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CONTENDING HETEROTOPIC ARTISTIC SPACE AND SPATIAL/STRETCHED TIME IN T.S. ELIOT'S "THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK"

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T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" has been received with mixed responses but with an almost unanimous consensus —though implicit at times— that the notion of '*Time*' occupies a position of artistic and thematic centrality in this poem (and in Eliot's other work, mainly the *Four Quartets*), and also with wider concerns about issues of intertextuality, allusion, echo and debts of origin. It was Stephen Spender who, in 1975, asserted that Eliot was "obsessed with time" (Spender 1976: 2). In fact, it is hardly necessary to acknowledge how the idea of time in Eliot's work has been a major preoccupation for critics, as it so frequently and explicitly features in critical responses to his reservoir (see, for example, Bay-Petersen 1985; Spender 1976; Bodelsen 1966; Bergsten 1960; Gish 1981; Weitz 1952; Patrides 1973; Lynen 1969). In this paper, I argue that it is the notion of '*Space*', the seemingly absent, absented and/or camouflaged, which constitutes the centre of the poem, overriding the superficial notion of time.

Categorically speaking, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" recruits a complex form of 'heterotopological space' a term theorized by Michel Foucault in "Of Other Spaces" and *The Order of Things*. Introducing the term *Heterotopias*, Foucault argued that the nineteenth century was an age concerned with the development of history (past time), while the twentieth century was an age of space as a domain of simultaneity and juxtaposition, whereby space becomes a means by which time is controlled, held and overcome (Foucault 1986: 23). Heterotopology,

Foucault explains, represents the co-existence of many various incompatible spaces in a particular real place (25). In *The Order of Things*, he rethought the term and gave it further possibilities while arguing that heterotopology is the interweaving of disjunctive, fragmentary spaces in one impossible space, whereby *heterotopology* becomes a creation of an order and a sorting of priorities (Foucault 1994: 31ff.; 330ff.). Whether the experience is to take place in a real or in an impossible location, there is a complexity of contending spaces to be experienced together in one space, real or unreal, the latter sense pertaining perhaps to dreams, as might be figured out from Foucault's following distinction and elaboration:

> This problem of the human site or living space is [...] that of knowing what relates of propinquity, what types of storage, circulation, marking, and classification of human elements should be adopted in a given situation in order to achieve a given end or epoch as one in which space takes for us the form of relations of any sites. (Foucault 1986: 23)

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault argued that various types of episteme relocate themselves in varied cultural spaces in different times. As such, Foucault's heterotopological space represents an awareness of the relations that can be established among fragments of space(s) along with contending thoughts and/or feelings, whereby the contest turns out to be between places that are repository locations of those thoughts/feelings. In the end, this is a definitely 'psychological space' which recognizes the simultaneity (co-existence) of present and re-lived past thoughts, feelings and actions, experienced altogether in an impossible (unreal) or even real location, depending on what 'real' means, as for example in the case of a dream or fantasy.

This distinctive psychological space, where the past retains a cause-effect relation with the present, was central in Freud's discussion of memory and the unconscious:

> There is a kind of forgetting which is distinguished by the difficulty with which the memory is a wakened even by powerful external summons. [...] A forgetting of this kind has been given the name of 'repression' in psychology. [...] What is repressed, it is true, as a rule makes its way into memory without more ado; but it *retains the capacity for effective action*, and with the influence of some external event, it may one day bring about *psychical consequences.* (Freud 1953: 34, emphasis added)

The past maintains its significant influence on present action, a co-existence of the two.[1] St. Augustine's remarks on memory seem relevant here; he thought of memory as a dualistic activity where one part of the mind recalls the past and the other listens, watches and reacts; for him, memory is:

> like a great *field* or a *spacious palace*, a *storehouse* for countless *images* of all kinds which are conveyed to it by the *senses.* [...] When I use my memory, I ask it to produce whatever it is that I wish to remember [...], allowing my mind to pick what it chooses, until finally that which I wish to see *stands out* clearly and emerges into

> sight from its hiding *place* […] and as their *place* is taken they return to their *place* of storage, ready to emerge again when I want them. (Augustine 1961: 214, emphasis added)

Augustine's perception lays emphasis on notions of object, place, and human senses, whereby the co-existing past and present are spatialized and objectified. Eliot himself discloses a similar vision of memory in the *Four Quartets*:

> There are three conditions which often look alike
> Yet differ completely, flourish in the same hedgerow:
> Attachment to self and to things and to persons, detachment
> From self and from things and from persons; and, growing between them, [indifference
> Which resembles the others as death resembles life,
> Being between two lives —unflowering, between
> The live and the dead nettle. This is the use of memory:
> For liberation —not less of love but expanding
> Of love beyond desire, and so liberation
> From the future as well as the past. "Little Gidding", III, lines 152-161)

Eliot's self is clearly a combination of the self, the things and the persons, a holistic vision of the person's context, which affects one's present in which the experienced past and the conceived future are actively involved. Nonetheless, memory helps one overcome *emotional* attachment to things and persons of one's past whereby these things and persons participate in the present objectively, away from their original subjectivity, a matter Eliot calls "liberation". The past is hence recalled not as time but as object.

In the following discussion of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" I will examine the fragmented and contested spaces in Prufrock's (Eliot's) mind and try to trace their assimilation in the poem, which I think should be related to the implied dream ("Till human voices wake us, and we drown", line 131),[2] or what might be called the dream-poem, a matter that is perhaps reminiscent of John Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale": "Was it a vision, or a waking dream?/ Fled is that music —Do I wake or sleep?" (lines 79-80).[3] My focal endeavor will be to show how Prufrock is moving across different sites of his life, superficially associated with time (his past) but, in the underlying texture of the verse to be closely read, presented as spaces, or spatialized times, drawing the map of the conflicting locations of the journey of an individual, young/old, layman/intellectual, atheist/Christian, potent/impotent, poet/philosopher etc. In particular, the following close analytical reading of the poem will target the identification of these various sites, examine their implications and then underline the relation or contest between them.

In fact, the central figure of the poem, Prufrock, is haunted by a heterotopic space as he strides along various sites, shifting through and creating multiple forms of

spatiality that collide, intermix and/or contend each other(s). Early in the epigraph, the reader encounters a journey, indeed, a descent into the underworld, the Inferno, becoming a kind of rite, whereby the reader, the persona and the invited 'you' —this last perhaps the repressed, hiding, unconscious double of Prufrock— seem to be destined for a state of limbo. The underworld, or simply the grave, is a spatial location with spiritual, religious and/or philosophical implications such as issues of life, death, afterlife, mortality and immortality. As seen earlier, Eliot's possible connection with Keats is found in a context of concerns about death and immortality in art, matters that constitute Prufrock's *overwhelming questions.* Nonetheless, the reference to Dante's *Inferno* might be seen as a visit to a literary site, again with preoccupations about death and immortality, a recurrent act in the poem, as will be further established in due course. Prufrock's journey is a search for meaning in two directions (locations); a journey inward (into the self) and simultaneously outward (into life/city), with death at the back of his mind.

From the start and in the first stanza (lines 1-12), Prufrock announces his intent to set out on a journey. It is a pity that a dominant notion of space in this stanza, and later throughout the poem, should be compromised in critical response for the sake of the idea of time, based on the superficial appearance of the words "evening" and "night" ("When the evening…", "restless nights…", "one-night…"). To start with, the evening (time) is itself spatialized here; transformed into place, space and/or location ("spread out"), and associated with concrete objects; time has become a person in a designated place/space ("a patient etherized upon a table").[4] Prufrock (re)visits various sites, urban spaces such as hotels, streets and restaurants in the city, along with related objects and persons; one may also think of implied frightening spaces and associated concrete objects like hospital, patient and surgery-room table. The initial action proposed in the poem, "go" (repeated in line four and also later throughout the poem), targets a space/place, and when Prufrock's fellow traveler seems to be avoiding the journey, he is pressed for the discovery of place in an attempt to search for a meaning/answer ("do not ask, 'What is it?'/ Let us go and make our visit"); the street and argument are seen as one and the same thing, "streets that follow like a tedious argument", whereby the *argument* is also objectified and spatialized.[5]

Immediately afterwards, space is further identified with a sudden entrance into a room: "In the room the women come and go/ Talking of Michelangelo". The room becomes a central point of spatial concern in Prufrock's journey and this room persists in the persona's mind up till line thirty-five, whereas the people associated with that room, the women, take over from that point up to line sixty-nine. These women "come and go", acts that emphasize notions of place and suggest also the tyranny of imprisonment in (limited, claustrophobic) space. The reference to Michelangelo, a *person* belonging to a certain time in history, might

be considered as a further preoccupation with space; Michelangelo here might be, rather than the person/artist, an artistic space, like the earlier visit to Dante and the later reference to Hamlet and other literary sites, to be underlined in due course. The modern almost-naked women selling their flesh in the room seem to be comparing themselves to the *puritanical* naked women in Michelangelo's paintings, whereby the reference turns out to target the artist's paintings (artistic space), along with concerns about modern notions of sexuality, prostitution, male-female relationship and art criticism.[6]

In the second stanza (lines 15-22), the process of wandering into sites and of spatializing time continues in the traveler(s) journey in the fog. The journey proceeds across a vague place with lack of clear vision, fog featuring in an image of a creature. But it is site/location that is leading: "upon the window-panes", "upon the pools", "upon its back […] from chimneys", "by the terrace". The "corner of the evening" is a further example of Eliot's objectification and spatialization of time, like that of the "evening" in the first stanza. The creature-like fog then seeks rest in a place "Curled once about the house" not inside it, a state of homelessness, and placelessness; the persona searches for but fails to find a permanent resting place since the room following the journey in the first stanza is claustrophobic, occupied, crowded, noisy and *shameful*, and the house by the end of the journey in the second stanza is locked and access to its interior denied.

In the third stanza (lines 23-34), Prufrock's journey into space faces a problem; time might be running out, space and movement being at risk, an intervention becoming essential. Time should be provided, but how? Time (limited) should be stretched out, spread out on the table, a matter that receives fuller explanation shortly afterward. Place is not at all absent here ("along the street", "on your plate"); but the desired resting place is beyond reach and Prufrock immediately returns to the room, though found uncomfortable earlier ("In the room the women come and go"). During the rest of the tiring journey in search of the wished-for place but not finding it, Prufrock keeps revisiting the room every now and then, which becomes like his bed-and-breakfast ("Before the taking of a toast and tea"). Having in mind his later desire to be "Scuttling the floors of silent seas", it seems as if Prufrock is taking a quick dive to find a lost object down in water and come back to the surface (the room). Time is needed for the sake of entering a place and performing actions "To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet", "to murder and create", "for all the works and days of hands", along with psychic unsettlement of a state of "a hundred indecisions/ And for a hundred visions and revisions", before finding the desired space/place where Prufrock might enjoy "the taking of a toast and tea". But the spaces/sites (along with the related actions) in this stanza are not necessarily all physical; some are spiritual, questioning aspects of death and afterlife: "To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet"; others

intellectual and philosophical: "That lift and drop a question on your plate", here the plate on the table perhaps a reference to ancient philosophers who used to sit around a table and ask and answer questions that became philosophies of their and of later times, Eliot wishing to be placed on the list of famous philosophers. Or they may be creative: "murder and create", creating but destroying works of art (poetry) the quality of which the artist was not satisfied with until with hard work, "works and days of hands", their quality improved and he decided to keep it, particularly that "Prufrock" was the first poem Eliot wrote "that he wished to preserve" (qtd. in Sultan 1985: 78).[7] Mortality/immortality underline Prufrock's (Eliot's) spiritual, philosophical and artistic concerns here and later in the poem, for he wants to be immortalized by the products of his creativity, to overcome forgetfulness by time.

Problematic time persists in the fourth stanza (lines 37-48) as the journey restarts, but Prufrock now more assured of himself having rested for a while (in the room, his bed-and-breakfast, his motel) and regained confidence: "And indeed there will be time" and later in the stanza "In a minute there is time"; it is here that he once again challenges and spatializes time, linking it to a stair: "Time to turn back and descend the stair". Prufrock's assertion that "In a minute there is time" is yet another case in hand where time is spatialized; time ("minute") is a designated place/space associated with a preposition of location and positionality ("in"). In fact, this relates to a distinctive notion of time, what might be called "lengthened or stretched time" to render an enriched place, in connection with notions of memory or dream, for the persona is, by the end of a poem, revealed to have been dreaming. It seems that Prufrock is in a hurry, perhaps a reflection of the journey into the unconscious, as in a dream where many things happen in a concentrated moment, a piece of stretched time.

Apparently, a minute cannot encompass all the actions Prufrock does or intends to do, unless the length of a minute is stretched. Here lies the significance of what might be called "temporal space"; more time, whether strung out and stretched, or slowed down and suppressed (in the sense of impeded movement), makes possible elucidated acts of re-experience.[8] Along with spatialization and objectification, stretched-time reinforces the ability of the *observer* (as the persona comes to see the objectified and spatialized) to re-experience the contemplated object, which is no longer a distanced entity as is the case in photography, which Angela Cozea described as a case of "emotional detachment" (1993: 210), Walter Benjamin a lack of "contingency" (243), and Roland Barthes a sense of *mourning* called "flat death".[9] That is, the distance between the rememberer and the disclosed (objectified) remembered experience vanishes and the rememberer relives the remembered. It thus seems that Prufrock is not in a hurry but rather is hurried by fast-moving time, as if approaching his death by the end of the poem, and he,

therefore, tries to slow time down to relive what he revisits, to avoid mere mournful looking at what would hence be a "flat death" of his past. Prufrock's assertion that "in a minute there is time" is an act of *stretching* the minute, spatializing it to the length he needs to experience the past and present simultaneously. The coexistence of the past (remembered and relived) and the present turns Prufrock's psyche into a stage/theatre full of action, dialogue and negotiation between characters/objects from his past and present. Gaston Bachelard, a significant persuasive champion of poetic space, examined the psychological complexity of space while remembering and recalling past experiences, his major concern being to see "how can an image, at times very unusual, appear to be a concentration of the entire psyche?"; and in answering this question, he attested: "the reader of poems is asked to consider an image not as an object and even less as the substitute for an object, but to seize its specific reality" (1994: xviii; xix). Bachelard argued that one has "to relive it [experience] entirely", a reliving enabled by spatializing the memory, for space constitutes "a localization of [our] memories" and "contains compressed time"; "space is everything, for time ceases to quicken memory" once it is objectified and spatialized (xxxii; 8; 9). In simple terms, the concentrated psyche in its entirety is a state in which the past and present are experienced simultaneously. In other words, memory should be performed with *uncompressed* time, to be, as Bachelard asserted and put into practice himself, *slowly* read and thus relived (38).

Prufrock, then, is slowing time down as he spatializes it. Even physiognomy is determined by place, location and direction "bald *spot in* the *middle* of my hair […] *to the chin… asserted by a simple pin*" (emphasis added). Nonetheless Prufrock still suffers psychological unsettlement with "decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse", a matter that continues in the next stanza with further recruitment of the image of the "pin", along with notions of (shaky) positions and states "formulated, sprawling on a pin", "sprawling on a pin", "pinned and wriggling on the wall", to end up wishing to be in "the floors of silent seas". Sara Trevisan examined Eliot's emphasis on "pins" and "thinness" in the description of Prufrock, and suggested two possible sources: Chaucer's "General Prologue" (the description of the Monk, lines 195-197), and the common English saying "not worth a pin", in connection with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Trevisan asserted that "Prufrock actually depends on the pin, as the pin gets to be the objective correlative for Prufrock's entire persona" (2004: 221-222).[10] It may be added here that the possible connections with these works of literature add to the notion of "artistic space" that constitutes an essential site in Prufrock's journey.

In the fifth stanza (lines 49-54), the women in the room become a preoccupation for Prufrock, along with persistent references to time "evenings, mornings, afternoons". Nonetheless, Prufrock immediately returns to his spatialization and objectification of time as he measures out his life "with coffee spoons", perhaps suggesting the hourglass, thus turning abstract time into an object, coffee/sand,

which is an attribute of space. Likewise, music is spatialized along with his nodal point of space, the (farther) room ("*Beneath* the music from a farther *room*"). Space/location becomes Prufrock's devise for grasping the dimensions of his being. Consequently, in the sixth stanza (lines 55-61), language becomes a site: "The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase". As the preposition "in" indicates, language becomes a place and a location, whether real or hyperreal. Perhaps there is here a reference to John Donne; the "eyes" to which Prufrock refers might be seen as the archetypal locked eye beams of the two lovers, directing us towards an allusion to Donne's "The Ecstasy": "our eye-beams twisted, and did thread".[11] Another "artistic space" shows up in the poem, a space that Eliot definitely visited with enthusiasm, as his critical preoccupation with the metaphysical poets shows. And it is here that Prufrock links time and space: "days and ways".

Eliot's preoccupation with language as a site recurs in his poetry; consider the following significant presentation of the matter, where he emphasizes creativity and immortality, along with language:

> Words move, music moves
> Only in time; but that which is only living
> Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
> Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
> Can words or music reach
> The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
> Moves perpetually in its stillness.
> Not the stillness of the violin, while the note lasts,
> Not that only, but the co-existence,
> Or say that the end precedes the beginning,
> […]
> And all is always now. ("Burnt Norton", V, lines 140-152)

Time is treated here as space and object. Eliot asserts that time should be stilled, its movement impeded or hindered, stillness becoming the only possibility for (immortal) existence. Something should be said about this distinctive perception of time. The only real aspect of time is that of the past, not the present as many tend to believe; that which is happening in the "now" cannot be considered as having materialized until completed; for example, a statement is reversible or alterable before reaching the full stop, and the same can be said of an action, unless completed; and once completed it becomes past. The notion of "stillness" that Eliot discloses warrants the closest attention. It is related to a "Chinese jar" which "Moves perpetually in its stillness", abstract time having thus become objectified and concretely associated with "form, the pattern"; there are two types of movement here, one the linear movement of time in historical terms and another circular in nature ("the end precedes the beginning") within the past object itself

which becomes, as it were, kept in a shell, recoverable to be revived at certain times. This is a distinctive definition of a "then", which is not nostalgically recalled as that which existed in the past but does not any more; rather, it is that which existed and is still existing somewhere (in the objectified memory), hence creating a co-existence of "now" and "then", present and past: "And all is always now". Stillness, therefore, is an objectification of time, a mechanism that preserves time to be resurrected once needed. Such an act is, in a sense, a spatializiation of time, making it a concrete entity. Stillness is not silence, the former a preserved past, the latter a dead one. Perhaps, the idea of stillness and the image of the "Chinese jar" are reminiscent of John Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn", with its initial image of stilled, slowed-down time in art: "Thou *still* unravished bride of *quietness/* Thou foster-child of silence and *slow time*" (lines 1-2, emphasis added), and its concluding stanza about immortality in art: "When old age shall this generation waste,/ Thou shalt remain" (lines 46-47). This is another example of artistic space which is a marker of Eliot's talent revising tradition.

The connection between time and pattern, along with the two aforementioned types of spatial movement, brings into play Einstein's theory of relativity, a matter that was examined by Ole Bay-Petersen who argued that Eliot's idea of time and eternity forms a pattern in which "all times co-exist" a matter similar to Einstein's space-time continuum, whereby time does not develop and rather becomes a "static phenomena in which events manifest themselves in their totality" (1985: 153).[12] The possible influence of Einstein on Eliot might be considered an "intellectual space". Nonetheless, my main question here is about how an "event" should be thought of, as time or space? I think it is both, or, in other words, space in which time has become stationary.

It is to be noted that "stillness" comes by means of objectifying and concretizing abstract time, an act enabled by language. As Eliot himself reveals, objects come to have identity only when we can "show that it and our self are independent entities, and to do this we must have names", naming being the essence of language (1964: 133). Eliot's preoccupation with language as a space by which to conquer abstract time, objectifying and spatializing it by and in language, features also in the *Four Quartets*:

> So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty years—
> Twenty years largely wasted, the years of *l'entre deux guerres*—
> Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
> Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
> Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
> For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which
> One is no longer disposed to say it. (Lines 1-7, section V, "East Coker", the second of the *Four Quartets*)

Abstract things once uttered and written as language, using what Eliot calls "better of words" —those which objectify the abstract— get preserved and immortalized, having been objectified and made concrete. As Karl Malkoff has put it, "For Eliot, struggling with time, the most significant confrontations of words are with the abstract" (1984: 255). Earlier Malkoff said that "in Eliot an emphasis on time and eternity is accompanied by a tendency toward the abstract" (146). Therefore, time can be overcome once concretized and spatialized to be grasped by the human senses for, Malkoff attested, "time is an experience of the intellect rather than the senses" (255). In view of that, place, a realm of the senses (and of the intellect), becomes the redeeming factor, since "Eliot struggles to give body to his abstractions", the struggle with time and abstractness being major issues of twentieth-century poets and poetry (Malkoff 1984: 266).

In the seventh stanza, Prufrock etherizes the bodies of the women of the room on his examination table. Ekphrastically, he associates their arms with length, position, location, size and shape: "Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl". Having spatialized time and the female figures, he then escapes the oppression of the room and the women to move forward in the eighth stanza (lines 70-72) and afterwards, describing all of that as a past experience, making the past a piece (space) of his memory, with present-tense designation and narration of what happened before he continues: "Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets"; yet it is still his policy to unite time and place "dusk […] narrow streets […] from chimneys […] out of windows". The recurrent couplet about the women coming and going in the room in the first third of the poem is now left for a different space, mostly intrinsic, though superficially extrinsic: "I should have been a pair of ragged claws/ Scuttling across the floors of silent seas" (The "floors of silent seas" might be taken literally as real space). He is no longer on the floor of the room staring at women nor outside a locked house; he has now set out on a symbolic journey, that targets the hidden, mysterious and mute unconscious, a major archetypal symbol for which is the sea.[13]

It is from this point onwards, stanza nine (lines 75-86), that he starts to leave life-like outward space, and has recourse to excursions into memories (flashbacks) of it ("stretched on the floor, here beside you and me"), towards a more inward journey into the self, experiencing psychological, spiritual and other types of space. His spiritual fear of having sinned and his desire for redemption for having "wept and fasted", "wept and prayed", targets a religious site, a space in the Bible, the story of John the Baptist, along with an emphasis on place and location "my head […] brought in upon a platter".[14] His desire for redemption retains a humble note, that he is no more than a sinful human being and not a prophet, a matter that is accompanied by the notion of fear as he sees the "moment of my greatness flicker". It is worth noting here that his redemption is associated with figure/object and

place "prophet […] here is […]" and his fear is linked to time, the "moment of my greatness […]". He feels safe in space and afraid in time.[15]

In the tenth stanza (lines 87-98), Prufrock comes again to spatialize his frightening past as a piece of memory over which he negotiates himself; looking back in anger, anguish and/or regret:

> And would it have been worth it, after all,
> After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
> Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me[.] (lines 87-89)

Prufrock negotiates his memories, his past actions, along with a clear preoccupation with time and a greater one with space; he refers to times when he enjoyed drinks ("after the cups") but he is also haunted by positions and places ("among […] among"), when these items are definitely references to places where they exist(ed), locations that are domains of regret for Prufrock. Nonetheless, and in relation to elements featuring soon after in stanza eleven (lines 99-110), the cups, marmalade, porcelain, the sprinkled streets, dooryards, novels, teacups, and skirts that trail along the floor might be a reference to Victorian times, perhaps even to the Victorian novel, designating hence a literary space. Here one may argue that the women in the room, present throughout the poem and revisited at this point, are Victorian ladies having leisurely discussions of art and novels: "If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,/ And turning toward the window, should say [/…] That is not what I meant, at all". This could be an instance of Eliot's well-known anti-romantic and anti-Victorian critiques exhaustively commented on by critics.[16]

Nonetheless, it is worth referring to Christopher Krogstad and James Alexander who, in a brief note, found in Eliot's phrase "among some talk of you and me" (line 89), a marker of a relation between Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, building their argument on lexical similarity and solid evidence that Eliot read the work of Khayyam in translation (Krogstad and Alexander 1994: 53). This connection, if it exists, may add to the notion of "artistic space" in Eliot's poem. It is also interesting that Khayyam's translated work had a clear connection with the Victorian age. Referring to Hugh Kenner who, in 1959, called Eliot's "Prufrock" the best known poem (3), Stanley Sultan argued that critical reception of Eliot's poem "since 1959 reveals 'Prufrock' to be a most eloquent cultural artifact —both as harbinger of Modernism and as paleomodernist specimen", whereas the modernism of Eliot's Prufrock lies in its being anti-romantic, notwithstanding the "remote ancestors who also are relevant", such as Dante, Virgil, Swinburne, Baudelaire, Laforgue and others (1985: 77; 80-82). Sultan concluded that "What Eliot 'had taken', his originality metamorphosed in 'Prufrock'", this being a modest attempt to account for Eliot's borrowings while maintaining the poet's originality and contribution to

modernism, a contribution Sultan found "implicit in this poem ['Prufrock']" and remained implicit in Sultan's study as well (1985: 88; 89). I may add here that a major aspect of Eliot's modernism is his spatialized and objectified notion of time.

However, Prufrock does not want to be understood as suggesting the need to go back to the Renaissance to find literature and art that are of value, as opposed to the art and literature of the Victorians; he asserts:

> No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
> Am an attendant lord, one that will do
> To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
> Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
> Deferential, glad to be of use,
> Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
> Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
> At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
> Almost, at times, the Fool. (lines 111-119)

The reference to Hamlet clearly strengthens the sense of "artistic space" in Eliot's poem, a matter which achieves additional significance when linked with critics' findings of further connections that extend beyond Hamlet to Touchstone, Richard II, the critic Walter Pater —this last suggesting a "critical space"—, *Crime and Punishment*, Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress", Rudyard Kipling's "Love Song of Hart Dyal", and Rainer Maria Rilke's "Love Song: A Poem", in addition to other connections outlined earlier.[17]

Nathan A. Cervo considered the name "Prufrock" to be an allusion to John the Baptist —as supported by the initial "J." in the title of the poem— against the background of Herod, Herodias, and Salome, hinting at the triumphant royal name "Alfred", and eventually reaching the court jester Touchstone, the "proof rock" in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. In particular, Cervo convincingly gathered evidence to argue that Prufrock "functions as a touchstone of the fallen parody of Arden" (1999: 227-228). Robert Fleissner traced a connection between the line in which Prufrock's dissociates himself from Hamlet and a critical essay by Walter Pater where Pater writes "No! Shakespeare's kings are not, nor are meant to be, great men…", a statement that occurs in a discussion of Richard II, and enabling Fleissner to link together Prufrock, Pater and Richard II (1966: 120-122). In addition Eugene Hollahan examined the "parallel specifically between a passage in the *Inferno*, Canto II, 31-42, and the passage in "Prufrock" beginning "No! I am not Prince Hamlet […] although the implications of the parallel extend throughout Eliot's poem", a matter he considers significant for an understanding of Eliot's poem "particularly in respect to his [Eliot's] projection of Prufrock's experience against the epic Dantean background" (1970: 91; 93). Using the epigraph from Dante's *Divine Comedy* at the beginning of Eliot's poem, Jay

Dougherty also argued for a relation between Guido and Prufrock who are both "faced with 'overwhelming' questions" (1984: 38). Amer Al-Rashid and Ahmad Abu-Baker (2005) suggested a possible connection between the bald Prufrock and Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*; Harold Bloom, in his well-known analysis, read Prufrock's past intention "To have squeezed the universe into a ball" as an echo of Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress".[18]

All of these cases of allusion, echo or intertextuality ascertain that the notion of artistic space is a major domain in Eliot's psyche as etherized upon the lines of this poem. Artistic space, as Eliot both appreciated and denounced, dominates the poem towards its end; the mermaids who will not sing to him, along with the beach, as a romantic domain, may fit into Eliot's anti-romantic sense, and also oppose his modern world of the waste land. Eliot is dissatisfied with escapist poetry that evades direct treatment of social problems by hiding in a piscatorial dream-world ("We have lingered in the chambers of the sea/ By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown"), for once reality has reasserted itself the sea becomes the nightmarish world of death "Till human voices wake us, and we drown". Interestingly, Eliot's concluding lines reveal how he is haunted by space (chambers of the sea), a space that has been disclosed as an archetypal symbol of the unconscious. It also seems that Prufrock's preceding journey into various locations and sites is no more than a journey within his unconscious, featuring artists, critics and philosophers he read, appreciated, disagreed with, or was influenced by, in addition to Christian aspects of his life. However, the dominating sites of this journey are mostly artistic, though the artistic sites revisited represent wider concerns about life, pertaining to philosophy, religion and society. These sites come together in the poem which ends up with an assertion that it is a dream to be finally awakened from, a journey into the chambers of Prufrock's unconscious.[19]

Thus, the connection with Keats's concept of the "dream poem" surfaces once again. Preoccupation with the relation between dreams and poetry is also central in his "Sleep and Poetry" and "The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream". Nonetheless, in "Ode to a Nightingale" time is redeemed or overcome by resorting to space, for early in the poem the persona passingly mentions time as he sets out on a journey into space: "One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk" (line 4). In addition, death also occupies a position of centrality in the poem: "for many a time/ I have been half in love with easeful Death,/ Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme"; this he did, indeed, as in his poem "When I have Fears that I may Cease to be".[20] Nonetheless, Keats's concern about death is part and parcel of his wider preoccupation with immortality by means of art and poetry, as is evident in his poetic reservoir; in this poem, he says "Thou was not born for death, immortal bird!" (line 61). Death, in its religious and non-religious terms, troubles Prufrock's

mind, along with his desire for immortality. While he might be seeking an after-life in Christian (religious) terms, he definitely desires immortality through artistic success, the second raising doubts about belief in the first. Eliot was concerned about the need for a separation between the self and not-self (subjectivity and objectivity) being essential for a balanced, objective judgment in the understanding of Christianity; in *The Idea of a Christian Society*, Eliot stated:

> The Idea of a Christian society is one which we can accept or reject; but if we are to accept it we must treat Christianity with a great deal more *intellectual* respect than is our wont; we must treat it as being for the individual a matter primarily of thought and not of feeling. The consequences of such an attitude are too serious to be acceptable to everybody: for when the Christian faith is not only felt, but thought, it has practical results which may be inconvenient. (4-5)

This thoughtful reasoning about religion (Christianity) perhaps constituted a major aspect of Eliot's psyche. Christianity, Cervo told us, might be behind the "psychic chasm" Prufrock experiences as a result of his taking Christianity seriously while living in the company of "worldly sophisticates" who would make fun of him if he revealed that belief; due to this "psychic chasm", he turns out to be an introvert who suffers "ego-toxicity and self-pity", his case being "a psychological pastiche", showing "conditions of hallucination" (Cervo 2002: 208).

Prufrock, Eliot's rememberer (of personal, religious and artistic past), like St. Augustine's, is often a dual being (the schizophrenic "you and I"): a voice and an ear, a speaker and a listener. The chasm within himself is that of the division between the memory and the present and Eliot unites the two parts of the self as he visualizes, externalizes and objectifies the memory and then brings both the memory and the rememberer to negotiate selfhood. Eliot presents memory and remembrance within a focused act of objectification of past time, an act rooted in a psychological vision of remembrance. Throughout the poem there is a strategy to objectify recalled fragments of memory and turn them into live-action. Therefore, the remembered-past is problematized in the poem by Eliot's making of it an object and a space experienced, to be experienced and re-experienced again and again. That is, the objectified fragments of memory are relived in what might be called a "simultaneous recall". As such, once time is objectified, localized and concretized in material form, it becomes, therefore, self-contained, redeemable and defeatable rather than elusive and overwhelming, for the result will be a dialogue between living and remembering, present and past.

Consequently, Prufrock oscillates between many places; he shifts to and fro between various and multiple sites in the poem. He is a traveler revealing and/or gaining experience through a series of journeys or a fragmented journey into various spaces seeking answers to his overwhelming questions. Such wandering into spaces, as Edward Soja argued, "produces a phenomenon of a new order, one by

which geography overtakes knowledge", space becoming meaningful only when it determines the relation between the conceived and the lived, the conceived being the intellectual and abstract whereas the lived space is the passionate and sensual, while both (conceived and lived) are compromised by the passage of time and only when spacialized and objectified do they become graspable, space being a creation of a knowable order (1998: 26; see also 2001). Prufrock's dilemma lies in coming to terms with the contending spaces in his mentality/psyche, as he wavers amongst the dialectics of space. In fact, Prufrock's journey is a hyperreal wandering through multiple sites of heterotopic space, trying to achieve a reality that is only achievable in the hyperreal territory framed in the poem. Prufrock's desire and search for imaginary (hyperreal) locations in which to engulf a total and simultaneous experience of his life seems to have been frustrated by the failure to find a satisfactory hyperreal space, except for the poem itself, which is a concentrated presentation of his unconscious (entire psyche) when written. The poem becomes a record of the contending domains of his psyche (past actions, thoughts, feelings etc.) which exert a constant pressure on his moving present. These contending sites are artistic, intellectual, philosophic and religious, though mainly artistic and associated with aspects of tradition that Eliot's individual talent felt anxious about. The richness of Eliot's poem lies in its intense recruitment of past poetry, art, poets, authors, philosophers and artists, becoming hence a space/place for contest between those various revisited sites and itself.

Notes

[1]. David Hume perceived the relation between past and present as a matter of causation: "Had we no memory, we never should have any notion of causation, nor consequently of that chain of causes and effects, which constitute our self or person" (qtd. in Watt 1974: 21; originally from Hume, Bk. I, pt. 4, sect. vi).

[2]. All quotations are from Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" in Kennedy and Gioia 1995.

[3]. The possible allusion to Keats underlines a significant notion of "artistic space" in Eliot's poem, a matter this paper underlines in due course.

[4]. Donald Childs examined what he considered Eliot's favorite clinical image "of a patient etherized upon an examination table", which features in various places in Eliot's literary and critical reservoir, pertaining to Eliot's philosophical perception of man's position in the world and serving, Childs argued, "as an acknowledgment of the pain that is a consequence of social interaction", a pain that is inherent in Eliot's preoccupation with "the same problematical tension between self and not-self that we encounter in 'Prufrock' and the dissertation" (Childs 1993: 381-382; 384). Simply, Eliot, the critic and the poet, wanted to examine (aspects of) human life (man, world, community, thought, feeling, action, knowledge, experience, subjectivity,

objectivity, identity, self, art and literature), whereby, Childs concluded, "Eliot and his *personae* remain both patients and physicians" (Childs 1993: 394).

[5]. Preoccupation with the "overwhelming question" might be an emblem of Prufrock's modernist task and attribute. According to Irving Howe, modernism is "a dynamism of asking questions and of learning not to reply. The past was devoted to answers, the modern period confines itself to questions. […] We present ourselves, we establish our authenticity by the questions we allow to torment us" (Howe 1971: 8-9).

[6]. It might be argued that these women perhaps assume the role of art-critics, a kind of criticism that seems irritating to Eliot, if seen along with a possible connection with the Victorian artistic taste with which Eliot was dissatisfied as will be acknowledged later. It is perhaps of value here to refer to the issue of sculpture, as treated by Roy Matthews and Dewitt Platt who argued for the sculptor's creativity being equaled to that of the divine, whereby art achieves divine significance and, interestingly, that in sculpture "human figures were liberated from the lifeless prison of their surrounding material"; such a connection may add to Prufrock's concern about death and immortality, seeking the latter in art. Matthews and Platt also underlined Michelangelo's most celebrated image of the heroic nude male (2001: 326; 327), which might be taken as opposed to the notion of a feminist (Victorian) critic.

[7]. Originally from the flyleaf of *Collected Poems: 1909-1962* (Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963).

[8]. For more on spatial form in narrative and narrative space see Eric Rabkin's (1981) discussion of spatial form (the relation between time and space, the temporal and the spatial, the diachronic and synchronic) in connection with plot; see also Ivo Vidan's (1981) discussion of "spatial form" and the polarization between spatial and temporal types of art.

[9]. Barthes argued that the photograph creates a paradoxical reality as "it establishes not a consciousness of the *being-there* of the thing (which any copy could provoke) but an awareness of its *having-been-there*", with a consequent psychological chasm between the 'here-now' and 'then-there' (Barthes 1977: 44). For a comprehensive treatment of the issue see Al-Joulan 2008, Chapter One.

[10]. A related comment was made by Nathan A. Cervo while examining Prufrock's psychic diffusion to the effect that the "simple pin" "holds together the simpleton Prufrock's disguise as a composed human being" (2002: 208).

[11]. All quotations from Donne are from Patrides (1991); regarding the interpolation between Eliot and Donne, Hal Blythe and Charlie Sweet argued that "Donne's seventeenth-century 'Song' may be a source for Eliot's twentieth-century 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'" (2004: 109). It may be noted here that critics, particularly, but not exclusively, those responsible for brief annotations, focused on Eliot's possible superficial influences by examining the connection that the epigraph, the title of the poem, the direct references to names and works and Eliot's critical work make, for example, with Dante (and Dante's Guido da Montefeltro), John the Baptist, the two biblical Lazaruses, Hamlet, Touchstone, the metaphysical poets and many more. See for example, Campo; Ledbetter.

[12]. This idea of Eliot's possible indebtedness to Einstein's theories, as acknowledged by Bay-Petersen, was first suggested by C.A. Patrides (1973) who referred to Eliot's translation of an article by Charles Mauron about Einstein (Mauron 1930). Patrides, however, considered Augustine, rather than Einstein, the main source of influence on Eliot's concept of time (193); another approach was also taken by Steven Foster (1965).

[13]. As for the sea as an archetypal symbol of the unconscious, see Grimal 1998; Jung 1981; Natoli 1984; Wright 1984. Nonetheless, Eliot's metaphor here was the concern of Hal Blythe and Charlie Sweet who, in a brief note, discussed Prufrock's desire to be a "pair of ragged claws" as a reference to the mating habits of shellfish, a connection that

helps towards an understanding of Prufrock's acceptance of "his failure in the arena of male-female relationship" (1994: 170).

14. James H. Ledbetter examined the references to Lazarus arguing that they might be Lazarus of Bethany, John the Baptist, Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, and Dante's Guido da Montefeltro (1992 41ff; see also Campo 1994; Sherfick 1987).

15. In a short note, Kathleen A. Sherfick drew attention to the theme of prophecy in Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", considering the references to John the Baptist and Lazarus (line 95) "suggest the value of prophetic gift" and concerning the controversy over which Lazarus is referred to in the poem, she argued, "Both references are appropriate" meanwhile asserting that the statement "I am no prophet" (line 83) which is a clear reference to John the Baptist, can also be a reference to Amos (1987: 43).

16. See Adam Kirsch's argument that Eliot was dissatisfied with the Victorians who "failed because they were not up-to-date enough" (2005: 13); see also David Spurr who discussed Eliot's anti-Victorian note (1988: 34-36).

17. For treatments of the similarities between Prufrock and Hamlet, se Frank J. McCormick (2004); Elizabeth Drew (1949: 34); Cleanth Brooks and Robert Warren (1960: 394); Harry Levin (1959: 7); Robert Seiler (1972: 41-43); and Grover Smith (1991: 44-51).

18. See also John Pope's (1945) investigation of Eliot's indebtedness to *Crime and Punishment*. One may also draw attention to a possible connection between Eliot's poem and Rudyard Kipling's "Love Song of Hart Dyal". An interesting case of comparison may be conducted on the interrelatedness of Eliot's poem and Rainer Maria Rilke's "Love Song: A Poem" in which a negotiation between souls or parts of the soul takes place (lines 1-3) in what might be related to Eliot's schizophrenic "you and I", and along with an objectification of elements of the unconscious presented in terms of aspects of motion and place: "Among lost objects in the dark/ In some quiet unknown place, somewhere/ Which remains motionless when your depths resound/ And yet everything which touches us, you and me […]" (lines 5-8, translated by Cliff Crego).

19. As for the notion of the "dream poem" in Eliot's poetry, Robert Silhol, in his discussion of the convergence of Lacan and T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, argued that "the structure of *The Waste Land* is that of the dream, and we must take unconscious desire into account to understand it[,] a Lacanian model of literary representation" (2004).

20. For a fuller discussion of the matter in Keats's poetry, see Al-Joulan and Al-Mustafa (2007).

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THE MYTH OF THE ADIRONDACK BACKWOODSMAN: FROM THE GOLDEN YEARS TO CONSUMER SOCIETY

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In his sociological approach to literature, Kenneth Burke proposed to consider the poetic artifact as "equipment for living", that is, as a collective discursive strategy or attitude of an active nature that functions for the sake of "human welfare" (1973: 293). According to Burke, any given culture is bound to project in its art perfected formulas through which not only to represent immediate reality, but also to provide exemplary acts worthy of imitation. "One tries, as far as possible, to develop a strategy whereby one 'can't lose'. One tries to change the rules of the game until they fit his own necessities. [...] One tries to fight on his own terms, developing a strategy for imposing the proper 'time, place, and conditions'" (1973: 298), he writes. In modern criticism, Burke's argument on the psycho-sociological weavings underlying myth and the literary piece is accepted as an a priori fact, and its intrinsic obviousness has somewhat pushed it away to oblivion. In this paper, however, I would like to recuperate Burke's stipulations for the analysis and deconstruction of the Adirondack backwoodsman myth for several reasons: firstly, Burke suggests that literature is at once reactionary and creative, that is, it is a fabricated response to circumstances (or, to use Burke's term, "situations") upon which a conduct to overcome those circumstances is reflected. The reaction and the act of perfecting the human possibility of overcoming circumstance are in themselves sociological processes of acknowledging immediate spatial and temporal reality. Secondly, the perfected literary piece is ironic in its dynamics as equipment for living: it is at once developed and imitated by the cultural group at hand with the aim of eternalizing

its value as long as the circumstances are essentially the same. The side-effect of this collective process is that circumstances remain forcibly unchanged by human anxiety for myth until they prove to be more powerful than the equipment for living itself. As history moves forward, the "rules of the game" are readjusted so as to establish the proper "time, place, and conditions" under which the literary piece will attend to the cultural group's new perfected needs. The Adirondack backwoodsman is a localized paradigmatic example of the mythical process as described by Burke, a perfect instance of the pragmatism of myth in its persistence as an agent and creator of history. As such, I will present the archetypal dimension and fictional modes of the nineteenth-century backwoodsman (a category that includes guides, trappers, and hermits of the New York North Country) as a case study of equipment for living that in a relatively short span of years rose to battle against "the situations" only to succumb to the industrial era and the power of consumer culture.

