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LA TRAICIÓN EDÉNICA EN LA LITERATURA ARTÚRICA: CONSIDERACIONES SOBRE LA IDENTIDAD DE LA PAREJA EN *LE MORTE DARTHUR* DE THOMAS MALORY

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1. La literatura entre el bien y el mal: dualismos estructurales

"Crimen y castigo". Este célebre enunciado —consagrado dentro del campo artístico occidental gracias a la obra homónima de Dostoievski— sintetiza los pilares básicos del engranaje pedagógico-represor implícito en nuestro modelo social. A partir de dicha estructura dicotómica pueden extrapolarse los dos puntos esenciales del proceso general de modelado e instrucción de un colectivo por parte de quienes ostentan el poder y controlan sus infraestructuras (o superestructuras). La racionalización de la conducta pública impulsa la represión de toda acción que no responda a la ortodoxia social (representada por la ley o los usos consuetudinarios). Todo crimen debe ser perseguido, desencadenando la pena subsecuente. El patrón causal que rige el proceso de purgación le otorga al mismo un carácter racional, casi inefable, que contribuye a su legitimación pública. Crimen y castigo, desafío y condena son, pues, dos momentos de una única acción global: la lucha contra la corrupción cívica. Intolerable en tanto que resultado del cuestionamiento general de los valores interiorizados o impuestos por los agentes del orden, pone en peligro el equilibrio social alcanzado y debe ser atajada. Por eso la contrapartida, la corrección, aparece como inevitable. El castigo es al crimen lo que el crimen es al castigo, *ils vont de soi*.[1]

El arte, y muy especialmente la literatura, no es ajeno a los procesos de formación y consagración de diferentes patrones sociales. Al fin y al cabo, la cultura puede ser analizada en términos de "hecho social", desarrollándose en un espacio propio o "campo"[2] intervenido tanto por factores de orden individual como público (entramado de relaciones que favorecen la incorporación de un agente artístico al medio, grado de autonomía con respecto a los poderes económico-políticos, etc.). Y es que la literatura, ya sea la generada dentro del campo de una producción restringida o en el de una producción masiva, se ve a menudo confrontada con la difícil encrucijada entre el "arte por el arte" o la escritura comprometida, véase realista o mimética (en términos puramente marxistas, superados ampliamente por la crítica contemporánea). Consciente o inconscientemente, la obra literaria es con frecuencia depositaria de valores e ideas propias no solo de su creador, sino del marco social general al que ambos pertenecen. El libro aparece, pues, como un testigo silencioso y sutil de una cosmovisión particular. No en vano, ha sido un soporte privilegiado de pedagogía social desde los albores de la historiografía literaria occidental.

Y es que los grandes mitos fundacionales, las leyendas y las narraciones épicas originalmente recogidas por la tradición oral no son sino colecciones de elementos dinamizadores de la estructura colectiva y como tales admiten lecturas en clave alegórica. Según dicho patrón, los libros sagrados de las distintas religiones contienen no solo las enseñanzas espirituales, sino todo un amplio legado de códigos morales. De la exégesis exhaustiva de los mismos han resultado numerosos modelos de conducta de gran calado en la historia de las mentalidades orientales y occidentales. A través del relato de aventuras y desventuras de personajes remotos incluso para los hermeneutas antiguos como Caín y Abel, Sansón y Dalila, San José y la Virgen María, el lector se ve confrontado con encarnaciones míticas de virtudes y pecados, de valores loables o censurables, incluso privadas de ellos. La traición, la fidelidad, la fe, la confianza o la envidia recorren páginas y páginas de numerosas obras encaminadas a ilustrar e instruir a las gentes comunes cuyo acceso a la cultura era limitado o nulo. Esta carencia exigía el desarrollo de un cierto proceso de "homogeneización" o de "normalización" cívica en aras de la consolidación plena y satisfactoria de los núcleos grupales constituidos.

Cabe subrayar la importancia de la dualidad implícita en dichos relatos de naturaleza metafórica. La imagen del recto proceder ocupa un plato de la balanza social, en constante pugna con su antónima. El sistema moral antiguo descansa, según lo analizado en las líneas precedentes, sobre un patrón bipolar en el que el bien y el mal se encarnan en figuras corpóreas, reales, plausibles y verosímiles que contribuyen a acercar al potencial receptor del mensaje encriptado a la noción de "norma social". La aparición constante de personajes en contrapunto permite

la interiorización de la enseñanza moral, simplificándola hasta el extremo de convertirla en un código de signo *maniqueísta* que tan solo contempla el respeto a la regla o su subversión radical. Tal reduccionismo en el planteamiento pedagógico entronca con la necesidad de garantizar que un auditorio poco o nada familiarizado con la terminología filosófico-científica y extremadamente permeable a las vívidas imágenes del pecado y de la virtud esculpidas simultáneamente desde los púlpitos y las cátedras lo reciba correctamente.[3]

Partiendo de una de las narraciones míticas más productivas de la tradición occidental, el episodio de la "expulsión del Paraíso", podemos descubrir el funcionamiento esencial de esta vertiente moralizadora de la literatura. La *Biblia* reduce a tres el número de participantes en dicha escena: dos seres mortales y un mediador de naturaleza sobrenatural. Eva y Adán, Adán y Eva, protagonizan el primer episodio humano en torno al crimen y al castigo. Inducida por la aviesa serpiente, Eva toma el fruto del árbol del conocimiento (prohibido para ambos, pues les serviría para alcanzar un nivel superior de conciencia únicamente reservado al dios-demiurgo-creador) e invita a Adán a comer de él. Eva se convierte entonces en la representación del mal, del desafío al orden establecido. Es la imagen del traidor, del que sucumbe al pecado. Tentando a Adán intenta corromperlo y prolongar la desviación de su propia conducta, haciéndola extensiva a otros elementos sociales todavía inmaculados. Adán es, antes de sucumbir, la encarnación de la rectitud, del respeto a la norma. El *yin* y el *yang*, dos únicas caras de una realidad que se inclina por el bien y se horroriza ante el mal que avanza subrepticiamente para desembocar en el castigo eterno a la naturaleza humana. El crimen del conocimiento que Eva comete se represalia imponiendo el estigma de la mortalidad y la vergüenza. Ella es el vívido rostro de la traición. En este caso, se trata de una traición en varios niveles, pues la transgresión que comete afecta no solo a la escala lineal de sus relaciones humanas (con su semejante, Adán), sino también a la escala jerárquica, rompiendo el pacto tácito establecido con el Creador y equiparándose al mismo.

Y si los relatos religiosos son ricos en motivos pedagógico-moralizantes, la mitología pagana greco-romana proporciona numerosos elementos que puede ser igualmente analizados bajo el prisma dual del paradigma de la ofensa y su castigo. Perpetuando el patrón básico en torno a la polarización de los registros de conducta, numerosas obras clásicas (entre las que destacan la *Teogonía* de Hesíodo o la *Ilíada* y la *Odisea* homéricas) se refieren a la pugna entre el bien y el mal codificada a través de personajes puramente simbólicos. Tales son Prometeo, castigado por violar la confianza que los dioses olímpicos habían depositado en él ofreciéndoles a los humanos el fuego sagrado; Pandora —el primer castigo infligido a la humanidad fue, precisamente, a esta figura femenina; o el propio

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Ulises —condenado a vagar durante una década por haber ofendido a Neptuno. Si bien en este último caso la posibilidad del perdón divino es más que evidente (hay que tener en cuenta que Ulises goza de la protección de Minerva, diosa de la guerra y de la sabiduría), esa no es la tendencia general en los relatos de esta naturaleza. Normalmente, al igual que en los libros sagrados de la tradición cristiana, el infractor ha de expiar de forma ejemplarizante su pecado o su traición.

Como herencia de esta amalgama de narraciones mítico-religiosas occidentales, surge en torno a la Plena y la Baja Edad Media una tendencia artística que revaloriza la noción de una pedagogía cívica y moral basada en la importancia de la imagen. En un clima de inestabilidad geográfica y política notables, la consagración del poder feudal pasa en gran medida por la capacidad de difundir un mensaje legitimado en torno a conceptos abstractos como la sumisión, la lealtad, el respeto o la abnegación. Para el campesino como para el artesano, para el comerciante o el señor, el arte se convierte en un laboratorio de formas que guían su comportamiento en el ámbito público y privado. Si bien es cierto que las gestas y proclamas entonadas por trovadores y poetas estaban basadas en primera instancia en una intención meramente lúdica, existen numerosas composiciones medievales que atestiguan una segunda lectura en clave simbólica. Bajo el relato de las peripecias de un célebre caballero al servicio de su estimado señor puede esconderse toda una lección de moral feudal en torno a los valores requeridos a un buen vasallo. Muy sutilmente, el adoctrinamiento se filtra entre líneas para alcanzar a una cantidad creciente de receptores potenciales.

En el ámbito francés se hallan dos de los testimonios más célebres de esta vertiente didáctico-alegórica de la literatura medieval. En los siglos XIV y XV, respectivamente, *Le roman de la rose* (en el que hay que destacar el aspecto moralizador de su segunda parte, un apéndice cuya autoría ha sido atribuida al clérigo Jean de Meung) y *La cité des dames*, de Christine de Pizan se erigen como las obras más notables y ricas desde el punto de vista de su contenido en clave simbólica.

2. Los personajes de la Materia de Bretaña y la exploración de los antagonismos

Paralelamente, proliferan obras que, si bien no pueden ser catalogadas dentro de la literatura alegórica, poseen un cierto aire moralizador. A esta categoría pertenecen todas aquellas que, de una forma u otra, presentan el retrato de las sociedades medievales que las acogen. Las dinámicas sociales, las jerarquías colectivas, los códigos de conducta públicos e individuales están sutilmente integrados en tramas llenas de aventuras, luchas por el poder, los bienes materiales y peripecias varias en

las que la pintura de la psique humana ocupa un lugar privilegiado. Así, la célebre *Le Morte Darthur* (1485) de Sir Thomas Malory constituye un buen ejemplo de literatura pedagógica y moralizante, si bien no puede afirmarse que sea este su principal y único cometido. No se debe olvidar que el canto o la compilación de hazañas del héroe Arturo no pretende sino reafirmar la consolidación de la identidad británica como tal, proporcionando a sus integrantes un relato fundacional basado en la exaltación épica de motivos más o menos fieles a la historiografía oficial. La narración de batallas y acciones notables se ve a menudo salpicada por la inserción de reflexiones en torno a conductas concretas, de signo positivo o negativo, que no solo tienen amplias repercusiones sobre el desarrollo de los acontecimientos, sino que al mismo tiempo sitúan al receptor de los textos ante disyuntivas y cuestiones morales de hondo calado de las que puede sacar provecho.

Le Morte Darthur, originalmente editada por Caxton en 1485, es, ante todo, una obra épica, un compendio de historias extraordinarias unidas por el marco común del reinado glorioso del rey Arturo. El manuscrito caxtoniano presenta una división de la materia narrativa en torno a sucesivos ejes temáticos. La edición moderna a cargo del filólogo francés Émile Vinaver recoge los propósitos de tal estructura. En palabras del propio William Caxton "y para que se entienda brevemente el contenido de este volumen, lo he dividido en veintiún libros, y cada libro, en capítulos"[4] (Vinaver 1990: cxlvi). Así, esos veintiún libros están a su vez formados por subapartados o escenas breves que sirven para marcar la progresión en la narración y que suman un total de 507 partes. La obra comienza con el célebre "The tale of King Arthur", que contiene el relato de la genealogía del futuro rey, así como su alianza con la reina Ginebra o el estrecho vínculo que le une al mago Merlín. Otros de los libros más conocidos son: "The noble tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake", "The tale of Sankgreal briefly drawn out of rench which is a tale chronicled for one of the truest and one of the holiest that is in this world" o "The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere".

A lo largo de sus múltiples subdivisiones, *Le Morte Darthur* va adquiriendo forma de crónica historiográfica, así como de manual del buen obrar caballeresco. Muchos son los ejemplos de valientes señores que protagonizan gloriosas gestas al servicio ya sea del rey o de Dios. Como numerosos son también los testimonios de actos desleales para con aquellos que ocupan un rango superior en la escala social. La traición toma cuerpo a lo largo de las páginas de esta obra monumental, adoptando múltiples apariencias. Generalmente responde a la dicotomía entre el espacio público y el privado, dando lugar a episodios de deslealtad ante otro personaje al que el traidor está unido por vínculos afectivo-sentimentales o bien ante la jerarquía de los caballeros. De entre ambas categorías cabría destacar tres conductas contrarias a los usos y costumbres de la época retratada por Malory: la

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traición de Mordred, la de Lanzarote y la de Ginebra. Mordred, hijo incestuoso del rey Arturo, es cegado por su ambición desmedida y, en un intento desesperado por hacerse con el trono, recurre a sucias artimañas que pretenden destapar los amores prohibidos de Ginebra y Lanzarote. Por otra parte, la propia reina y el caballero incurren en una doble traición, no solo pública, (como en el caso del aspirante Mordred) sino también privada. Ambos son culpables de una felonía que afecta a su relación con el rey Arturo tanto en el plano interpersonal como en el institucional. Si el rol de la reina consorte, dechado de virtudes y fiel consejera, se tambalea, de igual modo peligra el de esposa abnegada y entregada. Por lo que respecta a la figura del amante, Lanzarote incurre en una doble falta al violar la autoridad de su señor y compañero seduciendo a su contrapunto femenino dentro de la trama. De la traición a la sangre a la traición a los votos, Mordred, Ginebra y Lanzarote encarnan en la obra de Malory las distintas naturalezas que puede revestir la noción de deslealtad. Juntos constituyen una especie de prisma catalizador y ejemplarizante, rico en facetas y matices. Sin embargo, y paradójicamente, una de las más notables traiciones dentro del ciclo artúrico ha sido relegada a un segundo plano, probablemente debido al carácter ligeramente periférico de sus protagonistas con respecto a la trama básica acerca de las hazañas del rey: Vivien y Merlín.

Antes de analizar la pareja que forman Vivien y Merlin en la obra de Malory, sería interesante profundizar en la materia de Bretaña y analizar dos puntos importantes para el desarrollo de este estudio. Así, es necesario no solo observar cómo dicha pareja ha sido plasmada en otros textos anteriores, sino también examinar en profundidad el personaje de la reina Ginebra (como agente femenino fundamental en la corrupción moral y cívica). El objetivo no es otro que estudiar cuáles han sido los factores desencadenantes que impulsan a un personaje virtuoso a entregarse a la destrucción y al pecado de su recurrente adulterio con el caballero Lanzarote. ¿En qué momento los textos épicos comenzaron a referirse a la reina en términos vejatorios, definiéndola como infiel y adúltera? El amor adúltero entre el caballero y su reina se menciona por primera vez de manera explícita en *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* (1170) (*Lanzarote, o el Caballero de la Carreta*) de Chrétien de Troyes. Se trata del primer lugar en el que se define a Ginebra como la amante de Lanzarote, pues este acomete todas sus empresas en nombre de su dama. Habiendo raptado Méléagant a Ginebra, es el caballero Lanzarote el que se lanza a su rescate. Sin embargo, la idea de hacer de la reina una adúltera puede percibirse ya en la *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1130-1136) de Godofredo de Monmouth, quien parece sugerir una relación amorosa entre la reina y Mordred (hijo ilegítimo de Arturo que, en un último intento de hacerse con el poder, contrae nupcias con la reina).

Esta descripción gozó de una notable aceptación, convirtiéndose en una de las bases de la literatura artúrica a partir de la versión francesa de Chrétien. En efecto, está presente también en el *Ciclo de la Vulgata* (siglo XIII-Francia) y en todos los relatos posteriores. El texto de Malory que nos ocupa hace referencia a dicha relación pecaminosa exponiendo un amor inconveniente y apasionado entre Ginebra y el que era la mano derecha de Arturo: Lanzarote. Este amor manchará la pureza de ambos personajes: la reina será juzgada por infiel y Lanzarote tendrá que renunciar a la búsqueda del Santo Grial (pues ya no posee una naturaleza sin mácula, requisito indispensable). Paralelamente a esta relación incestuosa se le atribuye la decadencia y destrucción de la Mesa Redonda, así como la muerte del rey Arturo. Hay que recordar que existe una fuerte conexión entre Ginebra y la Mesa Redonda, pues cuando Arturo contrajo matrimonio con ella, dicho objeto ritual y cien fieles caballeros compusieron su dote).

Si bien la pareja formada por Lanzarote y Ginebra ha sido un motivo recurrente en todas y cada una de las revisiones de la materia artúrica desde Chrétien de Troyes, ¿qué ocurre con el resto de las controvertidas parejas que aparecen en dichos textos? Merlín y Vivien, dos personajes secundarios a menudo olvidados por la crítica, también proporcionan un rico material digno de estudio. Antes de profundizar en el análisis del texto de Malory realizaré una breve revisión de su historia común, siguiendo las fuentes en las que se inspira este. Así, la *Vulgata* francesa presenta a una Vivien estudiante y seguidora de los hechizos del mago Merlín. La épica francesa hace referencia a una historia de amor entre tutor y aprendiz, relación de amor puro y fascinante. Sin embargo, la idea recurrente de que es ella y no otra quien condena al mago a un forzoso enterramiento queda también manifiesta en esta obra. Vivien, conocedora de todas las artes mágicas de Merlín, le aprisiona en una hermosa torre a la que acude, sin embargo, con asiduidad, para visitarle e intentar salvar, en la medida de lo posible, la armonía previa. En la *Post-Vulgata* se radicaliza la perspectiva, evocando una relación que no está en absoluto basada en el cariño tierno que ambos se profesan, sino todo lo contrario. De hecho, la dama entierra al mago de una forma cruel y brutal. Este episodio inspirará los textos posteriores. Dicha condena, inhumana y atroz, contribuye a proyectar a la figura femenina artúrica como agente causal de la caída tanto de valerosos caballeros (véase Merlín) como de reinos y compañías (la Mesa Redonda). Por lo que respecta a los motivos aducidos para tal conducta extrema, la *Post-Vulgata* presenta a una Ninianne (Vivien) de quince años que sufre el acoso constante del mago. Este ansía poseerla sexualmente para obtener su virginidad, triunfo supremo. Merlín la forma en el arte de la magia y su aprendiz se vale de dicho conocimiento para forjarse un camino que ha de conducir, paradójicamente, a la destrucción de su mentor. La dama le encerrará en una tumba y sellará su hechizo para siempre. Sin embargo, al igual que en los textos posteriores, ella

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se redime de su crueldad al salvar la vida de su rey y reivindicarse como su fiel consejera y protectora.

3. Vivien y Merlín en *Le Morte Darthur*

Le Morte Darthur, siguiendo los pasos de la *Post-Vulgata*, también nos presenta a una dama inocente y virginal poco, o nada, interesada en el mago. Tanto es así que intenta por todos los medios evitar su presencia y su constante persistencia. Esta caracterización contrasta con la dimensión que la figura de la dama alcanzará en su rol de castigadora. Si bien es cierto que la mayor parte de las afrentas al código de conducta caballeresca son operadas por agentes masculinos, hay que subrayar que el caso al que presta atención este estudio destaca por el protagonismo que en él adquiere una figura femenina secundaria. A medio camino entre las actitudes que muestran Mordred o la propia Ginebra, Vivien se erige en un nuevo icono de la traición. El primer volumen de la obra, el denominado "The tale of King Arthur", recoge los episodios esenciales de la relación entre la hechicera y el mago, ahondando en el estudio pragmático y psicológico de aquella. Sin embargo, resulta harto difícil esbozar una caracterización exhaustiva del personaje de Vivien. Si hay algo que la define es, precisamente, la sucesión de motivos fluctuantes en torno a su identidad. En términos generales, esta hada maloriana encarna una de las diversas variantes que adopta la llamada Dama del Lago. A lo largo de los dos capítulos que abren el primer libro de *Le Morte Darthur*, Vivien desarrolla un especial protagonismo. Tras la batalla de Arturo y su homólogo, el rey Pellinore, la espada de Arturo se le rompe en las manos y el rey se ve obligado a recurrir a Merlín en busca de una nueva arma protectora. Este, a su vez, lo invita a un viaje al Lago de Avalon. Allí se produce la primera aparición de la Dama del Lago, que más tarde dará pie a la transmutación en Vivien. "Justo entonces, Arturo vio que en el centro del lago un brazo, vestido de samita blanca, rompía la superficie y que la mano blandía una espada finamente ornada con piedras preciosas"[5] (Malory 1969: 55). El impacto de la imagen ofrecida reside en la poderosa utilización de una sinécdoque que centra la atención del receptor en un único punto para potenciar la simbología del mismo. La blancura del atuendo que envuelve la mano parece apuntar a la clásica iconografía en torno a la expresión de la pureza virginal, combinada con la riqueza de los motivos ornamentales de la espada que porta. A medio camino entre una doncella y una dama engalanada, la Dama del Lago es una especie de sacerdotisa encargada de velar el arma artúrica por excelencia: Excalibur. "'Esta es la espada mágica Excalibur', dijo Merlín, 'y te será entregada por la Dama del Lago, que ahora cruza el agua en su barca'" (Malory 1969: 55).

Paradójicamente, la relevancia de la Dama como protectora de la espada mítica se ve desdibujada por los escasos datos que aporta su caracterización dentro de la trama. La ausencia de una denominación propia apunta a su desplazamiento a un plano secundario, reservando todo el protagonismo para el motivo central de la narración: Excalibur. El único apunte que contribuye a la contextualización de la Dama del Lago es el siguiente: "viene de su castillo, que está erigido en las rocas, y es más hermoso que ninguna morada terrestre" (Malory 1969: 55). La localización del mismo en un lugar escarpado y de difícil acceso apunta a la reclusión, voluntaria o involuntaria, en la que vive el personaje.

Pero es sin duda el episodio titulado "Balin le Sauvage or the Knight with Two Swords" el que alberga un mayor desarrollo del personaje de la Dama, siempre en relación con el hechicero Merlín y Arturo. En este pasaje coexisten dos denominaciones ciertamente confusas por su ambivalencia: la Dama del Lago y la Dama de Avalon. En realidad, la protagonista de la narración —muerta a manos del caballero Balin, violando la orden de la caballería y sus normas pues, en palabras del rey Arturo: "'¡tú, criminal!, gritó Arturo', 'esta dama era nuestra benefactora. ¿Cómo has podido osar matarla en mi presencia, en mi corte, en la que se hallaba bajo mi protección, fuese cual fuese su demanda?'" (Malory 1969: 65)— no es más que una de las hechiceras de la compañía de la Dama original. Si bien en ella son más evidentes los rasgos terrenales (su muerte contribuye a dotarla de una apariencia menos etérea que en el anterior episodio), es importante destacar la caracterización 'polarizada' que de ella se lleva a cabo. 'Polarizada' en tanto que la Dama evoluciona entre dos patrones de conducta radicalmente opuestos: la simple hada benefactora que aparecía de modo casi testimonial en el anterior fragmento adquiere toda una gama de connotaciones negativas bajo la óptica del caballero Balin. Este, en un último intento por legitimar sus actos, aduce que "nuestra benefactora no solo provocó que a mi madre la quemasen viva, sino que también envió a un caballero inocente a una muerte vergonzosa sirviéndose de su magia" (Malory 1969: 65).

Estamos ante el primer signo de maldad atribuido al personaje femenino. El uso pernicioso de sus artes la asimila a la visión medieval de la naturaleza de la mujer, entendida como un cúmulo de humores y bajos instintos entregada a actos irracionales. Por eso debe penar. Y por eso mismo, el hombre se erige en juez y verdugo de su suerte. Heredera de Eva, la Dama del Lago es un eslabón más en la cadena del pecado. Existe una clara dicotomía entre la rectitud de su obrar y la perversión que se le presupone ante las amargas palabras de Balin. La Dama es, pues, un ente ambiguo en este punto del desarrollo narrativo. Se observa, sin embargo, un proceso evolutivo irreversible desde su primera intervención como hechicera protectora. Esta transformación es mayor si cabe en el episodio climático

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de su relación con el mago Merlín, correspondiente a la tercera transmutación de la susodicha Dama del Lago. Su álter ego en esta ocasión es la joven Vivien, Nineve o Nimue (siguiendo la terminología empleada por Malory en *Le Morte Darthur*), que hace acto de presencia en el llamado "The Quest of the White Hound". Secuestrada por el rey Pellinore (véase el claro paralelismo con el rapto de la reina Ginebra, liberada por Lanzarote de manos del rey Méléagant), es a su vuelta a Camelot cuando Merlín experimenta un repentino amor por ella. Es así como "Merlín se enamoró profundamente de Nyneve, a la que el Rey Pellinore había traído de vuelta a la corte, y que había estado anteriormente al servicio de la Dama del Lago" (Malory 1969: 117). El influjo de Vivien-Nineve sobre el hechicero es cada vez mayor, siendo más que patente en el fragmento titulado "The Death of Merlin and the War with the Five Kings".

Cumpliendo con la profecía y viendo próxima la hora de su muerte, Merlín anuncia al rey su exilio voluntario: "un buen día, Merlín habló con Arturo y le contó que iba a marcharse para siempre de su corte porque sabía que su destino, que era ser enterrado vivo, estaba a punto de cumplirse" (Malory 1969: 117). En este nuevo periplo fuera de Camelot, Camelot, al mago le acompaña su protegida Vivien. Una vez solos, comienzan a sucederse los acontecimientos que darán lugar a la traición de Nineve.

La peregrinación de ambos fuera de los límites del mundo legendario de la corte artúrica no solo es el preludio de la inevitable muerte del mago, sino que supone el punto de inflexión de Vivien como carácter femenino. Es, en este sentido, un viaje iniciático para la mujer. Esta da un paso más en su reafirmación progresiva tras su fragilidad inicial y el coraje demostrado tras el episodio y su posterior retorno a Camelot. Fortalecida por los contratiempos sufridos, Nineve decide aventurarse en el conocimiento de las artes mágicas de Merlín, como si de un último estadio formativo se tratase. La Dama ansía un mayor conocimiento, algo que entronca directamente con la narración bíblica sobre la "Expulsión del Paraíso". Al igual que Eva, Nineve tiene vetado el acceso a un cierto tipo de sabiduría, solo apta para un ente superior (ya sea Dios o Merlín, dotado de capacidades sobrenaturales). Esa prohibición degenera en una tensión exponencialmente mayor cara a la consecución del objetivo final. De hecho, el veto es el principal motor de la voluntad subversiva que albergan tanto Eva como Nineve. Así, este funciona como un mecanismo represor de primer orden, manteniendo a la mujer bajo el yugo masculino en tanto en cuanto solo él es depositario de las claves supremas de un conocimiento místico. La ignorancia reduce a la figura femenina a la condición de títere y es la búsqueda de salidas válidas a dicho *statu quo* lo que alimenta la voluntad transgresora.

"Durante el viaje, Merlín le mostró a Nyneve varios lugares secretos maravillosos, que tan solo él y sus iniciados conocían" (Malory 1969: 118). Para lograr su

propósito, Vivien se gana el favor de Merlín. La pasión que él experimenta parece ser la vía idónea para que ella le manipule. Esta dinámica comulgaría con numerosas líneas temáticas medievales que entroncan con la caracterización negativa de la fémina (perniciosa, vengativa, manipuladora) muy explotada, por ejemplo, en los "fabliaux" de tradición francesa. Siguiendo el patrón característico de dichos relatos y transponiéndolo al escenario de Malory, Vivien iniciaría un último viaje junto a Merlín con el único objetivo de sacarle provecho a la atracción de él hacia ella. Una vez más, sería una demostración de las artes y recursos femeninos en aras de conseguir sus propósitos (ya sean legítimos o no). Sin embargo, la ambiciosa Nineve sorprende por su escaso o nulo interés físico y sexual por Merlín. La caracterización de doncella púdica y virginal esbozada en los primeros episodios prevalece aquí sobre la voluntad de conocimiento. El ansia de sabiduría y de poder que a ella van ligados no consigue subyugar en modo alguno la férrea determinación de la dama, dispuesta a preservar su condición inmaculada.

Las aproximaciones sexuales de Merlín son constantemente rechazadas por Nineve, que parece desarrollar incluso una cierta animadversión hacia su mentor, "incluso de indiferencia u hostilidad" (Holbrook 1978: 769).[6] En esa muestra de pudor estriba la principal diferencia entre la interpretación maloriana de la figura de Nineve y la versión ofrecida por Tennyson en *Idylls of the King* (1859). La mayor diferencia entre el texto de Tennyson y la descripción de Malory es el hecho de que, en este caso en particular, no es Merlín quien intenta, con artimañas, seducir a la dama. Muy al contrario, es la propia Vivien la que utiliza sus 'armas de mujer' para conquistar al mago. En el poema "Merlin and Vivien", el poeta victoriano representa a un hada sibilina, dotada de características cercanas al zoomorfismo y próxima a la naturaleza vil de los reptiles. Vivien es para él una víbora interesada que succiona el conocimiento de Merlín antes de acabar fatalmente con su existencia.[7] Mientras que en Malory el lector observa un atisbo de arrepentimiento y redención en la dama, Tennyson suprime dicho episodio: su Vivien representa lo más despreciable, oscuro y negativo del ser humano. Se trata de una nueva vuelta de tuerca al tópico de la mujer y la serpiente, como si fuese una actualización del mito de Lilith.[8] Muy al contrario, en Malory parece prevalecer la virtud sobre el vicio, la rectitud sobre el pecado. Eso evitaría aparentemente la necesidad de un castigo o escarnio. Sin embargo, la evolución de los acontecimientos, si bien no alberga la consumación física de la relación, desemboca en una falta de igual o mayor magnitud: el homicidio. Temiendo que el mago intente seducirla en contra de su propia voluntad mediante subterfugios y encantamientos, Vivien-Nineve se ve empujada a radicalizar su posición inicial. Teniendo en cuenta que "Merlín siempre va con Nymue, tratando a menudo mediante sus 'sutiles artimañas' de llevarla a un lugar oculto, hasta que ella le hizo prometer que no realizaría ningún hechizo sobre ella o, de lo contrario, nunca conseguiría sus deseos para con ella"

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(Holbrook 1978: 769). Esta promesa, que en su forma y contenido tiene mucho de pacto entre caballeros parece no ser más que un recurso desesperado, un truco final del que la Dama echa mano para ganar tiempo en su aprendizaje antes de poder dar una respuesta contundente "para protegerse a sí misma más que por simple oportunismo" (Holbrook 1978: 769).

El acto radical final de Vivien cumple con lo pronosticado por el propio Merlín. Su traición aparece como una consecuencia lógica, el eslabón final de los designios de la Fortuna. "Malory, como tantos otros escritores anteriores y posteriores, no permite a Nymue, quien va a conducir y retener a Merlín bajo la roca que ha de ser su lápida, más opción que la de ser el instrumento del destino" (Holbrook 1978: 769). Partiendo de una concepción determinista de la existencia humana, Malory exime a la Dama de la responsabilidad absoluta de sus acciones. Si ansía el conocimiento oculto de su maestro no es sino en aras de lograr su salvación personal, que pasa en última instancia por la preservación de su integridad física. Aparentemente, la deslealtad de Vivien respondería al paradigma subversivo descrito siglos más tarde por Marx en su teoría del capital (*El Capital*, 1867) y que caracteriza los momentos cruciales del movimiento histórico: la tensión entre el oprimido y el opresor. Merlín funciona como un actuante dominante que pretende la alienación del dominado (Vivien, en su condición de aprendiz del mago) mediante la imposición de su voluntad. Por eso Merlín se ve obligado a ofrecer resistencia y a postularse como elemento revulsivo a favor de un cambio en la tendencia social observada. En su microuniverso particular, Merlín y Vivien alcanzan un *statu quo* de naturaleza semejante. Solo la desaparición del mago puede liberar a la dama de su tormento espiritual.

Para reafirmar el carácter inefable de la traición operada por Nineve, Malory acentúa hasta extremos casi paródicos la definición del mago como un ser concupiscible, movido por el deseo irracional. Merlín aparece como una especie de sátiro lúbrico, "el Merlín de Malory es vicioso. La línea entre el amor apasionado y la concupiscencia puede depender de la perspectiva moral de cada uno, pero […] hay que decir que el tradicional amor fatídico ha evolucionado aquí a claro vicio" (Holbrook 1978: 770). Y dicha caracterización, en el contexto medieval en el que se enmarca la obra *Le Morte Darthur* equivale a la censura y la condena por parte de las autoridades morales, cívicas y religiosas. El misticismo medieval es contrario a toda forma de goce que no se derive de la observación extática de la dignidad divina. El placer de la carne es denostado como un fruto de la perversión humana, ligado únicamente a su condición de mortal y a su fugaz existencia terrenal. El respeto al dogma cristiano pasa por la dominación de los impulsos carnales, privilegiando el alimento espiritual. Sir Thomas Malory parece próximo a dicha línea de pensamiento al postular la necesaria condena a Merlín en forma

de encierro. El sustrato moralizador filtrado en la obra reproduce, pues, la norma mística cristiana.

Por eso Vivien, lejos de recibir un correctivo acorde a las consecuencias fatales de sus actos, renueva, al final de la saga artúrica, sus vínculos con el reino de Camelot, retornando a este mundo mítico en calidad de sucesora legítima de su maestro, demostrando su carácter esencialmente puro. Malory la hace protagonista de una redención final al convertirla en la salvadora del rey Arturo en su episodio con el pérfido Accolon. Esta reconversión se acentúa al transformarla en la benefactora del lago (La Dama del Lago que entrega la mágica espada Excalibur a Arturo). Malory diseña un futuro para Vivien, lejos del mago y de cualquier conexión con él. A través de este procedimiento contribuye a dotarla de una notable independencia y de una relevante importancia en el desarrollo de la saga artúrica y de sus personajes.

Podría considerarse que la Dama no es sino la transposición épico-literaria del motivo bíblico de la Virgen María. Su pureza inmaculada debe ser un patrón de conducta y un ejemplo de moralidad para todas las de su género. El misterio de la Concepción incide en la defensa de la castidad como virtud permanente y necesaria en la mujer del mismo modo que la rectitud del espíritu demostrada por Nineve pretende rectificar la laxitud de otras conductas femeninas representadas por Malory (véase la relajación moral de la propia reina Ginebra o el incesto morganático, por ejemplo).

Así pues, si en la revisión tennysoniana de la historia artúrica la mujer encarna el principio de fractura social, en Malory esta se erige en guardiana y protectora de los valores fundamentales de la estructura grupal. Si partimos de que "para Browning y Tennyson, entonces, las mujeres pecadoras se convierten en las cabezas visibles de una cultura corrompida; su resonancia imaginativa justifica el castigo al que se ve sometida"[9] (Auerbach 1980: 31), la Vivien romántica y victoriana simboliza el ocaso y la corrupción moral, mientras que su homóloga maloriana evoluciona en un sentido inverso. Si para Tennyson el personaje de la aprendiz no es más que un ejemplo disimulado de conducta prometeica —sirviéndose de su posición privilegiada para conseguir sus propósitos intelectuales—, en Malory cabe una interpretación positiva de la misma.

4. Merlín y Vivien a la luz de la modernidad

La historia de Merlín y Vivien —lejos de caer en el olvido— ha sido revisada en múltiples ocasiones, dejando una honda impronta incluso en las artes modernas. El poema de Edwin Arlington Robinson "Merlin: A Poem" (1917) nos presenta a Merlín y Vivien como una pareja de amantes que cree fielmente que su destino

es el de estar eternamente juntos y, para ello, deben renunciar al mundo real de Camelot. Cuando Merlín presiente la inminente caída de Arturo decide regresar, oponiéndose a los deseos de su dama. Su vuelta al reino, a esa realidad en la que el tiempo consume y mata, le permite tomar conciencia de que la relación con Vivien ha provocado en cierta manera su ruina y su pérdida de identidad.

Valerie Nieman revisa también la historia de Merlín y Vivien en su poema "The Naming of the Lost" (1989). En él traspone a la pareja legendaria a un ambiente moderno en los Estados Unidos. Así, el mago se convierte en un granjero llamado 'Merle' quien, tras su liberación, abandona Inglaterra para asentarse lejos del torbellino amoroso causante de su desgracia. El destino hará que Nimue y Merlín se encuentren en este nuevo escenario, al igual que años antes, y vean florecer su amor. En esta ocasión, sin embargo, viene acompañado del perdón (ansiado por la dama y otorgado por Merlín).

Otra adaptación contemporánea de esta leyenda es la llevada a cabo por Vera Chapman en su obra *The Enchantresses* (1998). Su aportación acerca la historia a un público adolescente y juvenil, basándose fundamentalmente en el amor entre Vivien y Merlín haciendo de ellos una pareja en total sintonía. Mientras que ellos utilizan sus poderes mágicos para proteger a Arturo y actuar como benefactores de la Corte, es Morgana quien se erige en el agente negativo que perturba la paz espiritual de los amantes. La descripción de la mujer en términos negativos evoluciona de una figura a otra, pero pervive.

Incluso el mundo del cine ha intentado reflejar el antagonismo pasional de dichos personajes. *Merlín* (1998), dirigida por Steve Barron, presenta un concepto de amor puro y leal entre la bondadosa Nimue y el fiel consejero Merlín. Siguiendo la literalidad de la leyenda, Barron reproduce el enterramiento del mago. Sin embargo, él decide utilizar el personaje de la pagana reina Mab (como contrapunto negativo a Nimue) para evocar una ficción en la que esta es encerrada en una cueva a la espera de que llegue el mago. Este, temeroso de la abrupta caída de Arturo, se evade de la misma dejando a Nimue encerrada para siempre en las profundidades de la tierra.

Todas y cada una de las aproximaciones contemporáneas a esta leyenda tienden a conservar aspectos importantes de la historia base: el mundo de la magia, el amor, la imagen del enterramiento y la exploración del simbolismo negativo encarnado por la figura femenina, ya sea Morgana, Mab o la propia Vivien. Sirviéndose del enfoque de Malory, se insinúa generalmente que no es la mujer quien rompe en definitiva la estabilidad del colectivo, sino el hombre con su obrar desviado. No puede, pues, hablarse en este contexto de una fuerza subversiva de inspiración proto-feminista como motor de la acción de Nineve, sino más bien de la asunción pasiva y resignada de su destino. En este punto, los conceptos de traición y mujer se desligan para dejar paso a una noción si cabe más potente: el sino.

Notas

1. A este propósito, resulta interesante el estudio de Michel Foucault sobre las estructuras y dimensiones de la noción de represión en la cultura occidental (*Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975).

