that brought echoes of Liverpool rather than Cambridge and suggested an enigmatic Dr Jekyll-and-Mr-Hyde combination of the posh scholar and the rock'n roll fan. Part of this fascination evaporated, however, when the female students discovered that he was engaged to a young Spanish sociologist, Angela López. Still, whether single or engaged, Tim continued to fascinate the female as well as the male students, since his greatest asset was, and has always been, his teaching not only of language but also of literature, especially poetry, which he made us love by the sheer projection of his own devotion for it.

Since then he has never stopped teaching, giving us very good advice about how to teach and helping us find the precise turn of phrase that would give the required touch of Englishness to our publications. To this should be added his time-consuming and difficult job as style reader of *Miscelánea*, from which the current editors, Bárbara Arizti and Ana Hornero, have not allowed him to retire yet. Considering also the thousands of students he has taught and inspired in the thirty-two years he has been with us, his commitment as Vice-Dean for Student Affairs and his invaluable contribution as Erasmus co-ordinator, you will easily understand why we already miss him so much and why we feel the need to recognise with this little homage his priceless contribution to the construction of the English Department at the University of Zaragoza.

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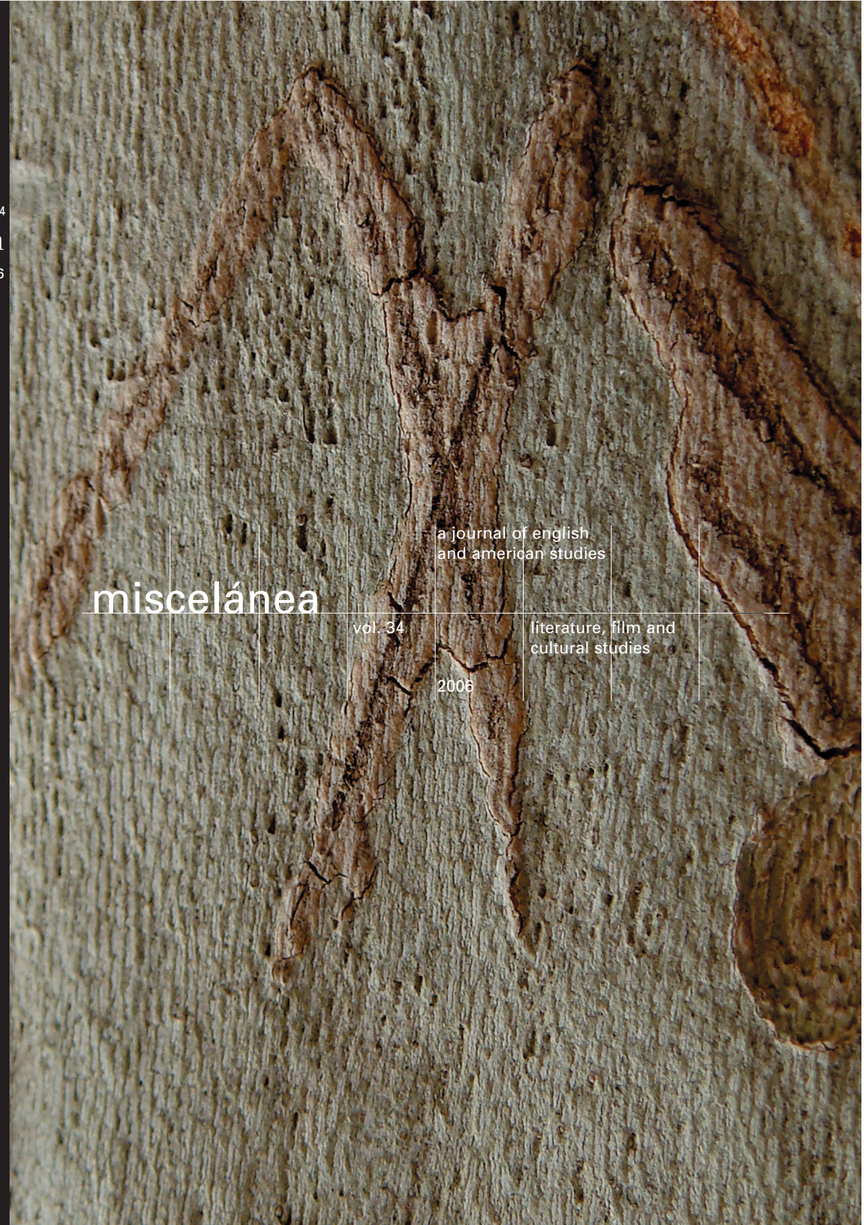

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To TIM

It's been a long time since I met Tim Bozman. I had arrived in Zaragoza in 1971, to study English Philology, and I was dismayed by the fact that the speciality did not start until the third year. The students were expected to arrive with a very basic knowledge of English, or no knowledge at all, and acquire teaching proficiency. Worse still, all teaching was done in Spanish, with the only exception of a few native speakers of English, hired annually on rather meagre wages. It was in this capacity that I first met Tim Bozman as a teacher of English Language and Literature. The impression he made on me as on the other students was fabulous: not only did he have an impeccable RP accent, rumour had it that he was a Don from Cambrigde and that he had travelled across Europe and South America before landing in Zaragoza. This adventurous side to Tim's ironic personality was enhanced by the striking length of his already greying hair and the impossible narrowness of the points of his patent-leather boots

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IMAGINING ADAM'S DREAM: KEATS'S CHAMBER OF MAIDEN THOUGHT IN *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

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From the time of its initial publication, *The Eve of St. Agnes* (1820) has engendered a number of different interpretations and is arguably one of Keats's most highly contested works. While many critics, following Jack Stillinger, argue that Porphyro rapes Madeline, others, in accord with Earl Wasserman's metaphysical view, assert that no sexual union occurs between the lovers. Because Keats leaves the relationship between Porphyro and Madeline ambiguous, readers have responded by regarding the lovers *either* as bound in physical desire *or* freed from constraint by their imaginative longings.[1] Though most agree that Keats creates a world where the lovers express either physical or metaphysical desire in the poem, but not both, I argue that Keats defies exclusivity by presenting the imagination as a bridge that allows the poem to offer two interconnected spaces: the actual world of the poem and the abstract realm of art. The lovers engage this imaginative world, which cannot offer them actual immortality. Nevertheless, it can offer them an artistic immortality Keats depicts through their union in the chamber of maiden thought.

Keats writes his poem during a revival of the medieval romance. The medieval romance provides a narrative frame for Romantic poets as well, and they rework romance conventions to create exotic landscapes that expand and reconfigure romance tropes. When Keats invokes the medieval romance in several works, including *Isabella; or The Pot of Basil* (1819), which he imaginatively recreates from Boccacio's medieval work, *The Decameron*, and in *The Eve of St. Agnes*, which he

bases at least structurally on Edmund Spenser's Early Modern text, *The Faerie Queene*, he manipulates the romance and its Spenserian derivation to give him a physical space on which he may craft a metaphysical world of infinite desire. Like earlier and contemporary Romantic poets, Keats invests *The Eve of St. Agnes*, his first successfully sustained narrative, with a complex interplay between physical, spiritual, and artistic desires. These desires participate in the world of innocence and experience, which are collapsed in the poem.

In *The Eve of St. Agnes*, Madeline and Porphyro exercise the imagination, configured in the chamber of maiden thought, which allows them to enter an "elfin" world of "faery land" (l. 343) —an artistic world Keats frequently associates with the imagination and develops further in the Odes. Because the experience shared by the lovers does not exist solely in a metaphysical or physical realm, every physical reality experienced through the body holds a metaphysical duality given through the imagination. Thus, when Porphyro enters Madeline sexually, he also enters into her poetic identity imaginatively, for her chamber represents both.

These complex relationships, representative of characters' alternate states of being, implicate three of the ideas Keats presents in his letters: the "Mansions of Many Apartments" (274), "Adam's Dream" (258), and the poetical character (836). By examining Keats's descriptions of dreams, the poetic process, the character of the poet, and the imagination in his letters, we see that Porphyro not only represents both the lover desiring a sexual experience with Madeline, as critics have frequently asserted, but also the poet desiring an imaginative journey with his muse, who exerts more agency in the artistic and erotic experience than critics have acknowledged. As he progresses through the mansions of human life, represented by the castle's chambers, Porphyro seeks the maiden's, or Madeline's, chamber. In contrast to every other room of the castle, her chamber represents the transcendent power of the imagination and offers physical and imaginative beauty to the lovers.[2]

Without the presence of physical beauty, which Keats almost always links with femininity in his poetry, there can exist no means for the poet to enter the chamber of maiden thought. This chamber represents a feminized level of the imagination Porphyro reaches through consummation with Madeline. The power of the poem lies beyond the gratification of masculine sexual desire in which the lover rapes or, as Karen Swann suggests, "harasses" the feminine muse (90). It lies, rather, with the imagination, where Porphyro enters Madeline figuratively to participate in divine dreams. Sexuality in the poem serves as the physical manifestation of imaginative beauty Madeline offers, and the poetic experience between the lovers supercedes the carnal one. It is merely the shadow of a greater reality Keats describes in his letters. The lovers explore this "greater reality" through human experience, which, in the poem, reflects rather than opposes the spiritual world depicted through art.

Physical longing in fact remains an integral part of the imaginative process for Keats, whose poet-heroes almost always evince a heterosexual identity to authorize their poetic one. Porphyro projects this heterosexual identity as the male lover; he enters Madeline's bedchamber to watch her undress, following her "over the hushed carpet, silent, stepped, / And 'tween the curtains peeped" (ll. 250-251) at Madeline before entering her bed. Imaginatively, however, he enters the chamber of maiden thought without his masculine identity, which he surrenders for a feminine one, becoming an androgynous figure as poet. He appears to "mus[e] awhile, entoiled in woofèd fantasies" (l. 288) given by Madeline and remains under the "steadfast spell" cast from "his lady's eyes" (l. 287), a Petrarchan trope for the relationship between the poet and his muse.[3] Keats suggests that Madeline captivates Porphyro imaginatively and sexually, and he depicts her not only as the Petrarchan ideal but also as the seductive mistress. More importantly, however, Keats presents her as the poetic imagination, her character representing the chamber of maiden thought.

The transcendent capacity of physical beauty, personified by Madeline, grants Porphyro as poet the ability to intuit immortal dreams through "a life of sensations" (Keats 829) given by the poetic imagination. The muse traditionally offers the poet inspiration, but Madeline plays a more significant part in the artistic process, for Keats employs Madeline and her maidenly chamber in a way that overturns expectation. While she occupies the Petrarchan role as the indifferent and idealized lady, she likewise displays imaginative longings for divine inspiration — qualities typically associated with the poet, not his muse. Keats gives her, as he gives almost all women in his poetry, control over the male poet-knight figure, allowing her to control the artistic, if not the sexual experience.[4] Keats deifies Madeline, even calling her "a god" (l. 56) with "maiden eyes divine" (l. l. 57) in Stanza 7 and attaches divine power to her presence.

Madeline's imaginative desire permits her to escape from the outside world and into the interior chamber of her mind, depicted literally as her chamber in the castle, where she prays and communes. To enact the ritual of the Eve of St. Agnes, Madeline must "nor look behind, nor sideways, but require / Of heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire" (ll. 53-54). Her posture and remote presence in the first half of the poem suggest that Madeline, like Porphyro, seeks transcendence through divine experience because she remains unsatisfied by the world around her. Though ultimately she desires the vision of her future husband, Keats attributes greater significance to her prayers because, unlike others in the castle, Madeline appears removed from "the argent revelry" (l. 37) around her, "the level chamber, ready with their pride" (l. 32). Likewise "she scarcely heard" (l. 57) the noise around her, which "she heeded not at all" (l. 59) by refusing to participate in the castle events, which, Keats implies, hold danger, even in the sound

of the "snarling trumpets" (l. 31). Rather, she retreats to perform the necessary rites of St. Agnes, deliberately oblivious to the outside world:

> She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,
> Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
> The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sighs
> Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort
> Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
> 'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
> Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amort,
> Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
> And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn. (ll. 64-73)

Because Keats ascribes "faery fancy" to Madeline's presence, he links her desires and retreat from the physical world with the imagination. She remains "hoodwink'd with faery fancy" through a willingness to participate in rites that will remove her from a world beyond the one of "hate and scorn" around her —a desire for an imaginative retreat from an unsatisfying existence expressed by all the speakers of Keats's major odes. He typically places the suffering poet rather than his muse, however, as blissfully "hoodwink'd" into an imaginative world.[5]

Madeline's association with "faery fancy" has implications for the poetic imagination, which Keats associates with her castle chamber later in the poem. Because "faery fancy" leads Madeline into a chamber where she engages St. Agnes, arguably another muse in the poem, to gain immortal visions, Keats compares her presence with the imaginative beauty in her bedroom. He describes the room's architectural beauty as reflecting her, for just as the "casement" (l. 208) is "garlanded with carven imag'ries / Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass" (ll. 209-210), so too does the "wintry moon" shine through this same "casement" (ll. 217) onto Madeline, whose hair is garlanded with "wreathèd pearls" (l. 227). Likewise, the jewels of the room, "diamonded with panes" (l. 211), parallel Madeline's physical "warmèd jewels" (l. 228). The comparison between Madeline's beauty and "jewels" invokes another Petrarchan trope: the correspondence between the lady's attributes, typically the eyes, which look like sapphires, and jewels. Whereas the lady assumes a singularly idealized position in the Petrarchan tradition, Madeline possesses a human identity, for her jewels are "warmèd", of the body, rather than unearthly, suggesting she not only has an imaginative role but also a human one ultimately limited. Though her body inspires Porphyro with its bejeweled beauty and her eyes, like the idealized Laura, are blue, they are "blue affrayèd eyes" (l. 296), capable of human experience, including pain and fear.

Keats's association of the chamber of maiden thought with Madeline demonstrates the spiritual power of the poetic imagination, which, like Madeline, captivates with

inexplicable beauty. Though powerful, it remains a human faculty that cannot eclipse the world of experience and its attendant pains. Even so, Keats extends the relationship between Madeline and the imagination by giving her a poetic affiliation in Stanza 23, where she appears as the melancholic nightingale, a bird symbolic of the poet's suffering state, and made famous, of course, in Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" (1819). Though silent, Madeline enters the room:

> She closed the door, she panted, all akin
> To spirits of the air, and visions wide—
> No uttered syllable, or woe betide!
> But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
> Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
> As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
> Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stiflèd, in her dell. (ll. 199-207)

Though an anguished symbol, the nightingale represents unutterable, "tongueless" beauty for Keats, beauty he associates with most of the women in his poetry, whose presence can inspire or provoke pain. Madeline, who inspires Porphyro, participates in this pain and in this beauty. Like the nightingale in Keats's ode, which provides the speaker with "viewless wings of Poesy" (l. 33) to leave the world through "a vision" (ll. 79) of "charmed magic casements" (l. 69) and "faery lands forlorn" (l. 70), Madeline provides Porphyro with physical and imaginative beauty "together pressed" (l. 220) in her presence. Though she remains silent for fear that "all the charm [will be] fled" (l. 234), she expresses her artistry through movements given by her heart, "paining with eloquence", only as a reflection of her imagination, for "in fancy" (l. 233) does she regard St. Agnes with a "pensive" (l. 232) mind. As she enters the chamber, she becomes part of it, literally in the description Keats offers of her body and imaginatively in the world he creates as her fancy. He likens the architectural features of the room with her physical appearance to forge a link between her character and the chamber of maiden thought, which acts as a doorway for the lovers to enter the castle chamber literally and figuratively.

Keats's description of Madeline's physical beauty as a literal representation of imaginative beauty recalls Joseph Addison's essays on the imagination, which Keats perhaps used as a model.[6] In *The Spectator*, No. 412, on *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (1712), Addison describes physical beauty as a facilitator of imaginative liveliness and delight, for "the very first Discovery of it strikes the Mind with an Inward Joy, and spreads a Chearfulness and Delight through all its Faculties" (336). The natural world acts as a catalyst for the mind, and the beauty of "Symmetry and Proportion of Parts, in the Arrangement and Disposition of Bodies", which Keats explores in Madeline's physical charms in the poem to "heighten the Pleasures of the Imagination". Furthermore, Addison notes that

both "senses", or the imagination and physical beauty, "receive an additional Beauty" by working together from the eye to the intellect (337). He implies that the combination of the imagination and the physical beauty of the natural world generate a metaphysical beauty, which he elaborates further in *Spectator* No. 413 (1712) as a Final, or as Aristotle names it, a Fourth Cause, the "Supreme Author of our Being" —God. By giving humanity a soul, Addison explains that God created the universe beautiful for us to "discover imaginary Glories in the Heavens, and in the Earth, and see some of this Visionary Beauty poured out upon the whole Creation". For Addison, the metaphysical beauty engendered by the imagination offers another world, like the chamber of maiden thought, where human souls retreat before returning to reality:

> Our Souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing Delusion, and we walk about like the Enchanted Hero of a Romance, who sees beautiful Castles, Woods and Meadows; and at the same time hears the warbling of Birds, and the purling of Streams; but upon the finishing of some secret Spell, the fantastick Scene breaks up, and the disconsolate Knight finds himself on a barren heath, or in a solitary Desart. (338)

Keats conceives of beauty and the imagination similarly in the poem, and Madeline's physical beauty parallels imaginative beauty, which she gives to Porphyro to translate since she, as "a tongueless nightingale" (l. 206), cannot. Moreover, though the lovers return from the metaphysical realm to a world of "disconsolate" physical actualities, they share "a pleasing Delusion" in the chamber of maiden thought. The lovers become suffused in imaginative pleasures, and both Porphyro and Madeline possess an imaginative intensity that begets immortality through "fancy" before returning from the "delusion" that confers brief immortal visions.

To participate in Madeline's metaphysical vision, Porphyro enters into a "feminine" mindset, if only for the duration of his metaphysical union with Madeline, by imaginatively entering the chamber of maiden thought. Although the female acts as a vehicle of inspiration for the male artist, he nevertheless casts off his masculine identity to gain poetic vision. Because Keats conceives of the imagination as a "maiden", he gives Porphyro a hermaphroditic position as poet, with the body of a man attracted to Madeline physically and a mind that becomes, like the body, seduced and overtaken by the imagination, another feminine muse. Keats describes the chamber of maiden thought in a letter written to John Hamilton Reynolds (3 May 1818):

> Well—I compare human life to be a large Mansion of Many Apartments, two of which I can only describe, the doors of the rest being as yet shut upon me—The First we step

> into we call the infant or thoughtless Chamber, in which we remain as long as we do not think—We remain there a long while, and notwithstanding the doors of the second chamber remain wide open, showing a bright appearance, we care not to hasten to it; but are at length imperceptibly impelled by the awakening of the thinking principle—within us—we no sooner get into the second Chamber, which I shall call the Chamber of Maiden-Thought, than we become intoxicated with the light and the atmosphere, we see nothing but pleasant wonders, and think of delaying there for ever in delight: However among the effects this breathing is father of is that tremendous one of sharpening one's vision into the heart and nature of Man—of convincing ones nerves that the World is full of Misery and Heartbreak, Pain, Sickness and Oppression—whereby This Chamber of Maiden Thought becomes gradually darken'd and at the same time on all sides of it many doors are set open—but all dark—all leading to dark passages—We see not the ballance of good and evil. (835)

Porphyro immerses his physical senses in the erotic delights of Madeline's chamber, and his body and intellect, like the poet's mind, "become intoxicated" with the metaphysical "delight" of the chamber of maiden thought —the imagination. And though imagination possesses the power to remove the poet to a realm of immortal beauty, physical realities dissipate the dream. The chambers of the castle hold "misery and heartbreak, pain, sickness and oppression", which includes harsh physical consequences for the lovers, if caught.[7]

Keats appropriates the chambers of human life he describes in his letter for the poem's castle chambers and manifests them as physical and imaginative representations in the poem. Unlike the warmth, vitality, and "pleasant wonders" that emanate from Madeline's chamber, the surrounding castle chambers "held barbarian hordes / Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords" (ll. 85-86) and convey a portrait of oppression, violence, and danger. Porphyro's longing heart desires to "gaze and worship" (l. 50) Madeline and to "become intoxicated with the light and atmosphere" of divine revelation given through his muse, whose heavenly desires contrast with the earthly ones lying in the surrounding chambers. Though Stillinger argues that Madeline's chamber cannot represent the chamber of maiden thought due to the imminent penetration of immutable truths, Keats describes her bedroom similarly to the chamber of maiden thought depicted in his letters (52).

Fragrant with "candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd" (l. 265), Madeline's chamber permeates the senses with oriental delights "from silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon" (l. 270). Redolent with exotic smells and infused with warmth, this chamber permits the lovers to retreat from the physical pain that exists without. Porphyro endures the human realities threatening to overwhelm him and understands "that the World is full of Misery and Heartbreak, Pain, Sickness and Oppression" because he escapes, with Madeline, through an imaginative experience that Keats represents physically through their sexual union. Mortality threatens the

imaginative beauty found in the lovers' metaphysical union; however, the inevitability of the dying body has also created the desire within the lovers to ameliorate pain, death, and loss. Porphyro and Madeline *both* journey to this literal and imaginative room in the first half of the poem to escape the physical world around them.[8]

Keats develops the lovers' imaginative desires in the poem by drawing a distinction between their ability to experience transcendence, and Angela and the Beadsman's inability to escape. Unlike "poor" Angela, who cannot free herself from the pain of "agues in her brain" (l. 189), Porphyro liberates himself from pain in "the maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste" (l. 187), where he sees Madeline performing her prayers. Because Keats describes Angela's physical ailments as "agues" that affect her "brain", he draws attention to the division between her and the lovers, who free themselves by their imaginative longings. As the allegorical embodiment of physical suffering Keats describes in his letters, Angela leads Porphyro to the chamber of maiden thought, but she cannot enter with him. Like the Beadsman, Angela remains in a cold world outside the one sought by the lovers.

Keats draws several distinctions between Angela, the Beadsman, and the lovers to illustrate that Porphyro and Madeline display an imaginative desire to enter into a sanctuary away from pain and heartbreak. The dream into which Porphyro immerses himself defies the cold ritualistic forms of organized religion in the poem because the rituals Madeline performs engage the imagination, a vital force in opposition to the "the sculptured dead [...] / Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails" (l. 14-15). Instead the chamber of maiden thought appears vibrant, warm, and exotic, and Keats associates the lovers with this room rather than the cold "sculptured" chapel in which the Beadsman prays with "frosted breath" (l. 6) in dead, "dumb orat'ries" (l. 16). Rather, Madeline's divine communion counters mortality:

> As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
> Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
> And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
> And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
> She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
> Save wings, for heaven:—Porphryo grew faint:
> She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint. (ll. 219-225)

By contrast, the Beadsman's rituals leave him spiritually and physically "numb" (l. 5). One cannot forget, however, that Madeline only "seem'd a splendid angel". She remains, like Porphyro, grounded in a world of pain and fear that frames the visionary experience metaphorically depicted as a physical union.

Though the lovers have metaphysical desires, they never lose their human propensity to doubt and suffer, and the poem ends with the veiled implication that

they have escaped the danger of the castle, not the danger of the "storm" (l. 371). Indeed, "the frost-wind blows / Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet / against the window-panes" (ll. 322-324) when the consummation has ended. Though Porphyro would remain in Madeline's "dream [...] / A midnight charm" (ll. 281-282) to prolong "an ancient ditty, long since mute" (l. 291), the heartaches of the world return.[9]

While the imagination offers visionary transport, the dream vision fades as physical truths of death, loss and fear encroach on the lovers. Madeline, the vehicle for Porphyro's ascent to the chamber of maiden thought, only alleviates suffering from these mortal truths; she cannot deify Porphyro as Diana does her mortal lover in Keats's *Endymion* (1818) by removing him from the world. She remains, like Porphyro, limited by the dying body.

Though restricted in the physical world, Madeline grants poetic experience to Porphyro, thus controlling the imaginative encounter that liberates the lovers. As the metaphysical entity, or idealized muse, in the poem, Madeline assumes a more central position because she not only represents the physical and imaginative beauty that inspires the poet, but she *becomes* the poetic imagination. John A. Minahan (1992: 75) denies that Madeline possesses the ability to enter the "realm of the spirit: imagination, dreams, [and] visions" without a male as the necessary opposition that creates unity in the poem. However, as the material embodiment of the poetic imagination, Madeline needs no one to experience imaginative beauty. Porphyro steps into her dream as the poet-lover to translate the experience once the vision fades.

When Porphyro enters Madeline imaginatively, he allows her to overtake his poetical character, which must become feminine to reach "maiden thought". Keats describes the poet's identity in his "Letter to Richard Woodhouse" (27 October 1818) as one that "has no self—it is everything and nothing [...] it has no character". The poet becomes a "chamelion [...] the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because he has no Identity—he is continually in for—and filling some other Body" (836). Porphyro's poetical identity in the poem, then, is Madeline, for he must be "filled" with her body and her dreams to create his poetic character.

Her power only extends as far as the imaginative realm, however. Madeline suffers from the dying body and another immutable truth: patriarchal oppression, reflected in her fears after discovering Porphyro in her bed. Keats confines Madeline's agency to the imaginative world where Porphyro gives song to her, his "tongueless nightingale". His role as the translator of imaginative beauty reflects Keats's unwillingness to give Madeline artistic power as poet. Without her, however, there can exist no fulfilment of imaginative desire for him. As the sole possessor of access to divine power, she invests Porphyro with the immortal beauty he translates as the traditional Platonic poet-musician:

> It seem'd he never, never could redeem
> From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
> So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.
>
> Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
> Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
> He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
> In Provence call'd, 'La belle dame sans mercy' :
> Close to her ear touching the melody;—(ll. 286-293)

Anne Mellor (2001), among others, argues that the power Keats associates with the poetic imagination in the poem only proceeds through Madeline and progression to a feminine chamber —maiden thought.[10] Though I would agree with Mellor that the masculine poetic faculties collapse as the male poet enters a feminine body and chamber of thought, this lasts only as long as the vision. While Porphyro embraces the feminine imagination to enjoy the metaphysical dream world, he nevertheless returns to a masculine world where he alone has an active role as poet. Keats gives Madeline access to the divine, but he specifically assigns Porphyro to the poet's "masculine" role: translator of the divine, Pythagorean "music of the spheres", given in the poem through Madeline. The "hollow lute" he plays, a metaphor of Madeline's womb, suggests that physical consummation and Porphyro's transcription of divine experience is now made "hollow" due to the absence of imaginative beauty. Porphyro's song extends the metaphor; the song he sings to Madeline, "La belle dame sans mercy" (l. 292), recalls Keats's other poem by that title, where a beautiful woman, presumably the muse, has left the knight/poet to die.[11] Because Madeline awakens beside Porphyro, remaining with him, Keats specifically assigns la belle dame to another fleeting feminine presence, the imagination, and also, by extension, associates himself with Porphyro. After the immortal dream fades, Porphyro leaves the chamber of maiden thought imaginatively to render his "ancient ditty" (l. 291) —like Keats, who renders the poem. Madeline, however, does not vanish as the elusive belle dame in the poem but enters the mortal world with Porphyro, divested of any power she previously held.

Though the imagination proceeds through the maiden, the artistic translation nevertheless emerges from a masculine mind and body that Philip Cox (1995: 40) labels Porphyro's "masculine energy", signaling the return of the physical worlds and its "Misery and Heartbreak, Pain, Sickness and Oppression". Language, even music, which exists as the only available means for human expression of their shared imaginative escape, fails to capture immortality, and Madeline realizes that she and Porphyro possess mortal bodies with limited expression:

> "Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
> Thy voice was a sweet tremble in mine ear,

> Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
> And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
> How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
> Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
> Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
> Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
> For if thou diest, my love, I know not where to go. (ll. 307-315)

Unlike Lycius's beloved in *Lamia* (1819), Madeline does not disappear, leaving Porphyro to die, but participates with him in "this eternal woe".