I

It was during the so-called golden years of the Adirondacks (1830-1865) that the mythical connotations of the backwoodsman reached their full potential. In order to trace the development of the myth, we must first contemplate the situations against which it was intended to react, that is, the historical circumstance that forged the myth as a cultural imperative.

Until the early 1800s, the Adirondacks had been practically devoid of the white man's presence: the hostile climate, the mountainous environment and its barren soils had been enough to convince cartographers that the land was completely useless. As the American frontier was conquered westward and topographical reports consistently delivered information about the territories' features, the Adirondacks were represented by a blank triangle-like space on the map. Finally, in the 1830s, the geologist Ebenezer Emmons was commissioned to develop the New York Natural History Survey's Northern Wilderness section. Emmons's detailed geological descriptions and scientific hypotheses not only helped to finally place the Adirondacks physically on the map, but moreover, they reacted against the previous topographical accounts that "emphasized the region's mystery, wildness, and unsuitability for agriculture" (Terrie 2008: 5). Such a reaction was not an isolated event; at the turn of the century the entire nation had reached a most profound identity crisis stemming from the need to articulate the cultural uniqueness that had required a revolution to take place. Writers and artists seeking to compete with the history, artistry and refinement that European culture afforded finally accepted the American territory as the virgin space from which to erect a fresh sense of identity. In Roderick Nash's words, "in the early nineteenth century American nationalists began to understand that it was in the *wildness* of its nature that their country was unmatched" (2001: 69). Although the consideration of

'wildness' as the primitive mythical space was a nationalistic parameter original to America, such a consideration absorbed European romanticist thought so as to justify its validity. Most notably, Rousseau's *Emile* (1762) and *Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloise* (1761) proclaimed that society corrupted the morality of man and that the practice of a primitive lifestyle could sway the individual away from spiritual degradation. In this scope, the wilderness ideal was embraced as a moral sanctuary; it represented an actual, physical space where man could retreat to his untainted, original innocence. The American frontier, uncontainable and uncontrollable in its primitiveness, was hence morally superior to the decadent cities and domesticated gardens of the old continent (Nash 2001: 69).

While Rousseau's doctrines functioned as the philosophical angle arguing for a necessary reversion to nature, Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757) was enthusiastically received by American intellectuals as the aesthetic guidebook for the classification of wilderness features. Burke had established two distinct categories, the sublime and the beautiful, in accordance with man's reaction at the moment the element is beheld. While the contemplation of beauty aroused in the human mind a sense of tranquillity and harmony, and provided a continuation of traditional taste, the sublime seemed to awaken irrational passions such as astonishment, awe and terror in an instant. Burke claimed that it was in nature that "the passion caused by the great and the sublime" operated "most powerfully" (1990: 53). The American wilderness provided not only beautiful landscapes, but more importantly, sublime ones. As writers and landscape painters saw it, the element of wildness increased the likelihood of experiencing the sublime at a level that Europeans would not be able to reach through the contemplation of their own natural features.

Although such aesthetic and philosophical taxonomies were initially embraced and propounded by artists and intellectuals, it was not long before public opinion became indispensable for the continuation of the wilderness frontier as America's original mythical space. In the words of Bradley Dean, travel writing —either in the form of topographical surveying or reports by independent naturalists and authors— capitalized "on a reading public whose appetite for narratives of wilderness exploration seemed insatiable" (2007: 75).

II

The new sociological circumstances had called for suitable features to represent the source of national pride. Accordingly, the cult of the sublime and the beautiful and the moral integrity that the wilderness represented required an adequate archetype to personify the reactive and creative impulse of the literary piece. In other words,

the American people had defined the 'terms' of the fight, and now an archetype had to be established to function within the 'rules of the game'. As the popularity of the Adirondacks as a sublime and beautiful landscape surged, the practice of guiding developed as an independent profession. Nomads seasonally dedicated to hunting welcomed guiding as an additional or alternative way to supplement their incomes, and writers venturing into the region to pursue masculine sports and nourish their aesthetic sensibilities found in their trusty guiding companions the American Adam incarnate.

Before viewing examples of the type of discourse that launched the myth of the Adirondack guide, the qualities of the backwoodsman as an archetype are in need of clarification. In his study of fictional modes, Northrop Frye adopts a scientific methodology to approach the hero's "power of action" (1973: 61). Our concern for this case lies in Frye's three categories proximal to myth: in the first category, "if superior in *kind* both to other men and to the environment [...] the hero is a divine being". The second category stipulates that "if superior in *degree* to other men and to his environment, the hero is the typical hero of *romance*, whose actions are marvellous but who is himself identified as a human being". Thirdly, "if superior in degree to other men but not to his natural environment, the hero is a leader" (1973: 61). Rooted in structuralism, Frye's fictional modes illustrate a hierarchy according to which the hero's power of action deteriorates as he is distanced from myth. The three categories mentioned above mark perimeters for the types of heroes whose exceptionality places them above the conditions of ordinary men. While at the peak of the hierarchy roam the divine beings (that is, those that are governed by myth in its purest guise), the hero of romance and the hero as leader represent a form of superiority over other men that attracted romanticist thought. In the case of the frontiersman, it was the hero's primitive qualities akin to the wilderness which endowed him with the skills and the morality that distinguished him from common man. The Adirondack backwoodsman's superiority must necessarily always be based on degree, not on kind: the frontiersman's essential appeal for romanticists is his limitation as a human being, as matter that will one day expire regardless of the gift of primitiveness and intuition. As such, the hero of romance and the hero as leader are archetypes worthy of emulation by the culture that created them.

Let us begin chronologically through the impact caused by Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). Set in the Adirondack east, the Lake George region, the novel presents the reader with formulas characteristic of popular fiction while engaging a complex dialogue between the past and the present, between European purity of blood and American hybridization, and most specifically for our case, between regional and universal archetypes that have become cultural referents beyond the Adirondack borders. The plot revolves around the Fort William Henry

massacre which took place during the French and Indian War in 1757. In this context, the loyal and gallant Heyward functions according to traditional European standards of heroism, while Natty Bumppo (Hawk-eye) emerges as the nationalist archetype. Cooper created a protagonist who could have been bred only in America: he is a man with untainted moral values, yet does not answer to any specific creed. Bumppo rejects the corporative, methodological organization of Eurocentric militias when he claims that "he who wishes to prosper in Indian warfare [...] must not be too proud to learn from the wit of a native" (2005: 251); in other words, he is a man whose instinct and intuitiveness separate him from Eurocentric codes of conduct and survival, which in the American wilderness, as is proven through the inefficiency of Heyward in maintaining his own heroic status, are useless. While conservative, European codes rely on a series of corporative laws based on tradition, Bumppo places his individual experience as the basis from which to act. Instinct and intuition do not deceive the individual; they are innate predispositions through which one learns the art of improvisation and spontaneity, the tactics needed to become a skilful warrior (Lewis 1955). The battlefields over which the English and the French are fighting will never become truly theirs, no matter the outcome of the struggle: loyalties to the crown mean nothing to a wilderness which is indifferent to traditions and religions developed in faraway continents.

Had it not been for *The Last of the Mohicans*, the story of the Adirondack backwoodsman would have evolved quite differently. Regional writers have attested to the deterministic influence that the novel, and in particular its protagonist, had over the popularity of local guides. Paul Jamieson stated that "the Leatherstocking legend embodies one substantial truth: the good guide was lord of the forest and held the key to it for the townsman" (2009: 107). Robert Williams also notes that "real-life stories of the great Adirondack guides probably owe more to the influence of Cooper and Leatherstocking than they might admit" (1985: 73). If we consider once more Frye's fictional modes, one could argue that Bumppo, as a hero of romances, was superior in degree to other men and to his environment. Frye elaborates on this notion: "the hero of romance moves in a world in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended: prodigies of courage and endurance, unnatural to us, are natural to him" (1973: 61). For Frye, although the presence of magical and fantastic objects and characters is canonical evidence of this category, it is not indispensable for a story revolving around the romance hero. The natural prodigies of courage and endurance suffice in elevating the archetype above the laws of his environment. It was not rare for readers of *Mohicans* to interpret Natty Bumppo as a man who had absorbed and imitated the ways of the wilderness to such an extent that he had become superior to his environment. Indeed, none of the difficulties that impede the other characters from being confident in their stride

seem to affect Hawk-eye. Not once does the wilderness as a space (without including the French and Indian enemies) present an actual threat; he does not even fall into the more earthly human faults of tripping or missing his target. Symbolically, Bumppo has killed the primal father (the wilderness) in the very act of imitating and overcoming it, an act that can be regarded as euhemeristic in its implications. Despite the fact that Frye confined the godlike features of the archetype to the first category, superiority over the environment can be understood as a deifying transformation that takes the hero beyond the limits of human existence.

In his history of Adirondack guides, Charles Brumley summarizes the development of the relationship between Cooper's novel and the Adirondack guiding tradition as a case where "reality soon began to imitate art" (1994: 52). Indeed, romanticist travel writers, enthused by the hero they had read about in their youth, became the leading figures to seek Hawk-eye's qualities in their guides. Amongst these, it was the New Hampshire native John Cheney (1800-1877) who most recurrently appeared as subject matter in the works of several writers that range from Ebenezer Emmons, Charles Fenno Hoffman, Joel T. Headley, and William Redfield to Charles Lanman, Farrand Benedict and Seneca Ray Stoddard. His reputation as a skilled, courageous hunter was legendary, and his stories were familiar folk material throughout the Adirondacks. It was Cheney who guided Emmons to the tallest peak (which the geologist named Mount Marcy) and he was the reason why a one-legged writer and editor by the name of Charles Fenno Hoffman decided to set out on an excursion to the North Country. Hoffman's resulting book, *Wild Scenes in the Forest and the Prairie* (1839), was pivotal in launching the Adirondack backwoodsman archetype, for he was the first to claim the symmetry between the Leatherstocking and an actual man of flesh and bone:

> If it did not involve an anachronism, I could swear that Cooper took the character of Natty Bumppo, from my mountaineer friend, John Cheney. The same silent, simple, deep love of the woods —the same gentleness and benevolence of feeling toward all who love his craft —the same unobtrusive kindness toward all others; and lastly, the same shrewdness as a woodman, and gamesomeness of spirit as a hunter, are common to both. (2007: 35-36)

The description of the renowned nimrod Nat Foster (1767-1841), was a variation on the same theme: he had a reputation amongst sportsmen and Adirondackers as an excellent hunter and trapper, and Jeptha Simms christened him "the modern Leatherstocking" (2007: 177, 181) in his highly acclaimed book *Trappers of New York* (1850). He reportedly killed more than seventy deer, more than thirty bears, and more than twenty wolves in a single season, along with other fur-bearing animals. He was also notorious for his animadversion towards Indians, and was distrustful of any kind of dealing with them. Foster did not bother to conceal his

dislike of them, and even put into circulation around the Fulton Chain region rumours about how he had eliminated more than one Indian in the solitude of the forests. Many of Foster's contemporaries believed him to have been not the replica of Bumppo, but the one in whose image Hawk-eye had been created. Unlike the case of Cheney, this did not involve an anachronism, for Foster was said to have met Cooper when he visited Lake George before writing the *Leatherstocking Tales*. In *The Life and Adventures of Nat Foster* (1897), Reverend Byron-Curtiss claimed that

> The assumption that Foster is the hero of Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales I think is well founded. [...] The character of Nat Foster as portrayed by the facts here presented, and the character of Natty Bumppo of Cooper, are wonderfully similar; which, taken with the unbiased opinions of men of Foster's time, are weighty arguments in favor of the idea advanced. (2009: 8)

Among these contemporaries of unbiased opinions Bryon-Curtiss included E.P. Hurlbut, who "claimed that James Fenimore Cooper had actually modelled Natty Bumppo after his client" (Schneider 1998: 75), and his son.[1] Byron-Curtiss quotes a letter he received from the latter:

> James Fenimore Cooper having known Foster in his lifetime (at an early age) it seems not improbable that he took Foster as the original of his famous scout and trapper, commonly called 'Leatherstocking,' or in other words, that 'Nat Foster' and 'Natty Bumppo' were identical. [...] You find points of similarity, hardly the work of chance [...] and there is additional ground for the assertion that they are the same persons; or rather, that Cooper's hero was none other than Nat Foster. (2009: 135-136)

The fact that Foster was 'the real deal' authenticated his status as a local celebrity and to some extent must have licensed his violence against local Indians. Lionel Trilling (1972) and Richard Handler (1986) have described the modern era as a transition from the obsession with sincerity (which, by its very nature, is dependent upon the public sphere) to the anxiety for authenticity, "which has to do with our true self, our individual existence, not as we might present it to others, but as it 'really is' apart from any role we play", and which is "particularly apparent where national or ethnic groups find themselves in a struggle for recognition" (Handler 1986: 3). The rhetoric of authenticity resembles the archetype's role as equipment for living in that it calls upon the mythopoeic credentials of 'the first' and 'the original'. If Foster had inspired Cooper's Bumppo, and Bumppo symbolized the honesty, nobility, and innocence of the woodsman, then so must Foster, as the original, founding source, be the model of such a virtuous code of conduct. Above all, Foster and Bumppo were true representatives of the code of individuality (versus the code of commitment to a social contract). As such, they were figures of authority before a nation that was coming to terms with its own moral and

aesthetic identity through the convention of primitiveness and the cult of the sublime and the beautiful. In addition to this, Cooper had suggested in *Mohicans* that the tragic yet inevitable disappearance of the Indian race was a necessary step for progress so as to "legitimize an established social hierarchy" (Fluck 1996: 427). If Cooper was, therefore, justifying certain historical events (and subsequent casualties through genocide practices), so was *Mohicans* somewhat legitimizing Foster's actions.

Adirondack guides were prone to archetypal mystification through writers' evocations of romanticist mythical paradigms. Beneath their mesmerizing abilities in the arts of hunting, trapping, and woodcraft, lay the philosopher with an intuitive and emotional sensibility that endowed him with gifted insight into the meaning of existence. The guides' choices in the materialization of their lives signified a dogma governed by pragmatic and ethical standards. For the romanticist hero, the ephemeral essence of time is the suffocating shadow that man is destined to agonize over; the individual is condemned to clutch the earthly in the struggle against inevitability (let us recall that it is the inescapable conclusion of life which characterizes the frontiersman as a hero superior in *degree* to other men). Life for the romanticist hero is a final gasp to make possibility out of impossibility, to overcome the terminal edges of the physical, the body. Although the futile battle against Chronos can shepherd the hero through tragic existence, the awareness of time may also be met with more pragmatist attitudes by which the hero's strife becomes an affirmative attempt to live life fully (Argullol 2008: 393). In nineteenth-century America's attempt to perfect, that is, to complete its nationalistic identity, what was adopted was this latter 'strategy' (or 'attitude') of a more positive character. The backwoodsman philosopher pragmatically reacted against time; at least during his lifetime, in this space, and under these circumstances, he was the master of his existence and therefore creator of his identity. Herein lay the true powers of the frontiersman: the refusal *to live by* the limitations of human condition, to lead the pusillanimous life of common man together with the impulse to always be there and face out the interstices of time by willingly testing himself against the wilderness perils. Paradoxically, the closest the hero can ever get to immortality is by balancing himself on the fragile borders of mortality. Joel T. Headley observes in his classic work *The Adirondac; or, Life in the Woods* (1849) that it is a learnt stoicism of spirit which prevents the guide from tipping over the edge:

> [Cheney] was once hunting alone by a little lake, when his dogs brought a noble buck into the water. [...] In the eagerness of pursuit, he hit his rifle either with his paddle or foot, when it went off, sending the ball directly through one of his ankles. [...] The first thought was to return to shore; "the next was", said he, "I may *need that venison before I get out of these woods*"; so, without waiting to examine the wound,

> he pulled on after the deer. Coming up with him, he beat him to death with his paddles, and pulling him into the boat, rowed ashore. Cutting off his boot, he found his leg was badly mangled and useless. Bandaging it up, however, as well as he could, he cut a couple of crotched sticks for crutches, and with these walked *fourteen miles* to the nearest clearing. There he got help, and was carried slowly out of the woods. How a border-life sharpens a man's wits. Especially in an emergency does he show to what strict discipline he has subjected his mind. His resources are almost exhaustless, and his presence of mind equal to that of one who has been in a hundred battles! (2006: 82-83)

The pragmatism of battling against time by harvesting from the pleasures of one's circumstance is instilled in the sober simplicity inherent to each and every motive behind the guide's decisions. It is this same simplicity of motives which intrigues and fascinates romanticist sportsmen. Hoffman confesses his initial surprise when he saw that Cheney carried a pistol rather than a rifle. His confusion turned to understanding when the guide recounted how he once crushed the skull of a wolf with a rifle, killing the animal but damaging the barrel. Rather than purchasing another rifle, Cheney resolved to carry with him more adequate gear: "I got me this pistol", Hoffman quotes him, "which being light and handy, enables me more conveniently to carry an axe upon long tramps, and make myself comfortable in the woods" (2007: 85). Everything about Cheney, from his personality to his attire, is motivated by an experience. In other words, he adapts perfectly to the environment, carrying with him only what he has learned is necessary, being *practical* and ridding himself of the decorum that urban social life masks man with. Headley's reaction to Cheney's story of a deadly encounter with a panther resembles Hoffman's observations:

> Being a little curious to know whether he was not somewhat agitated in finding himself in such close proximity to a panther all ready for the fatal leap, I asked him how he felt when he saw the animal crouching so near. "I felt", said he coolly, "as if I should kill him". I need not tell you that *I* felt a little foolish at the answer [...] for the perfect simplicity of the reply took me all aback. (2006: 77)

But it is not only through action that the Adirondack guide evidences his philosophy. His sensibility endows him with the soul of a poet, and contemplation of the wilderness becomes a process of introspection whereupon the limits of man are once again examined. In one of the most famous passages of Adirondack literary history, William Chapman White quotes Cheney upon his view of the vast landscape from the Mount Marcy summit in 1837: "It makes a man feel what it is to have all creation under his feet. There are woods there which it would take a lifetime to hunt over, mountains that seem shouldering each other to boost the one whereon you stand up and away, heaven knows where" (1985: 14). Guiding was not simply a matter of leading one's clients through the mountains or instructing

them in the strenuous activities of camp-life; at the intersection between the primitive wilderness and the hectic, corrupted world of man stood the backwoodsman. The guide was a medium through which man could get a glimpse of what one once was and what one ought to be; his every motion and every word was a tribute to primitiveness, a poem of essences of meaning. In other words, his role was purely hermeneutical: he was to deliver the Word of the wilderness to those lost in the vortex of civilization. It was up to modern man to seek Hermes the messenger and to decipher the cryptogram of his frontier life as entangled with the sublime and beautiful forefronts of the wilderness. In this context, the guide himself becomes the primal feature of the picturesque. Describing the Abenaki Indian Mitchell Sabattis (1824-1906), whose reputation resembled Cheney's, Headley alludes to the aesthetically symbiotic relationship between the wilderness and the guide:

> Every nerve in him seemed to have been suddenly touched by an electric spark —and he has now stooped to elude the watchfulness of the deer, and now again stood erect, with his rifle raised to his shoulder, he was one of the most picturesque objects I ever saw. (2006: 177)

Beyond the aesthetic qualities of the backwoodsman were matters of an ethical nature. The traditional guide challenged the excesses of modern utilitarianism through early conservationist principles and emotional sensitivity. The moment the guide reveals his ethical stance is depicted as a cathartic revelation for the writer. The sportsman is exposed for the societal laws and absurd interests that govern his methods, while the always short, simple reflection of the backwoodsman holds a cosmogony of harmonic order that revokes anthropocentric dogmas of existence. Such was the reaction that Headley recalls when on the verge of shooting a female duck, he turns to Sabattis for approval:

> I turned to Mitchell and inquired if I should fire. "I guess I wouldn't", he replied; "she has young ones". My gun dropped in a moment. I stood rebuked, not only by my own feelings, but by the Indian with me. I was shocked that this hunter who had lived so many years on the spoils of the forest, should teach me tenderness of feeling. (2006: 161-162)

In a somewhat similar note, Hoffman records Cheney's position as an advocate of hounding and an enemy to the practices of still-hunting and jack-lighting:[2]

> "How can a man sleep sound in the woods", saith John Cheney [...] "when he has the heart to lure the mother of a fawn to the very muzzle of his rifle by bleating at her: or who has shot down the brutes by torchlight, when they come to the waterside to cool themselves at nightfall?" (2007: 88)

Of all the guides of the golden years, it was probably Orson 'Old Mountain' Phelps (1816-1905) whose hermit ways and ardent adulation for the North Country best

mirrored the backwoodsman philosophy. The novelist and journalist Charles Dudley Warner was mesmerized by Phelps's worship of the wilderness: "there were other trappers and more deadly hunters and as intrepid guides", Warner writes, "but Old Phelps was the discoverer of the beauties and sublimities of the mountains" (2008: 50). It was only for the "appreciative tourist" that "Phelps was ready, as guide, to open to him all the wonders of his possessions" (2008: 50). The Adirondack Hermes would, after all, only gift the interpreter with a message if he humbly believed in the wilderness Word:

> It then became known what manner of man this was who had grown up here in the companionship of forests, mountains, and wild animals; that these scenes had highly developed in him the love of beauty, the aesthetic sense, delicacy of appreciation, refinement of feeling; and that, in his solitary wanderings and musings, the primitive man, self-taught, had evolved for himself a philosophy and a system of things. (2008: 50)

But the tourists were not always appreciative; there were those whose "presence was a profanation amid the scenery [Phelps] loved" (2008: 55). These tourists did not have the wit to appreciate "being accompanied by a poet and a philosopher" (2008: 55), and Phelps's contemplative ways on "the various problems of existence" (2008: 55) were often mocked and he was frequently accused of being a fraud. "They would have said the same of Socrates", Warner remarks; these tourists were the sons of Xantippe, "who never appreciated the world in which Socrates lived" (2008: 55).

Indeed, tourists seeking the ultimate Natty Bumppo in the Adirondacks often found their adventure a frustrated one; but they were not the only ones unable or unwilling to submit to the backwoodsman philosophy. None other than the father of Transcendentalism poeticized about the limits of primitiveness. In his poem commemorating his 1858 excursion to Follensby Pond in the company of notable gentlemen such as the painter William James Stillman or the naturalist Louis Agassiz, Ralph Waldo Emerson suggests that although the backwoodsman's life is worthy of admiration, social and scientific progress remain man's grandest achievements:

> We praise the guide, we praise the forest life;
> But will we sacrifice our dear-bought lore
> Of books and arts and trained experiment,
> Or count the Sioux a match for Agassiz?
> O no, not we! (1994: 157)

I will return to these 'worldly' characterizations of the guide later on, but for now it is important to keep in mind that although most of the romanticist writers who lived through the Adirondack golden years undertook the quest of finding a flesh-and-bone version of Bumppo, there were also unimpressed visitors inclined to knock the hero off his pedestal.

Let us turn to Frye's fictional mode once more to comprehend the overall effect of this case of reality imitating fiction. I mentioned above that Bumppo could be interpreted as a hero superior in degree to other men and to his environment, yet in the process of reality emulating illusion the resulting hero should be classified in Frye's third category: he is superior in degree to other men, but not to his natural environment. As such, "the hero is a leader. He has authority, passions, and powers of expression far greater than ours, but what he does is subject both to social criticism and to the order of nature" (1973: 61). Indeed, despite their initial claims, Hoffman, Headley, and Warner resist portraying their subject matters as superior to their environment, opting instead for the characterization of a man *from* his environment. Unlike the Leatherstocking, these heroes are subject to the occasional human error: Cheney accidentally shoots himself (and local tradition has it that he also accidentally killed one of his clients when handing him a loaded pistol); and Sabattis, despite his admirable skills, was depicted by L.E. Chittenden in his *Personal Reminiscences* (1893) as prone to alcohol abuse. In addition to this, their physical presence was not necessarily impressive: the historian Alfred Donaldson describes both Cheney and Sabattis as "small and slight of stature" (2009: 87) and Seneca Ray Stoddard recalled in his 1874 landmark work *The Adirondacks* that Phelps's voice was of a "cheery, cherripy squeaky sort of tone" (2008: 138). Thus for these writers the absolutism of self-reliance elevated the guide's position to a realm of veneration that was not beyond human possibility, but rather, was the result of the craft of self-improvement. His hermeneutical role, though rendering him superior in degree, is not euhemeristic; it is the very limits of human condition —his awareness of time— which provides him with the sensibility to look into the beyond. The hero's descent to the third category reflects Burke's idea that the most effective strategies are those in a middle ground between myth and realism: "one must also, to develop a full strategy, be *realistic*. One must *size things up* properly" (1973: 298), he notes. The American Hermes is therefore necessarily human and necessarily a man of his environment. The same rules of the wilderness apply to him as they would to any other man, but his superiority in degree and the strict discipline noted by Headley allow him to perfect existence in the parameters between life and death.

According to Frye, this type of hero is of a "high mimetic mode" (1973: 61), relegated to the genres of epic and tragedy. As I stated earlier, none of the backwoodsmen are tragic figures; they represent the embryonic form of the American epic. They are not the distinctive kings of the epic, for just as Natty Bumppo exposes Eurocentric diligence for its inefficiency, so American popular culture rejects corporative hierarchies based on social status as the prime structure of its mythology. Rather, the backwoodsman stands as a "stylistic

dignification" (Burke 1973: 413) of the democratic pragmatic impulse of the nation struggling to come to terms with its own identity. Laurence Coupe claims that, for Burke, myth contains the historic process by which "the idea of perfection is generated and sustained" (2009: 7). In order to attain that 'perfection' in the form of equipment for living it was imperative for the social group creating the myth to recognize itself in the hero it had created. As Burke points out, although "writ large", the mythic hero's life "must have been a replica of [the people's] own process" (1973: 413). By finding actual men who conformed to the 'rules of the game' (in this instance, men who personified democracy) America made an act of affirmation (of national identity) through confirmation.

III

Ultimately, of course, the 'rules of the game' change, and the hero must either be molded within the new rules or confine his eternity to a specific period of history. I have mentioned above a couple of examples in which the guide gravitates further away from myth to a position where he is superior "neither to other men nor to his environment" and is sometimes even deemed as "inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves" (Frye 1973: 61). These are Frye's fourth and fifth categories of the fictional mode, respectively. The fall of the Adirondack backwoodsman should not be seen simply as a series of spontaneous interpretations made by a number of unappreciative tourists who found their guides to be ordinary men. Rather, it should be interpreted as symptomatic of a shift in the dynamics between myth and history.

With the advent of the industrial era and consumerism, the cultural group that had created the backwoodsman surpassed its hero's archetypal signification. Throughout the golden years, tourism had progressively increased in the North Country: various male sports became fashionable, as did the image of the Adirondacks as a health resort and natural sanatorium for those suffering from ailments caused by city life. Small hotels sprouted throughout the region, and so began the construction of a railroad to Saratoga Springs. In 1869, W.H.H. Murray published *Adventures in the Wilderness, or, Camp-Life in the Adirondacks*, one of the pioneering texts in America to present the wilderness as a product for consumption for middle-class New Yorkers and New Englanders. Guides were displayed as a crucial part of the product; in fact, they were depicted as products themselves from which the consumer, that is, the vacationer, had the right to demand certain services. Murray classified guides according to their potential to meet the consumer's expectations: the "witty guide", the "talkative guide", or the

"lazy guide", depending on their personality traits, or the "independent guide" and the "hotel guide" (2009: 35) depending on whether they worked for themselves or for a business. As if exhibiting branded products, Murray concludes that the first three types are all faulty and are "hindrances to a party's happiness" (2009: 35). The witty guide is "forever talking" and "thrusting himself impertinently forward", and therefore the client should "avoid him as [he] would the plague" (2009: 33). The client should as well "beware" of the talkative guide because of his tendency to "brag" and of the lazy guide, deemed as "the most vexatious creature" (2009: 34). The hotel guide was also to be avoided; the very circumstances of his job as an employee of a mediating business fractured the sacred, traditional bond between guide and sportsman. Independent guides, on the other hand, lived up to the client's expectations. They were "quick, inventive, and energetic" (2009: 34) and "models of skill, energy, and faithfulness" (2009: 35), the Leatherstocking that the consumer had bargained for.

That the hermeneutical powers of the guide were becoming irrelevant by the end of the 19th century was not only due to the clients' wanting a servant rather than a leader, but also to the fact that the guides themselves had discovered Natty Bumppo as their own marketing strategy. As Williams notes, it became essential for the Adirondack guide to exploit his likeness to the Leatherstocking: "the more writers a backwoodsman could attract, the more famous he might become, and thereby the more clients might seek his services or guests stay at his hotel" (1985: 73). By the 1890s, the excess with which many guides earnestly sought to be replicas of what had been a model only a few decades earlier resulted in a complete implosion of the myth of the backwoodsman. The hotel guide became the standard, as did the backwoodsman employees of private clubs and camps. The celebrated independent guides of the golden years were a grim shadow of their former selves: Cheney had died in 1877, Sabattis had become a Methodist clergyman, Phelps's quaint services as consort and philosopher discouraged tourists, Alvah Dunning was senile, Jack Sheppard left the Adirondacks when William Seward Webb began expanding the railroad system, and Bill Nye perished in a fire accident. More than ever, drink became the leading problem among the backwoodsmen that had once captured the imaginative powers of their clients. The physician and writer Arpad Gerster recalled in his diaries of the mid-1890s the deplorable state in which he often found the former guide Mike McGuire:

> The once indefatigable hunter, famous guide, fisherman, fearless river driver, cook, and generally accomplished woodsman, who earned and spent money "like water", who was famous for his wit and skill in difficult circumstances surprising the hunter or fisherman, has, in consequence of his addiction to alcohol, become a pauper. (2005: 85)

The new generation of guides that adjusted to the demands of consumer culture found in organizations the most effective way of protecting their interests. In 1891, the Adirondack Guides Association was formed; their aim was to "promote and facilitate travel", "secure to the public competent and reliable guides" so as to assure "the welfare of tourists and sportsmen" and "aid in the enforcement of the Forest and Game Laws of the State" (Brumley 1994: 28). Similar objectives were soon followed by the Brown's Tract Guides' Association, organized in 1898. The bureaucracy surrounding the creation of the Adirondack Park and Forest Preserve in the 1880s and the 1890s launched the State as the new force governing the ways of the wilderness. Gone was the frontier in which the backwoodsman had lived by the laws of self-reliance and had learned to take matters into his own hands. The State was concerned to meet conservationist needs to protect the watersheds and to catapult tourism into a prime source of income: game laws and restrictions on the use of private and public land aggressively stipulated the limits as to what, how, when, and where the backwoodsman was allowed to hunt, fish, or cut down trees. Rather than rebel against legislative impositions, as Bumppo had done in *The Pioneers*, the guides' associations became an effective tool to ensure their execution.

I have attempted to present the rise and fall of the myth of a culturally-specific region through Burke's sociological formulation of literature as equipment for living and a theoretical consideration of Frye's fictional modes. The diachronic approach to the Adirondack backwoodsman as an archetype and a figure of authenticity reveals that the myth-history antinomy is one based on symbiosis as much as on the competition for credentials. While nineteenth-century America's anxiety to explain the links between wilderness, individuality, and democracy pressed for the exaltation of exemplary men —either in fiction or in real life— to supply meaning to the circumstances or 'situations', the long-term result is a decline of the hero's power of action. The implosion of the myth through mimetic obsession and the extinction of the basic rituals that defined woodsmanship as an expression of individuality (the 'rudimentary' technology used by the guides of the golden years for hunting, camping, and cooking, and more importantly, the traditional union between guide and client, where the backwoodsman played his double role as American Adam and Hermes) point to the uselessness of the myth's original meaning for post-romanticist society. By the late 1920s enough roads had been constructed and enough detailed maps had been produced to allure tourists of the roaring automobile culture, who were bound to find guiding an unnecessary, expendable service. As new 'situations' surge and old ones fade, the 'strategy' is gravitationally pulled downwards, and the hero is ripped from his proximity to myth and precipitated into the light of common day: it is the unequivocal symptom of the process by which history overcomes myth.

Notes

[1]. Hurlbut was the defense attorney when Foster was put on trial for the murder of Peter Waters, known as 'Drid'. The trial brought Foster's popularity to its climax, and when Joseph Grady published his history of the Adirondacks in 1933, a century after the trial, he could still claim that "[Foster] looms heroically in the region's history as the slayer of the last Indian known to fall in the long series of feuds that have added bloody romance to the historical literature of the mountains" (71). Drid, an Indian of the St. Regis tribe, lived with his family in the same vicinity as Foster. For a long time the animosity between the two men was confined to verbal insults and death threats, but when Drid, who was in his late twenties, assaulted Foster, now in his mid-sixties, with a knife, the old trapper resolved to take matters into his own hands. The next morning, on September 17, 1833, Foster shot Drid as he was paddling his canoe, before several eye-witnesses. Foster turned himself in at Lewis County, only to find that nobody would issue a warrant for his arrest there. He was more successful in Herkimer County, and after a year in jail, the trial was celebrated on September 3 and 4, 1834. The testimonies of the witnesses turned out to be unsubstantial. The verdict was clear: 'not guilty', which pleased not only Foster, but also the multitude that cheered for the trapper and embraced him as a hero.

[2]. Hounding, jack-lighting, and still-hunting are three types of traditional deer-hunting in the Adirondacks. The first consisted in releasing hound dogs into the woods to chase the deer down to the lakeshore, where the sporting party awaited. The huntsman would either shoot or paddle close to the swimming deer, beating it to death or slitting its throat. Jack-lighting involves approaching the deer in the night time, when the animal comes to the shore to graze and drink at ease. The hunter, quietly paddling his boat towards his prey, carries a light strong enough to blind the deer, which, unaware of the approaching danger, stands mildly alert, staring at the light. The hunter succeeds in getting quite close to his prey, from where he can usually get a straightforward and easy shot at the target. Lastly, still-hunting consists in the more strenuous practice of tracking the game on foot and getting the best aim possible so as to mortally wound the deer.

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FEARFUL SYMMETRIES: TRAUMA AND "SETTLER ENVY" IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN CULTURE

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While it is the case that the traumatic effects of colonization have been identified and investigated (see Žižek 1997: 28-51), so that an analogy between decolonisation and the process of recovery in therapy could also be sketched (see Lloyd 2000: 212-228), there is a danger that the conceptual apparatus proper to trauma studies may be too glibly transposed to the specific cultural situation of a former settler colony like Australia. In part this would be a case of succumbing to the lures of intellectual fashion. Gail Jones has pointed to the "discursive exorbitance and privilege" (Jones 2004: 159) enjoyed by a brand of theorizing predicated on a form of Derridean "hauntology", which pervades current sensibilities as they become manifest in postmodern approaches to history, reality, representation. This suggests that an ambivalent perception of absence/presence, always susceptible to intuited accommodations of supplementarity, characterizes postmodern theoretical elaborations which necessarily displace a sense of the real felt to be ungraspable in its ipseity. This context accounts for the claims made by the trauma model not only on segments of psychology but also on phenomenological philosophy and on historiography, not to mention its further forays in the fields of "ethics, theology, legal studies, pedagogy, and literary theory, to name but a few" (Jones 2004: 161). Concurrently, in an important intervention Dominick LaCapra has warned against the consequences of confusing the concepts of absence and loss, which may result in the occultation of "the significance or force

of particular historical losses (for example, those of Apartheid or the Shoah)" (LaCapra 1999: 712). In other words, as against the postmodern tendency to subsume the real under its representations, and more particularly to privilege trauma so as to figure forth all of reality in its elusive ramifications, LaCapra reminds us that:

> Historical trauma is specific and not everyone is subject to it or entitled to the subject position associated with it. It is dubious to identify with the victim to the point of making oneself a surrogate victim who has the right to the victim's voice or subject position. (1999: 722)

This *caveat* constitutes a mainspring of inspiration for the commentary outlined in the present essay. Indeed, over and beyond the frequent epistemological obfuscations induced by postmodern sensibilities, my motivation for submitting what follows[1] is inseparable from the wish to further expose what Jones identifies as a "transferential gesture of victim surrogacy" (162), symptomatic of postcolonizing settler cultures, and to explore some of the forms assumed by this dubious transference in a selection of representative literary expressions latterly produced in Australia.

Thus, it is imperative, if we approach trauma as a constitutive dimension of both the colonial and the post-colonial situations, that we should remain alert to the particulars of the historical circumstances subtending the correlated theoretical elaborations. On the face of it, there are of course clear substantial grounds for suggesting that trauma studies may prove analytically productive with a view to understanding post-colonial processes both in general and in the particular case of Australia. Generally speaking, one remembers Frantz Fanon's famous declaration to the effect that colonialism is a nervous condition. In the same line of thought, more recent commentators have emphasized the resemblances existing between psychoanalytic recovery and the recuperative drive implicit in the construction of a post-colonial identity. Witness Leela Gandhi:

> The colonial aftermath calls for an ameliorative and therapeutic theory which is responsive to the task of remembering and recalling the colonial past. The work of this theory may be compared to what Lyotard describes as "the psychoanalytic procedure of *anamnesis*, or analysis —which urges patients to elaborate their current problems by freely associating apparently inconsequential details with past situations— allowing them to uncover hidden meanings in their lives and behaviour". In adopting this procedure, postcolonial theory inevitably commits itself to a complex project of historical and psychological "recovery". (Gandhi 1998: 8)

It can be argued that this congruence of "historical and psychological recovery" bears pointed relevance to the narrative of national self-definition in Australia, which depended from the first upon the perpetuation of a singular collective

amnesia, but also on the further desire to transform this mnemonic gap into a form of historical memory. Trauma theory then seems adequate to the task of exploring this typical (post-)colonial ambivalence in view of its willingness to deploy itself at the limit of articulate expression, and to map out realities falling just outside the safeties of public acknowledgement. In this sense, though, it should be noted that the theories of trauma appear as themselves morally ambivalent, if only because the discharge of intense psychic suffering which it entails is seen to be vindicated, no matter how problematically so, by what it potentially offers in terms of heuristic progress. Indeed, more often than not the dimension of suffering is played down in trauma studies, in favour of a compensatory emphasis on the new intellectual purchase that it makes possible. The latter is typically underlined by Cathy Caruth when she proposes that, "in its repeated imposition as both image and amnesia, the trauma […] seems to evoke the difficult truth of a history that is constituted by the very incomprehensibility of its occurrence" (Caruth 1995: 153).

It is therefore extremely tempting —though not, I suggest, risk-free— to approach the settlement of Australia as such a historical "occurrence", one that was characterized by an in-built inability to understand itself, thus remaining in settler memory as the kind of past that was never fully experienced, not at least at the moment when it came to pass.[2] Arguably this "void" typifying traumatic experience came to be encoded into the first settlers' perception of the Australian continent as *terra nullius* (empty land). This is the name of the doctrine, an aspect of international law, which was invoked by the British as they took possession of Australia at the end of the 18th century. The rationale behind *terra nullius* is that it was indeed legal to lay hold of territory demonstrably owned by no-one. Hence the settlers' decision to view the Aborigines of Australia as nomads tied in no way to the land by any relationship that could be construed as involving a recognizable form of official proprietorship. The fact that this depended on a misrepresentation of the Aborigines' complex attachment to the land[3] did not prevent the doctrine of *terra nullius* from remaining in undiminished force until the end of the 20th century. In this sense it constituted a blind spot, indeed an index of the non-indigenous Australians' ongoing inability to register the full impact of settlement, which continued to inform subsequent attempts to trace the narrative of Australian history. In 1968, this vertiginous void at the heart of national self-representations was famously called the "Great Australian Silence" by the anthropologist W.H. Stanner, who considered that white historiography in Australia was governed by "a cult of forgetfulness practised on the national scale" (Stanner 1968: 25-26). This made for a skewed account of historical tradition, summarised by the historian Bain Attwood in the following fashion:

> At the turn of the [nineteenth] century historical narratives were coalescing into a myth which could be summarised thus: following its discovery by Captain James Cook in 1770, Australia was founded by the British in 1788 when Governor Phillip declared British sovereignty and took possession of the entire continent. This was in accord with legal convention because prior to the coming of the white man the continent was inhabited by a relatively small number of nomadic savages whose culture was simple and unevolved and who did not cultivate the land and who therefore forfeited any right to it. The process of colonising the new land was, by and large, peaceful, and although Aboriginal society was more or less destroyed this was largely an unforeseen consequence of introduced diseases and tribal conflict, and inasmuch as there was any conflict between settlers and Aborigines the latter were treated in accordance with British justice and their suffering was alleviated by humanitarian endeavour. Besides, the Aborigines' decline was inevitable because they were a weak, inferior, archaic and unprogressive race which was incapable of adapting to the presence of the white man —in short a dying race which would pass away. By contrast, British settlers, drawing on the knowledge of intrepid explorers, settled upon the strange and alien continent, and with enormous courage, fortitude and hard work came to possess it by transforming it into flourishing pastures and the like, so that the countryside prospered, great cities were created, and the Australian colonies became a working man's paradise. Not only British people, but also British values such as equality, liberty and justice, and venerable British institutions, especially political and legal ones, were successfully transplanted. In time a new nation was born. (Attwood 1996: 101-102)

There is of course a sense in which this kind of narrative only confirms Walter Benjamin's famous dictum that "*even the dead* will not be safe from the enemy if he wins" (Benjamin 1968: 255). This raises the interesting possibility that what is traumatic about history is not only the phenomenology of the past —the actual bloodshed— but also historiography itself —the accounts which get written, inasmuch as they continue to exert coercion and repression.[4] This much has been acknowledged by Dori Laub in her work on trauma, specifically when she explores the difficulty of bearing witness about the Holocaust as a condition which affects both the victims and the perpetrators.