2. Para una explicación detallada de ambos conceptos, ver Pierre Bourdieu, "Le champ littéraire" *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales,* 89, 1991, p. 4-46.

3. Es interesante el estudio llevado a cabo por la profesora Annick Boileve-Guerlet: "D'une sculpture de la cathédrale de Santiago à María de Zayas, évolution du motif de la femme adultère et de la tête coupée".

4. Traducción de la autora.

5. Todas las citas de Malory han sido traducidas por la autora.

6. Todas las citas de Holbrook han sido traducidas por la autora.

7. "Sus trazos de serpiente, tan evidentes en los *Idylls,* parecen provenir también de las notas de Southey. En un pasaje que él traduce de *The Prophecy of Merlin* Viviane se refiere a sí misma como 'la blanca serpiente' que Merlín había instruido" (traducción de la autora; Haight, 1947: 552).

8. "Lilith era una serpiente; fue la primera mujer de Adán […] Más tarde Dios creó a Eva; Lilith, para vengarse de la mujer humana de Adán, animó a Eva a que probase el fruto prohibido y a que concibiese a Caín, hermano y asesino de Abel" (traducción de la autora; Borges, 1974: 94).

9. Traducción de la autora.

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'PARADOXING' THE ALIEN: THE MORISCO IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH TEXTS[1]

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In late October, 1501, Catalina de Aragón, the daughter of the Spanish Catholic Monarchs King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, arrived in London to marry Henry VII's first-born son and heir, the ill-fated prince Arthur. After a formal engagement in August 1497 and a marriage by proxy in 1499, the Spanish princess had eventually come to England to be married to the sickly fifteen-year-old prince Arthur in November 1501. Catherine —as she would be called for the rest of her life— made a triumphal entry procession at Cheapside a few days after her arrival, which according to contemporary accounts produced an excellent impression on Londoners, to a great extent due to the presence of a spectacular and exotic retinue of musicians and dancers, including "trumpettes", "shalmewes", "minstrels", "sakbotes" and at least one acrobat (Habib 2008: 38-40). Indeed, Catherine's attendants were not only fascinating but also very numerous, apparently exceeding by far what had been agreed between both parties, English and Spanish, before the engagement: the pre-marriage conversations apparently specified a retinue of not more than fifty attendants, and King Henry complained that Catherine arrived in London with around three times that number.[2]

But if Catherine's dignified entry proved a success with the commoners of London, her entry in the royal palace was seen in a different light by another kind of audience. Together with the King and his second son Henry (who would marry Catherine in 1509), the humanist Thomas More witnessed Catherine's encounter

with Arthur in Whitehall, where she arrived accompanied by her attendants during the first days of November 1501; disturbed by what he saw, More described the scene to his friend, the English theologian John Holt, in a letter:[3]

> The magnificent attire of our nobles aroused cries of admiration. But the Spanish escort —good heavens!— what a sight! If you had seen it. I am afraid you would have burst with laughter; they were so ludicrous. Except for three, or at the most four, of them, they were just too much to look at: hunchbacked, undersized, barefoot Pygmies from Ethiopia. If you had been there, you would have thought they were refugees from hell. (Roger 1961: 2-3)

From what we know and according to the Spanish monarchs, of the fifty attendants (one hundred and fifty or so, if we believe King Henry), only two (who were slaves) were black; however, More very graphically explains that he could only bear to look upon three or four of Catherine's attendants, suggesting that for him these alone were 'reasonably fair', the rest being either 'black' or at least 'non white'. Whatever we may think of the ethical standards of the author of Utopia, and although it is likely that Catherine had with her more than those two black attendants, it seems improbable that she travelled to (and arrived in) London with a retinue that was mostly of unspecified black origin. The ones that More found so very unpleasant, improper, and 'ludicrous' (and that he identified as "the Spanish escort") must have been dark, or olive-skinned Moriscos, the baptized Spanish Moors who, between the late 14th and the early 17th centuries, not only became in Spain an identifiable community (in terms of its demographic, social and economic weight) but were also strikingly visible as they were often given positions of relative importance by the Spanish aristocracy, either as slaves or free servants.[4] As the evidence of the Oxford English Dictionary shows, there was no specific word for More to use to identify them, and so he was undoubtedly registering the presence of some vaguely ideologized oriental or Moorish (and probably Spanish) 'appearance', as his racialist and negative description to Holt seems to demonstrate. In fact, he may have been recording the first ever appearance of Moriscos on English soil. To be sure, More's 'refugees from hell' could be adequately defined as aliens or strangers, following Lloyd Edward Kermode's clear taxonomy of 'the other' in Elizabethan England: according to this, 'aliens' (or 'strangers', as Kermode holds that both terms can be used indifferently) are persons from a 'foreign' country (the home country being England and Wales during Elizabeth's reign, and England, Wales and Scotland under James I); 'foreigners', on the other hand, are individuals from outside the city of London, those not being freemen (or guildsmen, who possessed voting and representation rights). Most aliens then were foreigners too, both being jointly considered as 'general outsiders', although the interests of the foreign English (non-Londoners in London, for instance) were far from those of continental strangers (Kermode 2009: 2).[5] However, although More appears to

refer explicitly to the Spanish collectively in his letter, and clearly considers them as aliens, he seems to exclude the princess from his negative judgment:

> Ah, but the lady! take my word for it, she thrilled the hearts of everyone; she possesses all those qualities that make for beauty in a very charming young girl. Everywhere she receives the highest of praises. (Roger 1961: 3)

More's criticism then is directed against almost all the Queen's attendants, whom he seems to find too 'Ethiopian' or, in other words, too Spanish, too Moorish, and too alien, while Catherine herself somehow appears to avoid his disapproval. Yet, More paradoxically twists again his description of the event to rebuke his fellow countrymen for a possibly excessive praise of this Spanish lady, and concludes his letter with the admonition: "but even that [i.e., to bestow on Catherine the highest of praises] is inadequate" (Roger 1961: 3).

In his seminal *The Stranger in Shakespeare* (1972) Leslie Fiedler explored the apparently contradictory attitude towards strangers expressed in Shakespearean drama, which simultaneously showed "a paranoia about blacks" and "sympathy for strangers" (Fiedler 1973: 182), remaining the locus "in which all the proverbial antinomies are confused" (Fiedler 1973: 183). In this paper I argue that the early modern English approach to aliens and strangers (as defined above) involves a complex and paradoxical dynamics of rejection and absorption. As my opening anecdote suggests, I will focus on a very specific category of vaguely identified aliens, namely the Spanish Moriscos, since it is they who are the protagonists of what I have called 'the paradox of the alien', or the act of 'paradoxing the alien';[6] that is, Moriscos are representatives of both the alien-within, frequently encountered in early modern Europe, and of the alien-within-the-alien insofar as they are simultaneously Spanish but also alleged crypto Muslims, as well as being, in a nominal sense, Catholic converts.[7] In my approach to paradox —today commonly understood as the reversal of common opinion, 'para-doxa'[8] or 'beyond convention'— I follow Peter Platt, who explores and defines paradoxical reasoning in Shakespeare and the early modern period as "an agent of action and change" (2009: 4). This is the epistemological move that operates on reality with the purpose of simultaneously accepting and rejecting it, and which also creates the kind of irresolvable uncertainty and doubt that early modern writers called 'contrariety' (Platt 2009: 1-16).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* informs us that it was Thomas More (as we saw, the author of the 'paradoxical' description of Catherine of Aragon and her Spanish retinue) who firstly used the term paradox in English to refer to an "opynyon inopinable" in his *Second Parte of the Confutacion of Tyndal's Answere* (London, 1533); Shakespeare also used the term in *Hamlet* to discuss the 'paradoxical' relation between beauty and honesty, emphasizing how paradox reversed given

opinion: "This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof" (1997: III, I, 115-116). And Thomas Hobbes (to give just a very superficial survey of the use of the term in the early modern period) defended paradox from the accusation of being a "felony or some other heinous crime", defining it as "an opinion not yet generally received" in his 1656 treatise entitled *The questions concerning liberty, necessity, and chance* (1841: 304). A modern judgement on the matter, following Hobbes, would probably see early modern paradox as far from being "paralyzing and ineffectual" (Platt 2009: 4), indeed would see it as helping to explain the attitude of 16th and 17th-century writers towards aliens, and more specifically towards the Moriscos who were beginning to appear in England at this time: such paradoxes contain opposites without trying to resolve them, startling the readers and audiences, expanding rather than excluding contradiction, and challenging conventions (Platt 2009: 2-8).[9]

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the earliest references to the term 'Morisco' in the English language are relatively unspecific[10] and occurred decades after More's slighting of the Spanish princess. For example, in the 1540 *Voyage Barbara to Brazil* the term 'Morisco' appears to be synonymous with 'Moorish' or 'Moroccan' in the sentence "master Roberte Browne delyvered unto Stone xxxj peces of Morisco golde". As we know, there was no distinctive Morisco currency as such, whereas the kingdom of Morocco, the land of the Moors, was recognised as a conspicuously wealthy economy. At around the same time the term 'Morisco' appears in the English translation of the 1551 travel narrative by the Venetian ambassadors Giosaffat Barbaro and Ambrogio Contarini, *Travels to Tana & Persia*, to refer to the customs of North African Moors and Persians within the context of the ambiguous political geography of the early modern period, when they describe "Sitteng vpon carpetts aftre the Morisco maner". The *OED* also informs us that 'Morisco' as a specific geographical location appears in English almost simultaneously but with considerably greater accuracy, with reference to north-western Africa, or modern-day Mauretania and Morocco, the locations from which the Moors (and especially 'Spanish Moors') were thought to come. Indeed, in 1531 the Aristotelian essayist Thomas Elyot in his well-known *Book Named the Gouernour* described how the "Noble Romanes, whan they were in Numidia, Libia, & suche other countrayes, which nowe be called Barbary & Morisco, in the vacation season from warres, hunted lions, liberdes, & suche other bestis" (1907: I, xviii).

By the late 16th century references to Moriscos begin to be used with greater precision, combining a reasonably well-documented knowledge of their role in Spanish contemporary politics with definitions that are sometimes clearly prejudicial, as in Matthew Sutcliffe's *Briefe Replie to Libel* (1600),[11] with a

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derogatory reference to: "Moriscoes and Negroes, and horseboies, and such Canalliary" (1600: B1ᵛ). Frequently, these references are also informed by an exotic orientalist perspective; for example, in 1605 Moriscos are linked to gypsies in R. Treswell's *Relation of a Journey*: "Diuers Gypsies (as they termed them) men and women, dauncing and tumbling much after the Morisco fashion" (1809: 434).[12] Finally, around 1645 William Atkins' *A Relation of the Journey from St. Omers to Seville* refers to "Those Moriscoes which in the yeare 1610 were by Philip the Third bannisht out of Andalusia and Granado in Spaine to the number of ninetie thousand" (2009: 247).[13]

As I noted above, in Aliens and Englishness in Elizabethan Drama (2009), Lloyd Edward Kermode has developed a complex and productive approach to the dramatic representation of aliens and foreigners in 16th-century England that I believe to be informed, implicitly at least, by the early modern culture of paradox. According to Kermode, Marian and earlier Elizabethan drama (what he calls the 'first alien stage') produced plays and non-dramatic texts that confirm the theoretical perception of an English identity that was over-determined by its explicit rejection of, and difference from, recognizable ethnic and cultural 'others'. However, late Elizabethan theatre (the 'second alien stage'), according to Kermode, produces Englishness "as an ideology of power built, paradoxically, around the alien within that is 'con-fused'". (2009: 6, my italics). In the transition from one 'stage' to another an objectified 'otherness' is incorporated into a dominant English culture to produce a hybrid identity. Kermode's emphasis on the need to identify a set of early modern plays that offer late Elizabethan constructions of identity 'around the alien', is reinforced by the work of the anthropologist Anthony Cohen, who by the 1990s had already emphasized the conceptual inadequacies of an approach to identity that focuses primarily on the exclusion of the 'other'. Cohen describes a more flexible dynamics between self and other that includes distancing from a set of characteristics (of aliens), but also implies associating with other sets of features (1993: 197-198). Considering the preponderance of criticism based on a binarist theory of self-identity formation in the English early modern period, it seems necessary to assert that both Cohen and Kermode have brilliantly reintroduced and adapted a familiar Bakhtinian dialectic of the internalized opposition between 'high' and 'low' that Stallybrass and White had already developed, and to a certain extent popularized, in their seminal The Politics and Poetics of Transgression (1986):

> Repugnance and fascination are the twin poles of the process in which a *political* imperative to reject and eliminate the debasing 'low' conflicts powerfully and unpredictably with a desire for this Other. (1986: 5)

According to Stallybrass and White, the 'top' not only simultaneously rejects and desires the 'low other', but also finds itself including its 'other' symbolically. In

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Barbara Babcock's words, "what is socially peripheral, is often symbolically central" (in Stallybrass and White 1986: 20). Interestingly, both Bakhtin and Babcock (and Kermode, and Stallybrass and White) introduce a concern with borders between self and other, and the high and the low, which reproduces the central Lotmanian notion of the 'semiosphere' as the abstract (although very real and material) space where semiosis takes place, and the also Lotmanian concept of the 'boundary' that comprises the outer limit of that space. Of course, the boundary in Lotman's semiosphere is an ambivalent concept in that it both separates and unifies; it is bilingual and polylingual, and it transforms (or 'translates') what is 'external' into what is 'internal' (Lotman 2001: 137). This implies a process of negotiating meanings and sanctioning specific discourses from outside the semiosphere along with decisions about whether to include them or not within authorised and legitimised discursive fields. But this process, in order to avoid reverting to some form of structuralist idealism, has to be explained as (in Voloshinov's words) an association of external discourses with "the vital socioeconomic prerequisites of the particular group's existence" (Voloshinov 1973: 13); in other words, I want to emphasize how the 'reception' of otherness is materially (not only symbolically) conditioned by the already existing discourse of 'Moorishness', a discourse which —only indirectly produced by Biblical exegesis— itself consists of a number of post-lapsarian narratives of the Muslim 'other' as non-English, non-European, non-civilized or non-Christian, but also as powerful, fearsome and admirable. It is in this sense that Moriscos externalize the paradoxical early modern approach to others that the actual evolution of the term 'Morisco' —as an index of social change— signals: after all, from a cultural and materialist semiotic perspective (and, interestingly, according to Voloshinov), words "have the capacity to register all the transitory, delicate, momentary phases of social change" (Voloshinov 1973: 13). The apparently exclusive relation established between 'us' and 'them' in many accounts of self-other encounters in the early modern period may, in the light of these approaches, acquire a different dimension, in that it directs attention away from a simplistic binarism of exclusion to forms of symbiosis or dialectical dynamics of the kind suggested by Kermode and Lotman.

Virtually unknown in the early 16th century, the vicissitudes of the Moriscos became a central matter of attention in England at least as early as 1568, when the Morisco Revolt (also known as the War of the Alpujarras), broke out.[14] Many records contained in the Calendar of State Papers *(CSP)* lodged at Simancas, covering the period 1568-1579, clearly manifest the English awareness of, and interest in, the potential geo-political role of the Moriscos. That role involved the capacity of the Moriscos to deplete Philip's military resources by forcing him to divide his attention between Flanders and the war in Granada. In addition, it furnished a comparison between their role as enemies-within, as pseudo-Christians

within the Spanish realm, and the role occupied mainly by the Catholic minority in Elizabethan England. On 2 April 1569, four months after the beginning of the revolt and only a few weeks after it had escalated into a major conflict, the Spanish ambassador Guerau de Spes wrote to King Philip that:

> not a day passes [in England] without some new tale being made up [by members of the Privy Council or counsellors of the Queen] to comfort the people; just as, recently, they cried up the rising of the Moriscos of Granada, as if it were some great thing. (*CSP*, 1894: 139)

A month later, on 9 May 1569, another letter to the King explains that:

> They [i.e., Cecil and his party] also exaggerate greatly the rising of the Moriscos of Granada and other fibs and fictions which they publish everyday. They boast of the impossibility of your Majesty making war against them [i.e., the English] […] I have given full information of the true state of things in Granada, but they will not believe me, and cry out that other provinces of Spain have risen against your Majesty, little knowing the fidelity of the Spaniards. (*CSP*, 1894: 145; 149)

The English clearly had a vested interest in Spain's defeat, or at least in her domestic distractions, which accounts for the ambassador's observation in the letter of 13 May 1570 that they (i.e., the English) "cannot hide their disappointment at the good news from Granada" (*CSP*, 1894: 245), when Don Juan de Austria had already changed the course of the war. Even some decades after these events, Francis Bacon in his *Considerations Touching a Warre with Spain* (1623-1624, published in 1629) still considered the Moriscos a major threat to Spain: "the Moors of Valencia expulsed, and their allies, do yet hange as a cloud or storm over Spain" (1629: 4v). In general, the Morisco revolt was regarded in England and Europe (Hillgarth 2000: 205-208) as an internal (although with an international dimension) and debilitating struggle between the two halves of an already hybrid culture, the product of an orientalization of Spanish identity that was already at work in the English and European imagination (Fuchs 2009: 4). This confusion and contamination ascribed to England's most feared —and perhaps most admired and hated— rival can be perceived in the discursive formulations of these issues widespread during the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

An updated revision of Richard Percyvall's dictionary of 1591, John Minsheu's *A Dictionary of Spanish and English* (1599) was the first of a series of Spanish and English dictionaries, and Spanish grammars, published between 1599 and 1623 by this self-styled "Professor of Languages in London".[15] Both Percyvall's 1591 edition and Minsheu's 1599 edition include various references to *Moro* ("a blacke Moore of Barberie, or a Negar that followeth the Turkish religion"), *Mulato* ("the sonne of a black Moore, and one of another nation"), *Mestizo* ("that which is come or sprung of a mixture of two kinds, as a black-Moore and a Christian, a mungrell

dog or beast"), and interestingly from the point of view of the present discussion *Morisco* ("a blacke Moore made or become a Christian") (Minsheu [1599] 1623). Minsheu, and Percyvall before him, familiarized English readers and students of Spanish with the great diversity of hybrid subjects populating 16th and 17th-century Spain, individuals who were the product of certain 'mixtures' that would have shocked Thomas More a century earlier, but who were becoming increasingly visible as a consequence of European proto-colonial projects. I will deal later with the wider epistemological consequences of this concern with 'mixtures', but in terms of human taxonomy such was the English awareness of hybridization that by the mid-seventeenth century English readers had already been familiarized with many of the 'new' human types fashioned by the Spaniards in the New World, as Thomas Gage described in his *New Survey of the West-Indies* (1648), a travel narrative (the first ever by a non-Spaniard in the American colonies) in which he carefully defines 'Black-Moors', 'Mulatto's', 'Mestiso's', 'Indians', 'Criolios', and 'Simarrones', all of them being jointly categorized as 'Barbarians' (1677: front page, 122-124, 291-292).

For their part, Minsheu's texts seem to take for granted the degree of hybridization of Spain, to the extent that his observations contain few value judgments and a certain tolerance is detectable in his somewhat neutral definitions. Minsheu's primary object of study is language and grammar, and he seeks to emphasize the pleasure and delight to be obtained from learning Spanish, as well as from the location of the Latin etymologies of the language, and he exhorts learners and "any other Reader" (*Dialogues*, 1623: first page) to profit from the learning of Spanish, encouraging them to attain "the perfection of the Spanish Tongue" (*Dictionary*, 1623: first page).

However, Minsheu consistently reminds his readers of the hybrid ('symbiotic', I would call it) nature of the language. In this connection, it is noteworthy that the Dictionary of Spanish and English includes:

> an Alphabeticall Table of the Arabicke and Moorish words now commonly received and used in the Spanish tongue, which being dispersed in their severall due places throughout the whole Dictionarie are marked thus †. (1623: first page)

Moreover, the companion work, Dictionarie in English and Spanish (1599), contains

> [A] briefe Table of Sundry Arabian and Moorish words usuall in the Spanish tongue: all which as they stand dispersed in their severall places in the Dictionarie, are marked with a long Crosse […plus sections on…] Arabick or Moorish words usuall in Murcia, and Arabick or Moorish words used in Portugall. (1623: 384)

This particular structure, in which 'the world of Spanish words' (to adapt a familiar early modern metaphor) is contained within the dictionary, could be explained as

a cultural semiotic or more specifically Lotmanian instance of how semiospheric boundaries filter and translate various languages and discourses. This is represented orthographically in the *Dictionarie* through its simultaneous incorporation and marking off of those words with an Arabic origin.

Minsheu is also at pains to demonstrate the hybrid origin of the Spanish tongue. For example, in his Spanish Grammar of 1623, he postulates a mosaic of origins in which 'Biskaine' (the source of which was Caldean, he claims), 'Arabique' (which —he thinks— comes from Hebrew), and 'Catalan' (which, in Minsheu's account, is a kind of French and comes from Provençal), combine to provide the basis for the evolution of Spanish itself as both the prestigious final stage and the source ('mother tongue') of the current language:

> The fourth is that which is now at this day commonly used and spoken thorow all Spaine, and is called Lengua vulgar, the mother tongue, otherwise Lengua Castellana, or Española, the Castilian or Spanish tongue. (Spanish Grammar, 1623: Mm3/1)

Minsheu then simultaneously and paradoxically incorporates Spanish into the realm of dignified objects of study, and at the same time constructs a cordon sanitaire that affirms the non-European nature of a substantial part of that language and culture. From a careful reading of his abundant linguistic writings, we may conclude that, paraphrasing his definition of the Morisco, Spanish seems to be for Minsheu 'an oriental language made or become European', and like the Moriscos, Spanish is and is not Muslim, is and is not Christian. This self-division is the foundation of paradox, the otherness that is lodged at the heart of the discourse of origins and that produces a homogeneous phenomenon, while at the same time pointing towards a constellation of marginal constitutive relationships that affirm the symbolic centrality of the Spanish language itself.

An increasing awareness of the mongrel composition of cultures and languages was undoubtedly present in the early modern period, partly as a consequence of the various contacts made between cultures through trade or conquest, and it is no surprise that linguists were especially aware of this. If Minsheu reproduces the hybrid nature of Spain and all things Spanish in the structure and disposition of his Spanish-English dictionaries, then we find a similar concern with English as a polyglot language and culture in the early modern period. John Florio (the author of the 1598 Italian-English dictionary *A World of Wordes*) describes in *First Fruits* (1578), through an Italian character, the English language in terms not dissimilar to those of Minsheu: "Certis, if you wyl believe me, it doth not like me at al, because it is a language confused, bepeesed with many tongues" (in Kermode 2009: 5). Kermode links this early modern allusion to English as a confusion of languages with the issue of English identity: like Minsheu's account of the origin

of Spanish, it is not clear whether alien elements in language (French, Italian, or 'Duitch' in the case of English; 'Biskaine', 'Arabique', or Catalan in the case of Spanish) come after the creation of the language (or culture), or whether they are already present within the language (or culture). Minsheu and Florio appear to suggest both things. As Kermode explains, the belief in a dismissable alien body is less worrying than the alien presence within, since if the former is easily identifiable and is therefore vulnerable to repression, the reformation of the self-alienated individual can only take place within the self, through a process of internalisation that carries with it certain risks (2009: 24). Hence, the constant concern with hybridization that Minsheu and Florio express: while Minsheu seems to warn the student of "the Castilian or Spanish tongue" (*Spanish Grammar*, 1623: Mm3/1) against the oriental nature of that language, Florio openly criticizes the confusion (his term) that he finds in English, which his fictional Italian character does not like "at al" (in Kermode 2009: 5).[16]

As was to be expected, we find this same epistemological concern with linguistic hybridity in early modern drama, poetry and theoretical writing and criticism, now focusing on the polymorphous nature of literary forms. On the one hand, some authors inveigh against a potential gallimaufry, another mixture that 'degrades' the alleged 'purity' of literary, aesthetic or intellectual productions; on the other, we perceive a certain ambiguity about the possibility of introducing some breeches of decorum by allowing the mixing of types or styles, especially as they seem to be inevitable, to the extent that for many authors these generic mixtures appear to be acceptable. Sidney had a relatively open attitude regarding the mixing of literary types: "some poesies have coupled together two or three kinds; […] but that cometh all to one in this question; for if severed they be good, then conjunction cannot be hurtful" (Klein 1963: 201). This is a position that Ben Jonson sustained in the prologue of the pastoral play *Sad Shepherd* (1641), where he argued in favour of introducing comic elements in a pastoral (Klein 1963: 371). More widespread, though, was the criticism of 'confusion', as in the extremely influential *Scholemaster* (1570) by Roger Ascham: "The confounding of companies, breedeth confusion of good manners both in the Courte, and euerie where else" (1570: 24). For Puttenham, there is an evident need to keep different things apart, be they the kind of business to attend (1970: 281), or the clothes to wear: "there is a decency of apparel in respect of the place where it is to be used" (1970: 284). Indeed, by 1668, Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* proclaims the superiority of French drama over the English and the Spanish as the former respects the three unities and does not mix genres, as to his dismay English and Spanish playwrights do in tragicomedy (Gilbert 1962: 601-620). In any case, playwrights and poets seemed to have developed the epistemological perception that the state of the real world, no less, provided a good explanation for this literary mingling, as John Lyly

states in the prologue of his allegorical comedy *Midas* (1589): "If we present a mingle-mangle, our fault is to be excused, because the whole world is become an hodge-podge" (Klein 1963: 203).

A similar preoccupation with hybrid cultural forms for which these kinds of intertextuality may stand as metaphors can be found in the non-dramatic work of the Elizabethan playwright and essayist Thomas Dekker; for example, in *The Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1606), Dekker seems to agree with Puttenham's criticism above when he satirizes one of the major social ills of his time, the "sin of Apishnesse" (or 'imitation', his fifth sin) (1885: II: 57-61), which he relates to the English fashion of picking styles from various nations, and associates with the more general sin of Pride:

> For an English-mans suit is like a traitors bodie that hath beene hanged, drawne, and quartered, and is set up in severall places […] And thus we that mocke everie Nation, for keeping one fashion, yet steale patches for everie one of them, to peece out our pride, are now laughing stocks to them, because their cut so scurvily becomes us. (1885: II: 59-60)

For Dekker, true Englishness suffers from this hodge-podge of styles that he catalogues in his *Seven Deadly Sins* and in other writings such as *A Strange Horse-Race* (1613) or *A Rod for Run-Aways* (1625). To be sure, Dekker was —in all likelihood— not explicitly referring to Moriscos when he made allusion to various processes of hybridization; yet, his overall concern with identities and otherness —as we will see when we deal with some of his dramatic writing— was certainly permeated by a clear awareness of the existence and significance of hybrids such as Spanish Moriscos.

Whereas public documents (like the *CSP*), or linguistic works, such as Minsheu's, that deal explicitly with diplomatic contacts, or with the origins of language, include various references to Moriscos, it is difficult to find clear and explicit references to them in the drama of the period. Evidently the visibility of these identities in early modern England was reduced because their political and cultural impact was relatively limited compared to that of, say, Spaniards or conventional Moors. However, there are some oblique references to Moriscos in several early modern plays, especially from the mid and late 17th century. The anonymous *Lady Alimony* (1659)[17] contains a secondary character called Morisco, who acts as the confident of Lady Platonick, along with two other marginal characters called Mor and Moris. Both Philip Massinger's *The Parliament of Love* (ca. 1624)[18] and Francis Fane's *Love in the Dark* (1671) introduce Morisco as the language of the Moors. In the former, Massinger's Clarindor makes a positive allusion to it: "I desir'd/ to heare her speake in the morisco tongue/ troath it is a pretty language" (1929: II, 329-331); Massinger

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is referring to the language of Beaupre, a servant of "darke Complexion" (1929: II, 306), and there are no further references to the Moriscos or their 'language'. Fane's play, however, abounds in linguistic, ethnic and socio-cultural references to Spanish Moors and Morisco language; thus, Morisco is the language of the supposedly black slave played by the malevolent Intrigo, who invents a fake language that passes as Morisco (1929: II, 425, 427, 454), and is physically described as a "better favour'd Moor than ordinary" as "his nose is not so flat as most of theirs, and he has not altogether such a black Mossy Pate" (1929: II, 345-346), although like all lustful Moriscos he "will make plaguy signs to a Woman" (1929: II, 398). Francis Beaumont's *Cupid's Revenge* (ca. 1615) refers to "Mad morisco's" (1615: II, i) to suggest hidden and wild danger, and it is this meaning that Shakespeare deploys in his account of Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*: in act three, scene one, York remembers the "headstrong Kentishman John Cade of Ashford", (1997: 356-357) whom he saw in the middle of the battle "capre upright, like a wilde Morisco" and who shook the darts off his thigh "as he [i.e., the Morisco] [shakes] his bells" (1997: 365-366). John Marston's *What You Will* (1607) alludes to the wit of the Moriscos (1633: IV, i); and, finally, Thomas Dekker's *Match mee in London* (*ca.* 1611) —significantly demonstrating an emphasis similar to that manifested in his prose writings— dramatizes the Morisco style as one of a number of foreign dressing fashions now contaminating England; in the dialogue between the King and Bilbo the merchant the following complaint occurs: "If they be blacke they are rotten indeed, sir doe you want no rich spangled Morisco shoo-strings" (1630: II).[19]

Interestingly, Dekker's *Match mee in London* is set in a corrupt Spanish court ruled by debauchery, and dramatizes how it is eventually destroyed by unbridled lust, something he had already explored, as we will see, in *Lust's Dominion* (ca. 1598-1599, pub. 1657).[20] Indeed, regardless of these brief references, there are indications that Elizabethan and Stuart playwrights were by no means unaware of the existence of these quintessentially hybrid figures, especially in the actual dramatizations and ideological transformations that these characters underwent in early modern plays. Thomas Dekker's *Lust's Dominion* dramatizes Moors in a Spanish context, suggesting that his concern here was with Moriscos. If William Rowley's later play *All's Lost by Lust* (ca. 1618-1620, pub 1633) signaled the historical beginning of Muslim Spain,[21] Dekker's play pointed to the final stage of a process that, almost exactly nine hundred years after the events dramatized in *All's Lost by Lust*, led the Spanish King to decree the final and complete expulsion from the kingdom of all 300,000 Moriscos, an event that would produce various responses from several European writers and rulers, from Cardinal Richelieu and Elizabeth I to English observers such as John Stevens (Hillgarth 2000: 200). Thus, although they are not specifically alluded to as such, Dekker's play seems to end with a decree that anticipates the

historical expulsion of the Moriscos/Moors: "And for this barbarous Moor, and all his train/ Let all the Moors be banished from Spain" (1657: V, vi, 203-204).

The protagonist in *Lust's Dominion* is the son of the King of Fez, the Muslim Eleazar, whose origins —like those of Shakespeare's Othello— are difficult to pin down. Although he has traditionally been assumed to be a prisoner at the Spanish court ("captive" he says of himself at the beginning of the play, and later on he briefly explains the death of his father and his own capture at the hands of the Spaniards in Fez), the play appears to be actually addressing the figure of a Morisco: his evidently preeminent role and presence in the court, with total access to the Queen and the King, his apparent status and support, including absolute visibility in all state affairs, his cultural confidence and connections, his association with an orientalized Spanish *habitus*, together with the final explicit reference to the expulsion, can only be satisfactorily explained through the figure of the Morisco. Indeed, Eleazar's condition not so much as prisoner but rather as just another Spaniard or —more to the point— as a Morisco, seems to be reinforced by the probable earlier title of the play: Samuel Chew reminds us: "there is, in fact, no objection to Collier's and Fleay's identification of it [i.e., *All's Lost by Lust*] with *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy* for which Henslowe paid Dekker, Day, and Haughton in February 1600" (1937: 520).

Eleazar (like Shakespeare's Aaron in Titus Andronicus, or Iago in Othello)[22] manipulates reality through language by playing upon a community's vulnerabilities and, in Dekker's play, this weakness is the cardinal sin of lust. Lustful Eleazar is surrounded by lustful Spaniards (King Fernando, the Queen Mother —the 'lascivious Queen'—, and Cardinal Mendoza) all of whom are at least as wicked and vicious as he is. Indeed, lust —as the play states— functions as a metonymy for Spain, but whereas both Christians and Muslims in the play are evidently ruled by lasciviousness, it is the pernicious influence of the Morisco/Moorish enemies-within (Eleazar and all his 'train') that seems to have 'contaminated' the Spanish court by having inoculated Eleazar's eroticism and the Moors' corruption and evil. The 'Spanish Moor' of the 1597 title is then not an oxymoron but a symptom of that condition, lust becoming a commonplace feature of 'otherness' for some early modern authors. Indeed, Thomas Gage in his already mentioned New Survey of the West-Indies (1648), echoes Dekker's concern with clothing as a signifier of excess and lust as distinguishing features of Spaniards and what he calls 'Moors':

> The attire of this baser sort of people of Blackmores and Mulatta's (which are of a mixt-nature, of Spaniards and Blackmores) is so light, and their carriage so enticing, that many Spaniards, even of the better sort (who are too prone to Venery) disdain their Wives for them. (1677: 124)

The play becomes more disturbing because it not only has an eloquent Moor located within a lustful Christian society, but it also insists that this state of affairs

could obtain almost anywhere: in wealthy Barbary, with the Turk, in France, or in Portugal/Spain. In fact, [he] "can live there, and there, and there,/ Troth 'tis, a villain can live any where" (1657: I, iv, 16-21). The play manifests a barely repressed admiration for Eleazar's cunning, which —combined with the Spanish location— produces a semiospheric alien-within-the-alien, a 'villain' more threatening than the identifiable alien, as radical and unassimilable other, could ever be.

The evidence adduced so far does not consistently distinguish between the 'colour' of the figure of the Morisco and that of the Moor or the 'Ethiop;' yet it is conceivable that there were cultural if not visual distinctions made between different ethnic identities. In this sense, it seems reasonably clear that (as we have seen) the early modern perception of the Morisco renders the boundaries between national identities (or semiospheres) porous, which might account for the ease with which certain figures appear in assimilable form in the drama of the period. With this instability in mind, it is possible to argue that our understanding of Shakespeare's *Othello* (ca. 1604) may also profit from a 'Spanish' and more specifically 'Morisco' reading. In the wake of the seminal work by Barbara Everett in the 1980s,[23] recently augmented by that of Peter Moore (1996), Eric Griffin (1998 and 2009) [24] and, although differently focused, Grace Tiffany (2002),[25] it would seem logical to consider, in conjunction with the Muslim/African/Ottoman content of the play, a Spanish, or more precisely, a Morisco intertext for the play.

Basically, as Everett has already established, the attribution of Spanish names in Shakespeare's *Othello* (a play with a Venetian —i.e. Italian— setting) recalls Spain's centuries-long struggle with the Moors. To begin with, 'Iago' is the name of the villain of the play, which made Everett wonder why Shakespeare chose a non-Italian name for his villain, especially one which this villain would share with James I, the Stuart King before whom the play was to be first performed on 1 November 1604 at Whitehall. Interestingly, Shakespeare's villain is the namesake not only of King James but also of Sant-Iago the Moor-killer, Patron-Saint of Spaniards and alleged defender of an ethnically 'pure' Spain; moreover, another villain, Roderigo, shares his name, which is also Spanish, with two such preeminent Spanish characters as Rodrigo Díaz, *El Cid*, legendary hero of Spanish Christians fighting Islam, and Visigoth King Roderick, whose sin of lust caused the kingdom to fall into the hands of the Muslims in 711. All these coincidences, some of them potentially dangerous for the playwright (namely, the connection Iago/King James) suggest that a Spanish/Moorish subtext should be taken into consideration.

Equally concerned with a possible Spanish subtext in the play, Eric Griffin has also noted how 'Brabantio' may allude to 'Brabant', the Spanish possession in the Netherlands; how lasciviousness acts as an allusion to the alleged lust of the Spaniards (which takes us back to King Roderick, or Dekker's lustful Morisco

Eleazar); or how the constant derogatory reference to Othello as the 'Moor' could be connected with moro, the term of abuse in early modern Spain, where Moors were the quintessential strangers (Griffin 1998: 71-73). In her 1994 "Acts of Naming and Spanish Subtexts in Othello" Lena Orlin has also argued in favour of the Spanish subtext of the play, explaining how:

> [t]he Spanish name subsequently given the ensign in *Othello*, […], provides a suprapsychological explanation of […] why (to return to Cinthio) the Moor believes the ensign, otherwise "too foolishly", and murders his own chaste wife. (Orlin, 1994)

If Iago and Roderigo may be linked to Spain, so may Othello. Indeed, the Venetian General's background can furnish a link to Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan, better known to early modern Europeans as Giovanni (Johannes or John) Leo Africanus. Al-Wazzan, or John Leo, was the author of *Della descrittione dell'Africa*, a text originally published in Italian in 1550 and first translated into English in 1600 by John Pory as the quite popular and authoritative *Geographical Historie of Africa*, which was once considered one of the indirect sources of *Othello*. John Leo was born in Nazari Granada around 1491, and lived through the conquest of the city in 1492 by the Catholic Monarchs, leaving Granada with his family in 1497 just a few years prior to the first expulsions of the Moriscos.[26] From Granada he went to Fez, and from there he travelled through Muslim Africa, until he was taken prisoner by Sicilian pirates and presented as a 'gift' to Pope Leo X, under whose influence he converted to Christianity.

As early as 1973 Geoffrey Bullough had already pointed out the similarities between Othello's life narrative as told by himself in I, iii, 128-158 and John Leo's account of his own life as retold by Pory: both historical personage and fictional character share not only their uncertain origins and wandering lives full of dangers, but also their conversion, their ascent in the power structures of their respective societies and their new allegiances (Bullough 1973: 208). Furthermore, as Jonathan Burton has recently argued, both seem to be "in need of establishing the credibility of [their] adopted subject-position[s]", that of converted-Christians (Burton 2005: 235), and in order to purchase this new-Christian identity both secured their own space within the Christian semiosphere at the expense of their Moorish self.[27] Leo's narrative can be linked to an increasing early modern awareness of the existence of Moors and Muslims in England, a context into which the Moroccan embassage that visited London in August 1600 can be inscribed as it seems to play a major role: it introduced, just as Leo's life and Othello's tragedy did, the possibility —unprecedented for Londoners— of proximity to the simultaneously dignified and repulsive Moor, a subversive vision of enemies-within that Habsburg Spain's politics had emphasized by means of the several expulsions and revolts of Spanish

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Moriscos; interestingly, we know that the Moroccan ambassador Abd-el-Ouahed ben Massaod took with him an Andalusi or Morisco translator.