Likewise, her beauty, the physical signifier of imaginative beauty, ultimately remains bound to death, which holds another imaginative beauty Keats begins to develop in *The Eve of St. Agnes* and will continue to explore in the subsequent Odes and in *Lamia*. Imaginative dreaming serves a "Shadow of reality to come" generated by the "Life of Sensations", which Keats describes as a state of desire for intellectual and divine sensation in his letter to Benjamin Bailey on "the authenticity of the imagination" (22 November 1817). Physical beauty, which Keats defines as "essential beauty", allows the poet to access imaginative beauty, and Keats unifies both conceptions through the poet's artistry:

> I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the Heart's affections and the truth of Imagination—what the imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth—whether it existed before or not—for I have the same Idea of all our Passions as of Love: they are all in their Sublime, creative of essential Beauty [...] The Imagination may be compared to Adam's dream—he awoke and found it truth [...] O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts! It is "a Vision in the form of Youth" a Shadow of reality to come [...] we shall enjoy ourselves here after by having what we called happiness on Earth repeated in a finer tone and so repeated—And yet such a fate can only befall those who delight in sensation rather than hunger as you do after Truth—Adam's dream will do here and seems to be a conviction that Imagination and its empyreal reflection is the same as human Life and its spiritual repetition. (257-258)

The "holiness of the Heart's affections", like the holiness depicted in Madeline's attributes, attracts the poet just as it lures Porphyro; the "Passions of Love" in the poem reach a "Sublime" profundity through momentary illusions. Diane Hoeveler (1990: 159) views Madeline's role as "an ideal [...] a secularized Virgin Mary" and "an object of exchange [...] [with] value [...] predicated on her use as a sexual commodity", but Madeline stands at the center of the poem's vitality, its warmth and regenerative power to awaken Porphyro's poetic imagination. Madeline gives the male poet an artistic consciousness that redeems immutable physical truths threatening to dispel the sacred splendor her dream offers. Indeed, what the "imagination seizes as Beauty" is the lovers' desire for immortality, and they heighten

the pleasures of the body with the pleasures of the imagination. As with Adam and Eve, the lovers enjoy an Eden of the mind along with the body that Keats develops in his letter on "Adam's dream" in the unity found between a pre-lapsarian Adam and Eve.[12]

In the poem, immortal dreaming falls into mortal pain, and the imaginative plane the lovers reach collides with the concrete reality to which they return. Though Porphyro desires Madeline even after the divine vision fades, each realizes that Madeline, as a woman, faces harsh penalties if Porphyro, a potential "rude infidel" (l. 342), is found in her chamber.[13] Though a divine intermediary, Madeline ultimately remains bound to a human world and fears the results of premarital sex:

> She panted quick—and suddenly
> Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone [...]
>
> Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
> Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
> There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd
> The blisses of her dream so pure and deep (ll. 298-301)

The imaginative world Madeline imparts through her dream fades, and doubts plague her conscience. Unlike Porphyro, Madeline has more to lose as an unmarried woman bound not only to a dying body but also to a strict moral code that objectifies women and imposes celibacy on maidens. If before she held the keys to divine power, Madeline now holds no power, and whereas Keats likens her to the poetic nightingale before her union with Porphyro, she now appears as a wounded dove. She moves from "so pure a thing" (l. 225) to an understanding of herself as "a deceived thing;— / 'A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing'" (ll. 332-333). Porphyro seeks to reassure her of his honorable intentions by regarding her not only as his "sweet dreamer!" but also, and more importantly considering her lost virginity, his "lovely bride!" (l. 334).

Prior to the sexual union, Madeline remained unaware of the physical realities around her, but after her "fall", she gains new worldly eyes that perceive Porphyro in her bed as a potential heartache, for with prophetic pessimism she grieves: "Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine" (l. 329). Before the realization of her heart's passion, she existed as "a thoughtful Madeline" (l. 55) in the poem:

> She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
> Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
> Pass-by—she heeded not at all: in vain
> Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
> And back retir'd; not cool'd by high disdain,
> But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
> She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year. (ll. 57-63)

Her thoughts, however, look towards heaven rather than earth, for she looks as though "blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain [...] Binded alike from sunshine and from rain" (ll. 240, 242) as she dreams beneath Porphyro's watchful gaze. She transforms from one "yearning like a God in pain" (l. 56) to a suffering woman, powerless against what Michael Ragussis (1975: 387) has called the "world of natural process". This world incites Madeline's "painful change" (l. 300) from the sacred muse to the secular mistress.[14]

The poetic imagination, then, poses a complex problem for the poem's ending. While it offers a vision of immortality, the imagination cannot prevent the "sleeping dragons all around" (l. 354) from penetrating the lovers' "paradise" (l. 244). Neither can the imagination efface the "fears" with which Madeline is "beset" (l. 352) after she awakens with human eyes to a changed world. In effect, she realizes that the poetic vision has vanished, leaving her with the ultimate fate of the mistress with "peerless eyes" (l. 20) in Keats's "Ode on Melancholy": "She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die" (l. 21). Nevertheless, Keats links the poetic imagination with Madeline for a specific reason. Like Madeline, the poetic imagination has the ability to lift one from physical realities even if it cannot defeat mortality.

The lovers awaken from their imaginative and sexual union to a "life of sensation", able to transcend reality through imaginative longings and dreams. Though they possess physical bodies, like the Beasdman and Angela, Keats marks off their position by allowing them to escape the cruel death suffered by the castle's inhabitants in the last lines of the poem. The lovers enjoy an imaginative world that liberates them spiritually and physically, and Keats ameliorates the effects of death for them. They appear as ghostly, spiritual beings that vanish into an imaginative realm at the end of the poem.

The "visions of delight" (l. 47) Keats grants them engender mystical vitality that counters death by offering an imaginative life where the lovers escape, even through death, as "by one, and one, the bolts full easy slide;— / The chains lie silent on the stones;—/ The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans" (ll. 367-369). Though the characters, now ghostly "phantoms" (l. 361), flee into a "storm" (l. 371), it is"an elfin-storm from faery land" (l. 343), imbued with an imaginative quality that *seems* to give one alternative, that the lovers endure hardship, but really offers another, for they escape in a storm that is "haggard seeming, but a boon indeed" (l. 344).[15]

Keats diminishes the physical reality that the lovers die by allowing them to "glide, like phantoms, in the wide hall" (l. 361) and into a mystical storm rather than into the "coffin-worm" (l. 374) that awaits Angela and the Beadsman, the knights, and the castle guests. He moves them from the physical world to the imaginative one,

for they appear not to suffer but to travel as imaginative characters leaving for a new "home" (l. 351). Keats goes to some lengths to create a division between the lovers' fate and the fate of those in the castle, contrasting the nightmares in the last stanza, comparable to Angela's "agues in her brain" (l. 189), with the imaginative dreams experienced by the lovers:

> And they are gone —ay, ages long ago
> These lovers fled away into the storm.
> That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
> And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
> Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
> Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
> Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face deform;
> The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
> For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold. (ll. 372-378)

Keats ends the poem with images of death and pain to differentiate them from the images of the chamber of maiden thought, which grant "a life of sensation" rather than of pain to the lovers. He embraces imaginative beauty as a recognition that the dying body cannot contain the undying spirit or the transcendent powers of the imagination, a theme he implicitly defines as a passage from this life to a "nobler" (l.123) one in *Sleep and Poetry* (1817), one that gives "wings to find out an immortality" (l. 84) through "an eternal book" (l. 64) read in this life. Perhaps more importantly, however, Keats obscures the line between death and life, giving the lovers a death that promises another imaginative world, one that he addresses in "To Autumn" (1820) as beautiful and seductive, equal to the "songs of Spring" (l. 23) that have passed, for he apostrophizes death: "thou hast thy music too" (l. 24).

Mark Sandy (2000) argues that, while there remains no actual, permanent escape for the lovers, Madeline and Porphyro are "absorbed into legend's ideal and immutable realm", where they possess a timeless existence through art. I argue, however, that only their spirit is absorbed into this world. Like the "marble men and maidens overwrought" depicted in Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1820) the lovers "glide, like phantoms" (l. 361) into an imaginative world despite their mortal "chains" (l. 368), and it is a "life of sensations" that releases them. As representatives of a realm Keats defines more explicitly in "Ode on a Grecian Urn" as "For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd, / For ever panting, and for ever young: / All breathing human passion far above [...]" (ll. 26-28), the "pant[ing]" (l. 295) Madeline and Porphyro, who "breath'd himself" (l. 250) into her, breathe "beyond a mortal man impassion'd far" (l. 316), for both lovers exceed mortal limits imaginatively.

Unlike the urn figures, however, the lovers participate as living characters with imaginations that allow them to bridge the physical and imaginative worlds through dreams, and by extension, through death. If Keats apotheosizes them as poetical characters by allowing them to escape into faery land, this escape is effected through their imaginative longings, which distinguish them from their counterparts in the poem and on the urn. These immobile figures serve more as an ekphrastic representation of poetic language than as poetical characters because they remain incapable of experiencing imaginative longings. They rather signify than perceive imaginative beauty:

> When old age shall this generation waste,
> Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
> Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
> 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty.' —that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. (ll. 46-50)

The figures on the Grecian urn capture the idea of imaginative beauty, the world of art to which the poet aspires, by appearing physically beautiful as artistic figures, but unlike Madeline and Porphyro, they are only "a friend to man", a signifier of another world beyond the "earth" that they "know". Stuart Peterfreund (1986: 69) believes that, for Keats, imaginative beauty exists free of temporal limitation and in the "realm of being—the realm of the *is*". What humans possess is "the means for the partial apprehension" of imaginative beauty. As mediating figures between the physical world and the imaginative one, and Peterfreund specifically refers to the artistic figures in Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn", humans search for beauty as a fixed locality and find, rather than eternity, a dead reality that only *points* to eternity. The urn's figures remain symbols, whereas the lovers participate as active beings because of their imaginative capacity.

Porphyro and Madeline perpetually exercise imaginative longings, and these imaginative desires allow them to transcend pain and loss as spiritual beings, even in death. Their escape into the elfin-storm, then, reconciles death and the imagination because it allows them to engage with imaginative experience. They resist the "ache in icy hoods and mails" (l. 18) by invoking an imaginative world that offers immortal dreaming and death as a passage to an unknown but imagined world of beauty. What the imagination offers in a fatalistic universe where pain and oppression seem to triumph over imaginative beauty is the artistic world offered by the chamber of maiden thought. Receptivity to the imaginative world liberates the lovers, giving them a negotiated position between the physical world and the imaginative one. Though they die, an inescapable truth, their deaths, like their dreams, allow them to enter into an imaginative realm that never dies.

Notes

1. Stillinger (1999) documents the wide range of readers' views. Among more than fifty-nine interpretations of the poem offered in his study, Stillinger gives primacy to three readings, which he employs as a critical structure for examining the diverse directions taken by readers of the poem. He takes these readings from a prior essay he wrote on the poem, from Earl Wasserman's earlier reading of *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and from an interpretation developed by Stuart M. Sperry. Each of these critics provides a spectrum from one extreme to another that offers a useful framework for understanding most of the interpretations of the poem given. While Wasserman argues for a metaphysical reading of Porphyro's progression towards Madeline and a transcendent spiritual experience, Stillinger posits a much bleaker view of the sexual union between Madeline and Porphyro. In Stillinger's analysis, Porphyro acts as a voyeur who creeps and peeps around the castle, giving the "hoodwink'd" Madeline unwanted sexual attention and a consummation she neither invites nor desires. Sperry's argument lies somewhere between the spiritual ascent Wasserman argues for and the physical aggression of Stillinger's reading. His view occupies a space between these extremes where imagination and reality create a world in which wish fulfillment drives desire. For a complete analysis of Wasserman's, Sperry's, and Stillinger's readings and Stillinger's summary of the critical corpus of scholarship on the poem, see *Reading The Eve of St. Agnes*.

2. Erik Gray (1999: 127-147) offers a provocative analysis of the poem's contradictory nature, which he argues Keats employs to overturn the readers' expectations of the traditional romance genre and Keats's typical poetic lovers. He posits that the poem reflects Madeline and Porphyro's divided personas in opposition. Because of the divided nature of the characters, I believe that the lovers express the inherent tension driving the poem, for they, like the imagination, exist between two dimensions, the mortal and the immortal realm. They exist both as sexually charged human lovers and as artistic creations reflective of medieval romance and poetry, the two forms Keats invokes to create their world and their poetic characters.

3. See, for example, the relationship Keats establishes between Petrarch and his muse in *Sleep and Poetry*: "Petrarch, outstepping from the shady green, / Starts at the sight of Laura; nor can wean / His eyes from her sweet face. Most happy they! / For over them was seen a *free display* of out-spread wings, and from between them shone / The face of Poesy..." (ll. 389-394), italics mine. Whereas the poet typically continues to occupy a masculine identity as poet, Porphyro sheds his masculinity while under his muse's "spell".

4. Compare to "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and *Lamia*, where Keats allows the apotheosized female divine agency to emasculate and/or kill her adoring male suitor.

5. Consider, for example, the speaker in Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale", who laments his return to an unsatisfactory physical world after the transcendent experience given by his feminine imagination: "Forlorn! The very word is like a bell / To toll me back from thee to my sole self! / Adieu! The fancy cannot cheat so well / As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf" (ll. 71-74).

6. Though there is no direct evidence Keats read Addison, the popularity of Addison's writings on the imagination and his influences on writers prior to and contemporary with Keats suggests that he was most likely familiar with Addison. Since Keats had access to the large library at John Clarke School, it seems highly probably that Keats would have had access to Addison while a student there. For a more extensive study of Keats and his influences, see Andrew Motion's *Keats* (1997: 37).

7. If Madeline possesses a divine presence prior to the lovers' union, she awakens to mortal fears: the loss of her virginity, a world where she will age, and the possibility that Porphyro will not love her. And moreover, she awakens to a mortal body that ultimately dies. Having once experienced transcendence, which Keats constructs as the poem's metaphysical world, Madeline finds herself surrounded by physical truths: fear and mortal decay.

8. Michael E. Holstein (1987: 32-49) has noted that poetry provided a healing agency for Keats and that the imagination allowed the poet, nursing his dying brother Tom and facing his own mortality and consequent failed love affair with Fanny, an escape. For Keats, "Poetry contributes to the world through its intense experience and its commanding claims on a reader's attention, which deflect consciousness from pain".

9. The return to reality from the imaginative realm given by art remains a persistent theme in Keats poetry.

10. Mellor (2001: 214-229) asserts that Keats's poetic fluidity created by the effacement of self through negative capability, his choice for "feminine" poetic forms, like the medieval romance, and his attachment to beauty as a feminized manifestation of the imagination in his poetry and letters provoke interesting questions about Keats's view of gender. Mellor argues that what Keats develops in his poetry is a collapse of all poetic faculties into femininity: "He repeatedly assigns the possession of beauty, power and knowledge—everything the male poet desires—to the feminine gender".

11. In the ballad, Keats creates an abstract world in which he explores how physical reality overtakes imaginative beauty because the imagination remains confined to the mortal world. The poet, through human language, attempts to capture this beauty through art, which provides brief transcendence though it cannot penetrate death. The knight, like the lovers in *The Eve of St. Agnes*, ultimately faces death, though he offers the memory of la belle dame's beauty to communicate the power of the imagination through art. Even though death remains an eventuality, art offers metaphysical truth in the poem, which the knight views as a deceiving aphrodisiac for the body and mind, because it allows brief interludes of metaphysical beauty in a mortal world.

12. Nancy Rosenfeld (2000: 56) examines the relationship between Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Keats's exploration of the imaginative process as a progression from reality to an Edenic state to a less transcendent, idyllic phase. She remains ambivalent, however, about whether "Adam's dream" provides an authentic source for Keats since Adam "awakens to a reality of perfect beauty" and Keats's "reality is never perfect as the dream". Rosenfeld's analysis follows Keats's outline for the progression of the poet's imagination in his letter on maiden thought almost exactly; however, Keats turns this idea on its head for the poet-knight Porphyro in *The Eve of St. Agnes*. If Madeline awakens to a world less divine it is only because Keats never clearly defines her human agency until the moment *she* realizes she is human. Porphyro, who only reached divinity through an imaginative participation of the body and mind with Madeline, awakens from the dream to a beautiful reality that never fades for him. He is perpetually driven by the desire for communion with Madeline and escape.

13. Keats perhaps alludes to social prejudice in this line, which adds to the lovers' physical pains and oppression. If Porphyro is a "rude infidel", both face the consequences bred from an un-accepting world if found together.

14. Keats perhaps gives social commentary through Madeline's loss of power in the poem. In the imaginative world of art, Keats links the feminine with divinity and with agency to grant the poet vision, imaginative beauty, and life. In the physical world, however, women remain powerless, subject to sexual restriction and rejection if they lose their virginity prior to marriage. Keats allows Madeline complete autonomy in the first half of the poem when she appears divine, but after her union with Porphyro, Madeline must face

the oppressive masculine hierarchy that would condemn her as an unmarried woman if discovered in bed with a lover.

15. See Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" (1820) where he conceives of an imaginative, undying realm where the nightingale has flown "in faery lands forlorn" (l. 70)—an escape from the physical world he seeks through the "vision, or a waking dream" (l. 79) given by the imagination, the feminine "deceiving elf" (l. 74).

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LOOKING FORWARD TO THE END. /OU TOPOS/: AN APPROACH TO THE ART OF SAMUEL BECKETT

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The earliest version of the saying "no news is good news" can probably be found in the Jacobean period, when, in 1616, King James I of England wrote "no newis is bettir than evill newes".[1] The equation "absence = goodness" seems appropriate to begin an essay on utopian implications in the work of Samuel Beckett. Beckett is the poet of negation —not to be confused with nothingness, an idea one cannot sustain for too long without feeling chilled to the bone. Beckett's writings and plays do not provoke fear of some kind of existential void in their readers or spectators. Physical and mental shapes are too dense, too intensely felt, to elicit the dizziness the mind may suffer if forced to move close to the rim of speculation about existential blackout. Negation in Beckett has a more positive connotation than the atmosphere pervading his work might suggest. Beckett is an artist. Year after year, I find it difficult to convince my students of this fact —not the fact that he is an artist, but the fact that there is optimism in his work. When other arguments fail, I remind them that literature, however gloomy, is always an affirmation of life. Who would otherwise devote time and effort to imposing discipline on the imagination, to giving thought to feelings, to scanning the quotidian or the remote? Who would be willing to suffer the rebuke of words again and again unless fuelled by a strange and stubborn love of life? The crushing awareness of failure in Estragon's famous words "Nothing to be done" has to be weighed on the same set of scales as the-waiting-for-Godot premise of the title —the sound of the word suggesting, by the way, both good and not so good news.

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James Knowlson, (1997: 263) the authorised biographer of Beckett, throws light on most of the sources that might explain the writer's penchant for negation, meaning both awareness of, and resistance to the idea of absence as deprivation. Here is one such source:

> [Beckett] immersed himself deeply in Schopenhauer, who continued to influence his outlook, providing a clear justification for his view that suffering is the norm of human life, that will represents an unwelcome intrusion, and that real consciousness lies beyond human understanding.

Samuel Beckett's characters know what suffering and deprivation are. They seem to be painfully aware of the impossibility of attaining the kind of knowledge they wish to acquire. And yet, their stubborn faith in some form of enlightenment places them on the frontier between *ou-topos* and *eu-topos*, the liminal space where hope can resist the downward pull of despair and the forward-urging yet destructive force of the will as understood by Arthur Schopenhauer. Beckett himself, as described by his biographer and as perceived through his art, had a philosophical, hence contemplative, bent of mind that found in art the possibility of accommodating an aspiring sensibility and the negative capability that John Keats explained as the readiness to dwell in uncertainties without any "irritable reaching after fact and reason".[2]

The refrain "nothing to be-done" in *Waiting for Godot*, also repeated by Mrs and Mr Rooney in *All That Fall*, and Clov's awareness in *Endgame* that "something is taking its course" are only two of the many examples of Beckett's insistence on the meagre and often non-existent control we have over the forces shaping and directing our existence. These examples also suffice to account for the inoculation of Schopenhauer's pessimism into the plays of Samuel Beckett, where the gap between what the characters wish to understand and the understanding lying within their reach is always unbridgeable. Such tension between the real and the ideal is a constant source of suffering, one that Beckett's characters seem to have learned to accept and live with. Beckett does not explain how the road to acceptance, however long and painful, has been walked. He is not an author interested in processes but in the outcome of processes. He does not pose the question: "How are we going to live?" but "What are we going to do now that we have lived through everything?" —which dramatically wipes out any possibility of choice, since all possibilities have already exhausted themselves in failure. Hence the passive temperament of the characters. Hence, too, the stripped-down, compacted, static nature of Beckett's settings and sense-making. Once again, the philosophical and aesthetic intensity pervading his works sends us back to Schopenhauer, for whom only art and aestheticism could provide man with some kind of liberation from the tyranny of will, and therefore from suffering. In other words, the negation of the

will might be achieved through a spiritual disposition favouring renunciation, or through the aesthetic craft of channelling this blind and raging force into the pent-up intensity of art (Schopenhauer 1987: 63-65).[3]

In the plays of Samuel Beckett there are examples of both survival strategies, the spiritual and the aesthetic. It is around these that this essay revolves. Seldom do we find a character who has not expressed his or her desire to move from a meaningless here-and-now to an unknown there, or who has not attempted various forms of conscious or unconscious artistic sublimation of a predicament to make the waiting bearable. Spiritual longing and aesthetic consolation function as slow-moving, often stuck or jerky, life-conveyor belts, where Beckett's characters are being transported and forced to move in circles, luggage-like, waiting to be claimed and taken elsewhere by some caring hand. In his plays, the frustrated attempts to find a meaningful *topos* is strikingly visualised through ageing, ailing, or crippled bodies, and through disembodied voices emphasising the inability of the mind to find answers to questions that baffle reason. The desire to flee reality is also stubbornly present in the broken and increasingly minimalist discourse adopted by Beckett, who reflects upon the evolution of his own style in the following passage:

> I realised that Joyce had gone as far as one could in the direction of knowing more, [being] in control of one's material. He was always adding to it; you only have to look at his proofs to see that. I realised that my own way was in impoverishment, in lack of knowledge and in taking away, in substracting rather than adding. (in Knowlson 1997: 352)

The increasing concern for language as the expressive kernel of experience has led numerous critics to analyse the paradox of how such an underfed form of discourse as Beckett's should be able to produce such vigorous, vital and protean meaning. In *Samuel Beckett y la narración reflexiva*, José Ángel García Landa says that Beckett's broken language is his way of incorporating chaos into his art rather than fighting against it. (García Landa, 1992: 245-246; my translation). Terry Eagleton (*The Guardian* 2006) opts for a down-to-earth, anti-essentialist appraisal of Beckett's artistic and linguistic stances. He writes:

> Beckett's 100th anniversary is crammed with literary events celebrating the life of the modern age's most lovable pessimist, most of them, one imagines, awash with talk of the timeless human condition portrayed in his work. Nothing could be further from the truth. For one thing, Beckett treated such portentous interpretations of his work with typical Irish debunkery. "No symbol where none intended", he once reminded the critics. For another, he was not some timeless spirit but a southern Irish Protestant, part of a besieged minority of cultural aliens caught uneasily within a triumphalistic Catholic Free State. As Anglo-Irish Big Houses were burnt by Republicans during the war of independence, many Protestants fled to the Home

> Counties. The paranoia, chronic insecurity and self-conscious marginality of Beckett's work make a good deal more sense in this light. So does the stark, stripped quality of his writing, with its Protestant aversion to frippery and excess.

No appraisal of Beckett's art is to be discarded as being untrue. Beckett, like Shakespeare, belongs to all of us, and therefore each of us can only attempt to explain the kind of intimate relation we enter into with his work. I like to think that Beckett's art is a form of prayer, that the repeated words and rhythms in his plays are litanies. Even the most seemingly absurd utterances sound to me like praying. After all, one does not pray from a position of certainty —one should not, and need not. It is out of a sense of alienation and ignorance that one addresses some deity or other, directs an appeal to some promise of authority or solace beyond one's own inner resources. Real prayer is not coherent rational discourse. It is a kind of babbling, a speaking in tongues. I also like to think (without this being misconstrued as self-aggrandisement) that Beckett's characters feel the way I do when I am puzzled and disoriented, yet willing to continue in the hope that some of the fragments of my own experience may slowly or suddenly become more meaningful. I wonder how far James Knowlson (1977: 237) was from this thought when he wrote the following:

> Beckett found himself drawn into restating his own criterion of true art, in which he not only repeated his view that the authentic poem or picture was a prayer but developed the image further than he had ever done up to that point: "The art (picture) that is a prayer sets up prayer, releases prayer in the onlooker, ie. Priest: Lord have mercy upon us". People: "Christ have mercy upon us". This is an attitude that few readers will associate with Beckett, yet it was essential to his view of art at the time, whether this was the art of the writer, painter or musician.

The time Knowlson is referring to here is the period between the two World Wars when Beckett was in Germany and "listened to anti-Jewish sentiments with acute distaste" (Knowlson 1997:237). Art as prayer would suit a time haunted by the prospect of world conflict. In fact, art as prayer suits any context, for art, like prayer, or utopia, wishes us well.

Beckett's characters pray for a way out of suffering, a release from endless waiting, ignorance, even life. Some prayers are pregnant with longing, like Mrs Rooney's in *All That Fall*:

> Oh no coughing or spitting or bleeding or vomiting, just drifting gently into the higher life, and remembering, remembering... all the silly unhappiness... as though... it had never happened... What did I do with that handkerchief? (Beckett 1985: 219)

Some are like empty begging-bowls, as in *Waiting for Godot:*

Vladimir: Let's wait and see what he says
Estragon: Who?
Vladimir: Godot.
Estragon: Good idea.
Vladimir: Let's wait till we know exactly how we stand.
Estragon: On the other hand it might be better to strike the iron before it freezes.
Vladimir: I'm curious to hear what he has to offer. Then we'll take it or leave it.
Estragon: What exactly did we ask him for?
Vladimir: Were you not there?
Estragon: I can't have been listening.
Vladimir: Oh... nothing very definite.
Estragon: A kind of prayer.
Vladimir: Precisely. (Beckett 1988: 18)

There is also the category of "tantrum prayer", as in *Endgame:*

Hamm (*to Clov*):
You'll finish him later. Let us pray to God.
(*Clov is trying to kill a rat in the kitchen*).
Clov:
Again!
Nagg:
Me sugar-plum!
Hamm:
God first!
Are you right?
Clov: (*resigned*)
Off we go.
Hamm: (*to Nagg*)
And you?
Nagg: (*clasping hands, closing eyes, in a gabble*)
Our Father which art —
Hamm: Silence! In silence! Where are your manners?
(*pause*)
Off we go.
(*attitudes of prayer. silence. abandoning his attitude discouraged*)
Well?
Clov: (*abandoning his attitude*)
What a hope! And you?
Hamm:
Sweet damn all!

(*to Nagg*)
And you?
Nagg: Wait!
(*pause. abandoning his attitude.*)
Nothing doing!
Hamm:
The bastard! He doesn't exist! (Beckett 1958: 54-55)

This is a curious and significant tantrum, as Hamm has, throughout the play, adopted the tyrannical attitude of a *roi sans soleil*, an absolute monarch deriving his power directly from a non-existent deity; hence his fury. His obsession with being at the centre, the fact of having let Mother Pegg die of darkness, and his asking Clov to place him under the window to feel the light on his face are elements pointing in the same direction. In *Samuel Beckett and the Idea of God*, Mary Bryden writes:

> [Hamm] gravitates, in his immobilised status, towards a magnetic central position, like that described by Christ: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me' (John 12:32). (Bryden 1988: 141)

The attraction to a still centre is a form of prayer; stasis is the ultimate act of mimesis on the part of the individual, his most desperate desire to please God, the unmoved mover. Vladimir and Estragon, Hamm and Clov, Nagg and Nell, Winnie, or A and B (Billy), the protagonists in *Rough for Theater II* —most of Beckett's characters are suspended in an endless moment of intense anticipation, what Borges beautifully describes as the imminence of a revelation that never takes place ("inminencia de una revelación que no se produce" (in *La Vanguardia* 1999),[4] a definition of art that applies aptly to Beckett.