In her analysis the point is again that the incomprehensible nature of the event precludes its own witnessing outside some predetermined mental framework:

> [As the Jewish Genocide unfolded,] it was inconceivable that any historical insider could remove herself sufficiently from the contaminating power of the event so as to remain a fully lucid, unaffected witness, that is, to be sufficiently detached from the inside so as to stay entirely *outside* of the trapping roles, and the consequent identities, either of the victim or of the executioner. No observer could remain untainted, that is, maintain an integrity —a wholeness and a separateness— that could keep itself uncompromised, unharmed, by his or her very witnessing. The perpetrators, in their attempt to rationalize the unprecedented scope of the

> destructiveness, brutally imposed upon their victims a delusional ideology whose grandiose coercive pressure totally excluded and eliminated the possibility of an unviolated, unencumbered, and thus sane, point of reference in the witness. (Laub 1995: 66)

It may not be the least consequence of this kind of perception, which is reminiscent of Althusser's definition of ideological interpellation or indeed of Derrida's approach to hegemony in his "Violence and Metaphysics" (1978: 79-153), that it posits trauma as the source of a bond between the murderer and the victim —a highly problematic notion which finds a disturbing resonance in the context of contemporary Australia, for historical and political reasons that will be outlined below. For the moment, suffice it to insist that, as David Lloyd points out, the frequent numbing of sense —which Freud had already identified as a major symptom of trauma— can be seen in this context to correspond to the denial of the means of understanding the traumatizing event "outside the terms that constitute the common sense of hegemony, a phenomenon that places considerable onus on the postcolonial historian to make other sense of the event and of the narratives that congregate around it" (Lloyd 2000: 215).

In Australia, the challenge of stepping outside the totalitarian frame of reference in which the genocidal event occurred, by providing an independent viewpoint through which the past could be observed, lies at the heart of the ongoing public debate known as the History Wars. In the wake of Bill Stanner's forceful pronouncement about the "Great Australian Silence", a number of progressive historians have addressed the task of filling in the void by writing up the forgotten pages of Australian history. These crusaders for another truth include Charles Rowley, Henry Reynolds, Bain Attwood, Andrew Markus, Heather Goodall, Ann McGrath, Tim Rowse and others. For example, in his book *Why Weren't We Told?* Henry Reynolds referred once more to the "great Australian silence" and to a "'mental block' which prevented Australians from coming to terms with the past" (Reynolds 1999: 114). Thus it was that a new strand of Australian historiography emerged, which paid much greater attention to the violence that was inflicted on indigenous Australians by the British settlement of Australia.[5] Also, in a sense, the identitarian melodrama of the History Wars emerged as an aspect of the Reconciliation, a political process and cultural phenomenon which, as various commentators (Gooder and Jacobs 2000; Nettheim 2005) have shown, exerted a considerable impact on the psyche of the Australian nation from the late 1980s onwards. Roughly speaking, the Reconciliation can best be described as a communal awakening to the more unpalatable aspects of the nation's past, triggered by the release of disquieting information on a number of occasions including, in the chronology offered by Tony Birch, the conclusions of

> the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (established in 1987), the Bicentennial 'celebrations' of 1988, the High Court's Mabo land rights decision of 1992 (and subsequent Native Title amendments), and the reception of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's *Bringing Them Home* report of 1997 […] which was the published outcome of [an] inquiry into the history of removing indigenous children from their families and communities during the twentieth century. (Birch 2004: 137)

The discourse generated in these Reconciliation years would be typically divided between, on the one hand, spontaneous expressions of fellow-feeling, shame or guilt, and of course on the other hand requests for absolution on the part of the settlers.

What is arresting in this collective outburst is the scope that it was given in the public sphere, as well as the intensity of affect characterizing the attitudes respectively manifested by all parties, including those who stubbornly resisted any decentring of their carefully honed identities as post-colonial subjects. Thus what is at stake in the History Wars, as indeed in the Reconciliation, is a form of anxiety, on a national scale, at the prospect of losing one's moral integrity, or the legitimacy of one's identity as national citizens. Although, once again, a wide spectrum of response was deployed in this context, ranging from self-deprecation to a form of narcissistic love for the former idealized self-image, this rarely took the shape of an offer of material reparation for the victims. If anything, what came to pass was a reversal of the respective positions of the privileged and the underprivileged, since the claims of the former (to be suffering no less than the latter) eventuated in a condemnation of the victims, or at least in a dismissal of their demands for compensation (see Sunder Rajan 2000: 167). What is also interesting is that this banal political arrogance appears to have been underwritten by sincere (if self-indulgent) manifestations of distress, as the destabilized settlers under Reconciliation seemed to be suffering from a sense of the traumatic, "seemingly irreparable rupture" (Gooder and Jacobs 2000: 235) of their earlier sense of belonging to the nation. The irony of the matter is that, by contrast, the Aborigines were invested with precisely those qualities, construed in terms of authenticity and continuity of occupation of the land, of which the settlers suddenly felt deprived. This is why it has been argued that the latent spirit of the Reconciliation may well be a form of envy (see Moran 1998), as experienced by the settlers in the very gesture of conferring 'authenticity' upon the natives. This curious "settler envy" (Gooder and Jacobs 2000: 236) would thus typically involve some strategic gesturing towards "an indigenous equivalence" (236) —a nativist posture which has been a long-standing one, as shown by Terry Goldie who described this kind of identity politics in terms of "indigenization" in his classic *Fear and Temptation* (see Goldie 1989).

There is then an eerie sense in which the settlers under Reconciliation, by dint of their very empathy with Aboriginal suffering, exhibit the desire to take possession of the wound itself, fantasized as that which will allow one to entrench one's entitlement to a 'full', restored Australian citizenship. In other words there may well be, as a further aspect of settler envy, such a thing as trauma envy, a notion actually envisaged by John Mowitt who refers to "the gain of pain" that accrues as an effect of the link established between traumatic injury and moral authority (Mowitt 2000: 276). In the context of the Australian predicament, it seems evident that trauma has come to be invested with such a capacity to produce empowerment that it elicits a desire to have suffered from it —if not because of the event of invasion itself, then as an aspect of the discursive aftermath it has produced, notably in the years of the Reconciliation. Clearly, again, all this makes for the emergence of a self-seeking discourse which obfuscates the materiality of exploitation in the present and allows the speakers (or indeed, as we shall see, the writers) to achieve legitimacy by proxy, through the pursuit of an experiential equivalence with the victims. Thus it can be shown that a form of trauma envy traverses an incredibly large proportion of today's discursive production in Australia. Because one can hardly be exhaustive within the scope of a brief essay such as the present one, a few significant examples will be highlighted in what follows.

It is certainly the case that "settler or trauma envy" crops up where one was least expecting it, as for example in Germaine Greer's pamphlet, *Whitefella Jump Up*, which offers an implacable reading of settler history as well as, among other things, a caustic castigation of the settler Australians' catastrophic mismanagement of their environment. Greer links contemporary ecological disasters to a whole history of settler alienation from the environment:

> In Australian literature, the Europeans' corrosive unease expresses itself in a curious distortion of the pathetic fallacy, which characterizes the land as harsh, cruel, savage, relentless, the sky as implacable, pitiless and so forth. The heart of the country is called "dead". […] It was not the country that was damned but the settler who felt in his heart that he was damned. His impotent cursing, which has left a legacy in the unequalled degree of profanity in Australian speech, was a classic piece of transference. We hate this country because we cannot allow ourselves to love it. We know in our hearts' core that it is not ours. (Greer 2004: 10-11)

What Greer is really saying, in a sense, is that the wilful destruction of the land by the settlers is a consequence of envy, in keeping with Melanie Klein's contention that envy, defined as "the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable", can take the form of spoliation of the desired object (Klein 1986: 212). The irony of the matter is that Greer herself considers that the only way for the nation to outgrow this attitude would be by embracing Aboriginality wholesale, which testifies to the intensity of her own settler envy, of the kind which

consists of a wish to take away the coveted object. Indeed she explains that "jump up", in the Kriol language, means to "leap up to a higher level", and therefore, "to be resurrected or reborn". The whole argument of *Whitefella Jump Up* is then that settler society ought to espouse Aboriginality if it is to rise from its "dead" condition, to become rejuvenated and redeemed of its current spiritual exhaustion. The paradox is then that a sense of settler envy, and hence an acquisitorial or neo-colonial impulse, can be seen to characterize even the most radical condemnations of white exactions in Australia.

It is certainly the case that settler or trauma envy in Australia gave rise to a form of identity politics in which Aboriginality is apprehended as a source of role models to be imitated, no matter if most indigenous experience in itself hardly seems appealing in sociological terms —indeed all the more so if the circumscribed collective experience comes across as crippling, since it is precisely the quality of suffering which is felt to be empowering in the context of a delegitimized settler history. Interestingly for my present purposes, the search for an equivalence between non-indigenous and Aboriginal history sometimes results in spectacular speculations —in the literal sense that white Australians tend to imagine for themselves life conditions which symmetrically reflect, like a mirror image, those of their unfortunate partners in grime, even to the point of downright identification. For example Robert Drewe, in a novel entitled *Grace*, indulges in a quaint anthropological fiction about the origins of mankind, probing the consequences of a change of scientific paradigm that would replace the "Out of Africa" theory by an "Into Australia" model of explanation. Clearly this is a form of indigenization writ large, since it would automatically follow, if the first humans turned out to be Aborigines, that everybody else (including, incidentally, the settlers) could claim as part of their natural inheritance a share in the sort of atavistic bond to the land that ostensibly typifies the natives and that is seen to justify belonging and possession in equal measure.

Strategically, then, the novel sets up a dialectical relationship between past and future, perceptible in John Molloy's irrational feeling that "in her genes his daughter [Grace] preceded as well as followed him" (Drewe 2005: 175). Indeed the book sustains a sense that future directions are bound to depend upon reinterpretations of the past, and perhaps vice versa, which is crucial to its meaning and inseparable from the polysemy of its title. John, Grace's father, is an anthropologist who named his daughter after his discovery of the cremated remains of an ancient skeleton on the western edge of the Great Sandy Desert. When assessing the skeleton's age at the time of death he establishes that he is dealing with a young female hominid whose body presents the "exciting anomaly" of being "anatomically 'modern'", for while "anthropology had taught him to expect the ancient skeletons on this continent to be robust rather than gracile", his find is

characterized by her surprising, "petite ballerina's frame" (104). On account of these features he gives this ancient human being the name of Grace, as he does his new-born child, fittingly so as it turns out since the latter will grow into a slender and athletic young woman. His impression that, "as well as his sole genetic link to the future, she was his only connection to the past" (174), thus appears to derive from an intuited bond between the two Graces, which creates a strange temporal loop whereby the quality of gracefulness emerges as one that "spanned the ages and races" (101).

What the two Graces have in common is notably a vestigial dimension which points to unsuspected ways of becoming liberated from the determinism at work in the genetic groove. John wonders at the "total mystery" (174) presented by his daughter's remarkable gracility, which cannot be correlated to his own or her mother's hereditary stock, so that she comes to embody the vertiginous challenge implicit in a quantum leap, beyond atavism, towards utter freedom of self-definition. It is relevant to this ontological challenge that John himself is an orphan, deprived of precious identity-giving information about his own genealogy, so that he tends to rely even more on clues afforded by his daughter in order to solve the riddle of himself. Intriguingly in this respect, his orphanhood is presented in terms of an alternative, settler version of the trauma experienced by the Stolen Generation, as "thousands of children were denied their backgrounds" as a result of the diligence manifested by "a whole host of busybody, self-righteous organisations and individuals" —"churches, municipal councils, charities and governments"— to destroy "their orphans' birth records" (185). Quite evocatively, the point is made also that "the British Government had since apologised for such nineteenth-century colonial behaviour prevailing into the mid-twentieth century" (185-186). In the face of such identity deficit, Australia itself is then embraced as a unique opportunity for self-invention, indeed as if the incentive towards evolution represented for the Aborigines by the Stolen Generation had to be exploited by the settlers also.

The reference to an apology,[6] together with the allusion to those same official bodies —"governments, churches, police forces and welfare agencies" (Gooder and Jacobs 2000: 230)— which were also involved in the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families, testifies to the wish to fashion an inventory of settler suffering modelled on indigenous patterns of experience. More generally even, it has been shown that a similar patterning, along symmetrical lines, of the Australian temperament, informs the construction of settler spirituality, too, in terms chosen to "set up an artificial resemblance" (Crouch 2007: 102) with indigenous modes of reverence for the land. Indeed a conception of mimetic spirituality is endemic to many settler Australians as they attempt to articulate their sense of belonging to the land in ways which reproduce common representations of Aboriginal

mythology. It is central to the work of a historian like Peter Read, for example, whose book *Haunted Earth* sets out to investigate "the very wide experience of inspirited place" which he sees to be a feature equally shared "across the diversities of Australian cultures" (Read 2003: 11). The same derivative, ready responsiveness to native belief is evidenced in the specific tradition of the ghost story which, in Australia, privileges narrative strategies that tend to displace the established tropes of the genre. David Punter has made the point that the "post" in a word like "post-colonialism" makes "uncannily […] appear before us […] the very phenomenon [it has], in a different sense, surpassed" —thus giving the traumas of the colonial past "the status of spirits haunting the apparently purged landscape of the contemporary" (Punter 2000: 62). In this view, the phantomatic topology of Australia normally betokens a sense of unsettled geography, since the spirits plaguing the settlers remind them of the infamy of the nation's beginnings and therefore express their deep worry about the validity of their possessions in and of the land. The ghost then operates as a "figure for displacement" and, in this sense, it supposedly fulfils "a postcolonial function" (Gelder and Jacobs 1998: 32). However it turns out, as against this explanation, that the spectre of indigenous possession tends to be raised, in many recent fictional apparitions, only to be retrieved into the mental space of white mythology. Within this modified framework the Aboriginal ghost signifies primarily inasmuch as it solicits the settler imagination, which then comes across as marvellously susceptible to the wonders of the place. At best this narrative strategy ascribes to the settlers a capacity for supernatural response equal (if not superior) to that of the natives, while at worst it becomes "a way of silencing an indigenous presence within a discursive structure that asserts the legitimacy of non-indigenous occupation" (Crouch 2007: 102).

It appears, then, that the search for cultural equivalences between indigenous and non-indigenous histories, just like the construal of the relationship between the two communities in terms structurally informed by the figure of symmetry, usually conceals repressed hierarchies implicit in the attempt to secure land for only one of those groups —which remains, as Patrick Wolfe contends, the ultimate project of all settler colonialism (see Wolfe 2008). This sort of discursive stratification, in which an egalitarian rhetoric on the surface fails to be matched by the deeper political structure underneath, possibly accounts for the mixed reception reserved by the critics for Alex Miller's novel of reconciliation, *Journey to the Stone Country*. This book has been read as an attempt to gauge "the increasingly fraught relationships around land, modes of occupation and divergent discourses of indigeneity and belonging" that have characterized Australia in the wake of the socio-legal revolution brought about by the Mabo judgement of 1992, with its implied revocation of *terra nullius* (Mullaney 2008: 1). The context is then one of intense anxiety about the legitimacy, not to mention the possibility of legitimate

settler occupation and exploitation of the land, which accounts in Miller's novel for the white characters' eventual propensity for "ceding ground" (Mullaney 2008: 17), in all senses of the phrase, in the face of mounting Aboriginal requests for compensation. Yet it has been noted that the book itself concurrently gestures towards "an indigenous philosophy of time and land which is in collision with western epistemologies" (Ashcroft et al 2009: 178). Banal as this may seem in view of the massive indigenizing archive typical of post-Reconciliation Australia, the distinctiveness of Miller's vision inheres in his dependence on a twofold, "precisely particularised knowledge of land (derived from *both* Indigenous *and* pastoral lived familiarity)" (Ashcroft et al 2009: 183; my emphasis). Once again, such bothness posits the equivalence of two traditions of past experience, so that, possibly by way of an amalgamation of the notions of symmetry and similarity, a form of deferred settler belonging may be (re)invoked, through the appeal to "a shared future" (186) actually reminiscent of Drewe's temporal circularities.

Specifically, *Journey to the Stone Country* documents the search for archaeological vestiges constituting an aspect of the struggle led by Aboriginal or land rights activists, whose demands for territorial restitution, according to the terms of the current Native Title legislation, must be accompanied by firm evidence of "significant occupation" (Miller 2002: 15) on the part of the claimants. In this context, it may not be innocent of Miller that he should represent settler history as equally in need of an archaeological excavation of its own. If cultural remains have gained a higher status on an Australian political scene which is determined by the contestation of land rights, then of course the settlers must be given ancient artefacts and sacred places of their own. In the novel this is done through the depiction of an old pastoralist homestead —formerly home to the Bigges family, on Ranna station in a valley of the Queensland ranges north-west of Mackay— as a multilayered ruin well worth exploring, all the more urgently since it teeters on the brink of annihilation, for the library in particular is the prey of termites devouring the books from within, "shuffling across a landscape of infinite extent […]. Millions of white ants at their blind work, recycling the world and returning it to some kind of cosmic dust, unconscious and inert" (181). Thus the "infinite extent" of the white "world" is felt to be threatened with extinction, lest a new historiography should be inaugurated, in which the relics of the pastoralist past would be consigned and preserved. Miller's ambiguity is then that he finds an opportunity to the History Wars, with their call to explore the darker dimensions of Australia's past, in order to urge a reconsideration of settler experience too, which is placed on a par with suppressed knowledge about the sufferings endured by the Aborigines —down to the reference to the 'pioneering' pastoralists as a "vanishing race" (151).

Clearly the logic of pairing at work here (and elsewhere) corresponds to a dynamics of cross-cultural identification and appropriation quite in line with the long tradition

of impostures and insecurities which has determined settler history since its inception. My suggestion has been that there is a danger that this manipulative brand of rhetoric may be allowed to posture as more progressive and less self-seeking than it really is, if it is coupled with a fashionable discourse about the universality of trauma which tends to obscure historical and sociological specificities. The novel by Alex Miller discussed above constitutes a revealing case in point, as it obviously seeks to provide a fictional exploration of the traumatic events which happened on the colonial frontier in Australia, but it does so in a way which ultimately likens the perpetrators to the victims. It may well be the case that, as Dominick LaCapra argues, there is such a thing as "perpetrator trauma" (see LaCapra 2001: 79), but this should by no means constitute a justification for the blatant attempts at self-exoneration and diffractions of responsibility which have characterized Australia's cultural discourse since the Reconciliation. One way of circumventing the difficulty presented by what comes across as a lack of conceptual fit between trauma theory and the actual socio-political situation of a former settler colony like Australia, would consist in extracting a capacity for greater nuance or subtler distinctions from within the theory itself. This is attempted by Sheila Collingwood-Whittick in a recent (unpublished) article on the Miller novel, which does draw on trauma theory but distinguishes, with reference to LaCapra's nomenclature, between "acting out" and "working through", two antithetical approaches to traumatic experience since the former constitutes "an arrested process in which the depressed and traumatized self, locked in compulsive repetition, remains narcissistically identified with the lost object", whereas the latter qualifies rather as a form of mourning in which the traumatized self not only confronts the past but also attempts "to counteract the tendency to deny, repress of blindly repeat" the situation that generated the trauma (Collingwood-Whittick 2010: 3; see also La Capra 1997). By reading *Journey to the Stone Country* as an instance of acting out on the part of the author, Collingwood-Whittick provides an excoriating critique of the novel's politics; yet it remains to be seen whether, by consenting to view today's settler as a "depressed and traumatized self", and therefore presumably as an irresponsible one, she may not in fact be conceding too much.

Notes

[1]. I wish to thank Professor Dolores Herrero for her invitation to deliver, on 27 February 2009 at the University of Zaragoza, a lecture entitled "The Australian Predicament in a Post-Reconciliation Age", which provided an incentive for writing this article.

[2]. Immediately, however, the callousness of this sophisticated rhetoric makes itself felt: can one really maintain without blushing that a traumatic event such as, say, frontier violence in Australia necessarily "lies outside people's capacity to

make cognitive or emotional sense of it" (Attwood 2005: 177), in the face of those who suffered its action in their own flesh, or indeed in that of their descendants?

[3]. It is now generally acknowledged by anthropologists that one aspect of the Aborigines' complex custodianship of the land involved a form of management by fire called fire-stick farming, along with a myriad other ostensible practices, imagined by novelist Kate Grenville as follows: "[The first settlers] couldn't have pretended for a moment that [Australia] was an empty land. Along every stream, the thousands of axe-grinding grooves would have been clear and fresh, the newly scraped stone gold against the dark. Narrow sandy paths would have wound through the trees. The trees themselves would have carried fresh bleeding wounds where canoes and shields had been prised out of the bark. Every rock overhang would have been blackened by a cooking fire, scattered with bones and shells from past meals" (2007: 138).

[4]. In Australia commentators still routinely deplore the way in which the national history continues to be "reduced to singular interpretations that conform to one narrative". Thus Christos Tsiolkas: "The Liberal federal government's intervention in education was centred on the teaching of an approved Australian curriculum that offered history as an undiluted progression of democracy and capitalism in our nation, in which every sickening manifestation of racism —genocide, White Australia, the Stolen Generation, One Nation, the detention camps— would be identified as exceptions because the mantra runs that we are not racist, that we have always been good, decent, courageous" (Tsiolkas 2008: 34).

[5]. Immediately, however, a fierce counter-attack was launched by more conservatively-minded historians, chief among them Geoffrey Blainey who stigmatised what he called the "black armband view of history" held by his colleagues. The phrase was popularised and came to be used pejoratively by commentators and politicians who refused to endorse a historical narrative seen to be overly concerned with the shameful dimension of the national legacy. These commentators gained prominence after the election of the conservative Federal coalition government in 1996, with the former Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, openly endorsing their views. Thus Howard was heard publicly regretting that "the 'black armband' view of our history reflects a belief that most Australian history since 1788 has been little more than a disgraceful story of imperialism, exploitation, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination" (Howard 1996). This politicisation of the issue probably explains why what was initially mainly an academic debate came to be largely reflected in Australia's media culture. This is then the context which surrounded the publication in 2002 of a study by Keith Windschuttle entitled *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History, Volume One: Van Diemen's Land 1803–1847*, which in all likelihood would not otherwise have enjoyed the kind of resonance that it did. In this book, Windschuttle disputes the accuracy of the evidence established by Reynolds and others, focusing especially on the Black War in Tasmania —a strategic choice since, as is well known, the Tasmanian Aborigines have been completely wiped out by colonization. Yet the historian argues that fewer than 120 Tasmanian Aborigines can be said to have been directly killed by the British, attributing the other casualties to various forms of collateral damage, including introduced diseases like smallpox which decimated the natives. It seems symptomatic that the polemics which ensued in the printed press centred essentially on the definition of genocide and whether or not the wiping out of an entire race of human beings should be considered as such if it was not correlated to a demonstrable form of intentionality. In other words, the controversy unfolded as a form of intense navel-gazing by those settlers who seemed more preoccupied with the task of exonerating themselves from collective guilt than with the fate of the Aborigines then and now.

[6]. The revelations of the *Bringing Them Home* testimonies about the practice of large-scale removal of Aboriginal children, which started in the 19th century but continued

until the 1970s in some rural areas, motivated hundred of thousands of ordinary Australians to sign "Sorry Books", as a gesture of personal apology presented in a context when the Federal Government obstinately ignored the demand that an official apology should be proffered (see Gooder and Jacobs 2000; Jones 2004). This situation was only modified when the recently elected Labour Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, finally pronounced his "sorry speech" on 13 February 2008, in which he acknowledged at long last "the profound grief, suffering and loss" inflicted on the Aboriginal population of Australia, notably (but not exclusively) through a succession of child removal policies (see Dolce 2009: 114).

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NATIVE AMERICAN HUMOR AS RESISTANCE: BREAKING IDENTITY MOULDS IN THOMAS KING'S *GREEN GRASS, RUNNING WATER*[1]

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> Certainly the time frame we presently inhabit has much that is shabby and tricky to offer; and much that needs to be treated with laughter and ironic humor; it is this spirit of the trickster creator that keeps Indians alive and vital in the face of horror.
>
> Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop*

> The trickster is a comic liberator in a narrative and the sign with the most resistance to social science monologues: if not in narrative discourse the trickster is 'released' as an 'object' in translation.
>
> Gerald Vizenor, "Trickster Discourse"

While on the surface a heavily dialogical and tremendously funny novel, *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993) presents readers with one of those unlikely turnarounds in postcolonial history in which a human collectivity on the verge of extinction finds new ways to resist the colonizer's epistemological and spiritual prerogatives. Author Thomas King, a writer of Cherokee, Greek and German ancestry, makes that resistance effective by engaging in the active recuperation and comic use of Native Americans' endangered cultural heritage. This is by no means an easy task because, as Said (1993: xiii) reminds us, "the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them". It is probably for this

reason that King has chosen to highlight the comic potential of his fiction at the expense of other more subversive purposes that it, no doubt, also serves (see Gzowski 1999: 65). Certainly, one of the most remarkable effects of his use of humor is, as several scholars have maintained (Goldman 1999; Daxell 2003), its capacity to reconcile the stark facts of tribal annihilation with the tradition of continuance and bonding so common among Native American cultures. As a result of this 'reconciliation of opposites', instead of representing his culture as superior to others, King is seen to find a balance between cultures by exposing the truth and the falsity in all of them. In this reading of the novel, its greatest achievement would lie in its ability to help readers from very diverse backgrounds to cross borders into different cultural traditions and to find out for themselves their virtues and shortcomings (Cf. Matchie and Larson 1996; Andrews 2002). Or to use Fee and Flick's (1999: 132) words to describe the same phenomenon, "the reward for following King's merry chase is the pure pleasure of getting the point or the joke, the pleasure of moving across the border separating insider and outsider".

While it is true that this 'mediating' component may seem momentous in analyses of the novel focusing on the interaction and border-crossing between traditions of a distinct kind, I believe that King's narrative also sets out to elicit more critical responses from the audience. Beneath the humorous veneer of the work, there is also a severe critique of the type of socio-surgical incisions that colonial ventures inflict on indigenous territories. Fanon (1968: 39) accurately rendered these cleavages in his classic *The Wretched of the Earth*, in which he argued that "[t]he zone where the natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers. The two zones are opposed, but not in the service of a higher unity. Obedient to the rules of Aristotelian logic, they both follow the principle of reciprocal exclusivity". Although this exclusivity is not immediately apparent, for some Native characters seem to be allowed to cross the border between the white and the reservation worlds unobtrusively, the novel gradually attests to the impossibility of establishing communication and harmony between the two. Not only does this fact become evident every time characters from the two cultures meet to try to settle their irresolvable conflicts but, more importantly perhaps, the book pits two radically different narrative forms —one oral, the other written— against each other to show that no complementariness is attainable between them. The object of this contribution is to demonstrate that King's use of Native humor transcends the idea of a felicitous symbiosis between two traditions by means of "a complex interweaving of people's backgrounds, experiences, attitudes, and choices" (Matchie and Larson 1996: 154). Instead, as my discussion hopes to show, his ultimate aim is to undercut some of the most prevalent and injurious discursive practices deployed by Western civilization.[2] Novelist Margaret Atwood (1990: 244) has probably come closer to the mark in this sense when, in a review

of two earlier stories by King, she concluded that "his humor becomes a subversive weapon to invert white ways of thinking".

Before I move into my analysis of King's novel, I will briefly discuss a parallel example of the use of humor in narrative, which may also prove illustrative of what Vizenor (1993: 196) has called "the [comic] sign with the most resistance" to the monologic discourse of social science. A number of years ago the Basque Television Network (*eitb*) launched a series of commercials which were intended to apprise the audience of the policy of broadmindedness and interculturalism pursued by the channel. With witty humor, not unlike that present in King's fiction, these TV advertisements suggested that past and present, the native and the foreign, can successfully cohabit in a new Basque Country, in which different traditions will eventually merge into interesting cultural formations. Nevertheless, under the motto of *Zabal Zabalik* (Wide Open), these commercials could be seen to signify on two distinct levels. On one level, they were meant to entertain and to arouse self-complaisant feelings in the spectator by means of a ludicrous treatment of the subject, while, on another level, they unwittingly preempted the foremost implications of foreign incorporations into Basque culture. In one of these commercials, for instance, we see a young *baserritarra* (Basque countryman) wearing a traditional regional outfit and flexing his muscles to lift a massive stone. Behind him, seated on a bench, there are four elderly characters looking proudly upon him. As everybody is waiting for the young man to bend down and raise the stone from the ground, he makes a stylish swing and we hear the sound of a golf club hitting the ball. The camera shifts to the four elders, one of whom has fallen backwards as a result of the shock and another, open-mouthed, loses his cigar as the golf ball whizzes past his nose. After breaking a window, the ball ends up in a henhouse sharing a nest with two or three eggs, while a hen looks down on it quite puzzled. Predictably, what most viewers saw was the ingenious and amusing combination of a Basque rural sporting tradition and a more modern and universal game. Little thought was given, in fact, to the inconsistencies deriving from the kind of landscape, the set of rules, the number of players, or even the social status that golf-playing usually entails. To the attentive viewer, however, a subliminal message will be conveyed in the commercial: the likelihood that these two sports will be played by the same people in the Basque Country nowadays is almost non-existent —at least, as long as the socio-cultural connotations associated with them remain so at odds. The bewildered gaze of the hen at the end of the ad speaks volumes about the distance separating the worlds being allegedly reconciled in it. Hence, while a surface interpretation of the commercial is likely to bring the gentle and politically-correct message of the campaign to the foreground, a deeper reading would unveil some more resistance-laden connotations by now familiar to those of us living in the region.

In the introduction to *Black Literature and Literary Theory*, Gates discusses at some length the need of African-American artists to become "masters of the figurative", since learning to say one thing to mean something different was very much at the root of their survival as a race with its own cultural tradition.[3] Something similar could also be said about Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water,* which conceals, behind the façade of easy comicality and high volatility of the linguistic sign, a stubborn resistance and unflagging aspiration to change the ways in which Native Americans perceive themselves and are perceived by others. Benito (1999: 328) notes in an article entitled "The Poetics and the Politics of Resistance" that "if literary texts were crucial to the formation of colonial discourses, they are also a means of appropriating, inverting and resisting dominant ideologies". King's novel accomplishes precisely this type of re-appropriation and inversion thanks to a Native brand of humor that effects "a subversive re-ordering of relations in the prominent fields of imperialist, capitalist, and masculinist power" (Donaldson 1995: 40). As will become evident in the ensuing pages, King manages to subsume important passages of Euro-American religious, intellectual, and historical doctrine in an overall Native framework that reveals their nonsense and ill will. This is done by introducing such widely-used techniques among American Indian storytellers as the inclusion of a trickster figure, anachronistic elements, subversive intertextual references, plays on words, or the satiric treatment of stereotypes. All these comic resources are brought into the text with a foremost aim in mind: to undo the Western performance of epistemological and spiritual domination. Arteaga (1999: 336) has eloquently commented on the great importance of humor for groups who have been dispossessed of their culture and homeland:

> In unequal power relations, laughter can have tremendous power; it can afford the weak the means to disarm the powerful. Making light of a situation diffuses the tense relations and undermines the rigid order of those relations. By laughing with, and laughing at, the oppressor, the oppressed upset the established order, if for a moment, and allow for an alternate relationship. And beyond humor, irony accomplishes the same thing.

Beginning with the very title of the novel, which obviously refers to the white man's unfulfilled promises to keep the treaties with the Indians "as long as the grass is green and waters run", King funnels all his intelligence and narrative skills to challenge the margins and identity moulds that non-Native teleology and epistemology have imposed on their cultures. He takes advantage of all kinds of 'narrative chances' to resist —although rarely to reverse— the subjugation of the mind and the annihilation of the spirit that have characterized the histories of the (mostly white) people who have subdued other cultures.[4]

Green Grass, Running Water can hardly be said to exhibit the type of plot we are used to in the landmarks of the Western canon. On the contrary, the work

resembles much more a piece of jazz in which a number of instruments keep composing their contrapuntal melodies in a syncopated manner. King himself has explained that his goal in writing such a broken and discontinuous narrative is to create a sense of movement and the effects of oral storytelling:

> [...] if you have a deck of cards, you know, you can see each individual card, but if you take that deck and you flip it really quickly it gives you the illusion of movement. Each individual card is a rather short section, but if you snap'em [sic] fast enough then you wind up with this sense of movement and that is what I wanted to do in the novel. (in Gzowski 1995: 66)

This rapid interpolation of different story lines does, if nothing else, succeed in keeping the readers' attention, as they are required to shift gears in their reading at every other turn of a page. The book comprises a minimum of four different sub-plots which, at least at the outset, seem to be only obliquely related. On the one hand, we find the unlikely love triangle formed by Lionel Red Dog, a hapless TV salesman who has turned John Wayne into the beacon of his life; Alberta Frank, a university history professor who longs to have a baby although, ideally, without a male partner; and Charlie Looking Bear, a lawyer working for *Duplessis International Associates*, a firm involved in a legal battle against the land and water rights of the Blackfoot Indians. On the rival front of this unequal battle is Eli Stands Alone, Lionel's uncle, who is also a university professor and whose mother's house happens to be located downstream from the spillway of the Grand Baleen Dam. After his wife's death, Eli goes back to the reservation and risks his life to defend the Native rights to the land beneath the dam. A third sub-plot is put together by interweaving several Christian and Indian creation narratives. Four mythical Native Women run into personages from the Old and New Testament, with the most unforeseeable developments:

> First Woman's garden. That good woman makes a garden and she lives there with Ahdamn. I don't know where he comes from. Things like that happen, you know.
>
> So there is that garden. And there is First Woman and Ahdamn. And everything is perfect. And everything is beautiful. And everything is boring.
>
> So First Woman goes walking around with her head in the clouds, looking in the sky for things that are bent and need fixing. So she doesn't see that tree. So that tree doesn't see her. So they bump into each other.
>
> Pardon me, says that Tree, maybe you would like something to eat.
>
> That would be nice, says First Woman, and all sorts of good things to eat fall out of that Tree. Apples fall out. Melons fall out. Bananas fall out. Hot dogs. Fry bread, corn, potatoes. Pizza. Extra-crispy fried chicken.
>
> Thank you, says First Woman, and she picks up all that food and brings it back to Ahdamn. (King 1993: 40-41)

The last sub-plot concerns four uncannily ancient Blackfoot Indians (Robinson Crusoe, the Lone Ranger, Ishmael, and Hawkeye) who, after running away from

a mental asylum, set about "fixing the world" with the invaluable assistance of tricky Coyote and the first-person narrator. The main function of these two liminal figures is to help —and sometimes hinder— the telling of everybody's story (Cf. Matchie and Larson 1996: 155). In spite of the diversity of the characters' personalities and goals, and although the novel's structure is heavily indebted to some important tribal features —orality and cyclical character, most conspicuously—, all these characters and story lines converge in two climactic events at the end of the book: a Sun Dance ceremony and the bursting of the Grand Baleen Dam.

According to Donaldson (1995: 29), *Green Grass, Running Water* reveals the kind of longing for the signifier and volatility of intertextuality that are typical among oppressed peoples engaged in the postcolonial struggle against cultural and religious domination. Like Gerald Vizenor or Sherman Alexie, King also seems to be convinced that the absorption and transmutation of one cultural system by another is a useful material practice enabling the recuperation and empowerment of traditions that would otherwise be doomed by current politics and economics. Thus, via a highly contesting intertextuality in which "writing reads another writing, reads itself and constructs itself through a process of destructive genesis" (Kristeva 1980: 77), King's novel manages to transmit the dialogical matrix of Native oral discourse while, at the same time, also undermines some of the foundations of Western myths. One of the most successful instances of this 'deconstructive' intertextuality is found in the indictment that Judeo-Christian anthropocentrism and sexism receives when biblical narratives are seen in the light of Native creation stories:

> Are you all right? Changing Woman asks Old Coyote.
>
> Pssst, says Old Coyote.
>
> Why are you talking to animals? says the little man. This is a Christian ship. Animals don't talk. We got rules.
>
> I fell out of the sky, says Changing Woman. I'm very sorry that I landed on Old Coyote.
>
> The sky! shouts the little man. Hallelujah! A gift from heaven. My name's Noah, and you must be my new wife.
>
> I doubt that, says Changing Woman.
>
> Lemme see your breasts, says Noah. I like women with big breasts. I hope God remembered that.
>
> Don't do it, says one of the Turtles. He'll just get excited and rock the canoe.
>
> I have no intention of showing him my breasts, says Changing Woman.
>
> Talking to the animals again, shouts Noah. That's almost bestiality, and it's against the rules.
>
> What rules?
>
> Christian rules. (160)

Evidently, Noah becomes a laughing stock during this lively conversation because of his blatant misreading of a number of elements that are commonplace in Native creation stories, which ends up making him sound like a despotic male chauvinist. Nonetheless, it is more than likely that King's most corrosive criticism is being directed at the kind of attitudes that the white man exhibited toward Native spirituality when they first came into contact. In connection with this point, Turbide (1993: 44) wrote in an early review of the novel that "[b]y portraying biblical stories from a native point of view, King shows how illogical and foreign the natives found the Christian religion [… and] he illustrates how white culture misinterpreted, ridiculed and even outlawed native beliefs". In passages like those quoted above, King is able to retrieve some of the ideals of wholeness and reciprocity —so central to Native religious sensibility— by setting them side by side with the misogynous and often brutal ways of Western theologies.[5] Thanks to these intertextual cross-references, the author achieves a reversal of power relations that, besides increasing the comic temperature of the text, also contributes to the continuance of important tribal values and rituals.

But if biblical stories are certainly one of King's favorite targets in his efforts to dismantle Western myths, the same could be said about his handling of some literary classics and cowboy movies. Evidently, the names adopted by the four old Indians —whose intertextuality is also beyond any question— are an initial sign of this writer's keenness on literary allusions that contravene the significance of the original scripts. Early in the novel, we begin to realize that the runaway Indians are none other than First, Changing, Thought, and Old Woman, "the four archetypal Indian women who come right out of oral creation stories" (Gzowski 1995: 67) in disguise:

> It looks like the work of Indians, says those live rangers. Yes, they all say together. It looks just like the work of Indians. And those rangers look at First Woman and Ahdamn.
>
> Definitely Indians, says one of the rangers, and the live rangers point their guns at First Woman and Ahdamn.
>
> Just a minute, says First Woman, and that one takes some black cloth out of her purse. She cuts some holes in that black cloth. She puts that black cloth around her head.
>
> Look, look, all the live rangers says, and they point their fingers at First Woman. It's the Lone Ranger. Yes, they says, it is the Lone Ranger.
>
> That's me, says First Woman.
>
> Hooray, says those rangers, you are alive.
>
> That's me, says First Woman.
>
> Boy, says one of the live rangers, that's good news. I'll just shoot this Indian for you.
>
> No, no, says First Woman. That's my Indian friend. He helped save me from the rangers.

> You mean the Indians, don't you? says those rangers.
> That's right, says First Woman with the mask on. His name is Tonto.
> That's a stupid name, says those rangers. Maybe we should call him Little Beaver, or Chingachgook or Blue Duck.
> No, says First Woman, his name is Tonto.
> Yes, says Ahdamn, who is holding his knees from banging together, my name is Tonto.
> Okay, says those rangers, but don't say we didn't try to help. And they gallop off, looking for Indians and buffalo and poor people and other good things to kill. (75-76)

Smith (1997: xii) notes that trickster-like figures, such as those represented by these four mythical women, "revel in the hazardous complexity of life" in colonized settings and that their main function is "to shake things up, splinter the monologic, shatter the hierarchies" so as to permit a closer study of difference. Although King's use of subversive allusion is admittedly attenuated by the comic brushstrokes, there is little question that his cross-textual intrusions are an attack on the values and interpretations frequently attached to some of the classics in Western literature. This Copernican revolution in literary meaning is achieved most often by engaging in modes of figuration completely different from the teleological storyline on which the Euro-American tradition has usually relied. Notice, for example, the unexpected and hilarious turn that Melville's classic *Moby Dick* takes in King's hands when Ahab is displaced from his all-dominant position:

> We're looking for the white whale, Ahab tells his men. Keep looking.
> So Ahab's men look at the ocean and they see something and that something is a whale.
> Blackwhaleblackwhaleblackwhalesbianblackwhalesbianblackwhale, they all shout.
> Black whale? yells Ahab. You mean white whale, don't you? Moby-Dick, the great male white whale?
> That's not a white whale, says Changing Woman. That's a female whale and she's black.
> Nonsense, says Ahab. It's Moby-Dick, the great white whale.
> You're mistaken, says Changing Woman, I believe that is Moby-Jane, the Great Black Whale. (219-220)

Like Morrison's (1992: 31-59) ground-breaking reassessment of Poe, Melville, and Twain in *Playing in the Dark*, King, instead of concentrating on the hegemonic white patriarchs, also shifts the reader's attention to black, female, and even lesbian America. Moreover, in this re-invention of the original sea epic, not only are Ahab's perceptions and disquisitions proven to be clamorously incorrect but, when he finally decides to throw everybody overboard for challenging his viewpoint, "the great male adventure story turns into a female friendship story" (Fee and Flick 1999: 135). To the reader's bewilderment and amusement, Changing Woman and Moby-Jane are portrayed riding the waves in an overtly erotic embrace:

> Perhaps we could swim some more, says Changing Woman.
> That would be lovely, says Moby-Jane, but I have to get back and sink that ship again.
> Moby-Jane and Changing Woman hug each other. Changing Woman is very sad. Good-bye, says Changing Woman. Have fun sinking that ship. (249)

No need to explain that the sinking of the *Pequod* in this subaltern narrative represents the vanquishing of something much larger and more dangerous than egocentric Ahab. It is the whole Western binary and hierarchical way of seeing that is being sabotaged here. In this regard, Bakhtin's (1981: 366) reflections on carnivalesque techniques seem particularly appropriate for examining King's fiction, since the release of alternative voices brings to an end "the hegemony of a single and unitary language" and causes "a verbal and semantic decentering of the ideological world". The key aim of all these intertextual references is to upset previously controlling ideologies by means of the intervention of voices and perspectives that had been hitherto excluded or, at least, relegated to the margins.[6]

Although the impact of these Western master-narratives on the psychology and lifestyle of many of the Native characters in the novel should never be underestimated, yet, what most effectively seems to subjugate them is the existence of representations that construct them as a 'fixed Other', needed by the white world to maintain a given order. Bhabha (1994: 66) defines stereotype as "a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated […]"; it is this ambivalence —and the silence of other actors— that ensures both its perdurability and discriminatory power in colonized contexts. Aware of the centrality of stereotyping in processes of conquest and domination, King engages some of the malign ways in which the image of the Indian has been manipulated by the Western mind in order to reify its difference. Late in the novel, Old Woman meets "a short, skinny guy in a leather shirt with fringe standing behind one of the trees" who mistakes her for Chingachgook. Predictably, he is Nathaniel Bumppo, "Post-Colonial Wilderness Guide and Outfitter" (433), who is known by his friends as *Nasty* Bumppo. Like Ahab and Noah earlier on, Nasty displays the same narrow-mindedness and prejudices that distinguish most non-Native characters in the novel:

> Indians have Indian gifts, says Nasty Bumppo. And Whites have white gifts. […]
> Indians can run fast. Indians can endure pain. Indians have quick reflexes. Indians don't talk much. Indians have good eyesight. Indians have agile bodies. These are the Indian gifts, says Nasty Bumppo.
> Interesting, says Old Woman.
> Whites are patient. Whites are spiritual. Whites are cognitive. Whites are philosophical. Whites are sophisticated. Whites are sensitive. These are all white gifts, says Nasty Bumppo.

