a key part of Stephenson's repudiation of postmodernism. The third chapter, by Sherryl Vine, also focuses on Neal Stephenson's literary production, more specifically on his *Baroque Cycle*, which as she claims charts the emergence of modernity by "confusing" the genres of historical novel and science fiction. Throughout the different sections of the paper, Vine lucidly focuses on the scientific, economic, and political revolutions that the cycle charts, concluding that these various elements "are also con-fused: melted away from their fixed, rigid forms and mingled together to produce something new" (74). This is, no doubt, also the aim of this collection as a whole in matters of reaching a contemporary understanding of notions of history, science, fiction, and textuality.

Chapter four, written by Loveday Kempthorne, focuses on Romanian author Ion Barbu, the algebra and geometry professor and also poet who attempted to develop a theory of poetics that might unify poetry with mathematics. This chapter might be seen as the odd one out in this otherwise brilliantly researched and skillfully written collection. The fifth chapter, by Martin Paul Eve, usefully foregrounds a movement from historiography to taxonomography in the novels of some contemporary authors. The first part of the essay explores the self-conscious construction of genre and its “socio-transgressive potential” (102) from a theoretical perspective. Eve then moves on to discuss a number of novels by Thomas Pynchon in order to trace the shift towards taxonomographic metafiction and its critical and ethical function, insightfully concluding that taxonomographic metafiction target our own reading practices. Nina Engelhardt’s paper focuses on another relevant metafictional mode which she claims has recently emerged: scientific metafiction. Indeed, chapter six brilliantly develops this concept, which is defined in the context of historiographic metafiction and in relation to two novels, Daniel Kehlmann’s *Measuring the World* and Thomas Pynchon’s *Mason & Dixon*. These two texts, as happens in the case of other scientific metafiction, “link the questionings of the truth claims of history and science, depicting both as constructs whose ‘facts’ derive not alone from how the world ‘really is’ but that are subject to cultural and social factors as well as to narrativization and fictionalization” (144). The following chapter, written by Francisco Collado-Rodríguez, also deals with history and science, providing a comprehensive and relevant analysis of Thomas Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49* with the tools provided by historiographic metafiction and the cultural metaphors of classical science and post-Newtonian physics. Collado-Rodríguez’s conclusion that the novel subverts traditional paradigms of history, science, and religion seems apt for most of the fictions analyzed in the volume, thus proving the collection’s success in furthering a critical theory of contemporary narrative while developing the practice of critical analysis.

The eighth paper in the book, by Terry Reilly, returns again to Thomas Pynchon’s *Mason & Dixon* in order to explore different temporalities and the representation of time. These, as he illuminatingly concludes, shape the novel’s magical realist quality. Temporality in the narrative of Thomas Pynchon is also the main focus of Chapter nine, written by the volume’s editor himself. In his paper, Episcopo skillfully maps the space-time nature of the locus where part three of *Gravity’s Rainbow* takes place, arguing that this is precisely the source of the uncanny feeling that results from entrance into this “Zone”. His conclusion that the “Zone” is a space where the repressed returns brilliantly encourages a consideration of the construct of time and its association to space—as many of the essays in this collection do. The last chapter, by Amy J. Elias, skillfully leads readers to consider the proliferation of subgenres of cyberpunk from the 1980s and 1990s, mapping

their connection to the genre of the metahistorical romance and the technological sublime. In order to support her claims, Elias also turns to the literary production of Thomas Pynchon, more specifically to *Against the Day*, a novel that she analyzes as a steampunk text which “historicizes and metahistoricizes the technological sublime, at the same time rearticulating the sublime desires of metahistorical romance” (217).

Even though the attempt to satisfactorily map contemporary evolving representations of the past and at the same time propose a critical theory of it seems far from easy, the book represents a masterful compilation of studies which shed valuable light on emerging literary modes and their relationship with the notions of time, history, and science. However, it is my belief that this excellent collection of essays would have benefitted had it been completed by a concluding chapter. Indeed, the multiplicity of ideas and concepts about contemporary fiction introduced through the different chapters might have been usefully recapitulated, particularly given the book’s declared purpose to propose a critical theory through the practice of critical analysis. Nevertheless, *Metahistorical Narratives and Scientific Metafiction* is a valuable book for the study of late twentieth-century poetics, contemporary fiction, and its relation to scientific discourse. It competently introduces and puts into practice groundwork notions about contemporary modes of writing that will invite much critical discussion for years to come, opening up some fascinating paths for the analysis of narrative in our transgressive times.

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**GLOBAL GENRES, LOCAL FILMS.
THE TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSION OF SPANISH CINEMA**

Elena Oliete-Aldea, Beatriz Oria, and Juan A. Tarancón, eds.

London: Bloomsbury, 2016.

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This important collection of essays, edited by Elena Oliete-Aldea, Beatriz Oria, and Juan A. Tarancón, makes a decisive contribution to the study of Spanish cinema by establishing the matrix genre-global-local as a critical axis the better to read the cinema associated with this country, as well as its transnational dimension. Following Barry Jordan's proposal to consider the dyad national-transnational as suspect of being an unqualified heuristic device, *Global Genres* engages a copious body of critical literature about Spanish Cinema, offering its readers a compelling set of essays about politics, history, social conflict, crime, music, violence, melodrama, resistance, migrations, immigration, bromance, regionalism, and transnational co-productions, among other matters. The collection as a whole raises critical questions about the past, present, and future of the so-called 'Spanish' cinema, about the importance and meanings of movies associated in some way with an auteur affiliated with Spain, or with films shot, produced and watched inside and outside of its national borders, films that one way or another have come to be known as 'Spanish'.