Bearing this in mind, we may argue that Othello, like Dekker's Eleazar, has some obvious connections with Spanish Moors, who at the time had been at least nominally been converted to Christianism and were known as Moriscos. This Othello, read in this Spanish and Moorish light, appears as a new Christian, travelling throughout the Mediterranean, exiled from an uncertain place but clearly connected to Spain and various things Spanish. Furthermore, Shakespeare's adaptation of Giraldi Cinthio's 1565 *Gli Hecatommithi* (the seventh story in the third decade) incorporates, all through the play but especially in Act One, the attempted Ottoman invasion of Cyprus as a dramatic motive that triggers the action through a continuous sense of impending danger. Shakespeare was here introducing a reference to the Fourth Ottoman-Venetian War (1570-1573), a conflict that was a direct consequence of the Morisco revolt of 1568-1571.[28]

Focusing on the Morisco as a paradoxical figure who internalises the values and customs of a culture to which he is alien allows all of the strands that the foregoing discussion has identified to be drawn together, and it adds an ethical and an ethnic dimension to our understanding of Shakespeare's play. Thus, we can identify a distinctly Renaissance moral and ethical economy operating here that feeds directly into our discussion of Moriscos as prototypically hybrid figures, a meeting point of a number of early modern ethnic, moral and religious stereotypes and the embodiment of the above-mentioned porous boundaries of the early modern Christian/European semiosphere. The Morisco —as we have seen above: from More to Minsheu, or from Gage to Sutcliffe— was not only reasonably well-known in early modern England but the object of a number of paradoxical definitions, as being simultaneously skilful and resourceful, hateful to look at and brave, non-Christian, non-white and barely human, but vaguely European; this apparent confusion, however, ultimately had to do with their aforementioned hybridity and uncertain status in Habsburg Spain, which was included in the definitions and references to both Moriscos and Spaniards in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. This ambiguity and inner contradiction —stemming from the Morisco's split identity— closely resembles many of the defining features of Shakespeare's Moor of Venice, the Venetian who killed the turbaned Turk within himself: if early modern states were increasingly repressing enemies-within through a vague criticism of 'mixtures' and 'confusions', both Othello (and to a certain extent Eleazar) and Moriscos are quintessential enemies-within, walking paradoxes in their simultaneous conflation of 'us' and 'them', so useful at times but so laden with fear for 17th-century Spain and England. What Shakespeare's *Othello* dramatizes, and the Moriscos embody, is the conflict-ridden status of the emergent early modern

state, with its complex and diverse identity conflicts: "That's he that was Othello: here I am" (2006: V, ii, 282).

This link, which may be largely lost to us today, may be partially based on the English early modern image of Spain (for which the Moriscos were greatly responsible) as an inherently divided community, a society undergoing a crisis of identity, as much the consequence of an external gaze as the product of her inability and unwillingness to abandon the Moorish *habitus* that marks it off as simultaneously European and Oriental, just as Minsheu's segregated dictionary clearly suggests. Even more significant to a reading of Shakespeare's play, the Moriscos, like the Spanish *conversos*, became Europe's 17th-century paradigmatic representatives of split identities, uncertain allegiances, and conflict-ridden integration and assimilation, roles which are of central importance in relation to current approaches to Othello.[29]

It is also in this sense that Shakespeare's *Othello* may be amenable to a 'Spanish' or 'Morisco' reading, since vulnerability is evidently a central feature of the Spanish Moriscos and of the play's main character, as Eldred Jones was one of the first to note in his seminal *Othello's Countrymen* (1965: 97-105). It was also Jones who first approached Othello's case as that of an "honourable murderer" (1965: 87-93): apart from the obvious connotations of such a self-definition of Othello in a play so complexly informed by the concept of honour (interestingly one of the two early modern Spanish obsessions together with that of purity of blood), Shakespeare's play dramatizes a confrontation between early modern clichés about Moors (including Othello), and a problematization of those self-same commonplaces, leaving to the audience the potential resolution of that apparent contradiction. This is what Jones actually identifies as the paradox lying at the heart of the tragedy, which he calls the "double antithesis" of the play: Iago as both soldier and villain and Othello as both Moor and noble hero (1965: 110-117). This paradoxical construction of alterity (Jones's double antithesis) is based on historically specific social and political questions that directly affect semiospheric relations with others such as Othello, and have to do with Venice and her political and economic role in the early modern Mediterranean: her reliance on external military support, her economic preeminence, her identity as a 'republic', and her geographical location as the meeting point of East and West (the so-called 'Venetian myth'). The Moriscos, as we saw, fulfill in Spain a similar social and economic role to that of Othello (and other aliens) in Shakespeare's Venice: as Caro Baroja has clearly explained, the reasons why they were not expelled earlier have to do with their central economic function within Habsburg Spain as cheap and efficient labour force, and with geopolitical reasons of state derived from Spain's need to keep a certain balance in her relations with the Kingdoms of Morocco and Fez, and the Ottoman empire (1991: 37-58). The Moriscos were also simultaneously included and excluded, assimilated and

marginalized, defined and carefully categorized, basically in late 16th and early 17th -century Spain, but also in other European locations such as England, as I have suggested above; hence the evident links that the play seems to provide between the figure of Othello and that of a Morisco.

A diversity of early modern texts represent and reproduce complex and sophisticated negotiations between early modern culture and the figure of the Muslim or Moorish other. The catalogue of characters include Dekker's Eleazar or Shakespeare's Aaron, Morocco, and the Moor of Venice, and in most cases they foreground paradox and contradiction, two indicators of an ideology struggling to cope with, and to absorb, phenomena that challenge existing national, cultural, and linguistic assumptions. It is the same paradoxical approach to aliens that characterizes the mixture of admiration and repulsion that we find in Minsheu's or Florio's definitions, or the concern with the inevitability of cultural 'contamination' that becomes evident in Dekker's writings. It is also the same feeling of horror manifested by Thomas More as he observed the attendants of the Spanish princess, a feeling strangely aligned with an admiration that he eventually contained when he met Catherine. We know that whereas Henry VII expelled most of Catherine's dark-skinned Spanish musicians, he proceeded to hire some of them for his personal service, so impressed was he by their skill and talent.[30] Spanish Moriscos, well known in Elizabethan England, were basically civil monsters, hybrid subjects who performed the function of mediation typical of the Lotmanian boundary and who acted as an intermediate link between oppositional groups. Indeed, they tragically embody the irresolvability of the early modern paradox: aliens who are neither white nor black, Christian but yet Muslim, Spanish and in spite of that (or precisely because of it) non-Europeans, frequently characterized as "mongrel dogs or beasts".

Notes

[2]. According to Gustav Ungerer, Catherine's female attendants alone amounted

to almost sixty people. King Henry refused to maintain the apparently excessive accompaniment and expelled some dozens, some of whom were absorbed by the English court to be employed as musicians, while others appeared to have settled in Northern England and Scotland (Ungerer 2008: 96-97; Habib 2008: 38-40).

[3]. I am very grateful to my colleague the Morean scholar Eugenio Olivares for making this episode, and the corresponding letter, known to me.

[4]. Whereas according to the Oxford English Dictionary 'Muslim' merely refers to a follower of Islam, and 'Moor' in the early modern period could be either a natural from Northern Africa (ancient Rome's Mauretania) or one of those North African Muslims who in the 8th century conquered "Spain" (sic), the term 'Morisco' specifically refers to baptized Spanish Moors (many of them crypto-Muslims) in the late middle ages and the early modern period, especially between 1492 (conquest of Granada, the last Muslim stronghold on the Iberian peninsula) and 1609 (when 300,000 Moriscos were forced to leave Spain by Philip III's edicto de expulsión). According to the Treaty of Granada (1492) Muslims from Granada would be allowed to maintain their religion, speak Arabic, and keep their properties and customs, but by the late 1490s Spain's Catholic monarchs Isabella and Ferdinand renounced those terms and started, through Cardinal Cisneros, a policy of repression which included the burning of books in Arabic, the expropriation of land and houses owned by Muslims, and the severe punishment of those Muslims who did not renounce Islam and were baptized nevertheless, which produced the first Morisco revolt easily put down by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella between 1499 and 1501. By that year Islam was no longer a tolerated religion in the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. Conversions followed, and although most of the Moriscos secretly kept their Muslim faith, Charles V did not interfere with this situation in any significant manner. Some decades later Philip II decided to implement again a policy of repression by applying the regulations passed (but never enforced in practice) in 1526 (the so-called Pragmática) and as of 1 January 1567 Moriscos

suffered heavier taxation, social, religious and economic prohibitions, administrative barriers, and all kind of abuses. As soon as these new regulations came into effect, the Moriscos (led by Fernando de Válor, from an aristocratic Morisco family in Granada) declared war on Philip II and Habsburg Spain in December 1568, the so-called Morisco Revolt, or the War of the Alpujarras, which finished in 1571 with the total defeat of the Moriscos at the hands of Philip's half brother Don Juan of Austria. The whole community was enslaved and dispersed to several other Spanish regions, only to be expelled from the kingdom by Philip III, in the early 17th century, on the grounds that they could not be integrated (Caro 1991: 37-59; 160-203).

[5]. Between the status of a true born Englishman and the alien was the 'denizen', a permanent resident with rights of residency and work, whose status was requested from the crown and granted through an individualized letter (Kermode 2009: 3).

[6]. I have adapted the phrase "paradoxing the orthodox" from Peter Platt, who took it from Joel Fineman to refer to the function of early modern paradox in Shakespeare's plays and sonnets; see Platt 2009: 4.

[7]. Whereas, as we saw, most Moriscos remained crypto Muslims, some did indeed convert to Christianity. Yet, both groups would be known, both in Spain and England, as 'Moors'. This complex nature of Moriscos had another major consequence for their fate outside Spain: since —nominally at least as they had been baptized— Moriscos were Christian, on religious grounds they could not be shipped to non-Christian lands, and many were initially sent to France (Marseilles) and Italy (Livorno and Venice). From these locations many went to Northern Africa, where they received an unequal welcome: some were received as 'Christian' invaders, and consequently were rejected and abused there again, especially since they were not considered to be true Muslims (indeed, they had been baptised, spoke poor Arabic, and practised an 'imperfect' Islam) (Pennell 2005: 128-29, 143). Others were luckier, and Tunisia, for example, received more than 100,000 Moriscos who settled and prospered

in a few decades. Salé or Tetuan, in Morocco, were almost totally populated by Moriscos (in the case of Sale, most were from the southwestern Spanish location of Hornachos).

[8]. The Greek etymology of 'para-doxa' "suggests a reversal of common belief or convention" (Platt 2009: 2). In *Paradoxa stoicorum* Cicero explains that paradoxes "sunt… admirabilia contraque opinionem omnium" ("are surprising and go against the opinion of the majority", my translation, 1960: 257). This emphasis on contradiction and surprise as characteristic features of paradox in its Greek and Roman (stoic) classical origins, although central in any definition of the term does not exhaust it: paradoxes underline identity or equivalence between contraries, which links them to other rhetorical devices reflecting cognitive approaches to reality. Indeed, by resisting the resolution of the contradiction paradoxes are close to deconstruction and Derridean 'undecidables' (Platt 2009: 4-6).

[9]. Platt has interestingly argued that the notion of paradox helps establish a solid link between Renaissance thought and poststructuralism (based on a shared interest in, and "a fascination with doubleness, undecidability and radical ambiguity" (2009: 6); Richard Wilson has recently explored the connections between Shakespeare and French poststructural thought in *Shakespeare in French Theory: Kings of Shadows.*

[10]. Apart from Spanish, which was the first European language to use the term 'Morisco' (as early as 966), French shows early appearances of the term; we know, for example, that the term 'Morisco' denoting "a Moor subject to the Christian King of Spain" dates from 1478, whereas the first ascription of this term "denoting a Moorish woman" is from 1611, a coincidence which inevitably links this first appearance of 'Morisco' with the 1609-14 expulsion of almost 300,000 Moriscos from Spain by Philip III. In 1620, with most Moriscos already outside the realm of the Spanish Habsburgs as a consequence of the expulsion, the *OED* registers the term in English as denoting "a Moor subject to the Christian King of Spain".

[11]. Sutcliffe's was a response to a libel by the pro-Spanish Jesuit Robert Persons, *A temperate ward-word* (1599), itself a reply to Sir Francis Hastings' *A watch-word to all religious, and true hearted English-men* (1598).

[12]. Treswell wrote about the Moriscos in his account of the activities of the English ambassador in Spain in his "Relations of such things as were observed to happen in the journey of Charles, Earl of Nottingham, his majesty's ambassador to Spain 1604". It must be noted that the Harleian edition explains in a footnote that 'Morisco' in this sentence should be understood as 'Moorish'.

[13]. This is a travel narrative full of adventures and encounters with strangers and aliens: the story of English Catholics travelling from Flanders to Spain, who were harassed by Flemish sailors and captured by Moroccan (and probably Morisco) corsairs from Salé.

[14]. This conflict would end in 1571. Although as we saw there was a previous year-long uprising, the Albaycín Revolt (1499-1500), which was brutally repressed by the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, the Morisco Revolt (1568-71) was the confrontation that captured the attention of the English (and of most western Europe) as a potential distraction for Phillip II's Spain.

[15]. Apart from this 1599 dictionary, other works by Minsheu are *A Spanish Grammar* (1623); the *Pleasant and Delightfull Dialogues* (1623); and his relatively popular *Guide into the Tongues & A Most Copious Spanish Dictionary* (1617).

[16]. George Puttenham in *The Arte of English Poesie* also warned against what he called 'the mingle-mangle' or 'Soraismus', "when we make our speech or writings of sundry languages using some Italian word, or French, or Spanish, or Dutch, or Scottish" (252).

[17]. The latest EEBO-ProQuest edition of the play (2011), however, attributes it to Robert Greene, and the EEBO database gives Greene's collaborator, Thomas Lodge, as author.

[18]. The source text, on which the Malone Society edition is based, is incomplete.

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[19]. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* makes what might be a passing reference to Moriscos: "As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords" (I, I, 122): although it has traditionally been interpreted as an oblique reference to the natives of the New World (or 'Indians') and their submissiveness to Spanish *conquistadores,* we may take it in the opposite sense: note how the term 'Indian' is applied to the Muslim Eleazar in *Lust's Dominion* (1657: III, iv; IV ,iii).

[20]. Although the play's first edition of 1657 attributed the authorship to Christopher Marlowe (at least three of the four extant copies do so, including the one I have consulted at the Folger Shakespeare Library), today it is widely considered to be by Thomas Dekker, and probably William Haughton and John Day, although some authors also include John Marston as an additional co-author. On authorship and dates, see Cathcart (2001).

[21]. Actually, in his seminal *The Crescent and the Rose,* Samuel Chew claimed that *All's Lost by Lust* was composed as a consequence of attention being drawn in England to Spanish Moriscos: "The expulsion of the last Moriscos early in the seventeenth century recalled to mind the circumstances in which the Moors had obtained their first entrance into Spain" (1937: 518).

[22]. Besides these two, in *The Crescent and the Rose* Samuel Chew also relates Eleazar (although not for his loquacity) to "two Moslem slaves in Christian hands, the unnamed Slave in Davenport's *The City Night-Cap and Mulleasses (a Christian born) in Mason's The Turk*" (1937: 521).

[23]. To my knowledge, the first link between Iago's name and Saint James (or Sant'Iago) was G.N. Murphy's "A Note on Iago's Name", as early as 1964, although Barbara Everett was the first to call for a Spanish reading of *Othello.*

[24]. For these and a few other authors, the Sant/Iago reference is paramount for a correct understanding of the play, promoting a reading of *Othello* in the context of Anglo-Spanish relations and the Muslim/Ottoman threat in the Mediterranean (in which Venice and the Habsburg Empire had so much to say).

[25]. Here Tiffany, by means of an analysis of Othello's divided self and through the figure of the racialized unintegrable Other, has arrived at the split personality conflicts of Spanish Jews in the early modern period (which she evidently also connects with Shakespeare's other Venetian play, *Merchant*). See also Metzger 1998.

[26]. As we saw, the first expulsions were preceded by forced baptisms en masse, dispossessions, tortures, the burning of books and various prohibitions.

[27]. However, this is a charge that some authors have recently and convincingly denied in the case of John Leo (Burton 2005: 233-256).

[28]. Indeed, Selim II decided to conquer Cyprus precisely because he knew the Spanish Habsburgs would not react, as Philip II was focusing his strength on putting down the Morisco revolt; in fact, right after this conflict ended, Philip agreed to lead the Holy League at Lepanto (1571), although Cyprus was never recovered for Christendom. For a full account of the Wars of Cyprus (1570-1571), and more specifically of the siege of Famagusta, and an analysis of its impact on English literature, see Ruiz Mas' "The Image of the Great Turk after the Ottoman Conquest of Famagusta and Marc Antonio Bragadino's Martyrdom".

[29]. Everett introduces additional evidence of the links between Spain and *Othello*. Some of this is clearly metadramatic: Iago and his connection with the figure of the Spanish *pícaro,* or the links between the comic dimension of *Othello* and Italian learned comedy, which included the figure of the Spanish braggart soldier, frequently fused with the role of the deceived husband. Some other evidence relies on the socio-historical, ideological and political conditions of production of the play: *Othello*'s composition at precisely the time in which the English seem to have been asked to aid the Moriscos from Valencia (1605, according to Luis Cabrera de Córdoba 1857: 240); the excessive concern with honour, arguably the best known Spanish trait of character in the early modern period; or the centuries-long Spanish struggle against Islam (1982: 104-109).

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[30]. In all likelihood at least one John Blancke/Blak, originally part of Catherine's retinue, became a popular figure with both Henry VII and Henry VIII. This black trumpeter appears in the Westminster Tournament Roll (1511) (commissioned for the birth of Henry VIII's son) proudly wearing a turban (Habib 38-40).

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THE POSTMODERN GENDER DIVIDE IN THE BOB DYLAN BIOPIC *I'M NOT THERE*

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There really is no need for further abstraction in an analysis of the Bob Dylan Biopic *I'm Not There*. The messages seem simple. The film is allusive. The film is not biographically accurate. The film is not for the general public. The film is not easy to watch —just like Bob Dylan. Leading biopic academic Dennis Bingham says that *I'm Not There* is "a biopic in reverse" (2010: 381), and he is correct. He says that director Todd Haynes "works with the parts and by the end gets him (Dylan) into a coherent person" (2010: 381) and he is right. However, two statements in his appraisal of the biopic *I'm Not There* seem a bit too light hearted and signal for a retracing of his argument. Firstly, Bingham says that the film "deconstructs the inherent masculinities of Dylan's music and persona" and secondly, that "[Haynes] also reveals an unexpected debt, pliability and universal applicability outside time, space and gender" (2010: 393). I would like to critique the supposed way this deconstructed masculinity works outside gender and apparently outside history as well. Through an analysis of masculinity and pastiche, the claim will be as follows: despite the firm ability to predict and provide what both Dylan and the spectator would like to be, to hear and to see in a biopic about Bob Dylan, the film does not work outside gender nor deconstruct masculinity. The film deconstructs the biopic genre and Bob Dylan himself, but it does not deconstruct the masculinities that drive them. *I'm Not There* haphazardly assumes that a certain aesthetic malleability suffices to mask historically constructed masculinities and their limitations. These

masculinities are constructed and therefore not inherent in Bob Dylan's music and life in the forms proposed by the film.

A Comfortable Contradiction

The biopic is a space of representation and plays a role in the making of history. Its power lies in the fact that if produced after the death of the artist, a biopic can seal the historical memory of a generation or generations through the use of a nostalgic intimacy, using the blurry lines of fact and fiction to fix an artist in time. In *Bio/Pics*, one of the first books to bring the genre to academia, George Custen says that "[Hollywood biographies] represent according to Hayden White, not a concrete illustration of history, a literal recapitulation of physical cause and effect, but rather types of behaviors and explanations that compromise the category of history" (1992: 7). In this genre of film, history is compromised despite the genre's claim to be biographically accurate. However, history itself is a contradictory space as it claims to tell a factual story that is mediated (Custen 1992: 11). New sources of historical information always come to the surface making it hard to fix. "Work in history has increasingly focused on 'public history' and 'collective memory' as historians recognize the roles mass media play in shaping the public's notion of historical events" (1992: 25). Because of its stake in history, the biopic also inhabits a contradictory space as well. Any analysis of a biopic should start from the assumption that it is in a contradictory space related to history. History itself harbors contradictions based on source information, presentation and the trend towards accepting new media as historically valid sources. Biopics have inherited these contradictions.

On top of the contradictions inherent in any representation of history are the visible and structural contradictions that the medium of biography —picture or biopic— addresses directly and indirectly. The biopic subject inhabits a local and global space simultaneously. Bingham claims that the subject either "demonstrates how to live or how to leave a legend" (2010: 379). This film genre works as an artist's gravestone, providing location and reference to spectators looking for access to information and entertainment in today's fast paced society. Bingham praises the biopic's overall scope and intention saying that it "exhibits and celebrates the life of a subject in order to demonstrate, investigate or question his/her importance in the world" (2010: 10). The biopic is important to both the artist and the spectator. Custen draws a contrast between the biographical film and its receiving audience in order to define their relationship. "No matter how alienating the character's actual life", he argues, "it had to be told in terms congruent with audiences' own experiences and expectations about how the famous conducted their lives or lived"

(1992: 18). The biopic must be accountable to its audience, which is comprised of the artist's fan base and new or interested spectators. However, it is not always easy to be accountable to the artist being represented, to the artist's fans, and to history itself. This tension between the audience, artist and historical accuracy makes the biopic a potentially contradictory medium of representation.

Right away there is a need to specify. The music biopic has certain characteristics that can distinguish it from biographical films as a whole. One clear distinction is that the actor playing a performer is the single most popular kind of biopic there is. This popularity may be due to the fact that the musician is an intercultural role model. "These biopic star-genre formulations tapped into audience's conceptions of what life should be like", says Custen (1992: 142). He notes that, despite being a model for the audience's life, musician biopics carry with them a tension between high and popular culture (1992: 48). This tension usually unfolds as the artist's fans face up to the performer's private life. "Biopics are", he says, "instruments of instruction mediating between a specific lived life and the public's knowledge of it" (1992: 120). This instrument of instruction is particularly powerful with music biopics because the star formula finds a space between the public and private life of the performer much like the audience member itself. The character therefore cannot be wholly associated with the audience members nor the artists in the biopic. "The average viewer [...] would hardly find these circumstances — inherited wealth and the seeming absence of a work — congruent with American values" (1992: 123). Thus the viewers of music biopics relate to the star effect as a performance, relinquishing their empathy as both musician and by-stander. "Presumably", Custen argues, "the pleasure the viewer obtains is derived [...] from seeing familiar expectations fulfilled within a tradition of performance or witnessing the reenactment of a particular kind of entertainment" (1992: 168). Like stars, the viewers are pleasurably positioned not with the narrative subject, but above the narrative as a whole.

The film *I'm Not There* attends to and reacts against this genre's contradictory space as being both a biographical and dramatic representation of a musician. The *New York Times* article "This is Not a Bob Dylan Movie", nicely summarizes the narrative structure of the film: "Todd Haynes' Dylan project is a biopic starring six people as Bob Dylan, or different incarnations of Bob Dylan, including a 13-year-old African-American boy, Marcus Carl Franklin, and an Australian woman, Cate Blanchett", (Sullivan 2007: 1). Other actors who play Dylan include the slow-speaking folk singer Dylan, played by Christian Bale, the retired Billy-the-Kidd Dylan played by Richard Gere, the Arthur Rimbaud, a teenage French symbolist poet Dylan played by Ben Whishaw, and the 70s movie-star Dylan played by Heath Ledger. "All the Dylans presented a team, six-actor composite". The movie

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narrative consisted in "killing off one Dylan and moving to the next", Sullivan says (2007: 1). These six different actors coincide through narrative leaps which were also differentiated by the use of six different filming styles. "At some point, Haynes would sit you down and show you that Blanchett's Dylan was filmed in a Fellini style black and white; that Richard Gere's Billy the Kidd Dylan would be shot like a 60s, early 70s western [...]; that Bale's born-again Dylan was filmed in the bad-TV video that befits a Sacramento, Calif. Church basement; that Ledger's rock-star Dylan would feature the wide shots and close ups of objects that characterized Godard" (2007: 11). Bingham nicely summarizes the director's concept of the film by saying that "Dylan is not there in the film literally (but he is present figuratively), so by the time Dylan can be fixed as dwelling in one time and place, he's not there he's somewhere else" (2010: 389). The art of making legends is in fact the focus of this film's structure: the drive to give the audience what they want but not in a way that they expect. Haynes has just this intention with his six figure structure as he says, "[Dylan] wanted to be Woody Guthrie, and he wanted to be not Jewish, and he wanted to be Arthur Rimbaud at some point and he wanted to be Billy the Kidd and so I let him be all those things in the movie" (IFC 2007). The movie, Haynes claimed at the New York Film Festival in 2007, has been made especially for Dylan —his fans and history itself are not priorities for the film. Getting the rights to the film meant pitching it to Dylan in a particular way: "they told me all these things to avoid like voice of a generation, genius of our time, any major accolade would have to be excised from this thing [a one page summary of the movie]" (IFC 2007). Dylan's distaste for major accolades and punch lines that mark him as a historic figure shows just how the contradiction of the biopic genre works. The film genre that identifies and even makes legends, according to Bingham is, from this biopic's inception, in a contradictory space since the artist doesn't want to be represented as a legend. The page Haynes submitted to Dylan began with a quote from Arthur Rimbaud: "I is someone else", and then continued:

> If a film were to exist in which the breadth and flux of a creative life could be experienced, a film that could open up as opposed to consolidating what we think we already know walking in, it could never be within the tidy arc of a master narrative. The structure of such a film would have to be a fractured one, with numerous openings and a multitude of voices, with its prime strategy being one of refraction, not condensation. Imagine a film splintered between seven separate faces —old men, young men, women, children— each standing in for spaces in a single life. (Sullivan 2007: 8)

Haynes uses words like experience, open up, fractured, multiple, splinter to describe his idea. He opposes his way of film making to the consolidating, condensing style of the genre and tries to convince Dylan that his film is not just a

tidy metanarrative. The language of legend making is not only avoided but also in a sense negated by Haynes' approach.

The contradictions continue at the level of production as well. In that same festival Haynes also claimed that this "idea [of having multiple characters play Dylan] is almost as plain as day […] when you listen to the music" (IFC 2007). This plainness in the idea of the film is then contrasted with the film's excessively complex body, as the director "knew [the film] was never going to deliver the palpable, reductionist results that a traditional biopic delivers" (IFC 2007). The style shifts and the character changes are not easy to digest for the average viewer, much less the avid fan. These initial differences of intention and production mark the separation of this film from most if not all the biopics in the genre. Bingham too argues that *I'm Not There* "presents the apotheosis of the biopic as it has evolved to date. It breaks one of the hidden assumptions of the genre: it feels no need to prove Dylan's worth or establish his mythology" (2010: 382). It has been claimed that the justification of these differences comes from the subject itself as the biopic performs like Dylan, in that it trades one "authenticity or fakery for another" (IFC 2007). It is a classic biopic despite constantly trying to escape the biopic format. By doing so it falls into the trap of other predictable forms of representation: postmodernism and masculinity. Thus it is always already not there.

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The Biopic as Postmodern Pastiche

The contradictory aspects of this film and the biopic genre itself are not the dominant elements around which the narrative structure of the film revolves. Unresolved contradictions and tension in films today are more or less part of why a film is made in the first place, part of its narrative structure. However, looking past the contradictions in the director's intentions and into the film's structure reveals how this film's temporal inserts, breaks, retreats and attacks work alongside its global narratives to make a new kind of narrative of legendary importance. This makes *I'm Not There* clearly an attempt at a special kind of postmodernism in film, a postmodernism that is pastiched.

Besides claiming that *I'm Not There* is a deconstruction of the phenomenon of the biopic, Bingham also says that the director "does all this in the postmodernist, déjà vu style" (2010: 381). Haynes' own technique was to achieve a film where the "quality of paint and matter can coexist with representations and identity, mixing up temporal experiences" (IFC 2007). This attention to impact on the viewer through the use of image manipulation is one of the pillars of postmodernism.

The liquidification of signs and images in postmodernism fits with the director's image of the film as it is his version of a cinematographic pallet. There seems to be a sensory overload of six different but intersected narratives, all moving in a space without time. The way this subject is disoriented by the image is not just random, but a method in itself. Postmodernism is the protagonist of this disorientation.

Dylan's lyrics do hold together the disorientation of the postmodern subject. "I think anyone who likes Dylan will be into this film", says the Billy the Kid Dylan actor Richard Gere. "You can just close your eyes and listen to the music if you don't like the movie" (Haynes 2007). Dylan's songs in the biopic are left almost untouched, if not slightly enhanced by the re-mastering of the music for the film. In the article "'The Singsong of Undead Labor' Gender Nostalgia and the vocal fantasy of Intimacy in the 'New' Male Singer/Songwriter", Ian Biddle describes this specific tradition of song preservation as one of the "singer/song/writer" (2007: 130). By splitting the label using these slashes Biddle says the process of production and consumption is revealed. Song is the bridge between the performance of singing and the work of writing. "Song works here as a suture that binds over the space between public and private fields", he says (2007: 130). The song itself is the glue that holds together the performative singing and the behind the scenes writing. The biopic provides the stage for the actors and the subject, and shows the process by which songs were written. In the case of this film, the writing is literally performed in many scenes as Dylan's written landscapes and characters are rereleased onto the screen. However, the songs themselves in the film, especially the originally recorded Dylan songs, work as a suture for what Biddle calls the "broken continuum". Without this suture of the song, the public life of Dylan (his acting, performing, and public appearances) could not be mixed with his private narrative with any credibility. The binary public/private, and the attempts to resolve and dissolve it is part of the song's work: "Song works here then as a way of grounding a certain kind of fantasy: that there might after all be an articulable relationship between the inner and outer worlds" (Biddle 2007: 130). Music biopics must address this tension and this biopic does it at the expense of the biography and the image, but not at the expense of the song. The songs in *I'm Not There* remain the same. They lend themselves to postmodernism as they carry the flag of freedom of the multiple voices being heard in their generation. Haynes' remix of Dylan is about the way his postmodern montage of images is held together by the concrete familiarity of not the narrative story line, but of Dylan's lyrics, guitar and voice.

Postmodernism's claim to speak beyond the chains of narrative linking is frowned upon in cultural theory today. Mark Featherstone says in *Postmodernism and Capitalism* that postmodernism's disregard for narrative and history itself is

what makes it a problematic alternative to modern story telling. He subjects the subject of the postmodern narrative to its historical baggage, not allowing it to release itself from responsibility: "historical development should give way to the perception of the past as a conglomerate of images, fragments and spectacles" (2007: 96). Historical development must step aside as it is orderless anyway, Featherstone argues. In the case of *I'm Not There* temporal order and historical accuracy are given a back seat to the youthful struggle for freedom. Freedom is a dominant theme of the historical melee of Dylan's time. "The theory of freedom is very tied in to this idea of identity that the film posits and that Dylan's life is a living argument for", says Haynes. "People tell you to find yourself and be yourself and that that is a sort of freedom, but his life and the pressures that he worked under kept forcing that into question. The ultimate freedom is being able to escape that and to continually reinvent yourself" (IFC 2007). Freedom is the idea that Haynes uses to justify the use of the postmodern, multiple subjectivity in the film, performing the parts of Dylan's music and life as his attempts to escape from traditional narratives.

The postmodern method of film making is not even mentioned as the aesthetic technique used by the director to tell Dylan's stories, possibly because postmodernism is not as fashionable in today's media and academia as it was in the 80s and 90s. Possibly also because the biopic cannot contain all of Dylan's symbols of freedom in its shell. This inability to contain Dylan contradicts the very claim of the biopic as being a valid historical document. In fact, Richard Dyer, in his book *Pastiche*, seeks to rectify the scrambled history of the postmodern through the fruitful technique of pastiche. This dense fluidity is the result of pastiche, a term derived from the Italian word pasticcio:

> The contrasts and clashes of style, the pushing at and beyond the boundaries of balance and structure, the sense of surprise, shock, chance and disorientation, propulsive flow heightened by rupture, all these can feel energetic, exuberant, tonic and equally the quantity of connotations, associations and echoes available in pasticcio's semiotic mix allows for stimulating intellectual and effective play between the elements. (Dyer 2007: 20)

This way of mixing narrative through a play that is both intellectual and effective describes more precisely what Haynes does in the biopic. Dyer says that pastiche not postmodernism "demonstrates that self-consciousness and emotional expression can co-exist, healing one of the great rifts in western aesthetics and allowing us to contemplate the possibility of feeling historically" (2007: 4). Pastiche, he argues, preserves history and feeling. Feeling historically is exactly what *I'm Not There* seeks to provide for the spectator. The impact on the audience takes the form of a feeling, a feeling that is interwoven in history thanks to the narrative positioning

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of pastiche. The emotional expressions in Dylan's songs are coupled with the film's mini-narratives which continually reflect on the songs and the life of the character as well, providing a language that allows us to listen to these dense lyrics with a series of music video-like images. These images are evoked by certain lyrics in the songs, which is quite helpful for the modern listener as Dylan's songs are packed with images while there are very few actual Dylan videos.

The freedom from history and rewriting of the past in this pastiche does not let the artist live in a bubble however. Does Pastiche remain only as a certain part of the cultural production of the singer/songwriter, or can it, in its entirety, contain a historically sensitive narrative? By breaking up the singer/songwriter divide Biddle seeks to understand whether today's artists actually produce free subjectivities in their lyrics and sounds or whether they are just rehashed masculinities that sustain the hierarchical power structure. Dylan's music, being one of the founding examples of this contemporary genre, is susceptible to this criticism. Freedom for Dylan is expressed in his lyrics (his multiplicity, his political unrest, his trickery, his romance, his abuse) and the staging of his body remains the site for what Biddle says is a certain nostalgic intimacy that is "immediately free, infinitely open-ended, and yet, paradoxically carefully managed, honed in, kept within the small space of this new disciplined intimacy" (1992: 130). Dylan's freedom and long open-ended story-telling songs include carefully thrown in political messages and questions that jar listeners from a kind of relaxed mesmerized folk-song-listener state. The acoustic guitar and minimal recording techniques are the foundations of the nostalgic intimacy. However, I would like to distinguish Dylan not from the singer/songwriter divide as a whole as Biddle does in the article, but look at the specific parts of the songs and their production to locate the micro divisions that Dylan's music performs. The nostalgic effect on the listener and the critique of a seemingly free position remain the same today as in Dylan's time. The difference is the management of the sonic space in the song itself.

The careful management of the songwriting in the case of Dylan changes in the course of his career as seen in the biopic *I'm Not There*, and becomes less clearly organized, as Biddle claims, than the new folk music of today is. Dylan does in fact use this immediacy and intimacy in a dynamic way, sometimes wailing out certain lyrics that are danger-ridden while leaving other things unsaid. The guitar remains calm and close in songs like *Masters of War*, while in other songs like *Bob Dylan's Dream* he beats on the guitar like a blue grass beginner shouting out random lyrics that seem to tell a story that can best be described as bizarrely funny.

I'm Not There tries to show the freedom Dylan expressed by juggling the narrative structure while maintaining the historical credibility of the narrative through the use of Dylan's nostalgic intimacy. The energy and modern appeal of the domestic

environment of the 70s with its violent news flashes of Vietnam and the protest scenes sharply edited up against the cool country feel of the African American Boy box car traveler story and the classic western images of the Richard Gere story. They all work together thanks to the songs themselves. The cool calm surreal folk scene story is contrasted with the hyper active Dylan electric period: eras change, cameras change, people, fashion, and dialects change. If we include history in this mode of simulation, then we break with the postmodern problem while including some of its features. Pastiche as analysed by Dyer, then, claims to fulfill this role as a more nuanced version of the postmodern. It shows the myriad of intimacies and immediacies and how these dissolve, revolve and evolve during the course of Dylan's early career. *I'm Not There* uses pastiche as a representative style of Dylan's music and life. It however, does not contain the folk music genre's claim of being revolutionary through a freedom from all kinds of subjectivities. Gender remains trapped in its hierarchical frame despite all the other attempts at obtaining a representation of freedom through song and image. Masculinity cannot be masked by nostalgic intimacy.

Masculinity and Pastiche

The structure of story-telling at work in the film *I'm Not There* can be seen as postmodern pastiche. However, the way the film was intended to work, meaning the feelings generated in the audience by the film's narrative through postmodern techniques and aesthetics, seem to neglect an aspect of gender that once revealed, upsets the balance of authenticity desired by the director. The framing elements that form the pillars of this film are not the songs themselves but the masculinities that these characters perform. It is important to show specifically how these masculinities operate within this structure of pastiche and what response this whole combination has on the audience and on this feeling of history.

The study of masculinities is a purposeful way of reinserting the issue of gender into identities that claim gender neutrality through, in the case of this film, alternative aesthetics such as pastiche. However, there are many approaches to the study of masculinities and many kinds of masculinities to be studied. Lynne Segal in her book *Slow Motion* says that masculinity:

> is best understood as transcending the personal, as a heterogeneous set of ideas, constructed around assumptions of social power, which are lived out and reinforced, or perhaps denied and challenged, in multiple social systems in which relations of authority, work and domestic life are organized, in the man, along hierarchal guidelines. (Segal 1990: 288)

This research shows how these masculinities are 'lived out' in the stories of the many Dylans despite the attempt at covering them up. The covering up here occurs as a set of "epistemological mismatches" that claim to be normalized through the cultural process of the story and film (Biddle 1992: 137). These mismatched characters in effect do not erase gender in the story but take the personal element out of Dylan and align him with a series of identities that work along hierarchal guidelines. The masculinities in this biopic undermine the aesthetic of pastiche because, as proponents of hierarchal guidelines, to use Segal's terms, they overshadow and work to reassemble the intellectual dismantling of identity that pastiche performs. It is through the first impression of pastiche that we can reveal the masculinities that frame the narrative, and in this reassembling we can see the return of a hierarchical gender identity.

The masculinities in this film are worked into and through the pastiche structure of story-telling and filming. One of the principal forms these masculinities take on in the film is pastiche through imitation. There are two forms of imitation that play each other off in the film, but they cannot always be neatly isolated. They function as tendencies that are modified and personalized by the actors in the film: impersonation and the use of the other. In the interviews with the actors for the making of the film we can see how these techniques are approached and what the 'affect' may be. Also revealed is the way that the various masculinities proposed in the film dismantle this pastiche through its power to normalize identities.