> So, says Old Woman. Whites are superior, and Indians are inferior.
> Exactly right, says Nasty Bumppo. Any question? (434-435)

It could be argued, of course, that King decides to take the easy path every time he wants to show the intolerance and racism of the white world, as one can fairly easily recast these literary figures into plainly detestable beings. But if this were so, he could be held responsible for resorting to tactics similar to those used by the colonizer since, as Allen (1983: 189) warns us, when authors and critics "[s]implistically delineate unifying characteristics of contemporary Indians [and whites], they will repeat the sins of the fathers by manipulating new stereotypes to suit their concepts of 'ethnic' or 'minority' literature". Nevertheless, King avoids this pitfall by never using his re-appropriation of colonial discourse to institute a similar form of govern(ment)ality or domination; on the contrary, his repetitions and irony are continually producing their own slippages and differences (Cf. Slapkauskaite 2006).

It is in his portrayal of the more contemporary and realistic characters that King is at his best, for it is in them that his "cartographies of difference" (Goldman 1999: 20) become more subtle and accomplished. The synopses of the sub-plots above should have made clear that it is diversity and heterogeneity that characterize the gallery of Native portraits appearing in the novel. Owens (1992: 18) notes that most contemporary Indian novelists eschew in their fiction the poetics of the American gothic with its guilt-burdened wilderness and doomed, one-dimensional Natives, "[…] emphatically making the Indian the hero of other destinies, other plots". Still, in spite of the conspicuous differences the reader observes between characters like Alberta, Charlie, Lionel, or Latisha, the latter are quite often perceived by Anglo-Americans as the embodiment of an aboriginal identity and age-old traditions. Clifford Sifton, the constructor who built the Grand Baleen Dam, is a case in point as he can rarely see beyond inherited stereotypes and his own business interests:

> "Hell, Eli, those treaties aren't worth a damn. Government only made them for convenience. Who'd of guessed that there would still be Indians kicking around in the twentieth century".
> "One of life's little embarrassments".
> "Besides, you guys aren't real Indians anyway. I mean, you drive cars, watch television, go to hockey games. Look at you. You're a university professor".
> "That's my profession. Being Indian isn't a profession".
> "And you speak as good English as me".
> "Better", said Eli. "And I speak Blackfoot too. My sisters speak Blackfoot. So do my niece and nephew".
> "That's what I mean. Latisha runs a restaurant and Lionel sells televisions. Not exactly traditionalist, are they?"

> "It's not exactly the nineteenth century, either".
> "Damn it. That's my point. You can't live in the past. My dam is part of the twentieth century. Your house is part of the nineteenth". (155)

In the best tradition of Socratic dialogue, but also borrowing heavily from the kind of rhetorical contests often played in Native gatherings, this conflictive exchange conveys overtly the kind of pigeonholing that indigenous peoples have been subjected to in Euro-American minds and histories. Sifton exhibits a typically colonialist attitude toward the Natives that, in marking them out as uniform and inferior, tries to simplify and reduce their variegated spheres of activity. Bhabha (1994: 70-71) argues, following very much the same line, that "colonial discourse produces the colonized as a reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible".

Lionel Red Dog, the TV salesman, is very likely the best example in the novel of a Blackfoot Indian who has completely lost his sense of selfhood and orientation in a world where Natives are confined to roles as losers and 'limited beings'. As his aunt Norma constantly reminds him, Lionel was driven from very early in his purposeless existence by the illusion of turning into a white hero:

> By the time Lionel was six, he knew what he wanted to be.
> John Wayne.
> Not the actor, but the character. Not the man, but the hero. The John Wayne who cleaned up cattle towns and made them safe for decent folk. The John Wayne who shot guns out of the hands of outlaws. The John Wayne who saved stagecoaches and wagon trains from Indian attacks.
> When Lionel told his father he wanted to be John Wayne, his father said it might be a good idea, but that he should keep his options open. (265)

Lionel, who is nearing the troubling age of forty, promises himself on several occasions that he is going to talk to Bill Bursum, his abusive and insensitive employer at the TV store, about his intention of resuming his university studies. Likewise, he intends to update Alberta on his plans for the future in a final attempt to gain her affection. However, the pressure of Western myths has lain too heavily on him for his life prospects to be able to change overnight and, at the end of the book, it is still unclear whether he will show the courage to make that definite turn. Yet, unsure as Lionel is, he enjoys a glimpse of hope in the late stages of the novel when the four runaway Indians and Coyote play a funny trick on the predictable Westerns that Bursum loves to watch on his TV sets:[7]

> The soldiers ran back to their logs and holes and rocks, shooting as they went. But as Lionel and Charlie and Eli and the old Indians and Bill and Coyote watched, none of the Indians fell. John Wayne looked at his gun. Richard Widmark was pulling the trigger on empty chambers. The front of his fancy pants was dark and wet.
> "Boy", said Eli, "they're going to have to shoot better than that".

> And then Portland [Charlie's father] and the rest of the Indians began to shoot back, and soldiers began falling over. Sometimes two or three soldiers would drop at once, clutching their chests or their heads or their stomachs.
>
> John Wayne looked down and stared stupidly at the arrow in his thigh, shaking his head in amazement and disbelief as two bullets ripped through his chest and out the back of his jacket. Richard Widmark collapsed facedown in the sand, his hands clutching at an arrow buried in his throat.
>
> "Jesus!" said Bursum, and he stabbed the remote even harder. (358)

This radical revision of the closing scenes of *The Mysterious Warrior*[8] is no doubt the most valuable birthday present Lionel could receive from Coyote and the four mythical figures, since it should allow him to see the kind of lie he has been living in as a result of his reliance on Western modes of representation. Goldman (1999: 28) has observed that readers become aware that "the younger generation's inability to reckon their place in the world stems, in part, from the fact that generation after generation of Native peoples have been forced to take direction from non-Natives, who expect them to play stereotyped, over-determined roles". Once the illusion of the white myths is destroyed and the linear trajectory of their narratives challenged and contested, Native characters are able to go back to their cultural roots in search of more organic and congenial paths of self-realization. Although Lionel and Charlie may need the guidance of their elders and some figures deeply-rooted in the oral tradition to relinquish the false idols they have been taught to venerate, *Green Grass, Running Water* makes it clear that there is hope for the retrieval of a Native identity and its rituals.

In fact, the two main female characters in the novel, Alberta Frank and Latisha Red Dog, seem to be much better equipped than their male counterparts to face the pressures that the non-Native world exerts on them. This may well derive from their adherence to their Indian heritage and the people who unconditionally work to preserve it. In the case of Alberta, her position as a professor of Native history at the University of Calgary has long familiarized her with the kind of misconceptions and disinterest that white Americans usually exhibit towards her people. Her lecture early in the novel on the Fort Marion Ledger Art (1874) fails to open her students' eyes to the incredible endurance and solidarity that this classic 'text' of Native art reveals in the face of dispossession and exile. Only one of her students —non-coincidentally named Helen Mooney[9]— seems to show some concern for the fate of the seventy-two Native prisoners who produced those marvelous drawings of a race on its way to extinction. But even more injurious to Alberta's unstable sense of selfhood than her pupils' lack of interest in her people are her encounters with other characters who, generally, project her into identity moulds utterly foreign to her nature. For instance, when she arrives in Blossom to celebrate Lionel's fortieth birthday and decides to stop at the local Lodge because

she detests driving at night, the desk clerk immediately categorizes her as the 'average' Indian wife:

> "I'd like a room for the night".
> "Mr. and Mrs.?"
> "No, a room for one".
> The desk clerk looked over his glasses at Alberta.
> "As I recall, you have a university discount", she continued
> "And does the lady work at a university?"
> Alberta pulled out her university identification card and her driver's license.
> The desk clerk smiled and handed her cards back to her. "You can't always tell by looking", he said.
> "How true it is", said Alberta. "I could have been a corporate executive". (194-195)

As is the case here, due to her education and her experience in non-Native contexts Alberta is able to retaliate on most occasions when her individual freedom and identity are offended in such gross ways. Still, the kind of damage done to her personality and self-esteem by these frequent encounters with characters suffering from an 'image distortion disorder' cannot be easily estimated. Michael LeNoir (1998: 326) comments on this point that "[t]he perception painted by television of people of color becomes a reality, and it creates a background of anxiety and fear in America that is dangerous". It would be rather naïve to expect these Native women to walk out psychically unaffected by their collisions with all the rudeness and negativity that whites —and especially men— display toward them. Yet, Alberta's resistance to the power of Native stereotypes to set specific agendas for her future is rewarded in the last stages of King's novel by her full immersion in her people's Sun Dance ceremony and her unexpected pregnancy by a rain far more 'arousing' than Charlie's or Lionel's personalities:

> Alberta felt a little weird sitting at the table, looking out the window at the parking lot, wrapped in a heavy blanket, holding a hair dryer on her lap. But it felt wonderful. And it was drying her clothes. Already she was beginning to feel her breasts again, and her panties had lost that awful clammy texture. In fact, working the nozzle of the hair dryer in particular directions felt slightly erotic. (392-393)

Latisha Red Dog's confrontation with white ethnocentrism and her combat against the process of stereotypical representation take a more truly Native and effective form. Unlike Alberta, she has remained closely attached to the Blackfoot Reservation and has allowed her parents and extended family to have an important influence on her lifestyle and world view. Despite her mistake in marrying George Morningstar,[10] a lazy and irresponsible white American, she has managed to bring up and keep her three children together, and to run her family business quite successfully. In order to do so, she has relied on the organic strategies of the cycle and performance that in many ways permit her to escape the teleological narrative

patterns of the Western culture and to engage in alternative modes of self-representation. Rather than upsetting Native stereotypes by changing the expected path of her existence, the way Eli or Alberta do, Latisha prefers to fetishize them so as to be able to employ them as an affirmation of wholeness and solidarity and, at the same time, of anxiety over their inevitable difference with respect to other identities. She seems to have learnt that stereotypes are not harmful in themselves but may easily become so in the power relations between colonizer and colonized, if they are permitted to dispossess the Others of their right to be different. Bhabha (1994: 75) has formulated this same idea in the following terms:

> The stereotype is not a simplification because it is a false representation of a given reality. It is a simplification because it is an arrested, fixated form of representation that, in denying the play of difference (which the negation through the Other permits), constitutes a problem for the *representation* of the subject in significations of psychic and social relations. (emphasis in the original)

Latisha's "Dead Dog Café" is very likely the clearest manifestation of her profound understanding of the workings of stereotypical representations. As several conversations with her husband reveal, she is aware that what may hurt the psychological poise of her people is not so much the sweeping statements and foolish generalizations made by other groups about them but, rather, their inability to see beyond the kind of false fixity that they imply. With the invaluable assistance of her elders, she transforms a small town café into a successful tourist restaurant by keeping things simple and just going a bit beyond the usual expectations of her customers. Thus, the choice of a few pictures depicting Indians and dogs on the walls of the premises, and the change of name of the beef stew they cook every day bring about the miracle:

> The food at the Dead Dog was good, but what drew tourists to the café was the ambience and the reputation that it had developed over the years. Latisha would like to have been able to take all the credit for transforming the Dead Dog from a nice local establishment with a loyal but small clientele to a nice local establishment with a loyal but small clientele *and* a tourist trap. But, in fact, it had been her auntie's idea. "Tell them it's dog meat", Norma had said. "Tourists like that kind of stuff".
>
> That had been the inspiration. Latisha printed up menus that featured such things as Dog du Jour, Houndburgers, Puppy Potpourri, Hot Dogs, Saint Bernard Swiss Melts, with Doggie Doos and Deep-Fried Puppy Whatnots for appetizers. (117)

Latisha's consciousness that racist stereotypical discourse is not merely a question of setting up a flat and inaccurate image of the Other —but, also, of how those images are projected and introjected— allows her to reverse the positionings of her power relations with the white world. This reversal is important because it reveals a great deal of the 'fantasy' (always related to defense and desire) involved in the colonizer's habitual position of mastery (Cf. Bhabha 1994: 85-92). Her

observations near the end of the novel on the need to rebuild their grandmother's house beneath the dam —although, again, it is her aunt who takes the initiative— further suggest that there may be alternative ways for her people other than simply adopting the roles that non-Natives are constantly defining for them: "Latisha put her arm around Alberta. 'Come on', she said. 'We'll catch lunch at the Dead Dog, get changed, and get to work'" (464).

Although characters like Norma, Alberta, and Latisha do contribute significantly to the preservation and transmission of some of the essential values in tribal cultures —dignity, solidarity, and continuance, most noticeably—, the narrative would never have managed to create those "new cartographies of difference" without the active roles played by Coyote and the I-narrator. These figures have two fundamental functions in King's novel: on the one hand, they incorporate into the written text some of the key features of Native oral storytelling, thus forcing the reader to deal with two signifying codes and two forms of cultural dissemination all at once; on the other, they succeed in recovering a certain balance amid the apparent chaos of most situations by means of a type of humor that they believe to be integral to all kinds of life on this earth. Coyote, in particular, displays many of the features we associate with trickster figures in Native stories: he is versatile and ambiguous, a deceiver, shape-shifter and situation-invertor, and he is a sacred and lewd bricoleur (see Hynes 1993: 34). Again, King uses these two characters —or, rather, their voices— as counterpoints to the heroes depicted in Western myths, who often gain their stature in static fragments of written narratives. Unlike those personages, who are guided by a very rigid set of moral principles, these figures learn to live in a context of duplicity and volatility, tension and contradiction that hardly allows for the consolidation of more stable and definite values. On this point, Vizenor (1995: 4) further clarifies that "the trickster is comic in the sense that he does not reclaim idealistic ethics, but survives as a part of the natural world; he represents a spiritual balance in a comic drama rather than the romantic elimination of human contradiction and evil".

It is no wonder that readers should sometimes feel disconcerted by the swiftness with which these characters oscillate between the Native and the non-Native, the sacred and the sacrilegious, the fantastic and the real, or the living and the dead. After a conversation between Old Woman and *Nasty* Bumppo, during which the latter tries to decide on the most adequate name for the former (Daniel Boone, Harry Truman, Arthur Watkins, or Hawkeye), Coyote and the narrator go on deliberating upon the issue:

> "Hawkeye?" says Coyote. "Is that a good Indian name?"
> "No", I says. "It sounds like a name for a white person who wants to be an Indian".
> "Who would want to be an Indian?" says Coyote.
> "Not me", I says.
> "Not me, either", says Coyote. (437)

As usual, these dialogical structures seem to undermine the authority of several earlier written texts —most conspicuously those in Cooper's Leatherstocking Saga— by means of highly ironic comments on those novels. Unlike Western narratives, though, rather than assuming that authority for themselves, these conversations exhibit a fluid and incomplete quality that makes meaning dependent on situation and historical context. By saying that neither of them wants to be an Indian, Coyote and the I-narrator are not just parodying and deconstructing Cooper's script of Native romantic idealization, but also questioning some of the ways in which the Natives (mis)represent themselves in the novel. In this new light, it is not so surprising that the acts and judgments of these trickster figures should sometimes misfire or prove utterly incorrect. After all, they do not seem to be any freer than anyone else of the imperfections that plague most human beings. Hence, when the four old Indians accuse Coyote of having caused a terrible mess by destroying the Grand Baleen Dam near the end of the book, he can only reply:

> "I didn't do anything", says Coyote. "I just sang a little".
> "Oh, boy", said the Lone Ranger.
> "I just danced a little, too", says Coyote.
> "Oh, boy", says Ishmael.
> "But I was helpful, too", says Coyote. "That woman who wanted a baby. Now, that was helpful".
> "Helpful!" said Robinson Crusoe. "You remember the last time you did that?"
> "I'm quite sure I was in Kamloops", says Coyote.
> "We haven't straightened out *that* mess yet", said Hawkeye.
> "Hee-hee", says Coyote. "Hee-hee". (456)

Coyote's hilarity is likely to derive from his consciousness that because his behavior does not respond to any preconceived moral principles, it is quite impossible to foresee the kind of meanings that it will give rise to: in a contrary spirit, like life itself, he just follows certain cycles that may result in happy denouements or some fatal consequences. In this sense, the connection made between Alberta's impregnation by rain water and that of the Virgin Mary —by the Holy Ghost (?)— seems truly appropriate since in both cases it is for the storyteller and the audience to decide whether the signs left by these events on the narrative may help us understand something about the current plight of American Indians and about ourselves. As Hirsch (2004: 170) rightly explains, what King's work ultimately creates is "human space, to the extent that we embody its ambiguities and contradictions, recognize the sweep and shifting tenor of its joys and sorrows, and remain open to various ways of perceiving and expressing all these things".

Now, although it is a fact that the oral character of much of King's text is intended to undermine not only the authority of the Western narratives it constantly interacts

with but also that of the 'revisions' it usually puts forth, it would be inaccurate to assume that the book is devoid of any final meaning or significance. Much has been written about *Green Grass, Running Water* as a novel that, by using a multivocal and oral discourse, "rejects the single plot which builds coherently to a significant climax and an all-encompassing resolution" (Bailey 1999: 46). And, indeed, the fact that it is difficult to speak of a single main character or a principal story line in the book may contribute, initially, to this impression that the story is only meant to stir up a feeling of amusing disorder that readers are to enjoy as pure entertainment. Nevertheless, as I remarked at the beginning of this article, it is quite characteristic of King to hide the most disruptive and critical elements of his fiction behind a mask of comicality that may divert the readers' attention from what the text is truly doing. As most ethnographers well know, besides offering the audience a merry way to pass the time, Native storytelling also plays a part in the healing rituals aimed at repairing the physical and psychological damage inflicted by the dominant culture (cf. Daxell 2003). Hyde (1998: 12) notes in this regard that trickster stories are important to Native 'survivance' both as entertainment but also as medicine that "[k]nits things together again after disorder has left a wound". It would then be a serious analytical blunder not to notice the key transformations undergone by most of the characters as a result of their trying experiences and the new equilibrium attained by the Blackfoot community after the 'deluge' that follows the bursting of the dam.[11] While it is true that many of the characters —especially those of the younger generation— pay a substantial price for breaking the identity moulds they had previously relied on, it is also clear that their participation in the Sun Dance ceremony and the regenerating effects of the collapse of the dam mark a profound change in their relation with their own culture. It seems only logical in this sense that the four old Indians should conclude after their short visit to Blossom, Alberta, that "we have fixed up part of the world" (466) since, at least, they have managed to make a handful of Native Americans aware of their ties with and responsibilities toward their people.

In order to render this resolution, King resorts once again to some of the comic techniques he has deployed throughout the novel: puns, anti-logocentrism, overlapping historical references and anachronisms, mocking stereotypes, and so on. Perhaps one of the most climactic moments in the book is the scene in which we are privy to the destruction of Sifton's beautiful, shell-like construction —which, ironically, Eli compares to "a huge toilet" (148). Interestingly, the dam is not destroyed by an attack of Native activists or, even, solely by the effects of Coyote's unruly singing and dancing, which are said to cause an earthquake:

> Clifford Sifton and Lewis Pick watched the Nissan, the Pinto, and the Karmann-Ghia float into the dam just as the earthquake began. Almost imperceptibly, the waters swelled and the cars were thrown into the dam, hard, insistent. And before either

> man realized what was happening, a tremor rolled in out of the west, tipping the lake on its end.
>
> Pick and Sifton were knocked to the ground, and as they tried to stand, they were knocked down again. It was comical at first, the two men trying to find their footing, the cars smashing into the dam, the lake curling over the top.
>
> But beneath the power and motion there was a more ominous sound of things giving way, of things falling apart. (454)

Readers are likely to find the comical "dance" of the dam keepers to the rhythms of its destruction funny. King's depiction of the event, however, ostensibly conveys a serious critique of the ways the white man has been paving the way for his domination of the American landscape and its earlier settlers, and how that domination has later been historicized by Western culture. To the repeated references to the (re)creation of the world after the Flood, King adds on this occasion several allusions to the myth of the discovery of the New World, which according to many historians marked the beginning of modern times. Columbus's caravels, the *Niña*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa María*, are refashioned here as the three cars which fall into Parliament Lake and, eventually, precipitate the collapse of the huge construction. Any reader failing to get the in-joke about the consequences of the arrival of the white man's technological innovations to the Americas would be missing much of the negative judgment that King is passing on this intrusion. While the West has usually interpreted this meeting of the two worlds as the initial step towards more developed and progress-driven societies, from the point of view of Native Americans this confluence of radically different cultures represented the beginning of their decline. The "ominous sound of things giving way, of *things falling apart*" (my emphasis) is, of course, related to the literal bursting of the dam and the flushing out of automobiles, concrete, steel, and other similar 'detritus' generated by civilization. And yet, by echoing the title of Achebe's (1994) well-known novel about the impact of missionaries and commissioners on a small African village, King is also commenting on the disastrous consequences of the encroachment of Western culture upon the American landscape and its indigenous population.

For most critics, Eli Stands Alone becomes another innocent victim of this encroachment and his death tinges the ending of the novel with an unusually tragic tone. In trying to preserve the house that his mother built log by log right on what is now the spillway of the dam, he is fighting not only to retain his family's properties but also to keep alive his tribe's cultural heritage, which is being gradually annihilated by the introduction of modern technologies. It is only natural that the survivors in his family should feel sad and obliged to him when, a little over a month after the flood, they visit the place where his mother's cabin used to stand. However, while the younger members believe that Eli's demise represents

a sombre conclusion to his battle over the land and water rights of his people, Norma tries to convince them that his life and self-immolation were an example to be followed. She immediately sets to work on the reconstruction of her mother's cabin by looking around for the main posts:

> "Not much left", said Charlie.
> "Everything's still here", said Norma.
> "Well, the cabin's not here", said Charlie. "And neither is Eli".
> "Charlie!" said Alberta. "God, you can really be sensitive".
> Norma waved Charlie off. "Eli's fine. He came home. More than I can say for some people I know". (461)

Despite the grief she must be feeling after those difficult circumstances, Norma finds the humor and strength necessary to try to entice all her relatives to join in the crusade against the invading civilization that Eli only partly completed. In her eyes, Eli "had a good life, and he lived it right" (460) and his disappearance, rather than a cause of sorrow and despair, should encourage others to take up the attitudes and responsibilities that the 'survivance' of culture requires (Lousley 2004: 41). It is no coincidence that Eli meets his fate at dawn on the day of the tribal Sun Dance that he so much cherishes and that he enjoys a brief but reassuring conversation with the four ancient Indians who are intent on bringing some sense of order and cohesion to his community:

> The old Indians turned to watch the sun rise. It was above the horizon now, too brilliant to look at directly.
> "This is a nice place to live", said the Lone Ranger.
> "Is that the dam?" said Ishmael.
> Eli turned and nodded. "That's right. Government built it to help Indians. There's a lake that goes with it".
> "Is the lake for Indians, too?" said Robinson Crusoe.
> "So they say", said Eli, turning away from the dam. "We're all supposed to be millionaires".
> "It doesn't look like an Indian dam", said Hawkeye. "It doesn't look like an Indian lake".
> "Perhaps it's a Coyote dam", says Coyote. "Perhaps it's a Coyote lake".
> Eli went into the kitchen and brought out more coffee cups. "Here", he said. "Just brewed".
> "It's going to be a good day", said the Lone Ranger. "I can feel it".
> "You bet", said Eli, and he arranged the coffee cups on the porch. But as Eli reached for the coffeepot, it began to rattle and then bounce. Eli grabbed the railing of the porch and tried to stand up. And as he did, the land began to dance. (149-150)

The irony and double entendres present in this lively dialogue suggest once more that the battle to bring the exploitation and annihilation of Native cultures to an

end is far from being over. Eli's acceptance of his role as a scapegoat in his people's struggle to keep their rituals and traditions alive should never be understood as a defeat or a pitiful accident to mourn over. Hirsch (2004: 165) has rightly noted that the fact that he is killed "is by no means a judgment upon him. Life and death comprise the natural order. They are part of a single process and generate each other. Eli dies because people die. He lives in the flow of the river he sought to free". The fact that he is able to find a funny side to his existence and that of his tribesfolk, even when he realizes that the end must be near, speaks clearly of both his belief in humor as a powerful weapon in contexts of postcolonial domination and his conviction that resistance will continue even after the fall of some of the braves. In this regard, Eli Stands Alone is not unlike the author of the novel himself who can also be considered a contemporary warrior-artist as he relies on the comic to challenge and resist Western modes of representation and identity moulds that have imprisoned Native Americans for centuries.[12] King would definitely agree with Allen (1986: 158) when she maintains that laughter and jokes become more habitual in Native American communities when their life is especially squalid and limited: "many [of the jokes are] directed at the horror of history, at the continuing impact of civilization, and at the biting knowledge that living as an exile in one's own land necessitates".

To conclude, Thomas King's novel *Green Grass, Running Water* should be read primarily as a narrative of resistance in which a Native American artist embarks on an in-depth revision of the content of the relations between his people and the mainstream culture. Arteaga (1999: 334) sees the emergence of this kind of narratives as a sign of physical and political empowerment and he notes that "it is for this reason that a people resisting oppression constructs an alternate reality, constructs narratives of resistance". King can be said to do just that since he uses the comic strategies that his culture and intelligence afford him to wrestle with the religious, literary, and historical discourses of the West in order to redefine the content of the reality Native Americans have to face on a daily basis. As I have shown above, although a superficial reading of the text may suggest that we are dealing with a light-hearted humorous literary experiment mostly aimed at entertaining the reader, there is an undercurrent of very serious and contesting critique intent on subverting some of the key ideals and myths of Western culture. Perhaps the strongest evidence to support this claim is the fact that, in the last pages of the novel, Coyote is asked by his fellow world-fixers to apologize "in case we hurt anyone's feelings" (468). Readers are also likely to be greatly disturbed by the presence of the mythical Native figures that, eventually, are seen to determine the fate of the more realistic characters in the book. About this possible objection, King himself has said that "the line that we think so firm between reality and fantasy is not so firm at all, that there's a great deal of play in it, and that the line itself is an

imaginary one […]" (Gzowski, 1999: 70). And, in fact, it could be argued that while it is true that Lionel's, Alberta's or Eli's fates are deeply affected by the doings of those magical figures, one could equally assert that those Native 'figments of imagination' only make sense when we consider them in the circumstances that Blackfoot Indians face in the real world. These circumstances are in great part shaped by the deep physical and psychological wounds that the Euro-American colonizers have historically inflicted on their culture and way of life.

Notes

[1]. A shorter version of this article was presented at the Conference "Mapping the Hybrid Space: Inter-Ethnic Approaches to American Literature", held at the University of Castilla-La Mancha in Ciudad Real the Fall of 2003. I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to all the other participants in the Conference for their challenging and illuminating comments after I delivered my paper.

[2]. In this sense, my analysis is more in line with the literature produced by authors such as Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (1969) or Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970). I am aware that some contemporary scholars would find these discussions excessively nationalist and 'essentialist' in character but, as I see it, they marked the beginning of a project of cultural revitalization that has not been fully completed yet.

[3]. Obviously, Gates' idea of African Americans as "masters of the figurative" is deeply indebted to W.E.B. DuBois' well-known discussion of black psychology in his *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903). In particular, Dubois's usage of the concept of "double-consciousness" —which he probably borrowed from his mentor at Harvard, William James— is essential to understand why African Americans developed this capacity to mean at two distinct levels.

[4]. In this regard, Thomas King closely resembles the 'postindian warriors' that Gerald Vizenor so well describes in Chapter 1 of *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance* (1993).

[5]. For a revealing analysis that connects religion —or, rather, some religions in particular— with violence, see Ken Derry, "Religion and (Mimetic) Violence in Canadian Native Literature" (2002).

[6]. Gayatri C. Spivak sets out to theorize the changes occurred in modes of production by the dialogues and confrontations of the subaltern/colonized groups with their histories of domination and exploitation in "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography" (1988).

[7]. Bill Bursum has put up a magnificent and spectacular display in his store by building a map of the US and Canada using over two hundred TV sets of different kinds and sizes. For the storekeeper, this 'cultural construct' represents the ultimate "unifying metaphor" and one that is "beyond value" (140) as it is associated in his mind with issues of power and control, like Machiavelli's *The Prince*.

[8]. *The Mysterious Warrior* is a composite of different western movies that King invents. The title could well allude to the TV film *The Mystic Warrior* (1984), which

caused incendiary protest from several Native groups on account of its outrageous misrepresentations of the Sioux.

[9]. Helen Mooney's name is probably connected with James Mooney, an early ethnographer who wrote about Cherokee sacred formulas and their Ghost Dance.

[10]. This character's name alludes quite clearly to George Armstrong Custer — Union General and famous Indian fighter— who was referred to as "Son of the Morning Star" by the Natives in Dakota territory. Furthermore, Latisha's ex-husband is fond of dressing in the uncommon and extravagant outfits that Custer wore.

[11]. In her study of trickster aesthetic, Smith (1997: 8) underlines that "though often bawdy and even anarchic, trickster tales teach through comic example and define culture by transgressing its boundaries. It may only be a Western aversion to paradox and disorder, then, that so distorts the trickster's image in the popular imagination".

[12]. Ibis Gómez-Peña reaches very much the same conclusion in "Subverting the 'Mainstream' Paradigm through Magical Realism in Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water*" (2001).

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JOHN DOS PASSOS IN SPAIN

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In 1931, Ernest Hemingway wrote to John Dos Passos from Madrid: "You are the great writer of Spain" (Baker 1968: 342). The two friends both knew Spain, but Dos Passos got there first. After graduating from Harvard, Dos Passos studied Spanish language, literature and culture at the Centro de Estudios Históricos in Madrid in 1916-17, and he returned for almost eight months in 1918-19 (Carr 1984: 101-102). For six weeks he walked with his friend Dudley Moore across the Basque Provinces before returning to Madrid, where he wrote his war novel *Three Soldiers* (1921). In his first Spanish book, *Rosinante to the Road Again* (1922), Telemachus and his bawdy companion, Lyaeus, ramble along Spanish roads in search of "the gesture", the essence of Spanish life that the Dos Passos persona hoped to emulate in words. Spain would remain important to both Dos Passos and Hemingway, from 1924 when they planned a hiking trip from Burguete to Andorra, to other times, as when Hemingway explored Zaragoza during the *feria* and Our Lady of the Pillar festivities in 1926. He used the railway station there in "Hills Like White Elephants" (1927) and would compare both Africa and Wyoming to Aragón in his works. Angel Capellán writes in *Hemingway and the Hispanic World* (1985) that "Aragón had become an integral part of his accumulated memories of Spanish landscapes" (33). In 1937, Dos Passos and Hemingway collaborated with Joris Ivens on the documentary *The Spanish Earth*. Both stayed at the Hotel Florida in Madrid, and both supported the Loyalist cause. But Dos Passos felt that Russian Communists had killed his friend José Robles and Hemingway did not, and their friendship did not

survive the conflict, or their differing ideas about themes and sequences in Ivens's film (Pizer 1986: 115-116; Ludington 1980: 365-374; Donaldson 1985: 176-177; Capellán 247-248). Dos Passos exorcised Spanish ghosts in the novel *Adventures of a Young Man* (1938) and another travel narrative, *Journeys Between Wars* (1938). Both the exuberant Dos Passos of *Rosinante* and the angrier author of *Journeys* enjoy the Spanish people, the land, and the villages, and both present a multicultural and multiregional Spain, at odds with efforts at centralization and unification.

Dos Passos and Hemingway's travels in Europe have intrigued generations of critics. On Spanish ground, Pilar Marín Madrazo explores in *La Gran Guerra en la obra de Hemingway y Dos Passos* (1980) their first encounter with war and its literary significance, while Catalina Montes in *La visión de España en la obra de John Dos Passos* (1980) focuses on Dos Passos and his representation of Spain. Regrettably, these works were largely ignored by Anglo-American critics in the 1980s, when Townsend Lundington, Donald Pizer, Scott Donaldson, and others wrote about the Spanish sojourns of the two expatriate writers. In the 21st Century, Dos Passos and Hemingway in Spain have stimulated critics and writers on both sides of the Atlantic, who attempt to explain their break-up, to understand their politics, or, in the case of Ignacio Martínez de Pisón, to imagine their world. Understandably, Dos Passos critics find the Spanish Civil War and its personal and political conflicts so compelling that they have not fully explained the aesthetic ramifications of his Spanish experiences. In *Rosinante*, Spain becomes a testing ground for aesthetic experiments, as the young author searches for techniques to articulate his resistance to American systems and narratives. The Spanish gesture communicates both aesthetic and political choices and links up with the masculinity that Dos Passos associates with opposition and pride. In his non-fiction from the Second Republic, the author of *U.S.A.* focuses on Spanish politics, but he articulates his own political stance most subtly through form. Apart from his modernist interventions, the older Dos Passos satirizes both Nationalists and Republicans, who subscribe to measures and stories he could not decipher but hoped to deconstruct.

Like his *alter ego* Telemachus, Dos Passos tries in *Rosinante* to locate a gesture that in terms of Spain says it all. "I can't help it. [...] I must catch that gesture, formulate it, do it", Telemachus exclaims to Lyaeus. He is in Spain for this reason: "It's burned into my blood. It must be formulated, made permanent" (Dos Passos 1922: 20). The young traveler traces the gesture in Pastora Imperio's flamenco dance, which represents the Spain he hopes to capture in words. Blood frozen with anticipation, he watches Pandora come on stage:

> Her face is brown, with a pointed chin; her eyebrows that nearly meet over her nose rise in a flattened "A" toward the fervid black gleam of her hair; her lips are pursed in a half-smile as if she were stifling a secret. She walks round the stage slowly, one

> hand at her waist, the shawl tight over her elbow, her thighs lithe and restless, a panther in a cage. At the back of the stage she turns suddenly, advances; the snapping of her fingers gets loud, insistent; a thrill whirrs through the guitar like a covey of partridges scared in a field. Red heels tap threateningly. (Dos Passos 1922: 14-15)

In *lo flamenco*, Pandora erases boundaries between life and death, pleasure and terror, body and mind. She is frightening, nurturing and defiant, the perfect embodiment of Dos Passos's artistic vision: "That gesture, a yellow flame against maroon and purple cadences [...,] an instant swagger of defiance in the midst of a litany to death the all-powerful. That is Spain". Then he corrects himself: "... Castile at any rate" (Dos Passos 1922: 17). With the three dots preceding "Castile", Dos Passos expresses Pandora's ability to bridge the national and the regional, as well as the general and the individual, a balance he himself hoped to strike in his portrait of Spain and in his fiction generally. The ellipsis hides as well his own ambivalence, as he vacillates between anarchistic, individual tendencies and the desire for truth and essence that drives him across Spanish terrain. His art must, like Pandora's, combine danger and healing. It must scare its audience and then offer comfort, "as a nurse might look into the eyes of a child she has unintentionally frightened with a too dreadful fairy story" (Dos Passos 1922: 15). It must, in short, escape established systems and categories.

Spain lends itself to his artistic vision through its lack of unity and organization. As Telemachus watches shadows striped with moonlight in Motril, he contemplates the "bewildering dazzle of the night" and watches three "disconnected mules" jingling out of the shadow in the plaza (Dos Passos 1922: 31). Later, inside the stagecoach, he watches "the mules that roamed drunkenly from side to side of the uneven road" (Dos Passos 1922: 32). Spain becomes an aesthetic discourse stressing asymmetry and disjunction, and Dos Passos identifies difference as a general principle in Spanish art. In El Greco, Goya, Zuloaga and others who have successfully painted the peculiar and the picturesque of Spanish faces and Spanish landscapes, Dos Passos sees a "powerful sense of the separateness of things". On a topic close to his heart and his literary production, Dos Passos notes about Spanish art that it verges on caricature in order to differentiate among individuals. "Given the ebullient fertility of the Spanish mind and its intense individualism", he writes, "a constant slipping over into the grotesque is inevitable" (Dos Passos 1922: 58).

Dos Passos clarifies his aesthetic preferences through the picaresque form of *Rosinante*, which emphasizes fragmentation and non-closure. As modern-day *picaros*, Telemachus and Lyaeus travel across the Iberian Peninsula, their journey dotted with passers-by, talks by the road, and introductions to Spanish writers and educators. Dos Passos does not construct a coherent narrative or a coherent Spain, but he presents an aesthetic vision that led to *U.S.A.* In his famous trilogy, he

begins and ends his American epic with Vag, the traveller-observer who listens to the "speech of the people" as he keeps moving "a hundred miles down the road" (Dos Passos 1937: 3, 1240).

In *U.S.A.* Dos Passos dots his epic of American dreams and disillusions with biographies of famous Americans who had given the nation its contours. By then he had studied Diego Rivera's paintings in the courts of the Secretariat of public education in Mexico City and had learned to paint social criticism with representative figures and words (Dos Passos 1927: 15). In *Rosinante*, the author also interrupts his travel narrative with short biographies of important Spaniards, who serve as role models, or the opposite, to the author-traveller. A Spanish poem about death inspires a journey into the past, where Don Jorge is mourning his father, the Master of Santiago. Telemachus introduces the poet sitting underneath a lemon tree, in the court of his "dust-colored" mansion, a myriad of details fleshing out this biographical sketch and halting his own journey across Spain: a suit of black velvet, pigeons cooing, vermilion arabesques, the catafalque of the Master of Santiago, and the waiting bishop impatiently fingering his crosier (Dos Passos 1922: 11). Because of his aesthetic mission in *Rosinante*, Dos Passos prefers to portray writers, scholars and artists. Another biographical intermezzo focuses on Pío Baroja, a "novelist of revolution" (Dos Passos 1922: 80), who obviously inspires both Telemachus and his author. Having practiced medicine without "the cocksure brutality of a country doctor", Baroja opened a bakery and began to write instead (Dos Passos 1922: 82). As in his *U.S.A* trilogy, Dos Passos wraps up his short biography with an evaluation of Baroja's life and worth: "So, by meeting commerce squarely in its own field, he has freed himself from any compromise with Mammon. While his bread remains sweet, his novels may be as bitter as he likes" (Dos Passos 1922: 83). In the portraits of both Don Jorge and Pío Baroja, Dos Passos pays tribute to the individualist aesthetics of resistance that he himself would adopt.

In passing through this or that village, Telemachus experiences both the strength and the weakness of the Spain he visits in 1922. "This intense individualism", Dos Passos writes, "born of a history whose fundamentals lie in isolated village communities —*pueblos*, as the Spaniards call them— over the changeless face of which, like grass over a field, events spring and mature and die, is the basic fact of Spanish life. No revolution has been strong enough to shake it" (Dos Passos 1922: 53). His words conjure up a historical and natural Spain and present his conception of "the changeless Iberian mind", but he resists a national story or history. The country, he finds, is "essentially centrifugal", with centralized government resulting in what he calls "the present atrophy, the desolating resultlessness of a century of revolution". "Iberia exists", he asserts, "but Spain as a modern centralized nation is an illusion" (Dos Passos 1922: 53, 55). Instead, he argues for variety and multiplicity:

> In trying to hammer some sort of unified impression out of the scattered pictures of Spain in my mind, one of the first things I realize is that there are many Spains. Indeed, every village hidden in the folds of the great barren hills, or shadowed by its massive church in the middle of one of the upland plains, every fertile *huerta* of the seacoast, is a Spain. (Dos Passos 1922: 55)

To support his argument, Dos Passos mentions first the linguistic diversity of the Spain he encounters, where he identifies "four distinct languages" (Dos Passos 1922: 55-56). He emphasizes as well the varied topography of the Iberian Peninsula, which he compares to locations across the globe. The central plateaux that have dominated traditional modern history resemble Russian steppes in terms of climate and vegetation; the west coast is a luckier Wales. The southern *huertas* or "arable river valleys" look like Egypt, while the east coast north of Valencia appears as a continuation of coastal Mediterranean France. "In this country", he concludes, "where an hour's train ride will take you from Siberian snow into African desert, unity of population is hardly to be expected" (Dos Passos 1922: 57).

Dos Passos ascribes Spanish pride and religion to intense individualism. A proud Iberian trusts nothing outside the self and moves, like El Greco, towards a "restless, almost sensual spirituality in forms that flickered like white flames toward God". For the Spaniard, he concludes, "God is always, in essence, the proudest sublimation of a man's soul" (Dos Passos 1922: 60). In this "hunger of immortality", Dos Passos finds "the core of the individualism that lurks in all Spanish ideas, the conviction that only the individual soul is real" (Dos Passos 1922: 61). In his view, persistent attempts to unify or centralize —in art, government, philosophy or religion— have resulted in a deadlock, since Spanish energy moves in the opposite direction. Dos Passos sums up the choices facing the country:

> The problem of our day is whether Spaniards evolving locally, anarchically, without centralization in anything but repression, will work out new ways of life for themselves, or whether they will be drawn into the festering tumult of a Europe where the system that is dying is only strong enough to kill in its death-throes all new growth in which there was hope for the future. The Pyrenees are high. (Dos Passos 1922: 65)

Dos Passos's optimism appears not just in his line about the Pyrenees or in his youthful delight with the Spanish people and places of his journey, or in his journey as such. He is on the move, like the young Spanish men eager for love and adventure or the Spanish artists who give Spanish art its "strangely impromptu character". Like the mature Dos Passos, the author of *Rosinante* links art and politics directly. "Perhaps the strong sense of individual validity, which makes Spain the most democratic country in Europe, sanctions the constant improvisation, and accounts for the confident planlessness as common in Spanish architecture as in

Spanish political thought" (Dos Passos 1922: 59-60). The famous author of the *U.S.A.* trilogy, who called himself an "architect of history", is waiting beyond the horizon.