In the "Foreword", Jordan expands on the decade-old guide he co-authored with Mark Allinson, entitled *Spanish Cinema*, and sets the stage for *Global Genres* by stating the importance of the 'national' as a force in filmmaking. He underscores the global and transnational dimensions of Spanish cinema as two critical concepts for an understanding of these films, arguing that the figure of the nation cannot be simply eliminated in order to favor the 'transnational' as the essential trait in Spanish Cinema: "they are both", he says, "part of the same political, social, and cultural

environment and thus interdependent, where the one cannot function or exist without the other” (xix). As a point in case, Jordan establishes two perspectives: on the one hand, the taxing environment of film production in Spain during the past decade which, coupled with the competition faced by movie theatres from other places and modes of film watching (the privacy of the living room, Filmin, Netflix), led to a return of commercially successful films in 2014 and a realization of the need to make movies that entertain, challenge, and enlighten. On the other hand, the backstage political drama sustained by administrative figures at FAPAE (Spain’s main film and TV producer’s association), the PP, ICAA (Institute of Film and AV Media) boded ill for the prospects of a moviemaking industry in Spain. The bottom line, according to Jordan: a “declining home market, with a resistant and falling audience base, and the prospect of a serious drop in taxpayer funding, (and thus, presumably, far fewer shoots and jobs), local Spanish filmmaking stands on the edge of a precipice” from whence only commercial projects and profits can rescue it (xxiii-xxiv).

In the “Introduction”, the Editors raise questions about transnationalism and genre, considering them points of departure for questioning static borders in history, film, politics, culture, and reading. Their goal is to interrogate the concept of Spanishness and to place movies center stage in the making of a ‘counter-history’ of the nation and its cinema, seeking “to unveil the competing discourses at stake in specific films when examined against the rearticulation of different genres and film traditions” (8). They hope to prove that the connections of these films with world cinema has existed since day one, and to establish an “intricate dialogue between cross-cultural aesthetics and narrative models on the one hand, and indigenous traditions on the other, as well as the political and historical contingencies these different expressions responded to” (8-9).

Three sections address critical angles on the negotiation of the global-local and national-transnational: the first group focuses on a thorough revision of the concept of Spanishness, showing that Spanish early genres and film language are transnational factors “capable of putting forward a more complex assessment of the challenges faced by Spanish society” (9). These first five chapters analyze hybridity and transnational dimensions of early musicals from the 1930s (Valeria Camporesi), historical films of the late 1940s and early 1950s (Vicente Benet), criminal melodramas (Juan A. Tarancón), the mix of historical epic and musical (Federico Bonaddio), and the influence of Hollywood melodrama (Daniel Mourenza). As a whole, they show how these films cross folklore, new technologies, historical heroines, realist techniques, melodrama, and other referential threads in order to entertain culturally diverse audiences throughout the world. Individually, these chapters analyze how some movies target female spectators from Spain, or how others tap into the rising social unrest of the mid-century, to undercut

patriotism, or how others bring to the private sphere the social and political situation of Francoism, thus ‘resignifying’ a landmark of Hollywood cinema by adapting it to Spain’s political terms.

The second group, also composed of five essays, engages the ‘opening up’ of borders and genres (both national and filmic), to explore and help readers better understand lesser-known genres from Spain’s cinematic history. Thus, for instance, the exploration of the inter-generic dialogue between what came to be known as Nuevo Cine Español (New Spanish Cinema) and American road movies, French Nouvelle Vague, or the transnational fantastic element in Luis Buñuel (Arnaud Duprat de Montero); the following two chapters trace the production of *gialli* and Gothic films in Spain to link them both to their respective Italian and Anglo-American counterparts, and to underscore the importance of reading Spanish *gialli* such as León Klimovsky’s *Una libélula para cada muerto/A Dragonfly for Each Corpse* and early Spanish Gothic films such as *El espíritu de la colmena/Spirit of the Beehive* in the context of mounting social tensions in the Spain of the 1970s, and the later installments of these films, such as the Gothic *Tras el cristal/In a Glass Cage*, which carried this filmic mode into the democratic era of the 1980s (Andy Willis and Ann Davies). The following chapter compares the Hollywood historical epic of the Quincentenary, to which the Spanish film industry contributed co-productions such as *1492: Conquest of Paradise* and *Christopher Columbus: The Discovery*, adding threads from Spanish heritage film, and reveals the creation of “a transnational product that transcended its local specificity” (127). This, in turn, exposes neoimperial debates and global struggles and audiences (Noelia Saenz). Chapter 10 returns to the link between Spanish and American cinema, and explores the influence of the road movie on Spanish productions of that genre with clear postmodern and realistic traits (Carmen Induráin Eraso). The last chapter in this section focuses on immigration as a defining trait of Spain’s final entrance to modernity, and analyzes how the cinematic capture of rural Castile interrogates the concepts of displacement, homeland, and the infamous ‘difference’ of Spain as place and society, especially in the context of globalization’s realities (Chantal Cornut-Gentile D’Arcy).

The third and last section of the book analyzes the self-conscious dimension of transnationalism, proposing that in Spanish cinema this be used as a strategy to appropriate the global. The first of six chapters questions the globalizing influence of American film on Spanish cinema, taking the appropriation of Hollywood’s comic “bromance” as a dialogic process (with, I add, longstanding performative traditions dating back to the Spanish *Comedia* from the 16th and 17th centuries) in which Spanish films incorporate vernacular tropes to the representation of the traditional American bromance protagonists (Beatriz Oria). The raging proliferation of crime film and television productions worldwide takes shape in Spanish cinema

with a clear focus on the thinking and feeling of characters such as *malamadres* and *bertomeus* (the critic's terms for characters), amongst which spectators see flashbacks mixed with current events in the gangster miniseries *Crematorio* and the prison film *Celda 211* (Luis M. García-Mainar). The dwelling on thoughts and emotion recurs in the next chapter, which examines how “the generic treatment of human suffering in her [Isabel Coixet's] films, characterized by the encounter of various localities, elicits new forms of human relationality” (Hilaria Loyo, 201). The next chapter revisits the phenomenon of immigration and the new realities of Spain's contemporary society, such as a “domestic dimension” sorely missing from recent immigration cinema (Elena and Ana Martín Morán, 224). Galician Documentary Film moves center stage in the next chapter, an analysis of immigration cinema and transnational identities from a peripheral position in Alberte Pagán's *Bs. As.* and Xurxo Chirro's *Vikingland* (Iván Villarrea Álvarez). The last chapter of the collection sets in motion the expression “(in)visible co-productions” to examine the myriad factors in play to brand films and the use of genre as a way to frame Spanish Cinema globally (Vicente Rodríguez Ortega).