Some of the actors approached Dylan through a physical transformation that could be considered a form of pastiche through impersonation. "People performing exactly like other people is often felt as a more fundamental difference than copying in paint, creating a sense of the uncanny and bringing the copy image more evidently into the orbit of the version" (Dyer 2007: 33). Impersonation can bring the copy into the orbit of the original, obviously a place that has an emotional impact on the audience, and therefore is the desired result of the acting strategy. Impersonation involves an act of assuming a character from head to toe —an actor becomes a person in mind, body and soul. It also involves an act of forgetting on the part of the audience, which as a leap of faith, puts the audience in the hands of the actors as they allow the actors to believe that they are Dylan. Christian Bale seeks to impersonate Bob Dylan during his years as a beginner singer/songwriter and voice of the American folk generation. This way of acting seems to be part of the intention of the script as Bale's character is part of the documentary style of the film. His character most closely interacts with the issues of the authentic and the real that the film addresses through impersonation. This study of the character or rediscovery as Bale calls it, is, in Dylan's case, a rediscovery of how to impersonate an imitator: "Was that the real Dylan who was really rejecting it [the

communist party] or was he doing more of that 'hey Woody Guthrie' would have done this so I'm gonna imitate him?" (Haynes 2007) Bale connects his method of impersonation as part of his own acting style but also as part of Dylan's history of imitation: "You don't get a sense of his past and his growing up […]. He is like a method actor but he does it for months or years at a time" (Haynes 2007). The erasure of the past seems to be a necessary part of this chain of impersonators. Here Bale relates his ability to imitate Dylan to Dylan's ability to imitate, forging a symbiotic relationship between actor and acted. Dylan is fronting as a folk artist. A folk artist is a singer song-writer that claims a nostalgic intimacy with the listener. Folk artists pride themselves on writing songs about their life as one of the folk or people. *I'm Not There* backs up this side of Dylan. His life of acting as one of the folk becomes the format for the way Bale approaches his role as Dylan. Bale is in the perfect position to be like Dylan, a true impersonation of an impersonator.

The claim that imitating Dylan can bring to light an authentic version of Dylan is doubtful. However, all the white male characters portrayed as Dylan in this film are similar to some broader historically constructed frameworks of masculinity seen in Michael Kimmel's book *Manhood in America*. Is a historically constructed framework more or less authentic than an impersonation of an authentic impersonator? The trope of the struggling young man as seen in Christian Bale's Bob Dylan in New York clearly conforms to what Kimmel says about American youth at the turn of the century. "For a young man seeking his fortune in such a free and mobile society, identity was no longer fixed, and there was no firm patriarchal lineage to ground a secure sense of himself as a man" (2006: 31). Kimmel's image of young male insecurity and honesty is clearly sought after in the folk singer story line of this part of the movie:

> Grenage Village once the in spot for beatnik jazz and bebop is today the home of popular folk music fad. A do it yourself musical expression that has attracted youngsters from all across the nation. For them these home spun songs of the working man express a truth and candor sorely lacking in today's growing consumer society. .. Yet among the many new and talented artists to emerge, one name stands alone as the heart and soul of this growing musical trend. A young individual who both writes and performs some of his own era's finest tunes, and hailed by the New York Times as folk music's troubadour of conscience. (Haynes, 2007)

Dylan's identity through Bale functions as a voice free in itself, connected directly to society as if speaking through him. This young man physically expands, becoming the voice of the people. Bale's Dylan character, however, is paradoxically emotionally insecure —as seen in the scene where he is interviewed on a television program and is exaggeratedly feeble and uncertain about mankind. "I get a lot of thoughts inside of me and most people they keep them all inside. I guess it's for them that I do what I do" (Haynes 2007). He is grounded but released and his

free spirited state is neither praised nor questioned. He remains simply a voice of the people, as his girlfriend says in the documentary on Dylan inside this biopic: "Every night I would call this ragamuffin on stage and introduce America to Jack Rollins [Dylan]. I'd say that he has something to say and that he is speaking for me and everybody who wants a better world" (Haynes 2007). However, occupying both an important historical moment while maintaining an awkward intimacy in performance, is a common contradiction in the song lyrics. It is a part of Dylan's protest songs. Putting the bigger than life protest lyrics together with the tiniest of sounds in a natural acoustic sonic production space furthers its contradictory appeal and emotional impact.

We see in Dylan, one of the founders of the modern folk scene, the exact opposite of what Biddle proposes. This difference could be because of a shift in markets and/or technologies from the 1960s to the folk scene today, but the question of whether this recasting of gender norms through masculinity is radical or conservative is a valid concern in the case of Dylan as well. Referring to the context of today's folk music scene, Biddle says "the music of these artists is particularly interesting for its commitment in a highly technological and distributed world to place and presence" (1992: 125). He describes this return to place and presence as "unseating the more overtly exhibitionist, apparently self-assured phallocentrism of the cock (rock) persona from the previous decades" (1992: 132). Forty years earlier Dylan embraced the same minimalist, intimate reaction to a certain kind of overproduced, phallocentric music that was popular at the time. He says in the song "Talking World War III Blues" in the 1963 album *Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*: "This ain't rockaday Johnny singing tell your ma and tell your pa our love is gonna grow" (1963). Dylan overtly rejects this style of music and marries the folk music cause.

Kimmel's vision of male youth in America is a perfect summation of Dylan's pre-electric days played by Bale. Domestic Dylan Heath Ledger plays the role of Dylan during his short attempt at acting and being a home maker, subscribing to yet another kind of masculinity. Ledger plays both the domestic gypsy and incapable husband. He is unfaithful and unavailable and is eventually left by his wife. So why in a TVwireTV interview is this character called the emotional core of the film? The Heath Ledger narrative of the film is not done in a documentary style like that of the folk singer Bale narrative, but in an autobiographical narrative style. Haynes attains this effect by having Ledger narrate his part of the story in a muffled, low toned spoken voice off the screen, the exact opposite of Dylan's high pitched squeaky singing voice. During this period of his life he also appears to be a man of few words, the exact opposite of the loquacious Dylan in songs like "Subterranean Homesick blues" and many other rambling tunes.

The emotionality here is not revealed in the expressiveness of the man but in his inexpressiveness. In an interview about the film Ledger uses this same soft spoken voice to answer the question of whether he is the emotional core of the movie saying, "the slice of the story that Charlotte and I are in kind of chronicles Dylan's struggles with balancing his love life and his professional life. […] It's kind of like a moment in time thing, less of a physical portrayal and more of just a tone" (TVwireTV). Ledger drifts off at the end of his answer to this question, the volume of his voice diminishing as he lowers his head in an attempt to find the word "tone". He notably charms the interviewer by revealing his soft, sensitive side, but says nothing concrete about his role.

Ledger differentiates his Dylan from the other five Dylans not only by using his soft spoken voice, but also by his seemingly intentional non-impersonation of Dylan's characteristic vocal cadence, drawls, and stops and starts. The viewer especially notices this when seeing a scene from one of Dylan's movies being filmed during the biopic where Ledger acts like Dylan the actor: "It's not about me anymore its all about him […] your guaranteed double your money back voice of the people" (Haynes 2007). The scene ends and Ledger's emotional emotionlessness returns to his face and his body as he silently gazes at his wife in the crowd. His high pitched slurry drawl during the shooting of the film inside the film is similar to the impersonation of Dylan seen in Bale's character, but Ledger's voice returns to its soft narrative tone off camera. The claim here is that the viewer gets an inside view of a more authentic Dylan in Ledger's character, off the stage, off the music scene, and off the set. Ledger is in a way not even acting. He is just being himself. His voice in volume, tone and cadence portrays a calm, quiet person, not the Bob Dylan that fans expect to see.

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However, behind this character's attempt at intimacy through voice placement we see a claim of male emotionality characteristic in the construction of masculinity today. As Biddle explains the tone of the voice suggests a certain attempt at diffusing masculinity, but the content of the singer/song/writer lyrics reestablish the female as other (2007: 130). Ledger's solemn voice is in fact Dylan's domestic voice, a tone and way of being that proves incompatible with his marriage and fatherhood. This emotionality through silence is proposed at a time of Dylan's life when he was emotionally nonexistent at home. His passive response to the incompatibility of his life as a father and his life as a star is a common trope of post war masculinities and domesticity. In this respect Domestic Dylan displays what Kimmel's says was "part of the struggle simply to get out of the middle class house, now a virtual feminine theme park" (2006: 41). The emotional sincerity and organization of the domestic environment were not compatible with Dylan's music or his fame. As Lynne Segal says "Fatherhood can increase a man's sense

of his own failure and vulnerability, when he knows or fears he cannot adequately protect or provide for his wife and children" (1990: 29). The role of father in the film is not directly addressed as Dylan is rarely seen interacting with his children, leaving the family role to his wife in order to preserve his star role and lifestyle. "Social expectations, rules or norms attached to a person's position in society will usually force individuals to conform to them through processes of positive and negative reinforcement", she says (1990: 65). His reaction of distancing himself both psychologically and physically from his family is a dysfunction directly related to his masculinity in action, making his conditioned emotional inexpressivity not an aesthetic difference or a revolutionary new gender position, but an affirmation of the impossibility of the cohabitation of the roles of musician/star and father/ husband. His voice, with its solemn, vulnerable grain, occupies an aesthetic position of intimacy but also borders on a certain passive aggressivity. This neat packaging of Dylan's masculinity continues to be a dominant trope of the film *I'm Not There*. Its framework predictably supports a hierarchy of insensitivity, destabilizing the sincere, emotionally intimate portrait of Dylan provided by Ledger.

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The two Other characters are placed in the film as parts of Dylan despite not being white males. They are placed into a kind of allegorical narrative positioning. They do not just work as imitations of Dylan as the other characters do, but are pushed into allegorical versions of Dylan by a cultural antagonism that claims to disrupt the boundaries of both race and sex. The attempt to write these characters off as just a token move to appease both minority and women fans does not suffice. Looking deeper into how these characters play a role in Dylan as not Dylan further reveals the inherent limitations of Dylan's masculinities. These characters also reinforce the argument that biopics have an inherent dependence on masculinities, the building blocks for the biopic's narrative and visual construction.

The African American Boy Dylan played by Marcus Carl Franklin finds himself on the run from his past, frozen in a time not his own, and with knowledge of life way too great for his age. Franklin is by no means new to American history and representation. This character works as a symbol of Dylan's youthful innocence and freedom in the face of struggle. His blackness is not alarming or symbolically controversial as intended. Neither is what his character represents so revolutionary: Dylan's reappearance in the form of an African American boy is a clear mask for his Jewishness. There is nothing new about this masking of culture through the image of African-Americans. It has been done since before Elvis —black face being one of the earliest forms. Blacking it up has proven to be a very profitable method for American entertainment, especially music. Dyer

says that "Imitation was a survival and often an assimilationist strategy for Jewish entertainers […]. Jews occupied an unstable place in the racial hierarchies of the period: not quite white, they were yet not black" (2007: 149). In his interviews at the New York Film Festival Haynes addresses this Dylan character not as being represented as a black boy but as being "not Jewish" (IFC 2007). Dyer says that Jews have historically used blackness as an emotional release valve and a way to consolidate personal expression:

> Black music, in its emotional expressiveness, and with the weight of the experience of pain behind it, allowed Jews to express feeling in a way that they could not do on their own behalf. (2007: 149)

By pastiching this character with such an allegorical figure, a historical reversal occurs that dilutes and disavows these race issues "Pastiche in Jewish 'black' music is a highly ambivalent strategy of survival, expression and evasion" (2007: 150). However this African American boy is not imitating a Jew nor Bob Dylan as not a Jew, he is simply playing himself historically speaking. At the dinner table with a family of fellow black Americans, the mother interrogates Franklin's Dylan and symbolically releases him from a past no longer present: "I think it's 1959 and this boy is singing songs about the box car […]. Right here we got race riots, folks with no food, why ain't he out there singing about that […]. Live your own time child. Sing about your own time" (Haynes 2007). This leads the Franklin Dylan to step out of his state of being lost in time and start singing what is relevant to him in his time as a sensitive, aware, free spirited performer. At that point in the narrative he is freed from being lost in time but cannot free himself from the person he impersonates, Dylan. Many musicians who have some strain of blues in their music might act black or dwell in blackness but becoming black has still not proven possible, leaving the Franklin Dylan unwhole. This dislocated character then resurfaces in the Richard Gere story only to exchange a symbolic gaze with the Gere Dylan. The Franklin Dylan takes to *running* the whole movie, running away from the white Jew inside him. The transferral of masculinities from Jewish to black and back reinforces a masculine framework of identity that has been part and parcel of American racism and capitalist opportunism. The film does not present a fresh new perspective in the representation of either Dylan or masculinity.

Becoming just like a woman during the 60s was a bit more feasible than actually becoming a woman, which nowadays is more and more possible thanks to the advances in medicine. In the film actress Cate Blanchett plays Dylan and is famous as the best imitator of Dylan in the entire film:

> [H]er performance is a wonder, and not simply because, as Jude Quinn, she inhabits the twitchy, amphetamine fired Dylan of 1965-66 with unnerving accuracy. Casting a woman in this role reveals a dimension to the acerbic Dylan of this era that has

rarely been noted. Even as she perfectly mimics every jitter, sneer, and caustic put-down, Blanchett's translucent skin, delicate fingers, slight build, and pleading eyes all suggest the previously invisible vulnerability and fear that fueled Dylan's lacerating anger. It's hard to imagine that any male actor, or any less-gifted female actor for that matter, could have lent such rich texture to the role. (DeCurtis 2007: 6)

This imitation is done so well by Blanchett because she is an actress that uses all her body when acting a role says Haynes. "The psychical transformations that occur in her roles […] she really does have to find the equivalent body parts to throw herself into the role" (IFC 2007). A woman was chosen for Dylan's going-electric role because as Haynes says "you see this strangely anxious dandified hyperactive creature" (IFC 2007) in the videos of Dylan during that period. However, the use of an actress to play a male role, to imitate Dylan, is not a sign of a move beyond masculinity. Blanchett's embodiment of Dylan supports masculine ideas of feminine behavior as hysterical. Her imitation of Dylan reinforces the stereotype of women as hysterical that goes back to the beginnings of modern medical science.

In his book *Madness and Civilization,* Michel Foucault shows the lineage of madness focusing on two specific illnesses that work in binary opposition, Mania and Melancholia, and Hysteria and Hypochondria. Blanchett's imitation of Dylan in the biopic, specifically her use of the body, vividly works in conjunction with Foucault's description of hysteria: "A disease that could express itself in a paralysis or in frenzied movements that could bring on catalepsy or insomnia" (1965: 146). Blanchett does not stumble through Dylan's transition from acoustic folk music to his electrification, but glides through the role at a forty-five degree angle as if she were a character in an Edvard Munch painting. Blanchett's Dylan has had no sleep and is taking all the kinds of pharmaceutical pills available at the time. However, as Foucault notes in his dissection of the history of madness, doctors during the age of reason located "the cause of Hysteria in the womb" (1965: 145). The logic behind the identification and categorization of this "wet" and "sad" disease was that:

> The more easily penetrable the internal space becomes, the more frequent is hysteria […]; but if the body is firm and resistant, if the internal space is dense, organized and solidly heterogeneous in its different regions, the symptoms of hysteria are rare and its effects will remain simple. Is this not exactly what separates female hysteria from the male variety [mania]. (1965: 149)

If hysteria is essentially female and a female is playing Dylan, then the female is playing Dylan female. The imitation of hysteria in Dylan is essentially performed by being a woman. Blanchett is a woman playing a man playing a woman. However, Dylan's feminine side only surfaces with an excessive amount of drugs, drugs that

are provided by doctors in society, albeit with prescription, but prescription drugs nevertheless. Do these drugs make him act hysterical or do they make him act like a woman? The argument that the perfect postmodern pastiche of Dylan is played by a woman could reveal that the limitations of postmodern representations are best seen through gender. This character is chosen as part of an array of masculinities. Blanchett as Dylan is positioned as the non-masculine character and therefore is immediately made feminine, a femininity that corresponds to a three hundred year old prejudice buried as Foucault proves, in the very categorization of the illness itself. The film propagates the image of female as hysterical and therefore does not provide or work in a space outside gender. It does not deconstruct masculinities but merely displays them. It does not open a new space for gender or race and does not call into question the representation of masculinity by breaking them down, and it does not as Bingham says, "subvert the male perspective" (2010: 393).

In *Debating Masculinities* Armenagol and Carabi interview Lynne Segal about her perspective on postmodernism's relationship with masculinities:

> The postmodern emphasis on the mutability, fluidity and inconsistence of gender has helped question traditional binary oppositions such as men/women, masculinity/ femininity and heterosexuality/homosexuality […but it has] failed to eradicate phallocentrism and gender inequality since masculine domination continues at a global level seen in the violent and military masculinities. (2009:14)

This essay begins to unravel how this gender inequality is still present in not only global violence and politics, but postmodern global media as well. The claim that alternative representations such as postmodernism automatically call into question and respond to issues of gender is becoming less and less valid.

The feeling of history that this film leaves the viewer with through the music and life of Bob Dylan may be extremely real. The 60s and 70s may not have been a time of revolution, a time of progress, or a time of change. The followers of Dylan may not have had access to new information, new voices, and new codes for a better understanding of humanity. The women's rights movement cannot even have happened according to Haynes' version of Dylan. Dylan may have been just a pastiche of masculinities, all destined to fall, all destined to perpetuate the next version of themselves. What this paper seeks to understand is how the feeling of history generated thanks to the power of pastiche is not easily attained. By not calling into question the existence of these masculinities but merely demonstrating their instabilities through the scattered structure of the narrative, the biopic *I'm Not There* fails to pastiche the modern subject as Dyer would see it. This film does not attain the subterranean level of critique nor the historical 'affect' that it proposes in the deconstruction of Bob Dylan. The critique of masculinities through postmodernism in this film is just not there.

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THE EAST LOOKS AT THE WEST, THE WOMAN LOOKS AT THE MAN: A STUDY OF THE GAZE IN *BRICK LANE* BY MONICA ALI[1]

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> The imperial gaze reflects the assumption that the white western subject is central much as the male gaze assumes the centrality of the male subject. (Kaplan 1997: 78)

The question of *the gaze*, as an analytical framework within literary criticism, has been associated with and studied with regard to the narratological category of *point of view*, introduced by Henry James in his essay *The Art of Fiction* (1884). From the mid-twentieth century onwards, this concept of *point of view* has been revisited and revised by different scholars yielding to a plethora of alternative —not always equivalent— terms such as *focus of narration* (Brooks and Warren 1943), *vision* (Pouillon 1946) or Genette's more widely accepted notion of *focalization* (Genette 1980). All these terms —including Genette's coinage with which he unavailingly sought "to avoid the too specifically visual connotations of the terms *vision*, *field*, and *point of view*" (1980: 189)— metaphorically allude to the notion of *the gaze* or *look*. For, as Genette himself has conceded, a distinction might be drawn between the narrative entity which "speaks" and the one that "sees" (1980: 186). If looking implies power as Foucault has shown (1991), then an analysis of who looks and who is looked at within a literary text might prove useful in exposing how writers have, consciously or unconsciously, perpetuated or subverted power relations in their texts. Consequently, it is not surprising that literary critics have come to examine the focalizing entity/entities within a given

text *vis-á-vis* the broader subject-matter of the gaze, turning the presumably ideological-free analysis of narratology into a fertile field of exploration of cultural and power relations. Indeed, over the past years, scholars working under the rubric of (post)colonial and/or gender criticism have increasingly turned their attention to the imbrications between looking-relations and power-relations in literature. For, as Ann Kaplan suggests in the above epigraph, if the principles which have traditionally governed looking-relations between the East and the West reflect the centrality of the white western subject, those which have traditionally determined looking-relations between men and women reveal the centrality of the male subject. The purpose of the present contribution is therefore to examine the subversive implications of the narratological technique of focalization in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. Relying on postcolonial and gender studies, I argue that in *Brick Lane* Ali uses focalization to subvert the prevailing centrality of both the white western gaze —the "imperial gaze" as defined by Kaplan (1997)[2]— and the male gaze. To this effect, Ali has created a narrative in which the main focalizer, Nazneen, is a Spivakian subaltern female character, a character who, moreover, is recurrently and deliberately *looking at* and *scrutinizing* western and eastern, dressed and undressed, male and female bodies.

In a 1982 article in *The Times*, Salman Rushdie wrote that "the Empire writes [is writing] back to the Centre" (1982: 8) and, since the arrival of the *Empire Windrush*[3] at Tilbury in 1948, we could certainly add that the Empire has also been writing *from* the Centre. Since the publication of such pioneering works as Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) or Kamala Markandaya's *The Nowhere Man* (1972), British Literature has witnessed the appearance of a considerable number of works which have sought to (re)write the Asian experience in Britain through what Prafulla Mohanti has called "brown eyes" (Mohanti 1985). Amongst these works would be, for instance, V.S. Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), Ravinder Randhawa's *A Wicked Old Woman* (1987), Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988), Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990), Meera Syal's *Anita and Me* (1996), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma* (2007), and also Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). *Brick Lane* is Ali's first and most celebrated novel and is so far the only narrative which the British-Bangladeshi writer has devoted entirely to the Asian migration experience in Britain.[4] Ali's *début* novel was received with great critical acclaim —it was shortlisted for the *Booker Prize* in 2003; it has been translated into more than twenty languages and was turned into a film in 2007 under the direction of Sarah Gavron. Nevertheless, recent criticism has come to question the extent to which Ali's *Brick Lane* might deserve —either in terms of form or content— its huge success.[5] In this respect, I agree with Sara Upstone in highlighting that the main relevance of the novel lies in "re-imagining the migrant narrative from a female

perspective" (2010: 168). This constitutes a quantum leap since, as Papastergiadis has noted, "the driving motivation for contemporary migrants is rarely expressed in the masculinist narrative of the pioneer […]. The experience of Third World women, a key force in the international labour market, cannot be described in such pioneering terms" (2000: 48). Furthermore, as I intend to demonstrate in the present work, the subversive female gaze offered by the novel also provides a counterpoint to previous narratives. For even in novels such as Randhawa's *A Wicked Old Woman* or Syal's *Anita and Me,* where the main focalizer or narrator is a female character, we do not detect such a subversive depiction and exploration of the male body, from a female perspective, as we do in *Brick Lane.*

Brick Lane revolves, mainly —albeit not exclusively—, around the character of Nazneen, a young Bengali woman who is brought to Britain as the result of an arranged marriage with a man "at least forty years old" (Ali 2007: 17). Although featuring a third-person narrator, *Brick Lane* is mostly rendered from Nazneen's point of view. At first credulous and naïve, later on sophisticated and mature, Nazneen's perspective dominates that of the narrator in a very palpable way at the beginning of the novel, merges with it almost imperceptibly towards the middle section and makes it almost unfelt towards the end. Consequently, as the novel progresses, the reader gets closer and closer to the protagonist, forgetting the presence of the narrator who mediates between them. In so doing, the novel creates a parallelism between the emancipation of Nazneen's voice at the formal level and her process of self-empowerment at the diegetic level where Nazneen goes from being a submissive wife to becoming an independent woman and the breadwinner for the family.

Trapped inside her apartment for most of the novel, and particularly upon her arrival in London, Nazneen finds in the small window of her claustrophobic flat the first chance to come into contact with the external world. Nevertheless, the sight offered by this window is a limited one, restricting Nazneen's field of vision to "the dead grass and broken paving stones" (17) as well as to the figure of the tattoo lady, an old white woman who, like Nazneen, also shares a place by a window, a window which in this case is curtainless. This naked window offers Nazneen a privileged position since she can observe the tattoo lady without being seen. As a result, Nazneen recurrently allows her gaze to prowl over the body of the mysterious woman, a body which is not dressed in clothes but in ink:

> She [the tattoo lady] scratched her arms, her shoulders, the accessible portions of her buttocks […]. At least two thirds of the flesh on show was covered in ink. Nazneen had never been close enough (never closer than this, never further) to decipher the designs […]. They [the tattoos] were ugly and they made the tattoo lady more ugly than was necessary, but the tattoo lady clearly did not care. (18)

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Nazneen seems impressed by the way in which this old woman makes her body the object of the public gaze, something which, as we shall see, Nazneen avoids at all costs. Given Nazneen's socio-cultural background, her recurrent references to the body of the tattoo lady (17, 18, 40, 53, 87) can be understood as evidence of her bewilderment at a new culture in which the exposure of the body is, to a certain extent, normal. But what seems more revealing for the purpose of the present essay is the fact that, filtered through Nazneen's perspective, western reality —of which the body of the tattoo lady is but an early exponent— comes to be presented as an exotic *Other*. In this way, Ali's novel plays with and subverts the prevailing paradigm of previous Raj fictions such as Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901) where the white character of Kim, dressed in native garb, surveys India and transmits a vision of it as a feminized exotic *Other*. As Nazneen progressively ventures out of the domestic sphere, we also detect how the narrative subverts the figure of what M.L. Pratt has called the white western "seeing-man", "whose imperial eyes […] look[ed] and posess[ed]" the newly annexed territories (1992: 7). In *Brick Lane*, Monica Ali creates an eastern "seeing-woman" whose eyes progressively unveil and possess Britain. Through Nazneen's focalization, western readers come to experience how alien —and even risible— their own culture might appear when rendered from a different perspective, just as eastern readers might have felt detached from the reality portrayed through Kim's perspective in Kipling's novel. Thus, revealing the comic outlook which pervades the whole narrative, western women, as seen from Nazneen's point of view, have "strange hair […] pumped up like a snake's hood" (57), and they walk in a bizarre way with their shoulders "padd[ing] up and out. They could balance a bucket on each side and not spill a drop of water" (43). But Nazneen's patronizing gaze also falls upon the male characters of the novel as in the case of the male ice-skater whose suit was "so tight that it made his private parts stand out on display" (36). In this way, Nazneen *returns* the gaze at the whites, subverting the looking paradigm which has traditionally repressed the subjectivity of the subaltern (hooks 1992). Nazneen makes the white characters of the novel feel what Sartre called "the sensation of being seen. For the white man has enjoyed for three thousand years the privilege of seeing without being seen" (1976: 7).[6] For Nazneen, the streets of London become actual catwalks of exotic bodies dressed in exotic outfits which she *looks at* and *scrutinizes* from the position of a spectator:

> But they [the people in the street] were not aware of her. In the next instant she knew it. They could not see her any more than she could see God. They knew that she existed (just as she knew He existed) but unless she did something, waved a gun, halted the traffic, they would not see her. *She enjoyed this thought. She began to scrutinize.* She *stared at* the long, thin faces, the pointy chins. (56, emphasis mine)

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As the words in italics show, Nazneen does not simply *see* —an inevitable and even unconscious act— but rather she *looks*, *gazes* and *scrutinizes*, verbs which allude to a more conscious and intentional move than the mere act of seeing. Ali makes Nazneen's continuous acts of looking go beyond mere gestures of observation and turns them rather into consciously and deliberately constructed processes aimed at placing Nazneen as the subject of the gaze with all its subversive potential. Like the Freudian voyeur, Nazneen even admits taking pleasure in scrutinizing other bodies —"*She enjoyed this thought. She began to scrutinize*"— provided that she can avoid being seen. What is more, the fact that she compares herself with a God who sees without being seen recalls Foucault's "Panopticism" (1991). But, in *Brick Lane*, the "all-seeing" figure is significantly and subversively a female character; it is a woman who exerts control through her gaze, reiteratively defying and withstanding the male gaze and, by extension, male power. Thus, for instance, when she passes a group of young Bengali men whose eyes become fixed on her, she resists being reduced to a visual object: "When she passed a group of young Bangla men on the path, they parted and bowed with mock formality. One remained straight and still and she caught his look, challenging or denying […] Nazneen pulled her headscarf over her face to hide her lips" (143). In a similar vein, on seeing a girl with a big camera in Brick Lane, Nazneen also "adjusted her headscarf [because] She was conscious of being watched" (254). Although a discussion of Nazneen's use of the Islamic veil is beyond the scope of the present contribution,[7] it is worth noting that, as the previous quotations show, Nazneen recurrently uses her veil as what K.H. Bullock has called a "gaze inhibitor" (2000), that is, as a sartorial strategy to avoid objectification. In this respect, Bullock (2000) has even argued that the western interest in unveiling the body of the Muslim woman underscores the desire of the white western male gaze to appropriate the body of the Muslim woman who can see without being seen.

If Muslim women have traditionally entered western literary representations as objects of *Otherness* or as sexualized objects of a western white male gaze (Zine 2002), in *Brick Lane* Monica Ali subverts this paradigm by creating a female character who is the bearer of the gaze and who explicitly condemns any action which might turn her into the object of anybody else's gaze, including her husband's: "'I [Chanu] would not say so. Not beautiful, but not so ugly either. The face is broad, big forehead. Eyes are a bit too close together […]. Not tall. Not short. Around five foot two. Hips are a bit narrow but wide enough, I think, to carry children'" (23). On overhearing this conversation, Nazneen engages in a dialectical struggle against Chanu's objectification of her, and she immediately deprives him of his subject position and, therefore, of his power and self-command: "Narrow hips! You could wish for such a fault, Nazneen said to herself, thinking of the rolls of fat that hung low from Chanu's stomach. It would be possible to tuck

all your hundred pens and pencils under those rolls and keep them safe and tight" (23). Like Medusa's gaze which turns men into stone —and evokes the fear of castration—, Nazneen's verbal reply fossilizes Chanu's previous objectification of her. What is more, in line with Freud's theories (1965), it could be suggested that Nazneen's recurrent acts of looking at Chanu's body metaphorically 'castrate' him since, in destabilizing the subject position of the male as the bearer of the gaze, the character of Nazneen is challenging one of the phallocentric relations by which men assert their dominance. For, as Audre Lorde has pointed out, "men do not simply look; their gaze carries with it the power of action and of possession" (1984: 53). Thus, whilst Nazneen's acts of gazing at white characters serve to destabilize the imperial paradigm which has traditionally dominated looking-relations between the East and the West, the fact that Nazneen recurrently looks at and scrutinizes male bodies also subverts the gender paradigm which has traditionally defined looking-relations between men and women. Although, as we have seen with regard to the tattoo lady, Nazneen does look at female characters, her objectifying gaze is, more often than not, directed at male characters. Furthermore, whilst Nazneen's acts of looking at other female characters —mainly white women— seem to be mainly used for descriptive purposes, her fixation on male characters is conspicuously aimed at exposing male bodies in an unconventional, subversive way. Indeed, Chanu's body becomes one of the first and most recurrent targets of her objectifying gaze throughout the novel. Through several instances of indirect thought, we observe how Nazneen exposes his most hidden defects without any sense of pathos:

> After a minute or two in the dark when her eyes had *adjusted* and the snoring began, Nazneen turned on her side and *looked at* her husband. She *scrutinized* his face, round as a ball, the blunt-cut thinning hair on top, and the dense eyebrows that crawled across his brow. [...] She *looked at* him for a long time. It was not a handsome face [...] Now that they were closed she could see the way the skin puckered up across the lids and drooped down to meet the creases at the corners. (39-40, emphasis mine)

In a reversal of the male gaze which usually scrutinizes a female body, Nazneen bluntly scrutinizes and exposes Chanu's body before the eyes of the reader —and this occurs repeatedly throughout the novel (144, 178, 181, 184, 202, 204, 295, 521, 366, 370). Unknowingly, Chanu ends up being on display in the same way as the tattoo lady deliberately lets her quasi-naked body be on show to the whole community. In this way, Ali reverses the scopic paradigm of men looking at women (Berger 1972; Mulvey 1997), conferring to the female gaze the subject position of which it has traditionally been deprived both in western and eastern cultures. If within a western imaginary the female gaze has been regarded as dangerous and threatening —something symbolized by the Greco-Roman myth of Medusa—,

in eastern cultures —and particularly in the Muslim world— the social order is considered to be challenged if a woman dares to look at a man (see Mernissi 2003). Although, as we have seen with regard to Nazneen's use of the veil, the sartorial conventions of Muslim women might protect them from the objectifying male gaze —and, indeed, as Watson's interview-based analysis shows (2002), many Muslim women do use their veils for this purpose—, the fact that they might use their veils as "gaze inhibitor[s]" (Bullock 2000) implicitly underscores their potential position as objects of the male gaze. In this respect, scholars such as Ahmed (1992) or Mernissi (2003) have argued that, in the name of Islam, patriarchy has enforced female veiling and has subsequently used this sartorial imposition to protect men from sexual temptation since, as Iman Ghazali noted in the twelfth century, "the look is fornication of the eye" (in Mernissi 2003: 141). Given that the subject of that fornicating gaze is assumed to be male, the idea of Muslim women as potential objects of the male gaze is reinforced. From this, it may be deduced that, if exposed, Muslim women are also likely to fall prey to the male gaze, a male gaze which, judging by Ghazali's words, seems to assume phallic dimensions penetrating the female body like Draculanian eye-teeth. Thus, even though Muslim women might avoid becoming the object of the public gaze by covering themselves, they, like their western counterparts, have not traditionally inhabited the position of subject of the gaze, a convention which Ali reverses in *Brick Lane*.

Going back to Chanu, it could be argued that, to a certain extent, his body is feminized in the novel, not only because of his position as the object of Nazneen's gaze, but also because his body is repeatedly described as being abject.[8] The flaccid skin of his face "puckered [puckers] up across the lids" (39); "his lips parted [part] indignantly" (18); his stomach has the appearance of a "water-filled balloon" (202); and his clothes are always described as being stained by his "hair oil" (366), if not by food grease. At a certain point, Nazneen even defines Chanu's stomach in relation to a pregnant woman's womb: "His [Chanu's] stomach no longer looked like a nine-month pregnancy. Now it was closer to six" (459).[9] What is more, the fact that Nazneen is constantly working on Chanu's body (39, 45, 91, 182, 183) —"She was always cutting bits off him" (91)— strengthens the idea of Chanu as an object. Therefore, Chanu's body becomes more an area to work upon than a *locus* of desire, something which Nazneen will find in Karim, her middleman and future lover. The first image we have of Karim resembles a verbal translation of a cinematographic medium shot in which, through Nazneen's perspective, Karim's body is visually exposed:

> She considered him. The way he stood with his legs wide and his arms folded. His hair. Cut so close to the skull. The way it came to a triangle at the front, and the little bit which stood up straight at the centre of his forehead. He wore his jeans tight and his shirtsleeves rolled up to the elbow […]. He wore the phone at his hip, in a little

black leather holster. He felt the length and breadth of it and tested the surface with his thumb as if he had discovered a growth, this tumorous phone on his side. Then he refolded his arms. They looked strong, those arms. (210)

In passages such as this, Nazneen subverts the figure of the voyeuristic male spectator as theorized by Mulvey (1997). Paraphrasing Mulvey in reverse, we could say that Nazneen subjects Karim's body to her controlling and curious female gaze (Mulvey 1997: 16). In contrast to Chanu's plump and sloppy aspect, Karim is described as a well-built, attractive young man. Whereas Nazneen's portrayals of Chanu suggest feelings of repulsion, the visual impression that Karim leaves in Nazneen is flooded with sensuality and eroticism, something emphasized by the phallic dimension that Karim's phone seems to acquire. Only described in terms of its "length" and "breadth," Karim's phone, like the stereotypical phallic symbol of the pistol, is also placed "at his hip, in a little black leather holster" (210). Nazneen fixes her gaze on Karim's phone, going as far as sensing how he feels "the length and breadth of it" and how he "test[s] the surface with his thumb" as if representing an act of masturbation which culminates in "a growth" (210). Karim's phone becomes a fetish which Nazneen will recall on several occasions and, as a potential phallic symbol, it also serves to anticipate the future sexual encounter between the protagonist and the young man.

Nazneen's descriptions of Karim's body are charged with voyeuristic and erotic overtones as when she focuses her eyes on Karim's lips and thighs: "He turned round. Sweat across the top of his lip […] He got into position now. Legs wide, right leg working, and she saw the thigh strain inside the denim" (211). As Nazneen and Karim get closer, she is said to observe "him more openly now" (261). For "when he saw [sees] her looking at him she did [does] not look away immediately" (261). Nazneen's refusal to turn her gaze away when Karim catches her look might be suggestive of the growing intimacy between the couple, but it might also be understood as Nazneen's personal vindication of her right to look. Feeling even freer, Nazneen continues scrutinizing and, consequently, objectifying Karim's body either in their face-to-face meetings or in her musings: "she thought of Karim. She thought about his forearms and she rejoiced that they were not thin. She thought about the small flat mole on the left ridge of his jaw and how stunned she had been to discover it only this week" (264). If Nazneen describes Chanu as an unattractive man, she praises Karim's physical appearance, in particular, his strong arms —"They looked strong, those arms" (210). Similarly, whilst Chanu's fluids and segregations cause repulsion in Nazneen, she finds sensuality in the "sweat across the top of his [Karim's] lip" (211). This description confers on Karim an almost photographic aspect, much in keeping with the image of the man with a "sprinkling of sweat" (55) over his biceps whom Nazneen observes on a poster in Brick Lane. Nazneen

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reifies Karim's body, turning it into a quasi-commodity and this, in turn, serves to reverse the paradigm of female objectification which has traditionally dominated visual culture and artistic representations in modern societies.

In *Brick Lane*, Ali's use of an eastern female character as the main focalizer of the novel represents a challenge to the position of conventional observers. In filtering western reality through the eyes of an eastern woman, Ali reverses the paradigm which has traditionally dominated looking-relations between the East and the West, a paradigm which has also governed the looking structure of previous accounts by imperial surveyors. Furthermore, by placing a female character as the main focalizing entity of the novel, Ali also subverts the gender politics of the gaze. In a reversal of the male gaze which usually scrutinizes a female body, in *Brick Lane* it is a woman who explicitly and deliberately *looks at* and *scrutinizes* other male bodies. This is so much so that theorizations on the dichotomy women/object and men/subject of the gaze such as Berger's (1972) or Mulvey's (1997), rather than serving as frameworks for critical analysis, seem to be subversively evoked in Ali's novel. What is more, from a literary perspective, Nazneen's recurrent acts of looking at male characters also serve Ali to challenge literary conventions for, as Peter Brooks has noted, "[w]hile the bodies viewed are both male and female, vision is a typically male prerogative, and its object of fascination the woman's body, in a cultural model so persuasive that many women novelists don't reverse its vectors" (1993: 88). In *Brick Lane* Ali does reverse the vectors, not only because in her novel the woman looks at the man, but also because the East looks at the West.