By inhabiting the character of Telemachus, Dos Passos suggests that manhood also awaits him in Spain. Born on the day Odysseus departed for the Trojan War, Telemachus grows up in the company of his mother Penelope and a nurse, without a masculine role model. He bursts into tears in front of the people of Ithaca and is sent off in search of his father by Athena, disguised as Mentor. This quest for masculinity opens *Rosinante*, though Dos Passos stresses that Telemachus no longer remembers what he is looking for, in Spain or elsewhere (Dos Passos 1922: 9). His search for "the gesture" nonetheless takes him to masculine spaces, like the café and bar where Telemachus and Lyaeus find themselves amidst "whiskered men leaning over tables, astride chairs, talking". With the proximity of masculine bodies, Telemachus intuitively remembers his quest. He responds to Lyaeus who has asked why he is in Spain: "It's the gesture that's so overpowering; don't you feel it in your arms? Something sudden and tremendously muscular" (Dos Passos 1922: 17). Lyaeus brings up bullfighting to bolster the masculinity they both desire, including the association between manhood and death that also Hemingway would stress (Dos Passos 1922: 17).

Dos Passos links this pursuit of manhood with his search for aesthetic forms. As his mouthpiece Telemachus recollects the dancing Pastora, the memory turns sexual. The "strong modulations" of the flamenco-dancer, Dos Passos writes, "seemed burned in his flesh. He drew a deep breath. His body tightened like a catapult. 'Oh, to recapture that gesture,' he muttered" (Dos Passos 1922: 19). Through his art, young Dos Passos hoped to prove himself a man. Like Telemachus, he had spent too much time in the company of his mother and his nurses and was ready to strike out on his own. In the *U.S.A.* trilogy, his vision of manhood would link sexuality with aesthetics and politics: the working-class boys and men get closer to the Revolution than the upper-class author of the autobiographical Camera Eye segments. In *Rosinante*, Telemachus idealizes the manly peasants who are anarchists during the day and lovers at night. As Telemachus travels on by coach, the languid driver Paco, the erratic movements of the coach, the uneven road, and the memory of the tavern make up the erotic and political landscape of Andalusia: "As the coach jangled its lumbering unsteady way out of town, our ears still throbbed with the rhythm of the tavern, of hard brown hands clapped in time, of heels thumping on oak floors" (Dos Passos 1922: 34-35). By capturing the gesture of Spain, Dos Passos hoped to write himself into manly action. But his vision retains the homo-social or homo-erotic undertones that critics identify in the Hemingway canon. At the end of *Rosinante*, Telemachus and Lyaeus have become mirror images united by jokes and wet

bodies, while a young Spanish girl remains safely upstairs, a vehicle for the young men's bonding only.

Fifteen years later, in 1937, Dos Passos was approaching the Spanish border as a foreign correspondent and as Hemingway's collaborator on *The Spanish Earth* documentary. The famous author of *U.S.A.* was now less exuberant, if not downright disillusioned. Jorge Luis Borges writes about Dos Passos that his importance is incontestable, but he finds that *U.S.A.* leaves "a final impression of sadness and futility since it suffers from a lack of passion and faith" (Borges 1971: 48). Outside a café at Cerbère, this disheartened author watched with a crowd of old men and a sad-faced woman a distant airplane flying low towards Spain. "Loyalist? Fascist?" they all wonder, as the plane disappeared over the horizon, behind a cemetery (Dos Passos 1938: 348). The beer at the café is flat and sour and, with the disappearing plane, the graveyard and the woman in black, it turns into an omen for his disastrous trip. *Journeys Between Wars* opens with reprinted sections from *Rosinante* and closes with Dos Passos in Civil War Spain and thus links his separate Spanish experiences with his Orient Express accounts bridging the time gap. Once again his form highlights the fragmented and anarchic, as the narrator moves from Madrid under siege to sections on Hotel Florida, scenes from crowded streets and long anxious nights in April 1937, and along narrow rural roads. In the countryside Dos Passos visits village bakeries, fishing towns, and eventually the P.O.U.M. headquarters in Barcelona. The voices of the young and the older Dos Passos mingle in their love for Spain and in finding hope for the future in village communities off the main road. Spanish writers would also combine the personal and the political in their accounts of Civil War Spain, as in Arturo Barea's *La forja de un rebelde* (1951).

In "The Villages Are the Heart of Spain", Dos Passos describes an energetic young doctor unwilling to think of a private life until the Fascists have left Spain. The doctor and the author enter a village bakery, where the cozy smell of bread envelopes the tired travellers, who leave with arms full of the big loaves. Back in the car, the doctor speaks bitterly of the hunger in Madrid, while Dos Passos finds hope in the sweet-smelling bread and the people it nourishes: "country people eating their suppers in the dim roomy stone houses and the sharpsmelling herbs in the fires and the brown faces looking out from the shelter of doorways at the bright stripes of the rain in the street and the gleam of the cobbles and the sturdy figures of countrywomen under their shawls" (Dos Passos 1938: 385). Dos Passos also shows his faith in the Spanish people in his report from Fuentedueña, a poor village transformed into an agrarian collective. He writes at length about the villagers' crops, their newly acquired pumping machinery, their irrigation plans, and their pride and self-sufficiency. Everybody felt very good about the socialist community, he concludes, "so good that they almost forgot the hollow popping

beyond the hills that they could hear from the Jarama River front fifteen miles away, and the truckload of soldiers and munitions going though the village up the road to Madrid and the fear they felt whenever they saw an airplane in the sky. Is it ours or theirs?" (Dos Passos 1938: 388). Like the socialist experiment surrounded by fear and death, Dos Passos writes Spanish life and people into fragments and vignettes. His form collides with Nationalist narratives stressing unity and coherence and the vision of war they promote.

In April 1938 The Nationalists' newly formed National Spanish State Tourist Department, headed by Luis Bolín, circulated various tourist brochures to prompt foreign visitors and journalists to travel along *Rutas Nacionales de Guerra* (National War Routes). Early in the war, Bolín had headed the foreign press services at the Nationalist headquarters in Salamanca. As the main contact person for foreign war correspondents reporting from the front, he had censored news even remotely critical of Nationalist positions. His brochures now advertised nine-day bus tours to battlefields and other sites of human carnage, a "thanatourism" combining three meals a day and first-class hotels with real or symbolic encounters with death. With this new initiative, Bolín attempted to present the Nationalists as legitimate government representatives and upholders of order and tradition in the face of Republican chaos and anarchy. To this end, he relied on the "Francoist Crusade narrative", in which Nationalists restored God and Catholicism to a Spain in the grips of lawless Communists. The dominant Nationalist narratives —"the Spanish Civil War as Crusade and the exaltation of Spain's Catholic and medieval past"— maintained that the Republicans had torn apart Spain's national unity and its traditional, legitimate social order (Holguín 2005: 1414-1415). In short, the Nationalists were entitled to carry out the military coup that triggered the civil war.

Like other politicians, artists, intellectuals and activists siding with the Republic, Dos Passos disputed the idea of a unified Spain and subscribed to the ideas of a plural Spain: "Spanish national identity had its root in liberalism and the Enlightenment, in the belief in individual rights, a constitution, representative government, and the separation of church and state" (Holguín 2005: 1412). Republican sympathizers saw Spanish society as pluralistic; the Spanish nation could still be strong, even if Basques and Catalans achieved regional autonomy within the Spanish state. Opponents argued that the Republicans had disregarded Spanish history and culture and so they promoted a strong monarchy that cooperated with the Catholic Church. They viewed Spain as an organic whole, without regional identities and platforms and with a well-regulated hierarchical distribution of power (Holguín 2005: 1412ff).

Dos Passos hated this Nationalist vision, as he makes clear in a description of King Alfonso XIII's sudden departure for London in 1931. In a section from *Journeys* signed "Santander, August 1933", and ironically titled "The Republic of Honest

Men", Dos Passos crams the royal power paraphernalia into a series of descriptions that constitute most of the lengthy first sentence of the piece. His anger drips from the passage that deserves quoting in full:

> When Don Alfonso finished sorting out and burning papers in his office on the side of the palace towards the city, he walked round to the other side of the immense pilastered greystone building; through the tall state rooms ornate with overweening pomp of scrolling designs in stucco and gilt and bronze and crystal and damask and velvet; through the throne room with its lions and its crowns and its crowded black busts of antique Romans; under the huge ceiling where, for the first of the Bourbons in the gaudy days of the Sun King, the Venetian Tiepolo had painted, in that daze of blue empyrean light that was his specialty, the grandiloquently draped abstractions of Government and Power; under the tasseled portières, through the inlaid eighteenth-century doors, to the room where the Englishwoman his wife was having tea. (Dos Passos 1938: 304)

Dos Passos sharpens his satirical scalpel in this enumeration of Don Alfonso's possessions. The passage climaxes with his ultimate treasure, the tea-sipping Englishwoman, who resembles Nancibel Taylor in Dos Passos's Boston novel, *Streets of Night* (1923) and also signifies upper-class sterility.

Dos Passos especially attacks the so-called honest men who built the Republic. As in *U.S.A.*, he dissects with satire the prominent intellectuals who got up from *tertulias* at Madrid cafés to create a Spain they had not envisioned. Indeed, they surpass Don Alfonso's regime in terms of brutality and repression. Dos Passos angrily condemns these ruthless academics:

> How was it that these honest men, lawyers, doctors, socialist professors and lecturers, that finer element of the population that is the dream of reformers the world over to get into positions of power, found themselves so situated that it was easy for them to vote approval of the deportations on the *Buenos Aires* or the shootings at Casas Viejas as it had been for their ancestors [...] to approve of the stranglings and burnings of heretics and Jews in the days of good King Philip? (Dos Passos 1938: 313)

Dos Passos knows the answer: "Almost to a man they called for jails and Mausers and machineguns to protect the bureaucracy that was the source of the easy life and the hot milk and the coffee and the Americanmade cars, and order, property, investments". "They smelt danger", he writes. "Maybe the new Spain wasn't the Spain of the Madrid bureaucracy, or the Spain of those who weren't holding jobs yet: the honest men" (Dos Passos 1938: 314). These honest men speak through the ghosts of Casas Viejas, the village where the Civil and Assault Guards in the name of the Republic carried out a massacre of fourteen or sixteen Libertarian Communists. In contrast, the highly educated founders of the republic sold their dreams to protect their comfortable lives and get pinned on Dos Passos's satirical pen.

In the *U.S.A.* trilogy, Dos Passos writes in fragments his distrust of master narratives and institutions of power, whether left, right, or middle. Like the satirist George Groz, he sharpens his pen and uses his art against "POWER/SUPERPOWER". In *Journeys*, Dos Passos covers a demonstration in Santander, where oily-tongued Socialist leaders speak vaguely of a workers' state and more concretely of discipline, moderation, and order. The Socialist folk march by the city cafés, where their enemies watch them with quiet hatred: "people with gimlet eyes and greedy predatory lines on their faces, jerkwater importers and exporters, small brokers, loan sharks, commission merchants, pawnbrokers, men who knew how to make two duros grow where one had grown before". Dos Passos concludes: "The *socialistas* filed on by as innocent as a flock of sheep in wolf country" (Dos Passos 1938: 328, 329). With a rhetoric echoing *U.S.A.*, Dos Passos promotes an individualist, anarchist or democratic position and opposes centralized power structures at both ends of the political spectrum.

As always, Dos Passos trusts the people. On a stroll through Madrid, he visits the tower of Wall Street's International Tel and Tel, to Dos Passos "the symbol of the colonizing power of the dollar" (Dos Passos 1938: 366). He describes the apparatus of telecommunication inside the building as a link to countries waging wars with gold credits and weapon contracts and "conversations on red plush sofas in diplomatic anterooms" and he himself chooses to flee into sunny streets (Dos Passos 1938: 367). In Valencia, he finds that art and intellectual life will no longer do. Newly arrived tapestries from the royal castle in Madrid evoke civil-war Spain with apocalyptic scenarios of hunger, pestilence and death, but young men in the chapel that holds the treasures turn away with a shrug. Dos Passos himself finds the converted hotel called the House of Culture dreary and irrelevant. "We feel like old trunks in somebody's attic", Dos Passos concludes (Dos Passos 1938: 358). Again, the streets hold the life and the individuals he seeks out: "It's a relief to get out on the pitchblack streets where there are unrestrained voices, footsteps, giggling, the feeling of men and women walking through the dark with blood in their veins" (Dos Passos 1938: 359). As in *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) and the *U.S.A.* trilogy, Dos Passos is searching for answers among the ordinary people of his cityscapes, but he can no longer work out their problems. He focuses on a volunteer who has joined the International Brigade to save Madrid from the Fascists, but cannot alleviate his private and political sorrow: "What can he do? What can we do? We tell him he's a good guy and he goes away" (Dos Passos 1938: 359). Dos Passos looks for answers with increasing frustration.

Dos Passos's trip to Spain in April 1937 turned into a quest for the truth. Though the older Dos Passos satirizes the honest men who had made the Republic a political morass, his darkest thoughts revolve around the execution of his friend José Robles. In "Thoughts in the Dark", a section of *Journeys Between Wars* also

written in Valencia, Dos Passos contemplates the many victims of Spanish politics, "the prisoners huddled in stuffy rooms waiting to be questioned, the woman with her children barely able to pay for the cheap airless apartment while she waits for her husband". He obviously has in mind Robles's wife: "the days have gone by, months, no news. The standing in line at the police station, the calling up of influential friends, the slowgrowing terror tearing the woman to pieces" (Dos Passos 1938: 359). Dos Passos's pity and anger intensify, as he imagines the last moments of his friend's life:

> A joke or a smile that lets the blood flow easy again, but the gradual recognition of the hundred ways a man may be guilty, the remark you dropped in a café that somebody wrote down, the letter you wrote last year, the sentence you scribbled on a scratchpad, the fact that your cousin is in the ranks of the enemy, and the strange sound your own words make in your ears when they are quoted in the indictment. They shove a cigarette in your hand and you walk out into the courtyard to face six men you have never seen before. They take aim. They wait for the order. They fire. (Dos Passos 1938: 360)

Dos Passos held that communists had murdered Robles, while Hemingway believed that Robles had been a fascist spy, a theory circulated among American communist sympathizers and maybe originating in Stalinist propaganda.

Dos Passos remains a thanatourist. His travels in Spain did not follow the National War Routes, nor did he subscribe to Nationalist crusade narratives. In accordance with his own individualist politics, he made up his own itinerary, which nonetheless combined war sites across Spain with excellent hotels and authentic Spanish cooking. Upon leaving Hotel Victoria in Valencia, Dos Passos and his companions pile into the waiting car with packages of food, bags, boxes of chocolate and extra cigarettes. *En route* to Madrid, they stop at "a dry dilapidated village", where they quickly locate the homemade vermouth and send out local boys to "rustle up some ham to go with it". Soon they are in a well-equipped pastry shop praising the Castilian sponge cake (Dos Passos 1938: 361). At the Hotel Florida in Madrid, where Hemingway was enjoying himself with Martha Gellhorn and a private automobile, Dos Passos enjoys his morning sleep and the hot water in the bathroom before he goes out on a "metropolitan stroll" that takes him to the International Tel and Tel tower and an excellent bookshop, before visiting the Montana barracks, where the people of Madrid stopped the military revolt the previous July. Late in the morning he enters the apartment of Señor Fulano de Tal, which offers "a magnificent view of the enemy" across the Manzanares (Dos Passos 1938: 369). After lunch at the hotel, Dos Passos is ready to visit the mother of an old friend. He returns by train to the Gran Vía, where he steps out of the elevator and walks towards Calle de Alcalá. Thinking of the pastry shops and symphony concerts of past visits, he steps in a pool of blood but proceeds to Café de Lisboa,

where he goes through engraved glass swing-doors to chartreuse-colored plush furniture. With a glass of vermouth and the evening papers, times flies by, and at closing time, he heads for Hotel Florida and discovers that it is almost dark. For some reason, he thinks, "the city seems safer at night" (Dos Passos 1938: 372).

As tourists in Spain, neither Dos Passos nor Hemingway understood the situations and the silences they met, but they reacted differently. Dos Passos left Spain and ultimately Europe behind. Hemingway appeared at the boat train depot in Paris to see Dos Passos and his wife Katy off. Heated words, a Dos Passos shrug, and a raised Hemingway fist presumably marked the end of the friendship. While the young Dos Passos of *Rosinante* searched for the ultimate gesture of Spain, the older Dos Passos stared at Hemingway's fist and returned to the United States.

In Spain, young Dos Passos found his art, his manhood and his politics. Both *Rosinante to the Road Again* and *Journeys Between Wars* portray Spain through fragmentation, variety and multiplicity and support both formally and thematically an individualist, even anarchist vision of the country both he and Hemingway loved. In both texts, however, Dos Passos's quest for a Spanish essence complicates his vision and suggests the conservative anarchism of his political stance. In *Rosinante*, Dos Passos finds the gesture of Spain in Pastora's titillating flamenco, or in the bucket of water a laughing girl drops on Telemachus from her balcony above. In *Journeys Between Wars,* this playful gesture has turned into the executioner's finger pulling the trigger and killing forever Dos Passos's exuberance. Angry and hurt by Spanish Civil War politics, Dos Passos responded with a gesture of his own. He waved goodbye to Hemingway, who felt that Robles must have deserved his fate, and goodbye to Europe. His Spanish adventures were over, but his Spanish writings live. With Civil War survivors mostly gone, young Spanish writers explore the private and political stories that captured the American writers in Spain (De Toro and Ingenschay). In *Enterrar a los muertos* (2005), Ignacio Martínez de Pisón brings back to life Dos Passos, Hemingway and Robles, and the brutality and bravery of their world, with a truly Spanish gesture.

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WE DON'T MAKE THE NEWS, WE JUST REPORT IT: TELEVISION JOURNALISM AND NARRATIVES OF TRAUMA

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Introduction

Journalists are only too familiar with narrative elements that give form, structure and emotional resonance to the news: victims, villains and heroes, death and destruction, redemption, reconciliation, in short, the traumas of our individual and collective lives. Journalists assess all manner of events for their dramatic potential and hence for their audience impact. In an era of shrinking advertising revenues and eroding readership and ratings, deciding which narratives to develop is an art form at which journalists must become quickly adept if they are to succeed in a business increasingly shaped by the bottom line. Traumatic stories —wars, manmade and natural disasters, acts of violence and terror— offer emotional potential that is not typically matched by legislative sessions, trade deficits or the latest statistics on gross national production. Journalists favor events that have the elements of strong narrative because these are what people watch and remember. Often called the first rough draft of history, journalism shapes both our initial perceptions of events and our collective memories of them as well.

The news narrative, like its counterparts in literature, film and the arts, is a construction. It gives material form to events and experiences. Journalists shape narratives through their selection of what to cover, their use of language and images, through repetition, placement, juxtaposition and volume; they embellish

stories with experts and witnesses as well as with music tracks, montages, slow-motion, computer generated images and other special effects. Professional codes and practices, competition, technologies, audience demographics, and ratings all come into play as narratives are processed and produced, but the project for the contemporary journalist is first and foremost the compelling story.

While the need to know is the *raison d'être* of the journalists, the need to deny is perhaps less obvious but also pervasive, starting with the frequent need to deny their own agency, as our title suggests. In this paper, we take as examples some of the most heavily produced and reported trauma stories of the last decade to illustrate the competing needs of knowing and denying knowledge. The focus is on U.S. journalism because it is a highly influential model providing English language content used around the globe and because it draws heavily on established narrative conventions in both literature and film. Our analysis demonstrates that journalistic needs for knowledge and denial are both cultural and structural and the implications of this on collective and personal memory of traumas are profound.

Constructions of Memory

Writing in *How Societies Remember*, Connerton (1989: 39) notes that "to study the social formation of memory is to study those acts of transfer that make remembering in common possible". Rather than existing solely within the individual or in the past, scholarly inquiry into memory situates both memory and trauma as profoundly social phenomena that exist as a result of construction in the present. Memory, in other words, requires those whom Connerton (1989: 76) refers to as the "custodians of memory" —the agents charged with recollective performances— to chronicle happenings that create and maintain the communal memory.

It is through this telling and sharing that memories gain their meaning. Lewis A. Coser, commenting on Maurice Halbwachs'' "pathbreaking" work on collective memory, suggests these inquiries into memory are part of a larger body of work in the "sociology of knowledge", requiring an examination of how social processes operate to construct and maintain our beliefs and understandings of traumatic events and their memory (Halbwachs 1992: 1, 21). In this understanding of remembrance and trauma, memory transforms from a psychological concept to a sociological one, with communication becoming central to our understanding (Edy 1999: 72).

In this view, memory emerges as a highly contextual "process" rather than a "thing" (Olick and Robbins 1998: 122). Identity, trauma and memory connect under these questions of process, with the construction of narrative playing a

decisive role —the field of cultural memory is, as other scholars note, a space of struggle, where "people and groups fight hard for their stories" (Olick and Robbins 1998: 126). In this contestation, narratives can become assertions of power, with certain memories coming to dominate. Importantly, the construction of trauma and collective memory is a process often marked by struggle, and it is communication that plays the pivotal role in determining how trauma and memory are constructed and maintained.

Collective Trauma

In its original usage, the term "trauma" refers to a wound inflicted upon the body (Caruth 1996: 3). Later psychological literature came to grapple with how minds, like bodies, could also be injured. In speaking of collective trauma, there is an implicit belief in much of the later literature that the community exists as something distinct from a collection of individuals. This creates an important marker for understanding how we recognize the victims of trauma. This larger notion of community elevates us beyond viewing a collectivity as merely an amassed group of individuals, drawing greater attention to how communal bodies can be traumatized. As Kai Erikson (1995: 185) explains, the community is something tangible that "can be damaged in much the same way as the tissues of mind and body". Methodologically, this theoretical underpinning lends itself to an approach that analyzes the way communities, as entities themselves, are understood to function and what happens when the community is threatened. This helps explain how events that might only superficially influence individuals, can come to be designated as traumas for a community. As will be discussed further, today's news media in particular play a vital role in this definitional process.

Both individually and collectively, traumas are often understood as a "response to abrupt change" (Alexander 2004: 3). Jeffrey C. Alexander (2004: 1) defines cultural trauma as occurring "when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways". Likewise, Arthur Neal envisions national traumas as reactions to explosive, cataclysmic, "volcano-like events" that shake the foundations of a society and compel an emotional response (Alexander 2004: 3). The September 11, 2001, attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., are an obvious example of this for Americans, as is the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina on the city of New Orleans. School shootings are devastating for the local communities in which they occur, but they can also affect distant communities, as was the case with the murders at Virginia Tech University in the small town of Blacksburg, Virginia.

Trauma can also be a response to ongoing conditions such as poverty, lack of medical care or access to education. While there are certain characteristics that underpin the study of all cultural trauma, each is a product of a particular set of meanings and beliefs that are socially situated in a particular place and time, it is impossible to clearly delineate the full scope of events or situations that might constitute a collective trauma.

Many trauma theorists have argued that no events are "inherently traumatic" (Alexander 2004: 8). Events do not constitute trauma. Rather, it is what events precipitate —the creation of meanings through which we interpret events— that "provide the sense of shock and fear" that we characterize as traumatic (Alexander 2004: 10). Cultural trauma, if we believe it to be socially constructed, is predicated on the *belief* that an event or condition is harmful or threatening. A definition of cultural trauma thus hinges on a perception within a collective of a shared experience (past or present) of suffering. This, in turn, raises questions about the social processes that create these beliefs, suggesting a necessary focus on how trauma comes to be represented. Implicit in this approach is a belief that culture is constituted, at least in part, by "patterns of publicly available symbols objectified in society" (Olick 1999: 336). If, like Alexander (2004), we understand trauma as something that is not necessarily "naturally existing", but, rather, "something constructed by society", then media become a powerful force in understanding how it is that traumas and the memories surrounding them are created, maintained and understood.

Even if we believe, as some psychoanalytic approaches suggest, that there are events or situations that are more typically traumatic than others, there is a social element to understanding how it is that these events and situations come to have their power and influence. Not surprisingly, this idea takes on increased importance when speaking about cultural traumas. The notion of what a culture is or should be is socially determined and, in many cases, contested. Therefore, what it takes to "injure" or "traumatize" a culture is often subject to debate. This takes on particular importance in understanding constructions of trauma and memory in societies. Whether we are looking at "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland, apartheid in South Africa or the abortion debate in the United States, we can identify pronounced cultural struggles and claims to victimization that are continually contested in both public and private ways. Meanings are far from static and are constantly being renegotiated, which suggests a need to root our definitions of trauma in the social reactions to events and situations, rather than the situations and events themselves. In this case, memory of past discrimination, struggle, or violence becomes a crucial part of the manner in which we define what it means to be a traumatized society or culture.

Media and the Role of Narrative

If cultural traumas are not natural eventsly occurring, but instead the result of social construction, it is through communication that certain events come to be designated as traumatic and certain people come to be regarded as victims of trauma. Through this "trauma process", "agents" of the collectivity (rather than the collectivity as whole) work to define and represent trauma in particular ways (Alexander 2004: 11). The process of memory and trauma construction is an exercise in representation and thus the constructed or mediated text is highly relevant. Journalists participate in this process in at least two interconnected ways: first, by providing a medium through which agents of the collectivity can speak as authorized sources and second by acting as agents of the collectivity themselves.

Even more crucially, the narratives that journalists create about trauma often define and explain events in ways that resonate with audiences. As Connerton (1989: 76) notes, to ensure repetition over time recollections often rely on a "standardized form" of storytelling. Central to this form is the demand for coherence to create a meaningful narrative about the trauma that offers definition, context and explanations of responsibility and causality, while also providing resonance and fostering identification with the victims of trauma. Importantly, news reports (especially journalistic coverage of events designated as traumatic), often display many of the hallmarks of narrative, making journalists ideally situated to participate in the "trauma process".

As noted, news is largely a process of making meaning, with the journalist at the center, cobbling facts together into a cohesive and compelling narrative that "informs" members of audiences. This practice goes beyond the mere recounting of facts and descriptions of events. In a very concrete way, "the reporter's job", Schudson (2003: 177) writes, "is to make meaning". Additionally, the journalist as storyteller deals in "magic" and mystery, using cause-and-effect scenarios to offer explanations to traumatic forces seemingly outside of human control (29). It is, as Schudson (2003: 177) and others observe, not about a "sum of facts", but about the "relationship" among facts. In this shaping of facts as a process of meaning-making, journalists rely on a variety of narrative and reporting conventions, encompassing sourcing, structuring and news values. Steve M. Barkin, in the 1984 article "The Journalist as Storyteller: An Interdisciplinary Perspective", writes the journalist as storyteller is often criticized for not adhering to standards of objectivity, seduced by drama and forsaking the truth. Yet, Barkin (1984: 28) argues, the storytelling aspect of journalism performs an important "cultural function", making news accessible and "[(linking]) people together by stressing that which was common to all". The ultimate goal is audience comprehension, which comes through dramatization.

Likewise, in their 1988 study of news narrative, S. Elizabeth Bird and Robert W. Dardenne (1988: 67, 70) explore news as a "symbolic system" that moves beyond informing to a more communal role of providing solutions to problems and offering "reassurance and familiarity". In turn, news media provide information encoded with meanings, moral values and standards. "In newsmaking […] it is in their power to place people and events into the existing categories of hero, villain, good and bad, thus to invest their stories with the authority of mythological truth", Bird and Dardenne write (1988: 80). By establishing themselves as storytellers, journalists can influence a community's perception of its past —both defining who is part of a collective and contributing to the process of learning from significant events (Edy 1999). This is particularly true in stories focusing on major historical moments, which require that memories not be treated as mere fragments, but rather that they are be placed on a continuum and layered together to form a cohesive and meaningful narrative that propels the past into the present (Connerton 1989). The events of September 11, 2001 provide an obvious case in point.

Day of Heroes and Villains

Television was still the medium of choice for most Americans on the day of attacks. Live coverage, uninterrupted by commercials, drew huge audiences. The images they saw and the stories they heard varied in only minor ways from network to network. The narratives of 9/11, perhaps not surprisingly, relied on constructions of good and evil, heroes and villains, innocence and loss —all of which resonated with the American audience and also provided familiar frames within which specific events could be organized and recounted.

American journalists were given high praise for their round-the-clock reporting in a historical moment where the need to know was urgent. But from the very early television news reports on the 9/11 attacks, a pro-American bias was right there on the TV screen, signaled visually in countless ways, starting with the sudden proliferation of American flags on the lapels of reporters from American cities around the country. Graphic titles, which have become such a ubiquitous feature of television news reporting, appeared within hours and provided labels which branded the 9/11 story and gave viewers a constant reminder of what mental frame they should use when taking in details of the story. "Attack on America" was one of the first labels to appear, and it was soon followed by "America on Alert" and later, "America Strikes Back".

Even seasoned network anchors were caught up in the emotions of the story. NBC's Tom Brokaw choked up during a newscast when he was describing an

image of three firefighters lifting an American flag over Ground Zero. After pausing to regain his composure, he told his audience: "I'm sorry, I was caught unexpectedly emotional in that moment as I saw that flag" (television broadcast 2001). Critics noted that "anchors and correspondents have not hesitated to conduct the post attack coverage primarily through the viewpoint of the United States. Use of the pronouns 'our' and 'us' have been commonplace" (Rutenberg and Carter 2001).

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, American journalists policed each other to assure conformity in the ranks. ABC News President Av Westin was furiously attacked for saying he did not have an opinion as to whether the Pentagon was a legitimate military target. *The New York Post* responded with a blistering editorial: "He's not about to make a judgment that the murder of scores of Americans without provocation or warning is essentially wrong […]. Is he for real?" (*New York Post* 2001: 36). The next day Westin publicly apologized, saying, "I was wrong. Under any interpretation, the attack on the Pentagon was criminal and entirely without justification" (Moritz 199).

Patriotism was on visual display from the first day of coverage with emotionally charged video montages of the American flag, the Statue of Liberty, the President at Ground Zero and makeshift memorials that had sprung up around New York and Washington. These layers of images were typically combined with plaintive music tracks and chants of "USA, USA, USA". Lest anyone forget even momentarily the triggering events of the story, shots of the planes, the towers engulfed in flames and the buildings collapsing into rubble and dust were repeated so frequently that audience members complained that it was too much. Within a matter of days, the networks agreed to limit their use of the Twin Tower footage, although by that time the images had been burned into the mind's eye of anyone who had been watching.

With slogans like "We report, you decide" television networks assert their autonomy and attempt to deny their agency in shaping public perceptions of geo-political events like 9/11. In the aftermath of the attacks, to take just one example, MSNBC created a promotional piece showing a full screen text (below) superimposed over images from the World Trade Center and the Statue of Liberty and scored with an evocative music track.

> Who Did This?
> How Did They Do It?
> What Will America Do?
> How Will America Change?
> We Know You Have Questions
> We Will Continue to Bring You the Whole Picture

The ethnocentric text inherently contradicts the promise of comprehensive reporting on the "whole picture" and is an example of how U.S. journalists attempted to be both independent and patriotic at the same time. News institutions seemed torn between dual allegiances to professional standards of objectivity and to private notions of patriotism. Debates about the appropriate role of news media in the crisis came amid concerns about the ethics of television anchors wearing flag pins and labeling the hijackers as "terrorists". As Dennis D. Cali (2002: 290) noted, many journalists in the wake of September 11 abandoned traditional notions of objectivity and balance, focusing instead on community unification. Community in this case meant the entire country. And unity more often than not translated into a general reluctance to question responses advocated by the Bush administration not just for weeks but for years following the event.

Journalistic authority rests on an ability to take complex situations and explain them in narratives that resonate with their particular audiences. The struggle to do so effectively can be pronounced when reporting on cultural conflicts and traumas that are imbued with tremendous emotion and often defy easy explanation or categorization. In these situations, journalists typically simplify complex issues and in so doing ignore and thus implicitly deny those story threads that do not easily weave into an overarching story line.

In one sense, this is structural. In the case of television, the contemporary American nightly newscast is typically 30 minutes long, including eight minutes of commercials. In an effort to provide an appealing mix of content, producers are required to keep story counts high: shows with 10 or 12 different stories are preferable to ones with four or five. As a result, field reports from the White House, Congress, foreign bureaus or battlefields are kept brief —two minutes or less. These structural realities translate into time limitations for television and radio and space limitations for newspapers. Headlines have to capture even lengthy reports in a few words, and in so doing they frame what follows for both casual and careful readers. Dramatic photos often accompany front page stories, further directing and narrowing reader perceptions.

In another sense, simplification is cultural. Carolyn Kitch (2003: 213) notes that American news coverage in the immediate aftermath of September 11 largely reflected "elements of a funeral ritual, creating a forum for national mourning". It was through "closure" journalism —replacing "vulnerability and fear" with "heroism and patriotic pride"— that journalists forged a narrative that established a predominant collective memory and, in turn, a seemingly unified national community (2003: 213).

A central concern among many scholars of memory is the way in which the past is used to offer solutions to problems and naturalize certain courses of future action.

The news narratives of 9/11, constructed so solidly around longstanding anti-Muslim and anti-Arab stereotypes, provided a powerful touchstone in the political arena where the attacks were continually recalled in an effort to bolster public support for the invasion of Iraq 18 months later. Mainstream American media were frozen in a cultural moment. Despite evidence that Iraqis were not responsible for the 9/11 attacks, news organizations failed to aggressively question the Bush administration's policies until long after the U.S. was deeply entrenched in its military campaign. Writing in the alternative *Boston Phoenix*, Mark Jurkowitz (2005) noted belated "*mea culpas* from outlets such as *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*" for what he described as the "dismal failure to scrutinize the White House's faulty WMD rationale for going to war in Iraq". Many noted that in the aftermath of 9/11, U.S. journalists had relinquished the role of watchdog and adopted the role of lapdog. This was a role they arguably did not return to until the catastrophic government failures in response to Hurricane Katrina in August 2005.

Katrina Coverage

News coverage of Hurricane Katrina was hailed as a turning point in American journalism by columnists, critics, academics and ethicists alike. Writing for Reuters, Steve Gorman (2005) applauded "a sense of outrage and antagonism many thought had long gone out of fashion in broadcast journalism". Katrina reporting, Gorman noted, was a distinct "departure from what some regard as overly deferential treatment of US political leaders in the wake of the September 11 attacks on America" (2005, n.p.). *New York Times* media critic David Carr was grateful to see once again "the kind of anger that has been mostly missing from a toothless press. After a couple of years on the run from the government, public skepticism and self-inflicted wounds, the press corps felt its toes touch bottom in the Gulf Coast and came up big". (David Carr 2005, n.p.) Op-ed columnist Eric Deggans (2005) described "a pointed turn in news coverage which has found journalists consistently challenging officials —often with undisguised emotion— on bungled relief efforts " (2005, n.p.).

While there was much to be applauded in the coverage, Katrina narratives also underscored the double standards that apply in the American press when it comes to the often-intertwined issues of race and class. Jurkowitz called it "one of journalism's finest moments in recent memory", but nonetheless concluded that the coverage in mainstream media "reinforced the notion that our society is deeply divided by color and money" (2005, n.p.).

While journalists speak of serving all segments of society, White perspectives typically dominate U.S. news narratives. Mainstream media is by, for and about the White,

economically advantaged and educated. Newsrooms both local and national marginalize communities of color and ignore poor people and the neighborhoods in which they live. In the commercial environment that defines American media, content is aimed at those demographic groups who are sufficiently affluent to buy the products whose advertisements pay the freight. News stories based on all kinds of merchandise —iPods, computers, cars, wines, restaurants, stocks, bonds, Hollywood celebrities and professional athletes— are common. But stories of inner city or rural poverty are not typically part of the daily news agenda. One of the more shocking aspects of the Katrina coverage was how few Americans were aware of the degraded conditions in which many New Orleans residents had been living. As the Black actor Danny Glover noted during a benefit performance for New Orleans residents, "When the hurricane struck, it did not turn [(the Gulf Coast)] into a third-world country. It revealed one". (In "Stars Slate Bush at Relief Event", 2005).

With a major national story emanating from a Black majority city such as New Orleans, the double standard was indeed all the more striking. A case in point that appeared early in the coverage and went viral on the Internet: the now infamous two-photo incident. Two almost identical images of residents trying to escape the flood waters moved on the news wire services within hours of each other, but with notably different captions. Both photos showed teenagers wading in chest high water carrying food. But the caption for the Black teenager referred to him as a looter, while the caption with for the White teens described them as finding the food they were carrying. Asked whether this example was an anomaly or a real reflection of media bias, a CNN producer said that it was unquestionably the former: "In the huge amount of coverage that was made, you were bound to find that. I can guarantee that there was a photo which had a caption that Black people were foraging and there was probably some video showing that some White people were looting" (Blake, personal interview). But a research study that examined more than one thousand of the Katrina photos that appeared in *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today* and *The Washington Post* reached a different conclusion. Overwhelmingly, the study showed, Blacks and Whites were depicted in decidedly different roles. Specifically, Blacks were shown as passive and being rescued while Whites were shown in active roles as rescuers, relief workers and soldiers. Additionally, the study demonstrated that when photos depicted looting, in 83% of the cases, African Americans were pictured. When photos depicted people guarding their property, Whites were in those pictures 66% of the time (Kahle, Yu and Whiteside 2007: 75-89).

On the streets of New Orleans this came as no surprise. Interviewees for a NSF project that Moritz conducted consistently pointed to media bias in the Katrina coverage. Elizabeth Allen, herself a Black relief worker from Michigan, said that although Blacks were clearly a part of relief efforts, their stories were not

prominently featured in the news. "When it comes to helping […] you never see Blacks, you only see Whites, you only see Caucasians, you see maybe a few Hispanics, but no African Americans" (Elizabeth Allen, personal interview: 2005). Patricia Raybon, an African American author, similarly said that she "didn't learn how African American churches are helping Katrina evacuees by reading the newspaper, but by reading e-mail updates from my church in Denver". While there were numerous media stories about Tulane and Loyola universities being forced to close their campuses because of flood damage, Black schools did not receive the same attention. Said Raybon: "I had to search blacknews.com to learn the fate of Xavier University, the historically Black college in New Orleans that has successfully prepared more Black undergrads for medical school than any other academic program in the nation" (Patricia Raybon, personal correspondence: 2005).

Blacks who weren't shown as impoverished victims of the storm were often presented as criminals. Black residents of New Orleans again noted disparities in the coverage of crime, saying in interviews that news reports focused on Black crime only and offered exaggerated coverage.

> The media focused on poor people, the uneducated. They played up Black crime […] you hear them say things like, "a group of Black males went down and broke in". When in actuality, they were of all creeds and colors. Some were saying that they were breaking in for survival, now I'm not excusing the people that were breaking in, stealing and robbing other people's homes. I don't uphold doing wrong but when you catch people that are put out on a limb and trying to survive, we didn't see a problem with that, but in the media, they [didn't give] the whole story: it wasn't just Blacks doing it, it was other people too. (Patricia Lucky, personal interview: 2005)

During the height of the disaster, descriptions of rape, murder and chaos at the Superdome and Convention Center were repeatedly highlighted in both live coverage and printed reports. But in reviewing their coverage, some major news organizations were unable to actually verify the accuracy of what they had repeated so often. *The New Orleans Times-Picayune* was the first to offer a major correction.

> Even in our own pages, sometimes in stories that I wrote, we reported things that we got from other sources and when we went back to look they had turned out not to be true or had not been substantiated. And I think that was a good example of the media taking responsibility and going back to correct the story and I would include the national media in that. (Brian Thevenot, personal interview: 2005)

And, indeed, similar stories aimed at correcting the record were done by *CNN*, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*. The difficulties with media corrections are at least twofold: first, corrections typically are given less space or airtime than the original reporting, and second, by the time corrections are offered,

audiences have fallen substantially. In this sense it is often an impossible task to completely call back the information given in the original story or to change the first impression made on readers and viewers.

Hiring policies

Racial and gender diversity in newsrooms has a profound impact on content. In terms of national numbers, newsrooms are more diverse than they were several decades ago but African Americans are still an under-represented group. Despite industry attempts to diversify, employment in broadcast and newspaper newsrooms in the United States continues to be dominated by Whites. A program initiated in 1978 by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) to achieve racial parity in relation to each community's population by the year 2000 has not come close to meeting its goals. ASNE was so far from hitting its own employment benchmarks that it moved its parity target date forward by a quarter century to 2025. Meantime, especially in an era of shrinking revenues and newspaper closings, the numbers continue to dwindle. ASNE's 2005 report noted that the "share of journalism jobs held by non-whites has receded from its high-water mark in most newsrooms, large and small" (ASNE Survey 2005). Two years later, writing for the on-line news industry magazine *ScrippsNews,* Tracie Morales and Charlie Ericksen (2007) concluded that the "record is about as bad as it gets. Persons of color now make up a third of this nation's population, but less than 14% of the news staffs on ASNE member publications".

The situation in radio and television is somewhat similar. According to the annual survey of broadcast newsrooms conducted by the Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA), employment of non-whites in broadcast television was 23% in 2008 while the overall non-white population stood at 34%. African Americans account for about 10% of the non-whites working in television, but at the management level, they account for only 3.7% of television news directors. Heavier representations are seen in positions such as videographer and video editor. The RTNDA survey shows that the picture for non-whites in radio broadcasting is "even bleaker, with Caucasian employment having gone up from 85.3% in 1995 to 92.1% in 2005. In the same time period, African American numbers have plummeted: in 1995 Blacks made up 5.7% of radio broadcasting staff; in 2005, their numbers were less than 1%, at 0.7%". The number of all-white newsrooms in the United States stood at 37% (or 346 newsrooms), according to ASNE figures.