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Global Genres is an indispensable source for any reader interested in movies filmed in Spain and in other places, some produced or co-produced by Spain's film industry, some seen in Spain, or abroad, but known as part of what continues to be called and understood as Spanish cinema. Questioning the relationship between what is inside and what is outside Spanish borders, and the relationship of such borders to a concept of a ‘national’ film, the essays in this volume address genre, financing, character, empire, sound, politics, violence, and a number of other referential threads to yield a set of critical perspectives of what constitutes ‘Spanish cinema’. Understanding ‘transnational’ not as an opposite or contrary to ‘national’, but as a link from inside to outside Spanish borders, and as a bridge to collaborative work—which is the basis for all performative arts—, *Global Genres, Local Films* invites readers to think again about the past, present, and future of films belonging one way or another to the category of Spanish cinema. Rigorously researched, well-reasoned and organized, and elegantly written, these thought-provoking essays considerably further the study of Spanish Cinema and film in general.

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HYBRID HERITAGE ON SCREEN: THE 'RAJ REVIVAL' IN THE THATCHER ERA

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London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

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Elena Oliete-Aldea's monograph *Hybrid Heritage on Screen: The Raj Revival in the Thatcher Era* is a fascinating book that explores the Raj productions of the Thatcher decade in depth. Characterised by its interdisciplinary approach, this excellent piece of scholarship combines film, cultural and postcolonial studies to disclose the ambivalences, paradoxes and inconsistencies of the Thatcher era. Although there exist collections and treatises devoted to the analysis of films made in the 1980s in Britain (Hill 1999; Cornut-Gentile 2005) and to heritage films (Higson 2003; Monk 2012; Vidal 2012), the current volume is actually the first work to bring to the fore Raj productions and analyse them in context. Prior to the publication of Oliete-Aldea's monograph, literature on the Raj productions during the 1980s was limited to single articles in journals, such as Muraleedharan's in the volume edited by Monk and Sargeant (2002). Hence, *Hybrid Heritage on Screen* is a pioneering and innovative work since it provides for the first time a meticulous analysis of Raj productions. Oliete-Aldea challenges expectations and at the same time gives the readers an understanding of the complexities of the period via the movies explored, true refractions of this society. The volume sheds light upon the ambivalences elicited from the films analyzed, since their nostalgic journey to the past constitutes a critical look at Britain's imperial past.

The book is neatly structured into six chapters. While the first three chapters offer the theoretical background, the last three are the core of the volume, the analysis

of the film corpus, which includes Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982), *Heat and Dust* (1983), *A Passage to India* (1984) and the TV serials *The Far Pavilions* (1984) and *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984). After an introduction that offers a succinct summary of all the sections dealt with in the volume, the monograph starts with a strong theoretical chapter, which provides the underpinning for the later discussions of British films and TV series released in the 1980s and set in India at the time of the British Empire. By incorporating a plethora of literary theorists, such as Derrida, Grossberg, Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Lacan, Edward Said, Michel Foucault, Frantz Fanon or Paul Gilroy, this first chapter provides an overview of the concepts of identity and hybridity. Different perspectives —both positive and negative— are presented by delving into the complexities of the terms, incidentally revealing how unstable the categories have become. This first chapter should be required reading for students of cultural studies and/or postcolonial studies. Of particular interest is chapter two, which turns to a contextual analysis of the 1980s. It focuses on the Thatcher era and deals with the ways Britain had to undergo the trauma of decolonisation and its gradual, often painful adaptation to a new postcolonial and globalised world. As Oliete-Aldea argues, the Thatcherite period was characterised by harsh neo-liberal policies as well as strict moral principles. Chapter three includes a historical overview of the empire film genre and explores it during WWI and WWII, but the main thrust of the chapter is a thorough discussion of the different meanings that emerge from the films produced in the Thatcher era. Oliete-Aldea convincingly highlights the connection between the advent of Thatcherism and the rise of heritage films. Oliete-Aldea claims that although they are images of a past that showed unity, they actually represent a “troubled revision of British history and identity” (83) and “a step forward in the revision of the past relationships between East and West and their continuity in the present” (84).

After the theoretical background, the following three chapters consistently examine the Raj productions of the 1980s. Chapter four starts with Attenborough's *Gandhi*, which inaugurated the 1980s Raj revival cycle and was a critically acclaimed film. Oliete-Aldea offers an engaging reading of the film since she explores how Attenborough's *Gandhi* reasserts the Conservative Thatcherite — and also Reaganite— discourses of the time. While there are other Raj productions of the 1980s that leave room for ambivalence —explored later in the monograph— this is not the case of *Gandhi*, which emerges as a very conservative film, tinged with an orientalist approach, which made it more marketable. Presented as a Christ-like figure —murdered by his own people and whose last words are devoted to God— and always surrounded by white people, Gandhi makes an attractive figure easily assimilable to Western ideology and thus a walking justification of the supremacy of the West. Oliete-Aldea persuasively concludes the section showing

how the film manipulated the past to convey and favour a conservative ideology. In chapter five, she takes up the challenge of analysing two literary adaptations: *Heat and Dust* and *A Passage to India*. They differ consistently from Attenborough's *Gandhi* because they hint at ambivalence and tentatively offer a third space. As Oliete-Aldea comments, they also confirm the tendency of Raj productions to "feminise the imperial accounts of the past" (114) since they both revolve around female characters. As can be imagined, the relationships formed between Eastern men and Western women become the core of the movies and, subsequently, of the chapter. Despite the difficulty in the reconciliation between cultures, *Heat and Dust* proposes the creation of a hybrid space via Anne's quest for hybridity and pregnancy. The baby, half British and half Indian, precisely represents a positive hybridity and thus, hopefully, will put an end to injustices in the future. Miscegenation is equally discussed in *A Passage to India* through the characters of Aziz and Adela, but there is no ray of hope for these two characters. In spite of the fact that the attempt at reconciliation between races is present in *A Passage to India*, this movie is a step backwards in comparison to *Heat and Dust*, which actually presents hybridity as a solution.