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Notes

2. In *Looking for the Other: Feminism, Film, and the Imperial Gaze* (1997), Ann Kaplan defines the post-colonial concept of "imperial gaze" as follows: "By the 'Imperial Gaze', I mean a gaze structure which fails to understand that, as Edward Said phrases it, non-American peoples have integral cultures and lives that work according to their own, albeit different, logic (Said 1993/94, xxiii)" (1997: 78). Put differently, Kaplan's notion of the "imperial gaze" alludes to the fact that the colonized has often been viewed and represented from the perspective of the colonizer. The white western gaze has deprived the colonized of their subjectivity, putting them in the position of objects and, consequently, "in the position of being mastered" (1997: 70). For Kaplan, the imperial gaze and the male gaze cannot be separated, not only because both are objectifying gazes, but also because the imperial gaze has often been a male gaze.

3. Literally, *Empire Windrush* is the name of one of the first ships which carried West Indian immigrants to Britain after World War II. Metonymically and metaphorically, the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* at Tilbury in

1948 is often regarded as the beginning of post-war mass migration to Britain.

4. To date Ali has published three other novels, namely *Alentejo Blue* (2006), *In the Kitchen* (2009), and more recently *Untold Story* (2011).

5. In her article "'Same Old, Same Old'" (2007), Sara Upstone, for instance, argues that, despite their huge commercial success, both Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* continue to draw on postcolonial theoretical frameworks and, in so doing, they take a step back in the construction of black Britishness, above all, if compared to other, perhaps less successful, novels such as Diran Adebayo's *Some Kind of Black* (1997), Atima Srivastava's *Looking for Maya* (1999), Nirpal Singh Dhaliwal's *Tourism* (2006), Suhayl Saadi's *Psychoraag* (2004) or Gautam Malkani's *Londonstani* (2006). For a more comprehensive approach to the polarized critical reception of *Brick Lane,* see also Ruth Maxey's "'Representative' of British Asian Fiction? The Critical Reception of Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*" (2008).

6. Sartre wrote these words in his introduction to the *Anthologie de la nouvelle poesie nègre et malgash de langue francaise,* edited by Leopold Sedar Senghor in 1948.

7. In a different study, entitled "El *hiyab* en *Brick Lane,* de Monica Ali" (2012), I

have explored, in depth, the politics of the veil in Ali's novel.

8. As opposed to men's contained, closed off and hard bodies, the female body has been regarded as abject, fluid and malleable because of processes such as childbirth and menstruation (see, Grosz 1994; Kristeva 1982).

9. Nazneen's references to Chanu's rolling stomach are recurrent in the novel (144, 178, 181, 184, 202, 204, 295, 521, 366, and 370) and they can be said to represent a somatic translation of Chanu's psychological states. For the prominent stomach which Chanu exhibits at the beginning of the novel matches his great expectations for the future in Britain; when his failure as the family's breadwinner begins to be evident, his stomach is said to have become "alarmingly small, puckered and loose, a depleted rice sack" (204); and his failure as a husband and father as well as his inability to find his place in Britain also finds a somatic echo: "He [Chanu] had shrunk. Not just his cheeks and his belly, but all of him. His voice, his words, his temper, his projects, his plans. He had shrunk […] His stomach no longer looked like a nine-month pregnancy. Now it was closer to six" (459). Paralleling Chanu's inability to cope with the western world, his stomach fails to adapt to excessive eating and Chanu eventually develops an ulcer.

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DISCOVERING SHAKESPEARE IN EXILE:
SPANISH ÉMIGRÉS IN ENGLAND (1819-1840)[1]

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I

The theme of exile has been there from the beginning of literature itself. Not only has it affected poets and writers personally and been a subject of numberless stories, but it was a matter for discussion in classical literature that reached the Renaissance and beyond. Summarizing the manifold responses to exile runs the risk of simplification, but, as Claudio Guillén pointed out (1990, 1995, 1998), at least two contrastive positions can be observed: one might be represented by Ovid's attitude to it; the other, by what Plutarch, synthesizing previous Stoic commonplaces, wrote about it. In the remainder of this section I shall sum up the key points of this contrast, basically by following Guillén's observations.

In his *Tristia* Ovid made a personal, sad response to his experience of exile, one expressing nostalgia and lamentation. Ovid, as we know, was exiled to Tomis (modern Constance in present-day Romania), which was the most remote place in the Roman Empire and whose inhabitants (the Getae) he looked upon as barbarians —incidentally, a feeling jocularly echoed by Touchstone in Shakespeare's *As You Like It:* "I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths" (III.iii.5-8).[2] For Ovid, exile is the loss of civilization, the deprivation of the city. When he writes on the coming of spring in Tomis, Ovid thinks of Rome; not of Roman spring itself, but of the various social and cultural

activities associated with it. In other words, Ovid cannot find a meaningful world beyond Rome. Exile for him is a calamity, a sundering of the self. As his reaction is so personal and self-centered, exile becomes for him a subject of poetry rather than of moral meditation.

On the other hand, in Plutarch exile becomes a theme of moral reflection. In his *Perì phygês* (*On Exile*), written about a century after Ovid's *Tristia*, Plutarch rejected the opinions of Greek writers before him who exposed the evils of exile and drew on the Stoic consolations on it as defended by such as Musonius (*Discourse 9: That Exile is not an Evil*) and Seneca (*Ad Helviam matrem, De consolatione*), for whom exile is not a misfortune, but a test and an opportunity. Thus Plutarch observes that the evil of exile lies in opinion only, that exile can offer a quiet and contemplative life and defends the notion of the whole universe as our native land. As the human being is removed to a different place, he is in a position to discover or better understand what he has in common with the rest of mankind. Under the sky, he says, "no one is either exile or foreigner or alien; here are the same fire, water, and air; the same magistrates and procurators and chancellors —Sun, Moon, and Morning Star" (Plutarch 1959: 529).

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It is not the purpose of this article to expound on this theme at length, but I think it useful to begin with these two opposed views of exile in classical literature, not only because of their intrinsic interest, but because they have a bearing on part of what will be discussed later.

II

That exile involves a test and an opportunity, and that it affords the possibility of new discoveries and a better understanding of things and people seems to be confirmed by the experience of a number of Spaniards who formed part of the emigration to England in the first decades of the 19th century. With the obvious and important exception that I shall discuss later, they were political émigrés who escaped the political persecution unleashed between 1823 and 1833, at the end of the ultraconservative reign of Ferdinand VII, which involved the restoration of absolutism. Most of them had to live in London jobless and in poverty, basically on not much more than the small subsidy granted them by the British government, and were averse to becoming integrated and learning the language properly (Alcalá Galiano 1907: 475).

Among the émigrés, however, there was a limited but active number of highly educated and professionally qualified liberals, who spent their time reading, studying, writing, translating or teaching. Following up a 1826 remark by a

confidential agent of the Madrid government to the effect that a writing mania had seized many Spanish émigrés in London, a contemporary historian has pointed out that these liberal exiles did indeed turn to writing and that the professional writers became more prolific (Llorens 1979: 153-165). But there is a special benefit which many of them reaped from their English exile: in some cases, a first and direct contact with Shakespeare's work and, in others, a more immediate, authentic and deeper acquaintance with it.

It should be borne in mind that Shakespeare generally became known to the Spanish public in the 18th century through France and mediated by French Neoclassicism. If we look at what was written on him then, both by defenders and detractors, we can gather that for most of them "Shakespeare" was no more than a name, and the author of a few tragedies. Only three writers show a reading knowledge of his work, or at least of part of it, in its original English. The first was Father Juan Andrés, who quoted from the English originals of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *The Tempest* (1782). Then Leandro Fernández de Moratín, who translated *Hamlet* from the English —i.e., not from the French neoclassical adaptation, as had been done before, both in Spain and other European countries—, and quoted from the original in the notes accompanying his translation (1798). Finally, Cristóbal Cladera, who published a critique of Moratín's translation (1800), in which he fell back on the original English text to substantiate his criticism (Pujante 2008). Thus we have to wait for the next few decades to witness an important change in this respect, a change which originated in exile, revealed a direct knowledge of Shakespeare and involved a different, generally positive appreciation of his work.

However, the contact of the Spanish émigrés in England with "authentic Shakespeare" and its effects differed according to the persons concerned. It should be noted that these liberal exiles had received a Neoclassical education and abided by its principles. For them Calderón was out of fashion, so, Shakespeare, who from A.W. Schlegel onwards was to be associated with the Spanish playwright as representing "Romantic drama", clashed with their Neoclassical tenets. On the other hand, the conservative German consul and hispanist Johann Nikolas Böhl von Faber, supported by his patriotic and more conservative Spanish wife, defended Calderón and Romanticism, particularly through his early propagation in Spain of Schlegel's ideas (Pujante 2001a: 161).

One of the Spanish émigrés who read, and wrote on Shakespeare during his London exile was Manuel Herrera (1779-1834). A liberal army officer, he was the first Spaniard to write in some detail on Shakespearean plays, independent of translations, and he was also one of the first Spaniards of that period who read in the English original and discussed plays that were then hardly known or mentioned in Spain —comedies like *Much Ado about Nothing* and "problem plays"

like *Troilus and Cressida*. Part of his notes were interpolated in his translations of texts by William Hazlitt and A.W. Schlegel, whose Shakespeare *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* he was the first to render into Spanish, even if rather partially and selectively. Herrera remained a Neoclassicist, criticised Schlegel and did not warm unconditionally to Shakespeare. As a critic, he was honest and practical rather than intellectually outstanding, and he committed himself in his evaluations. In this respect, he differs from most of his Spanish predecessors in avoiding generalities on Shakespeare: for one thing, his reading of *Much Ado About Nothing,* which is more extensive and detailed than Schlegel's, reveals that he wrote it with the original at his elbow, and constantly quoted from it. It is impossible to ascertain whether he engaged in this critical activity as a way to occupy his exile in London —in which case his notes were for him no more than a reader's jottings— or if he wrote on Shakespeare with a view to revision and later publication. Be that as it may, he died in 1834, one year after his return to Spain, and his notes, which remained in manuscript, were not published until 2001 (Pujante 2001b). Nor is it possible to establish whether Herrera prepared his translations and notes on his own, or if he was helped, even if only in part, by one of the literary men exiled with him in London. But more of this later.

Another liberal army officer exiled in London in those years was Evaristo San Miguel (1785-1862), later to become field marshal back in Spain. A fervent reader of history, San Miguel authored a number of biographical and historical writings, and later became a member of the Madrid Royal Academy of History. He published a brief popularizing biography of Shakespeare in which he discussed the change of literary taste in that period and showed an interest in Shakespeare's history plays that was unusual in contemporary Spanish writers and critics —in fact, he did not deal with the tragedies at all (San Miguel 1844). However, as has been pointed out (Par 1935 I: 289), his biography tends to be rather cursory, and given its tenor and the date of publication (eleven years after the end of the absolutist régime), it may or may not be a direct consequence of his experience of exile. However, exile did bring about a change in the two men of letters to be discussed next.

III

José Joaquín de Mora (1783-1864), a lawyer and professor of Philosophy, was well known as a staunch defender of Neoclassicism. He seems to have converted to Romanticism and to Shakespeare during his London exile. However, the circumstances and effects of this possible conversion are not quite clear. In a letter of 1813 Mora says he has read

> something by Shakespeare, whom I consider the grandest genius that ever lived […]
> I love it when I hear him called barbarous, savage and uncouth, because if these
> people understood and praised him, would he be what he is? […] He is the best of
> poets. (In Pitollet 1909: 80)[3]

But this fervour was not to be expressed again. Five years later his newspaper *Crónica
científica y literaria* published an adverse critique of A.W. Schlegel's *Vorlesungen*,
in all probability written by himself, and which confirmed his Neoclassical
principles (Anon. 1818). In it he accused Schlegel of praising Shakespeare with
blind enthusiasm and justifying his faults to the point of becoming responsible for
all his mistakes. As this is the tenor of Herrera's notes, one wonders whether Mora
may not have helped Herrera with his notes, as suggested above. Like Herrera,
Mora was made prisoner in the Napoleonic Wars and taken to France, where
like the officers and other educated prisoners, he spent his free time learning or
improving his French and doing a lot of reading.

As an émigré in London between 1823 and 1833, Mora proved remarkably active
as a writer, compiler and translator. Helped by Rudolph Ackermann, he founded
No me olvides (*Forget me not*), a sort of almanac in prose and verse, of which six
volumes were published between 1824 and 1829, basically intended to be sold in
Latin America. In the 1825 issue he published a verse translation of Act II, scene
I of *As You Like It*. He did not explain why he chose this particular text in what
is his only rendering of Shakespeare, but it is reasonable to conjecture that, as an
exile, he might have felt attracted by at least the first part of the scene, in which
the banished Duke, addressing his "co-mates and brothers in exile", praises the
advantages of life in the forest as contrasted with the drawbacks of "the envious
court". Since the moral of the speech is that "Sweet are the uses of adversity", it
seems evident that Shakespeare offers here a case of *"consolatio* in exile" in the
tradition of Seneca, Musonius and Plutarch, as described at the beginning of this
article (see also Tison 1960: 149; Kingsley-Smith 2003: 106-136).

Now what is odd in Mora's rendering is the treatment of the subject; he translates
"exile" as "abandono mísero" (wretched abandonment or retirement), and there
is no way of knowing that both the speaker and his hearers have been banished
into exile, unless one has read the play or knows what it is about. Translations are
not produced in a vacuum, and in cases like this translators may leave traces that
reveal their own feelings and ideas on the subject. Here we are doubly frustrated,
as Mora not only left no personal note on exile in this version, but he also blurred
the very concept.

In a later evaluation of Shakespeare, Mora wrote:

> To my mind, the classicist who scorns, despises or ridicules the new artistic methods
> which a wider knowledge of German and English literature has introduced into

> Southern-European literature is as incomprehensible as the Romantic who treats
> with such hostility and lack of respect the models to be found in the opposite ranks.
> Nobody will ever convince me that Shakespeare is a barbarian, and Calderón an
> eccentric, nor can I persuade myself that they were top-ranking geniuses for the
> sole reason that they did not submit themselves to certain rules. (Mora 1840: XII)[4]

In other words, Mora converted or, at least, yielded to Romanticism during his
English exile, and with it to Shakespeare, but seems to have been reluctant to
burn his Neoclassical boats. His seemingly eclectic position, shared by others in
the 1830s and 1840s, laid him open to accusations of "versatilidad acomodaticia"
(over-readiness to adapt) (Par 1935 I: 166-169).

A similar case of conversion was that of the writer and statesman Antonio Alcalá
Galiano (1789-1865), who became professor of Spanish Literature at the University
of London during his English exile —the first professorship of this subject in
Britain. Like Mora, he was at first an opponent of Romanticism and Romantic
ideas as Schlegel had explained them. But his London exile made him change:
he later confessed his "superstitious respect" for the observance of the classical
rules, embraced the Romantic tenets and came to be in favor of Shakespeare.
Back in Spain, he expounded Romantic principles in his preface to the Duque
de Rivas' *El moro expósito* (1834) —in a similar way to Victor Hugo's prologue
to his own play *Cromwell*. Alcalá Galiano's conversion can be attributed, at least
in part, to his gradual acquaintance with English literature during his London
exile. He valued English writers as being of the first order, and in whose works
a reader could see inspiration and good taste, as well as extraordinary originality
and variety, and he pointed out that English literature ruled out the tendency to
literary controversies one often found in other European Romanticisms, especially
Spanish Romanticism. For him, England does not accept, or barely acknowledge,
the division of poets into Classical and Romantic (in Saavedra 1982: 24). Then in
his 1845 *Historia de la literatura española, francesa, inglesa e italiana,* he discussed
and praised Shakespeare, whom he proclaimed "perhaps the first playwright in the
world"[5] (Alcalá Galiano 1845: 71, 74, 99-100). But he had also defended him in
literary debates held at the Ateneo in Madrid in 1839. It is worth quoting what he
said in a session in which the three unities were being discussed:

> In England I saw a performance of Shakespeare's *Othello.* During the action, the
> protagonist sails from Venice to Cyprus, and I can assure you that I made that
> crossing with him in the theatre without getting seasick. (In Pujante and Campillo
> 2007: 121)[6]

In other words, his London exile afforded him not only the opportunity to get
acquainted at first hand with English literature in general and Shakespeare in

particular, but also the privilege of extending his reading experience of the text to that of the theatre-goer. Moratín, the first Spanish translator of Shakespeare from the original English, enjoyed the same opportunity during his stay in England in 1792-1793, but, instead of being beneficial, the experience confirmed his coolness towards Shakespeare and strengthened his Neoclassical convictions. Over thirty years later than Moratín, Alcalá Galiano grasped the opportunity and enriched his understanding of Shakespeare by watching him performed on the English stage.

IV

But there was another Spanish exile in England at the time whose acquaintance with Shakespeare left a deeper mark on him. José Blanco White (1775-1841) was the name that the Seville-born José María Blanco Crespo adopted after having decided to leave Spain for good and to exile himself in England. He was the grandson of William White, an Irishman who settled in Spain at the beginning of the 18th century. The surname began to be Hispanised and was used in alternation with the Spanish "Blanco". Two years after arriving in England, Blanco White explained in a letter to his parents the reason for his adoption of the double surname: "Since my need was not to lose my real name in its country of origin and not to hide the one I was generally known by, I adopted that of Blanco White (cit. Méndez 1920: 18)".[7] However, this double Spanish-English surname was going to be the outer symbol of his twofold mind and life in his self-imposed English exile. Before moving to England, Blanco White was a Catholic priest in Spain, but felt he was not able to harmonize his ideas of intellectual freedom with the religious demands of the priesthood. Having settled in England in 1810, he became an Anglican priest, and later a Unitarian.[8] As a poet and journalist, he edited the newspaper *El Español* (1810-1814) and later *Variedades o El mensajero de Londres* (1822-1825). But Blanco White had decided to become a writer in English, which led to uncomfortable and at times painful experiences. As a child he had learned and spoken English at home, but certainly not at the level that would be necessary for a writer in the language, so an assiduous dedication to it was a must. A reading of his English writings confirms that he succeeded in his endeavour: he collaborated in several English periodicals, was in contact with the English intelligentsia, including John Stuart Mill, and even wrote poetry in English —his sonnet *Night and Death* (1825) was highly regarded by Coleridge and others.[9] Nevertheless, his native Spanish never left him, and writing it gave him a problem of identity:

> The attempt to renew it, even occasionally, and just as I have now and then written Latin, since my arrival in England, was always very painful. I feel on similar occasions puzzled as to my own identity, and have to awake as it were from a melancholy

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dream, and assure myself that I am not again in that country both of my love and aversion. (Blanco White 1845: 394)

At the same time, he was also fully aware of what the loss of his native tongue might mean to him, which leads us to his acquaintance with Shakespeare and what this afforded him. Apparently, his serious reading of Shakespeare began in the ninth or tenth year of his new life in England, as he later remembered:

It must have been in 1819 or 1820, when the writer of these lines, being suffering under a painful illness, which made his sleep very uneasy, used to place a volume of Shakspere (*sic*) on a table with a light, near his bed, that, when awaking in distress, he might get up and endeavour to relieve himself by reading. (Blanco White 1839: 331)

Shakespeare must have impressed him, since in 1823, as editor of *Variedades*, he published Spanish verse translations of two fragments from *Hamlet* and one from *Richard II* prefaced by a brief but admiring introduction which could be regarded as the basis of his critical view of Shakespeare —to which I shall return later. What interests me now is the choice of the passage from *Richard II*, which is actually the speech by Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, when he hears his sentence of life banishment from the king:

> A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,
> And all unlooked for from your highness' mouth:
> A dearer merit, not so deep a maim
> As to be cast forth in the common air,
> Have I deserved at your highness' hands.
> The language I have learned these forty years,
> My native English, now I must forego:
> And now my tongue's use is to me no more
> Than an unstringed viol or a harp,
> Or like a cunning instrument cased up,
> Or, being open, put into his hands
> That knows no touch to tune the harmony:
> Within my mouth you have engaoled my tongue,
> Doubly portcullised with my teeth and lips;
> And dull unfeeling barren ignorance
> Is made my gaoler to attend on me.
> I am too old to fawn upon a nurse,
> Too far in years to be a pupil now:
> What is thy sentence then but speechless death,
> Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?
> (*Richard II,* I.iii.154-173).

Let us remember that in this scene the king banishes not only Mowbray, but also the latter's rival, Bolingbroke, who seems to submit to his banishment without resistance and considers the consolation ("comfort") of his imminent exile:

> Your will be done. This must my comfort be:
> The sun that warms you here shall shine on me,
> And those his golden beams to you here lent
> Shall point on me and gild my banishment.

<div align="right">(<i>Richard II,</i> I.iii.144-147)</div>

However, when the king and the others have left, the memorable exchange between him and his father John of Gaunt makes clear that Bolingbroke's envisaged consolation was feigned, so it is now the father's turn to instil consolation in the son, though to no avail.

JOHN OF GAUNT
> All places that the eye of heaven visits
> Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.
> Teach thy necessity to reason thus;
> There is no virtue like necessity.
> Think not the king did banish thee,
> But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit,
> Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.
> Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour
> And not the king exiled thee; or suppose
> Devouring pestilence hangs in our air
> And thou art flying to a fresher clime:
> Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it
> To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest:
> Suppose the singing birds musicians,
> The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,
> The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more
> Than a delightful measure or a dance;
> For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite
> The man that mocks at it and sets it light.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE
> O, who can hold a fire in his hand
> By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?
> Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
> By bare imagination of a feast?
> Or wallow naked in December snow
> By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?

> O, no! the apprehension of the good
> Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:
> Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more
> Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.
>
> (*Richard II,* I.iii.274-302)

It would seem, therefore, that Shakespeare has more or less juxtaposed in the same scene the two classical responses to exile as described at the beginning of this article: the Ovidian and the Plutarchan. Bolingbroke first pretends to find consolation in the idea of the sun shining everywhere in the world, a figure already present in Plutarch, and later Gaunt tries to console his son by using the same image ("All places that the eye of heaven visits"), but Bolingbroke rejects Stoic consolation on the grounds that neither thought nor imagination will offset pain. In other words, the dialogue becomes a debate in which consolation is rejected by the banished son in favor of lamentation (Tison 1960: 153). Shakespeare may also have drawn on contemporary writings: discussing the sources of *Richard II*, Kenneth Muir has pointed out that "to console a friend who has been sent into exile was, in fact, a favourite exercise" and that Shakespeare was acquainted with Erasmus' *De Conscribendis Epistolis*, which treats this subject (Muir 1977: 57).

As far as these scenes are concerned, Jonathan Bate thinks that Shakespeare may have drawn on Ovid's *Tristia*: "The language of exile in the first act of *Richard II* seems to echo that of the *Tristia*, with its emphasis on 'frozen winters' spent in banishment and separation from the native language" (Bate 1993: 167). It is, therefore, ironic that only two scenes after suggesting consolation to his banished son, John of Gaunt blows the nationalistic trumpet in the well-known speech beginning "This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle, / This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars…." (II.i.40-66). Be that as it may, Blanco White chose the Mowbray speech for his translation. He clearly ignored the consolation aspect and went for the Ovidian type of response. The heading which precedes his translation reads: "Norfolk, in the play entitled Richard II, condemned to banishment, depicts the distress and sorrow of having to abandon his native tongue for a foreign one".[10] In this case there is no need for us to conjecture an identification, however partial, of the translator with the Shakespearean character. He himself explained his position:

> Firm as I have been, under most trying circumstances, in my resolution of never returning to Spain, the only loss, which experience would make me dread, if I could, a second time, live over the past, would be that of the native language. Among the instances of surprising knowledge of the human mind and heart in which Shakspeare's works abound, few, if any, have struck me so much as that contained in a passage (probably little noticed by readers not in my circumstances) in which he

> describes the magnitude of the loss which a man banished from his country has to endure by living among those who do not understand his native language. (Blanco White 1845: 175-176)

Blanco White then quotes the Mowbray speech and concludes: "The idea is certainly spun out too far, but its truth is perfect, though by no means obvious". I expect there is no need to italicize his parenthetical reference to the Shakespearean passage —"probably little noticed by readers not in my circumstances". Clearly, if in Mowbray's lament the English language "becomes a metonym for national identity" (Kingsley-Smith 2003: 68), in Blanco White the loss is not his country, but his native tongue.

As regards his translation of the speech, it is a far cry from Mora's rendering of the *As You Like It* passage, not only in its higher poetic quality, but in the two personal and significant changes he makes, which to the best of my knowledge have not been noticed before. The lines "The language I have learn'd these forty years, / My native English" become in his version "El idioma patrio que he aprendido / Más de quarenta años", i.e. "The native language I have learned for more than forty years" (Blanco White 1823: 76). Here the specificity of the English language in the Shakespearean character is lost in the process of adaptation, as, for example, when translating "Do you speak English" as "Do you speak my language?" (especially in the cinema). However, in Blanco White's case this is not a question of cultural adaptation, but of personal appropriation. Here the translator speaks in his own voice, as is made evident in his rendering "*these* forty years" as "*more than* forty years": when he translated this passage Blanco White was forty-eight.

V

After these translations, and with the exception of his rendering of just seven lines from *Twelfth Night* (I.i.35-41) in 1840, Blanco White occupied himself with Shakespeare as a reader and critic in the 1830s, and left a number of notes and articles on him in his adopted English. In 1837 he wrote on him in his personal journal, and later in 1839 and 1840, in the periodical *The Christian Teacher*. In 1840 he wrote his last notes on Shakespeare, this time again in his personal journal.

In the introductory note preceding his 1823 translations, Blanco White had already praised "the force of his thoughts and the originality of his genius",[11] and pointed out his use of language as the key to understanding him: "An expression, a single word by this extraordinary man says more to him that understands him than a whole volume by others".[12] He had also warned the reader against "the

holdings-forth of the French authors who speak of Shakespeare as a madman or an eccentric".[13] It is clear that already in 1823 he had detached himself from the French Neoclassical education he had received. Later, in a 1837 diary entry, he returned to the ideas expressed fourteen years earlier, admitting the difficulty that Shakespeare must offer to a person like him, for whom "the original Standard of Taste has been the ancient Classics, especially if (as it happened to me) he has studied the French Writers anterior to the Revolution", since "the stumbling-block in Shakspere is found not so much in the want of the Unities, as in the novelty and boldness of his Metaphors. [...] His metaphors are full of the truest and most vigorous Life. He shows you the richest ties of Relationship by which Nature connects the, apparently, most distant notions" (Blanco White 1845: 288-289).

But it was the publication of *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere* (1838-1843) that prompted Blanco White to write further on the English dramatist, specifically the four articles published in *The Christian Teacher*, the journal of the English Unitarians, and his diary note on "The Fools and Clowns of Shakespeare", his last piece of writing on the Bard. In all of them, and particularly in the articles, Blanco White shows that he was steeped in Shakespeare in a more thorough and knowledgeable way than before and more than most Spaniards who had dealt and would deal with him —and he did so now as a confirmed Romantic, avoiding the Neoclassicists versus Romantics controversies. In this respect, it should be stressed that his articles on Shakespeare form part of a critical production which shows a development from his early Neoclassical education to a more and more idealistic Romanticism.

In his first article Blanco White occupies himself with the knowledge of Shakespeare (or rather lack of it) on the part of the English, to whom he tries to show the educational value of reading him, especially from childhood or adolescence, while he also rejects expurgated editions like Bowdler's *The Family Shakespeare*. In the second, he stresses the importance of Shakespeare's history plays, particularly *Henry IV*, perhaps less universal than his tragedies, but expressive of great poetical delicacy and of an evident practical philosophy. The third publication is made up of six brief notes on *Hamlet* dealing with philological points, the fatality of the hero's story, his relationship with Ophelia and his feigned madness. The fourth and last article, by far the most substantial and penetrating, is not just a critical reading of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but a disclosure of his poetic credo. Finally, in his note "The Fools and Clowns of Shakespeare", unlike so many Spanish and European Shakespearean critics before him, he shows a special interest in Shakespeare's comic side and comments on the satirical function of some of his fools and comic characters.

In his essay on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Blanco White defends a new concept of the sublime based on the perception of ideal beauty, explains the

poetical importance of imagination in overcoming realism, values the symbolic use of language in literature and presents Shakespeare as a conscious and organic poet, capable of creating concord out of discord —though obviously not as the Neoclassical writers did.

> The attempt to reduce these heterogeneous materials to unity, would appear perfectly absurd. How wonderful, then, must have been the power of that mind which, verifying its own grand conception of the Poet, seized both the external world and the world of Fancy, and with an ease, which has not left the slightest mark of labour, made the sauciness of Satire, the playfulness of Fancy, and the intenseness of Sentiment, unite in the most perfect harmony! In the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the mind of Shakspere does not only surpass in swiftness the nimble spirit that will "put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes," but with a kind of omnipresence, chooses, without dizziness or confusion, every object of highest beauty and cheerful interest in the vast fields of reality, of imagination, of sentiment. (Blanco White 1840: 48-49)

It has been pointed out that here Blanco White, developing an observation by Ludwig Tieck, went further than the German writer in his search for the unity achieved by Shakespeare between the ideal and the material world (Llorens 1979: 393-394). In this respect, Miguel Ángel Cuevas has shown (1982: 252) that Blanco White had a first-hand knowledge of German aesthetic idealism and that he started to learn German in 1833, though prompted rather by his wish to read the German theologian August Naender in the original. On examining these articles on Shakespeare, especially the one on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Cuevas concludes that, in his evolution from his Neoclassical education to his later complete identification with the Romantic ideas, Blanco White travelled the full circle that European aesthetics had described at the time in making Romanticism the successor of Classicism.

VI

In his memories of his London years, Alcalá Galiano showed that exile was a painful experience for all these Spanish émigrés, including himself, who were forced to live in England (Alcalá Galiano 1907), and Blanco White, who had settled in England for good and lived virtually like an Englishman, referred to the pain explicitly and implicitly. At the same time, the small group of intellectuals among them, particularly Mora and Alcalá Galiano, seem to have realized, and profited from, the more positive side of exile —not least Blanco White, who became a writer in English. They clearly benefited from direct contact with English life, culture and literature, an experience which was fruitful in various ways, particularly in

making English culture and literature better known in Spain and Spanish-speaking countries, in their conversion to Romanticism —with the exception of Herrera—, and thus in their contribution to Spanish Romanticism.

As far as their reading of Shakespeare is concerned, it is possible that they had read him before they went to England. Mora said he had. Alcalá Galiano and Blanco White were men of letters, and Herrera and San Miguel were known as highly educated army officers before their exile. However, if they had read Shakespeare earlier, they may have done so partially and superficially, and most probably in translation, particularly from the French. It was therefore their exile in England that afforded them the opportunity to read Shakespeare in the original, come to a better appreciation of his work, and write on him with first-hand knowledge of their subject —Blanco White being the most distinguished of them. After them, others, both in Spain and other countries, went on writing about Shakespeare, but usually second-hand generalities, probably without having read him sufficiently or in the original. However, at least in Spain, the work on Shakespeare by the Spanish exiles, the object of this study, can take credit for creating a precedent that would become more and more common.

Notes

[1]. This article is part of Research Project FFI 2008-01969/FILO, financed by the Spanish Secretaría de Estado de Investigación of the Ministry of Science and Innovation.

[2]. This and subsequent references are to William Shakespeare. 1988. The Complete Works. Gen. Eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor. Oxford: Oxford U.P.

[3]. "algo de Shakespeare, que lo considero el más hermoso genio que jamás ha existido […] Yo gozo cuando oigo decir que es un bárbaro, un salvaje, un grosero; porque si estos hombres lo entendiesen y alabasen, ¿sería lo que es? […] Es el mejor de los poetas". This and subsequent translations into English are the author's.

[4]. "Tan incomprensible es a mis ojos el clásico que desdeña, desprecia o ridiculiza los nuevos métodos artísticos que ha introducido en la literatura de los pueblos meridionales el mayor conocimiento que han adquirido de la alemana y la inglesa, como el romántico que trata tan irrespetuosa y hostilmente a los modelos de perfección que abundan en las filas contrarias. Nadie me hará creer que Shakespeare es un bárbaro y Calderón un extravagante; ni tampoco podré persuadirme que fueron dos genios de primer orden, por la única y exclusiva razón de no haberse sometido a ciertas reglas".

[5]. "quizá el primer dramático del mundo".

[6]. "He visto representar en Inglaterra la tragedia de *Otelo* de Shakespeare. El protagonista durante la acción hace un viaje desde Venecia a Chipre, y puedo asegurar que yo he hecho con él ese viaje en el teatro sin marearme".

[7]. "La necesidad de no perder mi verdadero nombre en la tierra de su origen y

la de no ocultar el que el uso general me había dado me hizo adoptar el de Blanco White".

[8]. His religious evolution can be followed in his books, written in English, *Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism,* London, 1825; *Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion,* Dublin, 1833; and *Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy,* London, 1835).

[9]. See Blanco White's *Obra poética completa,* eds. Antonio Garnica and Jesús Díaz, Madrid, Visor, 1994, 348-353.

[10]. "Norfolk, en el Drama intitulado Ricardo II, condenado a Destierro pinta el Desconsuelo y Pena de tener que abandonar el idioma nativo por uno extranjero".

[11]. "el tono de sus pensamientos y la originalidad de su ingenio".

[12]. "Una expresión, una palabra de este hombre extraordinario dice más a quien lo entiende que un tomo entero de otros".

[13]. "las declamaciones de los autores franceses que hablan de Shakespeare como de un loco o extravagante".

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Reviews

A.S. BYATT: CRITICAL STORYTELLING

Alexa Alfer and Amy J. Edwards de Campos
Manchester and New York: Manchester U.P., 2010.
(by Susanne Gruss, Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany)
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The work of A.S. Byatt has already received much critical attention, especially since the Booker Prize for *Possession: A Romance* in 1990. Recent monographs focusing exclusively on Byatt's work include Lena Steveker's *Identity and Cultural Memory in the Fiction of A.S. Byatt: Knitting the Net of Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) and Louisa Hadley's *The Fiction of A.S. Byatt* (2008) in Palgrave Macmillan's Reader's Guides to Essential Criticism. It therefore does not come as a surprise that Alexa Alfer and Amy J. Edwards de Campos's *A.S. Byatt* (2010) is published as part of the Contemporary British Novelists series, which already includes monographs on J.G. Ballard, Pat Barker, Jim Crace, James Kelman, Iain Sinclair, Graham Swift, Irvine Welsh and Jeanette Winterson. Alfer and de Campos's book offers a comprehensive and lucid introduction to one of the most influential contemporary British writers, covering the whole range of Byatt's writing (novels, short stories and critical writing).

Adding to and extending existing scholarship on the writer, the authors consistently include readings of Byatt's critical work in their analyses of her fictional work and position her as a public figure whose engagement with society and academia is one of the cornerstones of her career. The introduction states accordingly that the authors' aim is "an intellectual charting of the development of A.S. Byatt's career as a writer" (2) which focuses on "major themes and aesthetic concerns" (2) as well as the cultural and critical contexts of Byatt's

work. The authors' rationale is to showcase Byatt as a 'critical storyteller', a writer who "does not separate the literary from the critical imagination, but rather aims at a thoughtful and deliberate commingling of these two ways of seeing and describing the world" (3-4).

Chapter 2, "Fathers, sisters and the anxiety of influence: *The Shadow of the Sun* and *The Game*", offers in-depth analyses of Byatt's first two novels, both of which "place writers […] at the structural centre of their respective plots" (11) and focus on the Romantic legacy of (mid-)twentieth-century literature and the intersections of Byatt's early work with debates on the novel. Both *The Shadow of the Sun* (1964) and *The Game* (1967) accentuate the conflicted relation of 'life', 'reality' and 'art' (a recurrent topic in many of Byatt's works) and the search for (female) artistic identity. While criticism of the novels has so far had a tendency to dwell on possible biographical parallels between the women protagonists and Byatt herself, Alfer and de Campos prefer to treat them as an analysis of "the state of the novel at the beginning of the end of the twentieth century" (24), tinged by a nostalgia for the past and the search for a place for the novel form in the late twentieth century.

The next two chapters are centred on Byatt's Quartet (*The Virgin in the Garden*, 1978; *Still Life*, 1985; *Babel Tower*, 1996; and *A Whistling Woman*, 2002), condition-of-England novels which depict the 1950s to the 1970s. In Chapter 3 —"Writing the contemporary: *The Virgin in the Garden* and *Still Life*"— the authors identify the tetralogy's overarching theme in the question, "Is reality ordered, or is the order we perceive in the world only a reflection of our own minds?" (76). The contrast between 'old (novelistic) realism' and 'new experiment' after World War II has become something of a critical truism, yet Byatt's interest in creating a productive relation of these two aspects adds a new twist to the discussion. *The Virgin in the Garden*, set in the 1950s, highlights the inaccessibility of the past and constructs reading as a creative process. The novel shows how "realism, far from being epistemologically naive, can be a profoundly self-conscious mode of storytelling" (52). *Still Life*, set in the same decade, concentrates on the impossibility of objectivity in fiction due to "the muddled, metaphorical nature" (54) of language.

Chapter 4, "Two cultures: *Babel Tower* and *A Whistling Woman*", covers the second half of Byatt's Quartet novels, and is especially interested in the breakdown and fragmentation of language in the 1960s and 1970s, and the impact of narratives of science on literary creation. In *Babel Tower*, the changed setting —the Swinging Sixties— is mirrored in a "multi-layered narrative that allows the provocative and feverishly experimental atmosphere of its 1960s setting to spill over strategically into the novel's own narrative structures" (65). As the title

implies, the novel is at least partly a depiction of the perceived breakdown and increasingly fragmentary nature of language and the concomitant postmodern sense of identity as equally multiple. The authors convincingly argue that *Babel Tower* creates a connection "between the failure of confidence in language and contemporary social upheavals" (68). The novel also sees Byatt incorporating her increasing fascination with science into her work: the chaos of language and discourse(s) is countered by genetics as a supposedly universal code. *A Whistling Woman* picks up these questions: while grand narratives have lost their ability to offer explanations, narrative remains as "a phenomenon that pervades all of human life and underpins people's daily existence, their sense of self and their sense of reality" (81). As a conclusion to the Quartet, *A Whistling Woman* is analysed as a surprisingly inconclusive text, countering critics who had predicted the text would become a 'portrait of the artist' Frederica who, however, is not the central focus of this novel.