Indeed, stasis is also a synthesis of past motion, e-motion, and experiences —in art, Keats' Grecian Urn. Samuel Beckett, however, depicts a paradox, a form of stasis that walks and talks before us; hence the different tempos in the walking and the talking. Mind and body have different rhythms, though both feed on memory to lengthen their days. But the kind of memory that nourishes the mind works both as an illusion of permanence and as a curse. Memory is the historicising capacity of the imagination to keep itself company. Remembering is an effortless creative act, art being, along with spiritual longing, the only path from *ou topos* to *eu topos*, as has already been suggested. Some characters, such as Winnie in *Happy Days*, the protagonist of *Rockaby*, the old man in *Krapp's Last Tape*, or the woman whose mouth we see in *Not I*, use memory as the source of a tale that seems to be alive and feeding off them for its own survival. Some other characters fancy themselves to be word-hoarding storytellers forcing others to listen to the same tale again and again, thus making Shakespeare's famous line frighteningly true: "So long lives this, and this gives life to thee". Vladimir, by contrast, resists, refusing to listen to

Estragon's nightmares, though engaging with him in an exercise of memory scansion. Nagg in *Endgame* tells Nell the story of the tailor who was a slow but better artisan than God himself, and Hamm imposes his *récits*, *grands* and *petits*, on the other characters. About the role of the narrator in Beckett's works, José Ángel García Landa (1992: 125) writes:

> La primera persona beckettiana desafía los esquemas de la narración homodiegética. Por ejemplo, sólo aparentemente señala una identidad entre el narrador y el personaje. En lugar de la afirmación de identidad característica de la narración homodiegética tenemos una negación continua. El narrador al cual se alude como "yo" puede transformarse inopinadamente en un "él", y ello sin que se nos haya introducido en la narración de otro enunciador. Así, la identidad del narrador con el personaje se mantiene pero él ya no es más que una máscara desechada.[5]

García Landa traces the evolution of the binary of narration-narrator in Beckett. In early writings such as *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* (1932), García Landa observes, it is difficult to delimit the areas of character and narrator. In *More Pricks than Kicks* (1934), which he describes as being more disciplined in this respect, the voice of the narrator is the destructive voice of the textual author. García Landa (1992: 124) goes on to say that in these early writings there is a display of erudition on the part of the narrator, who looks down on his characters from the heights of baroque rhetoric. The richness of Beckett's earlier discourse may not only be related to the influence of James Joyce, but also to the loquaciousness and eloquence of Irish orality and the old- and new-world literature of the Spanish Siglo de Oro that Beckett was engaged in reading and translating partly because of his teaching involvement in Romance languages at Trinity College.

As Beckett enters ever more deeply into the process of pruning his style, a process which goes hand in hand with that of dismantling past assumptions about the power of language to explain reality, the tension between narrator and narration is no longer a matter of hierarchies but of uselessness, pointlessness, chaos. Nobody seems to be in control of anything; language leads nowhere, explains nothing, clarifies nothing. Action, mental and physical, is also reduced to sterile movement. Ed Jewinski (1990: 142), for example, has the following to say about the dramatic piece *Company* (1979), which portrays a solitary man listening to a voice recalling slices of his past, usually marked by emotional solitude:

> the particular formulations or words with which man attempts not only to understand his 'self' but also to capture relations beyond his 'self' are inevitably inadequate. For Beckett, the human circumstance is, at best, 'Ill seen, Ill said'. The self is ever receding beyond the verbal expression of the discrete experiences with which man attempts to establish a secure identity. Imagine as he will, man cannot give presence to himself. As the word *imagine* implies: man can only give 'image' or 'shape' to what is *not* 'present'.

Lucky, in *Waiting for Godot*, is a good example of the idea that however long and heavily freighted the memory of the narrator might be, it has no bearing, no influence on his present. Even worse, it is *precisely* because of the amount of information stored greedily, for its own sake or to quench yet exacerbate some existential thirst, that the effect appears to be so enslaving and destructive.

But because in literature, as in life, interpretation lies in the mind of whoever does the interpreting, I should like to see the linguistic wasteland in which Beckett's characters move (or stand and sit stock-still) as a kind of limbo, or perhaps purgatory, where they expiate the ills of a logocentric and egocentric experience. Michael Billington (*The Guardian* 2006) cites the words of Cyril Connolly, who said that Beckett is "the poet of terminal stages" —which takes me back to the beginning of this essay where I asserted that Beckett is the poet of negation, yet not of nothingness.

Beckett portrays humanity at the doors of the garden from which we were once expelled. As Vladimir himself observes, they are mankind. This occurs in the second act of *Waiting for Godot* when Pozzo, now blind, and Lucky, now mute, have stumbled over themselves in a vaudevillean pratfall and, flat on their back, are full of renewed resolve:

> **Vladimir:** Let us not waste our time in idle discourse! (*Pause. Vehemently.*) Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not every day that we are needed. Others would meet the case equally well, if not better. To all mankind they were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us, whether we like it or not. (Beckett 1988: 79)

Sometimes Beckett's characters have moments of surprising insight into their situation, as if, now and then, amidst all the slapstick, the author wanted to provide a glimpse of new possibilities for meaningful connections. I have myself made what I hope might be a meaningful and thought-provoking connection. I have always felt that Milton and Beckett narrate the same story. Milton concentrates on the departure of Adam and Eve from paradise. Beckett depicts the end of the postlapsarian journey that is undertaken. If the fall was caused by pride, Vladimir and Estragon seem to be pretty well ready for re-admission. They have no ambitions, no understanding, almost no memories, and no expectations other than what Godot may bring to them. In the last book of *Paradise Lost*, Milton (1998: lines 633-649) recounts the transition from myth to history:

> High in front advanced,
> The brandished sword of God before them blazed,
> Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
> And vapour as the Libyan air adust,

> Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat
> In either hand the hastening Angel caught
> Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
> Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
> To the subjected plain; then disappeared.
> They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
> Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
> Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
> With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:
> Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon;
> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
> They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way.

Beckett's characters have walked all the way back home. Theirs is the last stage on a long journey filled with travail, a journey whose wayside and high-road spectacles and pleasures have been almost completely forgotten. All they have is a deeply rooted sense of failure and alienation. And because there is nothing else to be done, they inhabit a liminal space, and a time of tense, intense and intensive expectation, even a form of manic busy-ness. With understandable bouts of despair, they wait as patiently and stoically as they can for the long-awaited gift of forgiveness. As with the transgression and guilt suffered by Franz Kafka's K., they don't even know why they have to be forgiven. Perhaps for being alive. This *ex-nihilo* condition, I would contend, is the *primum mobile* of all aspirations to utopia.

Notes

[1]. http://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin_board/45/messages/451.html.

[2]. Letter to George and Thomas Keats, Sunday, 21 December 1817.

[3]. Schopenhauer establishes a difference between "Will" as the-thing-in-itself, or life that blindly strives for itself, and "Willkür" as Will bridled by intellect. See also *The World as Will and Idea* (1819), ed. David Berman (New York: AMS Press, 1975), vol.3: 135-138.

[4]. Jorge Luís Borges, "La muralla y los libros" (1950), in Borges, *Otras inquisiciones* (Buenos Aires: Sur, 1952).

[5]. My translation: The use of the first-person narrator in Beckett defies the pattern of homodiegetic narrration. Such use, for example, is misleading as regards the identification of character with narrrator. Instead of the affirmation of identity which characterises the homodiegetic narrator, we find a constant negation of such affirmation. The narrator who is alluded to as "I" may unexpectedly become a "he" even though no other speaker has been introduced. Thus, the identification of narrator with character is maintained, but the latter has already become a discarded mask.

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EXPLORING IDENTITY ISSUES IN BRITISH MEN'S MAGAZINES' PROBLEM PAGES: A CULTURAL STUDIES PERSPECTIVE

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1. Introduction

During the last few decades, men and masculinity have been undergoing an increasing process of change in the Western world. In countries like Britain traditional assumptions about the meaning of manhood have been challenged and called into question (Horrocks 1994; Segal 1997; MacInness 1998; Connell 2000; Stoltenberg 2000; Beynon 2002; Whitehead 2002). As men's studies theorist Michael Kimmel announced by the late eighties, "that men are today confused about what it means to be a 'real man' —that masculinity is in 'crisis'— has become a cultural commonplace, staring down at us from every magazine rack and television talk show" (1987: 121). The socio-cultural circumstances of the last few decades in Britain have had an outstanding impact on men, and masculine identities have experienced a process of destabilization which greatly contrasts with the historically taken for granted and unaltered foundations of patriarchal masculinities. As argued by various theorists (Nixon 1996: 204-206; Edwards 1997: 81-83; Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001: 14, 35-36; Beynon 2002: 164; Benwell 2003: 13-14), throughout the eighties, the so-called 'new man' made his way into the public arena as an image of masculinity only to lose ground in the nineties to the so-called 'new lad', who was to replace him as the dominating subject position in the discourses on masculinity articulated in different popular-culture vehicles in contemporary UK, men's magazines included.

This paper is concerned precisely with men's magazines as a cultural artefact which, by the late nineties, had become "the fastest-growing magazine sector" (Smith 1996: 1-2) in Britain —only ten years after they were launched— and, at the beginning of the new century, "had established a mass market and were, in some cases, outselling the most popular women's magazines" (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001: 1). In Benwell's view, "men's lifestyle magazines are both representative site and mobilizing force of crucial cultural shifts in masculinity" (2003: 7). In particular, this study focuses on problem pages as a genre significantly unattended in studies of the men's magazine in the UK. Drawing upon a cultural studies perspective on 'identity', this contribution examines men's lifestyle magazines' problem columns in relation to the constitution, and enduring presence, of so-called 'newmannism' and 'laddishness' as major subject positions made available to male consumers when reading these periodicals. Through the exploration of a selection of problem pages published in men's magazines over the 1999 summer and autumn period —including *FHM*, *GQ*, *Later*, *Maxim*, *Men's Health*, *Sky Magazine* and *ZM*— this paper challenges the above-mentioned commonly held view identifying newmannism and laddishnes with the life of the British men's magazine in the eighties and the nineties respectively.[1] Thus, rather than attempting to demonstrate any new changes in men's subjectivities at the end of the twentieth century, the emphasis of this study will be on showing how, as substantiated by the analysis of problem pages in 1999, not only laddishness but *also* newmannism were full of vitality at the end of the nineties. In other words, the evidence provided by the examination of counselling columns will demonstrate that newmannism did not fade away with the emergence of laddishness in the men's magazine early in the nineties.

2. Cultural studies and identity

This paper delves into the masculine identity negotiation processes activated when reading a popular-culture artefact of a textual nature such as men's lifestyle magazines' problem pages in contemporary UK.[2] The focus and scope of this contribution is framed within recent examinations of identity in contemporary cultural studies, where "the turn towards issues of gender and race has helped to reorient the discussion of identity: overwhelmingly in recent years, its focus has been on the politics of particular identities within specific historical conjunctures" (Turner 2003: 212). Indeed, this research project may be claimed to be consistent with the agenda of cultural studies, which, according to Barker's definition in *The SAGE Dictionary of Cultural Studies*, could be conceived of as a domain of enquiry "constituted by a regulated way of speaking about objects (which cultural studies brings into view) and coheres around key concepts, ideas and concerns that include

articulation, culture, discourse, ideology, identity, popular culture, power, representation and text" (2004: 42).

With Barker's recent definition in mind, cultural studies can be regarded as "an interdisciplinary or postdisciplinary post-structuralist field of enquiry that explores the production and inculcation of culture or maps of culture" (2004: 42).[3] In an attempt to devise a model to account for the practices of cultural production and consumption in society, du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay and Negus have coined the term 'circuit of culture' to refer to the particular interaction of a number of fundamental moments "through which any analysis of a cultural text or artefact must pass if it is to be adequately studied" (1997: 3). Together with the analysis of practices of representation, production, consumption and regulation, the study of identities is one of such necessary processes for the examination of cultural artefacts, products or practices. As Edgar and Sedgwick point out, "the issue of identity is central to cultural studies, in so far as cultural studies examines the contexts within which and through which individuals and groups construct, negotiate and defend their identity of self-understanding" (1999: 183).[4] Edgar and Sedgwick's reference to context here underlines another fundamental tenet of cultural studies, namely its radical contextualisation —temporal and spatial— of cultural practices including those of identity construction, in a specific social formation. As Grossberg insists, "a cultural practice is a complex and conflictual place which cannot be separated from the context of its articulation, since it has no existence outside that context" (1994: 8).[5]

In its theoretical approach, this paper adheres to an 'anti-' or 'non-essentialist' (Woodward 1997: 11 and *passim*; Barker 2002: 109) view of identity within contemporary cultural studies. Contrary to 'essentialist' or 'orthodox' views assuming that people have a true and autonomous self, a position widely held across the social sciences and the humanities (Brooker 1999: 109-110; Johnson 2000: 277-278) considers that identities are contingent, culturally specific constructions which are socially produced, and are always a response to an 'other', namely something external and different from it. As Baldwin, Longhurst, Smith, McCracken and Ogborn (1999: 224) put it, "the making of the self requires a constant interaction with the non-self or non-identity: the social world". Following the impact of post-structuralism upon contemporary cultural theory, identities have accordingly come to be theorized as being constructed discursively. In this view, discourses are seen as "'regulated' systems of meanings or representations" (Lewis 2002: 25) producing 'subject positions' which, in the course of their social interactions, individuals take up —or resist— to become social subjects. Such subject positions may be understood in terms of "the spaces from which one speaks and observes in a discursive formation" (Andersen 2003: 8). Hall has seen 'identities' in this regard as referring

> to the meeting point, the point of suture, between, on the one hand, the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpelate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and, on the other, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'. (2000: 19)

As Barker explains in a more 'palatable' fashion, identity represents "the processes by which discursively constructed subject positions are taken up (or otherwise) by concrete persons' fantasy identifications and emotional 'investments'" (2004: 94). Therefore, the very concept of identity entails an idea of instability and fluctuation, since not only do identities emerge "within the play of specific modalities of power" (Hall 2000: 17), but, given that meaning is never completed, they also become "a 'cut' or snap-shot of unfolding meanings" (Barker 2002: 109).

3. Men's magazines and problem pages in Britain

Following Edwards's classification of the current market of magazines focusing on men as their primary readers in the UK, a clear distinction can be established between "a list of fully style-conscious and self-conscious general-interest magazines aimed directly and overtly at a male readership" and "a gargantuan group of men's interest magazines which covertly target men as their primary readership including car, computing, photography, sport and technical titles" (1997: 72-73).[6] The general-interest periodicals —which are the object of this contribution— specialise in the masculine lifestyle. As Edwards adds, the so-called general-interest magazines for men have "a fixed targeting of single, affluent, city-dwelling, high-earning and high-spending, primarily heterosexual men" (*ibid*, 76). According to Mort's (1988: 211) initial market research, men's lifestyle magazines were launched for a target male reader of twenty-five to thirty-five years of age. Smith's (1996: 32) more recent research confirms this audience tendency, reporting that as many as 59% of the 25-to-34-year-olds regularly buy and read these magazines in the UK.

Although there is a strong tradition of special-interest magazines dating back to the 19th century in Britain, it was only in the mid-eighties that general-interest magazines started being published in the UK. After the appearance of *FHM* in 1985 and *Arena* in 1986, classical titles like *Sky (Magazine)* and *GQ* emerged during the late eighties. A number of widely read magazines continued this trend in the early nineties, including *Esquire* (1991), *Loaded* (1994) and *Maxim* (1994). Titles like *Stuff for Men*, *XL for Men*, *Later* or *ZM* were successfully launched during the late nineties, contributing to the consolidation of this print-media sector in the UK.

Apart from interviews with famous male icons and celebrities, men's magazines incorporate various features to do with sport, health and fitness, sex and women,

travel, art and menswear. Advertising is very prominent, with many pages dealing with male clothing and accessories, tobacco, alcohol and technology. In most of these publications, problem columns are a recurrent feature where male readers pose a wide range of questions on the masculine lifestyle. It is remarkable, however, that general studies about masculinity in the British men's magazine (Nixon 1996, 2001; Edwards 1997; Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001; Benwell 2003) have consistently neglected the analysis of this section, which is often acknowledged (cf. Thibault 1988; Moran 1989) as crucial to an analysis of identity representation and construction in lifestyle publications. Following the long-standing tradition of 'agony aunts' in women's magazines, counsellors offer readers advice about relationships with girlfriends and wives, emotional dilemmas, health and fitness, sexuality, body care and grooming, and masculine fashion. Since counselling columns first appeared in *The Athenian Gazette* in the late 17th century (Kent 1979: 1), the genre has tended to be associated with women and femininity. In particular, from the early 20th century onwards, the genre has been intertwined with women's magazines in "the form of the personalized letter and personalized answer" (Ballaster, Beetham, Frazer and Hebron 1991: 123). Nonetheless, with the advent of the men's magazine in the mid-eighties, problem columns have started to specialise in the masculine lifestyle.

4. Reading men's magazines as identity negotiation

As discussed above, a widely held view within contemporary cultural theory has come to see discourses as regulated systems of meanings of representations. Since Foucault introduced the notion of discourse to refer to "the practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1972: 49), discourses have tended to be understood as

> ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice: a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society. (Hall 1997: 6)

Cultural and discourse theorists admit the existence of 'gendered discourses' constituted in society by actually "positioning women and men in certain ways" (Sunderland 2004: 21). As substantiated by attempts to bridge the gap between linguistics and cultural studies like critical discourse analysis (e.g. Fairclough 1995), such abstract constructs as discourses are manifested in the actual genres that individuals draw upon in the course of their interactions as social subjects, and may be traced in tangible texts. Men's magazines have been described as "an important

site for the articulation of aspects of modern masculinity and addressal of the male consumer" (Benwell 2003: 6). Through the commodification of men's gender anxieties, these publications have been conceived of as "giving men the discursive resources to handle their changing circumstances and experiences" (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001: 156). So, along with other popular-culture genres including the advertising of fashion and toiletries for men, television soap operas or radio shows (cf. Edley and Wetherell 1995: 3-4), men's lifestyle magazines may be said to have a key influence in the representation, construction and circulation of various masculine subject positions and to map out what it means to be a man in the UK nowadays.

With these premises in mind it may be said that what differentiates media discourse genres from other kinds of discourse is the production of a special type of subject position labelled as 'ideal readers' —or viewers or listeners— with which actual media discourse consumers negotiate their own reading positions.[7] 'Negotiation' here refers to the discursive process whereby individuals take up, or resist, the systems of values and beliefs incorporated by specific subject positions. As Mills suggests, "individual subjects should not be simply seen to adopt roles which are mapped out for them by discourses; rather, they experience discomfort with certain elements implicit in discourses, they find pleasure in some elements, they are openly critical about others" (1997: 97). Thus, reading problem pages in such a media-discourse vehicle as men's magazines —problem pages included— entails an act of negotiation of individual readers' identity with the belief systems associated with the meaning of masculinity created by the magazines as textual products.[8] In other words, it is up to actual readers, "where the signifying system of the text intersects with the value system of the culture" (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery and Fiske 1994: 284), to decide whether they agree with or challenge the 'preferred reading' (cf. Watson and Hill 2005: 243) of content features, like problem pages published by the magazines' editorial boards as representative of men's lifestyle, anxieties and concerns.

5. Newmannism and laddishness at the crossroads in the magazines' problem pages

Within contemporary discourses on masculinity in Britain, so-called 'newmannism' has come to designate a masculine subject position "that, while acknowledging that men and the male role have now changed, is unclear about how and so indiscriminately scrambles together elements derived from both the 'nurturer' and 'narcissist' strands" (Beynon 2002: 164). Newmannism is often discussed as a discursive construct permeating men's magazines from their appearance in the mid-

eighties to the emergence of the new lad in the early nineties (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001: 1 *et passim*; Benwell; 2003: 13). As Edwards's (1997: 72-80) analysis reveals, throughout the eighties, the 'new man' was a prevailing image of masculinity in the features of the men's magazines' market, for instance, in *Arena*, *GQ* or *Esquire* among other titles.[9] In popular-culture genres like these, the new man took shape as a new kind of man who had come to terms with his traditionally neglected emotional dimension, and now showed greater attention to and respect for women's requirements and demands, and an unusual concern with his personal appearance:[10]

> New man represents the ideal partner for the modern, liberated, heterosexual woman. He is a softer, more sensitive and caring individual, who also avoids sexist language, changes nappies and loves to shop all day his own clothes. (Edley and Wetherell 1997: 204)

Newmannism has been seen as resulting, to a certain extent, from the impingement of second-wave feminism on men since the seventies, so that this new image of masculinity is argued to have been born in

> an attempt to resolve some of the obvious contradictions of the Classic Macho, to recognize and make peace with the feminine within itself, in response to feminist critiques [...]. If the old man was characterised by his abhorrence of all things female, the new man was invigorated by his enthusiastic embrace of female roles and qualities. (Chapman 1988: 227)

Admittedly, the figure is expected to comply with many of the requirements of the feminist movement, so that "this 'new man' is supposed to demonstrate a wider range of domestic involvements, a wider range of emotional responses and a greater willingness to criticize his own practices" (Hearn and Morgan 1990: 16).

Contrary to the generalised view of men's magazines analysts, an analysis of the questions that magazine editors select for publication in the problem pages examined in this paper reveals that, as late as 1999, the image of the new man was full of life in these publications. By way of example, a negotiation process is sometimes carried out between male readers who find it difficult to come to terms with the ideological apparatus of the sort of (pseudo)feminism endorsed by women, and counsellors who somehow validate such beliefs by promoting more nurturing attitudes in men. The following sample revolving around the social effects of ageing upon both men and women is illuminating in this respect. In fact, anxieties about ageing and personal appearance underlying questions like this are characteristic of the importance of the body "for modern people's sense of self-identity (their sense of who they are as understood in terms of their own embodied biography)" in late capitalist societies (Shilling 1997: 69):

> *Q. Despite being only 23, my girlfriend still maintains many of the prejudices of the proto-feminists. One such bias is that in our "lookist" society, women get a raw deal because they age quicker than men. Is this true?*
>
> *Simon Cook, London*
>
> *A. Yes and no. This theory, like many half-truths of folklore, does have a basis in medical fact. The male has more of the sex hormone, androgen, running around his system than the female and this makes his skin more resistant to ageing. This is coupled with the fact that a man's skin is usually oilier than a woman's, therefore more moist and less prone to falling apart. The result is that men do have a better deal than women in this area —but in the brave new dawn of genetic engineering, your fledgling feminist's daughter may well catch you up. JM.* (*GQ*, September 1999, p. 252)

Questions about conflict within relationships in the home repeatedly project this image of a man willing to satisfy his girlfriend's or wife's demands, and to embrace a great number of roles formerly associated with 'the feminine'. Excerpts like this may be highly indicative of the persistence, in contemporary British society, of what Abercrombie and Warde (2000: 7-8) regard as "cultural stereotypes of women [and men] as in, for example, the unequal distribution of housework, [and] in images of femininity which describe women as helpless and passive":[11]

> *Q: I live with my girlfriend and over the last few months we've been having huge arguments, usually started by her complaining that I always control what we watch on TV. I work hard and want to just sit and relax. Can we do anything to sort this out?*
>
> *THE EXPERT*
>
> *You can do something to sort this out. If you are sharing your life and living space with your partner there is bound to be conflict about who controls what and who feels they are making most of the sacrifices. You both need to realise that living together and making compromises means listening too and accepting the other person's point of view. If you don't you will end up being like two separate states at war and you might need to bring in the UN in the form of a relationship counsellor.* (*Later*, September 1999, p. 27)

Wider socio-cultural processes accounting for the emergence of narcissistic and self-centred selves —among both men and women— in modern western societies (cf. Lash 1980: 85-86; Giddens 1991: 171-179) similarly underlie various questions in the problem pages. The concern over and deeper preoccupation with the world of feelings emerges, by way of example, in questions where readers explore emotional dilemmas triggered when living in partnership. So, notwithstanding the "caring, sensitive and nurturing depiction of fatherhood" (Lazar 2000: 380) permeating popular-culture discourses on masculinity in present-day Britain, many questions revolve around the readers' difficulty in conforming to this fundamental feature of the new man, counsellors' replies often adopting an encouraging position in return.

> *Q: My girlfriend keeps dropping very unsubtle hints about her friends having babies, and keeps stopping to look in Mothercare when we go out shopping together. Part of me knows that this is the next step in our relationship, but I'm terrified.*
>
> *THE EXPERT*
>
> *Fathering a child can be seen as one of the most definitive acts which signals a man's maturity. A lot of men panic, thinking "I'm not ready yet", in a vain attempt to stop growing up. A surprisingly large number of men walk out of relationships within the first few months of the birth of their baby. There are many other aspects to the scenario —fear of failing as a father, fear of ageing, loss of other possible sexual partners, etc— but it all boils down to whether you have the courage to overcome this uncertainty, as there will never be a 'right' time to have a baby. To be able to overcome these fears is part of the growing process which changes us from lads to men.* (*Later*, September 1999, p. 26)

The new man's "attempt to express masculine emotional and sexual life [...] engaged in forms of compromise" (Rutherford 1988: 32) is not only manifested in men's relations with their girlfriends or wives, but also in other relations among men, for example, in the course of male friendships:

> *Q. My best mate has recently got a great job and I'm really jealous. What can I say to him?*
>
> *J S, Oxford*
>
> *A. Tell him that you want to feel pleased for him, but that you also feel very envious. If you can communicate that envy in terms of what you wish you had —rather than what a jammy git he is— then he's also less likely to feel quite so threatened or undermined. And by focusing on exactly what you envy about your mate's job, you can begin to look at ways to achieve the same for yourself.* (*ZM*, August/September 1999, p. 80)[12]

It has to be stressed that, along with the impact of second-wave feminism, the new man is often discussed as having come into existence as a result of the strong influence of consumerism upon men, which produced an unusual preoccupation with body care and male fashion: "what was distinctive about the 'new man' imagery [...] was the space it represented for the display of masculine sensuality, the sanctioning of a highly staged narcissism through the codes of dress and grooming" (Nixon 1996: 202). As a matter of fact, much of the early configuration of this image was articulated on the basis of men's representational practices in the advertising pages of men's magazines, so that "it was through the presentation of these menswear designs in popular representations that the 'new man' was often coded" (Nixon 1997: 295). At the end of the nineties, the new man image is still evoked recurrently in how-to features about grooming, and in advertising pages about menswear and accessories. Questions about personal looks and body care are similarly found in the magazines' problem columns on a regular basis, thereby positioning readers as active consumers:

> *Q. Ever since I hit 25 last year I've become aware of how knackered I look. My mates are the same age but could easily pass for younger, whereas my face has become saggy and tired-looking. My boss keeps teasing me and people quite often think I'm well into my thirties. I'm very conscious of my double-chin and jowls —are there any exercises I could do to firm up my face?*
>
> *TV, Northampton*
>
> *A. Your appearance has a lot to do with general well-being. A stressful lifestyle, poor sleeping and eating habits, too much booze and a lack of exercise have a hugely negative effect on how you look. Scrutinise your workload in relation to exercise, hobbies and social activities, and aim for a balance. Facial exercises will help in addition to cardiovascular workouts. Ensure you sleep at least six hours per night and eat a wholesome and varied diet.* (*FHM*, September 1999, p. 304)

Samples like this evince the importance of personal appearance in contemporary societies, where

> the state of the body is seen as a reflection of the state of its owner, who is responsible for it and could refashion it. The body could be taken as a reflection of the self because it can and should be treated as something to be worked upon, and generally worked upon using commodities, for example intensively regulated, self-disciplined scrutinized diets, fitness regimes, fashion, self-help books and advice. (Slater 1997: 92)

This is a well documented trend characteristic of modern societies like Britain, where "the individual's intense investment in commodity culture is explicable to the degree that his or her identity [...] is negotiated in large part through consumption" (Jagose 2003: 113). Thus, questions about menswear and male fashion abound to such an extent that titles like *GQ* have developed a special section on 'Style Counsel' for a readership assumed to need expert advice in this area:

> *Q. I am a bit confused about the correct time to wear short or long socks. I understood that long socks were for formal wear and short socks reserved for sports wear only. Which is correct?*
>
> *Andrew Pennington, London E1*
>
> *A. Short socks are a worry. Generally disdained, short socks should only be worn for real sporting activities: otherwise, the archaically named "full hose" (ie, just below the knee) are for general use. This way, men can avoid the unattractive NHG (Nasty Hairy Gap) associated with badly trained TV personalities.* (*GQ*, August 1999, p. 168)

At any rate, it should not be forgotten that, by the early nineties, new versions of masculinity started to be promoted from the pages of a new generation of men's lifestyle magazines including *Loaded*, *Maxim* or *Stuff for Men*, where the so-called 'new lad' had started to elbow his way forward. As discussed by Edwards (1997),

Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks (2001) and Benwell (2003), the certain 'feminisation' and loss of traditional male values by the new man contributed to a re-creation of hegemonic and patriarchal masculine values, very much in response to the aura of newmannism which had invaded men's magazines over the eighties.