The last chapter is devoted to the analysis of two TV serials: *The Far Pavilions* and *The Jewel in the Crown*, which are again vehicles for ideological discourses. The issues of hybridity and inter-ethnic relationships are constant features in these productions. While *The Far Pavilions* has been considered as fostering an orientalist discourse via the casting of actors and actresses who used 'blackening', *The Jewel in the Crown* has been regarded—and praised—as a more realistic portrayal of the last days of the empire. Curiously enough, the strength of this chapter resides in going beyond this traditional interpretation of these two TV serials. In Oliete-Aldea's opinion, the orientalist discourses in *The Far Pavilions* are so obvious that the movie should be read as a parody of previous empire films. Interestingly, the inter-ethnic relationship works perfectly in this TV serial, distancing it from all the films analysed, and clearly defying the "conservative preservation of the white, national identity boundaries of the 1980s" (170). However, despite the readers'—and critics'—first impressions, *The Jewel in the Crown* is less ambivalent than *The Far Pavilions* and leaves almost no room for hybridity. Miscegenation is impossible, characters belonging to the low strata of society seem dangerous and the main characters are in the end relegated to the margins. Strangely, Oliete-Aldea concludes the chapter by highlighting the ambivalence of this production. Although I share Oliete-Aldea's tenets in all the chapters, I cannot but disagree with this one since her analysis of the *The Jewel in the Crown* would seem to show it as being rather one-sided and quite lacking in ambivalence. The volume is brought to a close with the idea that all the Raj productions explored had no qualms about presenting the notion of hybridity more positively than had been the case in earlier empire films.

Oliete-Aldea's insights into the connections between the 1980s Raj productions and the Thatcherite period could have included a dialogue with other film texts from the period, but set in post-colonial India, such as *36 Chowringhee Lane* (Aparna Sen, 1981) which would have made the discussion even more enriching and engaging with regard to hybridity, female identity and, ultimately, ideology. This would have required a deeper theoretical discussion of the movies.

This having been said, it is commendable that Oliete-Aldea has produced solid, well-researched analyses of the Raj productions, substantiated with theory, in very readable prose. With *Hybrid Heritage on Screen: The 'Raj Revival' in the Thatcher Era*, Oliete-Aldea has managed to smooth the way for future research and consolidate the need for an analysis of Raj productions of the 1980s since they provide ideological discourses and help the readers understand the inconsistencies of the period in which they were produced.

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**SHAKESPEARE EN ESPAÑA: BIBLIOGRAFÍA BILINGÜE
ANOTADA/SHAKESPEARE IN SPAIN: AN ANNOTATED
BILINGUAL BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Ángel-Luis Pujante and Juan F. Cerdá, eds.
Murcia: Ediciones de la Universidad de Murcia;
Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2014.
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The group of Shakespeare scholars at the University of Murcia has been producing outstanding studies on the presence of Shakespeare in Spain in the context of his European reception (<http://www.um.es/shakespeare/>). One of them is an annotated anthology, edited by Pujante and Campillo (2007), which compiles 114 pieces of criticism on Shakespeare (sometimes with selected extracts) published in Spain or by Spanish writers up to 1916. The bibliography under review derives from, and extends the work of, this anthology as it covers the critical reception of Shakespeare beyond 1916, until 2000, and informs on the contents of referenced publications by means of summaries rather than by excerpts. As its title indicates, the bibliography is ‘annotated’ and is ‘bilingual’: the core of the volume is a 448-page section in which Pujante and Cerdá (and their collaborators Laura Campillo, Noemí Vera and Keith Gregor) provide summaries, in English and Spanish on facing pages, of 695 “texts on Shakespeare written in Spain or by Spaniards” (X). This central section of the volume is preceded by a Preliminary Note and a 24-page Introduction, both also bilingual; and is followed by a general bibliography (unannotated), and finally by an index.

Pujante and Cerdá’s bibliography invites comparison with Blinn’s *The German Shakespeare*, in particular to its section D on “Secondary Literature”. While Blinn only offers bilingual German and English texts of his book’s title, the heading of its sections and sub-sections, the running head and the back cover, English-

language and Hispanophone readers of Pujante and Cerdá's anthology are equally well served. The book's bilingualism is a clear statement on their will to reach an international readership as part of their professed tenet that the study of Shakespeare in Spain must be related *pari passu* to equivalent studies elsewhere in Europe and the rest of the world.

The "General bibliography" lists almost one thousand publications of "critical or academic studies", including "notes, remarks and commentaries [...] written by journalists, actors, politicians or private persons" (XII).¹ While Blinn groups his six thousand entries of "Second Literature" on Shakespeare into nine sub-sections (including Shakespeare on the German stage, his reception in the mass media, in Music, and in the Fine Arts, among others), Pujante and Cerdá organize the general bibliography in alphabetical order, with the "Summaries" section chronologically arranged (by year). This format effectively allows readers to have a sense of the ideas and interests of Spanish writers on Shakespeare as they evolve in time. The summaries are headed by numbers for cross-references, while the entries in the index are keyed to page numbers. The index does not compile all the Spanish writers whose publications are summarized or listed. Considering the limits of a print publication, the length of the individual summaries is adequate (from three lines in summary no. 68 to 24 lines in summary no. 428), and their content is conveniently informative. A comparison with Blinn's annotated bibliography in this respect must elicit praise for the Murcia scholars inasmuch as they consistently summarize 70% of the references they have compiled, while Blinn annotates 12% of his entries (and many of them do not summarize their content).

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The editors' criteria for excluding some texts from the "Summaries" section are sensible. Theatrical reviews and "contemporary journalistic articles" published in the second half of the 20th century are not summarized because of their abundance (the editors suggest that a doctoral dissertation could tackle the study of the full span of Shakespeare's presence in the Spanish press). Other publications excluded are those whose aim is not "Shakespeare's work in itself, but the use of his texts with specialized linguistic purposes" because they do not have a "practical application to literary criticism" or have "little use" for the study of the reception of Shakespeare in Spain (XII). A third kind of publication also excluded are those dealing with the translation of Shakespeare as a linguistic process (e.g. translating puns) because for a non-Spanish reader they demand a good command of the target language;² while those dealing with translations as an end product (e.g. essays on Moratín's translation of *Hamlet*) are summarized.

As the bibliography is devoted to "texts on Shakespeare written in Spain or by Spaniards" (X), it includes texts by Spaniards published abroad, such as those by exiled writers José Blanco White and Salvador de Madariaga, and by non-Spanish

authors such as the Italian actor Ernesto Rossi, or Shakespeareans such as Jan Kott, John Drakakis, Peter Holland or Giorgio Melchiori, among others. Although not stated in the Preliminary Note, the editors seem to have applied the criterion of excluding translations into Spanish of criticism by non-Spanish writers such as Hugo (1887) and Turgenev (1894), or influential books such as Jan Kott's *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (however, they do include two English-language articles by Kott published in Valencia).