With chapters 4 and 5, the authors continue their focus on Byatt's interest in narration and narrative form, but move from the novel form to a stronger focus on the appropriation of storytelling. Chapter 5, "Tradition and transformation: *Possession* and fairytales", covers a range of Byatt's writings from *Possession: A Romance* (1990) to short fiction in *Angels and Insects* (1992), *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye* (1995), and *Little Black Book of Stories* (2003). *Possession* is introduced in terms of its postmodern qualities, but then depicted as offering a subtle and poignant critique of postmodernism. Alfer and de Campos argue that *Possession*, *Angels and Insects* and some of Byatt's short fiction can be read "as twentieth-century intellectual responses to nineteenth-century fiction" (95). Many of the phenomena the authors diagnose in this chapter —such as the pleasure of immersion in the nineteenth century vs. a more analytical view of the Victorian past (as mirrored in the authors' assessment that Byatt's novel "invites readers temporarily to suspend their twentieth-century scepticism and imagine themselves into [the Victorian Age]", 96)— have by now been recognised as staple features of neo-Victorianism, and this chapter might have profited from a brief discussion of this approach; the authors even reference Christian Gutleben's *Nostalgic Postmodernism: The Victorian Tradition and the Contemporary British Novel* (2001), a founding text of neo-Victorian studies, and point out the element of haunting in the novel —another concept which has become prominent in neo-Victorian fiction and criticism.[1] Byatt "is undoubtedly best known for her reimaginings of the Victorian Past" (6), the authors state in their "Introduction" —it would have been interesting to see them frame their discussion of these texts in terms of neo-Victorianism. It is only in the second half of the chapter that the authors eventually concentrate on Byatt's increasing interest in the form of the fairy tale (especially in her short fiction), presenting tales and characters who

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share a potential for empowerment and liberation. Unfortunately, this part is not as coherent as the other chapters, possibly due to the more thematic interest of the (sub)chapter which forces the authors to touch upon a variety of texts rather briefly. The chapter therefore feels slightly underdeveloped and lacks both a precise thesis and a conclusion.

Chapter 6: "The dark side of the tale: *The Children's Book*, *The Biographer's Tale* and *Angels and Insects*" forms a counterpoint to Chapter 5 in its focus on "the darker side of the storytelling imagination" (116). It offers a detailed reading of the most recent text discussed in this monograph, *The Children's Book* (2009), in which Byatt explores the dangers of fiction —the authors depict Byatt's novel as "a cautionary tale about storytelling itself" (121), thus adding another level to the writer's constant negotiating of the relation of life and art. This ambivalence about the value of art and literature links *The Children's Book* to the earlier *The Biographer's Tale* (2000), which Alfer and de Campos evaluate in terms of Byatt's discussion of the free (humanist) individual in a biological discourse. The analysis then turns (briefly) to the novella "Morpho Eugenia" (in *Angels and Insects*) and its focus on biological determination. The initial focus of the chapter on 'the dark side of storytelling' seems to get lost in these pages. However, its conclusion alleviates this impression, pointing out that all of the narratives covered "reveal glimpses of a decidedly un-novelistic and anti-individualistic ethos" (136) while at the same time highlighting that these issues can be related to one of the most pressing (and as yet unresolved) issues in Byatt's work, the discussion of "the extent to which human fate is already written by biological *and* discursive forces, and the extent to which understanding these forces and plots may yet be capable of bringing freedom" (136).

The last chapter, "7 Critical storytelling: peopling the paper houses", finally, turns to Byatt as a 'public intellectual'. This is possibly the most important chapter of the present monograph because it focuses on Byatt as a writer of (literary) criticism and cultural commentary, an aspect that is often sadly neglected in criticism of her work. By way of an excellent introduction to Byatt's non-fiction, the chapter supplies readers with a broad overview of Byatt's diverse critical writings rather than concentrating on exemplary in-depth analyses. The authors point out various topics of Byatt's critical writing, note the plurality of (theoretical) approaches that underpin her writing, and underline her scepticism about the overuse of theoretical discourse in the analysis of literary texts. Particular attention is paid to Byatt as a public figure who has done much to advance and celebrate contemporary British literature. This concluding chapter is ample proof that Byatt is a writer with facets that remain to be discovered and discussed —and this monograph is an excellent introduction for those who want to take up the challenge.

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Note

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¹. See, for example, Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham, eds., *Haunting and Spectrality in Neo-Victorian Fiction*.

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BRET EASTON ELLIS'S CONTROVERSIAL FICTION: WRITING BETWEEN HIGH AND LOW CULTURE

Sonia Baelo-Allué
London and New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2011.
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Bret Easton Ellis (Los Angeles, 1964) is considered one of the most controversial writers of his time. Since the publication in 1985 of his first novel, *Less than Zero,* when the author was just 21 years old and still at college, Ellis's fiction has received contradictory critical attention. He was acclaimed by critics as the voice of a generation, but some accused him of playing to the gallery, especially with the publication of *American Psycho*, while some others rejected the status of the novel as a literary text. With seven novels to date, it could be argued that most of the critical attention generated has been concentrated on the most polemic factors of his work, increased by his status as celebrity writer, quite apart from its literary qualities. This interpretation is not shared by Sonia Baelo-Allué, the author of *Bret Easton Ellis's Controversial Fiction* (2011), who, on the contrary, has decided to explore why Ellis's fiction has simultaneously received both the highest glowing praise and the harshest condemnation. Her subtitle, "Writing Between High and Low Culture", offers a clue to the origin of the controversy. She effectively links title and subtitle and argues that "his use of popular and mass culture genres and references, together with minimalist, blank fiction and metafictional techniques, has led to discomfort on both sides on the cultural spectrum" (6).

The book appears to fill a significant gap on the literary academic market. In fact, Baelo-Allué's contribution to the study of Ellis's fiction is a major one, since,

in addition to offering a thorough analysis of the reception of Ellis's work, she successfully explores even the deepest intricacies of his work, offering a coherent and comprehensive study on Ellis's fiction, bringing to the fore his status as a serious contemporary writer and going beyond his reputation as a sensationalist. As a literary author, Ellis has been included in anthologies dealing with key American authors; a book on *American Psycho* and a collection of academic essays dealing entirely with Ellis's later career have been published; Ramón-Torrijos's Ph.D. dissertation, published in 2003, was on the first part of his literary career and Martín Párraga published a book on his work in 2008. Baelo-Allué's book is the most comprehensive study of Ellis's oeuvre to date, and I am convinced that the academic world will welcome this extremely well constructed and elaborate volume for its high scholarly value and its excellent contribution to the field of cultural studies.

The book starts with a introductory chapter in which Baelo-Allué briefly introduces the author and sets the agenda for the following chapters, and quickly moves on to Part 1 with the aim of exploring the ambiguous relationship of Ellis's fiction with high and low culture. Baelo-Allué devotes the rest of her book to an exploration of Ellis's relevant novels: *Less than Zero* (1985), *American Psycho* (1991) and *Glamorama* (1988), the last part of the book being devoted to Ellis's later novels *Lunar Park* (2005) and *Imperial Bedrooms* (2010). There are also some references to his not-so prominent novels *The Rules of Attraction* (1987) and *The Informers* (1994). Baelo consistently offers a comprehensive textual and contextual analysis of each of Ellis's novels, dividing each part into three chapters: the first chapter deals with the reception of the novel both in mass market newspapers and also in academic journals; the second chapter is devoted to an analysis of Ellis's use of popular and mass culture along with an analysis of the deconstruction of some popular genres that the author incorporates into his fiction, and the third chapter in each part consists of a close-reading of each novel with great attention to the narrative style.

Before making a detailed analysis of his novels, Baelo-Allué offers an interesting section —Part 1— entitled "Between the High and the Low" where the author explores Ellis's position within the two interrelated contexts to which Ellis's literary production alludes: the celebrity world and the literature panorama. Departing from the emergence of the celebrity author in the early nineteenth century, Baelo-Allué offers interesting data about how many relevant authors have been interested in developing a relationship with both the market and the advertising industry. Ellis, much like Hemingway and Mailer, has been interested in creating a name in literature, but unlike them, his status as celebrity author has not always benefited him as a writer, since, as Baelo-Allué comments, "the more

of a media star he became, the less they were willing to take his work seriously" (15). The wide range of labels that critics have used to contextualize Ellis's fiction occupies the second chapter of Part 1. Bearing in mind that the labels used to describe Ellis style have changed in parallel with the evolution of his writing, Baelo-Allué reviews an ample bibliography to discuss the large variety of terms used to describe his style and his place within literary movements. Accordingly, the author offers a balanced, enlightening discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of each term, commenting on labels such as "workshop fiction", "assembly-line fiction", "postmodernist fiction", "minimalist novels", "downtown writing", "hybrid fiction" and "Generation X fiction". Among these terms, the author singles out for clarification three labels in particular that, as she argues, are most appropriate when it comes to categorizing Ellis's fiction: *Brat Pack*, *Postmodern* and *Blank fiction*.

Part 2 is devoted to *Less than Zero* starting with an examination of the critical reception of the novel. While some critics linked the novel to lowbrow literary culture, due to its dependence on references taken from popular culture —songs, videos, brand names— others underlined its literary features, describing it as an updated *Catcher in the Rye* and connecting Ellis to well-established authors like Didion, Chandler, Capote, Fitzgerald, Hemingway or Carver. Dealing with the structure of the novel, Baelo-Allué introduces the concept of *intermediality* that the author describes as "the convergence of the language of literature and the language of cinema, newspapers, television and other popular culture forms" (49) and which links the novel's structure and content to the world of MTV. In the last chapter of Part 2, Baelo-Allué analyzes the way in which *Less than Zero*'s controversial subject matter is developed in terms of genre. In this sense, the novel can be considered a deconstruction of a *bildungsroman* or coming-of-age novel. I agree with Baelo-Allué that the novel, as representative of blank fiction, allows for multiple interpretations. Considering the end of *Less Than Zero*, which implies a certain process of maturation on the part of the main character, I would say that the novel is not so much a failure as a coming-of-age novel but rather the most conventional of Ellis's novels in terms of content and narrative plot.

Baelo-Allué starts the section devoted to *American Psycho* considering the circumstances that surrounded the novel's publication and analyzing the controversy generated even before its publication, with negative prepublication reviews. In order to study its use of popular, mass and consumer culture, Baelo-Allué introduces an interesting discussion about the importance of seriality in popular culture underlining the two intertwined forms of seriality that appear in the novel: the never-ending killings —since Bateman, the main character, is a serial

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killer— and Bateman's serial consumerism of surrounding mass culture. Baelo-Allué also comments on gender issues —the link between sex and violence in the novel is quite evident since Bateman ends up torturing and killing some women he has sex with— and discusses the strong controversy originated by pornographic passages in the novel since some reviewers could not accept that a serious book could use such language and detailed description (108). Taking into account ideas from Lynda Nead and Susan Sontag on the topic, Baelo-Allué embarks on a discussion of whether a work of art may be classified as pornographic or not to conclude "there has been a progressive acceptance on the part of the Academia that pornography may have social aims" (108). For Baelo-Allué, the pornographic passages in *American Psycho* are part of the general commodification that takes places in Bateman's mind. Of particular interest is the section where Baelo-Allué analyzes some of the conventions of the serial killer formula and the way *American Psycho* departs from them. While the traditional genre offers the reader sources of pleasure, in Ellis's novel the aesthetic sources of pleasure are diminished to "make readers face the real horror behind the serial-killer phenomenon" (113). As representative of blank fiction, the novel avoids open condemnation and admits different interpretations although Baelo-Allué's innovative conclusion is that the novel posits violence as critique.

By the time of *Glamorama's* publication, Ellis's narrative style alongside his public appearances had prompted the confusion between Ellis's own attitudes in real life and those of his characters, the critics being too much concerned with criticizing Ellis's lifestyle and his literary celebrity status as to review the novel seriously. Baelo-Allué is clear on this point when she comments that "some reviewers would have done well to keep their eye more exclusively on the novel instead" (140). As Baelo-Allué explains there are two parts in the novel: the first part focuses on the celebrity culture and takes the shape of a novel of manners where we find the world of spectacle described by Debord and the world of Boorstin's pseudo-events. The second part of the novel belongs to the conspiracy thriller genre, where *Glamorama* plays with its conventions and transforms them in order to obtain new meanings. One of the most interesting aspects in the discussion of this novel is the sharp contrast Baelo-Allué establishes between the first part of *Glamorama*, which may be closer to Debord's more modernist ideas of spectacle —a world where people could make the distinction between the real and the representation of the real— and the second part which relies on Baudrillard's more postmodern grasp of the social condition and where we enter the hyperreal, where such a distinction cannot be drawn anymore. According to Baelo-Allué, *Glamorama* is Ellis's most ambitious novel where reality is constantly manipulated and reinterpreted.

Lunar Park was published seven years after *Glamorama* and was both a collection of the various themes that run through Ellis's previous work and also something of a departure from Ellis's literary career. In fact, it reduces the level of violence and sex, and his blank fiction features, while the characters seem to learn from their behavior and there seems to be a chronological plot. Baelo-Allué describes its uses of intermediality and metafictional devices, most of them from Ellis's previous novels, before offering a comprehensive analysis of the novel's high and low sources —references to songs and TV shows, Stephen King and horror films, but also metafictional devices that echo Philip Roth, Shakespeare's Hamlet and Barrie's Peter Pan. In tune with the deconstruction of popular genres that Ellis incorporates in his fiction, the novel has two different sections: the first one is a mock autobiography of Ellis's career and his new life in the suburbs, and the second one is about a haunted house, a possessed toy, his father's ghost and even the return of Bateman to re-enact his killings. With *Imperial Bedrooms*, Ellis comes full circle and returns to the literary style, location, and characters of *Less Than Zero*, this time through the deconstruction of the hard-boiled genre, with the main character becoming detective and villain at the same time. In the novel we revisit the same character 25 years later and there are common motifs recycled from his earlier works —popular culture references, songs lyrics, the same personality traits in characters, narcissism and self-obsession and some graphic passages of sex and violence— but there is also an important difference with respect to his first novel: *Imperial Bedrooms* has a coherent plot whereas *Less than Zero* consisted of a collection of disconnected images. After some concluding remarks Baelo-Allué provides the readers with a clue to Ellis's next work of fiction: "Ellis claimed that he is no longer attracted to darkness" (197).

Using postmodernist discourse as the theoretical frame, Baelo-Allué offers a thorough study of the literary work of one controverted contemporary author, proving that his fiction deserves a in-depth analysis beyond his lifestyle and self-promotion, and his use of provocation. Baelo-Allué describes the evolution of his literary work in both his literary style —from the minimalism of his first novels to the blank writing of *American Psycho* and the metafictional prose of *Glamorama* and *Lunar Park* to return again to his literary origins in *Imperial Bedrooms*— and in the content of his fiction, through narratives which evolve from the juxtaposition of images without a plot to more complex narratives where popular genres are deconstructed. Moreover, Baelo-Allué successfully contributes to contemporary debate on relevant cultural issues such as the blurring of boundaries of high and low culture, the distinction between prestige and mass-market authors or the new ways authors deal with the literary marketplace, all of them being issues which are relevant both to the cultural studies field and to contemporary culture alike.

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JULIAN BARNES

Peter Childs

Manchester: Manchester U.P., Contemporary British Novelists, 2011.

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Peter Childs's expertise in contemporary British and postcolonial literature is extensive and admirable, as demonstrated by the numerous books he has written or edited since 1996. He is the author of monographs on Paul Scott, Ian McEwan and E.M. Forster, and has written on modernism, contemporary British culture and literature, as well as postcolonial theory. His engaging and insightful book on *Contemporary Novelists: British Fiction 1970-2003* (2004) explored the work of twelve major British writers, including Martin Amis, Kazuo Ishiguro, Hanif Kureishi, Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie, Zadie Smith, Graham Swift, Jeanette Winterson, and Julian Barnes. In 2009, he contributed to the special issue on Julian Barnes for the journal *American, British and Canadian Studies* with a paper on Barnes's complex relation to belief, mortality and religion. In 2011, Childs co-edited with Sebastian Groes a collection of essays entitled *Julian Barnes: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, and authored this monograph in the series on Contemporary British Novelists of Manchester University Press. In the acknowledgements, Childs kindly thanks previous critics of Barnes's work for pointing directions for discussions in his study, among whom Merritt Moseley, author of *Understanding Julian Barnes* (1997), Vanessa Guignery, author of *The Fiction of Julian Barnes* (2006) and co-editor with Ryan Roberts of *Conversations with Julian Barnes* (2009), as well as Mathew Pateman for his monograph entitled *Julian Barnes* (2002) and Frederick M. Holmes for his own *Julian Barnes* (2009).

Peter Childs starts his book by stating how difficult it is to make assessments of the oeuvre of a living writer who continues to produce new work. Published in 2011, Childs's book offers quotes from *Nothing to be Frightened of* (2008), which no previous critic had been able to include in their earlier monographs, but quite naturally the study could not cover Barnes's most recent titles, such as his third collection of short stories *Pulse* (2011) and his Booker prize-winning novel *The Sense of an Ending* (2011). However, the echoes that Childs notices in his introduction between Barnes's translation of Alphonse Daudet's *In the Land of Pain* (2002), his collection of short stories *The Lemon Table* (2004) and his memoir *Nothing to be Frightened of*, can be extended to the writer's two latest publications, which are also partly concerned with ageing, looking back towards the past and the mechanisms of memory.

The book focuses on Barnes's works of fiction from 1980 to 2005 (comprising ten novels and two collections of short stories) but does not propose specific analysis of the collections of essays, of *Nothing to be Frightened of* nor of the detective novels published under the pseudonym of Dan Kavanagh. Peter Childs nevertheless alludes in his introduction to the great variety of subjects Barnes has approached in his articles, reviews, prefaces and introductions —though it should be noted that he is not the author of the introduction to Aristotle's *The Nicomachean Ethics* (13), which was written by his brother, philosopher Jonathan Barnes. Childs deals with each text in turn, which he justifies by the fact that Julian Barnes views each work as a new departure with no continuities between them (15). However, the excellent introduction points to the recurrent thematic concerns such as "memory, history, representation, belief, truth, art, identity, […] death […] love and adultery" (15). After a brief biographical survey, Childs argues that even if Barnes is interested in capturing the melancholy, nostalgia and sense of loss in life, he is also for the most part "a comic novelist" and his fiction is marked by "a combination of social satire, Swiftian irony, and experimentation" (5). Childs identifies "ironic comedy and false memory" (6) as two of the poles around which Barnes's work revolves and which his monograph regularly comes back to. He also points out that Barnes's approach to fiction is marked by "generic fabulation" (6) and draws from Robert Scholes's examination of the concept in his 1967 study *The Fabulators* and his 1979 book *Fabulation and Metafiction*, to analyse the ways in which Barnes's work combines realism, experimentation and self-reflexivity in a variety of forms and genres. Barnes has often been deemed a postmodernist writer for his incredulity towards metanarratives, his scepticism of any truth claims and large political schemes, as well as his generic polyphony, but there is also in his novels a significant moral element which, according to Childs, "places Barnes more in a humanist than a postmodernist writing tradition" (15).

Individual chapters provide fresh perspectives on the work of Julian Barnes and, while offering a precise analysis of each work, also manage to weave threads between the various books. For instance, the adolescents' preoccupation with the purpose of art in *Metroland*, supposed to make people "*better* — kinder, wiser, nicer, more peaceful, more active, more sensitive" (24), is contrasted with Barnes's provocative suggestion in *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters* that the purpose of catastrophe is to produce art (9, 79) and therefore "art commemorates if not ameliorates catastrophe" (24), while in *Nothing to be Frightened of*, art is said to convey truths, which religion is unable to provide. In the chapter on *Flaubert's Parrot*, Childs argues that Barnes "approaches fundamental questions about the role of the novel in personal and social life" and offers as a possible answer "art as religion" (58). The relationship between art and life, as well as between truth and imagination, is a recurrent concern in Barnes's work. In *Before She Met Me*, Graham, a historian, has such a vivid imagination that he mistakes fiction for reality and fathoms truths out of fictional situations (38); in *Arthur & George*, Arthur Conan Doyle's overactive imagination contrasts with George Edjali's underactive one and strict adherence to facts (38, 144).

Peter Childs also subtly brings together his chapter on *Metroland* entitled "About to be less deceived", an allusion to Philip Larkin's collection *The Less Deceived* (21), and his chapter on *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters* which he describes as "a subjective view of history, within which love is inserted as the only hope of survival, free will figures as an escape from determinism, and 'objective truth' avoids the descent into relativism". Childs adds: "These are the beliefs of the less-deceived, Barnes might argue" (81). On the other hand, a continuing concern in Barnes's books is with truth and self-deception. His novels, Childs notes, are "littered with self-deceivers from Graham Hendrick in *Before She Met Me* to Arthur Conan Doyle in *Arthur & George*" (106). Another recurrent theme in Barnes's work and in Childs's analysis is the treatment of memory (89, 95, 109); it appears in almost all of Barnes's books in relation to issues of reliability and truth. Stuart's "I remember everything" at the beginning of *Talking it Over* is contrasted with Barnes's definition of memories as "workings of the imagination" in *Nothing to be Frightened of* (89), and as "just another artifice" in *Love, etc* (95). Both *England, England* and *Arthur & George*, novels that deal with memory, identity and self-construction, open with discussions of first memories and how they are often simulacra (109). The theme is also central in Barnes's most recent novel, *The Sense of an Ending*, which he wanted as "a book with meditative passages on time and memory" as he told Hermione Lee in a public interview in December 2011. The first words of the novel are "I remember" (3) and the narrator notes from the start: "what you end up remembering isn't always the same as what you have witnessed" (3). In each of Barnes's books, the discussions on individual memory

can apply to collective memories, and vice versa. The chapter on *England, England* thus proposes a detailed discussion of the contemporary development of heritage culture and actual "manufacturing" of the past and memories (116). While in other chapters Childs offers very precise analyses of the novels and short stories, in this one, the critic takes some distance from the text in order to situate Barnes's novel in the context of the obsession with heritage in British contemporary culture and literature.

Peter Childs is very good at spotting intertexts or suggesting literary echoes that had not been picked up by previous critics. While most critics have insisted on Barnes's connections with French literature, mainly of the nineteenth century, Childs refers not only to those but also, more originally, to some modernist writers —the comparison between the narrator of *Flaubert's Parrot* and that of Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* (56) comes as a complement to previous studies such as Brooks's. Allusions to E.M. Forster, on whose work Childs is an expert, thus appear several times in the book. For instance, Childs compares Barnes's reference to the cerebral and the animalistic parts of our brain in *Before She Met Me* to Forster's theme of "the beast and the monk", or "the prose and the passion" in *Howards End* (40). In *Before She Met Me*, the horse brain is associated with passion, "sexual arousal, memory, and addiction" (36) and thus to Graham's jealousy which leads to the killings at the end. Childs also reminds the reader of D.H. Lawrence's deployment of the horse metaphor in *Women in Love* and in his non-fiction, which, for him, symbolises "a destructive sensuality" which combines "terror and beauty" (40).

In the chapter on Barnes's debut novel *Metroland*, Childs suggests that it was "written self-consciously in the shadow of numerous 'first novels', *Bildungsromans*, and French cultural touchstones [such as] Alain-Fournier's 1913 novel *Le Grand Meaulnes*" (19). In the *Guardian* and on a BBC radio programme in April 2012, Julian Barnes paid tribute to Alain-Fournier's book and mentioned that he read *Le Grand Meaulnes* only in his late 30s when he had to review it for the *Guardian* in 1986, therefore after he wrote *Metroland* (published in 1980 when he was 34). Though *Metroland* (set in London suburbia and Paris in the 1960s and 1970s) and *Le Grand Meaulnes* (set in the 1890s in rural France) differ quite significantly in theme, mood and context, both are enticing portrayals of adolescence.

For this monograph, Peter Childs has put to good use the research he conducted into the Julian Barnes archives at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas in Austin. A comparison of the different manuscript drafts to spot Barnes's revisions and an analysis of the writer's papers produce illuminating remarks about the creative process and the genesis of the work. For instance, Childs points to the way the third section of *Metroland* (a novel which took Barnes eight years to

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complete) was revised so as "to make the parallels to Part One in Part Three less relentless", with Chris "less becoming a smug bourgeois" and giving his wife "more of a presence and sharpness, reinforcing her anti-romanticism and self-assurance" (29). Childs also gives the list of rejected early titles for *Before She Met Me*, thus showing how Barnes evolved from a focus on reason and sensibility ("A sensible man", "A reasonable man", "Within reason"…) to a concern with time and the relation to the past (35). In his chapter on *Flaubert's Parrot*, the novel which has received the most attention by critics, Childs offers new information by quoting from Barnes's papers where the writer points to the purpose of the narrator's presence: "1) Allow more points of access, and a greater range of response, to Flaubert […]. 2) Tie the stories together" (49). Childs also quotes from Barnes's notes for *Talking it Over*, which offer thumbnail sketches for the characterisation of the three main characters (90), and from a letter to his publishers in which he delineates his scheme for *England England* (121). All this information provides a unique perspective on Barnes's creative process.

The monograph concludes with a bibliography compiled by Claire Smith, which is limited to Barnes's works, the seven books devoted to the writer and twenty-five references to articles and essays. The latter may seem relatively short compared to the now extensive criticism that exists on Julian Barnes's work. However, this can be explained by the fact that Peter Childs's study is a fairly personal (and therefore often original) reading, which seems to have deliberately chosen not to rely too much on previous critical analysis. This choice probably justifies the absence of any reference to books on literary theory or contemporary fiction in the end bibliography, though several useful references appear in the endnotes to each chapter. This new monograph therefore proves a most valuable contribution to Julian Barnes studies, which both draws discreetly on previous criticism and discussion of the work and offers new illuminating interpretations.

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Trans.Through.Beyond
(A Review Essay*)*

This is a book about the intersection of gender and race in Canadian writing of the 1990s and since. It is indebted to the work of critics like Roy Miki (2001), Larissa Lai (2004), Lily Cho (2007), Guy Beauregard (2008), and Christl Verduyn and Eleanor Ty (2008), all of whom have identified, from an array of different positions, the dangers of the normalization and/or appropriation of difference by the literary and cultural institutions and market forces. *Transnational Poetics* stems from those critical positions and, by offering a material reading of recent Asian Canadian women's texts, contributes its own voice to the debates about the need to maintain resistance discourses that problematize the institutionalization of racial and gender difference.

The book's starting point is the failure of multiculturalism's policies to dismantle normative notions of Canadianness, and the need to rethink and rearticulate forms of cultural difference that do not comply with multiculturalism's sanctioned spaces for the representation of otherness, but rather remain resistant to them, maintaining thus their critical power (see Miki 2008). The authors single out the "Writing Thru Race" Conference, held in Vancouver in 1994 in the midst of great controversy over its exclusionary mandate (the explicit barring of white writers from the Conference), as a turning point in which the antiracist cultural production in

Canada began to focus on the identification of racialization processes as well as the discursive strategies that bring them about. The choice of this moment underlies one of the book's most significant merits, since as Robinder Kaur Sehdev has argued, "the Writing Thru Race Conference was a formative moment in Canadian cultural politics". The event as well as the controversy surrounding it, Sehdev continues,

> brought the issues of political and cultural legitimacy into sharp focus and in so doing, galvanized the discourses of anti-racism and reverse racism in cultural politics. Understood as a key cultural moment where competing public spheres intersected and collided, the discourses surrounding Writing Thru Race can provide insight into the significance of cultural discourses of anti-racism as they challenge dominant or national discourses of multiculturalism. (Sehdev iii)

The impact of Writing Thru Race also coincided with the rise of a new generation of racialized women writers who, without abandoning the struggle for racial and gender equality, seemed less concerned with what Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn have called the "auto-ethnographic" tradition, and more interested in working with experimental forms, themes, genres and structures (see also Lai).

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The authors then propose a type of analysis against the multicultural grain, as it were, looking at the writing of Asian Canadian women of the last two decades, with a focus on those disruptive moments in which the (multicultural) nation shows its fissures. Working through the intersection of race and gender, and an historically informed attention to the intergenerational links or points of departures, the book provides a study of the significant contributions of a younger generation of women writers to the more recent discourses about difference in Canada, given that, according to the authors: "The appropriation of the discourses on race and gender by the dominant classes —the cooption of the "politically correct" ideologies— is seen by many feminist racialized writers as a threatening move that requires new strategies" (xi). These new strategies would include the rejection of certain "over-ethnicized" modes in favor of more experimental forms of fiction or the introduction of "lesbian politics and poetics" (xii). Additionally, the analysis also occasionally offers (especially in the first chapter) a critical view of the global literary marketplace, for reading Canadian literature from Spain, the authors argue, adds a whole new and complex set of issues to the equation: "The weight of availability", for instance, "is not a light one", they argue. "At a moment when publishing and distribution are in the hands of a few big corporations, the decisions taken on which books will be printed, in which number, and for how long, are crucial for a Canadian book to cross the Atlantic" (xii-xiii).

Transnational Poetics is divided into three sections or large chapters, each of them dedicated to the study of the fiction of "one ethnic constituency within Asian

Canada" (xiii). This division would seem somehow at odds with the book's own underlying objective of dismantling the hegemonic discourses about ethnicity in Canada. Nevertheless, the emphasis on the intergenerational relationships between women writers and their texts could justify the choice of the book's structure, for the texts are invariably discussed in connection with other texts that have preceded them within a community of writers that share a common history and ancestry in Canada: e.g. the connections between Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981) and Kerri Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field* (1998), or the differences between SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café* (1990) and what could be called a "second wave" of Chinese Canadian writers, like Larissa Lai or Lydia Kwa.

The first chapter, "Indo-Canadian Women's Fiction in English: Feminist Anti-Racist Politics and Poetics that Resist the Indo-Chic", opens with a succinct history of South Asian Canadian writing in the larger international context with the boom of Indian literature in English, and puts the relatively recent success of these texts down to recurrent marketing strategies that simultaneously depoliticize and exoticize them: "The literary value of these novels is thus paradoxically put into question by the very system that promotes them", the authors write. "By foregrounding the victim/object (the exotic woman in a sari), the reader's attention is directed away from the political issues raised by these narratives" (9). This chapter then proceeds to identify and unveil those political issues discussed in texts by writers such as Anita Rau Badami, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Yasmin Ladha, Rachna Mara and Shani Mootoo, including sexual and cultural purity, (neo)colonial relations, and racism and gender violence (namely, war rape and incestuous rape). The survey-like tone of this first chapter occludes close reading of any of the selected texts and the reader may feel bewildered by the implications of the extremely hefty issues the authors bring to our attention. Yet the analysis succeeds in highlighting the intensely political meaning of many Indian Canadian texts, reading them against and outside the powerful exoticizing packages associated with multiculturalism, as effective critiques of racist and sexist practices both in India and in Canada.

Under the title "Racialized Bodies: Chinese Canadian Women's Fiction", the second chapter provides a closer reading of texts by Evelyn Lau, Larissa Lai and Lydia Kwa in an attempt to identify the shifting paradigms of the intersection between race and gender and how these changes are thematized through the body. After an informative summary of Chinese Canadian literature and its institutional contexts since the publication of SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café*, the authors note the thematic and formal departures of a younger generation of writers (to which Lau, Lai and Kwai belong) from the historical and autobiographical fictional forms of their predecessors. The analysis in this part provides some illuminating

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readings of six excellent texts, like the discussion of the prostitute's body in Lau's *Runaway: Diary of a Street Kid*, the cyborg body in Lai's *Salt Fish Girl*, or the diseased body in Kwa's *This Place Called Absence*. However, despite a declared emphasis on form and genre experimentation, an emphasis supported by important critical work that argues for the need "to set up interpretative strategies that move beyond the thematization of cultural difference" (Gunew 257), the approach here seems largely thematic. Moreover, the discussion of the representation of female bonds, sexual orientation or racialized identities seems most pertinent in Lai's and Kwa's texts and less so in the case of Lau's, which appear somehow forced, her writing resisting this type of analysis from within. The reader wonders whether the analysis of the power of market forces undertaken in the previous section would have been a more appropriate critical framework for Lau´s work (see Wong). This chapter nonetheless achieves the goal of showing how once they have abandoned the structure of the immigrant narrative (as well as the auto-ethnographic form associated with it), these writers have very little in common, their texts demanding altogether new approaches and reading strategies.

First acknowledging and then moving beyond the historiographic practice that has characterized Japanese Canadian novels, the last chapter, "Beyond Redress: Japanese Canadian Women's Fiction", focuses on the work of Hiromi Goto, Kerri Sakamoto, Sally Ito and Tamai Kobayashi to show the diversification of strategies employed by a new generation of Japanese Canadian women writers "[i]n the shadow of [Kogawa's] *Obasan*", but also beyond the experience of internment. Although still firmly on feminist grounds, I would suggest that the gender focus in this chapter is less explicit and more transversal than in the previous two, the analysis offering critical insights into the representation of historical as well as cultural violence through intricate codes of language, silence and food in the texts. This chapter is also the most theoretically informed of the three, giving the discussion remarkable weight and coherence, as, for instance, in the application of Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection to the emasculated bodies of Japanese Canadian characters in Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field*. Most notable in this sense is the reading made of some key stories in Goto's collection *Hopeful Monsters* from Kristevan perspectives on (her own) motherhood as related in "Stabat Mater".

Transnational Poetics is an important contribution to the articulation of a critical language on race and gender that interrogates and resists national and global modes of appropriation and homogenization (see Ty). As can be inferred from my comments above, it also is an uneven work, both methodologically and discursively, a condition that often results from the difficulties of collective authorship. The book's objective of reading Asian Canadian literature by women as acts of resistance against and outside the ideology of multiculturalism is sometimes thwarted by a

critical discourse that tends to reproduce the very categories, assumptions and language of the identity politics it seeks to undermine. However, in exposing the labyrinthine ways of what Judith Butler has defined as "the domain of the sayable" (Butler 133), this discursive contradiction becomes a formative moment in the book's (and our own) search for alternative critical spaces. *Transnational Poetics* is also a valuable work in other ways. Its value resides in the thematic scope of the analysis as well as in its attention to the social, political, institutional and historical specificities over the range of the texts discussed. In its emphasis on the need to rethink the location of racialized and gendered constructions of Canada, this book takes a positive step towards that space of constant transitioning which Smaro Kamboureli and Roy Miki devised in their groundbreaking collection of essays *Trans.Can.Lit: Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature*, and which the title of this review seeks to evoke.

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EL SUSTRATO CULTURAL DE LA VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO: LITERATURA, ARTE, CINE Y VIDEOJUEGOS

Ángeles de la Concha, coord.
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La publicación de *El sustrato cultural de la violencia de género: Literatura, arte, cine y videojuegos*, editado por Ángeles de la Concha, no puede ser más oportuna. Hasta este momento no existía un volumen que ahondara de forma multidisciplinar en las raíces culturales de la violencia de género y que tratara de forma diacrónica las tensiones y desigualdades existentes en la construcción cultural del género. Aquí radica uno de los muchos aciertos de este volumen: la panorámica que ofrece este estudio subraya el papel determinante que la literatura y otras producciones culturales, desde el Renacimiento hasta nuestros días, juegan en la pervivencia y en la reproducción de los discursos culturales que promueven la violencia física y simbólica. Esta publicación consta de una introducción, diez capítulos con sus respectivas bibliografías, lo cual facilita la lectura y la comprobación de los títulos utilizados en cada trabajo, y un índice sobre los autores. La disposición de los capítulos es particularmente reseñable porque, además de la cronología, la coherencia rige el orden de los mismos. Así pues, los capítulos que abren el volumen se ocupan del análisis literario y los siguientes, de otros discursos culturales contenidos en la pintura, el cine y los videojuegos. Esto promueve el diálogo entre las contribuciones, como señalaré más adelante.

La introducción, escrita por la coordinadora del volumen, presenta la línea argumental con claridad expositiva, proporcionando una contextualización necesaria en una obra

que, como la presente, reúne contribuciones heterogéneas y multidisciplinares, además del principio unificador que se espera en un libro de estas características. El primer capítulo, "El canon literario y sus efectos sobre la construcción cultural de la violencia de género: los casos de Chaucer y Shakespeare", de Marta Cerezo Moreno, se ocupa de obras medievales y renacentistas que han promovido, en mayor o menor medida, el sostenimiento del patriarcado. Con gran erudición, la autora repasa cómo los textos literarios refuerzan los discursos hegemónicos de la Edad Media y del Renacimiento sobre la inferioridad del cuerpo femenino frente al masculino. Entre las obras objeto de estudio se encuentran *The Taming of the Shrew*, de William Shakespeare, en la que Cerezo Moreno analiza impecablemente, por ejemplo, el gran número de alusiones a la violación y "The Knight's Tale", de *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-1400) de Geoffrey Chaucer, donde aparece veladamente la violencia de género (con ecos de la *Metamorfosis* de Ovidio). En este cuento la mirada masculina configura y determina al "otro" femenino, al que somete y subordina a través del poder de la mirada. Así pues, en esta historia clásica, "los mitos y su articulación literaria y artística han contribuido a modelar y difundir ideas y prácticas sociales patriarcales que están aún en la actualidad profundamente arraigadas, aceptadas y normalizadas en el subconsciente social" (29). La autora cierra el capítulo con un certero estudio de la película *Te doy mis ojos* (2003), de Icíar Bollaín, también objeto de análisis en el capítulo nueve del volumen. En este capítulo, Pilar Aguilar Carrasco, se encarga del discurso cinematográfico y trata los prototipos relativos a las mujeres y la violencia simbólica, prestando especial atención a la mirada masculina según Laura Mulvey.