To move on, then, from the longer-standing constructions of newmannism, to the new 'laddish' discourses on masculinity: they were seen to partake of

> a male culture which may be seen as a reaction to the idea of the caring, sensitive 'new man' produced by the feminist movement. So laddism is characterised by a climate of rough behaviour, excessive drinking ('lager louts') and all-male attendance at soccer matches. (Storry and Childs 1997: 338)

This image of masculinity, which some theorists like Rutherford have labelled as 'retributive man' represents "the struggle to reassert a traditional masculinity, a tough independent authority" (1988: 32). As maintained by Edwards in his analysis of the evolution of men's magazines in the nineties, "the success of *Loaded* has led other titles to drift increasingly towards using New Laddism, as opposed to narcissistic New Mannism, as a means of selling magazines" (1997: 81). In addition to the new titles, that appeared in the past decade, the new lad pervaded the features of other magazines like *Sky Magazine*, *FHM*, *GQ* or *Arena*, which had been loyal to the newmannist project in the eighties.[13] As a result, all of these titles ended up incorporating some of the most destructive and ruthless aspects of masculinity; hence, for example, the plethora of articles echoing aggressive and disruptive male behaviour in soccer matches; the value attached to sexual triumph as an indicator of virility; or the underlying homophobic attitudes in the humour and irony of many features.

An examination of men's magazines in the late nineties confirms that the image "of a riotous young man enjoying life to the full" (Beynon 2002: 164) has persisted and can be discerned in the questions and answers of many problem pages, as illustrated by the next instance from *Maxim* that delves into men's drinking practices:

> *Q: If I drink water between pints on a booze binge, will I get pissed slower or quicker?*
>
> *Charlie Squires, Essex*
>
> *A: The water makes little difference either way, according to Mark Bennett of Alcohol Concern. 'The amount of alcohol and the period of time determine how drunk you get. Nothing else'. Drinking water may reduce your speed and capacity but not the amount of alcohol in your body. You'll be in the bog more often too, which cuts boozing time. Bennett's advice is, 'Know how much you can drink before you start out —and stick to it. Use soft drinks to keep within your limits'.* (*Maxim*, October 1999, p. 202)

The image of a new man striving to cooperate with his partner in household chores and coming to terms with a historically uncared-for emotional dimension often coexists in the magazines with a community of lager louts celebrating the pleasures of sex with no strings attached and exhibiting purposefully neglected codes of menswear. This form of masculine identity "allows young men to return to the traditional pursuits of alcohol, sex and football" (Seidler 1997: 10). In Edwards's view, "where the New Man was caring and sharing the New Lad is selfish, loutish and inconsiderate to a point of infantile smelliness. He likes drinking, football and fucking and in that order of preference" (1997: 82). As the following excerpt from *Sky Magazine* exemplifies, this kind of laddishness is sometimes to be found in the form of parody in the problem columns of some magazines, side by side with the would-be new men seeking advice in a cultural artefact traditionally associated with women and femininity:

> *Dear Karen,*
>
> *Since I was six my grandfather has been sexually abusing me, and now I'm 18, I'm starting to enjoy it. I'm trying to get into a relationship with my best friend at school. He's not gay but how can I convert him?*
>
> *BS, Newquay*
>
> *Can you spell "therapy"? You need professional help. No shit, Sherlock. Trying to convert someone to being gay is as smart as trying to convert someone to being straight. Honey, get on the phone to the Samaritans and get yourself sorted. As for that grandfather, gimme a gun. Actually, how dare you write in with a real problem! Write to someone cuddly next time. One of those fat, ugly women's mag people.* (*Sky Magazine*, March 1999, p. 146)

At the end of the nineties, problem columns like 'Dear Karen' in *Sky Magazine* come to herald the ideological apparatus of laddishness by means of the apparently inoffensive humour of its questions and answers —probably created in an artificial way.[14] In this particular magazine a role inversion is implemented between an exaggeratedly 'masculinized' female counsellor and the male readers at whom she pokes fun because of their lack of manhood and often effeminate attitudes. As the sample below shows, readers are often invited to engage in practices of "heavy drinking, drug-taking and riotous behaviour" (Beynon 2002: 162) and return to "traditional masculine values of sexism, exclusive male friendship and homophobia" (Benwell 2003: 13) mapping out laddish subject positions:

> *Dear Karen*
>
> *I'm desperate to shag this 22-year-old. I know her very well and we are good friends, though I've fancied her since day one. She has huge tits. But I'm worried if I make a pass and she doesn't like it, she'll hit me.*

Adam, Manchester

Your problem is that you want a fuck but don't have the balls to ask. Christ, I've never seen such a wimp. Pussy does not spill out of those little gumball machines at the mall, you know. (If it did, I'd own a few.) You have to risk your arse to get some —that's the law. So, yellow-belly, why not take her for a drink and then say you fancy her? You know, in a few years you'll look back on this and think, "All that fuss over a pair of tits that aren't even attached to an offshore bank account and a bag of drugs". (*Sky Magazine*, September 1999, p. 163)

Moreover, the "post-permissive heterosexual script of 'cars, girls, sport and booze'" (Nixon 2001: 381) characterizing the representations of the new lad in the men's magazines' sector throughout the nineties emerges again and again in questions about sport and fitness featuring in the problem column of titles like *FHM*. The following sample illustrates this tendency, which is consistent with broader socio-cultural processes in Western societies regarding the body as a historically specific medium through which identity is produced and presented. As Benson maintains, in addition to the positive evaluation of thinness and the highly negative view of body fat, "in the last ten or fifteen years or so, this has been joined by ideas of hardness and muscularity, not just for men but also for women" (1997: 127):

Q. How long does it take to become unfit? I have a couple of friends who continue to exercise regularly if they feel ill, but I know others who stop until they feel better. Both parties say they are doing the correct thing —so which is the best route to follow in order to stay fit?

RA, West Sussex

A. It is essential to be healthy when exercising, so avoid training when you have a cold, are injured or feel unwell. To decrease the regression ("losing fitness") rate, particularly when you are unwell for a long period, "active recovery" will help maintain your pre-injury fitness. This means being active, but in a pain-free way (see "The Comeback Trail", right). And finally, the rule of thumb for regression is that it takes a third of the time it took you to build your fitness up as it does to lose it. (AL) (*FHM*, July 1999, p. 10)

Nonetheless, a tension between newmannism and laddishnes has to be acknowledged in the discourse of men's general-interest magazines in the UK in the late nineties. The examples above make it clear that, in 1999, titles like *FHM* incorporated problem pages which could sometimes be located within the boundaries of new man discourses and, sometimes, within more laddish repertoires. In addition, as many questions in the problem columns reveal, readers striving to hold on to laddish self-centredness encounter replies that inculcate more newmannist attitudes and patterns of conduct. The result in many questions is the projection of "a would be New man who can't quite shake off his out-moded, but snug fitting, laddishness" (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001: 35). The

following extract dealing with a man's anxiety over fathering for fear of losing his libido, and the counsellor's recommendation of more nurturing attitudes, is highly representative of this trend. In point of fact, questions like this shed light on the, so to speak, selfishness and individualism so valued in high modernity (Giddens 1991: 74 and *passim*) and, consequently, the conflicts and tensions (Woodward 1997: 23) experienced by individuals having to negotiate their identities in different aspects of their lives:

> *Q. My wife is pregnant with our first child and I don't want to be in the delivery room when it pops out —the thought makes me feel sick, and I'm sure it would murder my sex drive. Got any good excuses I can use?*
>
> *BH. Portsmouth*
>
> *A. This is a common fear among men, but not always a rational one. "Your sexuality is not that delicate", says Frank Pittman, a marriage and family therapist who thinks it's going to take more than a slippery placenta to destroy your sex drive. His advice: take a front-row seat. "The more involved you are at the beginning of the process, the sooner and stronger the connection will be between father and child", says Pittman, a trifle optimistically. But if you think you may be particularly squeamish, make sure you don't hang around at the business end —make yourself useful by mopping your wife's brow or, better still, holding her hand and letting her crush yours when the going gets tough. Oh, and ignore all the abuse she'll throw at you for causing all the pain.* (*Men's Health*, July/August 1999, p. 97)

6. Concluding remarks

As discussed in sections 1 and 5, in the view of men's magazines analysts (i.e. Nixon 1996, 2001; Edwards 1997; Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001; Benwell 2003), the image of the new man featured prominently in titles like *Face*, *GQ* or *Arena* during the mid- and late eighties, but, from the early nineties onwards, this subject position died out as a result of the 'colonising' effect of laddishness from new magazines like *Loaded* or *Maxim*. In line, then, with the arguments outlined above on the evolution of the men's magazine, the colonising effect entailed the replacement of newmannism with a new laddish orientation in titles that displayed newmannist images during the previous decade.

However, the present study of problem pages in 1999 reveals that *both* subject positions on masculinity were still flourishing in men's lifestyle magazines at the end of the last decade. Although analyses of the men's magazine in Britain have insisted on the vanishing of newmannist representations of masculinity in the early nineties, the coexistence of both laddishness *and* newmannism in problem columns as late as 1999 proves to be an indicator of the permanency of both subject

positions in these publications at the turn of the millennium. The examples included herein have been selected as representative of a tendency whereby titles like *GQ, ZM* or *Later* evidence a more newmannist orientation in contrast to the aura of laddishness manifested in magazines like *Sky Magazine* or *Maxim*.[15] Nevertheless, at times, a tension between both subject positions may be identified throughout the problem pages of *Men's Health*, *FHM* and, to a lesser extent, *Maxim*. It is significant that, in some of these magazines, the new man is projected in articles about committed fathering and in lists for improving looks, while the new lad emerges in light-hearted articles about sexual paradises for holiday-makers, usually accompanied by semi-pornographic pictures of female models. It is hardly surprising in this respect that male commodities like toiletries, scent or menswear are advertised as much as beer and spirits in these magazines. In any case, it is precisely the continuance of trends initiated almost two decades ago that needs drawing attention to in a study about the men's magazine at the end of the nineties, since —at least as far as problem pages are concerned— this finding calls into question previous approaches to the evolution of these publications in the UK.

Men's magazines have had a key role in both representing and constructing these versions of masculinity. From a historical viewpoint, the very birth of a new magazine market centred upon the masculine lifestyle is significant of the changing gender identities and relations in contemporary Britain. In contrast to the long tradition of women's magazines dating back to the eighteenth century, men's general-interest magazines did not appear until the mid-eighties. For, traditionally, patriarchal constructions of masculinity had prevented men from engaging in the practices of self-consciousness manifested in the life-style magazine. Echoing the trade debates in the British magazine sector before the first men's magazines started being published, Nixon (1996: 129) quotes a 'state of play' article by Simon Marquis in *Campaign* (26/7/1985: 37), a daily forum for media practitioners in the UK:

> While women become "friends" with their magazines there is an inbuilt male resistance to the idea of a magazine that makes public and shares ideas about being a man. To men it is an unacceptable contradiction. Self-consciousness is permissible, even attractive, in a woman; it is perceived as weak and unmanly in a man.

The social circumstances of the past few decades —including the feminist challenges, the impact of consumer cultures on men or the shifts in gender relations in the workplace or the home— triggered what scholars like Petersen (1998: 1) describe as 'the masculine crisis of identity'. Moreover, the rise of narcissistic, individualistic selfishness characterising exchange relations in late capitalist societies like Britain (Giddens 1991: 148; McGuigan 1999: 90), the impact upon individuals of the competitiveness inherent to modern social formations, or the

perception of bodies as a medium through which identity messages are transmitted, should not be disregarded as an element that forged men's —and women's— selves in the end of the millennium context. Indeed, men's magazines were born as cultural artefacts which offered men "a form of constructed certitude, providing a sense of reassurance amid all of men's contemporary uncertainties and anxieties" (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001: 146).

The act of reading problem columns in these lifestyle magazines may be conceived of as providing male readers with access to masculine subject positions with a certain referential value for their masculine identities, no matter whether they are taken up or resisted. McLoughlin underlines that "magazines are a means of presenting ideal-reader images to which the purchaser can aspire" (2000: 95), so that, in reading problem pages in these publications, magazines consumers are placed in a position where they are challenged to temporarily identify with the discursive repertoires of the new man, the new lad and their borderline tensions. Problem pages consumers are treated as ideal readers sharing the concerns of the men enquiring about looks, relations within the couple, emotional dilemmas, fathering anxieties, sex, drinking, and so on. Focusing on the sister-genre of women's magazines, Caldas-Coulthard highlights that ideal readers are "at the same time both produced and in a sense imprisoned by the text" (1996: 250). As the samples above reveal, the readers of problem columns in men's magazines are similarly located across shifting subject positions. Through intermediate spaces, these range from identification with newmannist concerns about personal appearance and emotional issues to playful mockery of the genre concealing sexist, homophobic and loutish attitudes typical of laddish ideological constructs. In assuming that actual readers partake of the lifestyle issues raised by the men drawing upon these counselling sections, men's magazines "invite readers to take up identity positions which may change from page to page, and which often conflict" (Matheson 2005: 59). There is plenty of scope, beyond the remit of this paper, for detailed sociological and ethnographic research on the impact of these publications upon the perceived personal identities of their male consumers in Britain.

Notes

[1]. Further titles in the men's magazines' sector (e.g. *Arena*, *Esquire*, *Loaded* or *Stuff for Men*) have not been taken into consideration on the grounds of their lack of problem columns —at least during the specified period when this type of publications was examined.

[2]. Hall (1997: 2) maintains that "primarily, culture is concerned with the production and the exchange of meanings — the 'giving and taking of meaning'— between the members of a society or group". As du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay and Negus put it, objects become cultural artefacts as soon as they acquire meaning and can be made sense of; so that "this bringing of the object *into* meaning is what constitutes it as a *cultural artefact*" (1997: 10). Thus, the problem page has a 'textual' nature not only *qua* written-language message, but also —similarly to other 'texts' (e.g. images, sounds, objects and activities) conceived of from a cultural studies perspective— because it is a genre that "generates meaning through signifying practices" (Barker 2004: 199).

[3]. For general overviews of the field, including different approaches, see, for example, Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler (1992), During (1993), Inglis (1993), Munns and Rajan (1995), Hall (1996), Storey (1996), Baldwin, Longhurst, Smith, McCracken and Ogborn (1999), Barker (2000, 2002), Lewis (2002), Sardar and van Loon (2004) or McRobbie (2005).

[4]. Recent work on identity within cultural studies includes Wetherell (1996), Hall and du Gay (1996), Woodward (1997), Weedon (2004), etc.

[5]. Grossberg is quoting forthcoming work by John Frow and Meaghan Morris here.

[6]. A number of supposedly more specific magazines regularly include features to do with the masculine lifestyle; that is the case of men's fashion magazines like *i-D*, or health and sports magazines such as *Men's Health*.

[7]. Ideal readers are constructed by media discourse genres that "assume the existence of groups that may not actually exist as groups within society and, by addressing themselves to these groups, create a shared ideology" (Reah 1998: 35).

[8]. Connell offers this definition of the term: "'masculinity', to the extent the term can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture" (1995: 71). Together with other variables like age, class or ethnicity, gender identity in general, and masculinity in particular, may be regarded as "given parameters and boundaries within which we create our own identities" (Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz 1982: 1).

[9]. As discussed below in this section, according to Edwards (1997), most of these titles adopted a laddish personality in the nineties. However, this study will demonstrate that, at the end of the nineties, many of these magazines —and new titles like *Later* or *ZM*— incorporated *both* ideological repertoires on masculinity.

[10]. As happens with 'new lad' and 'laddishness', 'new man' and 'newmannism' are terms interchangeably used in the literature on masculinity (cf. Nixon 1996; Edwards 1997, Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001). Strictly speaking, the so-called new man and new lad are to be taken as mere images of masculinity represented in various cultural artefacts in the UK. Newmannism and laddishness —or laddism— may be regarded as wider subject positions articulated around such images in the

discourses on masculinity constructed in contemporary British popular-culture genres. As explored by Nixon (1996: 202; 1997: 327), images like the new man or the new lad designate 'regimes of representation', whereas the corresponding subject positions (i.e. newmannism, laddishness) involve further ideological repertoires positioning individuals as social subjects when they participate in the discourses where such subject positions are constituted. With regard to du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay and Negus's (1997: 3-5) 'circuit of culture', the new man or the new lad may be best associated with the practices of cultural representation in society, and newmannism or laddishness with those of identity construction.

[11]. Given the length of the samples from the problem pages, including a larger number of illustrative examples would have resulted in an exceedingly long paper. Moreover, clipping the texts or incorporating questions would have only meant missing a full appreciation of how reader-counsellor interactions contribute to projecting identity models amongst readers.

[12]. Further comments could be made in samples like this concerning the competitiveness of capitalist exchange relations in fields like the workplace, and the 'stresses and strains' (Giddens 1991: 185-186) consequently undergone by individuals.

[13]. As Edwards highlights describing this shift in the nineties, "in particular, *GQ* and *Arena*, as previously the least gratuitously sexist of all the titles, now endlessly splash topless models amongst the advertising for designer suits; whilst *For Him Magazine*, desperately seeking increased circulation, sells free glimpses of the new Pirelli calendar and incorporates a separate letters page specifically for stories of lager-induced urinating incidents!" (1996: 81).

[14]. Problem pages in men's magazines may be expected to be subject to the same editorial practice echoed by McCracken (1993: 57) with regard to the sister genre of women's magazines, whereby original questions are often manipulated — even artificially created— to be consistent with the magazines' ideological policy.

[15]. For detailed quantitative analyses and individual case studies, see de Gregorio-Godeo (2003, 2006).

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WORDSWORTH'S "TINTERN ABBEY" AND THE TRADITION OF THE "HYMNAL" ODE[1]

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In Memoriam

Wordsworth's "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* claims for "greater simplicity" and the representation of "elementary feelings" (60)[2] without the "gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers" (59) are commonly taken to constitute the principal poetics of naturalness, emotional immediacy as well as the primitivist originality of Rousseauvian Romanticism. According to John F. Danby, Wordsworthian "simplicity is an invitation to a new intimacy, a new discipline, and a new complexity" (Danby 1968: 26). This complexity is represented not only in the ideology that Wordsworth's works advocate but also in the form that the poet chose to communicate ideas to his readers. In the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800, Wordsworth seemed to see the necessity to add an explanatory note to "Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey. On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798": "I have not ventured to call this Poem an Ode; but it was written with a hope that in the transitions, and the impassioned music of the versification, would be found the principal requisites of that species of composition".

By negation Wordsworth introduces the generic form of the ode, and characterises it by means of its typical "transitions" as well as "the impassioned music of the versification". Wordsworth's familiarity with the "species of composition" of the

ode reflects his reading of the major odes of the mid-century. In the "Preface" he commended Collins who, by Romantic poets, was universally associated with the ode and whose rare first edition of *Several Descriptive and Allegoric Subjects* (1746) Wordsworth possessed.[3] In his 1793 "Remembrance of Collins" he imitated the poet's *Ode on the Death of Mr Thomson*. Clearly, Wordsworth was aware of the (generic and ideational) distinctness of "Tintern Abbey"; at the same time, he utilised conventions that were used by Collins but modified them significantly in his poem so that —while giving voice to his cult of Nature— the classical Hellenism that inspired Collins was no longer discernible.

Collins's odes had not developed a "religion of nature" (Piper 1962: 60) as Wordsworth's poems did, but he embedded his personifications in a framework of myth that enabled him to build, in the form of the ode, a sublime setting in which his speakers invoked the central deities of the compositions.[4] While Collins invoked emanations of Goddess Natura, Wordsworth provided a personalised version of this all-comprising deity which was not defined in mythological terms. Yet, even Wordsworth attributes a mysticism to Nature that Collins saw as an inherent aspect of his deities.

Wordsworth's association of his poem with the genre of the ode is unavoidable since the ode —most prominently since the mid-eighteenth century, and especially through the renewed interest in Longinus and John Dennis's treatise on the sublime— is a lyric genre that deals with the sublime, the superhuman, supernatural, and the divine. Collins had already left behind the encomiastic function that seventeenth-century odes —especially music odes— had utilised, and Wordsworth does not revive this function, either. Kurt Schlüter demonstrated in *Die englische Ode: Studien zu ihrer Entwicklung unter Einfluß der antiken Hymne* that the structure of Collins's hymnal odes consisted of three distinct parts: (i) the initial invocation of the deity, (ii) the 'pars epica', a narrative part dedicated to providing information (mythological or contextual) on the deity and its importance for the speaker, and (iii) a petition, usually, for inspiration. Schlüter considered the invocation as the most important part, since it established the relationship between speaker and deity; for that reason, he does not consider "Tintern Abbey" a hymnal ode, arguing that the manner of Wordsworth's encounters with the divine is essentially different from the experience of the mythical gaze, despite his utilising the word *vision* (see Schlüter 1964: 182).[5] He concedes, however, that there are features in Wordsworth's particular way of experiencing the divine which in their representation stand in a relationship of tension with the hitherto known form of the ode (Schlüter 1964: 181).[6] Groundbreaking though it was —and still the best history of the English ode— his study aimed to trace the history of the hymnal ode by means of concentrating on the major representatives. Recent research, as well as the revision of the poetic canon, reflects a new interest in those authors hitherto ignored or

neglected. In that respect, it must be acknowledged that the hymnal ode lived on after the publication of Collins's and Gray's odes but that the strict formula that Schlüter introduced was at times translated into a tripartite structure of strophe — antistrophe— epode, while others applied a reductivist poetics and held that the hymnal invocation was the only essential component part of the ode (see Jung 2006).

In Wordsworth's use of the genre of the ode the Thou-I relationship of traditional hymnal odes in which the speaker depreciates his own identity by apostrophising the "Thou" is inverted into the Romantic constellation of I-Thou. There are brief invocations in "Tintern Abbey" of "sylvan Wye" which, however, are integrated in the long contemplative passages of recollection.

Wordsworth primarily used the *pars epica* not to describe the deity but himself in order to put into context the lengthy recollections of the speaker's experiences and sensations. One of the central topics for Wordsworth is that of recollection; the spontaneous response to the power of Nature that he may have felt when first visiting Tintern Abbey could have been uttered by means of a hymnal apostrophe; recollection, however, is a process that has already used the synthesising (inspiring) qualities that a successful petition would have conferred on him. Through his central emphasis on recollection, therefore, Harold Bloom argues, "Wordsworth so mystifies memory as to make it the one great myth of his antimythological poetry" (Bloom 1985: 113), thereby introducing mythic qualities that are inherent in the hymnal tradition. In that regard, "Tintern Abbey" "becomes more memory than spiritual or imaginative renovation" (Bloom 1985: 116). The poem adopts the epic features that Pindar's Epinician odes possessed, as well as the modal correlations that were introduced in the long poem and will, later in Wordsworth's career, be employed in *The Prelude*. Unlike Pindar or Collins, however, Wordsworth does not represent the history of heroes (Pindar) or the aretalogy of his personifications (Collins), but is more concerned with a desire to re-narrate his own history, the history of his mental and poetic growth. In doing so, the *pars epica* in "Tintern Abbey" is transformed into an autobiographical recollection of his visit to the abbey while at the same time redefining the ode as a Romantic lyric genre that no longer requires the superior deity in order for the speaker to be granted the petition that is usually the subject of the apostrophe. Rather than seeing "Tintern Abbey" as a failed hymnal ode, it represents a decisive alternative to the mythological odes of the mid-century; Alastair Fowler, writing about genre, insists that generic "features are often characteristic through their absence" (Fowler 1982: 73). And in Wordsworth's poem the striking absence of the invocational petition —the central address of the deity— is silently taken for granted and echoed in his mention of Nature as his personal guide, guardian and mother, functions that Collins (similarly, if more hesitantly) attributed to Goddess Natura in his odes.

The title mention of Wordsworth's "revisiting the banks of the Wye" indicates that his composition draws on the memory of a past visit and combines this —through imaginative synthesis— with his present visit to the abbey. The force of "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth "Preface": 62) is translated into durable (and artful) form. His technique of recollecting and reconstructing the past through transforming a transient, unstable, and fragmented memory of past impressions into a lasting memory that functions as the backbone of Wordsworth's (moral) well-being and identity as a poet appears not to be based on a plan other than Wordsworth's immediate response to revisiting Tintern Abbey. It is, therefore, an impression of immediacy and spontaneity that he wants to create. Wordsworth's imagination does not merely recollect the past, but refines both the memory as well as the sensations first experienced. Although, as Mary Jacobus argues, the process of recollection concentrates the "beautifully controlled movement of the verse" with the "mood" (Jacobus 1976: 48) of "tranquil restoration", thereby assuming that Wordsworth only serves as mouthpiece of his imagination, she realises at the same time that this process of translating thoughts and memories into writing requires some ordering of ideas, associations, connectives and transitions which reflect the artistry of Wordsworth's poem. Michael Mason further helpfully reminds the reader that "Tintern Abbey" "was not written confronting the scene it describes or even 'composed' there. [...] The date furnished in the title confirms the Fenwick note, as this was the day on which Wordsworth returned with Dorothy from his walking tour of the summer of 1798" (Mason 1994: 205).

The "introspective recall" that is so central to Wordsworth's recollection of past experience is reflected in his "rhythms of thought —associative exploratory, fluctuating in and out of the present" (Jacobus 1976: 50). The poet uses the fragmentary and elusive qualities of the ode to bridge the conflict between original experience and recollected experience; this experience, through the process of poetic composition, becomes "durable" and "permanent". Steven Knapp is certainly right, in that regard, that the necessity to order the elements of memorable experience that constitute the hymnal *pars epica* can only be achieved through reflection, for "only in the tranquil perspective of a later moment can the unwarranted excitement of the original experience be recognised as an index of the mind's transcendence through illusion of supernatural circumstances" (Knapp 1985: 108). Marshall Brown reads "Tintern Abbey" in terms of the poet's construction of experiential and imaginative growth and, in his reading, traces "an interpretation of empiricism" in which "Wordsworth recomposes the genesis of his current maturity" (Brown 1993: 40).

Wordsworth successfully creates the impression that the reader is tracing his progress over the five years that have elapsed since the poet's last visit to the abbey. When Wordsworth visited Tintern Abbey for the first time, his perception of the

environment was synchronic, focusing on the individual "spots of time". In order to achieve coherence within the *pars epica* of his odic composition he needs to synthesise these "spots of time" by means of an artificial sequence. The diachronic progress of the *pars epica*, however, need not necessarily be authentic or logical; rather, it makes use of transitions and digressions, elements so characteristic of the ode since Cowley and anticipates what F. W. Bateson, dealing with the later poetry of Wordsworth, discusses in terms of the egotistical sublime (see Bateson 1954: 150-153). This Wordsworthian "emphasis on the special nature of art-activity" (Williams 1983: 36), despite his centring on his own mental growth, is a prominent feature of Collins's odes, too, where the speaker describes his quest in search of poetic inspiration to translate his creative energy into Coleridge's "esemplastic power" (see Jung 2005).