Pujante and Cerdá's bibliography is a thorough and impressive compilation that provides an informative documentary account of the presence of Shakespeare in Spain. They do not claim to be exhaustive, but very few references are missing. In this category would be Teruel's *Guide* (1994) and essays by Barros Ochoa (1997) and by Zaro (1999), although the bibliography does include other articles by these authors. Yet, these slips are outweighed by the good number of publications the editors have 'unearthed' for the Shakespearean scholar, who otherwise would have had difficulty in spotting some Shakespeare-related documents from the titles of the works alone. For example, José Ortega y Gasset's "Elogio del 'Murciélago'" discusses *Hamlet* as read and as performed. Ramón Pérez de Ayala's "Casa de Muñecas", published in *Las máscaras*, analyzes the role of women in Ibsen's play and in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. In *Juan de Mairena*, Antonio Machado comments on translating Shakespeare; and Leonardo Romero's edition of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer's *Autógrafos juveniles*, offers an unpublished manuscript of Bécquer's version of the Hamlet story. One is grateful too that the editors have also looked at publications that do not belong to the general fields of English Studies, literature or theatre: for example, Josep Ramoneda's "Julio César y el espacio político moderno" published in *ER: Revista de Filosofía*. Moreover, they have included publications issued in the period 1764-1916 that do not appear in the 2007 anthology, and have corrected data presented in this anthology, such as the name of José Cadalso in a brief note on the performance of *Hamleto* in 1772, now assigned to Manuel Rubín de Celis (2-3).

The "Summaries" section is preceded by a 21-page Introduction surveying the fortunes of Shakespeare's works in its published reception in Spain, with helpful cross-references to the summaries themselves. Although this survey necessarily covers many writers that Pujante also dealt with in the introduction to the 2007 anthology, the introductions complement each other. In this 2014 Introduction, Pujante and Cerdá provide interesting observations related to issues such as the percentage of Anglicists, Hispanists and comparatists and even Latinists writing on Shakespeare in the last quarter of the 20th century (XXXVI), or the statistics of publications per decade and numbers of doctoral dissertations in different periods, all showing an increase related to the development and expansion of English

Studies in Spain since the 1950s. One of their conclusions is that, in Spain, “Shakespeare begins and ends these three centuries as an author of tragedies” (XL). They pay great attention to which Shakespeare plays are most commented on or mentioned in different periods (and in their summarized publications) with a view to establishing “the basis of the Spanish canon of Shakespeare up to 2000” (XXX), which they describe as “less varied than that of Britain or the United States but perhaps not so different from that of other European countries” (XLII). Their essay is well-documented, with references to similar reception studies of Shakespeare in other European countries.

To sum up, this annotated bibliography does a great service to the ever-growing field of Shakespeare studies, in particular to his reception in Spain. It would be of an even greater service if the contents were organized and made available in an open-access database (like SH·ES·TRA and SHAKREP), and not just published online (in Google Books, for example), as announced on their research project’s website. All in all, Pujante and Cerdá’s annotated bibliography is a feat of scholarship and adds to the already established reputation of the Murcia Shakespearians working on reception studies of Shakespeare in Spain.

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Notes

¹. The general bibliography has been available since 2013 at the Scribd.com digital library (<https://www.scribd.com/doc/137395738/Bibliografia-Shakespeare-en-Espana-1764-2000-Orden-alfabetico>).

². The editors have scrupulously applied their criteria to their own writings, and thus some of Pujante’s own articles on translating Shakespeare have not “deserved” their summary.

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DOCUMENTING CITYSCAPES. URBAN CHANGE IN CONTEMPORARY NON-FICTION FILM

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The past few years have disclosed a growing interest in the production of documentaries. In particular, scholarly research has developed a field of analysis that had traditionally been considered as marginal in the field of Film Studies, but it is a field that has recently cultivated an inclination toward the multiple liminalities offered by documentaries. Certain studies are pivotal in the articulation of theory and non-fiction film, and noteworthy examples of such studies could be Nezar AlSayyad's work on cinematic urbanism or Alisa Lebow's study on subjectivity.

Iván Villarnea's book, *Documenting Cityscapes. Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film*, sets out to show how the different approaches to documentary production have been determined by their relation to subjectivity and objectivity, and how these networks result in a performative connection to the representation of the city. The author focuses on the analysis of space and the (de)construction of what he calls "places of memory" to highlight the relevance of non-fiction habitats in the production of the cinematic city, and therefore to understand the influence of these productions on viewers' interpretations of past and current urban spaces. Villarnea shows how these non-fiction films respond to the connection between identity production and postmodern (urban) spatial conceptualizations.

Villarnea organizes his book by defining the different productions of documentaries according to the subjective impact of their directors. He divides

his study into two main sections, devoting the first to landscaping approaches and the second to urban self-portraits. Chapter one examines the theoretical background of cinema and the city, and focuses particularly on the discussion of spaces and place as the foundation of human subjectivity in the shaping of urban spaces and spatialities. Here Villarnea emphasizes the relationship between the social production of space and the value of film in terms of history, culture, and the process of identity production, delving into David Harvey's (1989) and Edward Soja's (1989) claims about the reciprocal influence of individuals and spatial practices, representations of space, and representational spaces. Villarnea uses the process of geographical relativization brought about by the postmodern era to assert that urban documentaries address the production of place and spatiality through the combined action of memory and identity. Chapter two discusses this systematization of the production of the city through non-fiction film in detail.

166 Considering documentary film to be prominent at the turn of the century, chapter two offers a detailed panorama of the modes of representation that affect, and are affected by, documentary film. Villarnea analyzes the objectivity crisis as a main feature of the multiple representations of space in documentaries, particularly in the light of the aporetic nature of the camera as a narrative device that favors both objective and subjective depictions of reality. The author insists on the contribution of non-fiction films to the articulation of objectivity and subjectivity, especially when referring to representations of the city, using the terms "city-referent" and "city-character" to typify this ambiguity. It is this tension between describing and interpreting that, Villarnea claims, defines contemporary non-fiction film.