"'Me poseyó un deseo salvaje': articulación de la violencia masculina de género en la novela inglesa del siglo XIX", segundo capítulo de este libro, cuyo autor es Antonio Ballesteros González, estudia la violencia de género en el siglo XIX. Realiza un repaso al contexto histórico-social decimonónico, en primer lugar, y, en segundo lugar, a los antecedentes literarios, más concretamente, la novela gótica y su máximo exponente: *Frankenstein* (1818), de Mary Shelley. Tras el breve examen de la representación literaria de la feminidad en contraposición al discurso de la ciencia en la novela de Shelley, Ballesteros González traza de forma magistral las complejidades inherentes a la jerarquía de los géneros y el discurso patriarcal en obras como *Cumbres Borrascosas* (1847), *Jane Eyre* (1847), *Grandes esperanzas* (1860-61), *El extraño caso del Dr. Jekyll y Mr. Hyde* (1886), *El retrato de Dorian Gray* (1895), *Drácula* (1897) y *El corazón de las tinieblas* (1898/1902). Estas novelas hacen hincapié en cómo "las mujeres son intermediarias, víctimas y rehenes de la violencia machista y de las tensiones patriarcales" (51). Si bien comparto sus afirmaciones de que no existe un estudio "riguroso, de carácter global y sistemático" (48) sobre la violencia de género en el contexto que trata, es necesario recordar que ya en el año 2000 Marlene Tromp publicó *The Private Rod:*

Marital Violence, Sensation, and the Law in Victorian Britain, donde se centra en textos que, mediante "la comprensión de la violencia marital y su articulación" desafían "la ansiedad de la exposición y el silencio" (12). Si bien este volumen se ocupa de la novela de la sensación, la obra también resulta muy útil para los investigadores que quieren adentrarse en el estudio de la violencia de género dentro de la novela decimonónica.

El tercer capítulo, de Mercedes Bengoechea, examina las fantasías e imágenes de violencia contra las mujeres en la poesía amorosa. Este estudio resulta más que pertinente pues rompe con la tradicional conceptualización del amor en la poesía como posesión, invasión, pertenencia del otro e incluso desmembración: "[la mujer] aparece casi sistemáticamente parcializada en fragmentos corporales, como si algo impidiese al varón aceptar y aprehender su cuerpo, en su totalidad, y necesitase desgajarlo, tomarlo, observarlo por partes, unas más claramente cargadas de simbolismo erótico que otras" (71). Aunque el peso del trabajo incide sobre la lírica en lengua inglesa, la comparación que la autora establece entre esas imágenes en la poesía amorosa de habla inglesa y la de habla española resulta fructífera. El trabajo se articula en torno a tres claves: la representación de la amada por parte del poeta, el desmembramiento o fragmentación del cuerpo femenino y el alejamiento o distanciamiento masculino (80). La contribución resulta especialmente interesante, pues no se limita a la mera descripción o catálogo de imágenes de la violencia que se ejerce sobre el cuerpo femenino en la poesía amorosa, sino que también plantea si esa violencia supera lo meramente figurativo o textual para convertirse en una realidad extradiscursiva y constitutiva de cultura. En este sentido, se puede enlazar la contribución de Bengoechea con la última del volumen, "Sexismo, violencia y juegos electrónicos", de Eugenia López Muñoz, que también se pregunta hasta qué punto la violencia contenida en los videojuegos queda restringida al marco puramente figurativo, virtual, propio del entorno al que pertenecen, o bien afecta y alcanza al sujeto/agente que se identifica con el protagonista que lleva a cabo acciones violentas en el videojuego. Diversos estudios, mencionados en este último capítulo, concluyen que la exposición a la violencia figurativa conlleva, en mayor o menor medida, una insensibilización ante otras muestras de violencia. Volviendo al capítulo de Mercedes Bengoechea, el estudio pormenorizado de los poemas amorosos de autores como Ian McDonald, Simon Armitage, R.S. Thomas, John Fuller, entre otros, aderezados con referencias a poetas de habla española como Garcilaso de la Vega y Pablo Neruda, culmina con el análisis de autoras como Miriam Scott o Clara Janés que presentan la vivencia del deseo sexual de un modo más integrador. El capítulo termina con una nota de optimismo, pues Bengoechea percibe un cambio de perspectiva en voces recientes de la lírica española como Luis Javier Hidalgo o José Ángel Valente.

La vertiente más teórica la ofrece Juan Antonio Suárez en "La violencia en el campo *queer*", que incide en la relación entre la violencia/agresividad y la sexualidad revisando las premisas freudianas, introduciendo nociones butlerianas y finalmente aplicándolas a representaciones culturales *queer*. La aportación de Suárez se encuadra en lo que sería la dimensión ética de la violencia, por lo que "es posible afirmar lo inescapable de la violencia sexual y social y, a la vez, utilizar esta conciencia de su inescapabilidad para atenuarla" (119). El análisis del arte de Wojnarowicz, Genet y del cineasta alemán R.W. Fassbinder, por ejemplo, ilustra cómo todo impulso erótico lleva aparejado un elemento violento que amenaza la disolución del sujeto. El pilar sobre el que se sustenta este trabajo subraya, pues, la noción de que la violencia y la agresividad resultan consustanciales al desarrollo personal del individuo y sus relaciones con el entorno; en ello radica "la carga ética de la representación *queer*" (138).

Ángeles de la Concha aborda en el capítulo quinto cómo la representación literaria de la violencia de género en la novela contemporánea presenta la progresiva resistencia y oposición de ciertos autores a los estereotipos sobre la mujer, frente a la victimización imperante en los primeros años de la crítica feminista. La autora analiza obras como la trilogía de Pat Barker, que saca a la luz la violencia doméstica, oculta y silenciada, a través de la comparación con el trasfondo bélico de la Primera Guerra Mundial. El corpus de textos empleado es amplio y diverso y del estudio de estas novelas se entresacan las estrategias utilizadas para ejercer la violencia, como el silenciamiento de la víctima. Resulta interesante que Roddy Doyle, un autor, rompa precisamente esta dinámica en *La mujer que se daba con las puertas* (1996). Por otro lado, la revisión de la literatura canónica y de mitos que han llevado a cabo algunas autoras contemporáneas contribuye asimismo a la subversión de la violencia real y simbólica presente en dicha literatura. El ensayo de Ángeles de la Concha concluye con la idea de que las novelas multiculturales como *Carne*, de Ruth Ozeki (1998), suponen un cambio cualitativo en la representación literaria de la mujer, que se aleja del victimismo presente en las novelas de fechas anteriores.

Los capítulos sexto, séptimo y octavo, de Amparo Serrano de Haro, Teresa Gómez Reus y Pepa Feu, respectivamente, se ocupan del discurso pictórico y la representación de la violencia en el mismo. Hay que alabar la disposición continuada de estos capítulos pues realmente entablan un diálogo entre sí. El capítulo sexto lleva a cabo una aproximación general a la representación pictórica de la mujer, desde la pasividad de la musa, su cosificación e invisibilidad, hasta la incorporación de la creatividad artística femenina mediante metáforas e imágenes sugerentes, como ocurre en la pintura de Leonora Carrington y de Frida Kahlo.

El trabajo de Teresa Gómez Reus propone un elemento innovador dentro de los estudios sobre el espacio y sobre la ideología de la segregación de las esferas en la cultura victoriana y moderna: la presencia urbana femenina en la representación pictórica. Tras trazar la cartografía de la figura femenina en relación con los peligros de la gran ciudad reflejada en la pintura victoriana, donde observa cómo las pintoras de la época representan contextos domésticos en líneas generales (con contadas excepciones), Gómez Reus se centra en Gwen John, cuya identidad no se contruye según las normas sociales. Sus cuadros intimistas y despojados de todo adorno son "espacios interiores casi vacíos [que] sugieren un lugar de transición en la historia de las mujeres, a caballo entre las constricciones físicas y psicológicas de un viejo orden y las coordenadas menos restrictivas y más posibilistas del nuevo siglo" (218). Por otro lado, "Anatomía de una represión: lo sobrenatural como rito de paso en la pintura y la escritura de mujeres", de Pepa Feu, analiza un grupo de pintoras cuyo lenguaje figurativo se compara con el de las escritoras góticas. Este capítulo, publicado póstumamente tras la pérdida de nuestra compañera Pepa Feu, pretende homenajear a ese grupo de artistas que no están reconocidas dentro del canon. El ensayo de Feu enlaza especialmente con el capítulo segundo, sobre la novela gótica, y el sexto, sobre la evolución de la presencia femenina en la pintura y se articula en torno a diversos arquetipos referidos a lo sobrenatural y *the uncanny* o *unheimliche* en la pintura de Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, Dorothea Tanning y Frida Kahlo.

El sustrato cultural de la violencia de género: Literatura, arte, cine y videojuegos viene a llenar un hueco en la crítica actual sobre la violencia de género, en general, y, en concreto, sobre el estudio del modo en que los discursos culturales perpetúan y normalizan las relaciones jerárquicas entre hombres y mujeres, pilar básico de la violencia de género. En este sentido, se puede echar en falta alguna referencia a Jessica Benjamin, una crítica feminista que precisamente ha analizado de manera extensa los desajustes y desequilibrios de poder en las relaciones heterosexuales, en relación con la configuración psicológica masculina y femenina en *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and The Problem of Domination* (1988) y en *Shadow of the Other: Intersubjectivity and Gender in Psychoanalysis* (1998). Sin embargo, este detalle no desmerece en absoluto los hallazgos de las contribuciones de *El sustrato cultural de la violencia de género* y el logro del volumen en su conjunto. El cuidado puesto en la edición y coordinación del libro se ponen de manifiesto en la disposición de los capítulos y su mutua relación, en la coherencia de las bibliografías y en la corrección ortotipográfica. *El sustrato cultural de la violencia de género* es, pues, una publicación altamente recomendable tanto para el público en general, interesado en las raíces de la violencia de género, como para la crítica especializada.

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FACTUAL FICTIONS: NARRATIVE TRUTH
AND THE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY NOVEL

Leonora Flis. Newcastle
Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010.
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Don DeLillo, reflecting upon his role as storyteller, states: "It's curious to think about what a fiction writer can do as opposed to a journalist or a historian. They say that journalism is the first draft of history. And maybe in a curious way, fiction is the final draft" (Norris and Block 2007: np). Leonora Flis' *Factual Fictions: Narrative Truth and the Contemporary American Documentary Novel* (2010) sets out to map the development of what Flis calls "the documentary novel". Flis acknowledges the "terminological inconsistencies" (2010: 1) surrounding this literary genre that have led writers and scholars to employ varying terms such as "nonfiction novel" or "faction", or to see these novels as works of historiographic metafiction or historical narratives (2010: 1-2). As Flis rightly acknowledges: "finding a uniform and a fixed definition [for the documentary novel] seems to be a virtually impossible task" (2010: 6). Thankfully this is not her intention in *Factual Fictions*. As she comes to demonstrate, the great value of this literary genre is its ability to adapt and be adapted by writers to tell the story of the socio-political and socio-cultural narratives that shape the experience of the everyday individual.

The documentary novel, in various forms and under various guises, has existed since the beginning of time, since man (or indeed woman) sat down and spun his (or her) first yarn. Flis' study focuses predominantly on the reappearance of the form in 1960s America for "it is in the United States that this particular literary genre or style of writing has developed in a truly versatile and abundant way" (2010: 2). Flis

offers a methodical and systematic mapping of the appearance and development of the documentary novel alongside the journalistic-literary phenomenon known as New Journalism. Flis also contextualises the development of the documentary novel alongside the major social, historical and cultural (American) events of that era that went hand in hand with this kind of fiction. These narratives, typified in the writing of Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965), Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* (1968) and *The Executioner's Song* (1998), John Berendt's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (1997), and Don DeLillo's *Libra* (1988) were not only great pieces of writing that enriched the American literary tradition but were a form of observing, reporting and interpreting the experience of the American people. These authors were also, and I'd say even more importantly, *writing* the experience of the American people.

The first chapters of *Factual Fictions* set out Flis' theoretical position on the reading of the documentary novel. Previous reviews of Flis' text have complained that the author "tends to work on the literary side of the literary journalism discussion more heavily than the journalism side" (Pauly 2010: 114). That is correct and not something that Flis should need to apologise for. With her feet firmly planted in the schools of post-structuralist and postmodernist thought she is interested in textuality, narrative and interpretation; in essence, the fictional nature of fact. The opening salvo of cultural theorists who move within the postmodern matrix may not bring anything new to our knowledge of the development of this field of thought, but it provides a strong theoretical scheme that sets up Flis' approach to interpreting the social construction and the sociological impact of the documentary novel.

Chapter Five provides Flis' application of her theoretical premise with what she calls "the practical analysis" (2010: 110) of these key documentary novels identified above. This has been a long time coming and I cannot help but feel that having four dense chapters on creating a theoretical framework and only one chapter dedicated to the readings of these key texts creates a certain imbalance in *Factual Fictions*. That said, Flis' analyses are sound (if short) in presenting the fluctuations in the ways these authors grapple with what they feel are their responsibilities toward the elements of fact and fiction in their works.

After the analysis of the American works Flis turns to the Slovene documentary narratives in Chapter Six. With so much of the text dedicated to (mostly) Anglophone theoretical and philosophical traditions as well as American literature, Flis' switch to the Slovene may seem abrasive. However, I found the chapter on the Slovene tradition to be hugely informative and a welcome window on a largely unknown literary tradition. While I found the impact (or lack thereof) of the main literary heavyweights that feature elsewhere in *Factual Fictions* to be notable, it is the mapping of the documentary novel in Slovenia that will be one of the main things I take away from this text.

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The main reservation I have about the book is with its layout. The use of dense footnotes on each page often overpowers the main body of the text and you find your eyes flicking involuntarily between the principal point and the digression. This is a very ambitious and wide ranging account of the development of not only a literary genre, but also a method of thinking about human experience. As Flis herself admits, "I found myself grappling with a rather disparate array of disciplines and theoretical approaches" (2010: 9). Ultimately, I think that Flis gets it just right. There is also an absence of reference to other works that have documented the rise of the documentary novel in the United States, notably Thomas Connery's *A Sourcebook of American Literary Journalism* (1992) and John Hartsock's *A History of American Literary Journalism* (2000). A note on these texts would have provided further contextualisation for Flis' arguments. That being said, Flis' book will prove to be, as it was in many ways for me, an engaging, well-written, and most importantly of all, instructive and informative way into this literary genre that will appeal, I feel, to graduate and post-graduate students of the novel in all its guises.

The final chapter of the text, "Future Prospects of Nonfiction Writing", speculates on the future of these documentary narratives. While Flis states fairly that "literature is losing its halo of a prestigious medium of communication in the world" (2010: 196), the relevance of the genre and indeed Flis' study with regards to contemporary literature is evident if we consider the fundamental drive of these works. Richard Gray argues that writers of contemporary American fiction "have the chance, in short, of getting 'into' history, to participate in its processes and, in a perspectival sense at least, getting 'out' of it too —and enabling us, the reader, to begin to understand just how these processes work" (2011: 19). And this is what Flis highlights as the underlying drive of the documentary novel. It was the "birth of a new consciousness, stemming from a larger, more varied, and more complex sense of the immediate human situation" (2010: 29) in the tumultuous 60s that drove the everyday person, not only ivory tower philosophers, to question the (un) reliability of "truth". And these people often looked to fiction for their answers. Don DeLillo, speaking in conversation with Anthony DeCurtis, is asked: "What does fiction offer people that history denies to them?" DeLillo's reply is telling:

> I think fiction rescues history from its confusions. It can do this in the somewhat superficial way of filling in blank spaces. But it also can operate in a deeper way: providing the balance and rhythm we don't experience in our daily lives, in our real lives. So the novel which is within history can also operate outside it —correcting, clearing up and, perhaps most important of all, finding rhythms and symmetries that we simply don't encounter else-where. (DeCurtis 2005: 64)

What Flis leaves us with is a reminder of the power of storytelling in understanding the human condition; in other words, that fact is ultimately found in fiction.

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**TRAVELLING IN WOMEN'S HISTORY
WITH MICHÈLE ROBERTS'S NOVELS**
M. Soraya García-Sánchez
Bern: Peter Lang, 2011.
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Michèle Roberts is one of the most prolific writers on the contemporary British scene. From her debut in 1978 with *A Piece of the Night*, to her most recent work to date, her memoir *Paper Houses* published in 2007, the half-English half-French author has explored the genres and forms of the novel, short narrative, poetry, drama, literary criticism and radio scripts. Soraya García-Sánchez's commitment to Roberts's oeuvre is both personal and intellectual. Her book is a very helpful addition to existing criticism of Roberts's work, which began in 2006 with Patricia Bastida Rodríguez's *Santa o hereje: la otra Teresa de Ávila en* Impossible Saints *de Michèle Roberts*, and was followed by Sarah Falcus's *Michèle Roberts: Myths, Mothers and Memories* (2007), a critical and thematic reading of Roberts's most successful novels till *Reader, I married Him*. In 2009 Susanne Gruss devoted *The Pleasure of the Feminist Text* to analyse the writer's production in the light of Angela Carter's work. García-Sánchez's study proposes, though, a literal and metaphorical journey along Roberts's long fiction with special attention to her memoir.

The book is divided into three parts. Part A focuses on the task of the novelist, highlighting Roberts's personal and literary background, and discussing her development as a writer in the context of her engagement with feminism. Part B explores Roberts's memoir in connection with her earlier fiction, and Part C comprises two interviews with the writer, previously published, intended to complete the discussion of the former sections.

From the beginning, García-Sánchez shows her interest in a number of set topics in Roberts's fiction which recur in her non-fictional writing, namely language, the female body, history and culture, travelling and the figure of the female *flâneur* (2011: 14). The author chooses the metaphor of travelling to illustrate her relationship with Roberts's work. Travelling is, then, both an individual and a collective experience, as the novelist focuses on single women's lives but also on the repercussions that individual existences have in the course of women's history. Part A, "Michèle Roberts, the novelist", is divided into different subsections according to thematic criteria. The first subsection serves as an introduction and enumerates recurrent motifs and issues in her production, like the use of pastiche and the creation of a woman's language invariably related to the body, following the notions of *l'écriture feminine* and *parler femme*, developed by French feminism. A general overview of Roberts's background and literary career is provided, and there are a few details about plot and main topics with special reference to those novels which dramatize the images of women in the Christian tradition, like *The Visitation*, *The Book of Mrs Noah*, or *Daughters of the House*. However, García-Sánchez chooses not to include in this discussion other novels relevant for the topic, such as *The Wild Girl* or *Impossible Saints*, or to use them to explain other related issues, like the figure of the woman writer (2011: 22). In the next section "Michèle Roberts and writing novels", the author focuses on various aspects and features in Roberts's fiction, like the outstanding presence of houses, the absence of omniscient narratorial figures, the importance of the unconscious, and the interrelation between story and history. Then, she reads Roberts's use of pastiche and *l'écriture feminine* as two postmodern forms and chooses her novels of the 1990s to illustrate the technique, on the grounds of her experimentation with narrative voices. García-Sánchez's allusion to the original meaning of the term in the semantic field of cooking could have been stretched further, though, by focusing on the relationship between writing and cooking in Roberts's production, present in stories like "The Bishop's Lunch", and novels such as *Impossible Saints, The Looking Glass* or more recently *Reader, I Married Him*, and that the writer herself delineated ironically in *Food, Sex and God*: "Writing feels like pulling something out of my insides; I've made it inside, now must draw it out, put it out. It's painful or pleasurable, depending on how the work's going, but it diminishes and empties me, I've lost part of myself, I become hungry" (Roberts 1998: 199-200).

García-Sánchez intertwines individual and collective lives in "Feminism: Women's History", to deal with the circumstances of Roberts's protagonists. She aptly claims that for them the personal is political (2011: 39). Writing becomes an essential part of their agendas, and García-Sánchez focuses accordingly on those heroines who are writers in the making, and who best exemplify proto-feminist or feminist attitudes: Mary Magdalene in *The Wild Girl,* Helen in *The Visitation*, Millicent in *The Looking Glass*, or Mrs Noah in *The Book of Mrs Noah*. Later, she evaluates the either/or

representation of femininity in Roberts's fiction and concurs that by playing with binaries the writer tries to deactivate the whole gender construction: "Roberts aims to end with that dichotomy that has separated women. Instead, this feminist writer explores the potential union of opposites in the same woman" (2011: 45). As a corollary to this debate, García-Sánchez centers on the mother-daughter bond, which she interprets as an autobiographical trace. It is perhaps here that Roberts's debt to French feminism becomes more evident, though this particular is not mentioned or developed any further in the analysis. The author pays attention to those figures who are committed to life giving in Roberts's fiction and then looks into three texts which could be easily read in the light of Julia Kristeva's theory about maternal *jouissance* (1986: 101): *A Piece of the Night*, *The Visitation* and *Flesh and Blood*. García-Sánchez is right to conclude that if mother and daughter come to terms very seldom in her fiction, the figure of the grandmother, so influential and pervasive in the writer's life, is chosen to foster relationships among women across generations (2011: 66). The topic of sex and religion is discussed in the book at different levels. García-Sánchez notes that Roberts attempts to neutralize power relations fostered by the Christian church by demystifying the figures of the saint and the prostitute in *The Wild Girl* (2011: 71-72). This project continues in *Daughters of the House* with the fictionalization of St Thérèse de Lisieux's life and culminates in *Impossible Saints*, Roberts's most choral novel. The lives of these saints portray them both as historical and individual characters.

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Part B, entitled "Michèle Roberts, the memoirist", is significantly shorter and is devoted to the analysis of *Paper Houses*. This experimental text, which moves between fiction and non-fiction, constitutes Roberts's foray into the autobiographic genre: "Roberts's conscious past becomes constructive and active in this autobiographical work" (García-Sánchez 2011: 93). García-Sánchez argues perceptively that Roberts's act of reconstruction involves both the activation of memory and the introduction of fictive material. Her purpose in this section is to approach the study of the intertwining of the personal and the public in relation to Roberts's experiences, and an analysis of structure, relating it to its adherence to both modern and postmodern techniques. This is not dealt with further. She refers to Roberts's relationship with London, and elicits questions about female identity, playing the role of the *flâneur* and describing the stages of Roberts's life and career, as they are associated with particular London locations. The connection between the autobiographical mode and the figure of the female city stroller constitutes one of the most insightful proposals in García-Sánchez's study (2011: 101). She also claims that the memoir follows closely the nature of the feminist novel in so far as both focus on plot and identity (2011: 109). The text reinforces the connection between Roberts's biographical and professional landmarks by listing those chapters in the memoir that are set in significant London scenes. García-Sánchez's work proceeds, then, to compare literary writing and history and culture in the

1970s and 1980s, the period in which Roberts discovered her literary vocation and started to get involved with feminist politics. Those topics that recur in Roberts's production, like sexuality and the body, the role of the feminist writer, or language and form are also under scrutiny here. The encounter with feminism in particular is described as a journey and a search for home, a point of departure and a destination. She concludes this section with an index listing the writers and historical women mentioned in *Paper Houses*, together with the most relevant intertextual references in this work. This is followed by some final remarks and conclusions, in which García-Sánchez returns to her initial purpose of reading Roberts's novels as they cross the boundaries between the personal and the political, and informing the analysis of fiction with a keen eye on history. She stresses the importance of the choice of female characters that become the narrators of their own stories, some of which take the reader back to a historical past. A substantial part of the conclusions evaluates Roberts's *Paper Houses* and stresses the dual perspective in this memoir: those of the contemporary memoirist and of the female *flâneur*.

Finally, Part C comprises two already published interviews of the writer by García-Sánchez in 2003 and 2010. In the first one, she focuses on the importance of language for the novelist, her choice of particular characters and their portraits, and on the major influences in Roberts's work. In the second one, her intuitive questions concentrate on the recurrence of history in Roberts's later fiction and on the particular nature of her memoir. García-Sánchez's choice of the leading figure of the traveller as the guiding thread in Roberts's narrative and in her own book, proves to be most illuminating. *Travelling in Women's History with Michèle Roberts's Novels* offers a perceptive approach to the work of the British writer that will appeal to the growing number of scholars interested in this figure, but also to those working on contemporary women's fiction.

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THE MAJOR PHASES OF PHILIP ROTH

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Articulating structural approaches to Philip Roth's oeuvre is, by definition, a daunting task. Roth is a prolific writer, with a career spanning over fifty years, in which two randomly picked novels might never appear to be by the same hand, or they may be unequivocally Rothian. So I undertook the review of *The Major Phases* with some reservations, only to be delighted at the clarity and articulateness of Gooblar's writing. Initially admitting the intrinsic difficulties of defining Philip Roth holistically, Gooblar refuses to compromise choices, and sets out to strike a balance between two recent critical approaches which consider, both of them validly but selectively, the writer's gaze as moving either "outward" towards the "republic of culture" (Posnock 2006) or "inward" towards "human subjectivity" (Shostak 2004). Stressing that "such unity is impossible to declare", Gooblar proposes to "break Roth's career into clusters of books, positing 'phases' of Rothian preoccupation while trying not to lose sight of the cumulative whole" (4, 6).

A glance at the contents page shows that Gooblar's monograph devotes the first two of six chapters to individual volumes —*Goodbye, Columbus* (1959) and *Portnoy's Complaint* (1967)— whereas in the ensuing four chapters, it addresses "clusters" of several works. This apparent imbalance responds to Gooblar's stress on how much of Roth's later production is influenced by the conception of and critical response to these early works, a point he will make repeatedly.

Chapter One recalls the early visceral reactions to the stories in *Goodbye, Columbus*, when an almost unknown Roth was targeted for his unflattering characterizations of "faithful" Jews (13). Gooblar contextualizes the allegedly self-hating Jewish protagonists of these stories in the cultural and political milieu of the 1950s, a time when New York liberals, in the wake of the Holocaust and of the Stalinist purges, had become skeptical of cultural or sociopolitical institutionalization. Such protagonists embody the inception of a *leitmotiv* of Roth's narrative: the ambivalent, self-questioning and non-conformist character, and later writer-double (22). The novella is examined through the symbolic implications of Neil's "seeing" American Jews' identity as divided between a new rich suburban class and earlier inner-city working-class origins, its final image featuring Neil as "characteristically Rothian […] poised between an inward focus on […] the self (Shostak's situated subject) and an outward focus on […] literature (Posnock's republic of culture)" (31).

Chapter Two locates Roth's position in the early sixties as paralleling that of the 1940s generation of Jewish intellectuals (Lionel Trilling and Philip Rahv) who aspired to engage with the "serious" Anglo-American literary canon. Attempting transcendence from the Jewish literary niche toward a position as "serious intellectual" and commentator on American culture at large (33-35) —a transition that also haunted Saul Bellow in his early work (42-43)—, Roth became influenced by Henry James, in the wake of Trilling's influential critical voice, producing two minor somber novels in a Jamesian mode before fully finding his voice with *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969). A milestone in Roth's career, the narrative mode of Portnoy —an extended psychoanalytic monologue— would influence Roth's later self-examining fictions. In the wild late 60s, Portnoy becomes a character who is comic in his concern about being serious (47-48), by embracing 'high literature', pursuing *shikses*, and shedding his father's Jewish background. Signalling Roth's authorial freedom to engage with Jewishness, Portnoy's vital progress symbolically enacts (in a Jewish comic mode) precisely the (serious) dilemma of Roth trying to become a hyphen-free "American Writer" (55-57).

The following chapter vindicates Roth's literary position in the difficult, experimental seventies, following Irving Howe's charge of his lack of a "personal culture" (1972). Instead, Gooblar claims that Roth's fascination with Kafka (and this writer's city, Prague) and his themes of entrapment inform part of this personal culture, while the figure of Anne Frank informs another. Close-reading Roth's essay-story "Looking at Kafka", Gooblar emphasizes this writer's significance (beyond the obvious *The Breast*, 1972) as mentor and alter ego, establishing an interesting connection to *The Professor of Desire* (1977), where Kafka becomes a dual symbol of sexual/intellectual unfulfillment. An illuminating discussion follows of *The Ghost Writer* (1979), first of the Zuckerman novels. The Anne Frank literary fantasy that Zuckerman envisions here (having survived, she lives in the US under a new identity, Amy Bellette) is related to the romanticized Broadway

adaptation of "The Diary of Anne Frank", which edited out its Jewish specificity.[1] Building from Cynthia Ozick's critique that all appropriations of "The Diary" are objectionable, Gooblar aptly points out that Ozick's position is actually enacted in Zuckerman's envisioning of Amy Bellette's despair at a staged version of her story which erases its singularity: "American culture has usurped her identity […] by its own need to draw certain lessons from the Holocaust" (85-86).

Covering the period 1974-1985, Chapter Four points at *Portnoy's Complaint* as forerunner of a cluster of works where psychoanalysis "becomes almost essential to an understanding of the fiction" (90) in *My Life as a Man* (1974), *Zuckerman Unbound* (1981), *The Anatomy Lesson* (1983) and *The Counterlife* (1986). These are works featuring fictional "writer doubles", Zuckerman or Tarnopol, centred on the re/discovery of the self, a literary transposition of Freudian psychoanalytic practice (95). Gooblar traces an evolution from the (optimistic) quest for self-knowledge of the early Portnoy towards its gradual, despairing, narrowing in *The Anatomy Lesson* (and in *The Prague Orgy*) where, slipping into a 'Freudian lock', eventually "Zuckerman cannot escape his identity as a writer, but, as a writer, he cannot write without some method of self-reflection" (98). Escape from this lock is suggested via narrative therapy, a practice Gooblar adopts as a framework to read *The Counterlife*. Rather than attempting to "uncover" a preexistent latent self (Freud), individual human experience itself can be "storied" or "narrativized", i.e. turned into a valid construction of the self: "each character becomes the author of his or her own story […they] all act like novelists" (102, 103). Gooblar singles out *The Counterlife* as a watershed for the next Rothian phase (Chapter Five: Nonfiction Writings), concerned with writer/character doubling, questioning accuracy in the representation of reality and the self, and the ethics of exposing autobiographical truth, issues explored, in varying modes, in *The Facts* (1988), *Deception* (1990), *Patrimony* (1991) and *Operation Shylock* (1993). Beyond the multiple narrative effects that Roth perfoms in each work (textual framing, genre-crossing, and writer doubles) I find especially interesting Gooblar's reference to the *Operation Shylock* (aka *Duality*) drafts in the *Library of Congress* which reveal Roth's original structural plan for these works: "TWO-FACED. An Autobiography in Four Acts. 1. *The Facts*, a Novelist's Autobiography 2. *Deception*, a Novel 3. *Patrimony*, a True Story 4. *Duality*, a Novelist's Fantasy" (112). The closing novel, whose outrageous plot stems from a "Philip Roth" writer-double in Israel narratively competing with the original Philip, is stressed as illustrating the life-long concern with "authorial liberty" over one's material. A scene of *Operation Shylock* where Philip is harangued by a Mossad agent on *loshon hora*[2] is related to Roth's deep-seated malaise at the reception of *Goodbye, Columbus* (127, 129).

Chapter VI looks at the "American Trilogy" —*American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998), *The Human Stain* (2000)— Roth's most explicit engagement with "the state of the nation" (151) in three convulse eras. Gooblar

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proposes here that rather than a shift away from the self-reflexive narratives many critics quote, this stage deals centrally with the "interaction between self and society [...] between self-determination and social determination" (132) and, thus, echoes the Jewish concerns of *Goodbye, Columbus*, but now in relation to the broader American canvas. Establishing an interesting link with early 1950s novels featuring Adamic protagonists[3] or "protean" heroes, he emphasizes how the self-fashioning of Coleman Silk, Ira Ringold or "the Swede", whether in ethnocultural or ideological terms, is ultimately dismantled by the collective/social forces dominant in each era. I am tempted to add, extending Gooblar's point further back into American literary history, that the quest for self-fashioning in the face of (adverse) social forces is a central theme in Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), the book Hemingway famously named as the origin of "all modern American literature" (22).

Gooblar develops his brief conclusion from the line "There's no remaking reality" in *Everyman* (2006), parenthetically enclosing "(there's no)" to underline — drawing various threads— how much of Roth's work is ambivalently about trying to refashion "realities" while it is also about being defeated by reality in these attempts, as the writer-doubles typically illustrate. Contemporary *front matter* listing policy of his work under the headings "Zuckerman Books", "Kepesh Books", "Roth Books" and "Other Books" is noted as a "particularly Rothian trick of giving a sense of unity (as if there was a plan all along) while dividing" (156) but Gooblar concedes this may be a publishing strategy. More rewardingly, he does underline how the first four novels in the new millennium —*The Dying Animal* (2001), *The Plot Against America* (2004), *Everyman* and *Exit Ghost* (2007)— complete, and apparently close, each of these *writerly* categories.

The output of criticism on Philip Roth is to date impressive,[4] especially since the 1990s, and Gooblar's bibliography cannot be all-inclusive. Yet I find two striking absences, Alan Cooper's *Philip Roth and the Jews* (1996) and Stephen Milowitz's *Philip Roth Reconsidered: The Concentrationary Universe of the American Writer* (2000), significant studies that shed light on the relevance of Israel and the Middle East, Jewish Diaspora, and the Holocaust, vis-à-vis a large part of Roth's work. On the more theoretical front, and allowing for Gooblar's preference for (well argued) psychoanalytical approaches to assess Roth's later works, I do feel a more explicit acknowledgement might be made of its postmodernist underpinnings, discussed by several Roth scholars over the past decade. Yet all things considered, David Gooblar's book is a very valuable contribution to Philip Roth studies, in that it argues very persuasively how much of the young writer's self persists within the mature author's literary and textual concerns, while proposing original and insightful approaches to some of Roth's key works and major phases.

Notes

1. The "Diary" was introduced in the US in 1952 by American-Jewish writer Meyer Levin, a reporter in World War II and witness to the concentration camp horrors. Levin wrote a stage production adaptation, which was finally rejected in favour of a commercial, mainstreamed version by professional scriptwriters. This led Meyer Levin into intricate litigations with the producers (81; cf. Levin's own account in *Obsession*, 1974).

2. Or *Lashon Hara*, meaning "Evil Tongue": Biblical laws related to gossip and slander, expounded by Polish rabbi Israel Meir Kagan (1838-1933), commonly known as the "Chafetz Chaim", precisely after the title of his famous work on this subject (cf. http://www.torah.org/learning/halashon).

3. J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952), and Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953).

4. A very helpful list of Philip Roth criticism, efficiently organized by academic categories, is available at the "Resources: Research" link at *The Philip Roth Society* site: http://rothsociety.org/

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The publication by Rodopi of the second volume of the "Neo-Victorian Series" entitled *Neo-Victorian Families: Gender, Sexual and Cultural Politics* shows once more the growing interest in the Victorian past on the part of both scholars in the academia and the public in general. The first volume edited by the series editors, Marie-Luise Kohlke and Christian Gutleben, *Neo-Victorian Tropes of Trauma: The Politics of Bearing After-Witness to Nineteenth-Century Suffering* and published in 2010 has represented a major step in the analysis and critical debate of issues concerning the Victorian period. The revision and reformulation of these issues, which were the cause of trauma for the Victorian mind and their representation through contemporary literary productions are the main concern of the volume.

The second volume, reviewed here, focuses on an essential element in what constitutes the so-called "Victorian culture" and which is still a matter of concern for contemporary society: the family. Neo-Victorian fiction represents a quite recent trend in historical fiction which answers contemporary readers' desire to share with the writer an understanding, interpretation and repossession of the past. In Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn's words, "Historical fiction can be read as the most essential form of postmodernism, continually questioning as it does the very fabric of the past and, by implication the present" (2004: 141). Neo-Victorian writers are not only looking back but also using the appropriation of topic, style and genre to try to problematize our understanding of Victorian times; in this way,

they offer us an image of the Victorians which the Victorians would probably not recognize themselves or could not display due to the social constrictions of the period (Preston 2008: 99). This image also constitutes a reflection of the anxieties and traumas that our contemporary society has inherited from our ancestors.

In their Introduction, Kohlke and Gutleben assert the centrality of the family in Victorian and Neo-Victorian discourses. From the domestic sanctuary that the Victorian family represented, we move to a Neo-Victorian family which itself constitutes the site of trauma where respectability is questioned, but which also reflects the hidden inconsistencies of Victorian society. This family becomes the locus of exploitation and resistance where its reproductive function and ideologies concerning gender, sexuality, class, race and nation are questioned (5-7). This is certainly what we find in all the essays that engage in a Neo-Victorian critique of family ideology. As the editors state, the ideal of the nuclear family was reserved for the morally superior middle-class, excluding other classes and races. Nonetheless, the Neo-Victorian approach to the family endorses traditional conceptualizations of the structure while simultaneously subverting these values and framing them within non-heteronormative models. These models can be more fluid and represent different experiences of the family and of exerting agency both in the present and the past (10-11). In this sense, the role of women and children as well as that of middle-class reformers becomes essential in the process of constructing and deconstructing such a mainstay in Victorian society as is the family.

Part I of the book "Endangered Childhoods and Lost Fortunes: Filthiness and Philanthropy" contains chapters by Matthew Kaiser, Shurlee Swain, Louisa Yates and Marie-Luise Kohlke which analyse childhood in both Victorian and contemporary contexts, using Neo-Victorian literary and visual texts to bring to the fore controversial aspects connected with children and their welfare. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, there was increasing concern about the situation of Victorian children, especially after the publication in 1885 in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of W.T. Stead's series of articles entitled "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon".[1] Children began to be seen as the future of the nation and the Empire, and were associated with innocence and the lack of sexual knowledge; this is the reason why child abuse and delinquency and deviancy in children became some of the main preoccupations for the Victorian mind (Jackson 2000: 1, 6). Hence the proliferation in the nineteenth century of charities, associations and organizations whose main aim was the rescue and protection of the "children of the poor", which runs parallel with contemporary attitudes towards childhood.

All the essays in Part 1 are concerned with aspects such as child abuse, child exploitation and trauma, and all of them underline the poor advance made in this field by our contemporary society. "Going slumming" and "slumming narratives"

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are elements in Victorian culture that became familiar for people in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Social workers and philanthropists went slumming to see firsthand how the poor lived. Slums represented human suffering and they symbolized brutality and sexual degradation; they elicited sympathy and urged action (Koven 2006: 1-5). Matthew Kaiser in his chapter "From London's East End to West Baltimore: How the Victorian Slum Narrative Shapes *The Wire*" uses the idea of "going slumming" and defines "slumming narratives" as "detailed, documentary explorations —fictional or non-fictional— of the living conditions and personal sufferings of the poor, usually the urban poor" (51). The aim is to move the audience toward a better tomorrow; slums are presented as the world of "the others" and Kaiser establishes parallelisms with twenty-first century America.

In the same vein, Shurlee Swain in her essay entitled "Failing Families: Echoes of Nineteenth-Century Child Rescue Discourse in Contemporary Debates around Child Protection" reflects on the sad issue of removing and relocating the child of a failing family in a substitute family, together with its pros and cons. People and organizations like Dr. John Barnardo, William Booth and the Salvation Army, Henry Mayhew or Seebohm Rowntree, among others, devoted their time and energy to the rescue of poor people in the slums and sometimes took their children to their institutions. These children, treated as victims, could be redeemed and, if properly trained, could become valuable citizens (75). Simultaneously, the issue of child abuse was rediscovered in the 1960s together with issues of profligacy, neglect and ill-usage, bringing the idea of transgressing parental rights to the fore (83).