The narrated time (*erzählte Zeit*) of "Tintern Abbey" comprises five years, which are alternately termed "Five years" and "five summers", relating again to Wordsworth's personal growth from a rationalist to a devotee of Nature who perceives and understands even time only by means of reference to the seasons and natural change. While the deity-personifications that are used in the hymnal odes of Collins had been part of the mythological machinery for thousands of years, Wordsworth's experience is not embedded within the mythological context of antiquity but in that of the myth of Nature and his desire to be to her prophet. Importantly, and that is a further difference from Collins, "Wordsworth adds another dimension to the dimensions of space and the dimension of time, for he presents the scene to us as interpenetrated with human feeling" (Durant 1970: 88). Rather than providing a linear progression of time in the *pars epica*, however, the poet's dealing with time appears to be circular, for as Charles Sherry observes, "the landscape remembered in bitter times in the city is a restorative; it is a source of freedom from the harshness of life, not that it enables him to escape it, but that it prevents him from succumbing to it" (Sherry 1980: 98). Yet, even after his (imaginative) return to Tintern Abbey through the fictionalised permanence of the completed *pars epica* Wordsworth will have to return home, for his life does not end with the end of the poem. Unlike Collins's speaker, Wordsworth's does not inhabit the environment that Collins's deities do; it may, therefore, be argued that they and their spirituality permeate the landscape, whereas Wordsworth —through the association of "Tintern Abbey" with the hymnal ode tradition— hopes to gain the sense of permanence for which Collins's speaker strives continuously. Collins, however, aims to achieve a union with the emanations of Goddess Natura while Wordsworth, through his recollective capacity, is self-contained and reworks external impressions internally.

The sublime, frequently considered as the prerequisite and defining feature of the ode, is representationally reflected in Wordsworth's descriptions of the natural

environment at the abbey, that is, the "steep and lofty cliffs" (l. 5) which appear to be implanted into this "wild secluded scene" (l. 6). Wordsworth hopes that in this solitude of sublimity he will be able to find the "absolute essence of truth and feeling" (Hazlitt 1960: 86). In that respect, Wordsworth, as William Hazlitt suggested, "takes the simplest elements of nature and of the human mind, the mere abstract condition inseparable from our being, and tries to compound a new system of poetry from them" (Hazlitt 1960: 87).

Apart from the need for Wordsworth to find a place of "more deep seclusion" (l. 7), he aims to conquer his anxiety. Paradoxically, seclusion and solitude enable him to hold communion with Nature as well as relieve his anxiety and fear of forgetting. Drawing on the images of the "Immortality" ode he suggests that it is through recollection that he can bring back impressions and feelings long forgotten. The "utter nakedness" of forgetfulness and its disintegrating characteristics are counteracted by his self-assertive act of recollection. In that regard, Bernard Groom comprehends "Tintern Abbey" as "a panoramic vision of the power of the remembered landscape working under the surface in a mind perplexed with five years of inward conflict; and, by implication, a record of the creative instinct triumphing over the forces of disintegration (see Groom 1966: 33). In other words, Wordsworth's speaker in his hymn on Nature and his account of his own growth resolves (at least temporarily) the "threat of a loss of vitality and happiness" that Michael Mason considers as the "groundwork" of "Tintern Abbey" (Mason 1994: 206).

The dialogic structure that is indicated formally through the invocation and the petition is alluded to at the beginning of the poem where Wordsworth uses an interjective opening which, as is later revealed through his address of the Wye, is addressed to the river rather than being what Bateson understands as a "reverie".[7] As in the case of Collins who used metonymy frequently, Wordsworth conceives of the Wye as an emanation of the force of Nature. In that respect the repetition of "once again" (l. 4) in line 14 emphasises the personal relationship of the speaker with Nature. The paratactical syntax employs "again" several times to depict the speaker's unchangeable delight at beholding again what he had already seen five years before. In fact, the scene that Wordsworth is so eager to establish in terms of the picturesque is not real, but derives from those images that he has stored in his memory and which are then combined and perfected by his imagination.

Thomas de Quincey, focusing on the central importance of Nature for Wordsworth and the poet's association of Nature with universal memory, observes that Wordsworth existed only "through his commerce with nature" (de Quincey 1960: 40). In the imaginatively conjured environment of Tintern Abbey, the speaker is able to experience "long months of ease and undisturbed delight" (Wordsworth *Prelude*: 1: 26) which in reality were originally —that is, on the occasion of his

actual visit— no more than a "few passing moments" (Moorman 1957: 403). His measuring of time is influenced by his emotions and is therefore imaginatively prolonged. Rather than embedding his narrative within the mythical *pars epica* of Collins's odes, the mythological machinery becomes unimportant and is replaced by Wordsworth's authority to evoke (and create) a world of memory, thereby achieving what Collins's speakers did not.[8] The internalisation of memories and their metamorphosing recollection are seen as ways out of the dilemma of cultural progressivism. Pessimistically, however, Wordsworth is aware that he will ultimately have to return to society and to adopt his social function again. Mark Foster comments on the metaphor of the hermit that the poet assumes in his imaginative "reveries" and remarks that the hermit "represents not simply transcendence or any achieved realisation, but rather an ideal of decisive action and coherent relation" (Foster 1986: 85), a harmony that Wordsworth attempts to establish through his response to Nature; his speaking authority, as has already been indicated, ought therefore to be understood as his version of the fulfilment that Collins gained (in uncertain terms) through his invocations.

The recollection of memories and the translations of them into "reveries" enable Wordsworth to experience "sensations sweet" (l. 27) (see Jung 2003: 36-43). In that regard, recollective introspection produces a pleasing and soothing effect on him, which he feels "in the blood" but also "along the heart" (l. 28). The memory of these scenes has become essential to his being:

> These beauteous forms,
> Through a long absence, have not been to me
> As is a landscape to a blind man's eye. (ll. 22-24)

The result of the experience of "sensations sweet" is the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" which, he notes in the "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*,

> takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till [...] the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself exist in the mind. (62)

His "purer mind" (l. 29), that is, the place where all impressions and sensations are collected, collated and imaginatively purified, becomes the instrument of "tranquil restoration"; despite its epistemological inaccuracy, this recollected result of "tranquil restoration" —with its central component of the imagination— "reveals an important kind of truth" (Bowra 1966: 7). Wordsworth, in that regard, confesses that he owes "this blessed Mood" (l. 37) to Nature who helps him to cope with "the heavy and the weary weight / Of all this unintelligible world" (ll. 39-40). In other words, sublimation of mundane life is effected by means of

imaginative processes. It is this form of mental (imaginative) escapism that has helped the speaker to withstand the "fever of the world."

"Tintern Abbey" poetically argues for Nature's ability to calm and soothe the human mind by providing the necessary impressive stimuli that are, in turn, reworked by the poet's imagination. It is these stimuli that reveal "amongst fields and mountains a substitute religion" (Willey 1950:272) to Wordsworth. Nature possesses a therapeutic character and assists Wordsworth in softening his *Zivilisations-Klaustrophobie* (see Göller 1963: 343). Nature's goodness is expressed in her "healing thoughts / Of tender joy" (ll. 144-145) which act like a balm on the poet's strained sensibility. As a "worshipper of Nature" (l. 152) Wordsworth is confident that Nature will not forget him to whom "these steep woods and lofty cliffs / And this green landscape [are] / More dear, both for themselves and for thy [Nature's] sake!" (ll. 157-159). This confidence and trust in Nature satisfy the poet "that he can get all the wisdom he needs from the world of nature as revealed by the senses" (Durant 1970: 104).

Nature, Wordsworth notes, is the "anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse, / The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul / Of all my moral being" (ll. 109-111). Nature is no longer assigned the role of a superior being (as Collins did to Goddess Natura) but is seen as part of Wordsworth, finding an emanation in Dorothy Wordsworth. He defines Nature by means of attributes that would usually have formed part of the aratological description of the deity in the hymnal ode but appropriates them to his own mental growth. The speaker understands the spirit of Nature as omnipresent and identifies it in the character of a companion who advises him on how to lead his life. In the poem it becomes less and less possible to know whom he is addressing: Logically, in line 114 he would still be addressing Nature; contextually, however, it can be inferred that he invokes Dorothy, creating a deliberate ambiguity that can similarly be found in Collins's odes. This is an instance of what Bateson comprehended as the "concessions to irrationality" and the "logical contradictions" of the poem (see Bateson 1954: 141, 142). The closeness of his relationship with this companion (Dorothy —but, grammatically, also Nature) is expressed in his emphatic interjection "my dearest Friend, / My dear, dear Friend" (ll. 115-116), an address that is reminiscent of the hymnal address, despite Wordsworth's breaking down of all differences of status by collapsing the mythological and unreachably divine character of Nature and by approximating his own existence to that of his "guardian" and "guide." The hitherto public odic character of "Tintern Abbey" is here inverted, too, by his turning to his sister and announces Wordsworth's shift "to a more private poetry" (Bateson 1954: 145). The interjective "Oh" then establishes without doubt that he is now addressing his sister, revealing that "prayer" (l. 121) will be rewarded by Nature, as "Nature never did betray / The heart that loved her" (ll. 122-123). In short,

> [Nature] can so inform
> The mind that is within us, so impress
> With quietness and beauty, and so feed
> With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
> Rash judgements, nor the sneers of selfish men,
> Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
> The dreary intercourse of daily life,
> Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
> Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold is full of blessings. (ll. 125-133)

With the aid of Nature, Wordsworth's memory reconstructs and newly creates "all sweet sounds and harmonies" (l. 142). Nature, too, "will undertake to teach the speaker to prevent the destruction and forgetfulness of his recollections" (Willey 1950: 272, 277). Or, in Susan C. Meisenfelder's words, "Nature taught him not by offering platitudinous moral systems but by guiding perception, eliciting feelings, by teaching him 'to see, to think, and feel'" (Meisenfelder 1988: 9). Then, that is, in the 1790s, "the exercise of his imagination was primarily a source of pleasure, mingled with a melancholy awareness that what was imagined had to remain a dream, a fancy of nothingness" (Christiansen 1988: 150). Reaching poetic maturity, however, the poet has succeeded in capturing the impressions of the past imaginatively and turned them into permanent and lasting reminders of the happiness he used to experience in his communion with Nature. With maturity Wordsworth has realised the true importance of memory and the imagination:

> For I have learned
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue. (ll. 88-93)

The dialectic of inevitable change and conjured permanence is central to "Tintern Abbey." Max Byrd, in that respect, speaks of the speaker's "shifting identities" (Byrd 1983: 26) and refers to his personal and artistic development. In a hymnal sense, what Willey terms the "divinization of Nature" (Willey 1950: 253) results in the poet comprehending Nature both as divine and his muse. There is no distinction between Nature's divinity and her functions as guardian and companion any more, and this marks the poet's innovation within the hymnal tradition. Through his address of Nature, Wordsworth looks for ways of "how to reestablish that parallel permanence, how to be reabsorbed into steadying interdependence" (Byrd 1983: 30). His imaginative reworking of the past "is not so much recollected

as created, as a speculative refuge from the pressure to realise oneself in poetry" (Foster 1986: 88).

Fred V. Randel argues that "Tintern Abbey" "is about living among ruins" (Randel 1993: 380). Wordsworth was living among the ruins of the awareness that his (actual) past was irreparably lost to him. He was eager to construct a state of mind which had not yet "establish[ed] an identity separate from the world around" (Byatt 1997: 162) it. In the process, he wanted to rid his mind of the awareness that he is a "prisoner of mortality" (Byatt 1997: 163). Referring to what Willey called the "divinization of Nature", Marjorie Levinson argues that one of the central points why Wordsworth may have decided to avoid writing specifically about Tintern Abbey in the poem may have been his wish to exclude religious, and more precisely Christian thought, from his poem (see Levinson 1986: 15). Levinson does not realise that, notwithstanding Wordsworth's resistance to call his poem "ode," he was in fact using and inverting some elements such as the invocation and the *pars epica* that Kurt Schlüter regarded as essential in the hymnal ode. That he did not adhere to the poetic practice of Collins can be explained with his different concerns: he was not a poet in search of a mythic gift of vision, but —possessed of Fancy— he succeeded in constructing that for which Collins (vainly) apostrophised deities such as Eve and Simplicity. Wordsworth was deeply rooted in the literary traditions of the eighteenth century, but he saw the need for generic experimentation to differentiate his voice from those of his predecessors. The hymnal tradition could still be used by a variety of Romantics such as Mary Robinson, Keats and Shelley but they had a classicist agenda rather than advocating the views of a "worshipper of Nature" (l. 152) (see Jung 2002: 185-197).

Notes

[1]. I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Professor Frederick Burwick for a critical reading of and helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.

[2]. The "Preface" and "Tintern Abbey" will be cited from Mason 1994.

[3]. This copy is now in the Piermont Morgan Library, New York.

[4]. Gray, on the other hand, in his odes demonstrated encyclopaedic learning, annotation, as well as poetic diction, features that are irreconcilable with Wordsworth's aspiration to represent the language and sentiments of "common men."

[5]. "Die Art seiner [Wordsworth's] Begegnungen mit dem Göttlichen ist wesentlich verschieden von dem Erlebnis der mythischen Schau, obwohl er sie gelegentlich mit den Worte *vision* bezeichnet". Translations mine.

[6]. There are "in Wordsworths besonderer Weise, das Göttliche zu erleben, Züge, die mit der Darstellung in der bisher bekannten odischen Form in Spannung stehen". Translations mine.

[7]. Bateson is not aware of the generic association that "Tintern Abbey" has with the hymnal tradition, especially as he considers them poem in terms of a monologue. See Bateson 143.

[8]. On the importance of memory in the hymnal ode, see Jung "Some Notes" 176-81.

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ASPECTS OF INDIAN MODERNITY: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

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I

There are two Indias. One is called Bharat, after a legendary King. This represents a traditional culture strongly rooted in religion. The other is India, the creation of a modern set of circumstances. It has to do with British rule and the modernities set in motion by that phenomenon. India as a nation is very much a creation of the encounter between an ancient people and a western discourse. The British unified the geographical space we call India in a manner never done before. Only Asoka the Great and Akbar the Great had brought large parts of the Indian sub-continent under their control, but their empires were not as potent or as organized as the British Empire. The British gave India communications, railways, the telegraph and telephones; they organized their knowledge of India systematically by surveying the landscape, categorizing the flora and fauna and by dividing the population into castes and religious groupings. Edward Said has shown in his well-known general studies of the colonial enterprise how this accumulation of knowledge is a way of establishing power. In India the British engaged themselves in this knowledge accumulation to give themselves an Empire and a free market and a site to work their experiments in social engineering.

This command of the land also translated into command of the languages of the people. British scholars like G.U. Pope and C.P. Brown, to name only two,

attempted to make sense of the grammars of the Indian languages which they assumed were in a barbaric state.[1] These languages, they believed, needed the catalyst of English systematic thinking and grammar to become intelligible. They modernized Indian languages by applying the principles of grammar peculiar to English or the classical tongues of the West. English grammarians brought a degree of arbitrariness into their linguistic classifications of the Indian languages. This was their way of establishing their command of language, which in turn became a language of command, as Bernard Cohn has so eloquently argued.[2] By modernizing the Indian languages the British enabled their officials to master the local tongues and, what is more, to master the local people who spoke those tongues.

But real modernity came via the English language. The introduction of English education into India was a decisive intervention in Indian affairs. It was responsible for the modern spirit becoming widely diffused among the elite. The Bhadralok, upper caste, upper class gentlemen of leisure of Kolkata, were the initial collaborators with the British in this respect. Raja Ram Mohan Roy,[3] for example, strenuously pleaded for funds to be made available for English education and his plea was backed up by a number of Bengali gentlemen. The establishment of Hindu College (now the Presidency College) in 1817 was an important event and eventually signaled the triumph of the Anglicists over the Orientalists and the Vernacularists. The Anglicists like Lord Macaulay wanted the medium of instruction in India to be English, the Orientalists had a sentimental attachment to the classical languages —Sanskrit and Persian— and wanted to see them promoted, while the Vernacularists argued that the local languages, the Bhashas,[4] should be taught to the people. Macaulay carried the day with his famous Minute on Indian education and was instrumental in the passing of the Indian Education Act in 1835.[5] Parliament made funds available for the spread of English education in the belief that neither the classical languages —Sanskrit and Persian— promoted by the Orientalists nor the indigenous or native languages, promoted by the Vernacularists, were fit instruments for modernity. Macaulay's argument, in brief, was that the introduction of English, which he believed was superior to the Indian languages, would have the effect of bringing India more firmly under the British influence because that education would produce a class of native gentlemen who would be dark skinned but very English in temperament and sensibility. The impact of the Macaulayan experiment is felt even today because English education has indeed produced a class of Indians who are very western in temperament and who often do not show enough sensitivity to the 'brute reality' (Edward Said's phrase) of India.

At the time Macaulay wrote his Minute, the English-educated Indians were collaborators with the British, a comprador class, loyal to British rule, English in

sensibility and modern in outlook. Hindu College paved the way for the establishment of many institutions of higher learning in the 19th century. Among the missionaries, David Hare and John Duff must be mentioned for the institutions they set up and nurtured in those early days of Indian modernity.[6] Duff, it is apocryphally said, made an attempt to sail to India and his ship floundered. He lost all his books but what survived was the Bible. He was convinced that God had chosen him for the task of educating the natives of India and converting them to Christianity. The evangelizing zeal of the missionaries was an important aspect of the modernizing process because the schools the missionaries set up had a place for English and, clearly distinguished from the conversion agenda, the missionaries also imparted instruction in science, mathematics, history and so on.[7] Thus, to cut this part of my exploration short, there is a modern India which is in many profound ways cut off from Bharat, the traditional India, and this differential can be traced to the existence of an English-educated elite which dominates education, the law, the bureaucracy and upper-class social life. This is being challenged particularly in the northern parts of the country, in what is called the Cow Belt, by politicians who, with a combination of muscle power and popular acclaim, make a mockery of the values of parliamentary democracy, which after all was a British legacy to India.[8] For this class of politicians the English-educated class does not matter and must be humiliated. But, be that as it may, the final result is that this English educated class has the edge and India to a large extent depends on its expertise and knowledge. The impact of globalization and economic liberalization has only made this class more powerful.

And so the real challenge facing the political class today is how to bridge this differential and, indeed, while there are only confrontationist postures visible, it seems to me that, if Bharat and India are to become one, there has to be a greater and more dynamic interchange of ideas and values between these two facets of that geographical space we call India. The result will be a dynamic mix of the new and the old, a reinterpretation of the old in the light of the new and also, and this is important, a strong shaping influence of the old on the new. That has been India's way for centuries. When heretical ideas challenged the Vedic culture, what happened in India was that the heretics were incorporated in the mainstream and the tradition widened and became more expansive without necessarily giving up its core. The classic case is that of the Buddha. Siddhartha, the Buddha, was against Vedic ritualism and priestcraft. He posed one of the greatest challenges to the traditional Vedic culture. Today there are hardly any Buddhists in India but the Buddha is a revered name in the Hindu pantheon. Indeed in the representation of the evolution myth in Hindu scriptures, in what is called the Dasavathara (ten manifestations of Vishnu, the supreme Godhead), the Buddha finds a place along with Rama and Krishna![9]

Hindu culture is the dominant strain in India, and while there are other strains, any meaningful discussion of India has to take serious note of the Hindu strain and of Hindu traditions. While I am aware that Hindu culture is not the whole of India, I would nevertheless argue that Hindu culture is an assimilative and tolerant culture and has and can accommodate a strong dose of pluralism. Hinduism has always assimilated and shown its capacity for inclusiveness. That has been the strength of the culture. Modernity, of course, poses a great challenge to the traditional culture. If the Hindu-Indian way asserts itself, I can see the challenges posed by modernity shaking the foundations but not destroying it, and there is every chance that the modern quest for a more equitable social order, for gender justice and identity for the individual person will find sympathetic reverberation in those who uphold tradition. The tradition will modify itself and inform the new and the new will find itself challenged by the old and informed by it and divested somewhat of its polemical edge.

I am acutely aware that I am formulating a logic of the tradition/modernity debate in India which is currently being questioned by scholars like Sanjay Subrahmanyam, David Schulman and Velchuri Narayan Rao, US based academicians doing remarkable work on Indological materials. I am valorizing a colonial modernity linking the nineteenth century to British rule. But recent studies by the scholars mentioned above and by others of their kind have shown that there is an earlier modernity in India which is not the derivative modernity of the nineteenth century. These studies question the exclusive status accorded to colonial modernity. Colonial modernity, these scholars argue, is itself viewed as an exclusive European achievement from which the colonial states derive the modern spirit. The modernity of the colonial states is thus derivative and the argument is that these client cultures have their own modernities which can be traced back even to medieval times, certainly to times before colonialism became a fact in India. This school also argues that, if India had not been affected by British rule, she would have asserted an indigenous modernity unrelated to colonialism. This is only partly true. For example, the writings of a medieval Telugu poet like Pingali Surana or the writings of an early Indian woman Bhakti (devotional) poet like the Tamil Andal can be seen as embodying profound questions about the body, sex, women, caste etc. These are then considered examples of an indigenous modernity, albeit early modernist, by the new scholarship. I am in sympathy with a view that claims that Indian literatures were quite radical in their questioning of received mores and values and that we can detect a progress forward in these matters. To call this early modern is fine, but early modern is not modern because the early modern, in my opinion, is still in the grip of the intellectual ancien régime. I am not sure that we can attribute modernity to them because modernity represents an attitude, a way of seeing and feeling that deeply implicates the valorization of the individual. The

European Renaissance, which may be seen as the origin of modernity, does give importance to the self-awareness of the subject. The subject is now psychologically aware and this, in turn, is related to an increasing secularization of life, with Man as the point of reference, not God. Although in medieval India the body may have been foregrounded and love treated with a degree of boldness, the self and the human person were still not detached from the larger context of the spiritual foundations of life and the real sense of an overarching God, the point of reference for all human action. It was still a theocentric universe. In other words, the valorization of the self or the body, which we see in Durer, Michael Angelo, Rembrandt and Montaigne, is not the same as in Surana and Andal. While the treatment of love in the medieval Bhakti poets may seem an interpersonal affair, rather than an abstract and general love, there is no gainsaying the fact that Andal or Nammazhwar or Sundarar posited thought and spoke of their love of Krishna or Siva in terms of human love, but always implied the impersonal Godhead manifested in human form. True, in Bhakti poetry we see a resistance to Brahminical authority and a democratizing process, but one would be completely off the mark to imagine that this necessarily constituted a radical rejection of tradition. Indeed, the remarkable phenomenon in India is, as I have already pointed out, that such radicalisms get assimilated by the tradition which is resilient enough to accept new currents and to include great diversity in itself. One could argue that this was a Brahminical device for extending its authority, and this is not untrue. But the Brahminical mind in its subtlety appropriates dissent, perhaps stifles it, and continues to wield much authority in things temporal and things sacred. That perhaps explains why in the early 20th century in the Madras Presidency, the Social Justice movement was called the anti-Brahmin movement.

Modernity, then, needs to be distinguished from early modern and other such manifestations of the modern spirit. The European Renaissance, of course, is not the only marker for modernity. The French Enlightenment is equally important and so are the ideas of Locke, Berkeley and Coleridge, if we, for a moment, confine ourselves only to British names. Such trends of thought, combined with the Unitarian ideas from America, was an important background for a thinker like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who led the Indian Renaissance of the nineteenth century. There is, therefore, a connection between the thought of the 19th century Indian thinkers and the modernity inaugurated by the Renaissance of Rembrandt, Montaigne, Michael Angelo and Durer and the radical thought of the French philosophers. The nineteenth century, in addition, also happened to be the time of high imperialism in India, and imperialism and colonial rule were linked up with the Enlightenment project which, in its turn, was the handmaid of the European Renaissance. The salient features of the 19th century Renaissance were: a more focused sense of the body and the individual, a concern for the rights of woman, a desire to participate

in the larger comity of intellectual brotherhood by getting an English education and a rejection of tradition, which went side by side with a recovery of tradition. Thus colonial modernity poses a different set of challenges. It cuts at the root of Sanatana Dharma (this is the traditional appellation for Hinduism), but Sanatana Dharma modulates into its recuperative avatars like the Brahmo Samaj (in Bengal), the Prarthana Samaj (in the West) and the Arya Samaj (in the North). These in turn empowered the careers of 19th century thinkers like Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo.

What is popularly called the Indian (Bengal) Renaissance is an aspect of colonial modernity, no less, and it has deep connections with the imagining of an Indian nation, an idea which the 'early modernists' and their contemporaries scarcely took into account. At this time, with the help of English Education and the fiery spirit of academicians like Henry Derozio[10] and the discourse of the Young Bengal movement, there is an increasing resistance to authority and a recognition of the socializing process created by the establishment of a public space. That public space was occupied, in characteristic Indian style, by spiritual movements like the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj and the Arya Samaj. These Movements were Hindu reformist and increasingly concerned themselves with secular questions like widow remarriage, thus raising the age of consent, education for women and so on.

The nineteenth century, then, is the beginning of colonial modernity in India. It was after all the period of the introduction of English which, by the way, is not just a language but also an ideology. Its ideology is that of colonialism and modernity. We may legitimately ask if there was only a 'derivative modernity' in the Indian texts of this period[11] or whether it is possible to detect a modernity which is the result of a healthy mix of English and the native provenance. I think this latter possibility is the truth of the matter. One has only to read Toru Dutt or Derozio or Madhusudan Dutt to see the point I am making. And here I have referred only to writers in English. It is equally true that there is a modernity in the writings of the Telugu Veereshalingam, the Tamil Vedanaygam Pillai, the Bengalis Bankim Chandra and Sarat Chandra, the Oriya Fakir Mohan Senapati and the Malayali Chandu Menon. And if we see the writings of a Swami Vivekananda or a Sri Aurobindo or a Pandita Rama Bai or a Kripabai Sattianathan we see this increasing reinterpretation of the past, this restless energy and this desire for progress and social justice which are the hallmarks of the modernist era. In Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo we see more dramatically the modernity espoused by religious figures, and I shall be saying something about this later. Suffice it here to point to a trait in Indian intellectual life. There is usually a measure of continuity with the past and, if I have pointed to the nineteenth century as a period of Indian modernity, it is with a full realization that there was more discontinuity in this period because of the impact of the West than at any other time in Indian history. Still it would not be disputed that even with this

disjuncture there is a symbiotic process being set in motion. Tradition is changing with the modern but the modern is increasingly taking the colour and shape of the traditional. Indeed there is a case for seeing the Indian Renaissance as a profoundly conservative movement. While the rest of the world is moving in the direction of humanist autonomy, in India any progress in this respect implies a dialogue with the theocentric bases of culture.

But, to change tack, here are two images. Some years ago, the conscience of the nation was shocked by what happened to Roop Kanwar, a Rajput woman. The Rajputs are a valorous people and stories are woven around them which are the stuff of legend. Sati or concremation was practised in their community and history is full of instances where Rajput women either jumped into a collective funeral pyre when the Muslim invaders were at their doorsteps and their menfolk were at war or committed Sati on the funeral pyres of their husbands, in a demonstration of Hindu piety and sacramental intensity. Sati was abolished by Lord Bentinck in the early years of the 19th century, but in 1987 Roop Kanvar sat on the pyre of her dead husband. Her action was witnessed by thousands. In Rajasthan Satis are glorified and temples commemorating their deaths are raised. The belief is that a Sati has enormous spiritual power to bless the living and in any case the fortitude with which she accepted the ordeal by fire qualifies her for divine status. The public outcry by civil society in India ensured that Deorala, the place where Roop died, would not be a place of pilgrimage because Parliament passed laws outlawing the public veneration or glorification of Sati. This is all very well but, where does that leave the thousands of Sati shrines which already exist in private homes and elsewhere? Can a government legislate faith out of existence? I am certainly not suggesting that Sati must be retained! But I am suggesting that Sati has happened and it is part of the daily belief systems of millions of Hindus. Can modernity come to terms with the existence of such belief or is modernity to be permanently at loggerheads with that past? I do believe that the British educated intellectual has an onerous responsibility to come to terms with the existence of these violent beliefs, which along with many other beliefs constitutes the sum total of the great spiritual traditions of the people of India. There are no signs that the people are going to change in a hurry. The moderns will have to do business with this past. The question is, can they find a space where faith and religion will be given honourable status and not be contemptuously dismissed by the modern spirit of radical reform? As I see it, in India modernity must mean a fusion of the spiritual dimension with the secular. And, lest I be misunderstood, modernity will have to select from tradition what may be retained, and sati is certainly not one of the things we must retain!