Nonetheless, one might expect that in New Orleans, a Black majority city, African American journalists would have a significant presence in local newsrooms. This does

not turn out to be the case at the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, the city's daily newspaper where 2004 was the peak year for hiring non-whites, who accounted for 17.1% of the newsrooms population. Even at its peak, the percentage of non-white staff was still very low when considering the paper's readership, which in 2004 was 43.6% non-white. So, while the circulation area for *The Times-Picayune* shows that almost half of the population is non-white, the employment figures of non-whites at the paper make up less than one-fifth of the newsroom. In comparative terms, the New Orleans daily paper was nearly at the bottom in its circulation category (250,000-500,000) for non-white hires (Dedman and Doig 2005).

CNN, with headquarters in Atlanta, might also be expected to have a diverse newsroom, but employees described a White male power structure that dominates the newsroom culture.

> CNN at the higher echelons is a mainly male institution. At the middle-to-upper management, there are a significant number of female producers. The weekend seems to be produced entirely by woman […]. For the prime-time shows, all the executive producers are men. And I do think it makes a difference. (B. Blake, CNN field producer, personal interview: 2006)

This overall lack of racial diversity among newsroom personnel suggests that a White perspective controlled the selection, framing and presentation of Katrina coverage. Nonetheless, news organizations try hard to look as though they provide diversity. CNN, for example, had an African American correspondent in New Orleans and considered that a major advantage. But having Black talent on the air may not have any fundamental impact on how the story is covered:

> Just because he is Black, it doesn't mean he understands these poor Black communities. But there is a credibility issue there. When he stands up and says it, it's harder to call him racist. It's easier to call it as just a misunderstanding. And I think that the advantage of having a Black correspondent is that people who would want to criticize you for your coverage can't use the word "racist" as easily. (B. Blake, CNN field producer, personal interview: 2006)

Even in this era of niche marketing, with cable channels devoted to specialized programming focused on food, decorating, gardening, sports, travel, and news, there is no Black news network. Spanish language news is available in many US markets through Telemundo and Univision, but BET, Black Entertainment Television, does not offer significant news coverage. African American viewers must rely on the major broadcast and cable news channels, still the only ones with the infrastructure to cover major national or international stories, for their accounting of the day's events. This is essentially the case for most non-white viewers, and it has significant consequences. The coverage of the school shootings at Virginia Tech University offers a case in point.

Virginia Tech and Representations of Race

A decisive feature of racial oppression in the United States has been the elaboration of an ideology of difference or otherness that often manifests itself in narrative constructions based on binaries such as "us" and "them" with "us" referring to White America and "them" to any other racial or ethnic group. This construction is also used to differentiate straights from gays and, as noted during the 9/11 coverage, Americans from other national groups. Omi (1989: 112) describes the importance of popular culture in shaping "the overall racial climate" in American society. He singles out visual media —namely film and television— for being

> […] notorious in disseminating images of racial minorities which establish for audiences what these groups look like, how they behave and, in essence, "who they are". The power of the media lies not only in their ability to reflect the dominant racial ideology, but in their capacity to shape that ideology in the first place. (1989: 115)

Similarly, Hall (1981: 34-35) argues that a "racist 'common sense' has become pervasive" in Western societies, shaped primarily through media "images, descriptions, explanations and frames for understanding how the world is and why it works as it is said and shown to work". Far from having a critical stance toward race, the media create and typically accept racial otherness, "taking it as their base-line without questioning it" (1981: 28).

The otherness frame was particularly evident in the treatment of Seung-Hui Cho, the Virginia Tech student who murdered 32 people on the university campus before taking his own life. Cho was first identified by police in a news conference the day after the shootings as a "23-year-old South Korean here in the US as a resident alien". That label was picked up by reporters and re-circulated countless times, a fact that was noted by others of South Korean origin writing in blog posts and discussion groups. One example reads as follows:

> Am I wrong to be incensed that there is constant emphasis on the fact that the gunman in the VA Tech shootings is South Korean? I don't think his race gives any insight into this tragedy. But every single article I read has to point out that he is a South Korean resident alien. There has been enough emphasis on his resident alien status that diplomats from South Korea feel compelled enough to travel to the site of the shooting and apologize on behalf of the country, as though South Korea itself was somehow involved. Perhaps I'm being a bit too sensitive. Since, you know, up until last June, I was a South Korean resident alien too. Although I've always identified myself as a Korean *American*, raised in Los Angeles. ("this little life of mine" April 18, 2007)

The journalism profession is replete with style guides and ethical codes that underscore the need to avoid racial identifiers unless they add something to a story's content. The Asian American Journalists Association, highly aware of longstanding media stereotyping in depictions of Asians, issued an email alert on

the day of the shooting, pointing out the sensitivity of the situation and the need for fair and unbiased reporting. Specifically, they issued guidelines to all media to

> avoid using racial identifiers unless there is a compelling or germane reason. There is no evidence at this early point that the race or ethnicity of the suspected gunman has anything to do with the incident, and to include such mention serves only to unfairly portray an entire people. The effect of mentioning race can be powerfully harmful. It can subject people to unfair treatment based simply on skin color and heritage. We further remind members of the media that the standards of news reporting should be universal and applied equally no matter the platform or medium, including blogs. (AAJA bulletin 2007)

As in the Katrina case, journalists covering Virginia Tech may deny racial bias and argue that standards were applied equally, but the audiences most sensitive to the issues saw it differently. South Korean students studying in the United States, for examples, voiced their opinions in on-line bulletin boards such as gohackers.com, where postings were typically written in Korean. Dozens of postings debated whether Cho —who arrived in the United States from Korea when he was eight years old— should be regarded as Korean or as American. "He grew up in America, so he's American" was a typical comment. Students made repeated references and objections to the US media's use of the phrase "resident alien". As one posting stated, "they [the media] repeat 'South Korea' so many times. We need to worry about possible revenge". Other posts said the preferred term is "permanent resident" (see full study at Moritz and Kwak 2008).

Just prior to the shooting spree, Cho had recorded a videotape of himself in a rambling diatribe against society where he assumes various threatening poses holding handguns and knives. He sent the tape to NBC News on the day of the murders. After NBC aired segments of the video, extracted still images circulated and re-circulated on the Web within mere minutes. Korean student postings focused on fear of reprisals because of Cho's ethnicity.

> "It seems that this gave people all over the world fear or hostility toward Koreans".
>
> "Do I need to change my name? My name is similar to the shooter's".
>
> "One good thing is that he didn't speak Korean before the camera, and he didn't say 'You Americans'".
>
> "I hoped he had changed his name to Andy Cho or Mike Cho since he had lived in America for a long time".

Another discussion criticized *The New York Times* web report for showing an image from the Korean film *Old Boy* and claiming that the movie provided Cho with inspiration. Students said it was more likely that Cho was motivated by American films like *The Terminator* or *Taxi Driver*. Posts criticized Japanese cartoons for being anti-Korean, YouTube's display of *Old Boy*, and claims in Japanese media that

Korea is a murderous country. All of this fueled a sense of personal trauma for South Korean students.

> "He [a neighbor] kept on asking our nationality […] my wife is under severe stress".
> "I was hesitating […] and I said I was Chinese".
> "An individual's mistake is not the mistake of the community […] [still] I cannot help but feel ashamed".

As in the case of 9/11, people who were not central figures and who were quite distant from the physical location of the story nonetheless appear deeply affected by how the story was being framed generally and by how Cho was being labeled. In addition to repeated references to Cho as South Korean, his status as a "resident alien" was another frequently used identifier that came in for criticism for two reasons. First, it was another way of suggesting that Cho, who had moved with his family to the United States when he was eight years old, should not be viewed as an American. Second, the word "alien" conjures images of space creatures and, as such, was seen as a veiled way of conflating Asians and non-humans.

Conclusion

While some trauma literature (and much media coverage) emphasizes the "waves of good feelings" that follow catastrophes, this is not the universal experience. Class, ethnic, and racial divisions among others, constitute what Foner (2005: 7) calls the "terrain of disaster", in which some groups are affected much more than others. After 9/11, for example, Muslims "were especially vulnerable. Of course, Muslims were not immune to stereotyping and discrimination before the attack" (Foner 2005: 14), but in the aftermath they "were seen as a threat to national security and targeted by a series of federal administrative measures" (Foner 2005: 14). These included detention, travel restrictions, registration regimens and FBI interviews. Muslims were also the victims of an anti-Muslim backlash, including hate crimes, street assaults, and verbal abuses.

Collective memory has always required custodians who protect, preserve, and perform recollections of significant events. In the electronic era, these performances are no longer typically face-to-face. Technologies now enable agents of the collective to reach a global audience and to create texts that remain perpetually accessible as "preserved communication" (Connerton 1989: 76). Through their capture in media, these become what Connerton (1989: 73) refers to as *inscriptions*, where "modern devices […] trap and hold information, long after the human organism has stopped informing". The memories preserved through inscriptions are notably different from the "live telling" because, among other things, they dramatically extend the reach of the community.

Texts that are inscribed in today's cultural memory have immense power both at their original moment of distribution, but more crucially, over time and space as they "transcend the social conditions of production and reception" (Connerton 1989: 96). In this sense, modern media technologies play a vital role in enhancing the performances of agents of the collectivity, even as they expand the number of agents able to participate in the recollection process. Archival interviews, still and moving images, soundtracks, headlines, analysis and commentary —all of which may not only reinforce memory but also reignite the trauma itself— are available in perpetuity thanks to Google, YouTube, Facebook and other file sharing and social networking systems.

These contemporary communication tools are dramatically changing the ways journalists collect and disseminate news. Reporters who work in print push material to websites for immediate publication. Deadlines are every minute and the next day's printed product is a now supplement to the real time stories and images that are hitting the Internet around the clock. Broadcast journalists who are used to being "live" at the scene are now competing to get material out as quickly as it gets to websites. In this environment, time for reflection is increasingly rare. As a result, accuracy, fairness, context may be further jeopardized —especially in the coverage of major breaking stories.

While citizen journalism and the blogosphere are increasingly influential, professional news organizations still dominate the media landscape and in large measure determine how stories are framed. Many of the same issues that were problematic in the pre-web era remain contentious today. Journalists have been repeatedly criticized, for example, for being insensitive to issues of race and ethnicity which, whether articulated or not, remain powerful elements in shaping news narratives. Despite written guidelines, ombudsmen and other reform efforts, the framing of stories is still determined by the perspective of reporters in the field and editors in the newsroom. And, most typically in the United States, that perspective is dominated by a White world view. The repeated description of Cho in terms of his Korean ethnicity and his "resident alien" status, the visual references to the American flag and to Muslim stereotypes, and the exaggeration of and emphasis on Black crime and Black passivity during Hurricane Katrina coverage are all concrete examples of how this plays out in practice.

Audiences for stories involving major crisis and traumas are no longer typically local or even national. When major stories break now, they circulate around the globe in a matter of minutes, not days. Those stories are easily shared among audiences, especially those with access to digital news, whose perspectives may very much be at odds with the editors, reporters, producers and news executives who provide the coverage. Journalists today really are serving both a global audience and a local audience who live in diverse communities and remote locations. For them to serve

both groups well, it is increasingly important that news narratives be constructed and analyzed with a critical eye that recognizes the many communities impacted by them.

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THE WEST AND ITS OTHER: LITERARY RESPONSES TO 9/11

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Terror is now a part of our lives. Whether it is the bombing of defenceless villages in Afghanistan or Iraq, or the slaying of Daniel Pearl, terror is perpetrated by different people for different purposes. Terror is the employment of strategies to instill fear and insecurity in the victim. This can be achieved by the deliberate targeting of women and children as happened in Bosnia, in Bali and in Khandamal. It can happen when a victim is transported to Gautanamo Bay or Al Ghraib and water-boarding and other forms of torture are practiced on him. The world is still reeling at the picture of American soldiers laughing at prisoners who are on the point of being attacked by a dog. So terror is terror whether one's purpose is to defeat the axis of evil or jihad. This paper, therefore, deals with the impact of terror on people and the way in which literature on the subject has represented it. It begins with a consideration of the aftermath of 9/11 in America and the numbness which overtook American and British writers, explores the way those representations often demonize Islam when tackling Jihadi terror, the manner in which the representations underscore the Huntington thesis of the clash of civilizations and offer pseudo Islamic scholarship as a justification, or simply turn away from the large issues involved and concentrate on domesticity and the business of living as in Ian McEwan's novel. The paper goes on to consider the impact of 9/11 on a Pakistani-American writer —Mohsin Hamid— who is torn between his admiration for things American and his fascination with the terror

attack on 9/11 and its impact on his Pakistani identity. The paper next considers texts from Afghanistan and Pakistan. These are not direct representations of 9/11 but the discourse around 9/11 which throws up questions of civilizational identity, the nature of Islam, the nature of Islamic fundamentalism are all apropos. This event shook the whole of humanity and what happened afterwards was only the natural response of people faced with death, loss and suffering. The paper also asks fundamentally if the trauma of 9/11 can be represented, who can represent it, and the ethics of representing it.

If the world changed after 9/11, literature also changed. Anyone writing after that event was shaped and informed by the event. American writers like Don de Lillo, John Updike, and British writers like Ian McEwan faced up to terror in their own ways. De Lillo's novel *Falling Man* (2007) as the author himself put it could not ignore the event because it had been deeply ensconced in the "narcissistic heart of the West" (quoted in Mishra 2007: 4). This is because before the event the West had experienced a surge of capital markets and this had captured global consciousness. "The dramatic climb of the Dow and the speed of the internet summoned us all to live permanently in the future in the utopian glow of cyber-capital" (quoted in Mishra 2007: 4). Ken Kalfus in *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2004) a work written in the aftermath of 9/11 recalls the time before the event when "dissent required a kind of neurotic, life-denying pessimism" (quoted in Mishra 2007: 4). It was a time when everyone thought that New York slums would become gentrified and free markets would establish a future of prosperity. But 9/11 changed all that.

A brief consideration of an almost inexhaustible stock of writing on 9/11, constituting a discourse, is appropriate at this stage and will serve to contextualize the literary texts. The final report of the 9/11 Commission came out on December 5, 2005 generating considerable anxiety in American society. Would the terrorists strike again, and if so, when? There were recommendations on foreign policy, public diplomacy, non-proliferation, all seen as affected by 9/11. There were recommendations on Homeland security and the Patriot Act. Much of this was drafted by Michael Hurley, a career CIA Officer. Ten members of the 9/11 Commission, determined not to let the official findings disappear from the public gaze formed a non-governmental organization called the 9/11 Public Discourse Project, to make an effort to educate the American public on the findings of the 9/11 Commission. The results are well-known. There was an increase in security measures which were often intrusive, anti-Islamic rhetoric, paranoid suspicion of coloured immigrants, special treatment for Muslims, an aggressive drive to dismantle terrorist networks by going after them, and a discourse of war. Iraq became a convenient ploy and Saddam Hussein's own wrongdoings made him a natural target, an enemy now of the USA and of the free world (Montgomery 2005: 149-180).

Michael Moore, the progressive filmmaker, produced *Fahrenheit 9/11* which documented President Bush's ties with Saudi Arabia, focusing on America's search not so much for terrorists as for oil and in a way holding the American government as complicit in the attacks on the twin towers. Along with war was the need to protect democracy which in President Bush's speeches was posited as the opposite of Islamic terror, which in turn was conflated with Islam itself. The process of 'othering' Muslims was thus begun ironically in a free democracy where presumably all were equal before the law. Democracy was 'our way of life', terrorism always seen as Islamic was the other. Democracy was the watchword with which America could go to war as part of her "globalized humanitarianism" (Mummery and Rodon 2003). In this masculinist discourse, of course, women were left behind. In the media, in citizen commentary and Presidential speeches there was an open acceptance of a gendered nationalist identity which valued masculine macho behaviour (President Bush's "I will smoke them out'" is illustrative), encouraged punitive responses to conflict (Gautanamo Bay, Al Ghraib), a paternalistic attitude to injury and trauma, both seen as weak and feminine (Drew 2004). Conspiracy theories were floated along with the growth of a public '9/11 truth Movement'. The playing on public fears that Islamic Terrorists were intent on infiltrating America combined with intrusive searches and invasion of privacy erected an atmosphere of suspicion, anxiety and vulnerability. Naturally humour was at a premium. "People", says Giselinde Knipes, "asserted that Sept. 11 was the death of comedy. After 9/11 Americans have stopped laughing" (Knipes 2005). The mind set of Muslim minorities, Pakistanis like Mohsin Hamid, demonstrated a visible internalization of a negative representation of Muslim and South Asian identities. 9/11 changed vocabulary in America. A volume of essays concentrated on the rhetoric of war on terror and showed "how discursive production of identities takes place, how ideologies and collective understandings in response to 9/11 determine how enemies are defined and identified, how politicians and citizens react, how members of societies understand their position in the world in relation to terrorism" (Hodges and Nilep 2007: 3). 9/11 also manufactured a new American nationalism which enabled the US to see itself as innocent in relation to the demonic other, but this was after all only a variation of the old theme of American exceptionalism. An "US & Them" Conference was organized in Helsinki, which underscored this othering process. If one scrutinizes President Bush's speeches during this period, one notices the messianic Biblical Born Again Christian rhetoric of the Bible belt. US allies like Israel took a leaf out of this book and used the War of Terror to increase their influence and to legitimize military repression in Palestine. Ann Keniston and Jan Follansbee Quinn in *Literature after 9/11* (2008), draw on trauma theory, genre theory, political theory, theories of post-modernity, space and temporality to suggest ways in which these discourses

can be reconstituted and set into a dialogic mode with one another in the act of explaining 9/11. Scholars have argued that the literature of 9/11 and after constitutes a 'pornography of grief', that it is an event which is uncommemorable, that it has changed literary studies. America has been set adrift post 9/11 and fiction represents that.

De Lillo's *Falling Man* concerns a survivor of the 9/11 attacks and the effect of that experience on his life thereafter. Keith Neudecker, a 39-year-old lawyer who works in the World Trade Centre escapes from the building, injured slightly, and walks to the apartment he has previously shared with Justin, his son, and his estranged wife, Lianne. The trauma of the attack brings the family together as Keith convalesces. While resuming his routine at home Keith also gets romantically attached to Florence, another survivor of the attack. Keith has by mistake taken her suitcase in the confusion following the attack. Lianne, meanwhile, gets frustrated with a neighbour who plays middle eastern sounding music, witnesses the dissolution of a writing group she had run for patients with alzheimer and spends time with her intellectual mother, Nina, and Martin (her mother's boyfriend) who has presumed terrorist links with a German group. Keith travels around the world playing professional poker and recalls one of his poker mates who died in the 9/11 attacks. In the novel Lianne sees a performance of an artist who is called Falling Man. He does all kinds of tricks, the best being suspending himself upside down with rope and harness in the pose of a man in the famous 9/11 photograph of Richard Drew. The novel explores the symbolic nature of terrorist violence and the way in which the media exploit that violence. It therefore throws up important question about the ethical dimension of literary engagement with the trauma of 9/11. It also poses other questions of moment. Does trauma have a redemptive role and if one forms part of a group, is one participating in a herd mentality with little appreciation of individual choice. Is there a way in which individuals can reinvent themselves or are they condemned to a group identity? Don de Lillo's usual vibrance with language is missing because the event itself was so debilitating and could not be commemorated. While this might be true, the point to note is that the novel exploits a chilling symbol of 9/11 flashed on TV. The horror of the event gets sanitized and blunted by a Baudrillardian hyper-reality of the image. The novel too gets appropriated to the discourse and loses its human impact.

Updike's *Terrorist* is clearly a more frontal response to 9/11. It is about an American teenager, Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy, and his high school counsellor, Jack Levy. The novel seeks to explore the world view and motivations of religious fundamentalism, but this is in America, and the novel is at one level an indictment of the American way of life, its morality, decadence and life style. The novel begins with a monologue by Ahmad about the condition of his peers, who, for him are

morally impure. He gets into a fight with Tynelol who thinks that Ahmad is flirting with his (Tynelol's) girl friend, Joryleen. While Ahmad is sexually attracted to the girl he is influenced by his Islamic learning and represses those instincts. His teacher at the mosque is Shaikh Rashid who is linked with Jehadi elements. Ahmad, in fact, thinks he is superior to the Shaikh in his Islamic convictions. He has ironically the support of his mother, Teresa, who, though raised a Catholic, has lapsed in her faith and is in fact a believer in sexual freedom, besides being a disbeliever. Ahmad sees her as typical of the degradation of America and yearns for his father, an Egyptian immigrant, who had abandoned him and Teresa. Jack Levy, who thinks that Ahmad has a great academic future and that he should go to University, is puzzled by Ahmad's desire to drive trucks. Levy visits Teresa to counsel but soon they have an affair. Levy is an American Jew, and he too is lapsed. His view of America is that it is materialistic and greedy and his criticism of the land is similar, but different, from Ahmad's condemnation which is fired by Jihadi enthusiasm. Ahmad drives trucks as he wants to, but soon he is sucked into a Jihadi plot. Levy gets to know this and hops on to the truck which is loaded with explosives meant to blow up a subway. Levy manages to talk Ahmad out of his mad adventure. The novel is in the third person narrative mode and the shifting narrative voice allows us to get a glimpse of the reflections and psychological anxieties of on the one hand Ahmad, the Islamic fundamentalist, on American Jews and on the other Teresa, the typical materialist hedonist American. Thus the narrative involving Ahmad tends to be about truth-telling and intense religious questing. When Levy takes over the narrative he is wry and disillusioned about almost everything. In spite of this his intense desire to save Ahmad endears him to the reader. Both Teresa and her sister Beth get space and the result is a multi-voiced and gripping exploration of the American way of life and its Islamic other. It is also an adventure story and Updike's considerable story-telling skills are very much visible. It is a bracing exposé of America and one is clear that Updike has struck a fine and difficult balance in his treatment of the theme. However, in a way, Updike falls into the contemporary trap laid by the Huntington thesis and exploits the clichés of our times. Updike has done his research but according to Pankaj Mishra he has visited websites of Islamic pseudo-scholarship on the Koran much as Martin Amis has on the same issue. Mishra says that in *Terrorist*, Updike appears as keen as Amis to optimize his research. Invoking the raisin-virgin controversy, one of Updike's fanatical Muslim characters echoes Amis's little joke that the substitution of virgins for dry fruits "would make Paradise significantly less attractive for many young men" (Mishra 2007: 4). It is this kind of flippancy which infuriates and one is quite able to see how the binary opposition of civilizations posited by Huntington, takes a literary toll in terms of credibility. Updike is quite unable to evoke the puritanism of Ahmad and his efforts are comic in the extreme and border on caricature. Talking

about terrorists is risky and Updike has had to overcome both fear and revulsion in tackling the subject. Mishra writes: "Their novelist-host has to overcome much fear and revulsion in order to take seriously murderous passions aimed at their own society. Sympathy often breaks down and hasty scholarship results in stereotypical formulations" (Mishra 2007: 4). This suggests that the trauma of 9/11 affected a major writer like Updike and compelled him to write a book which leaves one with unanswered ethical questions. In order to attack terror was it necessary to distort Islamic faith?

Ian McEwan is no less disappointing in *Saturday* (2005). It is a novel set against the backdrop of the London Protest march against the Iraq war. His protagonist is the forty-eight-year-old neurosurgeon Henry Perowne. He is thoroughly domesticated and has planned a series of activities on Saturday. He, like his author, won't engage with the large issues of the day and he is content to play squash, have sex with his wife and eat with his family. The narrative is in the third person omniscient. It lingers on the small pleasures of life and the British way of life. He has a happy marriage with Rosalind, his son is a Blues player and his daughter Daisy is a poet who lives in Paris. She is visiting, so is Rosalind's father, John Grammaticus, who is a drunkard and lives in a chateau in the South of France and with whom Perowne is hoping to effect a reconciliation over the weekend. Perowne is satisfied with his life and its pleasures and would like to keep it that way. He is not unaware of the Saturday March but has ambivalent feelings about Iraq. He loathes Saddam Hussein and his cruelties but is equally suspicious of American motives in going to war. *Saturday* may be read as a metaphor for the weekend when one is retiring into domesticity and awaiting the pleasures of Sunday. Perowne's day starts early. It has been a busy week and while looking out of his window he spots a Russian aeroplane, its engine on fire. For him this is an ominous start to the day and he is anxious about how this has occurred. Is it the handiwork of terrorists? Are the pilots Islamist terrorists? Is this a replay of 9/11? On his way to the squash court he has a minor accident and an encounter with a group led by Baxter, which attempts to extort money from him. He escapes them but not before he has indicated to Baxter his suspicion that Baxter is suffering from a debilitating disease, interestingly called Huntington! Baxter is interested enough in his condition to invade Perowne's home, and there he terrorizes the family, even threatening Daisy with rape. Baxter is distracted about his illness and in a soft moment allows himself to be overpowered, while his companions abandon him. Later Perowne is summoned to hospital where he operates upon Baxter. He returns home and has sex with his wife. Domestic life is seen as something which has to be cherished and his knowledge of the terror lurking out there is something which needs to be put aside so that he, like other Brits can go about their lives in their insular fashion. *Saturday* is a depiction of that attitude. In an interview McEwan

said that he was, after 9/11, wanting to know more about the world because the changes the world had gone through compelled writers to go to school again. He was tired of invented characters and wanted the real thing (Mishra 2007: 4). However, this novel does not meet that ideal, and *Saturday* turns out to be a weak response to a momentous event like 9/11, which is the motivation behind the Iraq war, the backdrop to this novel.

It is as though Anglo-American writers are unable to confront the big events of their times and prefer to sink into supra-reality like de Lillo, stereotypes like Updike, or domesticity like McEwan. If we are looking for more adequate responses perhaps we need to turn to ethnic writers in Britain and America like Kiran Desai who seem to have understood the changes in the world and may be said to speak to all of us about a world where terror is a fact of life and 9/11 has changed things. This is the burden of her excellent post 9/11 novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2005). And Mohsin Hamid, too, is a case in point: a consideration of his work shows a vital difference in perspective between ethnic writers and their Anglo-Saxon counterparts. In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) we see a sensitive response to a post 9/11 world. Hamid has lived in America and is a highly acclaimed writer and has the advantage of the insider-outsider perspective. He is a participant observer. A successful career in America was cut short by the events of 9/11 and Hamid has in several interviews given expression not only to his love of America but his fascination with terror and his satisfaction at seeing the twin Towers demolished. In his novel this dual perspective is brought out successfully in the character of Changez, a possible terrorist, meeting a CIA agent in Lahore. The monologue begins with the words: "Excuse me Sir but may I be of assistance? Ah, I see I have alarmed you. Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (Hamid 2007: 1). The monologue gives us the minutiae of the daily existence of Changez, the rise and fall of a man from Princeton, his employment in a prestigious firm, his love affair with the American Erica, and the mixed feelings of revulsion, hate and attraction he feels after the events of 9/11 unfold. "I turned on the television and saw what at first I took to be a film. But as I continued to watch, I realized that it was not fiction but news. I stared as one —and then another— of the twin towers of New York's World Trade Centre collapsed. And then I smiled. Yes, despicable as it may sound, my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased" (Hamid 2007: 72). Unlike Updike and de Lillo Hamid has the advantage of making the 9/11 event the central moment of his novel because it alters Changez's life irrevocably, while in the others it is a reaction to the event and the aftermath of the attacks. The narrative is cleverly deployed because we are never sure from Changez's statements whether he is a terrorist or not and we are left in suspense about what will happen next. The radicalization of Changez is a possibility and Erica's hysteria and disintegration are convincingly portrayed as the natural fallout of 9/11. The personal becomes the

political and the metaphoric force behind the individual character —each one becoming a symbol of the significance of 9/11— makes this novel a gripping and authentic presentation of the meaning of a trauma. It is a challenge to the West and it is an ethical challenge in its insider-outsider response and its ambivalence about the event. There is no posturing of the Updike variety with its pseudo-scholarship and no McEwan-like domestication. It confronts the world frontally. As a consequence, I would rate it an artistic success.

But Muslim writers with a purely insider view also have something to say about a 9/11-stricken world. Mukhtar Mai, the Pakistani woman writer's narrative *In the Name of Honour: A Memoir* (2006) is a case in point as are Afghan writer Khalid Hosseini's novels *The Kite Runner* (2003) and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007), both typical of the 'Other' way of doing things. Here are writers who have experienced Talibanist fanaticism and the ravages of war and colonialism and they respond in humane ways to human suffering. Mukhtar Mai is an illiterate Pakistani woman who was gang raped by the enemies of her family as a part of the honour tradition of the Frontier Provinces. Her life became an attempt to come to terms with her shame and to end the gender injustices a patriarchal society visits on Pakistani women in the name of religion, honour, and the Shariat Law. This is a view from inside, from an insider, and it is told to a westerner who in some way is used as an authenticator of the narrative. Mukhtar Mai's slow inexorable rise to fame and honour in a brutal Islamic society is nothing if not heroic and inspirational. It shows Islam in a bad light and it embodies the backwardness of the culture and it is calculated to make the West feel complacent about its civilized ways and to feel superior because the help Mukhtar wants is from the West. She even attempts to go to the West for an award and is prevented by her government but it becomes an international issue and finally she travels abroad, now an ambassador of her narrative. She is feted there and her fame in the West leaves her somewhat like the Kenyan Nobel Laureate Wangari Mathai, a celebrity in her own land. She has recently married but her life exemplifies the quiet struggle of a woman who has done the right thing for women in a patriarchal culture. Hers is a gendered narrative and speaks for the woman in an oppressed and oppressive system, the double jeopardy of being a Pakistani in relation to the West, and a Pakistani woman in relation to her community and religion. Be that as it may I still feel constrained to draw attention to its compromised character. While one is sympathetic about Mukhtar Mai, one is suspicious that this is a narrative written by the West to confirm its views. But then again, was there any other route open to Mukhtar to gain visibility and have her voice heard? While these are troubling questions the main impact of the narrative is to get a view of things from within Talibanized Islam. To that extent it speaks truth to power and is a valuable document. The ethical imperative legitimizes this narrative of trauma visited by

state power and the ideological apparatus of an illiberal society. But in spite of the inwardness of the voice it speaks the language of the Huntington thesis. If Mukhtar Mai had written her book in her native Pashtun the authenticity of the narrative would be relatively unproblematic but then there would have been a translation. Indeed the authenticating strategy of this narrative is complicit in an act of translation and translation in our present context is into English. That was the only way a Pashtun would be heard but Mukhtar Mai has to count her cost. She has had to give up her voice to American journalists.

In Khaled Hosseini's brilliant writing we have a variation of the language question and the nature of a comprador writer. An Afghan, no doubt, but an Afghan with half a foot in America where he has migrated, Khaled Hosseini is also compromised. It is important to know the location of a writer and to know whom he is addressing his tale to because these factors determine the nature of the narrative. *The Kite Runner* (2003) is the story of Amir, a boy from the Wazir Akbar Khan District of Kabul, who is haunted by guilt for betraying Hassan, his childhood friend. The story is set against the backdrop of tumultuous historical events in Afghanistan —the Monarchy has fallen, the Soviets have invaded Afghanistan, the Taliban has risen leading to reprisals and the flight of Afghan refugees to Pakistan and the United States. Amir is a Pashtun and Hassan is a low caste Hazara boy, the son of the servant of Amir's father, Baba. Baba loves both boys but is critical of Amir for not being manly enough. Amir must prove himself and draws comfort from Rahim Khan, Baba's friend, who is understanding and compassionate. But Amir is unable to help Hassan when he is sodomized by Assef, a bully who taunts Amir for consorting with a Hazara. Hassan, on an earlier occasion, had helped Amir by blinding Assef and this is Assef's revenge. Amir is jealous of Hassan's proximity to Baba and frames him for theft in order to compel Baba to get rid of him. Amir is eaten up with remorse. In the meanwhile the Russians invade Afghanistan and Amir and Baba go to Peshawar in Pakistan and then to Fremont, California in the USA. There Baba lives modestly and Amir becomes a writer. He marries a fellow refugee, Soraya, the daughter of an army officer in the Afghan services. Baba dies, Soraya's father is not happy that his son-in-law writes novels and the two cannot have children. Rahim calls up one day and Amir goes to Taliban-run Afghanistan where he learns that Ali and Hassan are both dead, the latter at the hands of the Taliban which has tried to take away Baba's house from Hassan. It turns out that Baba is Hassan's father, that Amir and Hassan are half brothers. Rahim Khan wants Amir to save Hassan's son Sohrab from the Taliban and take him away to America. The Taliban official who is holding Sohrab happens to be Assef and now he has his moment. Sohrab saves Amir from sure cruelty by fulfilling his father's promise to take Assef's other eye. Amir and Sohrab go back to America and there they begin a troubled life together but Hassan's memory brings them together.

There are many features which make this one of the most moving novels written in recent times. And yet the ethical questions keep cropping up. Hosseini himself is an immigrant Afghan writer living in the USA. He cannot help being beholden to the Americans for his freedom and clearly a novel appearing post 9/11 which rubbishes the Taliban, as this novel does, cannot escape being seen as a support to the West's ideas. The way the novel deals with the Taliban and its fundamentalism confirms the worst fears of the West about Islamic societies. The nobler aspects of Islam are elided and we only see the essential hypocrisy, fanaticism, sexual depravity of some Jehadi Islamists. They do not represent Islam. But to the West informed by the Huntington thesis this is an opportunity to savage a whole culture and not just those aspects of it which are a distortion of Islam.

As if this were not enough, Hosseini has another novel titled *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). This is a later novel and it is no less gripping and moving but it suffers from the same comprador dimension which the earlier novel had. It is an intense story of gender discrimination, rape, cruelty to women and patriarchal authoritarianism. It is set in Taliban ruled Afghanistan and it is about Mariam, the illegitimate daughter of a rich businessman, and Laila, a woman married by force to the brutal Rasheed, Mariam's husband. The two victimized women show courage in attempting to escape the Taliban and in bonding together against Rasheed whom they murder. The freedoms women had during Soviet rule are now gone with the departure of the Russians and the rise of the Taliban. These two women have to devise ways to survive. Laila is helped by Mariam to reach her lover Tariq, while Mariam herself is executed by the Taliban. Laila and Tariq look after Aziza, Mariam's child, who has been sent to an orphanage. It is a searing exposure of the fundamentalist culture unleashed by the Taliban and in the present context of Huntington inspired hardening of cultural boundaries it is not calculated to bridge the chasm. Also Hosseini now lives in America and he is more compromised. If he had lived in Afghanistan, as Mukhtar lives in Pakistan, it would be different.

This essay has tried to show that location and cultural identity determine the way representations of traumatic events are done. 9/11 was one such trauma. The American and British novelists either caricature the Islamic fundamentalist or attempt to marginalize him. This cannot be done by those who have experienced terror and its aftermath —Hamid, Mukhtar Mai and Hosseini. But their various strategies to cope with this trauma leave many ethical questions unanswered. It is not the purpose of this paper to say that one way of representing is better than the other but to point to differences and variety in response, to account for them and to point to the essential humanity of writers anywhere in the world, whatever their compulsions. The representation of 9/11 and post 9/11 compulsions is fraught with questions about the nature of trauma and the morality or ethics of attempting

to represent them. Can trauma be represented at all? Should anyone sitting in the luxury of an air-conditioned apartment preach about terror and its aftermath? What gives them the authority to do so? In what way is their view authentic? Should trauma be written about by those who have not experienced it or is it the preserve of those who have experienced it first hand? Does this mean that our common humanity cannot be pressed into service and does it mean that we have no say in the affairs of our times unless we are victims in a direct way? That would mean that Mukhtar Mai alone can speak of her humiliations and none of us can. That would mean that Updike has no business getting into the consciousness of his terrorist protagonist and that this can be done only by a terrorist himself or herself. But this is absurd and denies the whole project of the Humanities which is based on the assumption that all of us have a right to express ourselves and that it is through the untrammeled expression of our views that a civil society can come into being and exert moral pressure on those who commit evil acts. Clearly these are ethical questions and it would appear that when we are dealing with a traumatic event like 9/11 ethical questions about whether it can be spoken about at all, and if it can who can speak for whom, how much, to whom and how exactly, come dramatically into the forefront.

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Sí, estás cambiando, maridijo, y te estás volviendo, te siento, hacia una mujija, dejando atrás de nuevo las montañas. Ilmalamia. Y ella viene hacia aquí. Nadando en mi traseragua. Zambucogiendo mi colita. Simplemente un batido movido malvado agitado plof cataplof carretón de algo quealgaiquí, asaltarineando. Saltorella vino a misma ella. Me compadezco de tu demodéyo al que estaba acostumbrada yo. Ahora uno nuevo hay ahí. Intenta no dividir. ¡Sed felices, queridos míos! ¡Puede que sea un error mío! Para ella será dulce para ti así de dulce como yo lo fui cuando salí de madre mía. Mi gran cuarto azul, el aire tan calmado, falta una nube. En paz y silencio. Podría haberme quedado allí plantada por siempre solamente. Es algo que nos falló. Primero sentimos. Luego caímos. Y déjala ahora llover si quiere. Suave o violentamente como ella quiera. Sea como sea déjala que llueva para ha llegado mi hora. He hecho mi mejor cuando fui abandonada. Pensando siempre si voy en todos los tos. Un ciento de cuidados, un diezmo de problemas, ¿y hay alguien que me comprenda? ¿Uno en un ciento de años de noches? Toda vida mía he vivido entre ellos pero ahora se vuelven detestodiables para mí. Empiezo a odiar sus tibios trucos. Y a odiar sus cálidos giros íntimos. Y todos los codiciosos chorreos a través de sus almillas. Y todas las perezosas goteras cayendo sobre sus presuntuosos cuerpos. ¡Qué pequeño es todo! Y yo arrentando siempre a mí misma. Y cantarineando todo el tiempo. Pensé que tú estabas todo esplendoroso con el más noble de los carruajes. No eres más que un paleto. Creía

eras lo mejor de todas las cosas, en la gloria y en la culpabilidad. Eres pero un enclenque. ¡Hogar! Mi gente estaba a su no disposición más allá de allá, tan lejos como yo puedo. De todas las osadías y fechorías y llorerías son culpadas, las brujas marinas. ¡No! Ni de todos nuestros salvajes bailes en todos sus salvajes barullos. Puedo vistoso yo misma a su través, alanivia pulcrabel. ¡Vaya moza, la fiera Amazia, cuando se haga con mi otro pecho! Y mira si es rara, altiva Niluna, que intentará arrebatarme hasta mi más pelo mío! Por eso hay tormentas. ¡Ya cuelga! ¡Cuelga ya! Y el estruendo de nuestros gritos hasta que floreemos a la libertad. ¡Auraveola, dijo ellos, nunca reparé en tu nombre! Pero estoy saqueteándolos aquí es y todo lo saqueteo, soliloca en mi soliloquiada. Por todas sus faltas. Estoy perdiendo el conocimiento. ¡Amargo final! Me escabulliré antes de que se despierten. Nunca verán. Ni sabrán. Mi me añorarán. Y es vetusto y tuto es triste y tuto es triste y agotada vuelvo a ti, frío padre mío, mi frío padre, mi frío y loco padre timorato, hasta la próxima contemplación de la simple constitución de él, moles y moles de él, toldeandolamentos, me salmuela y me salduele y yo me precipito, en mi misma mismedad, en tus brazos. ¡Los veo levantarse! ¡Líbrame de estos terribles tridentes! Dos más. Unodos mementos más. Así. Aleluvión. Mis hojas parten a la deriva. Todas. Mas una aún se aferra a mí. La conservaré ahí adherida a mí. Para acordarme de. ¡Vrr! Tan suave esta mañana de nuestro. Sí. Arrástrame, papijito, como me arrastraste por la feria de juguetes. Si lo viese ahora abalanzarse sobre mí, bajo sus blancaenvergaduradas alas cual venido de entre los Limbángeles, me abandono, a sus pies moriría, entregada y silenciada, sólo para redimirme en su playa. Sí mareanda. Ves aquí es. Primer. ¡Silenciopido! Una gaviota. Otras más. Lejanas voces. ¡Llejando a ti, pipapi! Fin ya. ¡Ya de nuevo, Finn! Toma. ¡Masperdedcuidado, mismasmemoríasmías! Y a ti, hasta dentro de un cinto de… Bss. Las llaves para. ¡Entregadas! Un camino, uno solo, uno último, uno amado, uno largo, el

Reviews

UNCERTAIN MIRRORS: MAGICAL REALISMS IN US ETHNIC LITERATURES

Jesús Benito, Ana María Manzanas, and Begoña Simal
Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2009.

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This volume shows the precise scholarly work carried out by its authors in their sustained effort to revise updated views concerning contemporary literature and recent critical theory. *Uncertain Mirrors* is, in brief, a book that combines a historical approach to the uncertain grounds of magical realism with an analysis of current post-postmodernist theories on the role of fiction in our present globalized condition. The history of recent criticism, narrative, ethnicity, minorities, excluded middles, ethics, ecocriticism, and physics are among the most important key ideas addressed in the volume, whose tightly woven chapters dissect the notion of magical realism and its manifestation in the fiction written by authors who belong to minority ethnic groups. While it is true that this narrative mode has been addressed in quite a few books in recent years —including some very valuable ones such as Bowers' *Magic(al) Realism*— magical realism continues to elude all attempts at a final definition and it has hardly been addressed in its historical dimension —a dimension that ranges from Aristotle's *Poetics* to Adorno's "negative dialectics". Conscious of this fact, the three authors of *Uncertain Mirrors* move toward the narrative mode from different perspectives before closing the volume in what, in their self-awareness, they denominate "dialectical instability".

The book is divided into an introductory chapter on the oxymoronic nature of magical realism, six additional chapters dealing with the different interconnections between magical realism and a variety of *-isms* (namely, postmodernism,

postcolonialism, ecocriticism, as well as Levinasian philosophy), and then some final "dialectical" remarks about the mode from the perspective provided by Theodor Adorno's concept of negative dialectics. Before that happens, Ana María Manzanas was in charge of writing the first two chapters, Jesús Benito of the next two, and Begoña Simal of Chapters 5 and 6.