Finally, the essays by Louisa Yates and Marie-Luise Kohlke put forward the idea that the child remains the organising principle of Neo-Victorian families, connecting the topic of child abuse and the suffering of children with trauma narrative and its association with individual and collective historical crises (135). However, in Victorian literature, the child played a redeeming role for adults, whereas in Neo-Victorian fiction the child invites adult transgression (143).

Part II "Performing (Impossible) Happy Families: Deconstruction and Reconstruction" attempts to question the validity of Victorian traditional values associated with the family through the essays of María Isabel Seguro, Regina Hansen, Sarah Edwards, Hila Shachar and Sarah Gamble. Victorian notions of "the domestic ideal" based on the "theory of the double spheres" delineated by John Ruskin's 'Of Queen's Gardens' informed notions of men's and women's duties (178). According to this theory, a woman's place was the home and her main role was that of mother and wife; a man's domain was the world outside the home, the world of work, politics, business and judicial responsibility. A woman's nature was defined in the same way: the essence of woman was respectability which was connected with dependency, delicacy and frailty; also with subordination,

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self-sacrifice and appropriate behaviour (Poovey 1989: 6-9; Nead 1988: 28-29). Masculinity was defined by physical strength and militarism, and Seguro states that the social function of the middle class family was that of "the provider of harmony and moral strength necessary for the male to achieve social success in the capitalist world outside the home, as well as in the colonies outside the homeland" (158). As Michel Foucault observes, all these ideas permeated the different social and cultural discourses of the time thanks to the production of knowledge and the manifestation of power. However, these values are simultaneously contested and reproduced by our present societies; we can see for example in the original contemporary literary and visual versions of Victorian novelists like Dickens or Emily Brönte or Edwardian writers like Galsworthy the endorsement or the subversion of Victorian views on marriage, divorce or gender ideals connected with motherhood and patriarchy.

Part III of the volume, "The Mirror of Society: Familial Trauma, Dissolution and Transformation" moves from issues of trauma in the Victorian family and their reflection in our contemporary world to the creation and triumph of new forms of family that keep its traditional role as the basic unit in society but allow for other groupings which differ from the male-female tandem. Trauma has been part of the history of families, and trauma studies have become an important trend in literary and cultural studies in the recent years. The presence of prostitutes, murderers and murderesses, monsters and other marginal characters in Neo-Victorian novels like in Peter Acroyd's *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* (1994) constitute an example of the dysfunctional family discussed by Susana Onega; the lives of these characters reflect individual and social trauma, and London transforms itself into a "palimpsestic living organism constantly shifting shape" (293). Children are seen as the main victims of trauma and their protection constitutes the main concern of past and present societies (202-303); migrants are also marked by a history of trauma, and Melissa Fegan focuses her essay on a discussion of Irish migration in the novel by Joseph O'Connor's *Star of the Sea* (2002) as trauma. Rosario Arias's contribution opens up a new trend in Neo-Victorian studies with the introduction of Disability Studies and the idea of the narrative prosthesis, which, in her words means "dependence upon disability in narratives where there exists an infirm character who does not comply with normalcy and who prompts the unravelling of the story" (346). Georges Letissier also opens a path towards new contemporary models through the process of "queering the family" in her analysis of Sarah Waters's Neo-Victorian novels.

All in all, this volume provides highly relevant information about a wide range of theories and Neo-Victorian literary and visual texts. The essays have a critical potential in their approach to gender, sexual and social politics and tropes of trauma both in Victorian and contemporary representations, which make the volume fascinating and worth reading.

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Note

1. For a further analysis of the articles and their implications, see Maria Isabel Romero Ruiz, 2011, "Women's Identity and Migration: Stead's Articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on Prostitution and White Slavery".

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TRES VISIONES DE ESPAÑA DURANTE LA GUERRA CIVIL. *L'ESPOIR, HOMAGE TO CATALONIA* Y *FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS*

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Ricardo Marín Ruiz, profesor de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, sigue en esta monografía el rastro de aquellos estereotipos que, especialmente desde la denominada Leyenda Negra, han pervivido en el imaginario colectivo europeo y norteamericano hasta pleno siglo XX. Tal y como reza su título, el estudio se ciñe a un contexto espacial y cronológico preciso. De este modo, a través de la visión que tres autores, George Orwell, Ernest Hemingway y André Malraux, ofrecen en sus obras escritas a raíz de sus estancias en España durante la Guerra Civil, se muestra cómo, si bien en algunas ocasiones las imágenes que proyectan parten de su contacto directo con la realidad española del momento, en muchas otras se hallan aún bajo el influjo de los estereotipos forjados por sus antepasados. Asimismo, la elección de la Guerra Civil (1936-1939) como marco cronológico de referencia obedece principalmente a dos causas: en primer lugar, a su consideración como la última contienda romántica, en la que muchos escritores foráneos, a menudo contagiados por la visión exótica y pintoresca de España, vieron la posibilidad de asistir a una enconada lucha por la libertad, y en ocasiones de participar en ella, emulando así a aquellos antecesores suyos que habían combatido en la guerra de Independencia (1808-1814). En segundo lugar, la condición de la Guerra Civil como un conflicto que suscitó la atención de la comunidad internacional, propiciando así la llegada de numerosos voluntarios extranjeros, constituye un momento histórico idóneo para observar cómo, en pleno siglo XX, muchos de ellos seguían viendo España desde unos clichés propios de tiempos pasados.

Aunque a primera vista los capítulos introductorios ocupan un número excesivo de páginas y parecen no guardar una relación clara entre sí, una lectura atenta de los mismos descarta cualquier atisbo de gratuidad en su inclusión en el volumen o de falta de conexión con la estructura del libro. De este modo, la pertinencia del Capítulo 1, titulado "La escritura y la mirada del Otro: una aproximación a los estudios imagológicos", se halla totalmente justificada, al ser este un estudio en el que se aborda la representación literaria de la alteridad, identificada aquí con una cultura ajena. En este primer apartado, el autor no solo revisa la situación actual de los estudios imagológicos, sino que, además, aborda la evolución seguida por esta rama del comparatismo desde mediados del siglo XX hasta la actualidad, insistiendo especialmente en la renovación metodológica que dicha disciplina experimentó a partir de las aportaciones de Guyard y, más tarde, de Dyserinck y Pageaux (Pageaux 1989: 135).

Una vez descrito el marco metodológico en el cual se inserta el ensayo, el autor nos invita a reflexionar en el Capítulo 2, "Imagen, estereotipo y mito: hacia una delimitación terminológica", acerca de las diferentes interpretaciones y significados de los que han sido objeto estos tres conceptos. Al tratar términos como los aquí descritos, cuyo grado de abstracción puede conducir fácilmente al equívoco, creo que es de gran importancia justificar de manera clara y objetiva, y así lo hace con acierto el autor, la presencia del análisis terminológico de estos conceptos en un estudio de literatura comparada, evitando de ese modo que el lector pierda el hilo conductor del ensayo. Esta delimitación terminológica pretende, en último término, "ofrecer unos elementos de valoración que permitan determinar hasta qué punto las imágenes reflejadas por los autores tratados han quedado como representaciones particulares […], o bien, por el contrario, han persistido a lo largo del tiempo al ocultarse bajo el armazón del mito o del estereotipo" (39). Al final del capítulo, y tras efectuar una revisión sintética, pero a la vez completa, de los distintos significados atribuidos a la imagen, el estereotipo y el mito, el autor logra plasmar su interpretación personal de los tres, algo que no resulta sencillo a tenor de la volubilidad de sus significaciones, especialmente en el caso del mito, del que el autor afirma que es prácticamente imposible ofrecer una definición única, aunque destaca algunos intentos de conceptualización como los llevados a cabo por Mircea Eliade, quien lo define como "el relato de una creación" (Eliade 1968: 18-19), y Carl Jung, que concibe el mito como imagen simbólica del inconsciente colectivo (Jung 1997: 94), sin olvidar la propuesta para sistematizar el estudio del mito sugerida por Gilbert Durand (Durand 1993: 341-342).

En el Capítulo 3, titulado "España bajo la mirada francesa y anglosajona: un recorrido histórico desde el siglo XVI hasta el estallido de la Guerra Civil", se muestra la evolución seguida por las distintas representaciones que escritores franceses,

ingleses y norteamericanos ofrecieron de España desde el surgimiento de la "Leyenda Negra" hasta la Guerra Civil. Uno de los aspectos más llamativos de este recorrido histórico es el significativo número de testimonios y su diversidad, tanto en lo que se refiere a la tipología textual —cartas, memorias, novelas, …—, como a su autoría, al pertenecer a literatos, políticos, tratadistas, etc., lo que evidencia un concienzudo y laborioso trabajo de documentación. El estudio diacrónico de las visiones antes mencionadas obedece al hecho de que, si se pretende conocer de manera exhaustiva el significado imagológico de las obras objeto de estudio, "es necesario considerar aquellas imágenes relativas a nuestro país que han perdurado en los imaginarios tanto europeo —francés y británico especialmente— como norteamericano…" (71-72), resultando de este modo más fácil determinar el peso que en las imágenes ofrecidas por Malraux, Orwell y Hemingway tienen las representaciones proyectadas por sus antepasados. Las conclusiones que cierran el capítulo resultan bastante esclarecedoras; en ellas puede apreciarse que para el autor existen dos períodos históricos clave en la evolución de la visión que se ha tenido de España tanto en Europa como en Estados Unidos; el primero es el comprendido entre los siglos XVI y XVII, cuando Francia e Inglaterra recurren al libelo propagandístico para intentar desgastar el poder político, económico y militar del Imperio de los Austria. El segundo de ellos coincide con la primera mitad del siglo XIX, momento en el que se forja la imagen de un país exótico, anclado en tradiciones milenarias, que suscita una visión favorable entre los escritores románticos (Díaz López 1995: 85). Estas son las dos épocas en las que, según el autor, se gestaron una serie de estereotipos y mitos que perdurarían hasta bien entrado el siglo XX.

Los capítulos 4 y 5, que cierran la parte introductoria del libro, guardan una relación directa con el marco cronológico del estudio, como es la Guerra Civil española. Es de destacar que, en momento alguno, se aprecia intención por parte del autor de efectuar un análisis histórico ni de ofrecer valoraciones de ese período que aún hoy sigue generando infructíferas controversias. En consecuencia, si el Capítulo 4 nos ubica en el escenario sociohistórico es para conocer una serie de factores y circunstancias que influyen en las representaciones literarias legadas por los autores objeto de estudio, al igual que para "determinar en qué medida la imagen analizada se ajusta a la realidad del país durante la guerra o, si bien, se aleja de ella" (131). Por su parte, en el capítulo quinto, el autor muestra hasta qué punto la contienda sacudió las conciencias de la clase intelectual europea y estadounidense, de modo que el compromiso de Malraux, Orwell y Hemingway con la República y el apoyo que le prestaron no fue el de casos aislados, sino tan solo el de algunos de los numerosos intelectuales extranjeros que se implicaron, de muy diversas maneras, en la defensa de la causa republicana en un conflicto que, en palabras de Stephen Spender, fue el peor de los acontecidos en Europa hasta entonces (Sutherland 2004: 192).

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Los tres últimos capítulos del libro están de dedicados al análisis imagológico de *L'espoir*, *Homage to Catalonia* y *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Uno de los aspectos más destacables de esta parte final de la obra es el hecho de que el autor no se ciñe a unas pautas analíticas rígidas, ni se entrega a disquisiciones teóricas acerca de cuestiones metodológicas, sino que se centra única y exclusivamente en aquellos elementos de las obras en los que se reflejan las visiones aportadas por sus respectivos autores como son, entre otros, la estructura, los personajes, las coordenadas espacio-temporales, etc. Si a ello le añadimos la utilización de un estilo claro y conciso, el resultado es un análisis que, además de tener un interés científico para el lector especializado, posee al mismo tiempo un carácter divulgativo que lo hace realmente atractivo para el público en general. La misma vocación de objetividad y claridad apreciable al comienzo del libro continúa presente en las conclusiones finales que, en unas pocas páginas, exponen cuáles son las principales directrices que siguen cada una de las imágenes aportadas por Malraux, Orwell y Hemingway; es de resaltar en este apartado final del libro la capacidad del autor para extraer de cada una de las visiones analizadas aquellos aspectos deudores de los estereotipos y mitos del pasado, y aquellos otros que nacen de la experiencia personal; esta es, en definitiva, la esencia y el cometido último de una obra que, personalmente, pienso que contribuye a dar a conocer un poco más una disciplina comparatista, la imagología, que, pese a arrancar en el siglo XIX, es hoy en día relativamente poco conocida.

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IRIS MURDOCH AND MORALITY

Anne Rowe and Avril Horner, eds.
Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.
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Although this new collection of essays develops a synthesis between Murdoch's literature and philosophy as a stand-alone work it needs to be seen in the continuing tradition of publications by The Iris Murdoch Society that are a spin-off from the biannual conferences held at Kingston University, UK. The previous collection, *Iris Murdoch: A Reassessment* (2006)—also edited by Rowe— is a development from a successful conference in much the same way as the collection under consideration is; however, the diverse structure of the earlier volume has been refined (although this is not to say that *Reassessment* does not work well on its own terms) to provide a greater synergy between ideas presented within individual essays.

Iris Murdoch and Morality considers, over its thirteen chapters, three distinct areas of Murdoch's work: morality and the novel, philosophy and literature and her secular theology. Rowe and Horner negotiate the rather difficult task of placing essays to best delineate Murdoch's wide range of thought, and, although by no means exhaustive (how could it be when Murdoch's interests range over several decades and take in a spectrum from Plato to Heidegger, Homer to Dickens) there is ample room for the readers to move on from the essays provided to discover their own interests in Murdoch's work. As the editors state in their introductory essay "her novels do not function as mere illustrations of her moral philosophy but as meditations on, and counterpoints to, the positions she puts forward there […] her novels therefore offer themselves as a secular alternative 'place' for such moral

reflection" (p. 1) which brings the collection —as they themselves freely admit— into line with the developing trend for ethical discussions of texts and intertextual (and interdisciplinary) evaluations. This is, in my view, no bad thing, as it aligns with the nature of Murdoch's own work though it does leave the collection open to criticism that it is perpetuating a certain line of ethical analysis that parallels her own work. Other critical approaches are noticeably absent but perhaps this is the nature of Murdochian scholarship at present.

For the uninitiated, this collection may not be the best starting point (there are several introductory works available, not least Rowe's forthcoming volume for "Writers and their Work"), as it takes for granted a wide, prior engagement with Murdoch's oeuvre, as well as the vast corpus of secondary criticism available. However there is a close engagement with the ideas presented —and these almost always harmonise between chapters— and this is richly rewarding: what emerges clearly is that it is within Murdoch's novels that the most nuanced and diverse discussions of her ideas are to be found, where they become fully humanised.

The range of essays presented here makes good the expectations aroused by the general title and demonstrates the lines of enquiry now in full development since the reinvigoration of Murdoch's work some ten years ago. The book includes both established scholars of international renown (including her biographer and friend Peter Conradi) and new and exciting talent, and this collection very much benefits from the ideas developed from previous works published by Nicol, Grimshaw, Schweiker and others. There is a hermeneutic of continuity that will encourage those unfamiliar with what are considered central secondary texts in Murdoch studies to discover the roots of these honed ideas. Perhaps the most useful strand of discussion that runs through the book concerns the aesthetic consideration of morality and how Murdoch's characters struggle with moral, indeed ethical, foundations as their 'everyday' actions compete with moments of reflection. It is this fictional reworking of Socrates' statement regarding the unexamined life that is at the heart of both Murdoch's fiction and the essays developed in this collection.

Naturally, the approaches are diverse but complementary. The first essay by Nicol has Murdoch's work at its centre but moves outward to encompass her contemporary B.S. Johnson and postmodern fiction writers. He claims —a development from his previous work, or at least a more explicit and concise statement of it— that Murdoch is further away than she thinks from those she admires of generations previous to hers. In re-reading *The Philosopher's Pupil* (1983) and *Bruno's Dream* (1969), amongst others, Nicol claims we may see a gradual encroachment of the 'postmodern' onto her work and a greater flexibility with regard to writing and metafiction. Conradi urges us to review Murdoch's humour (an area little-studied or drawn on) and he presents both her tragedy and comedy, seen over a wide

variety of novels, as focusing us back toward the messiness (or 'thingyness' as she would have it). Morality then can and should be developed through humour and we are warned of the dangers of false seriousness.

The disputed relationship between philosophy and literature is never far below the surface in discussion regarding Murdoch's work and the editors acknowledge this devoting the second section of the collection to the 'moral union' of philosophy and literature. Simon Haines places Murdoch as one of the primary motivating factors in —and a key influence on— the 'ethical turn' that has become so prominent in the last twenty years or so. He clearly points out that this is, necessarily, a two-way dialogue and is paralleled by a 'literary turn' in moral philosophy. He sees Murdoch as leading a path away from linguistics, really away from Kantianism and all that followed him to Ayer and Ryle, toward an understanding that is richer in concepts: he wishes to call her a kind of phenomenological writer, an idea which merits greater investigation. Scott H. Moore develops this general overview and investigates Murdoch's fictional philosophers regarding the say/show distinction. His claim is that if we disregard Murdoch's pronouncements regarding the separateness of her dual endeavours and trust the text then "in several instances, specific ideas and even idioms from her philosophical works appear in novels that were being written at the same time. If most of them *say* things similar to Murdoch's philosophy, they *show* something entirely different, however" (p. 101). These moral pronouncements and, even more so, moral actions, delineate her underlying thought. Frances White and Mark Luprecht go deeper by focusing on how moral dilemmas are discussed and developed within specific novels —Luprecht with a solid and illuminating discussion of *Bruno's Dream* and *The Sovereignty of Good* (1970) and White's novel approach discussing *Jackson's Dilemma* (1999) in conjunction with the as-yet-unpublished "Heidegger: The Pursuit of Being", kept in the Kingston archives.

The final section is rather more diverse in its approach with a discussion from various angles of Murdoch's secular theology. A rather long and protracted discussion that can be made regarding the nature of Murdoch's approach to religion and theology: was she really a firm believer in Platonic forms in a literal sense? Was she a closet existentialist? Does she really exhibit the traits one would associate with Wittgensteinian neo-Platonist (as she liked to describe herself in her later years)? Thankfully these issues are kept at arm's length whilst we are led, by both Rowe and Pamela Osborn, through a series of meditations (perhaps too loose a word) on the Christ-figure in her work. Rowe sees Christ as both haunting Murdoch and as prefiguring the interior lives of not just her characters, but also, by her seeing Christ in others, of herself. Osborn makes clever use of the work of the Australian novelist Patrick White to discuss the demythologization of Christ in *Nuns and Soldiers* (1980) and *The Time of the Angels* (1966) —two of her most overtly

'Christianized' works. Osborn's clever comparative study is both novel and pleasing; a new Murdochian to watch with interest. The two final essays by Grimshaw and Schweiker (two established academics) are, again, rather different. Grimshaw discusses Murdoch's dismissal of Christianity, her affinity with Buddhism, and her description of herself as a 'Christian Buddhist': the 'hauntology' of Christ returns (of course). She uses Murdoch's later work to unravel this and her reading of both *The Green Knight* (1993) and *Nuns and Soldiers* makes the reader wish to re-read both —what more could a critic ask for? Schweiker is the final contributor and ties up many ends, although not all, by discussing the connection between Murdoch's thoughts regarding morality and art and how this shapes her understanding of a lived humanity. By discussing the bi-location of Murdoch work —between the necessity of virtue and the necessity of death— he neatly engages the reader with Murdoch's humanism and argues that it is revealing in relation to contemporary humanistic approaches to ethics and the end of our existence on Earth. Reading this in tandem with his previous work on Murdoch contained in his own co-edited volume from 1996 I was stuck by the depth of understanding Murdoch had regarding the current and perhaps overriding neohumanism in politics and beyond. That we are brought into the immediate 'now' is both a testament to Murdoch's own work and to the excellent work in this volume.

A paperback version of this excellent selection of essays would no doubt broaden the readership and would be most welcome in the current economic climate. However, perhaps the foresight of University libraries will enable a continued development of secondary resources on Murdoch as this collection is both a welcome addition and a necessary marker in contemporary studies of her work.

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WRITERS OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR.
THE TESTIMONY OF THEIR AUTO/BIOGRAPHIES

Celia Wallhead, ed.
Bern: Peter Lang. Spanish Perspectives on English and American Literature, Communication, and Culture Series, 2011.
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At the beginning of the 19th century, the outbreak of the Peninsular War drew the attention not only of European political and military powers, but also of romantic writers like Irving, Ford, Borrow, or Gauthier among others, who travelled to Spain to find a nation full of contrasts and particularities. They found in Spain those values which they looked for in their respective countries without success, such as the sublime and the exotic. This explains why many of them included Spain in their itineraries instead of bypassing it as most European travellers had done in previous centuries. Writings such as Byron´s *Childe Harold´s Pilgrimage* (1812), George Borrow´s *The Bible in Spain* (1843), or Richard Ford´s *Handbook for Travellers in Spain* (1845), share a similar image of Spain: a land full of exoticism and adventures where time seemed to have been stopped. The romantic image of Spain would linger on until the 1920s, when foreign writers found in this country the ideal place to leave behind the trauma of the First World War or the rigid social conventions of the middle classes. Many of them travelled to Spain hoping to see the very same country as the one their predecessors had discovered. Nevertheless, the country had undergone some changes and political and economic circumstances were not the same as those existing a hundred years earlier. Obviously, this caused disappointment, and some of them even reacted against the outmoded romanticism, like Gerald Brenan, who did not see in the Alhambra the wonder described by Irving in his *Tales of the Alhambra* (1832).

However, the romantic writings about Spain still influenced authors like Brenan himself, whose criticism of places like the Alhambra did not curb his desire to discover the exoticism extolled by the romantic writers. The romantic imprint is also noticeable in the testimonies of writers like Orwell or Hemingway, for whom Spain "was the very best country of all […] unspoiled and unbelievably tough and wonderful" (Baker 1985: 107), whereas the author of *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) still identified Spain with "girls in black mantillas, the wines of Málaga and Alicante, cathedrals, cardinals, bullfights, gypsies, serenades" (Orwell 2001: 145-146).

Brenan, Hemingway, and Orwell are some of the names that appear in *Writers of the Spanish Civil War*. This book is the latest volume in the series "Spanish Perspectives on English and American Literature, Communication, and Culture", which provides a space for discussion for Spanish scholars in the field of English and American Studies, focusing on literature, drama, movies, theatre, and communication. This collective work, edited by Celia Wallhead, consists of six essays on some of the most outstanding and influential 20th century writers, who lived in or visited Spain and reflected in some of their works the tragedy of the Civil War. More specifically, the essays are on Gerald Brenan (Juan Antonio Díaz), Robert Graves (Margarita Carretero), Ernest Hemingway (Mauricio Aguilera), George Orwell (Rosemary Masters), Stephen Spender (Mary Gleeson), and Laurie Lee (Celia Wallhead). They are followed by an afterword where Michael Jacobs gives a concise overview of issues such as the main motives which brought British authors to Spain before and during the Civil War, their reaction against the image of the country left by their 19th century predecessors, or the influence of their views on Spain after the conflict. The book is published on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, however it is not the usual work about the conflict, devoted to the study of its historical dimension, but a book about Spain as a place which attracted the abovementioned authors during the war. Despite focusing on the different autobiographies and biographies of these authors, *Writers of the Spanish Civil War* is not another text about life-writing in the sense that it establishes an interesting and innovative relationship, namely the contrast between their autobiographies, or what they wrote about their experiences in Spain, and the biographies written on them, two aspects which have not been considered in tandem before. By putting together these autobiographies and biographies, the reader can obtain a clarifying view of their respective visions of Spain. This aspect situates the book in one of the newest fields of Comparative Literature, that of "imagology"; according to the definitions given by authors like Nora Moll (2002: 347) or Anthony Johnson (2005: 52), this discipline deals with the representation of Otherness within the framework of different artistic manifestations.

All the chapters have the same structure, and this helps the reader to grasp the essential ideas in the book. First, there is a brief biographical outline with the main personal and literary milestones of each author. Secondly, if the writer produced an autobiography, it is taken as a reference against which to compare the biographies. Next, a list of all or at least the most relevant biographies is given in order to offer an overview of the scope and variety of life-writing on the subject. Then, each essay focuses on one or two of the key biographies, and after that, it draws a conclusion and thus offers an accurate and updated image of authors whose experiences in Spain marked their lives and writings. In effect, through these biographies and autobiographies this book provides a major source of information. The reader can find useful and accurate references to autobiographical works in all chapters, excepting those devoted to Orwell and Hemingway, who never produced autobiographies. In Chapter 1, Juan Antonio Díaz López, who was the first biographer of Brenan, alludes to the three autobiographical works by the British writer: *South from Granada* (1957*), A Life of One's Own* (1962), and *Personal Records* (1974*)*; the last of these books receives greatest attention, since it is the work where Brenan most clearly conveys his views on Spain. In the second chapter, Margarita Carretero González, who has been in touch with the Graves family, refers to *Good-bye to All That* (1929) as an autobiographical text by Graves, though she warns at the same time that it is not an autobiography in the strict sense of the word, since Graves does not always stick to facts, a strategy to make the book more attractive and sell better. In Chapter 5, Mary Gleeson, who came to know Spender and his wife on their visit to Granada, regards *World Within World* (1951) as the most interesting autobiographical writing by Spender —who was, above all, an autobiographer— on the grounds that it is a provocative and interesting source of information about the early and most attractive part of his life. Celia Wallhead opens the last chapter by underlining the particularly autobiographical tone of Lee's main works, like *My Many-Coated Man* (1955*), Cider with Rosie* (1959*)*, or *Two Women* (1983*)*. Lee would recollect his experiences in the Civil War in two books, *As I Walked Out* (1969) and *A Moment of War* (1991*)*, about fifty years later, when some of his memories from that period were rather vague; as a result, he had to resort to literary and historical sources provided by authors who were also in Spain during the conflict —Orwell and Hemingway— and historians like Hugh Thomas, to make up for those memory lapses.

As regards the biographies, the contributors undertake a detailed and accurate review of the main biographical texts on the authors they deal with respectively. These reviews are clearly intended to provide the reader with enough information to get to know new facets of the authors, to see different approaches to some episodes of their lives, and to better understand the role Spain played in their lives and literary experiences. Chapters three and four, which are devoted to

Hemingway and Orwell respectively, exemplify this interesting aspect of the book. In the former, Mauricio Aguilera's close perusal of the different biographies on Hemingway results in a psychological and gender-based approach to the American writer, and interprets his relationship with Spain in the context of his response to life, instead of the folkloric image of Hemingway as a bullfighting aficionado and habitué of the best hotels and local taverns. Finally, Rosemary Masters manages to shed light on a complex and obscure personality, that of Orwell, by making use of a wide variety of resources; such an exhaustive and intense research assures a rigorous and appealing portrait of the British writer. To sum up, *Writers of the Spanish Civil War* is a book which students and scholars in the field of 20th century English and American Literature should consider, especially if they are interested in the influence of the conflict on the life and literary experiences of English and American writers.

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Abstracts

LA TRAICIÓN EDÉNICA EN LA LITERATURA ARTÚRICA: CONSIDERACIONES SOBRE LA IDENTIDAD DE LA PAREJA EN *LE MORTE DARTHUR* DE THOMAS MALORY

Almudena Gómez Seoane

Christian tradition mysticised the first great betrayal associated with human genealogy: that of Eve and the apple in the Garden of Eden. Woman, in search of supreme knowledge to situate her at the level of the Creator, breaks the norm established by the latter and violates the semi-sacred vow of trust placed in her. Social pedagogy based on biblical examples is not the only trend concerned with the exemplary power of betrayal and its subsequent punishment as a cathartic mechanism. In pagan mythology there are many cases in which a figure — normally a prominent one—, is accused of a crime and forced to endure public derision. Furthermore, and in accordance with the Genesis template, these figures are usually females driven by ambition, desire or greed. This is the case of Queen Guinevere, Morgan le Fay or Vivien, all of which pertain to the legendary world of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Vivien's situation is especially interesting and appealing because of the symmetry established between her and Merlin the Wizard, both magical figures in pursuit of knowledge mirroring, to a certain extent, the Judeo-Christian myth of Adam and Eve. Using Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* as primary source, I will conduct an inter-textual analysis of the parallels and differences between these two couples, paying special attention to the female characters in each and exploring the link between women, the pursuit of knowledge and the notion of betrayal.

Keywords: betrayal, knowledge, conduct, norm, crime.

La tradición cristiana mitifica la primera gran traición de la genealogía humana: el episodio de Eva y la manzana en el Jardín del Edén. La mujer, ansiando el conocimiento supremo que la sitúe al mismo nivel del Creador, infringe la norma establecida por este y viola el lazo casi sagrado de la confianza depositada en ella. Mas la pedagogía social basada en la exégesis bíblica no es la única corriente interesada en el poder ejemplarizante de la traición y el consiguiente castigo ritual como mecanismo catártico. En el terreno de la mitología pagana son numerosos los casos en que un personaje —normalmente un cargo preeminente— es acusado de felonía, debiendo someterse al escarnio público. Generalmente, siguiendo el patrón del Génesis, se trata de figuras femeninas movidas por la ambición, la avaricia o el deseo. Tal es el caso de la reina Ginebra, el hada Morgana o Vivien, todas ellas pertenecientes a los ciclos legendarios artúricos. El caso de esta última es especialmente interesante por la notable simetría entre la relación que establece con su álter ego masculino, Merlín, en la búsqueda de la sabiduría y el mito judeocristiano de Eva y Adán. Tomando como referencia la caracterización que Thomas Malory establece en *Le Morte Darthur*, pretendo realizar un análisis intertextual que profundice no solo en los evidentes paralelismos, sino también en las sutiles divergencias existentes entre ambas parejas, incidiendo en la especial relación entre la mujer, la búsqueda del conocimiento y la noción de traición.

'PARADOXING' THE ALIEN:
THE MORISCO IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH TEXTS

Jesús López-Peláez Casellas

This paper addresses the English early modern problematization of the Spanish Moriscos, tragic representatives of the period's increasingly complex and contradictory preoccupation with the paradoxical identities of the 'enemy within', while it also attempts to establish their visibility in 16th and 17th century English culture. While the exploration of how early modern texts deal with various 'others' —both at home and abroad— has been sufficiently documented along the past two decades, this paper suggests that the English semiosphere (in Lotmanian terms) not only scripted and rejected these strangers but was also 'contaminated' with a multiplicity of others, who were simultaneously and paradoxically admired, absorbed, adapted, and misrepresented in a diversity of literary and non-literary texts: drama, dictionaries, pamphlets, and travel narratives. Among these others, the Spanish Morisco cuts across various faultlines, as a religious, cultural and political alien of uncertain identity and contradictory allegiance.

En este artículo se explora, por un lado, la preocupación de la Inglaterra moderna (1485-1660) por los moriscos españoles, a los que se considera en toda su complejidad y carácter contradictorio como representantes de la identidad paradójica de los enemigos interiores; por otro, se pretende determinar cuál fue su visibilidad en la cultura inglesa de este periodo. Mientras que, a nuestro juicio, en los últimos años se ha estudiado profusamente cómo los textos modernos ingleses se relacionan con la presencia de varios 'otros' (tanto nacionales —i.e. ingleses— como extranjeros), en este trabajo plantearemos que la semiosfera inglesa (en el sentido lotmaniano) no solo simplificó y rechazó a los extranjeros, sino que también se vio 'contaminada' por una diversidad de 'otros', que fueron paradójica y simultáneamente admirados, absorbidos, adaptados y deformados por una gran cantidad de textos literarios y no literarios: obras teatrales, diccionarios, panfletos y opúsculos, y relatos de viajes. Entre estos 'otros', el morisco español se ve sometido a diversas contradicciones, como un extranjero en el ámbito religioso, cultural y político, de identidad incierta y lealtades contradictorias.

Palabras clave: moriscos, textos ingleses modernos, paradoja, *Lust's Dominion*, *Othello*.

THE POSTMODERN GENDER DIVIDE
IN THE BOB DYLAN BIOPIC *I'M NOT THERE*
David Muldoon

This paper addresses postmodernity, gender and the body of Dylan's work through the Biopic *I'm Not There*. The biopic is a historical document that entertains. It is a bridge between fiction and fact, between fan and star, and in the case of this proposed research of biopics on musicians, a bridge between music and narrative. Gender, however, plays no small part in this endeavor to capture the life story of the great music makers of our time. A certain inevitable balance of power between genders has led to a nostalgic and last minute attempt to revive a purely masculine hegemony, and the musician, or musical star, embodies this mass production of masculinity and male role modeling. Male role models have been in their decline ever since the insemination of postmodernity into the artistic, academic and cinematographic worlds in the 1960s. In the 2007 Biopic *I'm Not There* director Todd Haynes proposes a multiple mosaic of Bob Dylan in an attempt to perform a postmodern interpretation of the musician. This story telling process directly buttresses against many historical developments in gender which have unfolded during Dylan's lifetime.

Keywords: postmodernism, masculinities, Bob Dylan, gender, biopics.

Este artículo trata sobre la posmodernidad, cuestiones de género, y la obra de Bob Dylan a través de la película biográfica *I'm Not There*. Esta película es un documento histórico que entretiene. Es un puente entre la ficción y los hechos, entre los fans y la estrella, y en el caso de esta propuesta de investigación sobre películas biográficas de músicos, un puente entre la música y la narrativa. El género, sin embargo, no tiene un papel menos importante en este intento de capturar la vida de los grandes músicos de nuestro tiempo. Un cierto equilibrio de poder inevitable entre los géneros ha llevado a un nostálgico intento de último minuto de revivir una hegemonía puramente masculina, y el músico, o la estrella musical, encarna esta producción masiva de modelos de masculinidad y del rol masculino. Los modelos masculinos han iniciado el declive con la inseminación de la posmodernidad en los mundos artístico, académico y cinematográfico desde los años 60. En la película biográfica de 2007 *I'm Not There* Todd Haynes propone un mosaico múltiple de Bob Dylan en un intento de hacer una interpretación posmoderna del músico. Este proceso narrativo se apoya directamente en progresos históricos en temas de género que se desarrollan durante la época de Bob Dylan.

Palabras clave: posmodernismo, masculinidades, Bob Dylan, género, películas biográficas.

THE EAST LOOKS AT THE WEST, THE WOMAN LOOKS AT THE MAN: A STUDY OF THE GAZE IN BRICK LANE BY MONICA ALI
Noemí Pereira

The present contribution intends to study the subversive implications of the narratological technique of focalization in Monica Ali's Brick Lane. Taking postcolonial and gender studies as a starting point, I argue that, in Brick Lane, Ali uses focalization to subvert the prevailing centrality of both the white western gaze –the "imperial gaze" as defined by Kaplan (1997)– and the male gaze. To this effect, Ali has created a narrative in which the main focalizer, Nazneen, is a Spivakian subaltern female character, a character who, moreover, is recurrently looking at and scrutinizing western and eastern, male and female, dressed and undressed bodies.

Keywords: *Brick Lane*, focalization, imperial gaze, male gaze, subversion.

El presente trabajo pretende estudiar las implicaciones subversivas que subyacen tras la técnica de focalización empleada por Monica Ali en Brick Lane. Partiendo de estudios de género así como de corte postcolonial, analizaremos cómo en Brick Lane Ali hace uso de la focalización para subvertir tanto la imperante centralidad de la mirada occidental –la denominada "imperial gaze" por Kaplan (1997)– como de la mirada masculina. Para ello, Ali crea una narrativa en la cual el focalizador

principal, Nazneen, es un personaje femenino y un sujeto subalterno en términos Spivakianos, un personaje que además aparece recurrentemente mirando e inspeccionado cuerpos occidentales y orientales, masculinos y femeninos, vestidos y desnudos.

Palabras clave: Brick Lane, focalización, mirada occidental, mirada masculina, subversión.

DISCOVERING SHAKESPEARE IN EXILE: SPANISH EMIGRÉS IN ENGLAND (1819-1840)
Ángel-Luis Pujante

The first few decades of the 19th century saw a considerable number of highly educated and professionally qualified Spanish liberals in exile in England. For some of them, their painful experience held a certain compensation in the form of a direct contact with English life, culture and literature and, in particular, a more immediate and deeper acquaintance with Shakespeare's work.

However, this contact with Shakespeare and its effects differed; it reconfirmed some in their Neoclassical faith, it led others to ambiguity or to a calculated eclecticism, while in others it wrought a transformation or a literary conversion. Manuel Herrera (who remained basically indifferent to Shakespeare), José Joaquín de Mora (who then began to be won over by Romanticism and its fervor for Shakespeare) and José Blanco White (who devoted himself wholeheartedly to the cause of Shakespeare) could be taken, respectively, as representative examples.

The aim of this article is to analyse the way in which exile in England had a decisive effect on the perception of Shakespeare in some outstanding Spanish exiles, noting the differences between the exiles and the consequences of this perception for each of them.

Key words: Shakespeare, Shakespeare criticism, Shakespeare reception, Shakespeare in Europe, Cultural Studies.

En las primeras décadas del siglo XIX se exiliaron en Inglaterra numerosos liberales españoles de alto nivel cultural y profesional. Para algunos, la dolorosa experiencia se vio compensada en parte por el contacto directo con la vida, la literatura y la cultura inglesas y, en especial, por un conocimiento más inmediato y profundo de la obra de Shakespeare.

Sin embargo, los efectos del contacto con Shakespeare fueron distintos: a unos los reafirmó en su fe neoclásica, a otros los llevó a la ambigüedad o a un eclecticismo calculado, mientras que en otros operó una transformación o una conversión literaria. Como ejemplos representativos se puede tomar, respectivamente, a

Manuel Herrera (que en lo fundamental permaneció indiferente a Shakespeare), José Joaquín de Mora (que se fue dejando ganar por el Romanticismo y su fervor por Shakespeare) y José Blanco White (que se entregó por entero a la causa de Shakespeare).

Este artículo se propone analizar el modo como el exilio en Inglaterra influyó decisivamente en la percepción de Shakespeare por parte de algunos destacados exiliados españoles, señalando las diferencias entre los exiliados y las consecuencias de esta percepción en cada uno de ellos.

Palabras clave: Shakespeare, crítica de Shakespeare, recepción de Shakespeare, Shakespeare en Europa, estudios culturales.

Notes for contributors

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