Come to Bombay (now called Mumbai) and you see the great monuments of the British Raj. One such great structure is the Taj Hotel, owned now by the Tata

family, an Indian industrial family, but in the Raj days a symbol of British power and opulence. It is still a glorious building and the rich and the famous still stay there. But cheek by jowl with buildings like the Taj you also have slums where Indians live lives of quiet desperation. Mumbai's Dharavi has the largest slum in the world, and Dharavi is an unsettling place. It is a site for crime, drugs and violence. Mumbai is India's business lifeline and a bomb blast in Mumbai can destroy the economy. Indeed Mumbai was subjected to medieval cruelty in the wake of the serial bomb blasts in the early 1990s and the images of people from different communities killing each other on religious grounds made one wonder if this was the same Mumbai of Marine Drive, the Gateway of India, and the tall skyscrapers which house the great industrial giants of India. Poverty is the blight of India and must go. Mumbai represents the new India of our dreams. Poverty must go and that is the reality of Bharat. But Bharat is not coterminous with poverty. It is marked rather by a great culture and poverty only stains it. So Bharat minus poverty must do business with India without her modernist pride and arrogance. The question is, can modernity find a place for the old, tried and trusted? And this certainly does not mean that we need to glorify all those horrible atrocities we have perpetrated in the name of patriarchy and a caste based hierarchy. Having said this, let me also clearly proclaim my lack of sympathy for religious fundamentalism or for exclusive Hindu majoritarianism. But I do try to rationalize the attraction Mumbai has for right wing Hindu zealots. It must have something to do with the contempt the moderns show for religious traditions and it is a backlash. The moderns, by accepting the inalienable right of people to practice religion, might in fact be able to take the wind out of the sails of religious fanatics, who only use religion for their own ends.

The interrelation of tradition and modernity is the thesis of this article. I am unabashedly following T.S. Eliot in this respect. It is T.S. Eliot's view that tradition need not smack of archaelogical excavations and fossils. The present is the most energetic moment of tradition. It is the presence of the past in the present so as to secure the future.[12] When Edmund Burke, whose conservative opinions need no glossing, spoke of the matter, he put it eloquently by describing the purpose of existence, which for him is a shared partnership between the old and the new, experience and experiment, tradition and modernity. Burke believes that a large view of existence must be taken because this shared partnership cannot be the burden of only the present generation, but rather a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. As is well known, for Burke each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primaeval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher nature, connecting the visible and invisible worlds, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral

natures, each in its appointed place. I believe Burke is right in this matter. In the name of change and fashion we tend to destroy the laboriously built artifacts of the past. The impulses that drive the younger generation and those who are carried away by the hustle and bustle of the present are based on a perception that man is perfectible, that reason is a secure guide to conduct, that a sentimental adherence to abstract notions of equality is a value which one dares not question on pain of being declared politically incorrect. The Irishman Burke, and in our country Rajagopalachari,[13] have a different view of the organization of society. They would see it as emanating from God, as admitting of transcendence, and they would admit of equality only in the eyes of God, not necessarily in interpersonal relations. This is common sense but the unthinking and sentiment driven radicals are governed by an abstract sense of justice and equality and by a sentimental humanitarianism with respect to human relations. They ask for a leveling down, while Burke and Rajagopalchari ask for a preservation of the mystery and the variety of human existence. I am arguing that a true modernity in the Indian context has necessarily to be a fusion of the past and the present. It is the Indian way, and it has been demonstrated in the writings of the best of our nineteenth century writers and in the activities of the greatest of our national leaders and thinkers.

II

The impact of British education in India was felt, as we have already noted, in Bengal, but it was also felt elsewhere. The Brahmo Samaj[14] founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1830 was an early attempt to purify Hinduism of its dross and its superstitions. Roy was in the forefront of the attack on obscurantism. He demanded a ban on Sati, a raising of the age of consent so that child marriages could be avoided, and he pleaded for the right of widows to remarry. These were radical measures and Roy became a hated figure among the Kulin (high caste) Bengalis and among the orthodox Pundits. He was not safe in Kolkata due to his activism, and this in spite of his influential family background. Brahmoism stressed the philosophical part of the Vedic scriptures and, in essence, it is a kind of Unitarianism, if we want an equivalent from the West. Emerson and Thoreau knew Roy's writings and he had good friends in England where, incidentally, he died. Roy was well versed in Sanskrit but, as we have seen, he asked for support for British education and he was a founder of Hindu College. Instruction in the classical tongues was to be imparted but this would not be in the old Brahminical way but on sound European principles. Brahmoism thrived for a while but it was soon beset with schisms and passed on to the leadership of distinguished Bengalis like Debendranath Tagore, an ancestor of the poet Rabindranath, and the

charismatic Keshab Chandra Sen. No one can, however, deny the obvious progressiveness of the Brahmos and their importance for culture in India and for Indian nationalism. Roy is rejecting tradition when he speaks up for women but he is passionately involved in a reinterpretation of the Vedas and the Upanishads in order to recover the ancient wisdom for modern times. It is, if you like, a kind of Brahminism, but a Brahminism under correction as it were.

The Prarthana Samaj founded in western India was a counterpart to Brahmoism in Bengal. The principal figures were Ranade and Gokhale. They reformed Hinduism by insisting on women's emancipation and education and raising the age of consent. Gokhale started the Servants of India Society, which was to be a band of political Sanyasis (monks), and whose members would not accept political office though they would engage with society and political action. There was a religious touch to its activities, as a perusal of the writings of Gokhale[15] and his disciple Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivas Sastri reveals.[16] The Servants of India Society was secular, but secular in the Indian sense of the term, which has always meant that the world has to be seen from a religious perspective because man is the child of God. Secularism in the Indian context does not mean the denial of religion but, in the Hindu spirit, an acceptance of religion as an integral part of life.

In the north west Dayanand Sarawati founded the Arya Samaj, which was a purified Hinduism with much stress on Vedic practices. Dayanand questioned the caste system, untouchability and the ritualistic practices of traditional Hinduism, but his puritanism enabled fiery nationalists with a Hindu cast of mind like Lala Lajpat Rai to engage with the British Raj in an extreme way. Rai died after being beaten by the police. The politics of the Indian National Congress was informed by the spirit of the Brahmos, the Arya Samajists and the Prarthana Samajists, and the fact that these were spiritual movements suggests that the freedom struggle in India was, to a large extent, informed by spiritual principles. That is why the current Indian debate on secularism is heavily weighted on the side of those who profess a religious view of life, but not a narrow sectarianism, as opposed to those who disclaim any role for religion in affairs of state.

These Movements were attempts to modernize Hinduism and contemporary Hindu society, which has clearly been informed by their spirit of radical reform. The history of Indian nationalism is the history in part of these religious movements, and any definition of Indian nationhood would be far off the mark if the spiritual dimension is ignored. In this respect two figures, however, stand out in this period. They are Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo. Both are religious leaders but they are not the narrow, fundamentalist and fanatical types who are only too ubiquitous in our times. Like the movements mentioned above, we see in them a good fusion of tradition and modernity and a synthesis of various currents. Swami

Vivekananda spoke eloquently at the World Parliament of Religions in 1893 and his representation of a reformed and resurgent Hinduism won the attention of people all over the world (Ramanan 2004: 143-166). Clearly he was the most charismatic of the delegates and he had a great fan following. He spoke in the name of the most ancient order of Hinduism, which he asserted was not a religion but a way of life. Also Vedanta was the foundational ground of all religions and to speak on its behalf was to eschew all forms of sectarianism and narrow doctrine. The message of Vedanta was that man is essentially divine, that he must realize the strength within him. With this confidence man must serve suffering humanity. India required, not cloistered monks, but people who were athletic and who could work incessantly to improve the lot of their countrymen. With this aim he founded the Ramakrishna Mission, named after his revered teacher Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. The Paramahamsa was an eclectic man who experienced God consciousness through Hindu, Islamic and Christian practices. Swami Vivekananda's order of celibate monks with a large lay following was, and continues to be, organized on the lines of the Jesuit order and has for over a century taken the message of practical Vedanta to every corner of the world. It is a shining example of the way an ancient faith can integrate itself to the needs of the changed modern present. Vedanta on this showing is a modern faith. Sri Aurobindo (Ramanan 2004: 229-249) had passed the Civil Service Examination but refused to take the mandatory horse riding test to join the service. Instead he left the West and took up employment in India, learning Sanskrit and Bengali and reading the great Indian texts. At first he was associated with an extremist and radical politics and was jailed. Freed for lack of evidence, Sri Aurobindo abruptly disappeared and surfaced in Pondicherry, where he set up an order. Joined a few years later by his spiritual companion Mary Alfassa, an Algerian French woman, the duo galvanized religious thought and in a short time the Pondicherry Ashram became a model for a revived religion based on Hindu thought. Sri Aurobindo spoke of the possibility of Man becoming the Supra Human and of divinity descending and bestowing grace on the prepared individual. Anyone who has been to the Ashram can see Hinduism at its brilliant best, refashioned for our modern times. This is tradition in modernity. Sri Aurobindo passed away in 1950, but his work was a constant presence in India's march to freedom and in her acquiring the character of a modern nation.

India has consistently demonstrated, in all aspects of life at both the individual and the societal level, that she can strike this difficult and delicate balance. An important ingredient in Hindu thought is the insistence that nothing is static, that adaptation is the law of life, that change is inevitable, though not all change is progress. Given this provenance, it is not surprising that Hinduism has been so resilient. I am painfully aware that there are many marks of a feudal past still present in India, but

I am convinced that the Indian people with the Hindu ethos I have outlined will be able to modernize without necessarily throwing away whatever is valuable in the past. Tradition and modernity should not be seen as binaries but as interpenetrating so that to speak of the one is to speak of the other. In this way, it should be possible to see Indian modernities in more complex ways than as simply a derivation of British colonial discourse.

III

To return to the question of the dynamic nature of tradition, which is the past living at the most intense moment of the present, I would argue that many of the changes we see in our times and which bewilder us need not upset us at all if we bear this larger view of tradition in mind. Once again, let us see the cities of India. Urbanization is clearly a marker of modernity. The cities, we are told, are different from the villages, and so they are. But there is an important rider. Our cities are being besieged by the village folk, who see in them opportunities for employment. In Kolkata, where I was raised, the Bihari migration was a major factor, and I remember that if it came to cheap public transport (the hand pulled rickshaw) or employing a cook or finding someone to wash your clothes or tend your garden a Bihari could always be found for this purpose. In Chennai, where I belong, the influx from the villages is proving to be a major factor in the increase of unemployment. This is true of all big cities. Mumbai, the industrial capital of India, is full of chawls and it is their facelessness that gives people from rural areas their identity and, ironically, their insecurity. The picture which emerges is that the cities have grown at the expense of the villages. It was Nehru who initiated large scale industrialisation (see Khilnani 1997). In this respect he was turning his back on his mentor Gandhi, who advocated village self-reliance.[17] Today we see the spectacle of the village increasingly wanting to become a city with all the facilities of urbanization available in them. President Kalam, a visionary, who speaks to his people frequently on programmes which remind one of the classroom, believes that by providing internet connectivity to the villages a major step would be taken to discourage large scale migration to the cities. A major reason for villagers seeking employment in the cities was that there were more opportunities in the urban conglomerates and now, with the Kalam mission under way, such a reason disappears since the villages will henceforth be powered by technology. Thus, it is hoped that the cities would be relieved of undue pressure. Here is a classic example of the interpenetration of the binary opposition between village and city, between tradition and modernity. And this is happening right before our eyes. Our villages will no longer be the Gandhian institutions they were for a long time represented

as being. Instead we will have urban villages and they would be a blend of the old and the new. This is assuming, of course, that we do not snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, and that we will implement the Kalam mission!

In every walk of life one perceives this interpenetration of oppositions. Let us shift to the image of the family. Till about 30 years ago the extended family was a physical fact. Grandparents lived with their children and their children's children and with several other members and relations. Food was cooked for all. Everyone was indissolubly linked to everyone else. Sorrow was shared and so was happiness. Everyone contributed to the commonweal. It was not as though there were no tensions but the patriarch was always implicitly obeyed and there was a lot of give and take. As an ideal, there is nothing to compare with this system. It was a training for the world and I believe it made one relatively unselfish —that is, unselfish as far as the family was concerned. Today the extended family is dead and if it exists it exists only as a shadow of its former self or as a fragmented variation of the original. The nuclear family is the norm and the children resent their space being occupied by grandparents. More and more the older generation is accepting this change and staying away from the children who have their own lives to live. We have not yet come to a point where the children, on attaining their majority, would be expected to fend for themselves. We are still psychologically attuned to old ways and we continue to show the respect old people must be given and so, even if the old are not living with us, we do consult them on most things. There is a fear of being cursed and there is a fear of being alone in the world without the comfort of the blessings of the older generation So even here we may read a complex interpenetration of the tradition/modernity debate.

We may move to the larger unit of society now, and in particular to the question of the organization of our society. Caste is still a fact and, with the intensification of identity politics after the Mandal Agitations of the 1990s, it is never far from the public consciousness. We are not moving towards a casteless society. In some ways such a move is fundamentally flawed. Caste as an institution is not India's peculiar institution. It is universal. Every society has a system of categorization and while one may not speak of caste, it is a psychological presence. To legislate caste out of existence is simply a utopian dream and it might be better to accept the fact of caste and understand its rationale. In the beginning it was a division of society in terms of the temperamental distinctions one saw in people. Thus, there are people who are intellectual, others who are natural leaders, yet others who can contribute to the generation of wealth, and finally some who are not any of the other things and who can contribute manual labour. It is evident that there is mutual interdependence. Indian or Hindu society has managed to weather many storms for thousands of years, and one reason is that this organic and hierarchical organization of society was broadly accepted and it worked. In the beginning there

was flexibility and mobility, but soon ossification took place, rigidity destroyed the creative possibilities of the caste system, and untouchability scarred its face. There is no excuse for untouchability. If we recognize our mutual interdependence, self-preservation should say that this oppressive practice must go. Gandhi understood this. He fought untouchability but he did not ask for the destruction of caste because he saw the need for some such division of society. True, it is caste which brought about untouchability, and it is caste that, in its ossified state, reduced a large number of human beings to less than human status, while also preventing many in the name of birth from having minimum standards of life. There is much to be angry about. But absolute equality is never possible. Even communist countries do not have it. We go back to the dictum that absolute equality does not exist. Equality before God, yes, but the view that all are equal is false and flies against the facts. In modern India we are moving towards equality of opportunity and this is laudable, but all change must come gradually lest we destroy the good things we do have along with the bad ones. On this showing the democratic experiment in India has worked. Caste and its rigidities are slowly being called into question and the people who historically had been marginalized are slowly asserting their rights and society by and large is acceding to their demands. Things take time and a process of gradual evolution rather than violent revolution is the surest answer to the need for all round progress.

IV

It will be evident that my explorations above have a decidedly conservative character. It is wrong to think that conservatism is reactionary, in the sense that it bespeaks a return to some glorious past. On the other hand, conservatism allows for a healthy balance of the old and the new. It asserts that all change is not progress but it does not ignore change. It accepts the inevitability of change but only asks that the change be well thought out, gradual and be in keeping with the genius of the community. Indeed the good conservative has a respect for the world and does not live in an ineffectual world of mystic nothingness. The conservative is worldly insofar as that means a capacity for constant adjustment in the wake of new realities. The adjustment is made with a broad sense of the theocentric humanistic purpose of life, and the changes are seen as only a variation of an already existing ground or foundation. In the Indian context, that reality principle is linked up with the transcendental reality of the Vedanta where, to use Emerson's formulation, the Soul identifies with the Over Soul. Man is not seen as a sinner in need of redemption but as ignorant of his true nature, which is divine. To remove ignorance and to arrive at a higher degree of consciousness is the purpose of Man.

Society and its character have to be seen in this context. In India great changes are taking place but to imagine that this is a takeover by a completely secular and godless establishment is to look at things from a Eurocentric view. In India religion stares you in the face wherever you go and the spiritual dimension of life is an unwritten but active code. Change in India has to be in this framework. To think otherwise is to miss the reality of India.

India, I assert, is not a nation, but a way of life, a way of thinking and feeling. British rule gave the Indian people a sense of a modern nation. That clearly is the most visible impact of modernity. But our sense of nationhood, however influenced by the West and by our contact with a western culture, is still not completely informed by it. The ancient Indian (if we wish to use this term at all) saw his culture as a unity and extended his sense of belonging from Khandahar (in present day Afghanistan) to Khambuja (present day Kampuchea). Hindu values and icons remain in these lands even today, and the great Sankara, an Idealist philosopher of the Vedantic persuasion walked, it is said, three times around the Indian geographical space in his brief life of 32 years. Sanskrit and its variations was spoken in much of this space and people understood one another. The devout Hindu goes to Prayag or Gaya in the north and carries with him sand from Rameswaram in the south to immerse in the rivers and brings back water from the sacred Ganga in the north to bathe the Siva lingam at Rameswaram, a testimony to the oneness of the people of India. If India is anything at all it is a cultural unity. Therefore, whatever the investment in modernity —dams, hydro-electrical projects, steel plants, aluminium industries, internet connections—, the real connectivity is cultural. A recognition of this should tell us that India is nothing if not traditional, and her modernity is nothing more than the present manifestation of the past in its most intense contemporaneous character.

Notes

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1. G.U. Pope was a Tamil scholar, a translator of the *Tirukural,* a great Tamil classic, while C.P. Brown gave the Telugu language a modern grammar.

2. "The language of Command and the Command of Language" is the opening section of Bernard Cohn's *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India.*

[3]. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a founder of the Brahmo Samaj. His letter to Lord Amherst is a classic of prose. See Ramanan (2004: 60-64).

[4]. Bhasha is the Sanskrit term for the indigenous languages. In recent times nativists like G.N. Devy have used the term as a political counterpoint to English, which they associate with colonial hegemony. See Devy's *After Amnesia* (1992).

[5]. Lord Macaulay's Minute is available in Trevelyan's edition of the *Speeches* (1935).

[6]. Charles Duff and David Hare figure in Gauri Viswanathan (1989) and Lethbridge (1972).

[7]. On Missionaries see Gauri Viswanathan (1989) and Eric Stokes (1959).

[8]. The most prominent Cow Belt politicians are the two Yadav leaders —Mulayam Singh and Lalu Prasad; the former is Chief Minister of the populous state of UP and the latter is the Railway Minister of India.

[9]. Dasavathara is the Hindu myth of creation and evolution and describes the ten manifestations of the supreme Godhead Vishnu in terms of Matsya (fish), Kurma (turtle), Varaha (boar), Narasimha (ManLion), Vamana (dwarf), Parasurama, Rama, Krishna, Balarama (but in one version the Buddha replaces Balarama), and Kalki (the redeemer of the future who is portrayed as riding a horse, somewhat akin to the Apocalypse).

[10]. Derozio was a teacher at the Hindu College and a leader of the Young Bengal Movement, which was radical in the spirit of the French Revolution. Derozio fell foul of the authorities of Hindu College and was dismissed. He died because of drink and dissipation.

[11]. Partha Chatterjee has advanced this view in *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (1986).

[12]. T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual talent" in *Sacred Wood* (1920), and the view of culture in *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture* (1948) are conservative documents.

[13]. C. Rajagopalachari was described by Mahatma Gandhi as his 'conscience keeper'. Rajaji, as he is popularly known, is India's foremost conservative thinker. The political party he founded in the fifties, in opposition to Nehru's Congress, was called the Swatantra party and is hardly visible today, but Rajaji's influence is felt in the polity in these times of economic liberalization. Many of his conservative ideas are now part of the ruling establishment's thinking. He was a great populariser of Indian epics and a fine speaker on Indian culture and philosophy.

[14]. See studies by Sivanath Sastri (1911-1912) and David Kopf (1979).

[15]. G.K.Gokhale, a member of the Viceroy's Privy Council, was a brilliant lawyer, Gandhi's mentor and a leader of the moderates in Congress. See Ramanan (2004: 167-189).

[16]. The Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri is by popular acclaim called the 'silver tongued orator' of the British Empire. Such was his command of the English language that he dared to correct Hall, the Englishman, who taught him. He was a statesman and a great writer of letters, which are among the finest examples of Indian English literature. See Ramanan (2004: 190-206).

[17]. Pandit Nehru was India's first Prime Minister, the undisputed leader of free India. As Sunil Khilnani has pointed out in *The Idea of India* (1997), he initiated most of the schemes which embodied Indian modernity. Gandhi chose Nehru as his successor but the two were temperamentally different. Nehru was a modern but Gandhi was traditional in his belief in the village.

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GENDERED SPACES AND FEMALE RESISTANCE: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S "THE MARK ON THE WALL"

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In a retrospective analysis of the houses she had once inhabited, Virginia Woolf claimed that those spaces "explained a great deal" (1985: 124) of both her private life and her fictional works. The evocative power of space in Woolf's recollections extends to imagining time and events in architectural terms. As Tracy Seeley has suggested (1996: 89), Woolf's interior spaces often act as embodiments, reminders and signs. Woolf's recollections frequently appear attached to spaces: "In order to fix a date, it is necessary to remember what one saw" (1985: 83), the narrator of "The Mark on the Wall" claims. Spaces and their significance help to clarify many aspects of Woolf's life and work and the connection between the two: their cultural meanings attach not only to Woolf's personal experience, but also to her aesthetics, in which architectural spaces suggest complex whole lives and describe structures of thought.

This paper intends to discuss Virginia Woolf's conviction that space is never a neutral emptiness, but a web of cultural, social and ideological relations which condition those individuals that inhabit them. Gender and space are constructed as mutually dependant categories, and both appear in need, in Woolf's view, of revision and rethinking. Woolf's first published short narrative, "The Mark on the Wall" (1917) dramatises such a need through its main argumentative thread, while also advancing certain assumptions embodied in the construction of a particular imagery which were to be centrally recurrent in some on her most celebrated

works. The patriarchal mechanics of production *versus* reproduction are perfectly reflected in the divorce between the public and private realm traditionally inhabited by men and women respectively. Woolf's "The Mark on the Wall" aims at dismantling such an opposition by means of subverting the very politics of space, where the traditional living-room turns into a place of subversion in which a subjective narrative perspective is compulsively engaged in exposing and discarding the assumed consistency of the male dominant modes of viewing and representing reality. The mark on the wall, both the title and the key image which structures the story, emerges as a disturbing blot that threatens to diminish order and coherence within the confines of the space which the traditional living room entails. Revealingly, it becomes the narrator's focus of attention, as well as the starting point of her subversive reflections.

Gaston Bachelard has claimed that "inhabited space transcends geometrical space" (1958: vii) or, in other words, that memory and imagination work dependably in our recollections of space as a structural principle. However relevant Bachelard's work may have been, recent criticism has looked deeper into the interrelations of culture and space, rejecting the Kantian view of space as an *a priori* emptiness which becomes filled with activity. As Michel Foucault has argued, space used to be either dismissed as "belonging to 'nature' —that is, the given, the basic conditions, 'physical geography', in other words, a sort of pre-historical stratum, or else it was conceived as the residential state or field of expansion of peoples, of a culture, a language or a state" (1972: 149).[1] Certainly, as Fredric Jameson has claimed, "space is ideological" (1988: 35), although the question has tended itself to be absorbed by naturalistic or anthropological perspectives, most notably in phenomenology. Instead, Jameson underlines the relationship of the individual subject or of the subject of lived experience to the architectural, spatial object by conceiving of space as a *text*, in which "a whole range of 'signs' and 'codes' are combined, whether in the organic unity of a shared code, or in 'collage' systems of various kinds" (1988: 36). Among other recent contributors to the theory of space, Henri Lefebvre considers space as a "social product" (1991: 26) which contains and regulates the social relations of both production and reproduction. Ideology produces specific kinds of spaces which may serve as tools of "thought and action, a means of control, hence of domination and power" (1991: 26). In short, cultural space reproduces the ideology which produced it in the first place. Decoding thus the multiple "intersections" of cultural meanings in a given space can reveal a society's spatial practice, demarcated by social relations and inhabited by history both personal and public. Virginia Woolf implicitly linked personal experience, cultural history and material conditions in most of her fictional work, and more overtly in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and its sequel *Three Guineas* (1938). In the latter, Woolf shows how the ideology of public life produces

monuments of architectural space: "Within a small space are crowded together St Paul's, the Bank of England, the Mansion House, the massive if funereal battlements of the Law Courts; and on the other side, Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament" (1992a: 176). Such "monuments of its own magnificence", as W.B. Yeats would have it, shape and condition private spaces too. As Woolf sees it: "It is from this world that the private house [...] has derived its creeds, its laws, its clothes and carpets, its beef and mutton" (1992a: 177).

It seems clear that Woolf considers space and gender as mutually dependant, most commonly understood as a discrimination between the public sphere, associated with masculinity, and the private or domestic sphere, generally conceived of as female. Such an opposition is hierarchical and supports an ideology that is both patriarchal and capitalist at heart, prescribing gender roles and activities backed up by a dynamics of production and reproduction in an enslaving binary system. This opposition and its dynamics determine, then, a woman's place. As is well known, *A Room of One's Own* dramatises the 'place' of women in culture through a history of exclusion and poverty, literally and metaphorically alluded to through the use of Woolf's discriminatory imagery, which permeates the whole essay. Woolf advocates the need for material independence and creative space, particularly in relation to the public world which excludes her as an Outsider: "If one is a woman one is often surprised by a sudden splitting of consciousness, say in walking down Whitehall, when from being the natural inheritor of that civilisation, she becomes, on the contrary, outside of it, alien and critical" (1992a: 101). In spite of such alienation, culture and literary tradition —abstract concepts which for Woolf appear embodied in specific sites and places— call for trespass by women, as she would argue in her late essay "The Leaning Tower" (1940): "Let us trespass at once. Literature is no one's private ground; literature is common ground [...]. Let us trespass freely and fearlessly and find our way for ourselves" (1992b: 178). Since a woman's 'place' can only be understood in relation to masculine culture, Woolf considers it necessary to contest and resist from the very place of oppression, thus subverting those modes of behaviour and thought which patriarchy has prescribed for women as obedient subjects, as proper to their female nature. The question goes beyond a process of rejecting a patriarchal gender role (for Woolf, embodied by the 'Angel in the House' inhabiting the Victorian house) by articulating the need to diminish the role of man as the sole maker of culture, as she had argued in *A Room of One's Own*: "Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size. Without that power probably the earth would still be swamp and jungle" (1992a: 45-46).