After the extended introduction and contextualization, Villarnea organizes his book by devoting the first section, "Landscaping", to discussing the portrayal of documentary images according to the involvement of the directors' subjectivities with their narratives. The second section, "Urban Self-Portraits", delves into the different forms in which films are used as a narrative instrument to create autobiographical discourses that place the author at the center of the representation. Chapter three focuses on the narrative device with the highest degree of objectivity, "observational landscape", where traces of slow cinema are to be found whereby duration is incorporated to the director's distancing from the image. This agrees with Ira Jaffe's claim that some directors have "taken rarefied pleasure in achieving various sorts of distance and detachment in [their] cinemas" (2014: 45). According to Villarnea, shot length is therefore the key element to define space in the two non-fiction films analyzed in this section. A still landscape proposal provides an increased exposure of the viewer to the scene

but, as it relies on the spectators' semantic contributions, it also distances the director from any form of objectivity.

Chapters four and five accommodate Villarrea's reference to the transnational nature of his approach. His analysis continues the examination of urban spaces in Los Angeles, and then discusses the production of relevant urban spaces such as New York and London. This chapter is therefore designed through two different argumentations: the first focuses once more on the idea of Angeleno spaces as envisioned by critics and film-makers of European origin, who provide the city with a subjective meaning. The second argumentation can be traced to his discussion of the emotional effects caused by territory on the subject through those historical landmarks, references, and everyday experiences that have become places of memory. Chapter five provides a thorough discussion of autobiographies, spatial urban narratives with the maximum degree of discursive intervention. Autobiographical films provide, Villarrea argues, an increased intensity and a direct presence of the directors' experiences in the represented city, enabling them to offer viewers a delineation of the structural changes and developments undergone by the city as past, present and future interpretations.

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The next part of the book, "Urban Self-Portraits", examines the different forms of self-portrait, a sub-genre of the autobiographical text. Chapter six begins by analyzing the performative mode used in self-portraits. Taking into account the aesthetics of failure to show the political possibilities of documentaries based on personal experiences and thoughts, it refers to the lucidity of these films when they are narrated in first-person by directors who are ordinary citizens.

Villarrea devotes the next two chapters to examining the self-portrait as essay film (chapter seven) and the urban self-portrait as self-fiction (chapter eight). In chapter seven he interprets the discourses in which a "second reality" unveils urban spaces normally concealed for the regular onlooker. This chapter closes with a look into the emotional search for memories derived from absent cityscapes, and then turns to a theoretical forethought about the causes of such a disclosure of emotional emptiness based on space. Chapter eight's analysis of self-portraits as self-fiction points out how this filming approach is based on compilations of real footage that are then fictionalized, becoming highly subjective. Villarrea argues that this amounts to a redefinition of documentaries, as it combines artistic imagination and actual memories to create new discourses of the city.

The last chapter draws on the final stage of subjectivity, where metafilm essays construct images not just as duplicates of the real but, Villarrea argues, as new realities. It also reflects on the impact of film imagery on actual (re)constructions of the city, employing a set of terms (elusive, exorbitant, noir, studio, city of exile,

etc.) to refer to the multiple interpretations of the city and “its infinite screens” (211). This agrees with other definitions of the city as postmetropolis (Soja 2000) or heteropolis (Jencks 1993).

As a whole, Villarnea’s book deals with one major concern: the diversity of interactions between the city and non-fiction films that produce places of memory. He first focuses on the theoretical discussions that provide structure for the different phases in the cultural construction of urban spaces, and then organizes his selection of non-fiction films.

Villarnea argues that his selection of films responds to a non-geographical arbitration, and therefore the reader will find productions from different national backgrounds. This is a praiseworthy strategy on the part of the author, who is coherent with his own claim that the global and transnational quality of urban spaces also defines films today. He explains that he opts for a “world systems approach” (9) in order to eschew the limitations imposed by national and cultural borders.

However, Villarnea’s task becomes a challenging one when he presents a rather erratic organization of the selected films. His transgressive approach clashes with the slightly traditional structure of the book, which works well in communicating his main ideas but would benefit from an interrogation of the concepts used to classify the chapters. This is not by any means a fault in this remarkable book, but the articulation of theory and analysis would expand its critical possibilities with an examination of Deleuze’s “territory”, David Harvey’s “the right to the city”, or Ignasi Solà-Morales Rubió’s pertinent concept “terrain vague”.

Villarnea’s reading of the individual films works much better because the author evidences his extensive scholarly research and articulates his critical apparatus with a thorough and innovative analysis. Villarnea, nonetheless, has an undeniable need to articulate the analyses of these films with current theories of space, and he succeeds in most cases. He very cleverly highlights, for example, the difference between space and place, and also the role of performative forms of identification and narrative production in setting about the documenting of the city.

Villarnea concludes this outstanding book about the representation of urban change in contemporary non-fiction film by showing how “the politics of representation in current urban documentaries has evolved into a politics of place-making and sense-making” (213). I am convinced that this book will open up new lines of research into the documentation of cityscapes. Its emphasis on the relevance of documentaries to (re)present the history of cities opens new windows to the study of urban spaces. This call for further research testifies to Villarnea’s success in his enthralling book.

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Abstracts

“YOU GOTTA ADMIT YOU HAD IT COMIN TO YOU”: TRAUMA, GENDER VIOLENCE AND FEMALE BONDING IN MARSHA NORMAN’S *GETTING OUT*

Maika Aira Gallardo

During the 1970s, and especially during the 1980s and 1990s, gender violence began to receive the attention of literary theorists, who explored it from a variety of different perspectives. One such approach was Trauma Studies theory, which, from the 1990s onwards, established gender violence as the third significant site of psychological trauma, along with hysteria and shell-shock postwar trauma, and tried to explain the origins of gender violence using historical, sociological and psychological evidence. In this essay, I will adopt the theoretical basis provided by trauma studies to analyze a case of post-traumatic stress disorder presented on stage: the character of Arlene-Arlie in Marsha Norman’s play *Getting Out* (1978). This work offers an example of how the devastating effects of trauma transform a person to the extent of causing in her an identity crisis which forces her to remain on constant alert against anyone who tries to get close to her.

Keywords: Marsha Norman, theatre, gender violence, trauma, female bonding.