In Chapter 1, "Mimesis, Realism and Counter-realism", Manzanas starts by challenging traditional assumptions on the concept of mimesis, a word whose meanings are always unstable and conflicting because, she argues, "as a deliberate performance of sameness", mimesis "is always going to alter the original" (9). Then, she offers a historical revision of the concept, departing from Aristotle's definition in his *Poetics* and showing how along the years mimesis has been "interpreted as the literal copy of reality", an interpretation that Manzanas systematically dismantles in the following pages by scrutinizing the different but related meanings that the notion had in different historical moments, especially in the 19th century, where it became the basic pillar to support traditional realism. Interestingly, as Manzanas perceptively points out, by then "the alleged mimeticism of the realists actually reversed Aristotle's formulations, for whereas Aristotle had widened the limits of the real to incorporate the possible, the realists inverted Aristotle's priorities to value the historian over the poet, that is to say, what happened over what may happen" (23). Part III of this first chapter evaluates whether mimesis can be a sufficient requirement for the writing of narrative and problematizes the alleged distinction between the actual and the fictional by revising their limits in the light of contemporary theories defended by critics like Thomas Pavel or Lubomír Dolezel.

Entitled "Romance, the Imaginary, and Magical Realism", Chapter 2 offers a historical revision of the idealistic and the realistic modes, because, as Manzanas argues, "it comes as no surprise that the romance survived realism through the creation of the inner reality of experience, and permeated the novel in various ways" (35), ways that she gradually discloses in the following pages, where she describes and analyzes different uses of the fantastic mode by resorting to well-established critics like Frye, Fluck, or Durand before proceeding to mark out the uncertain territory of magical realism. The wide range of terms that critics have used in later years to mark such textual territory occupies the second part of the chapter; classifications such as "postmodern realism", "the marvelous real", "psychic realism", "magicorealism", or "postmodern fantastic" add to the many difficulties in defining the mode and Manzanas reviews an ample bibliography on these terms in her intellectual quest for a satisfactory approach to magical realism. In my opinion, if there is a reference missing in her bibliographic survey, it is probably to Rosemary Jackson's seminal study *Fantasy, the Literature of Subversion* (1981),

one of the first books to evaluate the fantastic mode from poststructuralist and psychoanalytical premises and one that still offers very interesting theories about both our attraction to the uncanny elements of life and the rise of the gothic mode. After a clarifying summary of some of the most relevant antecedents of the mode, Manzanas addresses the existence of the different levels of representation that characterize magical realism and partakes of Sangari's view of "the simultaneity of the heterogeneous" (48) to explain the mode's overlapping of levels. The next section in Chapter 2 is dedicated to the connections existing between magical realism and postcolonial writing, a link already pointed out by Elleke Boehmer in 1995 but extended by Manzanas to the space of US fiction, where, as happened earlier in Latin America, "the correspondence between the word and the real is now traversed and transformed by heterogeneity and mediated by the magic, the imaginary, and the possible" (55), terms which she analyzes in the next section in the chapter. The meanings of the word *magic* and its relation to the category of the possible take Manzanas to finally evaluate what "real" may mean in the mode of magical realism, a particular way of writing that, she affirms, is still anchored in reality, while being politically and historically "conscious" and an "important element of dehierarchization that brings a vision from the fringes into conversation with the center" (58). Manzanas finally reminds her readers that in the analyses of the limits of the real vs. the unreal critics should also do well to consider the discoveries in quantum analysis, that demand a new interpretation of reality quite separate from our traditional Newtonian understanding of it.

Chapter 3 is titled "The Crisis of Representation: Post-realism, Postmodernism, Magical Realism" and in its pages Benito becomes deeply involved in the clarification of a number of terms abundantly used in contemporary criticism and theory. The implication that classic realism is the appropriate mode to narrate the credible and represent the external aspects of the real has been amply contested throughout the 20th century by an extensive number of experimental —metafictional or not— practices and Benito offers a very interesting and precise summary of those practices from its first relevant expression in Modernism to the most recent type of experimental fiction. Contemporary narrative, he asserts, is politically divided in different forms and modes and in the relation between magical realism and postmodernism they constitute one of the most confusing terminological issues. However, pages 69 to 74 considerably illuminate such uncertain concepts. Especially relevant in his adscription of magical realism to the field of socially committed literature is his realization that such a mode is also affecting some white writers in the United States, even if they do not fall within the scope of the book. Of course, being "non-ethnic" authors, the analysis of the use of magical realism by these white writers is not pursued in *Uncertain Mirrors*

although it may offer Manzanas, Benito and Simal the opportunity, I hope, to elaborate their views on the issue in their future publications. It should also be noted that there are some moments in Chapter 3 in which the presentation in general terms of postmodernist experimentation seems to be almost devoid of any possible social commitment, whereas at other times —especially when dealing with "historiographic-metafictional" texts— some of the experimental postmodernist writers cited (Doctorow, Vonnegut, Pynchon…) cannot be devoid of such political orientation as Linda Hutcheon, among others, has variously proposed; clear borders, as suggested throughout the book, are not to be found between the postmodern and the magical realist (in "the postmodern world, magic and reality are not opposites", 90). Politically oriented texts written in the mode of magical realism are exemplified in this chapter by Yamasita's *Tropic of Orange* and Vizenor's *Bearheart*. Both textual analyses efficiently confirm the implications previously defended by Benito in the theoretical part of the chapter.

Chapter 4, "Juxtaposed Realities: Magical Realism and/as Colonial Experience", is a sustained attempt to build a bridge between the literary mode under discussion in the volume and Postcolonial fiction writing. By approaching modernist surrealism and Carpentier's seminal ideas about the "marvelous real", Benito extends the debate to encompass an understanding of magical realism as a way of championing the indigenous and postcolonial cultural perception, although I have some reservations when the author affirms again that both *lo real maravilloso* and magical realism show "their rejection of the playful literary experimentation associated with the West" (106), an association that I do not find to be so clear unless many postmodern writers are disregarded and only modernist experimentation and the works of a few, now mostly forgotten American metafictional writers from the 1960s and early 1970s (Gass, Sorrentino, Barth…) are considered. However, Benito perceptively argues that magical realism has come to be finally acknowledged "as the postcolonial mode par excellence" (107), a bold statement that he convincingly clarifies in the remaining pages of the chapter when he analyzes the juxtaposition between mythological beliefs and the rational scientific outlook and suggests various bridges between the two. He understands the juxtaposition to be the most relevant feature of the mode and also a constant in postcolonial fiction (107-108). After exploring the unstable presence of magical realism in postcolonial (including US ethnic) literature, the chapter concludes with convincing analyses of two well-known North American novels that had rarely been associated with magical realism: Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day* and Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water*.

Simal is in charge of Chapter 5, "From Identity to Alter-entity: Trans-selving the Self in Magical Realist Narrative", an essay that offers an illuminating comparison

between the different conceptions of self and identity that appear in magical realist texts and some of the most striking notions defended by Emmanuel Levinas, one of the most controversial philosophers in recent years, especially since the Turn to Ethics. Simal focuses on the transgression of traditional ontologies and antinomies, especially on the binary subject vs. object, which she associates with the multiple and fluid identities that frequently appear in the magical realist mode. Within the context of the present questioning of a traditional stable self, she chooses Levinas' intellectual approach to resolve the typical Cartesian dichotomy, a solution that demands either death or the recognition of the face of the other. It is in this second and only possible choice, that Levinas reconsiders identity in terms of responsibility for the other, a move that is effected by a deconstruction of identity that Simal associates with the process of "substitution" found in some magical realist texts. Testing her views on actual fiction, Simal carries out subsequent analyses of Erdrich's *Tracks* (Substitution or Possession?), Tan's *The Hundred Secret Senses* (from Reincarnation to Substitution), and Keller's *Comfort Woman* (Substitution as Survival). She convincingly argues that magical realist narratives of this kind successfully illustrate the workings of alterity within identity, and that consequently the mode of magical realism "seems to be especially useful for authors who need to convey their liminal and/or traumatic experiences" (188).

The last of the six chapters that constitute the book's core, "Of a Magical Nature: The Environmental Unconscious", is also written by Simal and draws some links between magical realism and ecocriticism. The author shows her clear views on the issue from the beginning of the chapter: "Environmentality is also 'encoded' in magical realism through both literal and metaphorical renditions of the frictions between the capitalist notion of progress and the survival of the earth as we know it, the spiritual wasteland resulting from the literal wasteland, human greed as the originator of devastation, and other environmental issues" (194). In her analytical scope there is also place for the issue of ethnicity and its connections with magical realism and ecology. This chapter is innovative precisely in the sense that Simal addresses such connections drawing her corpus from non-mimetic fiction. Silko's *Ceremony* and Yamasita's *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest* offer her the opportunity to test her theory and, as she writes, "unearth the environmental unconscious" across the pages of a chapter where terms of recent coinage like "biotic community", "Eco-responsibility", or "Ecoapocalypse" coexist with more traditional terms to bring to critical awareness new aspects in our understanding of magical realism.

Benito's concluding remarks are based, as I pointed out earlier, on Adorno's notion of negative dialectics because, as the author says, insomuch "as it obstinately incorporates realism while questioning or directly negating the very assumptions

that sustain realist narratives, magical realism can be understood as a form of 'negative realism'" (239-240). Breaking down the power of Aristotle's terrifying Law of the Excluded Middle, magical realism means the restoration of the literary middle and its liminal grounds. Although complex at times, its theoretical complexity pays off and *Uncertain Mirrors* is an illuminating book that scholars and teachers of US literature should read, and in which senior undergraduates and postgraduate students will find the necessary assistance to clarify the many doubts that arise when facing those strange, non-linear, experimental narratives that have been labeled as "magical realism".

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"THE SEA IS HISTORY": EXPLORING THE ATLANTIC

Carmen Brikle and Nicole Waller, eds.
Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2009.

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The field of Atlantic Studies has acquired renewed interest as a result of a paradigm shift in the study of history, literature and culture in the last twenty years. Even though in its inceptions Atlantic Studies scholarship dealt almost exclusively with tracing economic and socio-cultural interconnections between Britain and the US after the latter's independence from its former colonizer, the field has expanded to include a body of works that follow what has been called a 'circum-Atlantic' perspective. Shifting towards a multidirectional approach, the Atlantic paradigm seeks to bring to light the multiplicity of economic and socio-cultural transnational connections that have existed between Europe, the Americas and West Africa from early modern times. Within this supranational framework, Atlantic History developed as a discipline aimed at providing adequate description of historical events happening at the same time in different locations across the Atlantic Ocean, from the first encounters in the15th and 16th centuries, marked by attempts of the European imperial powers to establish a European civilization in the Americas up to the present day. It includes the development of trade routes between Africa, Europe and the Americas during the 16th and 17th centuries, and the exchange of ideas associated with the Enlightenment during the 18th and 19th centuries that contributed to the process of independence of the different colonies throughout the Americas and the Caribbean (Bailyn 2005: 62-107). Carmen Birkle and Nicole Waller's "'The Sea Is History': Exploring the Atlantic" (2009) brings together a set of articles by scholars like Bernard Bailyn,

William Boelhower, Donna Gabaccia and other Atlantic historians that explore cultural links and connections in what Mary Louise Pratt would call the 'contact zones'[1] of the Atlantic world. Borrowing from the title of Derek Walcott's celebrated poem, the essays in Birkle and Waller's volume excavate the Atlantic archives aiming to contribute a cultural perspective to the study of the circum-Atlantic.

"The Sea Is History": Exploring the Atlantic is number 177 in the American Studies' Monograph Series published by Universitätsverlag Winter, a series edited on behalf of the German Association for American Studies by Reinhard R. Doerries, Gerhard Hoffmann and Alfred Hornung which, since the 1950s, has established itself as one of the leading publications in the field of American Studies in Germany. The volume is comprised of ten articles preceded by an introduction by Birkle and Walker in which the two editors set the theoretical underpinnings for the compilation, reviewing various approaches to the study of Atlantic History and establishing links between the developments of this field and the emergence of Atlantic Studies in the 1990s as a discipline that combines the concerns of Atlantic historians and economists with those of scholars of literary and cultural studies (Birkle and Waller 2009: 2).

The ten articles in the volume provide a fine example of the multidisciplinarity of the field, putting together a set of contributions ranging from critical analysis of historical documents and events, popular culture rewritings of canonical texts, filmic, narrative and theatrical pieces, as well as accounts of personal transatlantic experiences. The collection thus illustrates what William Boelhower describes as the "complexity and fluidity" (Birkle and Waller 2009: 11) of the field. Inspired by Ferdinand Braudel's notion of "total history", in his "Atlantic Studies Complexities: Routes across Cultures", the first article in the volume, Boelhower welcomes what he terms the "new Atlantic studies matrix" (16), characterized by an intense interdisciplinarity that results from a conception of the world as a pluriverse "caught up in processes that are both intra- and inter-civilizational" (16). After contrasting Bailyn's traditional approach to the study of history with Braudel's defense of a holistic research method, Boelhower turns to philologist Erich Auerbach in support of what he interprets as a "shifting interpretative space" for Atlantic Studies that demands a cross-cultural understanding of historical and literary texts. Hence, Boelhower's article complements in many ways Birkle and Waller's introduction by expanding on the theoretical grounds of the project.

Matthias Krings' article "*Black Titanic*: African American and African Appropriations of the White Star Liner" well serves the purpose of exposing interconnectedness in the Atlantic world by examining various reinterpretations of the sinking of the Titanic in African and African American media representations. In his analysis, Krings argues that African and African American singers and filmmakers have addressed the lack of black passengers aboard the infamous ship

in several ways in an attempt to "claim for black people a part of history from which they were excluded" (26). By focusing on the ship motif, these authors are also making a statement on the relationship between the Atlantic triangular trade, the Middle Passage and slavery, while at the same time reflecting on current conditions for African migrant and diasporic populations whose history continues to be linked to boats and the sea in an increasingly globalized world.

Black Atlantic experiences are also the central topic in Anne C. Bailey's "Beyond Boundaries. Learning the ways: Ghana, West Africa", where she narrates her own trip from the US to Ghana in search of "stories that were still told about the Atlantic Slave Trade" (45). In this piece of creative non-fiction, Bailey recounts her experiences in West Africa in an attempt to establish connections between the untold stories of the Middle Passage and those of the dispossessed African American communities in New York City. Likewise, Amina Blackwood Meeks points to the links between Jamaican and African histories and oral traditions in her "Depths of Memories: Honouring the Makere People". Focusing on the events organized to commemorate the Bicentenary of the Anniversary of the Abolition of the TransAtlantic Trade in Enslaved Africans in Jamaica in 2007, Meeks explores oral, textual and material underwater sources, her aim being to unearth the palimpsestic nature of black Atlantic history.

Drawing on a close examination of names in historical records, Erna Brodber traces the presence of African American enslaved workers and white loyalist settlers in Jamaica at the time of the American War of Independence, in an attempt to examine the complex cultural exchanges between black communities arriving from North America and Africa at the end of the 18th century and those already living on the island. In her "Atlantic Crossings of the Late Eighteenth Century", Brodber thus challenges the alleged heterogeneity of black peoples in the Caribbean, revealing the already existing diversity among African and Afro-descendant populations, while, at the same time, mapping out Atlantic routes outside the traditional established triangle. Also working within the Jamaican context, Wolfang Binder's "'Where the Remote Bermudas Ride': Exploration, Expansion, Transport(s), and Two Texts on Jamaica" examines two travelogues written by two British authors in the early 1810s in which they describe their experiences travelling to and living in the West Indies. In both texts —the first one, a diary written by Maria Nugent, the English governor's wife, and the other one, a journal by professional writer Matthew Lewis— the narrative voices face a redefinition of their Englishness as a result of coming into contact with the uncanny natural environments of the Caribbean region.

Moving over to fiction, Carmen Birkle's first contribution to the volume establishes a dialogue between two distinguished nurse practitioners of the nineteenth century: Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. By comparing their first person narrative accounts, in "Traveling Nurses: Mary Seacole and the Nightingale Encounter. A

Transatlantic Story", Birkle discusses racial and gender issues in medical practices and transatlantic travel. After a careful analysis, Birkle argues that if both nurses defy the gender roles assigned to them in their societies by breaking down the division between the private and the public spheres and by participating in the scientific discourse of their times, Seacole, as a black British-Jamaican subject, also crosses "national, cultural, social, and ethnic borders" (105), thus becoming an active participant in the creation of the black Atlantic world.

Nicole Waller's "Filmic Representations of Circum-Atlantic Complexities: Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*" moves beyond the literary to take a look at contemporary cinema in her discussion of Spielberg's *Amistad*, and the reinterpretation in the film of the *Amistad* mutiny and subsequent legal process. After a close analysis of the historical event, in which Waller details the political implications of the case in the context of the US/Spanish struggle over the Caribbean territories and circum-Atlantic space, Waller examines Spielberg's adaptation of the events for a 1990s audience. In her view, although she agrees that the film's focus on the characters of the white lawyers and the abolitionists results in the erasure of any agency as speaking subjects on the part of black Africans or black Americans, Waller contends that some of the narratological structures behind Cinque, the leader of the Mende rebellion, work to challenge the right of Western nations to establish control over oceanic space, therefore claiming the African presence not only at the level of individual heroism but also of Atlantic politics. In "*Slaves in Algiers*; or, Susanna Haswell Rowson's Transatlantic Negotiations", Carmen Birkle aims to explore the literary routes traced by Haswell Rowson in her play *Slaves in Algiers; or, A Struggle for Freedom: A Play, Interpersed with Songs. In Three Acts* (1974). Focusing on the experiences of Rebecca, a white American who is captured in North African shores and kept as an enslaved worker, the play stages a reverse of the black Middle Passage, thus offering a complementary view of slavery across the Atlantic. In the last article of the volume, Annette Trefzer examines and compares Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Andrew Lytle's *At the Moon's Inn*, in an attempt to identify analogies between the processes of colonization in Africa by British colonizers in the 19th century and of the Americas by Spain during the 15th and 16th centuries. With this in mind, in "The Cannibal Feast in Andrew Lytle's and Joseph Conrad's Circum-Atlantic Imagination", Trefzer argues that "in depicting the voracious greed of European colonialism, Conrad and Lytle share a moral point of view and a literary technique that renders the economics of capitalism in the trope of cannibalism" (161). A close examination of this particular trope as the colonizers' hunger to devour the Other's natural resources, bodies and minds leads Trefzer to a deep critical understanding of the global geopolitics of the early transatlantic world.

The wide range of topics and approaches covered in the different essays included in "The Sea Is History" exemplifies the disciplinary shift that Atlantic Studies as a discipline puts forward. In this sense, the volume will be a valuable contribution to the field, particularly as it compiles a set of articles that combine concerns of history, cultural studies and literature in papers exploring different aspects of the circum-Atlantic experience in various times and locations. However, if as stated in the introduction, the volume seeks to depart from Eurocentric approaches to develop more inclusive analyses for the study of the Atlantic world, and to take issue with geopolitical location along with social class, gender, race, and ethnicity, closer attention should be given to scholarly practices and methodologies that take these categories into consideration. With a few notable exceptions, there is a certain lack of attention to black and Caribbean scholars and black Atlantic scholarship in spite of the fact that seven out of the ten articles revolve around the racialized experiences of black Atlantic communities. In spite of this shortcoming, the volume contributes to the advancement of the "new disciplinary matrix of the circum-Atlantic world" ("Editorial" n.p.) by offering a panoramic view of recent developments and cross-disciplinary approaches in the field, and by propitiating a much-needed conversation between the Social Sciences and the Humanities.

Notes

[1]. Pratt devises this term to "refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths" (1992: 7).

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RAINFOREST NARRATIVES: THE WORK OF JANETTE TURNER HOSPITAL

David Callahan
St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2009.

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David Callahan's contribution to Janette Turner Hospital studies is a major one, since, apart from the fifty-odd page compilation of essays edited by Selina Samuels in 1998, in which Callahan's chapter on *Isobars* also figures prominently (along with Hospital's own essay on the work of Christina Stead), this is the first, and so far the only monographic book-length study of Hospital's work published so far. Given that Hospital embarked on her career as a writer of fiction nearly thirty years ago, and that her work has come to occupy a more and more prominent place in the panorama of contemporary literature in English, a work like this is not only most welcome, but also absolutely necessary. A look at Callahan's previous publications indicates how well-placed he is to tackle the task, since he is the author of abundant previous articles and book chapters both on Turner Hospital herself and on different aspects of Australian literature and culture. He is also the editor of *Australia —Who Cares?* (2007) and of *Contemporary Issues in Australian Literature* (2002).

His new book constitutes a thoughtful and sensitive study of all the books published by Hospital so far, from *The Ivory Swing* (1982) to *Orpheus Lost* (2007), with the exception of the pseudonymous crime novel *A Very Proper Death.* It consists of twelve chapters, the first of which is introductory, while each of the remaining chapters is a detailed analysis of each of Hospital's books, including her eight novels and her three collections of short stories. This overall clearly-ordered

structure seems to suit better the tidy, classical simplicity of the subtitle, *The Works of Janette Turner Hospital*, than the title proper. Callahan, however, shows in Chapter 1 how both parts of the title work by clarifying the underlying meanings of "rainforest narratives". He explains how Hospital's texts resemble "the profusion and entanglements of the rainforest" in that they offer an "oversupply of information" but, at the same time, by means of their convoluted plots, they "occlude connections and links until we have made our way into them". If, as the author suggests, "Hospital's work [seeks] to explore things in their connections and the ways in which they implicate each other" (2-3), Callahan's own work mirrors hers in that he is able to trace doggedly each of the connections between her different books, between her books and the different sources they draw on, and, especially, that last connection of all: the one between literature and life. For, even though Hospital's works make it clear that fiction is indeed, "a created artefact", and not "a mirror that reflects reality or life" (1), yet they also remind us that it may (it must, as a matter of fact) passionately engage with real life.

These links are established, not merely by pointing out autobiographical aspects in the texts, but, especially, by means of the concept of responsibility, a crucial one in Hospital's works, and one that Callahan, as an ethically-concerned critic, pursues throughout his book. In his analysis, responsibility turns out to be many-sided. To begin with, there is the writer's responsibility, closely related to what he sees as the "main theme of her fiction": "how to read reality" and "how to record one's reading". Reading responsibly involves, among other things, bearing witness to the injustices committed by power, asking moral questions without any of the pusillanimity that often goes with political correctness, or preventing readers from being self-complacent by "interrupting their tendency to follow passively what they are being told" (48), which she achieves by, for example, making us distrust the version of the story we have, perhaps too confidently, been listening to. In this connection, the proverbial difficulty in reading Hospital is shown to be no mere idle technical display, but rather an instrument intended to keep her readers fully awake, that is to say, fully responsible. Faced with multiple versions of reality, the responsible reader is sometimes at pains to decide what to make of "Hospital's troubling mixture of intellectual playfulness and ethical seriousness" (50). This leads to nothing less than an examination of "the practical consequences of the contemporary idea that reality has no objective basis and is merely a collection of different stories told about it" (156). The result of this examination, Callahan argues, is that "there are contexts in which it is crucial that one meaning prevail over others", because a version of reality that allows those in power to commit rape and go unpunished, remaining untarnished in the eyes of the society, should not be allowed to triumph. Being a responsible reader is, therefore, no easy question,

and Callahan concludes that it is "a matter of reading the signs in such a way as to affirm the possibility of human solidarity" (156-157). Hospital's fiction also introduces the issue of responsibility by presenting us constantly with characters who care for others along with those who, by failing to establish meaningful connections with others, are led to self-destruction. Moreover, for an Australia-born author, responsibility is unavoidably connected to the question of the Indigenous population of the country. Presenting this issue responsibly has to do, Callahan says, with the need to "reference Indigenous stories without appropriating their voices" (215), which Hospital absolutely refrains from doing. Finally, writer and reader alike have the responsibility of sustaining continuing hope. Hope, in fact, "however banal it sounds, is a fierce imperative in Hospital's world" (204). It is therefore the writer's moral duty to transmit this hope; it is the reader's duty to understand that "we need to act *now* to oppose the forces of violence and unfeeling", because, in the final analysis, the "last magician" in the homonymous novel is "the one who acts last", that is to say, the reader (205).

Closely related to the topics of responsibility and interconnectedness, the book also explores a number of related questions, such as those of difference, dislocation, trauma, loss, expatriation, memory, power, causality, consciousness, or time (especially the relationship between the past and the present). Such a rich array of topics is an indication that *Rainforest Narratives* may be found attractive by a much wider reading public than just those concerned with Hospital studies. It is also good reading for those working in the fields of ethics and trauma studies, as well as anybody with an interest in Australian culture and literature. It may be necessary to recall here that, in spite of her transnational identity (Australian/Canadian/American), "wherever she is, Hospital is touching Queensland" (243), that much of her writing is marked by both her love and her fierce criticism of the country, that "by far the most evocative places in her writing […] are Australian" (55), that, even in a novel set in India (where she also spent a considerable period of her life), her writing is strongly influenced by "an Australian upbringing in which history shows a hard-won battle to strip social interaction of the subservience and hierarchical protocols brought from Europe" (19-20), and that, therefore, it is with very good reason that Callahan has chosen an Australian metaphor as a title for his book. Nonetheless, it should also be borne in mind that "Hospital's career also challenges the tendency to nationalise culture" (5) in a way highly consistent with her "everpresent attention to margins, borders and liminal states" (6).

Callahan's exploration of these (and many more) issues is carried out by means of the joint operation of textual analysis and post-modernist and post-colonial theory. Plain theory is introduced very sparingly, and then in very reader-friendly terms, even when what is at stake is, as happens in the discussions of *Charades*, as complex

as Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. The reader also feels thankful towards the guiding, yet unobtrusive hand that, like one of those Dante figures Hospital is so fond of, guides her/him through the dense web of allusion and reference that spreads over Hospital's work, from medieval manuscripts to postmodern theorists, through the Bible and American literature, as well as the classics. Callahan's quick eye and knowledgeable response come in handy here.

The bibliography section also deserves a comment. Exhaustive and well-organised, it is divided into two parts which comprise, respectively, works by and works about Hospital. The former are divided into novels, short stories, selected uncollected fiction, manuscripts, articles and reviews. The latter consist of interviews and criticism, divided in turn into the categories of book (before the appearance of *Rainforest Narratives*, this category only had one item), booklets, special issues of journals, articles and reviews cited. Generous towards the reader, Callahan has even included websites where the reader can easily find further information. This generosity is also revealed in other aspects of the book, as when we are informed of ways in which we can expand our experience of the world of the novel. The notes at the end of the book direct us to find, for instance, "an excellent recording" of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (346, note 7) so that we can have a first-hand experience of what listening to this piece, so significant for Leela and Mishka in *Orpheus Lost*, is like. Another example: we are invited to revise material about the legal framework surrounding the trial of William Calley, a real-life event echoed by Slaughter's story in the novel (347, 15). Such an attitude is perfectly consistent with the book's ethical concern with connection: very much like the rainforest, the book establishes links for readers to go on exploring and to open up the field of their experience. In more than one way, then, ethics is not only a topic in the book, but an overall attitude on Callahan's part.

This ethical stance towards both his readers and his material is also apparent in other aspects. On numerous occasions, after discussing his own approach to an issue, Callahan introduces a note whose only purpose is to present a contrasting viewpoint (this happens, for example, with Mueller's views on *Dislocations*, 328, note 21). This is done without any sort of comment or interference, as if the author just intended to make room for difference, an attitude that he often praises in Hospital's works, and to allow the reader to draw her/his own conclusions. The lack of a final conclusion to *Rainforest Narratives* may indeed work in the same direction. In the middle of the rainforest of Hospital's narrative, Callahan provides enough light for readers to find their way but he does so respectfully enough to keep intact the experience of darkness we are indeed intended to go through, leaving all the responsibility to the reader after having fulfilled his own as a critic.

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WOODY ALLEN Y EL ESPACIO DE LA COMEDIA ROMÁNTICA

Celestino Deleyto
Valencia: Ediciones de la Filmoteca, 2009.

SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES: POSTMODERN NOSTALGIA IN WOODY ALLEN'S WORK

Britta Feyerabend
Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2009.

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"I'm hard to get. All you have to do is ask". With this famous line three of the best-known Hawksian heroines declared their professed love and unconditional allegiance to the male heroes played by Cary Grant, Humphrey Bogart and John Wayne in three of Howard Hawks's adventure films. Woody Allen is no Hawksian hero —he does not seem to have that much trouble asking— but one could easily put that line in the mouth of the present-day First Lady of France, Carla Bruni, as the news of her presence, in a yet to be defined role, in the next Woody Allen film was all over the press at the end of 2009. Bruni's wide and multi-faceted professional experience has not included acting so far, but, as she made clear in her unconditional acceptance of Allen's offer, this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that simply could not be missed. This anecdote, which could almost be part of the plot of an Allen film, proves, among other things, the continuing relevance of Woody Allen as a cultural icon of contemporary society. With his characteristic comic touch, this extremely prolific artist has been recording cultural changes and offering his inimitable perspective on specific aspects of our world for more than five decades now. An obvious measure of this relevance is the vast amount of books and essays, both academic and journalistic, devoted to his *oeuvre*. From the classic early accounts of his films (Yacowar 1979; Benayoun 1987), through biographies and book-length interviews (Björkman 1993; Schickel 2003; Lax 2000) and the more complex and sophisticated interpretations of the 1990s and early 2000s (Lee

1997; Nichols 1998; Bailey 2001; Girgus 2003) to recent anthologies and compilations of essays (King 2001; Silet 2006), critics have attempted to disentangle from a variety of angles the intricacies of the director's movies and, inevitably, their relation to his life. These two additions to the extensive literature on Woody Allen's work aim to analyse and study in detail some of these aspects. Even though the two books may make related claims at some points, they are very different in both scope and approach: while Celestino Deleyto explores the role of romantic comedy in a selection of Allen films, Britta Feyerabend sets out to read a broad selection of Allen's work through the lens of postmodern nostalgia.

Deleyto starts his fluently-written and well-structured book by distancing his analysis from two recurrent trends in previous critical work on the director: biographical criticism and an excessive reliance on the author's interpretation of his own work. These approaches, Deleyto claims, do not enrich but impoverish the texts. He vehemently defends the role of film critics and scholars and the need to distinguish between authors and their work and between critical discourse and the opinion of the filmmaker. As he puts it: "los artistas ofrecen interpretaciones del mundo a través de sus obras y la misión del crítico es interpretar las obras de los artistas a través de su propia visión del mundo y de la aproximación o aproximaciones teóricas consciente o inconscientemente elegidas para llevar a cabo su tarea" (17), an obvious enough but, in the case of Allen, frequently forgotten point. Deleyto then goes on to advocate the role of humour and the comic as the starting point for a discussion of a variety of issues. Not only does he take issue with frequent dismissals of Allen's comedies as "minor" works which can never measure up to his more serious films, but, in line with the approach taken in his previous book *The Secret Life of Romantic Comedy*, he also proves the relevance of comedy, and more specifically romantic comedy, even in those films in which comedy seems almost non-existent. For Deleyto, Allen's interest in romantic comedy does not end with the two films that are usually taken as landmarks of the genre, *Manhattan* (1979) and *Annie Hall* (1977), but rather traverses his filmic career and permeates most of his films. Deleyto's perception of romantic comedy as a constant in Allen's work is closely linked to the flexibility he advocates for the definition of the genre. A genre is not a body of texts but a set of conventions which are not just restricted to the instances we usually associate with that particular genre but can also appear in the most unexpected places. Among the ingredients that he finds central to the study of the genre, Deleyto's book focuses on Allen's particular articulation of the space of romantic comedy.

He defines the space of romantic comedy as a protective atmosphere which transforms the characters' social world, liberating them from their psychological inhibitions and the strictures of social convention, and allowing them to give free

rein to their desires. While most romantic comedies tend to smoothly blend the characters' social and comic worlds, Allen's particular contribution to romantic comedy lies in his constant exploration of the limits and the workings of the genre by consciously separating these two worlds. This has resulted in two main tendencies in Allen's cinema: a realistic one, which calls our attention to the mores and protocols of the social space, and a fantastic one, which transports characters to an ideal space clearly separated from their everyday worlds. The first three films analyzed in the book, *Hannah and her Sisters* (1986), *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (1989) and *Husbands and Wives* (1992), are examples of the first of these two tendencies. The social spaces constructed by these films are used to articulate a variety of discourses on love and relationships which constitute a propitious scenario for the type of transformation that is usually associated with romantic comedy. Yet, of these three films, *Hannah and her Sisters* is the only one in which the characters end up fully immersed in and protected by the spirit of romantic comedy. Through an insightful and detailed analysis of both the multi-protagonist narrative structure of the film and its visual style, Deleyto demonstrates how the film posits love and humour, that is, the spirit of romantic comedy, as the answer to the film's big existential questions. In *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, though, the social and the comic world always remain separate. The space of romantic comedy is there but the film's main characters, Judah and Cliff, are never allowed to fall under its benign influence. The comic space is finally deployed in the last scene, one of the most memorable in the director's career, but the two protagonists are abandoned just outside it and deprived of its influence. Outside the narrative proper, this space is further articulated in the final montage sequence, which finds hope and regeneration in love understood in a more general sense —not sexual and romantic love but love between friends or family members. The anxiety-ridden social space of Judah and Cliff becomes even more omnipresent and suffocating in *Husbands and Wives*, a film which, partly through its use of the conventions of the documentary, refuses to articulate an alternative space and, therefore, a solution for the couples' crises. The discourses on love and sexuality articulated in the social space of the film only bring about anxiety and frustration, making the space of comedy in this film even more conspicuous because of its strongly felt absence.

Deleyto uses *Manhattan Murder Mystery* (1993) as a bridge between the two tendencies mentioned above. As he argues, in this hybrid of comedy and thriller, the Liptons' married life shares most of the traits of the social worlds of the movies analyzed in the previous section: boredom, psychological and sexual anxieties and different degrees of hostility between the partners. Yet, the characters are finally able to leave this anxiety-ridden social space behind because it harmoniously coexists with a comic space which the film articulates through endless allusions to

previous filmic texts. Film references have been a recurrent way of solving all sorts of problems in Allen's films and *Manhattan Murder Mystery* is no exception here. Through the thrilleresque plot, the couple are able to enter a fantasy world —in this case the world of cinema—, which brings about the transformation necessary for their reunion. Yet, Deleyto argues, the comic space in this film does not just function as a mere escapist fantasy but ends up providing a complex battlefield for the divergent ideological and sexual discourses embodied by the characters.

This balance between the social and the ideal space is lost in the last two films Deleyto analyzes in this book, *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy* (1982) and *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* (2001) in which the action is lifted out of the social world and transferred to an entirely comic space. As Deleyto argues, *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy* revisits the cultural discourses of texts like *Annie Hall* and *Manhattan* but the overwhelming comic atmosphere of the later film guarantees a more optimistic perspective on those issues. This comic space is articulated on a sort of palimpsest of the original magical forest of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* —a liberating space where desire proves both arbitrary and unstoppable— to which are added later versions of the text by Felix Mendelssohn, Max Reinhardt and, especially, Ingmar Bergman. Rather than the source of anxiety, sex in this comic space becomes a privileged vessel for personal fulfilment and communication and the road to happiness. Released in 1982, *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy* is, for Deleyto, Allen's personal swan song to the liberal sexual politics of the 1970s as a radical backlash was starting to take hold in US society. *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* uses similarly intertextual ground, the conventions of both film noir and screwball comedy, to lay the foundations of its comic space. As Deleyto argues, the conventions of these two classical film genres, the eroticism of the former and the hostility and verbal sparring between the sexes of the latter, provide the perfect comic environment to explore present-day conflicts between men and women. The prevalence of the comic space makes credible in this film, as was also the case of *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy*, the utopian possibilities of the couple. Yet, as Deleyto argues, since the comic space was fuelled by the antagonism of the screwball genre, once this antagonism gives way to the couple's final reconciliation, the film's erotic utopia loses most of its interest and allows us to glimpse the resilient patriarchal social space on which it was based.

Woody Allen y el espacio de la comedia romantica smoothly combines textual analysis with a wide range of critical and sociological theories. The book uses an original approach to Allen's films, which attests to both the coherence and the evolution of Allen's *oeuvre* through the decades. In this study the analysis of humour and the conventions of romantic comedy are perfectly integrated within the director's take on intimate and sexual protocols. Deleyto's latest book is a pleasure to read and it

should be of great interest to film scholars and aficionados of Woody Allen alike and to anyone interested in film genre in general and romantic comedy in particular.

Britta Feyerabend's study of nostalgia in Allen's work is not restricted to films but includes his plays and short stories, as well. Maybe because she chooses to take on board more miscellaneous materials, she foregoes the stylistic and visual analysis which, especially in the case of the filmic texts, would have made her points and insights more forceful, and would have clarified the particular place that nostalgia occupies in the filmmaker's fictional universe. Nostalgia is not only a question of film plots but can also be represented visually and it is this kind of specificity that the reader often misses in this book. When she, rather extensively, quotes dialogue lines from the scripts —parenthetical remarks included— she appears to be analyzing a written text rather than a visual medium. Yet, Feyerabend's analysis of the different meanings and uses of nostalgia in Allen's work shows her to be well-versed in the critical and sociological literature on the topic and she never loses sight of its main aim, which is to explore nostalgia in Allen's fiction as a psychological tool, that is, as a mental process that can help individuals to come to terms with their past, to overcome present crises and traumas and to have hope for and believe in the future.

After a brief introduction which highlights the relevance of Woody Allen's work in relation to the main topics of the book, nostalgia and postmodernism, the author provides a detailed account of the concept of nostalgia as both a psychological and an analytical tool. One of Feyerabend's most interesting points here is her exploration of the concept of dystalgia, a term she takes from speech communication scholar James A. Janack, to refer to "negative nostalgia", that is, the longing for a past age with the conscious awareness of the shortcomings, hardships and even horrors of that time. Unlike the nostalgic subject, the dystalgic one is consciously torn between desire and repulsion for the past. The following chapters are detailed explorations of the uses and meanings of nostalgia in a wide selection of texts by Allen. She distinguishes three types of nostalgia in them: the author's nostalgia, the audience's nostalgia (these two types she calls exterior nostalgia) and the characters' nostalgia (which she calls interior nostalgia). Interior and exterior nostalgia, she argues, constantly interact and overlap to create a complex web in which both intertextual references and mnemonic recollections, which Allen takes from a wide range of areas of both high and popular culture, simultaneously trigger this affect in the characters and in the readers/viewers, and are in turn a reflection of the author's own nostalgic feelings.

Feyerabend structures her textual analysis in four chapters, each devoted to a specific area of Allen's fictional universe: childhood and family, love and sex, death and anxiety, and reality and fiction. The conclusions she reaches in each of these chapters follow the same pattern: in spite of the highly nostalgic nature of all the

texts under analysis, Feyerabend does not regard Allen's exploration of nostalgia as a mere exercise in playful escapism but as a therapeutic tool. Rather than being trapped in a futile longing for the past, the texts use nostalgia as a vantage point from which to read the present and on which to build the future. Chapter 3, "Childhood and Family", examines the role of the family as a site of nostalgia in two plays, *Don't Drink the Water* (1966) and *The Floating Lightbulb* (1981), and three films: *Radio Days* (1987), *Hannah and Her Sisters* and *Interiors* (1978). In spite of their almost full commitment to the centrality of both its interior and exterior forms, these texts, Feyerabend claims, always use nostalgia in a reflexive way, being aware of its dangers as mere escapism and of an individual's need to keep a critical distance from the past. Chapter 4, "Love and Sex", analyses relationships as sites of nostalgia in a short story "The Whore of Mensa", a play, *Central Park West* (1995), and four movies *Everyone Says I Love You* (1996), *Annie Hall*, *Manhattan* and *Husbands and Wives*. As she argues, in matters of love and sex, Allen employs nostalgia primarily as a tool to show a character's longing for a past relationship and as a tool to get into the narrator's stream-of-consciousness. Even if the author relies a little to heavily on autobiographical criticism in this section —*Central Park West*, for instance, is almost exclusively read in the light of Allen's divorce from Mia Farrow—, Feyerabend's interpretation of nostalgia in Allen's work captures the diametrically different attitudes of characters in these texts: while the nostalgic feeling of trying to relive a past experience only leads the characters to frustration and unhappiness, productive nostalgia allows them to reflect on why a relationship went wrong so that they can avoid making the same mistakes in the future. In Chapter 5, "Death and Anxiety", Feyerabend deals with the topic of nostalgia in relation to some of Woody Allen's well-known existential dilemmas. The texts she chooses include three films —*Sleeper* (1973), *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Bullets over Broadway* (1994)—, a short story "The Lunatic's Tale" (1977), and an assortment of plays: *Death Knocks* (1966), *Death* (1975), *God* (1975), *My Apology* (1975) and *Riverside Drive* (2003). As in the previous chapter, these films show that, if used in a productive way, nostalgia can help individuals overcome present-day crises on the basis of how similar crises were handled in the past. Yet, if nostalgia is understood in a merely escapist fashion, the excessive involvement with the past may seriously hinder an individual's development. A similar conclusion regarding productive and unproductive uses of nostalgia is reached in Chapter 6, which deals with the blurring of boundaries between reality and fiction in two plays, *The Query* (1975) and *Old Saybrook* (1973), one short story "The Kugelmass Episode" and five films —*Stardust Memories* (1980), *Play It Again, Sam* (1972), *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985), *Zelig* (1983), *Deconstructing Harry* (1997). In some of these texts, Feyerabend argues, Allen openly mocks escapist nostalgic fantasies which prevent the characters from coming

to terms with their own crises and traumas. Nostalgia, she claims, should never be restricted to just fruitless longing for the past but needs to be critically revisited, integrated into the present, and used for the future.