But suppose for a moment that the "looking-glass smashes, the image disappears, and the romantic figure with the green of forest depths all about it is there no

longer" (1985: 85), the narrator of "The Mark on the Wall" challenges. A discussion of this proposal is already articulated in this early Woolfian text, where the narrator imagines the existence of "a quiet spacious world [...] without professors or specialists" (1985: 87). Far from being withdrawals into self-indulgence, those pictures imply that gender and space are defined through male power. In literary terms, fiction-making has been overwhelmingly a male-gendered space, dominated by male voices and technical tools and impregnated with male values, as Woolf argues in her essay "Women and Fiction":

> When a woman comes to write [...] she will find that she is perpetually wishing to alter the established values —to make serious what appears insignificant to a man, and trivial what is to him important. And for that, of course, she will be criticised; for the critic of the opposite sex will be genuinely puzzled by an attempt to alter the current scale of values, and will see in it not merely a difference in view, but a view which is weak, trivial or sentimental, because it differs from his own. (Woolf 1966: 146)

Yet Woolf articulates the female writer's need to contest, to trespass, while also suggesting that fiction-making is also women's 'place'. In "The Mark on the Wall", such a need appears articulated from the very place of female oppression, the realm of the domestic from the privacy of a living room. Rather than presenting a female character engaged in educated talk around the tea-table as traditional Victorian narratives would,[2] an anonymous conscience (implicitly female, as will be argued) appears absorbed in her own thoughts while smoking a cigarette in a typically male attitude. The sudden awareness of a mark on the wall brings to an end her initial idle thoughts and fancies: "I was smoking a cigarette when I looked up and saw the mark on the wall for the first time" (1985: 83). The mark on the wall, as the title of this narrative suggests, is the image around which a whole argumentation revolves, both literally and metaphorically: the challenge to ascertain the provenance of such a mark allows the narrator to plunge into a train of thought and speculations in a fluid interior monologue detached from the principles of order, coherence and causality that governed traditional male narratives.[3] Significantly, the mark on the wall as key image was to be used again in a central passage of *A Room of One's Own*, where Woolf suggests that the absence of female figures in the public sphere is the outcome of centuries of oppression:

> There is no mark on the wall to measure the precise height of women. There are no yard measures, neatly divided into the fractions of an inch, that one can lay against the qualities of a good mother or the devotion of a daughter, or the fidelity of a sister, or the capacity of a housekeeper. Few women even now have been graded at the universities; the great trials of the professions, army and navy, trade, politics and diplomacy have hardly tested them. They remain even at this moment unclassified. (1992a: 111)

Confined to the mechanics of reproduction, women have been absent from the productive space, and thus unable to reach the mark on the wall which sets a satisfactory standard and bespeaks their 'place' in culture, as is argued in the story: "What now takes the place of those things I wonder, those real standard things? Men perhaps, should you be a woman; the masculine point of view which governs our lives, which sets the standard, which establishes Whitaker's Table of Precedency" (1985: 86). Even today, Whitaker's *Almanac* provides tables of precedency for the most prestigious public institutions from which women are excluded, while representing a whole set of beliefs, values and rules inherent to patriarchy and to monologisation, as Woolf was again, using the same image, to argue in *A Room of One's Own*: "I do not believe that even the Table of Precedency which you will find in Whitaker's *Almanac* represents a final order of values" (1992a: 138). The dynamics of precedence and inheritance which the *Almanac* tackles become thus crucial in preserving patriarchy as a social order and, as such, central images which help to develop argumentation in "The Mark on the Wall". Yet, as has been suggested, women do not partake as subjects of such an inheritance, but as mere objects of obedience and submission, metaphorically referred to in the story through the inherited portrait reproducing a "fraudulent" objectification of the female: "The miniature of a lady with white powdered curls, powder-dusted cheeks, and lips like red carnations. A *fraud of course*, for the people who had this house before us would have chosen pictures in that way —an old picture for an old room" (1985: 83; our italics). As Diane Gillespie has suggested (1988: 205), portraits not only underline a particular genealogy, but also recall those inherited values such as tradition, authority and continuity, which the narrator will resist throughout the narrative.[4]

Furthermore, the lady's imagined portrait tackles the issue of male representation of the polarised versions of the feminine that traditionally denied women the socially relevant position of full human subjectivity: either a decent lady, an Angel in the House deserving her little, miniaturised space within the domestic realm, or a whore, a highly eroticised female wearing make-up and standing for the object of men's sexual fantasies. The pure, white Lily and the red, whorish Rose: the virtuous wife-mother and the public woman.[5] By classifying the picture as "a fraud", the narrator of "The Mark on the Wall" aims at destabilising the male gaze, the principle through which reality is ordered in a particular way, distributing every constitutive element into its appropriate place in a hierarchical order that is taken to be the normal, true and natural way things are. Everything falls under this dominating, objectifying, classifying gaze: nature, history, fiction writing, women, even men themselves. In Woolf's repeatedly stated view it is this perspective that must be assailed and it is women who are to carry out this hard, laborious task.

In her lecture to the National Society for Women's Service of 1931 —published posthumously as "Professions for Women" in *The Death of the Moth* (1942)—

Woolf spoke about her own experience in the struggle towards self-emancipation. The first obstacle to overcome, Woolf told her audience, was to exorcise the ghostly Angel in the House in her: the detachment from the model of femininity with which she was forced to identify as a sympathetic, charming, unselfish and pure being. The identification with that particular image of womanliness was performed on behalf of a particular gaze that enforced it and to which enjoyment was offered in sacrifice: "She [the 'Angel in the House'] was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathise always with the minds and wishes of others" (Woolf 1993: 102). In reference to feminine charm in her essay "Two Women" (1927), Woolf spoke of "the curious spectacle [...] of grave and busy women doing fancy work and playing croquet in order that the male eye might be gratified and deceived" (1992b: 117). Precluding the expression and realisation of women's desires and aspirations to occupy relevant positions in a transformed social configuration resulting from their subjective agency, this interconnection of women's image and its regulating male gaze must be dismantled through subversion. If the image is abandoned as the source of identity, then the power of the gaze is undermined. If the patterns of thought and conduct prescribed as 'naturally' feminine are openly held to be unsatisfactory and oppressive and women promote an exploration of new modes of self-representation and agency, then the masculine image (reflected in the passive gaze of women as naturally inferior beings) would be blurred and patriarchy's safe position of domination could be effectively contested. And it is not just women's liberation from tyranny that is at stake, it is also men's enslavement to patriarchal desire to dominate as reflected in the gaze of women. In this sense, Woolf's late essay "Thoughts of Peace in an Air Raid" (1940) mirrors the polarised version of femininity found in the imaginary portrait of a woman in "The Mark on the Wall":

> Let us try to drag into consciousness the subconscious Hitlerism that holds us down. It is the desire for aggression; the desire to dominate and enslave. Even in the darkness we can see that made visible. We can see shop windows blazing; and women gazing; painted women; dressed-up women; women with crimson lips and crimson fingernails. They are slaves who are trying to enslave. If we could free ourselves from slavery we should free men from tyranny. Hitlers are bred by slaves. (1993: 169-170)

Significantly, "The Mark on the Wall" closes with a reference to World War I, revealingly attached to the narrator's male companion and to his factual world of events and newspapers: "'Though it's no good buying newspapers [...]. Nothing ever happens. Curse this war; God damn this war!'" (Woolf 1985: 89). Though implicitly stated, the text seems to establish a subtle connection between the mechanics of war and masculinity which would again be one of Woolf's main theses in many of both her fiction and non-fiction works, most overtly in *Three Guineas*

(1938). This is precisely a critique of such male dynamics of patriarchy as represented by the public sphere that is at stake in "The Mark on the Wall", which also reaches out to prefigure the workings of the private realm, becoming thus the "rule" of any social behaviour:

> The military sound of the word ["rule"] is enough. It recalls leading articles, cabinet ministers —a whole class of things indeed which as a child one thought the thing itself, the standard thing, the real thing, from which one could not depart save at the risk of nameless damnation. Generalisations bring back somehow Sunday in London, Sunday afternoon walks, Sunday luncheons, and also ways of speaking of the dead, clothes and habits— like the habit of sitting all together in one room until a certain hour, although nobody liked it. There was a rule for everything. (Woolf 1985: 86)

As seen by the narrator, it is not just a question of subjection to some external order that enforces a certain pattern of feminine identity and conduct, but also of such an order becoming truly effective subjection to patriarchal ideology when a regulating masculine gaze is internalised (Zizek 1989: 106). In order for a woman to kill the Angel in the House, to resist the overpowering, controlling male gaze, it is necessary simultaneously to become aware that the paternal, dominating gaze on behalf of which she is enacting that role does primarily reside within herself and so be in a position to free herself from its hold. And, of course, the fact that the narrator's gender is never clearly specified in the text is by no means an irrelevant fact, but rather a conscious textual strategy. The negative self-definition at one point would fit that given of herself by a consciously and intentionally negligent housewife: "It [the mark on the wall] may even be caused by some round black substance, such as a small rose leaf, left over from the summer, and *I, not being a very vigilant housekeeper —look at the dust on the mantelpiece*, for example, the dust which, so they say, buried Troy three times over, only fragments of pots utterly refusing annihilation, as one can believe" (Woolf 1985: 84; our italics). The voice which closes the narrative fits the place of the man of this fictional household better: he makes his entrance "standing over" the narrator, is about to go out to "'buy a newspaper,'" is exasperated by the paralysing effect of the war in the normal course of public events, and asks in a sarcastic manner "'why we should have a snail on our wall'" (Woolf 1985: 89). His expression of contained anger concerning the presence of a snail we take to be a reproach addressed to the narrator for her negligent housekeeping.

Despite the fact that the narrator's impersonality could be considered an instance of the androgynous mind that, for Woolf, the artist should ideally possess —which she would develop further in *A Room of One's Own* (1992a: 125-137)— it is "the masculine point of view" that is subversively assailed, thus making of the traditionally silenced feminine perspective the main agent in the process (1985: 86). The politics

of impersonality cannot be understood as lack of commitment to such a feminist perspective, but rather as a dramatisation of a new angle of vision void of the chains of anthropocentrism which the narrator attacks throughout the narrative, thus allowing this conscience to penetrate not only the solidity of external appearance, but also civilisation and its contradictions as a male construction: "I wish I could hit upon a pleasant track of thought, a track indirectly reflecting credit upon myself, for those are the pleasantest of thoughts [...]. They are not thoughts directly praising oneself; that is the beauty of them" (1985: 85).[6] In spite of this voice's insistent anonymity and grammatically ungendered nature, referred to through the story as the impersonal "one", only a female conscience would be so absolutely explicit about the fact that "the masculine point of view" (1985: 86) or, in other words, the patriarchal gaze and the feminine image it enforces, constitutes the major obstacle in women's struggle towards an emancipatory self-representation that would give voice to desires, aspirations, talents of their own that tradition forced them to repress in order to meet the inherited standards of womanliness:

> The masculine point of view which governs our lives, which sets the standard, which establishes Whitaker's Table of Precedency, which has become, I suppose, since the war half a phantom to many men and women, which soon, one may hope, will be laughed into the dustbin where the phantoms go, the mahogany sideboards and the Landseer prints, God and Devils, Hell and so forth, leaving us with an intoxicating sense of illegitimate freedom —if freedom exists [...]. (Woolf 1985: 86; our italics)

As the quote shows, women must overcome their fear and guilt in subverting masculine expectations which they have inherited for centuries —along with the list of useless objects to be "laughed into the dustbin"— about what they are, about female nature, and about the ideological representation of the way things are in general: "Whitaker knows, and let that, so Nature counsels, comfort you, instead of enraging you; and if you can't be comforted [...] I understand Nature's game— her prompting to take action as a way of ending any thought that threatens to excite or to pain. Hence, I suppose, comes our slight contempt for men of action —men, we assume, who don't think" (1985: 88). For Woolf, writing —because it is materially available and because it is the major channel for subjective expression— paves the way towards future emancipation from the dominant *status quo*, which was a precarious ongoing process at the turn of the twentieth-century. Hence the sense of "illegitimate" freedom that the narrator enjoys only partially. Only three years after the publication of "The Mark on the Wall", Woolf's review essay "Men and Women" (1920) engaged in similar argumentation, namely women's invisibility as subjects throughout the ages, overshadowed by the deeds of dubious "men of action": even the most famous heroines in novels "represent what men desire in women, but not necessarily what women are in themselves" (1992b: 19).

Revealingly, social change and formal change appear to Woolf to be mutually dependant when giving expression to female experience in writing: "To try the accepted forms, to discard the unfit, to create others which are more fitting, is a task that must be accomplished before there is freedom and achievement" (Woolf 1992b: 20). Such formal experimentation must undoubtedly include an abandonment of the dominant perspective from which women view themselves, the world around them, and the position they occupy in it. Hence Woolf's sweeping statement about women writers of the past in "Two Women": "Writing was the most accessible of the arts, and write they did, but their books were deeply influenced by the angle from which they were forced to observe the world" (1992b: 116).

"The Mark on the Wall" poses the question that literature is also women's place, and its practice an emancipatory experience. The living room, the traditional site of pacifying domestic homeostasis, turns into its obverse: a space of subversion in which a subjective narrative perspective is compulsively engaged in exposing and throwing into disarray the assumed consistency of the dominant modes of viewing and representing reality, the values that they entail, and the subject-positions that they enforce as normal, natural ones. As a work of fiction, this short piece is at a far remove from the neutral perspective of those writers Woolf called "materialist" —whom she identified with the male gaze and patriarchal modes of thought— who constructed their narratives by placing detail after detail in a coherent and chronological fashion in the assumption that their representation of reality was objective and unbiased, a mirror of life:

> Suppose the looking-glass smashes, the image disappears, and the romantic figure with the green of forest depths is there no longer, but only that shell of a person which is seen by other people —what an airless, shallow, bald, prominent world it becomes! A world not to be lived in. As we face each other in omnibuses and underground railways we are looking into the mirror; that accounts for the vagueness, the gleam of glassiness, in our eyes. And the novelists in future will realise more and more the importance of these reflections, for of course there is not one reflection but an almost infinite number; those are the depths they will explore, those the phantoms they will pursue, leaving the description more and more out of their stories, taking a knowledge of it for granted. (1985: 85-86)

The narrator of "The Mark on the Wall" does not occupy this position of presumed neutrality that for Woolf could not possibly render "life" in a true manner. Such a vision of fiction-making, attached in the story to specific sites and places dominated by patriarchy, has a female counterpart, enacted by the liberating potential of an imaginary landscape "away from the surface, with its hard separate facts" (1985: 85), where figures representing male order, coherence and authority appear neutralised:

> Yes, one could imagine a very pleasant world. A quiet spacious world, with the flowers so red and blue in the open fields. A world without professors or specialists or house-keepers with the profiles of policemen, a world which one could slice with one's thought as a fish slices the water with his fin, grazing the stems of the water-lilies, hanging suspended over nests of white sea eggs [...]. How peaceful it is down here, rooted in the centre of the world and gazing up through the grey waters, with their sudden gleams of light and their reflections. (1985: 87-88)

Both the water imagery and the Edenic garden of the passage suggest initial rites of life and existence, as well as the female womb and the maternal, as Woolf herself would explain when dealing with her first memories in her autobiography "A Sketch of the Past" (1939), described in surprisingly similar terms to those quoted above: "I begin: the first memory. This was of red and purple flowers on a black ground —my mother's dress [...] and of hearing the waves breaking, one, two, one, two, and sending a splash of water over the beach" (1976: 64). Furthermore, as Ellen Hawkes has suggested (1981: 32), the imaginary garden is reminiscent of the Medieval *hortus conclusus*, an enclosed garden where women share their experiences from their exclusion of male official culture.

And it is precisely the mark on the wall, the main *leit motif* of the story, that prompts the narrator's subjective involvement which is in itself a position of resistance to male order, bringing along with it the distortion of the co-ordinates of reality as symbolically constructed: "Still, there's no harm in putting a full stop at one's disagreeable thoughts by looking at a mark on the wall. Indeed, now that I have fixed my eyes upon it, I feel that I have grasped a plank in the sea; I feel a satisfying sense of reality which at once turns the two Archbishops and the Lord High Chancellor to the shadows of shades. Here is something definite, something real" (1985: 88). The mark on the wall becomes, revealingly, the most significant object among those confined in the traditional living-room, in spite of its odd nature, which threatens order and coherence. The black blot is the narrator's sole focus of attention as well as the point of inception of her subversive thoughts. This indeterminate, meaningless stain "about six or seven inches above the mantelpiece" haunts the mind of the narrator to the point of upsetting the chronological distinction between past and present upon which traditional plots were delineated (Woolf 1985: 83). Thus, an event —the moment when the narrator "first looked up and saw the mark on the wall"— is repeated in the present of the narrative discourse causing a permanent conflation of the two temporal dimensions that should be kept separate. In the third paragraph of the story the reader is already confronted with temporal confusion: "But as for that mark, I'm not sure about it; I don't believe it *was* made by a nail after all; *it's* too big, too round, for that. I *might get up*, but if I *got up and looked at it*, ten to one I *shouldn't be able* to say for certain" (Woof 1985: 83-85; our italics). The narrator closes the story by

echoing the unequivocal statement made by the other voice heard in the narrative concerning the nature of the mark on the wall: "Ah, the mark on the wall! It *was* a snail" (Woolf 1985: 89; our emphasis). In view of the narrator's permanent confusion and of the use of the past tense in her concluding remark, the attachment of a clear meaning to the blot on the wall does not prove satisfactory for the narrator and does not bring the story to a final closure (Cyr 1996: 200).[7]

One of the possible ways of approaching the effects of the mark on the wall upon the narrator and the subverting implications for the dominant ideology is to consider it as a version of what Slavoj Zizek, following Jacques Lacan, called "phallic anamorphosis" (1991: 94), a distorted optical image which viewed from a certain angle reveals its true shape.[8] In the story, the mark on the wall functions both as the object and cause of desire, as a piece of the Lacanian unsymbolised Real that should be repressed, but returns to distort the cohesiveness of reality as symbolically constructed (1991: 94). Therefore, the dominant representation of reality or the ideological, naturalising version of how things are is questioned in Woolf's narrative and the subject's desire is activated as a result of this slackening of her pacifying, normalising identitary moorings. The eruption of the object into the surface of reality —from which it should remain excluded for reality to retain its coherence— prompts the transition in Woolf's unnamed narrator from subjectification, or the subjection to and assumption of dominant ideology as "natural", to subjectivity, or the fact that the subject is divided as to her desire. Hence the liberating potential of the anamorphic object's effects when one does not phlegmatically dismiss it as an ordinary "snail", a piece of dirt that should be wiped off "our wall". The mark of the wall, viewed as an anamorphic blot, drives the subjective narrative perspective of Woolf's story into a systematic interrogation of the consistence of all the accepted modes of representing reality. Thus, in a tone of real exasperation, the narrator starts this process of demolition by a radical questioning of the solidity of all human knowledge and of the meaning of existence: "Oh, dear me, the mystery of life! The inaccuracy of thought! The ignorance of humanity! To show how very little control of our possessions we have —what an accidental affair this living is after all our civilisation" (Woolf 1985: 84). In accordance with such provisional nature of knowledge and reality, life is perceived as a state of inaccessible, perpetual fluidity: "One must liken it [life] to being thrown through the Tube at fifty miles an hour [...]. Tumbling head over heels in the asphodel meadows [...]. Yes, that seems to express the rapidity of life, the perpetual waste and repair; all so casual, all so haphazard" (Woolf 1985: 84).[9]

As opposed to this, "historical fiction", educated talk about the tea-table, the "objective" novels of the materialists, "retired Colonels" turned into antiquaries and their diligent wives, "professors or specialists or housekeepers with the profiles of policemen", not only bore the narrator, but also emerge as exemplary features of an

unsatisfactory, precarious and lacking world (Woolf 1985: 87). Even nature acts in support of this normative status by forcing the subject to abandon her engagement with the object that disturbs her pacifying subjection through an equipoise of compensation and renunciation: "Here is Nature once more at her old game of self-preservation. This train of thought [to stand up and see what the mark on the wall really is], she [Nature] perceives, is threatening mere waste of energy, even some collision with reality, for who will ever be able to lift a finger against Whitaker's Table of Precedency?" (Woolf 1985: 88). "The Mark on the Wall" dramatises Woolf's position of resistance against those rules and values as embodied by Whitaker's table. The story works on the evocative power of an irrevocably gendered space, the living-room, which Woolf saw as culturally and ideologically determined by patriarchy. It has traditionally been a feminine realm whose laws appear to be dictated by male order, a place inhabited by the 'Angel in the House' to which Woolf would go back in her autobiography, discussing her own mother's place and education in her earlier Victorian household: "Little Holland House then was her education. She [Julia Stephen] was taught there to take such part as girls did then in the lives of distinguished men; to pour out tea; to hand them their strawberries and cream; to listen devoutly, reverently to their wisdom; to accept the fact that Watts was the great painter; Tennyson the great poet; and to dance with the prince of Wales" (1976: 88). The dynamics of the living-room is also the dynamics of female oppression, of subjectivisation, and of silence. The place is attached to submission as well as to a compulsion of acceptance of a particular set of values or ideology. Such was Woolf's own education and inheritance, as she described it in her autobiographical narrative "Phyllis and Rosamond" (1906), surrogate characters of Vanessa and herself: "To see them [Phyllis and Rosamond] in a drawing-room full of well-dressed men and women, is to see the merchant in the Stock Exchange, or the barrister in the Temple. This, every motion and word proclaims, is their native air; their place of business, their professional arena. Here, clearly, they practise the arts in which they have been instructed since childhood. Here, perhaps, they win their victories and win their bread [...]. The daughters answer submissively and then keep silence" (1985: 18-19). However, as the narrator argues, the picture of these two sisters "fails, but *where* it fails and *why* it fails *it will take some time and attention to discover*" (1985: 18; our italics). It would take Woolf another ten years to dramatise in "The Mark on the Wall" where and why those female portraits failed. The dynamics of ideology at work in the drawing-room was in urgent need of revision, and in 1917 Woolf was in a position to do so, being intellectually and economically independent as a woman and as a writer.

In this particular story, the traditionally female gendered space of the living room becomes a text, as Jameson would have it, made of objects which are culturally and ideologically charged, which work therefore as signs and codes that the narrator

reinterprets and reformulates in a subversive aesthetics of resistance. Woolf reverses the mechanics of reproduction as attached to the private and feminine realm by producing a text targeting patriarchy from the very place of its oppression. The apparent order and coherence which the living room inspires through its familiar objects —the armchair, mantelpiece, bowl of flowers and bookcases— are suddenly upset by an unfamiliar (and thus even uncanny) object threatening its former smoothness. The mark on the wall erupts into the surface of reality from which it should have remained excluded to retain its coherence. But it is precisely the presence of this black spot, with its anamorphic quality, that allows the narrator's transition from subjectification, or being the passive object of male gaze and desire as depicted in the imaginary portrait, to subjectivity, or the active female conscience that questions the assumed consistency of patriarchy and its modes of representing reality, her own femininity and the way to express it through the power of the written word. In this particular sense, the narrator argues, literature is also a female place, yet not as it exists at present in the obsolete conventions of male realist writing or "historical fiction" (1985: 85), a Victorian inheritance which, along with the "mahogany sideboards" or the "Landseer prints", the narrator rejects (1985: 84). Writing, as the narrator would have it, paves the way towards female emancipation through a radical reformulation of conventions and modes of viewing reality. Like the mark on the wall itself, female subjectivity and women's writing emerge as disruptive elements upsetting an established social order, and as anamorphic black blots out of place. And yet, as "The Mark on the Wall" shows, it is only through the exercise of this particular change of focus that such a mark realizes its full and radical liberating potential: "The mark on the wall [...] is taking its first view of modern life in the sight of a white-walled fire-lit room" (Woolf 1985: 87).

Notes

1. Foucault sees such a consideration inextricably related to the reduction of modern philosophical practice to the problematic of time, thus bringing about a correlative devaluation of space which would stand on the side of "understanding, the analytical, the conceptual, the dead, the fixed, the inert" (1972: 149), a view which is further developed in "Space, Knowledge, Power" (1984: 239-257). Sonia Villegas has claimed that "the category of space has been traditionally associated with the feminine gender, whereas time remained a male dominion" (2004: 12), although Villegas herself is aware of the presence of relevant critical voices (Kristeva 1986) who deauthorise this association.

2. For an excellent discussion of the use of traditional Victorian settings in Woolf's narrative, see Rachel Bowlby's essay "We're Getting There': Woolf, Trains and the Destination of Feminist Criticism" (1997: 3-15).

3. Such principles, which prefigure realist narratives, are overtly criticised by Woolf through her attack on the artistic

method of the male triumvirate of Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy and H.G. Wells in "Modern Fiction" (1925): "Mr Wells, Mr Bennett, and Mr Galsworthy have excited so many hopes and disappointed them so persistently that our gratitude largely takes the form of thanking them for having shown us what they might have done but have not done; what we certainly could not do, but as certainly, perhaps, do not wish to do [...]. If we fasten one label to all these books, of which one word is materialists, we mean by it that they write of unimportant things; that they spend immense skill and immense industry making the transitory appear the true and the enduring" (Woolf 1993: 6, 7).

4. For an interesting discussion on the relevance of portraits in Woolf's fiction, see Dennis Denisoff, "The Forest Beyond the Frame: Picturing Women's Desire in Vernon Lee and Virginia Woolf" (1999: 251-269).

5. Penny Boumelha has shown how at the turn of the century scientific discourse helped support the patriarchal ideology according to which women were "naturally" irrational, petty, vain, inconsequential, unstable and, therefore, in need of being confined to the sphere of home and family. Furthermore, Boumelha puts the stress on the fact —which she takes to be a symptom of man's anxiety about his sexual inadequacy— that feminine sexual unresponsiveness (a moral value *per se* according to which the best wives and mothers were those that seldom desired sexual gratification) was linked to its obverse (i.e., women's insatiability) (1982: 15).

6. As Maud Ellmann has suggested (1988), authorial impersonality is one of the most outstanding features of the modernist movement. T.S. Eliot argued that "the progress of the artist is a continual extinction of personality" (1932: 17). For Woolf, impersonality in fiction allows focus on the object of narratives, and not on the subject, the "damned egotistical self" (1978: 14) which, in her view, ruined the work of otherwise great writers such as Dorothy Richardson or James Joyce. Woolf is, however, contradictory and ambivalent as regards this question in other critical discussions, as is the case with "The Modern Essay" (1925): "The triumph is the triumph of style. For it is only by knowing how to write that you can make use in literature of your self; that self which, while it is essential to literature, it is also its most dangerous antagonist. Never to be yourself and yet always —that is the problem" (1994: 221).

7. The vision of the mark on the wall is not an experience recollected by the narrator from a safe, detached perspective, but rather a troubling experience the narrator is bound to relive in a manner akin to Freud's reference to the patient's repetition compulsion triggered by trauma: "He is obliged to repeat as a current experience what is repressed, instead of, as the physician would prefer to see him do, recollecting it as a fragment of the past" (Freud 1957: 149).

8. The most renowned example of anamorphosis in visual arts is Hans Holbein's *The Ambassadors* (1553), which Jacques Lacan discusses at length (1978: 79-90). The picture portrays the two French ambassadors at the English court surrounded by the icons of Renaissance culture. The coherence and unity of the painting is undermined by the presence of an amorphous, elongated object that engages the observer in a restless search for meaning, forcing its contemplation from different angles. At a given extreme point, the enigmatic object shows its true features —a skull— while the rest of the picture decomposes and falls from view. According to Zizek, the anamorphic stain is both the object-cause of desire, the piece of the Lacanian unsymbolised Real which should be repressed but returns to distort cohesiveness of reality as symbolically constructed (1991: 94).

9. Woolf may be echoing in this passage Walter Pater's aesthetics as defined in his "Introduction" to his seminal study *The Renaissance* (1873), where life is also described as a perpetual movement of "waste" and "repair": "Our physical life is a perpetual motion [...] —the passage of the blood, the waste and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain under every ray of light and sound— processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces" (1986: 150).

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Reviews

BOOKS IN MOTION. ADAPTATION, INTERTEXTUALITY, AUTHORSHIP

Mireia Aragay (ed.)
Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2005

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Many things have changed in the studies of film adaptation since the 1950s, when the notion of fidelity was presented as the main criterion for measuring the success of a book's "translation" into film. As Mireia Aragay shows in her introduction to *Books in Motion*, this view was finally debunked in the 1990s when the binary opposition between "original" and "copy" was finally replaced with more fluid concepts of intertextuality and dialogism, allowing for a freer dialogue between both media. *Books in Motion* is clearly inscribed within this trend, supporting the ideas of recent criticism on film adaptation which sees this practice as a form of "intertextual dialogism" (25) and proposes a "reciprocally transformative model" (30) between literature and film.