Resumen: Durante la década de 1970, y especialmente durante los años 1980 y 1990, la violencia de género comenzó a recibir la atención por parte de teóricos de la literatura, que la han explorado desde perspectivas diferentes. Una de estas perspectivas la ofrecen los denominados Estudios Trauma, que, desde los años 1990 en adelante, ha dado a la violencia de género el tercer lugar más importante

dentro de los traumas psicológicos, junto con la histeria y la neurosis de posguerra, y ha tratado de explicar los orígenes de la violencia de género mediante evidencias históricas, sociológicas y psicológicas. En este ensayo, voy a adoptar la base teórica proporcionada por los estudios de trauma para analizar un caso de estrés postraumático: el personaje de Arlene - Arlie en la obra de Marsha Norman *Getting Out* (1978). Este trabajo ejemplifica cómo los devastadores efectos de un trauma pueden transformar a una persona hasta el punto de llevarla a una crisis de identidad que la obliga a permanecer en un constante estado de alerta ante cualquiera que trate de acercarse a ella.

Palabras clave: Marsha Norman, teatro, violencia de género, trauma, hermandad femenina.

APPROACHING THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN LITERARY STUDIES: ON THE NOTIONS OF FRAMEWORK AND METHOD (AND THEIR APPLICATION TO KURT VONNEGUT'S *SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE*)
Francisco Collado-Rodríguez

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Mostly addressed to novice scholars and instructors, this paper discusses some of the implications that the concepts of Theoretical Framework and Method of Analysis have for the field of Literary Studies. The limits between the two notions are unclear, which may lead to inconsistent teaching results or rejection of research proposals. The paper suggests a tentative definition for these yet unresolved conceptual issues. Then, it provides an example of the working of framework and method applied to Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Stress is given to the fact that in Literary Studies the frame and method deployed by the scholar should not be confused with the frame and method used by the author whose work constitutes the corpus of analysis.

Keywords: Framework, method, trauma studies, new physics, postmodernism, Vonnegut.

Resumen: Dirigido especialmente a profesores y académicos jóvenes, este artículo evalúa algunas de las implicaciones que los conceptos de marco teórico y método de análisis tienen en el campo de los estudios literarios. Tradicionalmente, los límites entre ambos conceptos no han sido demasiado precisos, lo que ha llevado a inconsistencias tanto de carácter docente como investigador. En una segunda parte, el artículo evalúa la pertinencia de estos conceptos con referencia a la novela *Slaughterhouse-Five*, de Kurt Vonnegut. Se hace especial hincapié en el hecho de que en los estudios literarios no deben confundirse el marco y método empleados por el autor con los utilizados por el académico.

Palabras clave: Marco teórico, método, estudios del trauma, nueva física, postmodernismo, Vonnegut.

FOOL FOR LOVE Y LA ESTIRPE DE LOS FANTASEADORES EN EL TEATRO DE SAM SHEPARD

Ana Fernández-Caparrós Turina

Fool for Love (1983), una de las obras más conocidas y más representadas internacionalmente del repertorio shepardiano, dramatiza la controvertida relación sentimental entre May y Eddie. El siguiente artículo indaga en cómo se articula escénica y narrativamente la imposibilidad de su amor a través de la figura paterna de ambos, el personaje del Old Man, el Viejo, suspendido entre la imaginación y la realidad. Las implicaciones de la aparición del Viejo en escena para definir a su hijo como un fantaseador y el discurso en torno a la imaginación son analizados en relación a su convergencia con otros tropos que ya habían aparecido previamente en las obras familiares de Shepard *Curse of the Starving Class* (1977) y *Buried Child* (1978): la maldición de una herencia genética masculina, la repetición patriarcal y el incesto. El análisis, conducente a la identificación de toda una estirpe de fantaseadores, permite vislumbrar cómo el dramaturgo estadounidense, cuya obra dramática había explorado durante dos décadas la pluralidad, diversidad y labilidad de la actividad imaginativa en escena, exploraría a través de estos personajes la vertiente más nociva del potencial ilusorio de la imaginación.

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Keywords: Sam Shepard, imaginación, incesto, masculinidad, *Fool for Love*.

Resumen: *Fool for Love* (1983), which is among the best well known and most often produced plays by Sam Shepard, dramatizes May and Eddie's controversial love affair. This paper explores how the impossibility of their love is theatrically and narratively articulated focusing on their relationship with the character of the Old Man, father to both of them and a figure suspended between the real and the imagined. The presence on the stage of Old Man, who refers to his son as a "fantasist", together with his meta-imaginative discourse, are analysed in relation to other tropes that had already appeared in Shepard's previous family plays *Curse of the Starving Class* (1977) and *Buried Child* (1978): the inheritance of a genetic curse, patriarchal repetition and incest. This critical reading identifies a whole lineage of fantasists in Shepard's drama and suggests that while for two decades Shepardian characters had shown the instability but also the enormous potential of human imagining, the family plays would explore instead a more harmful side of the delusive power of imagination.

Palabras clave: Sam Shepard, imagination, incest, masculinity, *Fool for Love*.

TAKE THE LAW INTO YOUR OWN HANDS: MODERNIST AND DETECTIVE FICTION IN WILLIAM FAULKNER'S *INTRUDER IN THE DUST AND LIGHT IN AUGUST*

Li-Hsion Amanda Liu

William Faulkner's *Intruder in the Dust* and *Light in August* are not conventionally associated with genres of crime and detection. Nevertheless they include multiple homicides, false accusations, ethnic conflicts, feeble enforcement of the law, and a nearly total failure to carry out impartial justice, within a narrative setting. Just as an ongoing controversy swirls around the topic of how to ensure justice is meted out on the basis of equity, so unbridgeable racial disparities have adversely impacted the legal proceedings in court. In order to examine the complex interconnections between race and law, this paper reflects a modernist approach to Faulkner's works by revealing the similarities between modernism and crime writing.

Keywords: William Faulkner, modernism, detective fiction, *Intruder in the Dust*, *Light in August*.