Seems like Old Times fervently defends nostalgia not as mere longing for the past but as both an individual and a collective way of interacting with the future and as a key notion to an understanding of Allen's career. Part of the book's interest lies in the impressive coverage of a wide range of his work and in its frequent and very welcome focus on non-filmic texts. Feyerabend succeeds in demonstrating the explanatory potential of nostalgia in the case of Woody Allen and thus adds one more pertinent perspective to the already voluminous and ever-expanding bibliography on the New York artist. Rather like Carla Bruni, cultural and film scholars continue to find Allen's *oeuvre* an endless source of pleasure and fascination, and the novelty of the approaches offered by the two critical studies discussed here attest to the inexhaustible nature of his artistic output.

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JEANETTE WINTERSON: LE MIRACLE ORDINAIRE

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There have been a number of recent book-length studies of Jeanette Winterson's fiction, including good work by Merja Makinen (2005), Susana Onega (2006) and Sonya Andermahr (2007 and 2009). It is noteworthy that Christine Reynier's fine study appeared as the first in this sequence, in France in 2004; the English texts are cited here in French translation, making this an accessible introduction to a major contemporary writer for French readers (and those who read French). The book is an enthusiastic endorsement of Winterson's work, covering the first decade of her writing, from her celebrated debut novel *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* (1990) to *The PowerBook* (2000). Christine Reynier leaves us in no doubt that she regards Winterson as a major talent, and gives no house room to those critics who have found her more recent work full of grandiose involution, or showings signs of a writer in decline. (*The Guardian*'s reviewer James Wood suggested as early as 1997 that "Winterson's novels have become increasingly conservative" and that she had begun to adopt a form of "sentimental exoticism" [Wood 1997]). For Reynier, on the contrary, Winterson creates "un monde merveilleux, féerique ou fantastique" which leaves readers "à bout de souffle et enchantés" (11).

Rather than deal with each novel in turn, the book blends discussion of the various texts under a series of headings. Winterson is seen first as a satirist, who condemns and mocks all forms of oppression and repression to the point of questioning the very nature of authority. It is easy to see how this satirical approach operates in *Oranges*

Are Not the Only Fruit, in terms of the heroine Jeanette's struggles against the strictures of her family and the Elim Pentecostal Church. Reynier shows how this early satirical impulse is to be found in different forms in all the books of the 1990s, from Henri's gaze "neuf, innocent et naïf", in *The Passion* (1987) to the treatment of the Puritans in *Sexing the Cherry* (1989). In support of this view, she cites Winterson's interesting "Introduction" to the 1999 Oxford University Press edition of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, to show how she connects satire with questions about identity. From here, Reynier's study goes on to highlight the range of Winterson's parodies, whether biblical, historical or generic. To some extent, this section covers familiar ground, citing Hayden White's *Metahistory* on the textuality of historical writing, and Linda Hutcheon's *A Poetics of Postmodernism* on parody as central to the postmodern novelist's armory. From this follows an emphasis on other familiar aspects of the postmodern repertoire: Winterson's use of decentred narrative authority, reflexivity, experimentation and use of the *scriptible*: "le texte est flottant dans ses structures, son agencement et ses limites; les trajets de lecture sont multiples" (43). It is to Reynier's credit, however, that her study modulates this set of routine postmodern desiderata into a discussion of Winterson as heir to the experiments of the great modernists, such as Virginia Woolf (about whom Reynier has also written with distinction) and to powerful traditional beliefs in the power and importance of art.

In a key part of the discussion, Reynier reminds us of the character Jeanette's reaction (in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*) to loss of faith, and her sense of the Nietzschean "death of God". This resolves itself, for her, into the loss "d'un modèle émotionnel, d'un modèle fort, d'un amour à toute épreuve, l'amour avec un A" (68). As Reynier points out, this is a key moment, which illuminates "l'oeuvre de l'auteur dans son ensemble" (68). For *love* becomes the principal theme of Winterson's work; her treatment of it is both metaphysical and concrete, evoking all its pain and ecstasy, the precarious "miracle ordinaire" of Reynier's title (96). Reynier discusses the illness of Louise in *Written on the Body*, and the "histoires de passions brûlantes racontées avec l'intensité de la poésie" (13) in *The PowerBook*, which connects the figures of Ali in the sixteenth century, Mallory in 1924, Paolo and Francesca and Guinevere. It is the importance of this theme that leads Reynier to characterise Winterson's work as a revitalisation of the genre of Romance, as defined by Northrop Frye (69). Citing on page 108 a heady conjunction of Roland Barthes, Kant, Levinas, Deleuze and Guattari and Virginia Woolf, Reynier reaches back also to Edmund Burke's concept of the Sublime, to place Winterson's concept of love within a longer literary and intellectual tradition: "Comme le sublime chez Burke, l'amour chez Jeanette Winterson est un moment de dépassement de soi, de sublimation, et il est l'enjeu suprême de l'art qui 'met en évidence le caractère fondamentalement agonistique de l'expérience esthétique'" (108).

Reynier is alert to the paradox that Winterson's work presents. On the one hand it is full of metafictional play, intertexts, shifts in time —the whole "jeu de miroirs" (65) that one associates with reflexive fiction. However, she says, to present it as *just* that is to betray it and suggest that it is theoretical and disembodied. "[...] bien au contraire. Le moment où Haëndel [in *Art and Lies* (1994)] retrouve sa capacité d'aimer coincide avec celui où il se met a chanter: l'amour apparaît comme la condition première de la création artistique en même temps que l'autre visage de l'art" (89-90). Perhaps the strongest part of *Jeanette Winterson: Le Miracle Ordinaire* is in Chapter 4, where Christine Reynier traces these connections between love and art, and the wholeheartedness of Winterson's writing with respect to both: "un amour synonyme de littérature ou de l'art authentique, un art qui retrouve le désir des poètes romantiques anglais de combiner l'intellect et le corps, la pensée et le sentiment ou plutôt, le *feeling*, ce terme intraduisible [...]" (95). Reynier's sensitivity to the nuances of English registers that there is no exact equivalent for *feeling* in French, since the English word conveys, for Winterson and others familiar with the language, both emotional intensity and bodily sensation, as well as being a useful term in aesthetics from the eighteenth century onwards.

I started by saying that *Jeanette Winterson: Le Miracle Ordinaire* is "an enthusiastic endorsement of Winterson's work" —a work designed to transmit that enthusiasm to students and other readers as part of the admirable series *Couleurs Anglaises* from the Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, which also includes studies of Graham Swift, David Lodge and Julian Barnes. The book's thematic structure, with chapters including "An Impertinent Art", "A Floating Universe", "A Love Song" and the culminating "Ordinary Miracle", is well suited to drawing together the themes and passions that animate the work of this extraordinary writer, and to examining the books in the light of each other. What it does less successfully is to confront the questions that preoccupy many readers of Winterson —even some who count themselves among her admirers. First, are all the books of the 1980s and 1990s of the same high quality, or uneven? One reviewer, usually very sympathetic to Winterson's work, saw *The PowerBook* as "terribly inconsequential. A few stories intertwined here and there, which in earlier books like *Sexing the Cherry* or *Art and Lies* she has put to the service of a bigger story, but here they just seem to say the same things (literally) over and over again. Only the impossible is worth the effort. There is no love that does not pierce the hands and feet. And so on" (Self, n.p.). Second, did the satirical impulse in Winterson ("profondément critique de notre monde mercantile, superficiel et factice, où les lois de la rentabilité érodent la sensibilité et dénigrent les vertus de l'imagination" [113]) turn for a period in the late 1990s into a jeremiad of bitterness and ranting? *Jeanette Winterson: Le Miracle Ordinaire* is so complimentary to Jeanette Winterson that Reynier does not fully

deal with these questions, she does not even bother to refute suggestions that the author's books might be uneven. Moreover, while so much of the pleasure of reading Winterson comes from the extended, inspired lyrical prose of which she is so capable, here there is relatively little sustained analysis of her style.

Nevertheless, this is a seductive study that makes one want to return to the books and re-read them. If there is relatively little reference to other contemporary British novelists, that is in a way appropriate, since Winterson's work is to some extent *sui generis*. Reynier more than makes up for their absence with a range of illuminating scholarly references to Alain Badiou, Antoine Compagnon, Maurice Coutourier and Jacques Derrida. Nor are such references limited to French critics; the book makes good use of Northrop Frye's anatomy of irony in *Anatomy of Criticism*, of Virginia Woolf's reflections on writing and Umberto Eco's comments on science and art (66). In this way, as in others, it allows us to read Winterson's achievements in a European and even North American frame of reference.

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VIRGINIA WOOLF'S ETHICS OF THE SHORT STORY

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Virginia Woolf's Ethics of the Short Story accomplishes the two major principles its author, Christine Reynier, detects in Woolf's shorter fiction: a well-balanced combination of proportion and intensity. The volume's division into chapters turns it into a comprehensive response to the questions that may arise on approaching Woolf's short stories. Nonetheless, as might be expected from a short story itself, it wisely keeps to a concision that turns it into a direct and effective resource easy to apprehend and enjoy.

Throughout its five chapters, Reynier leads us into the microcosm of Woolf's shorter fiction, where we gradually discover the myriad impressions that compose our understanding of it. Hence, Chapter 1 sets the bases of the conceptual arena where Reynier's discussion will develop by considering Woolf's definition of the short story. Reynier points out a fundamental distinction between what Woolf understands to be two very different types of fiction that will determine the latter's concept of the short story. By referring to Woolf's distinction between French and Russian literature —and therefore, between a focus on reason and formal perfection on the one hand, and a focus on emotional intensity and freedom of form on the other hand— Reynier remarks how Woolf had always favoured the latter type (*Essays IV*: 181-190). This helps us understand how important emotion is in Virginia Woolf's shorter fiction. As Reynier notes, many of her stories rely on a moment of high emotional intensity —a moment of being— when the narrative

goes beyond its fictional borders and reaches the reader, when, as Reynier remarks in Chapter 3, conversation flows between narrator and reader. Yet, even when this interaction takes place, as the author reminds us, Woolf advocates an impersonal mode of writing as a means of ensuring a purer form of literature, free from any preconceptions or expectations on the part of the reader. In order to reach a conclusion about Woolf's notion of the short story, Reynier examines the author's reflections on the genre, as cultivated by Chekhov, Hemingway, or Poe. Nevertheless, rather than merely recapitulating Woolf's essays on short fiction, Reynier shows us how she applied these techniques in her own fiction and in particular how form in her fiction is subordinated to the attainment of that "moment of being".

Once she has exposed those two forces —proportion and intensity of feeling— that are in play in Woolf's shorter fiction, Reynier continues by showing us how the former is put at the service of the latter in different ways. The author distinguishes between those instances in which association of meanings and narrative elements enable the reader to reach that epiphanic moment that is pursued by literary works, as is the case of "Slater's Pins Have No Points". On the other hand, Reynier acknowledges in other examples of Woolf's short stories, the principle of interruption —or the disruption of linearity. In these cases, the author aims to break with the monadism and one-sidedness that characterized Victorian literature, in favour of a more dialogical conception of the literary work (Bakhtin 1984: 122). To achieve this, the very logic of language or reasoning is frequently mocked. In this respect, the book provides enlightening examples from Woolf's stories, such as the apparently incoherent train of thought of an old lady in "Kew Gardens", or the continually digressive and non-linear conversation that takes place between a writer and another character in "The Evening Party".

The book flows naturally and clearly along the major theoretical parameters and thus, Chapter 3 is concerned with the apprehension of Woolf's short stories qua instances of conversation. The use of terms such as "love" and "hate" in order to typify conversational turns in Woolf's shorter fiction proves to be a very convenient way of understanding the different outcomes of the encounters between characters in Woolf's stories. Conversation, as the author lets us know, accurately defines its participants, as well as the demarcations they create around themselves. Reynier illustrates this with the example of the party in Woolf's stories,[1] where those social encounters clearly reflect, like the mirrors at the end of the village pageant in *Between the Acts*, not only the external, but even the very inner reality of its participants —their weaknesses, their jealousies, their deepest emotions. In the same chapter, Reynier explores further aspects of the role of conversation in this shorter fiction. Yet, whether it constitutes a form of interpersonal encounter

or gives the stories their basic structure, Reynier makes it clear that dialogism and the rupture with univocality in narrative is a central maxim at the core of Woolf's short stories. Through conversation, a gate into intertextuality and debate is opened. Consequently, exchange, contrast, contradiction, and polyphony —what Reynier describes as a democratic mode of writing— take over from centralization and the voice of an authoritarian narrator in this fiction.

Continuing with the notion of Woolf's short stories as conversations, Chapter 4 further develops this idea by conceptualizing this shorter fiction as a conversation between reader and writer. The chapter delves into the fact that many stories entail a reflection upon the writing-reading process, especially by acting it out through fiction, or they serve instead as the mainframe for the retelling of another story. Throughout this study, Woolf's shorter narrative works are portrayed as, in many cases, a thorough rethinking of the fiction-writing and reading processes as quasi-magical experiences which end in a sublime moment —a "moment of being". Such a unique instant takes place after reader and author have exchanged something exclusive and delicate that belongs solely to them. This magical conception of the creation and reception of fiction, Reynier notes, is graphically present in Woolf's stories in the form of a mist that envelops the writer, a train cabin that encapsulates them, but also in the form of a visual symbol that gradually develops on a piece of paper at the same time as it develops in the mind of the reader. Puzzled about the ultimate meaning of that symbol, the reader becomes acquainted with the author's innermost feelings and thoughts to achieve that magical moment of sharing. Yet, Reynier simultaneously makes us aware that Woolf always meant to remind us of the absence of conventional ties or Manichaean solutions in honest literature,[2] an absence released from the necessity of rationalized meaning and, as Reynier highlights in Chapter 2, conveying instead intense emotions.

It is this honesty that leads the author of this short fiction to create ethically committed narratives, as the last chapter of this book lets us know. Throughout this chapter, we rediscover stories populated by sometimes grotesque beings:[3] hybrid, in-between creatures that unsettle the reader and, at the same time, aim to convey a deeper meaning beyond conventions. Reynier brings to the fore the most combative and non-conformist side of an author who celebrates the marginal and impure as a means of defiance of the normative and constraining —a prescriptiveness which, in the context of the earlier decades of the twentieth century, is equivalent to notions of imperial supremacy, fascist dictatorship, or patriarchal tyranny. The author reflects on whether it is by means of explicit conversation or by means of powerfully meaningful silences —"the things people don't say" (*The Voyage Out*, 255-256)— that these stories rebel against imposition and repression, committed as they are to a plurality of voices, meanings, and forms.

Reynier's book succeeds in portraying that exclusive moment of interaction between reader and writer that occurs upon reading Woolf's stories. Through the book, we discover the spirit of an author that defies authority —whether patriarchal, artistic, or socio-cultural— and oversteps the boundaries of the fictional page to walk hand in hand with the reader, who is let into the very structure of the narrative, now demystified and put at their service. Yet, in this exchange between Woolf and he readers, not only is the metafictional heart of the narrative offered to them, but once those barriers have disappeared, Reynier reminds us, it is their very soul they come to share, at least as long as the "moment of ecstasy" that each narrative comprises lasts.

Notes

[1]. The importance of this element in Woolf's fiction has also been discussed by Christopher Ames. In his analysis of novels like *The Years* or *Mrs. Dalloway* he underlines the fundamental role of these parties, insofar as they even acquire a quasi-sacred ritualistic value (Ames 1991: 11).

[2]. Woolf uses the term "honesty" to refer to Chekhov's method of writing, insofar as he is interested in "the soul's relation to goodness" (*Essays IV*: 185).

[3]. For a more detailed analysis on the role of the grotesque in Woolf's fiction, see: Andrés, Isabel, *A Deformed Existence. An Analysis of Carnival and the Grotesque in* The Years (2011); see also, by the same author: "Is It in His Feet? The Role of Cripple and Dismemberment in *Jacob's Room*" (2006); "Orlando in Wonderland: The Carnivalesque Turn in Orlando's Androgyny" (2007); Additionally, in "Virginia Woolf's Shot on the Reader: The Case of 'Lappin and Lapinova'" (2010), I examine the value of some of the major grotesque elements that appear in that story, inasmuch as it bluntly defies patriarchal society and the enclosing conventions of Victorian marriages.

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THE "TALE OF GAMELYN" OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES": AN ANNOTATED EDITION

Nila Vázquez, ed.
Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009.

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Gamelyn is a Middle English verse romance that recounts the adventures of the eponymous hero, who finds himself dispossessed by his eldest brother John of the property he had rightfully inherited after the death of his father Sir John of Boundys. Having broken his brother's back, Gamelyn decides to exile himself in a forest and is proclaimed an outlaw. Eventually he returns, recovers his inheritance, and gets married. Composed ca. 1350–1370 in the northeast Midlands (Severs 1967: 31), *Gamelyn* is the Middle English romance extant in more manuscripts, twenty-five in total, belittling other English popular romances, such as *Bevis of Hampton* and *Guy of Warwick*, which survive in eight and six medieval manuscripts respectively. The apparent success of *Gamelyn*, however, seems to be owing not to its literary merits but to its codicological association with Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, since in all the existing manuscripts *Gamelyn* appears in the context of Chaucer's masterpiece, usually as a tale assigned to the Cook. This connection between *Gamelyn* and *The Canterbury Tales* does not imply necessarily that the former was composed by Chaucer. Instead, it is believed that *Gamelyn* "must have been found amongst Chaucer's MSS. in some connection with his Canterbury Tales" (Skeat 1884: xiv) and some scribe, who "thought it worth preserving" (*loc. cit.*), decided to copy the text of *Gamelyn*. Although it is not exactly known how and why this early association of *Gamelyn* with *The Canterbury Tales* came to be, scholars agree in excluding this poem from Chaucer's canon on

stylistic grounds. In addition, the fact that *Gamelyn* is not to be found in half of the approximately fifty manuscripts that contain a complete version of *The Canterbury Tales* is, according to N.F. Blake (2004: 97), codicologically suggestive that "scribes had some indication in their exemplar that TG [i.e. *Tale of Gamelyn*] was not Chaucer's composition". Consequently, it should come as no surprise that all modern editions have presented this romance independently of *The Canterbury Tales*.

Vázquez approaches the text somewhat differently, since the title of the book under review seems to suggest that she considers *Gamelyn* in the context of Chaucer's *magnum opus*: *The "Tale of Gamelyn" **of** "The Canterbury Tales"* (my emphasis). This is a bold choice that represents a departure from the aforementioned scholarly consensus. Vázquez states, "the different editors [of *Gamelyn*] dwell on giving reasons for keeping *Gamelyn* outside Chaucer's canon. In my opinion, none of the reasons they allege constitutes conclusive proof that this is indeed the case" (30; see also 285-290); unfortunately she adds, "[t]he refutation of each of their [i.e. the previous editors'] arguments is beyond the scope of the present piece of work" (30) and simply casts doubt on Skeat's contention that *Gamelyn* is not by Chaucer.[1] While Vázquez emphatically refutes arguments contrary to Chaucer's authorship of *Gamelyn*, more positive evidence is needed if we are to believe that Chaucer had indeed a hand in the composition of the romance as we have it.[2]

Given Vázquez's Chaucerian approach to *Gamelyn* it seems natural that the first chapter of the book should be devoted to studying the relation between *Gamelyn* and Chaucer's *Tales* in the manuscripts that preserve the text of the romance (5-12). The chapter closes with a brief codicological overview of the twenty-five medieval manuscripts containing *Gamelyn* (12-23). The truly editorial work is included in the second chapter, which forms the core of the book (25-449). In the first section of this chapter Vázquez justifies the publication of a new edition of this romance and presents the editorial principles she follows. She then discusses the achievements of all previous editors of *Gamelyn* (25-29), from Skeat (1884) to Knight and Ohlgren (2000). While Skeat chose Harley MS 7334 as base text for his edition, Knight and Ohlgren preferred Petworth House MS 7. But Vázquez believes "that neither of these manuscripts should be used as base text for this particular tale" (30); and later she adds, "none of the examined editions of the *Tale of Gamelyn* is, from my point of view, completely exhaustive or reliable, and the most accurate one, Skeat's version, is too focused on personal beliefs and decisions" (31). Therefore, one of Vázquez's aims in producing this new edition is to correct the alleged deficiencies of the scholarly versions published to this day: "[i]n view of the obvious shortcomings of the existing versions of the tale, my goal is to attain a transparent edition that will treat *Gamelyn* as a separate piece of work" (31).

In order to achieve her stated goal, Vázquez makes two strategic decisions. First, she departs from previous editors in taking a different manuscript as base text, namely Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 198. After collating the variant readings of this manuscript with those in the manuscripts selected by Skeat and Knight and Ohlgren, Vázquez concludes, "Cp [i.e. the Corpus manuscript] can be regarded as the most reliable manuscript containing *Gamelyn*" (36). In addition to the Corpus manuscript, Vázquez uses nine other relevant codices for collation and thus establishes the text of her edition.

Secondly, she strategically decides to present a synoptic edition of each individual version of *Gamelyn* contained in the ten selected codices. Considering that the purpose of a synoptic edition is to include "all variants within the critical text-page, rather than critically editing a copy-text, producing a clear text, and relegating rejected readings to the apparatus" (Greetham 1994: 354), the generosity of the decision becomes apparent: the entire second section of Chapter Two (37-270) is devoted to this end so that all textual evidence is made available to students of *Gamelyn*. As Vázquez explains, "[t]he reason for doing so [i.e. synoptically editing all ten manuscript copies] is that the editor is not to judge what is or is not important to show. The aim is to provide the reader with as much information as possible, for she/he is the one who will decide on what to concentrate" (37). This is undoubtedly the most important part of the book, because it enables us to better appreciate the paleographic, linguistic and literary features of each separate textual witness. The whole section is executed with academic rigour and in accordance with the synoptic apparatus described on pages 38 to 42.

The edition proper appears in the third section of Chapter Two following some introductory remarks. After summarizing the plot of the romance, Vázquez discusses some "internal and external features of the romance" (274-92) dealing with the following issues: the poem's language, poetic technique, metre, alliteration, rhyme, date, dialect, authorship, and relation with the ballads of Robin Hood, Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* and Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. While all these issues are accurately examined, in the case of the date and dialect of the poem (283-284) the readers are left without a clear sense of the editor's position. One significant feature alluded to by Vázquez is that *Gamelyn* is an "oral-flavoured written romance" (270) and seems "as if it were to be read aloud in front of an audience" (275). This point is deserving of further attention, since *Gamelyn* may have undergone a stage of oral-memorial transmission before being recorded in writing, as was the case with a number of Middle English verse romances (cf. Putter 2000: 33 n. 22, and Reichl 2009: 132-149).

After the introductory discussion, the 902 lines forming the text of *Gamelyn* are edited with explanatory footnotes (294-332) and followed by an extremely detailed

apparatus criticus (332-379). What we find here is an authoritative edition of *Gamelyn*, which is the result of a painstaking collation of the most relevant textual witnesses of the romance. Since all punctuation is editorial (though cf. p. 379), I would like to suggest small changes that may facilitate the reading of the edited text: substitute commas for full stops in lines 74, 261; add commas at the end of lines 267, 351; insert a comma between *kayes* and *leese* (line 401); add a full stop at the end of line 300; delete the full stop at the end of line 149.

The second chapter of the book closes with a comprehensive glossary and a translation of the poem into present-day English whose purpose is to "render a correct grammatical translation of the poem without losing the medieval flavour a fourteenth-century romance should have" (379). Readers that fail to understand the Middle English original can therefore use this translation as an aid, since it makes the sense of the romance clear, although it does not replicate the rhyme and rhythm of the original. The final chapter is reserved for the editor's "Final Remarks" (451-452), where Vázquez presents a personal assessment of the work accomplished and concludes by stating, "we are now closer to the original text created by its author" (452). The book ends with the list of references (453-461) and a general index (463-466).

In sum, this is a useful edition that should encourage other scholars to pay closer attention to one of the least studied Middle English verse romances, despite its having the largest extant manuscript support. While Vázquez allows that "[f]urther research is obviously needed concerning the connections of the *Tale of Gamelyn* with other poems dealing with similar topics, and its possible Chaucerian authorship" (452), her edition makes a notable contribution to the study of *Gamelyn* in particular and to a better understanding of the Middle English verse romances in general.[3]

Notes

[1]. As Vázquez states later, "[t]he conclusion to be drawn [...] on *Gamelyn*'s authorship is not that Geoffrey Chaucer wrote it but rather that none of the arguments given against this possibility has proved compelling" (289).

[2]. The conjectures Vázquez makes on pages 289 to 290 are not beyond the realms of possibility but do not represent a truly compelling argument. Note, however, that at the end of the book she admits being "uncertain about who wrote it [i.e. *Gamelyn*] and about the reason why it can only be found in manuscripts related to the *Canterbury Tales*" (452).

[3]. Research for this review was conducted as part of a project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Education (ref. FFI2008–02165), whose financial support is herewith gratefully acknowledged.

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Abstracts

CONTENDING HETEROTOPIC ARTISTIC SPACE AND SPATIAL/STRETCHED TIME IN T.S. ELIOT'S "THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK"

Nayef Ali Al-Joulan

Arguing against the almost unanimous consensus that the notion of '*Time*' occupies a position of artistic and thematic centrality in Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (and in Eliot's other work, mainly the *Four Quartets*), this paper attempts to show that the notion of '*Space*', the seemingly absent, absented and/or camouflaged, constitutes the centre of the poem, overriding the superficial notion of time. Eliot's distinctive sense of space is examined in the light of Michel Foucault's concept of 'Heterotopology', to show how Prufrock oscillates between various sites in the poem to gain experience, in the process of which geography overtakes knowledge. That is, Prufrock's dilemma lies in coming to terms with the contending spaces in his psyche, since his journey is a hyperreal wandering through multiple sites of heterotopic space. The contending domains of Prufrock's psyche (past actions, thoughts, feelings etc.) are artistic, intellectual, philosophic and religious, though mainly artistic and associated with aspects of tradition that Eliot's individual talent felt anxious about. Thus, the richness of Eliot's poem lies in its intense recruitment of past poetry, art, poets, authors, philosophers and artists, becoming hence a space/place for contest between those various revisited sites and itself.

Keywords: Eliot, love song, spatial theory, heterotopology, Modern poetry.

Frente a la idea casi unánime de que la noción de *tiempo* es esencial en el poema de Eliot "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (y en otras de sus obras, principalmente en *Four Quartets*), este artículo se propone demostrar que la noción

de *espacio*, aparentemente ausente, ausentada y/o camuflada, constituye el centro del poema, prevaleciendo sobre la noción superficial de tiempo. El característico sentido del espacio de Eliot se examina aquí a la luz del concepto de 'Heterotopología' de Michael Foucault para demostrar cómo Prufrock se mueve en el poema por varios lugares con el fin de adquirir experiencias, en un proceso en el que la geografía gana la partida al conocimiento. El dilema de Prufrock consiste así en conciliar los espacios antagónicos de su psique, dado que su viaje es un ir y venir hiperreal por una multiplicidad de lugares del espacio heterotópico. Los aspectos en pugna de la psique de Prufrock (hechos del pasado, pensamientos, sentimientos, etc.) pertenecen al ámbito de lo artístico, de lo intelectual, de lo filosófico y de lo religioso, aunque fundamentalmente de lo artístico, y se asocian a aspectos de la tradición que producían ansiedad en el talento individual de Eliot. Así pues, la riqueza del poema de Eliot reside en su capacidad para conjugar poesía del pasado, arte, poetas, autores, filósofos y artistas, convirtiéndose de esta manera en un espacio para la contienda entre esos lugares revisitados y el espacio mismo.

Palabras clave: Eliot, canción de amor, teoría del espacio, heterotopología, poesía moderna.

THE MYTH OF THE ADIRONDACK BACKWOODSMAN: FROM THE GOLDEN YEARS TO CONSUMER SOCIETY

Claudia Alonso Recarte

The aim of this paper is to trace the development of myth as a sociological tool through the analysis of the Adirondack backwoodsman of the golden years (a category which includes guides, hunters and trappers) as a literary archetype of the romanticist era and its subsequent decline with the advent of industrialism and consumer culture. Following Kenneth Burke's premise of literature as "equipment for living" for the support of "human welfare", I argue that the backwoodsman's significance as a 'strategy' answers to a nationalistic endeavor which functions under the dynamics of mimesis. With a view to exploring these mimetic games and the cyclic perfection of the myth in question as equipment for living, Northrop Frye's theoretical framework is applied as a supporting argument. In the final part of the paper, I argue that new literary directions portraying the backwoodsman as a product for consumption break the cycle, causing the extinction of the guide as hero. This final stage exemplifies the process by which history surpasses myth and overcomes the archetype's potential as 'equipment for living'.

Keywords: Adirondack backwoodsman, myth, mimesis, Kenneth Burke, Northrop Frye.

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la trayectoria mitográfica del pionero de los 'años dorados' de los Adirondacks (categoría en la que se incluyen guías y cazadores) como arquetipo literario del romanticismo, y su posterior decadencia con la llegada de la industrialización y los primero vestigios de la sociedad de consumo. Partiendo de la crítica sociológica de Kenneth Burke de la literatura como *equipment for living* y soporte del bienestar social, el pionero surge como una 'estrategia' de carácter nacionalista cuya perdurabilidad se basa en la dinámica mimética entre ficción, realidad y cultura. Con el fin de reflejar dichos juegos miméticos y la perfección cíclica del mito en cuestión como *equipment for living*, se aplica el marco teórico de modelos ficticios de Northrop Frye como apoyo argumentativo. Finalmente, se exponen las nuevas directrices literarias en las que se presenta al guía como producto de consumo como evidencia de la expulsión del pionero del panteón de los héroes, reflejando así la ruptura del ciclo, y entendiendo la superación del mito por parte de la historia como proceso inevitable.

Palabras clave: pionero de los Adirondacks, mito, mímesis, Kenneth Burke, Northrop Frye.

FEARFUL SYMMETRIES: TRAUMA AND "SETTLER ENVY" IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN CULTURE

Marc Delrez

It is tempting to consider that trauma studies, in view of its insistence that "the history of a trauma, in its inherent belatedness, can only take place through the listening of another" —with the result that "we are implicated in each other's traumas" (Caruth)— may offer a reclamatory purchase on the flip side of Australian history. Yet my impression is that trauma theory does not travel easily to the settler colonies, where there is a risk that it might be called upon to perform the service of allowing the beneficiaries of conquest to masquerade as its victims. Trauma studies does flourish within cultures that have a stake in investing the experience of suffering with the value of moral capital. In Australia, such gesturing towards the dividends of suffering can never be wholly divorced from the felt (il)legitimacy of the settlers' occupation of stolen territories. The notion of "trauma envy" (Mowitt) indexes the structure of feeling that seeks a wound to legitimate itself morally, in keeping with the unchanging agenda of neo-colonial identity politics. My essay attempts not to lose sight of this ethical quandary when examining the slippages which occur in specific discursive instances in contemporary Australia.

Keywords: Trauma studies, settler envy, settler colonies, Australian culture, reconciliation.

Resulta tentador considerar que los estudios de trauma, vista su insistencia sobre el hecho de que "la historia de un trauma, por su naturaleza tardía, sólo puede tener lugar a través de la escucha del otro" —lo cual resulta en el hecho de que "estamos implicados en los traumas de los demás" (Caruth)— puede ofrecer una adquisición reclamatoria de la cara menos vista de la historia australiana. No obstante, soy de la impresión de que la teoría del trauma no es fácilmente extrapolable a las colonias mayoritariamente blancas, donde existe el riesgo de que se instrumentalice para permitir que los beneficiarios de la conquista se hagan pasar por sus víctimas. Los estudios de trauma florecen en ciertas culturas interesadas en invertir la experiencia del sufrimiento con el valor de un capital moral. En Australia, un gesto tal a los dividendos del sufrimiento nunca puede separarse completamente de la (i)legitimidad percibida de la ocupación colonial de los territorios robados. La noción de la "envidia del trauma" (Mowitt) apunta a la estructura de sentimiento que busca una herida para legitimarse moralmente a sí misma, mientras conserva intacta una agenda de políticas identitarias neo-coloniales. Mi ensayo procura no perder de vista este dilema ético mientras examina los deslizamientos que aparecen en ejemplos discursivos específicos en la Australia contemporánea.

Palabras clave: Estudios de trauma, envidia del colono, colonias de mayoría blanca, cultura australiana, reconciliación.

NATIVE AMERICAN HUMOR AS RESISTANCE: BREAKING IDENTITY MOULDS IN THOMAS KING'S *GREEN GRASS, RUNNING WATER*

Aitor Ibarrola-Armendariz

Although in appearance a hilarious literary work about border crossing and cultural interaction, Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water* also proves to be an effective narrative of resistance in which a severe critique of the socio-surgical incisions that the Western colonial paradigm has inflicted on the indigenous peoples is articulated. By means of a Native brand of humor, which combines techniques such as subversive intertextual references, plays on words, anachronistic elements, the inclusion of trickster figures or the satiric treatment of stereotypes, King manages to undo the white man's performance of epistemological and spiritual domination. This article shows how the comic sign that Vizenor, Allen, Arteaga, and others have studied in the oral storytelling and the literature of the oppressed can in fact be turned into a successful weapon to disarm the oppressor in unequal power relations. A close reading of King's text reveals that humor can be productively used to challenge and subvert the colonial modes of representation and identity moulds that have imprisoned Native Americans for centuries. Thus,

the author could be cogently described, following Vizenor, as a "postindian warrior".

Key words: Native Americans, Thomas King, narratives of resistance, humor, identity.

Si bien en apariencia la novela de Thomas King *Green Grass, Running Water* resulta un hilarante experimento narrativo sobre el cruce de fronteras y la interacción cultural, no es menos cierto que es también un importante ejercicio de resistencia en el que se hace una dura crítica a las perniciosas operaciones quirúrgicas que el paradigma colonial de occidente ha realizado a las culturas indígenas en Norteamérica. Por medio de una clase de humor típicamente nativo, que entremezcla recursos tales como las referencias inter-textuales subversivas, los juegos de palabras, los anacronismos, el uso de la figura del *trickster* o la utilización en clave satírica de los estereotipos, King consigue cuestionar y deconstruir el complejo de superioridad epistemológica y espiritual del hombre blanco. Este artículo demuestra que la dimensión cómica que Vizenor, Allen, Arteaga y otros han estudiado en la tradición oral y la literatura escrita de los autores indígenas puede convertirse en un arma eficaz para combatir al opresor en contextos donde las relaciones de poder están desequilibradas. Una lectura detenida de la novela de King pone en evidencia que el humor es útil para enfrentarse y subvertir los modos de representación coloniales y los patrones identitarios que han encorsetado a los indios norteamericanos durante siglos. En este sentido, este escritor podría ser ciertamente descrito, usando palabras de Vizenor, como un "guerrero post-indio".

Palabras clave: Indios norteamericanos, Thomas King, literatura de resistencia, humor, identidad.

JOHN DOS PASSOS IN SPAIN

Clara Juncker

In 1931, Ernest Hemingway wrote to John Dos Passos from Madrid: "You are the great writer of Spain". The two friends both knew Spain, but Dos Passos got there first. In his early Spanish book, *Rosinante to the Road Again* (1922), Telemachus and his companion Lyaeus ramble along Spanish roads searching for "the gesture", the essence of Spanish life that Dos Passos hoped to emulate in words. Spain remained important to Dos Passos, even after his famous break with Hemingway in 1937. The following year, Dos Passos exorcized Spanish ghosts in a second travel narrative, *Journeys Between Wars* (1938). Both texts present a multicultural and multiregional Spain, at odds with centralization and unification. In *Rosinante*, Spain serves as a testing ground for aesthetic experiments, as young Dos Passos

searches for techniques that might articulate his resistance to American systems and narratives. The Spanish gesture communicates aesthetic and political choices, and the masculinity Dos Passos associates with opposition and pride. In *Journeys,* the author of *U.S.A.* concentrates on Spanish politics, but he relies on modernist aesthetics to intervene politically. Dos Passos satirizes both Nationalists and Republicans, who subscribe to measures and stories he could not decipher but hoped to deconstruct.

Keywords: John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway, Modernist aesthetics, travel writing, Spain.

En 1931, Ernest Hemingway escribía a John Dos Passos desde Madrid: "Eres el gran escritor de España". Los dos amigos conocían España, pero Dos Passos había llegado antes. En su temprana obra española *Rosinante to the Road Again* (1922), Telemachus y su compañero Lyaeus caminan por las carreteras españolas en busca de "el gesto", la esencia de la vida española que Dos Passos confiaba poder reflejar en palabras. España siguió siendo relevante para Dos Passos, incluso después de su famosa ruptura con Hemingway en 1937. El año siguiente, Dos Passos conjuraba fantasmas españoles en una segunda narrativa de viajes, *Journeys Between Wars* (1938). Los dos textos presentan un carácter multicultural y multiregional de España enfrentado a la centralización y la unificación. En *Rosinante*, España sirve de campo de pruebas para experimentos estéticos, mientras que un joven Dos Passos busca las técnicas que le permitan articular su resistencia frente a los sistemas y narrativas americanos. El gesto español refleja decisiones tanto estéticas como políticas, así como la masculinidad que Dos Passos asocia con la oposición y el orgullo. En *Journeys*, el autor de *U.S.A.* se centra en la política española, pero recurre a la estética modernista con el fin de intervenir políticamente. Dos Passos satiriza tanto al bando nacional como al republicano, que suscribían medidas y relatos que, si bien él no era capaz de descifrar, confiaba en poder deconstruir.

Palabras clave: John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway, estética modernista, literatura de viajes, España.

WE DON'T MAKE THE NEWS, WE JUST REPORT IT: TELEVISION JOURNALISM AND NARRATIVES OF TRAUMA

Marguerite Moritz and Theresa Crapanzano

While the need to know is the *raison d'être* of the journalists, the need to deny is perhaps less obvious but also pervasive, starting with the frequent need to deny their own agency, as our title suggests. In this paper, we take as examples some of the most heavily produced and reported trauma stories of the last decade to

illustrate the competing needs of knowing and denying knowledge. These include the 9-11 terror attacks of 2001, the devastation of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the school shooting massacre at Virginia Tech University in 2007. The focus is on US journalism because it is a highly influential model providing English language content used around the globe and because it draws heavily on established narrative conventions in both literature and film. Our analysis demonstrates that journalistic needs for knowledge and denial are both cultural and structural and the implications of this on collective and personal memory of traumas are profound.

Key words: trauma, journalism, television, memory, narrative.

Si bien la necesidad de saber es la razón de ser del periodista, la necesidad de negar es quizás menos obvia pero igualmente dominante, y comienza con la frecuente necesidad de negar su propia responsabilidad autorial, como nuestro título sugiere. En este artículo hemos tomado como ejemplo algunas de las historias traumáticas más trabajadas de la última década y sobre las que más se ha informado, con el fin de ilustrar la pugna entre le necesidad de saber y la necesidad de negar. Estas historias incluyen los ataques terroristas del 11 de septiembre de 2001, los estragos en la ciudad de Nueva Orleans tras el paso del huracán Katrina en 2005, y la masacre en el Politécnico Virginia Tech en 2007. El estudio se centra en el periodismo americano, al tratarse de un modelo muy influyente que proporciona contenido en inglés utilizado en todo el mundo y que, además, se nutre en gran medida de las convenciones narrativas imperantes tanto en literatura como en cine. Nuestro análisis demuestra que tanto la necesidad periodística de saber como la de negar tienen un carácter cultural y estructural y profundas implicaciones en la memoria personal y colectiva de los traumas.

Palabras clave: trauma, periodismo, televisión, memoria, narrativa.

THE WEST AND ITS OTHER: LITERARY RESPONSES TO 9/11

Mohan G. Ramanan

This paper initially considers Don de Lillo's *Falling Man*, John Updike's *Terrorist*, Ian McEwan's *Saturday* and shows how in spite of considerable fictional dexterity all three fail in various ways to respond to the trauma of 9/11. The paper argues that mainstream American and British responses are variously blighted by the Huntington thesis of the clash of civilizations, Baudrillardian hyper reality and pseudo-Islamic scholarship, and a pull away from the large events of our world into domesticity. If one wants a more satisfying response one must perhaps turn to an ethnic writer like Mohsin Hamid, whose *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* engages

with 9/11 and terror more frontally. The paper goes on to consider the Pakistani woman Mukhtar Mai's narrative *In the Name of Honour: A Memoir*, and the Afghan writer Khaled Hosseini's two novels, *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. It suggests that, while these insider texts are not about 9/11 centrally, but about a post 9/11 world dominated by fundamentalist Talibanism, they are heavily compromised by their dependence on American authenticating interventions and patronage. The exploration of these texts raises questions about whether terror and trauma can be represented at all, who may represent it, how much and to whom. These are centrally ethical considerations.

Key words: Terror, trauma, Don de Lillo, John Updike, Ian McEwan.

Este artículo examina en un principio *Fallng Man*, de Don de Lillo, *Terrorist*, de John Updike, y *Saturday*, de Ian McEwan, y muestra cómo a pesar de su considerable destreza ficcional los tres fracasan de distintas maneras en su reacción al trauma del 11-S. El artículo argumenta que las respuestas estadounidenses y británicas dominantes se ven afectadas negativamente por la tesis Huntington del choque de civilizaciones, la hiperrealidad y la investigación pseudo-islámica de Baudrillard, y por la falta de interés por los grandes eventos de nuestro mundo a favor del ámbito doméstico. Para encontrar una respuesta más satisfactoria quizás haya que volverse hacia un escritor étnico como Mohsin Hamid, cuyo *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* mira de frente el 11-S y el terror. El artículo continúa con la consideración de la narrativa de la mujer pakistaní Mukhtar Mai, *In the Name of Honour: A Memoir*, y las dos novelas del escritor afgano Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* y *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Se sugiere que, aunque dichos textos escritos desde dentro no se centran en el 11-S, sino en un mundo post-11-S dominado por el talibanismo fundamentalista, muestran un sólido compromiso por su dependencia de las intervenciones y el patrocinio americanos. La exploración de estos textos plantea cuestiones sobre si el terror y el trauma pueden ser representados, sobre quién puede representarlo, hasta qué punto, y para quién. Se trata de consideraciones fundamentalmente éticas.

Palabras clave: terror, trauma, Don de Lillo, John Updike, Ian McEwan.

Notes for contributors

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