Yet, in spite of most critics' agreement on the unsuitability of the fidelity criterion for measuring the quality of film versions of written texts, it is striking how this debate, far from waning in importance, still constitutes the core of most research on contemporary film adaptation, including Aragay's compilation. Even though the book's subtitle is "Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship", it might as well be called "The Fidelity Debate", since most contributors to the volume reflect at some point on this question, making it at times the central thesis of their chapters. Although tackled from different (and sometimes, very original) perspectives, the notion of fidelity constitutes a recurrent issue throughout the book, thus becoming its main unifying principle.

Of course, this concern with fidelity is not inappropriate in a compilation which deals with the relationship between literature and film. What catches the reader's attention is the book's insistence on the issue despite critical agreement on the shortcomings of the fidelity criterion and the inappropriateness of pursuing this debate further: if this is such an outdated concept, why do the contributors to the volume go back to it over and over only to reach the same conclusion? This may be an indication that, despite claims to the contrary, the fidelity debate is far from exhausted. In the end, the general conclusion that can be drawn from this compilation may be better summarized by a quotation of Robert Stam's which is frequently cited by the contributors of *Books in Motion*: "Film adaptations [...] are caught up in the ongoing whirl of intertextual reference and transformation, of texts generating other texts in an endless process of recycling, transformation and transmutation, with no clear point of origin" (2000: 66).

In an effort to organize the authors' contributions, *Books in Motion* is divided into four sections which sometimes feel somewhat arbitrary, since the inevitable disparity between many of these chapters make it very difficult to turn them into a coherent, well-integrated whole. The first section, "Paradoxes of Fidelity", tackles head-on with the issue of faithfulness to the source text and its interest lies in its will to take this debate further. In fact, it is taken so far that traditional notions of fidelity are radically reversed by Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan's chapter on *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001) and John Style's article on *A Tale of Two Cities* (1958). These authors propose quite daring (though sometimes problematic) positions in arguing that a film's excess of attention to the original may undermine its quality, as is the case of *Harry Potter*, or that a film may be more faithful to the "original" than the original text itself, as Style suggests. Less polemical but equally original is Sara Martin's chapter on Peter Kosminsky's *Wuthering Heights* (1992), which throws light upon an aspect of film adaptation largely forgotten by critics, namely, the adaptation of character, which is usually subordinated to a preoccupation with the successful adaptation of plot.

The focus of "Authors, Auteurs, Adaptation", the next section of the book, is on the connection that is established between auteurism and contemporary notions of film adaptation, such as the lack of reverence towards the original and the non-hierarchical relationship between literature and art. These new views in the field of adaptation enable the "birth" of a new kind of auteur: a decentred author, exemplified in this volume by Doris Dörrie. Margaret McCarthy's study of her authorial figure contains a paradox: Dörrie's double condition as writer and filmmaker render her an interesting figure in the contemporary panorama of adaptation studies, but McCarthy's analysis pays too much attention to her work and too little to the specific issue of film adaptation. Current adaptation theory's disregard for faithfulness to the original is also tackled by Karen Diehl's article,

which cleverly links notions of adaptation and auteurism by analysing the meaning of authorial appearances in *Le temps retrouvé* (1999), *Shakespeare in love* (1999), *The Hours* (2002) and *Adaptation* (2002). This revival of the author seems to place him/her as origin and master of his/her writing, but it can also have the opposite effect: depending on the film's use of authorial narrative techniques the author may be presented as a disempowered figure. Since being faithful to a text implies fidelity to its author (Diehl 2005: 103), these films' critique of the authorial figure as immutable origin and unifying principle of the text means a questioning of the need to be faithful to that text. Lastly, the figure of the auteur in connection with adaptation is further explored by Thomas Leitch, who wonders why some adapters remain metteurs-en-scène while others like Hitchcock, Kubrick or Disney achieve the status of auteurs. There are several reasons for this but Leitch highlights the creation of a public persona capable of being turned into a recognizable trademark as the indispensable factor in the achievement of auteur status.[1]

In spite of the third part's title, "Contexts, Intertexts, Adaptation", the first two chapters could have been included in the section on fidelity. Manuel Barbeito's article constitutes a detailed analysis of John Houston's adaptation of Joyce's *The Dead* (1987), tracing the differences between literary and filmic text and focusing on the illuminating power of these differences, which he analyses lucidly. Lindiwe Dovey's article also deals with the fidelity debate, and her chapter constitutes a very valuable contribution because it widens the book's perspective by paying attention to non-western literature and film. Her analysis of *Fools* (1997) suggests that the mechanisms of fidelity work differently in a continent marked by a traumatic history, since "unfaithfulness" to the original text has a different meaning in the case of African adaptations, in this case a political function.

The next two chapters are more in sync with the title: dealing with filmic versions of Shakespeare and Jane Austen's works, two of the most frequently adapted authors of all time, these articles explore the complex intertextual network built around them and suggest that the absorption of the originals into this dialogic web of intertextuality necessarily casts a new light upon the source texts. José Ángel García Landa deals with film adaptations of *Henry V* and Mireia Aragay and Gemma López tackle two versions of *Pride and Prejudice:* the mini-series for the BBC and the *Bridget Jones* films and books. What both articles have in common is the foregrounding of the complexity of these authors' situation, which goes beyond the usual relationship between original and adaptation because of the great amount of cultural baggage they carry with them. Ultimately, both articles argue in favour of "interpretative" film adaptations and a non-hierarchical relationship between discourses.

Two of the three articles in the last section, "Beyond Adaptation", deal *again* with fidelity. Celestino Deleyto's chapter on *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) and *High*

Fidelity (2000) constitutes a remarkable exception in this respect, since it is one of the very few chapters in the book which leaves aside questions of fidelity in order to focus on a yet unexplored aspect of the relationship between film and literature: the figure of the narrator. Deleyto's approach finally shows that there is more to film adaptation than the fidelity debate. The inclusion of more articles like this one (concerned with different or unusual aspects of adaptation other than fidelity) would have enriched the scope of this volume considerably, throwing light upon less hackneyed issues. This does not mean, of course, that the rest of the authors' approaches are unoriginal. Belén Vidal, for instance, introduces for the first time in the book a feminist perspective by dismissing traditional notions of fidelity in favour of a dialogic reading of the past which allows the inscription of present-day feminist consciousness into nineteenth century narratives. With this purpose she examines *Mansfield Park* (1999) and *The Governess* (1998), a film based on an original script, which feels a little inappropriate for analysis in a book about film adaptation.

Lastly, Pedro Javier Pardo García's article also deals with issues of fidelity and intertextuality but it constitutes one of the most interesting chapters in this compilation, not only because of his brilliant analysis of *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994) but, more importantly, because his is the most extensive and lucid contribution to the thesis supported by most of the chapters but only tackled in detail by a few: that present-day adaptation should be redefined as cultural intertextuality. His ideas are all the more convincing as they are conveniently borne out by textual evidence, since this article shows how Kenneth Branagh's film adapts the myth of Frankenstein as much as it does the original book, which has become just one more version of the myth. The conclusions he draws about film adaptation may well serve as general conclusions for the whole volume, since most contributors seem to agree on the need to replace the concept of fidelity with that of intertextuality. This "replacement" deviates from traditional ideas about film adaptation in three main aspects: firstly, reproduction of the original source is given as much importance as transformation and interpretation; secondly, the cultural context in which adaptation originates (including the strategies of adaptation active in that system) is taken into account; and lastly, the intertextual network is widened in order to include not only previous film versions of the original text but also other discourses within the cultural context. All these propositions allow for a more accurate (and realistic) account of contemporary practices of film adaptation which do not involve a straightforward relationship between original and adaptation but a much more complex interplay of sources best defined by the concept of intertextuality.

Even though *Books in Motion* could have widened its scope by including articles dealing with a greater variety of topics (for instance, it could have devoted a chapter

to exploring how texts are adapted cross-culturally), its consideration of popular culture texts instead of an exclusive focus on canonical works, and its keeping up to date with the latest theories of film adaptation make it a very valuable contribution to this critical field of study. A field which is by no means exhausted since, as *Books in Motion* shows, general critical agreement on the death of the fidelity criterion does not mean the death of the debate, which seems to be alive and well... if only to be reversed.

Notes

1. Even though it is not explicitly mentioned by Leitch, his view of what constitutes auteurism nowadays is closely connected with Timothy Corrigan's, who defends the reduction of the contemporary auteur to a mere commercial strategy, a brand name dependent on the filmmaker's public persona (1991).

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GENDER AND CASTE IN THE ANGLOPHONE-INDIAN NOVELS OF ARUNDHATI ROY AND GITHA HARIHARAN. FEMINIST ISSUES IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Antonia Navarro-Tejero
New York: The Edwin Meller Press, 2005
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The current postmodern calling into question of the existence of master-narratives which attempt to represent unquestionable universal Truths has entailed emergence of small personal narrations which provide readers with new perspectives opened up by other previously silenced subject positions. During the last few decades, there have been numerous attempts to recover subaltern memories that had been traumatically suppressed or apparently forgotten. This is the case of many post-colonial women writers who fill their books with personal stories foregrounding the political importance that giving voice to those previously silenced has for their own past and present historical context.

In the belief that literature is not an isolated discipline but closely related to other social activities, Dr. Antonia Navarro-Tejero provides us with a lucid study of a complexity of feminist issues in contemporary India through the detailed analysis of two well-known Anglophone-Indian novels. In her book *Gender and Caste in the Anglophone-Indian Novels of Arundhati Roy and Githa Hariharan. Feminist Issues in Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, Navarro-Tejero focuses on the analysis of Roy's *God of Small Things* and Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* in order to explore the different ways in which the subaltern comes to be subjugated in contemporary India. While Hariharan's novel deals with the oppression of women of the upper castes in an urban setting, Roy portrays the hypocritical permanence of an invisible caste system in a supposedly casteless rural Christian community

which marginalises those characters who try to break with long-standing gender and caste taboos. Thus, by drawing an exhaustive and well-argued comparison of these two novels, Navarro-Tejero's excellent choice of novels allows her to offer a remarkably wide vision of the complexity of the female experience in post-colonial India which helps to break the traditional stereotypes that for so long have simplified the Western perspectives on female oppression in the East, more concretely, in the Indian subcontinent.

The opening chapter of the book provides the reader with a general overview of the historical evolution of gender theory in India. It carefully relates the historical, social and political context with the most prominent literary productions in every period. From the general introduction, the author moves to concrete aspects of Indian literary composition and ends the chapter with an introduction to the main aspects of the two novels to be analysed in more detail in the following chapters. Navarro-Tejero illuminates the reader with her broad knowledge of female Indian writing and at some points in this chapter she interestingly compares the political and literary struggle of women in India with that of their Western counterparts. For instance, in note 16, she reveals that women's role of self-abnegating mothers, daughters and sisters is not an exclusively Indian issue, as Westerns feminists such as Virginia Woolf had already tackled the subject in *A Room of One's Own* where she described the same function imposed on English women of her time. For all the interesting feminist analysis of the complex representation of the female condition in Anglophone Indian literature, I would have welcomed a more extensive treatment of the feminist struggle in the East as compared with that of the West, since the author proves to be familiar with the issue and could have done a very interesting cross-cultural study by connecting similar ideological discourses at work in the oppression of women in both Eastern and Western societies carried out under the apparent disguise of different cultural peculiarities.

Driven by the need to tell personal stories that have always been marginalised in favour of official versions of history and society offered exclusively by those groups in power, many contemporary post-colonial women writers have made use of the autobiography or bildungsroman as the most appropriate literary genres for the expression of the construction of a new identity which had been previously erased. These writers provide what Tress has labelled "counter-memories" of the past (1991: 69), and it has been argued that this recovery of repressed and obligatorily forgotten memories has undeniable importance as it is above all an act of survival for the subaltern (Felman 1993: 13). Both Hariharan and Roy invariably do this, which is why, as early as in the second chapter of her book, Navarro-Tejero moves on to analyse the unconventional use of the Western form of the Bildungsroman by the Indian women writers as a clever way of exposing the clash between the psychological and social development of female subjectivity. Analysing in detail the

three stages of childhood, adolescence and adulthood, Navarro-Tejero draws a rigorous comparison with examples from the two novels that puts to the test the social constrictions that subjugate the development of female subjectivity to the patriarchal social norm.

The three following chapters are devoted to the main forms of oppression for women in India: the family, religion and the state. In Chapter 3, the author focuses on the stories of discontent of the female characters in both novels within the family, how women are used for economic transactions in the patriarchal model of the family and how they are often physically and psychologically abused by the male figures, no matter the caste, the level of education or the religious community they belong to. The ideology that supports the vision of women as second class citizens and thus justifies their submission to patriarchal roles is often based on traditional religious myths taken mainly from the Hindu culture. Navarro-Tejero argues that both Roy and Hariharan propose in their novels a revision of these myths, which they do not consider to be male chauvinist *per se*. The author mentions other mythological narratives with powerful female heroines which have been suppressed, and proves how most of the myths have been interpreted and manipulated by male Brahmins in order to maintain the privileges of their own group. That is why the apparently privileged upper-class Brahmin women are also shown to be sexually, emotionally and psychologically repressed in *The Thousand Faces of Night*, and in *The God of Small Things* Roy ironically portrays the extreme suffering of a Christian woman from the moment she decides to break the boundaries of class, religion and the apparently invisible caste system of the Syrian Christian community. Navarro-Tejero makes an exhaustive comparison of the two novels in order to show the pervasive female oppression across all the different communities and how the traditional patriarchal manipulation of Hindu myths is also present in other religious communities. This cross-cultural analysis allows Navarro-Tejero to offer the reader a broad vision of the female condition in Indian culture which goes beyond the stereotype of the voiceless low-caste Hindu woman. Nevertheless, the comparison of Hindu and Christian communities in India could also have been extended to include the myths found in the Christian religion not only in India but also in the Western world and thus offer an analysis of world-wide scope. In Chapter 5, the last one devoted to the specific forms of female oppression, the author focuses on the State, which helps to maintain institutional forms of oppression for the marginal groups, not only women, but also children and the Dalits. Navarro-Tejero manages again to widen the scope of her analysis to different levels of social oppression through several passages from the two novels in which institutional oppression is present both in the Brahminical culture and in the communities ruled by a supposedly communist ideology.

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One of the book's greatest strengths is the final reconciliation of male and female traditional cultural antagonisms that both novels provide and that Navarro-Tejero analyses in Chapter 6. She first tackles the issue of the difficulties that manless women (widows or single women) have to face in modern India and how Roy and Hariharan defend the dignity of these women and the need to develop an independent female identity which should not rely on the presence of a male figure for its realization. Roy and Hariharan also emphasize the difficulties a psychological reconciliation with the maternal involves, as mothers in their novels represent not only love, but also oppression for their daughters, since they have traditionally been associated with the preservation of the status quo, based on the patriarchal norm (San Juan 2002: 61). After this reconciliation has healed wounds born by female characters of the two generations, Navarro-Tejero defends the androgynous alternative as the solution proposed by these novelists, the union of masculine and feminine values which no longer oppress any individual. This androgynous ideal is present in both the form and the content of the novels, and has political implications for the representation of the national interests as reflected in them; in this sense the author highlights the importance of the memory of individuals who have historically been relegated to silence, and the conventions of this kind of recovered-memory-driven fiction which are present in these two novels in particular and the female post-colonial fiction in general. The book ends with strong emphasis on the political dimension of these personal stories, as, in Navarro-Tejero's words, "the quest for the self becomes a quest for a nation, a nation to be changed, rules to be revised and myths to be retold" (2005: 143).

Navarro-Tejero takes up again the main points in the book to draw her final conclusion in the clearly written final remarks of the book, which is a real eye-opener on the complexity of the female subjectivity in the different "Indias" that are to be found in the South Asian subcontinent. This carefully structured and reader-friendly book is a rewarding read not only for scholars and students involved in the analysis of feminist issues in post-colonial India, but also for anyone interested in the literary productions and cultural expressions of this fascinating country, who will surely enrich their knowledge of these issues by this relevant contribution.

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Abstracts

IMAGINING ADAM'S DREAM: KEATS'S CHAMBER OF MAIDEN THOUGHT IN *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Laura Alexander Linker

The purpose of this essay is to explore how Keats constructs Porphyro's and Madeline's physical and metaphysical identities in the poem and to examine the relationship of gender to the artistic process, which Keats presents lyrically as a vision of the poetical character outlined in his letters. Based on Keats's description of "Adam's Dream", the poetic process, the character of the poet, and the chamber of maiden thought in his letters, I argue that, in the poem, Porphyro represents the androgynous poet surrendering his masculine identity for a feminine one —Madeline's. Though Madeline occupies a traditional Petrarchan role as muse to Porphyro, she nevertheless displays imaginative longings for divine inspiration— qualities typically associated with the poet, not his muse.

Key words: Keats, *Eve of St. Agnes*, chamber of maiden thought, poetical character, imagination, gender.

Este artículo pretende explorar la manera en que Keats construye la identidad física y metafísica de Porphyro y Madeline en el poema, así como analizar la relación del género con el proceso artístico, que Keats presenta de forma lírica como una visión del personaje poético esbozado en sus cartas. Basándome en la descripción de Keats del "Sueño de Adán", el proceso poético, el personaje del poeta, y la *chamber of maiden thought* de sus cartas, mi tesis es que, en el poema, Porphyro representa el poeta andrógino que cede su identidad masculina a cambio de una femenina —la de Madeline. Aunque Madeline, como musa de Porphyro, responde a los esquemas petrarquistas tradicionales, la doncella muestra al mismo tiem-

po unos anhelos imaginativos de inspiración divina—, cualidades que se asocian tradicionalmente con el poeta, no con su musa.

Palabras clave: Keats, *Eve of St. Agnes, chamber of maiden thought*, personaje poético, imaginación, género.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE END. /OU TOPOS/: AN APPROACH TO THE ART OF SAMUEL BECKETT

Nela Bureu Ramos

The way to */ou topos/* is the way of most characters in the plays of Samuel Beckett. However, because they are trapped inside the categories of time and place, they can go no further than stasis, to a waiting in hopelessly hopeful stagnation. Their journey has been a relay race ever since Milton's angels turned Adam and Eve into homeless victims of memory and desire. They are waiting for someone or something to take over —but what: responsibility? power? control? Is the journey Beckett's poetic of the desire of humans to communicate? Or is it an existential blueprint for the unanchored self? The eschatological catechism of mortality?

The aim of my essay is to analyse this literary journey through the eyes, mouth and guts of several of Beckett's always signal characters.

Key words: Utopia, Milton, journey, Beckett, stasis, */ou topos/*

Una de las paradojas que plantea la obra de Beckett, como la de Arthur Schopenhauer, de cuya filosofía se nutre este irlandés universal, es que, tal vez, la negación sea el único camino que le quede al ser humano para recobrar la serenidad perdida, por no hablar de inocencia. Para Beckett, sin embargo, la negación es espera: el único topos que nos queda después del fracaso de la andadura humana a nivel ontológico: ya nos hemos pateado una historia, ahora tal vez podamos retornar al mito para empezar un nuevo y más prometedor viaje hacia nosotros mismos.

Como sus antepasados en la obra de Milton, Adán y Eva, los personajes de Beckett viajan de dos en dos. Ahora, maltrechos y sin memoria, esperan a las puertas de la Utopia de la cual fueron expulsados.

Se niega el lenguaje para convertirlo en letanía con visos de oración. La acción se paraliza, el ser se despoja de todo lo que le impidió permanecer en el Paraíso.

Quizás, la puerta se abra de nuevo. Sólo quizás.

Pero la esperanza sigue latiendo.

Palabras clave: Beckett, literatura, utopía, filosofía, historia/mito

EXPLORING IDENTITY ISSUES IN BRITISH MEN'S MAGAZINES' PROBLEM PAGES: A CULTURAL STUDIES PERSPECTIVE

Eduardo de Gregorio Godeo

Focusing on problem pages as a genre, this paper casts light on the varied subject positions or images of masculinity constructed in British men's magazines (*FHM*, *GQ*, *Later*, *Maxim*, *Men's Health*, *Sky Magazine* and *ZM*) at the end of the nineties. After theorizing the notion of 'identity' from a cultural studies perspective, and exploring men's magazines as an arena for the articulation of masculinities in contemporary UK, men's lifestyle magazines' problem columns are examined in relation to the enduring presence of so-called 'newmannism' and 'laddishness' as major masculine subject positions made available to the magazines' consumers. Rather than attempting to demonstrate any new changes in men's subjectivities at the end of the twentieth century, the emphasis of this study is on showing how, contrary to a widely held view among men's magazines analysts, newmannism did not fade away with the emergence of laddishness in the early nineties, but both subject positions were still very much alive at the end of the nineties. Through an analysis of illustrative examples, this contribution substantiates how the act of reading such a cultural artefact as men's magazines' problem pages provides male readers with access to masculine subject positions, no matter whether they are subsequently taken up or resisted.

Key words: Britain, cultural studies, identity, 'laddishness', masculinity, men's magazines, 'newmannism', problem pages, subject positions

Centrándose en el género de los consultorios, este artículo arroja luz sobre las posiciones de sujeto —o imágenes de la masculinidad— que se construyen en las revistas masculinas británicas (*FHM*, *GQ*, *Later*, *Maxim*, *Men's Health*, *Sky Magazine* y *ZM*) a finales de los noventa. Tras teorizar la noción de "identidad" desde los Estudios Culturales, y explorar el papel de las revistas para hombres como escenario de articulación de masculinidades en el Reino Unido actual, se examinan los consultorios de estas revistas en relación a la persistencia del llamado "newmanismo" y "ladismo" en tanto que posiciones de sujeto proyectadas entre los lectores. Lejos de pretender demostrar nuevos cambios en las subjetividades de los varones a finales del siglo XX, este trabajo demuestra cómo, frente a lo que se viene afirmado, el "newmanismo" no desapareció con la aparición del "ladismo" a principios de los noventa, sino que ambas posiciones de sujeto estaban plenamente vigentes a finales de los noventa. Mediante el análisis de muestras ilustrativas, este trabajo corrobora cómo la lectura de un artefacto cultural como los consultorios de las revistas masculinas permite a los lectores acceder a posiciones de sujeto sobre lo masculino, independientemente de que se asuman o se rechacen.

Palabras clave: Reino Unido, masculinidad, Estudios Culturales, identidad, consultorios de revistas masculinas

WORDSWORTH'S 'TINTERN ABBEY' AND THE TRADITION OF THE 'HYMNAL' ODE

Sandro Jung

Despite the claims for simplicity of language that Wordsworth articulated in the early years of his literary career, especially in the "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* —his pronounced difference from earlier (Neoclassical) poets, poetic practice, and the forms of poetry of the Augustans— he could not escape what Walter Jackson Bate long ago termed the "burden of the past". Wordsworth's indebtedness to his literary forbears is not only ideational but formal as well. The present article aims to examine Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and relate it to the tradition of the hymnal ode used so masterfully by William Collins in the mid-century, at the same time reconsidering the generic conceptualisation of the poem as an ode in all but name which in its structure and essence re-evokes mid-century hymnal odes but which is contextualised within Wordsworth's notion of emotional immediacy and simplicity.

Key words: William Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey", hymnal ode, William Collins, poetic practice.

A pesar de la pretendida sencillez formal de la que Wordsworth hizo gala en los primeros años de su carrera literaria, especialmente en el "Prefacio" a las *Lyrical Ballads* —que le diferenció radicalmente de los poetas (neoclásicos) anteriores, la práctica poética y las formas de la poesía de los *Augustans*— el poeta no pudo escapar de lo que Walter Jackson Bate llamó hace ya tiempo "la carga del pasado". La deuda de Wordsworth para con sus antecesores literarios no es sólo de conceptos sino también de formas. El presente artículo tiene como objetivo examinar "Tintern Abbey" de Wordsworth en relación con la tradición de la *hymnal ode* que empleó con maestría William Collins a mediados de siglo, al mismo tiempo que reconsidera la conceptualización genérica del poema como una oda en todo menos en el nombre, que en su estructura y esencia vuelve a traer a la memoria las *hymnal odes* de mediados de siglo pero que se enmarca dentro de la noción de inmediatez emocional y sencillez que caracterizan a Wordsworth.

Palabras clave: William Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey", *hymnal ode*, William Collins, práctica poética.

ASPECTS OF INDIAN MODERNITY: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

Mohan Ramanan

The paper attempts to delineate the contours of Indian modernity by showing that it is primarily colonial modernity which is a factor in the modern Indian nation taking shape. India is distinguised from Bharat which is the old name for the geographical space which is India. Bharat is traditional and India is modern. The paper shows that these categories need not be irreconcilable opposites, that the Indian way has been to effect a dynamic partnership of the past and the present, tradition and modernity, that if India does not do so now her future is at stake. The paper examines the growth of modernity in India through the nineteenth century and argues that to a large extent even this modernity and the stirrings of nationhood are informed by a spiritual attitude to life. The paper in short argues for a usable past which will preserve the best from tradition, select from it that which is useful and reject the dross so as to forge a future which is intimately linked with the past. Evolution, rather than revolution is the paper's burden. That is the Indian way.

Key words: tradition, modernity, Bharat, India, secularism, spirituality, evolution.

Éste artículo pretende trazar el contorno de la modernidad india para demostrar que la modernidad colonial es un factor primordial en el surgimiento de la India como nación moderna. La India se contrapone a Bharat, que es el nombre que designaba antiguamente a este espacio geográfico que hoy es India. Bharat es tradicional y la India es moderna. El artículo muestra que estas categorías no tienen por qué ser opuestos irreconciliables, que el estilo de la India ha sido promover una asociación dinámica entre pasado y presente, tradición y modernidad, que el futuro de la India está en juego si no sigue por este camino. El ensayo examina el surgimiento de la modernidad en la India durante el siglo diecinueve y defiende que en gran medida esta modernidad y el despertar de la nación están imbuidos de una actitud espiritual ante la vida. En resumen, el artículo defiende un pasado aprovechable que conserve lo mejor de la tradición, escoja de ella lo que resulte útil y rechace la escoria para forjar un futuro que está íntimamente ligado al pasado. Evolución, más que revolución, es el tema principal del artículo. Este es, en definitiva, el estilo de la India.

Palabras clave: tradición, modernidad, Bharat, India, laicismo, espiritualidad, evolución.

GENDERED SPACES AND FEMALE RESISTANCE: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S "THE MARK ON THE WALL"

Jorge Sacido Romero and Laura M. Lojo Rodríguez

Virginia Woolf's conviction that space is never a neutral emptiness, but a web of cultural, social and ideological relations is the issue at stake in the present paper. Gender and space are constructed as mutually dependant categories, and, as far as Woolf was concerned, both appear in need of revision and rethinking. Woolf's short story "The Mark on the Wall", published as early as 1917, dramatises such a need, while advancing certain ideological assumptions embodied in a particular imagery which will reappear in some of her later work. The mark on the wall, both the title and the key image which structures the narrative, emerges as a disturbing block that threatens to diminish order and coherence within the confines of the space which the traditional living-room entails, by focusing on the narrator's subversive and tantalising reflections.

Key words: Virginia Woolf, short story, "The Mark on the Wall", gender, space, anamorphosis.

La convicción de Virginia Woolf de que el espacio no es un vacío neutral, sino una red de relaciones culturales, sociales e ideológicas constituye el tema principal del presente ensayo. El género y el espacio se articulan como categorías interdependientes, y, en lo que concierne a la obra de Woolf, requieren ambas de una revisión y reconceptualización. El relato titulado "The Mark on the Wall" de Virginia Woolf, que apareció por primera vez publicado en 1917, expresa tal urgencia, al tiempo que avanza ciertos presupuestos ideológicos que aparecen representados en imágenes recurrentes en obras posteriores. La marca en la pared, a la vez título e imagen central que estructura el discurso narrativo, funciona a modo de obstáculo inquietante y desestabilizador que, por medio de las reflexiones subversivas y dubitativas del narrador anónimo, amenaza con minar el orden y la coherencia operativos en el marco espacial representado por el ámbito doméstico tradicional.

Palabras clave: Virginia Woolf, narrativa breve, "The Mark on the Wall", género, espacio, anamórfosis.

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