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Resumen: Las obras de William Faulkner *Intruder in the Dust* y *Light in August* no se suelen asociar normalmente con los géneros del crimen y la detención. A pesar de ello ambas obras incluyen una serie de temas como los múltiples homicidios, las acusaciones falsas, los conflictos étnicos, la aplicación laxa de la ley y la incapacidad de administrar justicia. De la misma forma que la polémica actual gira en torno al tema de cómo asegurarse de que la justicia se aplica sobre la base de la equidad, ha habido disparidades raciales insalvables que han impactado de manera negativa en los procedimientos judiciales en los tribunales. Para poder examinar las interconexiones complejas entre la raza y la ley, este artículo examina la aproximación modernista a las obras de Faulkner al revelar las similitudes entre el modernismo y la ficción criminal.

Palabras clave: William Faulkner, modernismo, ficción detectivesca, *Intruder in the Dust*, *Light in August*.

NATIVE AMERICAN THEATER: A CONCISE HISTORY

Sidoní López

Hanane Benali

This paper provides a concise and brief history of Native American theater from its beginnings in indigenous oral traditions to its consolidation in the 21st century. To start with, the essay will deal with the origins of American Indian theater in Native oral traditions through storytelling and its performance. The paper will then explore the dark period of Native American drama during the emergence of

Native American writing in the 18th and 19th centuries. In like manner, the essay will deal with the emergence of contemporary Native American theater as a genre during the second part of the 20th century through the numerous and multiple Native theater companies and plays. Finally, the paper will conclude with the path towards the consolidation of contemporary indigenous theater during the new millennium and will attempt to shed light on the collections and anthologies of Native American plays, a considerable body of scholarship which has just started to gain momentum, and the promotion of the genre through different institutions, companies and festivals across the country. As will be demonstrated, although Native drama is a relatively new phenomenon in the American literary landscape, the history of its development is long, complex and still developing.

Keywords: Native American, storytelling, performance, theater, drama.

Resumen: Este artículo presenta una breve historia del teatro nativo-americano desde sus inicios en las tradiciones orales indígenas hasta su consolidación en el siglo XXI. Para empezar, el artículo se centrará en los orígenes del teatro nativo-americano en las tradiciones orales indígenas a través de la narración de historias y su representación. A continuación, también se explorará el período de oscuridad que atravesó el teatro nativo-americano durante el inicio de la literatura nativa escrita en los siglos XVIII y XIX. Asimismo, el artículo también tratará el inicio del teatro nativo contemporáneo como género literario durante la segunda parte del siglo XX a través de las numerosas compañías y obras teatrales nativas. Finalmente, se concluirá con el camino hacia la consolidación del teatro indígena contemporáneo durante el nuevo milenio haciendo referencia a las colecciones y antologías de obras nativo-americanas, una considerable crítica literaria que ha comenzado a tomar impulso y la promoción del género a través de distintas instituciones, compañías y festivales teatrales en el país. Como veremos, aunque el drama nativo es un fenómeno relativamente novedoso en el panorama literario americano, la historia de su desarrollo es larga, compleja y todavía continúa expandiéndose.

Palabras clave: nativo-americano, narración de historias, representación, teatro, drama.

**FREDERICK W. LOWNDES, MRCSE AND SURGEON TO THE
LIVERPOOL LOCK HOSPITAL: PROSTITUTION
AND VENEREAL DISEASE IN THE 1880S**

María Isabel Romero Ruiz

The aim of this paper is to analyse the perpetuation of the myth of the fallen woman in the rescue work and the cure of prostitutes in Liverpool in the 1880s. To this end, Frederick Lowndes' 1886 publication, *Prostitution and Venereal*

Diseases in Liverpool, will be discussed as an example of a text written by a medical authority concerned with sexual promiscuity and the spread of venereal disease. Prostitution had cultural and moral implications for Victorians, and prostitutes represented a threat to middle-class society as the very image of vice and public disorder itself. Lowndes offers an overview of the issue for the years leading up to the publication of his pamphlet, dealing with issues like the role of brothels, the causes of prostitution in Liverpool and the classification of these women into different categories, thus echoing some of the ideas of moral reformers and medical men concerning the Great Social Evil. The role played by local laws in the containment of this public vice and of the Liverpool Lock Hospital in the treatment of the diseases considered to be the result of prostitution will be analysed in the light of Lowndes' text and ideas. My intention is to prove that seclusion of deviant elements of society together with their classification and indoctrination were still present in the medical and moral discourses of the latter part of the Victorian period. Similarly, Foucauldian notions concerning deviancy and discipline will be discussed together with Butlerian ideas about gender and sexuality in the context of Victorian respectability and womanhood.

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Keywords: Lowndes, prostitution, Liverpool, venereal disease, womanhood.

Resumen: El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la perpetuación del mito de la “mujer caída” en el trabajo de recuperación y tratamiento de prostitutas en Liverpool en la década de los 80 en el siglo XIX. Para ello, la publicación de 1886 de Frederick Lowndes titulada *Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Liverpool* será analizada como ejemplo de un texto escrito por una autoridad médica en relación con el control de la promiscuidad sexual y la propagación de enfermedades venéreas. La prostitución tenía implicaciones culturales y morales para los victorianos, y las prostitutas representaban una amenaza para la sociedad de clase media como imagen del vicio y del desorden público. Lowndes hace una revisión de la prostitución en los años anteriores a la publicación de su panfleto, tratando asuntos como el papel de los prostíbulos, las causas de la prostitución en Liverpool y la clasificación de estas mujeres en diferentes categorías, que reflejan algunas de las ideas de reformadores sociales y médicos anteriores en relación con lo que los victorianos denominaban el ‘Gran Mal Social’. El papel que jugaban las leyes locales en la contención de este vicio público y del Hospital de Enfermedades Venéreas de Liverpool en el tratamiento de enfermedades consideradas el resultado de la prostitución serán objeto de estudio de acuerdo con el texto y las ideas de Lowndes. Mi intención es demostrar que la continuación de una tendencia a la reclusión de elementos socialmente ‘desviados’ junto con su clasificación y adoctrinamiento estaba todavía muy presentes en los discursos médicos y morales de la última parte del período victoriano. De igual forma, nociones de Foucault

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concernientes a la desviación sexual y la disciplina, así como ideas de Butler sobre el género y la sexualidad serán objeto de análisis dentro del contexto victoriano sobre un comportamiento respetable en cuanto a la condición de ser mujer.

Palabras clave: Lowndes, prostitución, Liverpool, enfermedad venérea, condición femenina.

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