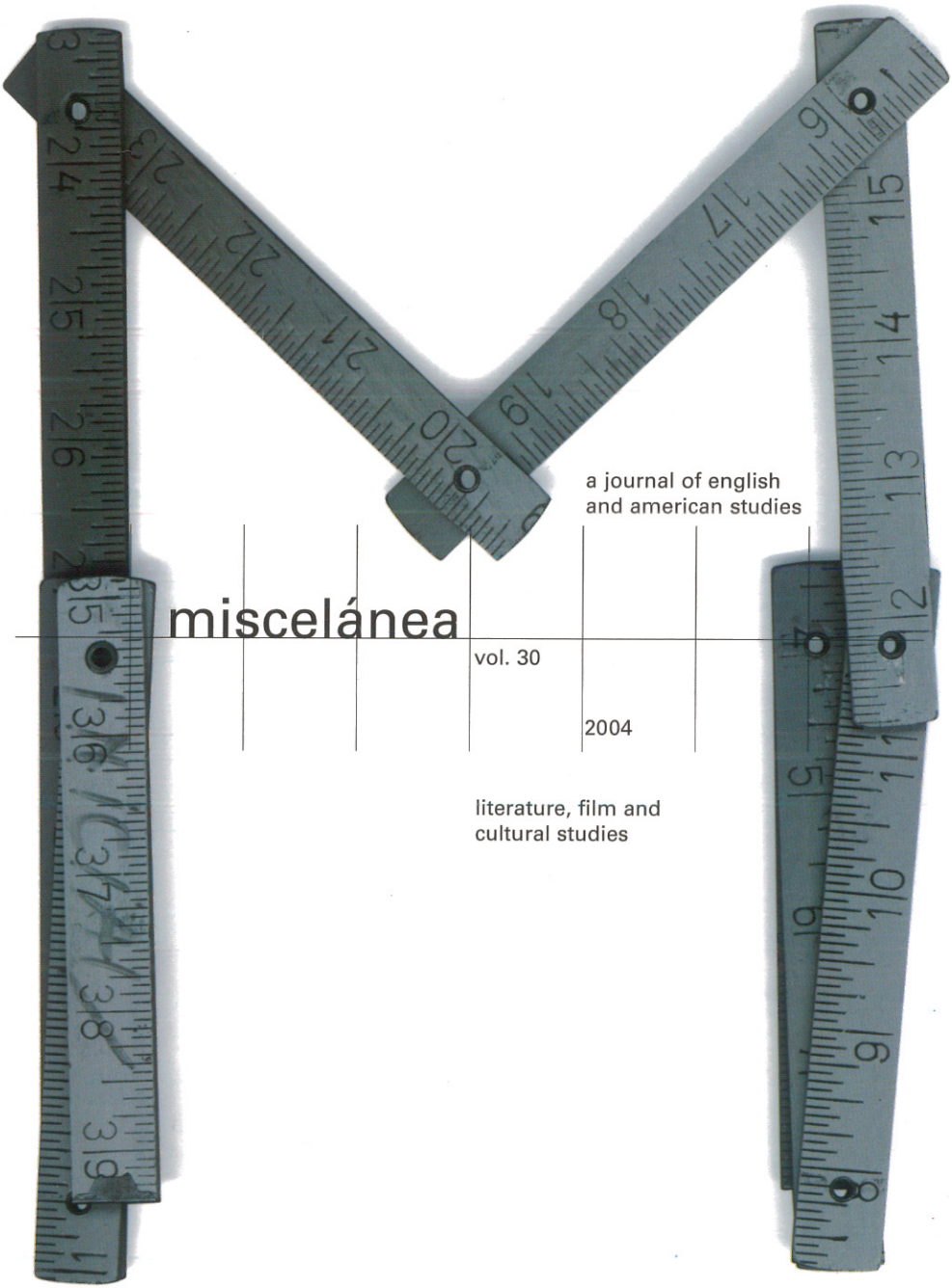

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Articles

WRITING THE LIFE OF THE TEXT: THE CASE OF W. B. YEATS

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University of London

1. Instability and intention

"Many times man lives and dies/Between his two eternities" (1966a: 637), writes Yeats, and the same is true of most texts that writers write. Using authors' and publishers' archives (in the broadest and the most minute senses) textual biography can trace those multitudinous textual lives, afterlives and new lives in real incarnations. Those latter categories are whole subjects in themselves, and for other occasions: my examples here are confined to the lives of certain texts during the lifetime of W. B. Yeats, whose life has recently been written, definitively and over two volumes, by Roy Foster.[1]

My point of departure is Yeats's well-known textual restlessness, which I have thought about a good deal as an editor.[2] He endlessly revised his work, and I was once inclined to see this as others (such as Curtis Bradford, Thomas Parkinson or Jon Stallworthy) had seen it, as evidence of a Darwinian process of aesthetic self-criticism, within the narrow focus of the work —the word, the line, the poem.

At the core of such textual instability is authorial intention itself: in Yeats's case the destabilising dream of finality, perfectionism, a collected works, an *oeuvre* (which he openly wanted from 1895 onwards), "something intended, complete" (Yeats 1961: 509). Focusing upon the apparent achievement of perfection within the confines of a single poem or set of textual changes, we can readily come to agree

with Yeats that "a poem comes right with a click like a closing box" (1964: 22);[3] or with Carol Shields's answer to the question "How does a poet know when a poem is ended?" —"Because it lies flat, taut, nothing can be added or subtracted" (1994: 71).[4]

If we do, we can lose sight of two forces which intersect at every point to make up the textual continuum. At any particular textual level, Yeats's perfectionism was exercised within the imperfect medium which print and publication provide, and —as often as not— against prevailing external circumstances. Though a number of Yeats's poems continue without major post-publication revision —"The Cloths of Heaven" and "No Second Troy" come to mind (1966a: 176, 256-7)— the blunt fact is that most of them must have 'clicked' not once but several times, on successive occasions, as they were revised and reworked. They are creatures of changing circumstances. Making was unmaking and remaking. Whereas Auden and Eliot saw with Valéry that, in the end, a poem is "never finished; it is only abandoned", Yeats was much less interested in a conception of poetry as pure process than was his French *symboliste* counterpart.[5] He had to believe in final intention in order to write, and if new textual perfection proved provisional, its meanings included an intended disavowal of a previous perfection. By contrast, James Joyce was not a post-publication rewriter (he was wholly given over to the writing of *Finnegans Wake* when some thought he should have been correcting *Ulysses*). By contrast, again, and in the other direction, George Moore exemplifies the terrible fluidity of prose we all know about when we hit a word-processor. While both he and Yeats used proof states as new drafts, Yeats's foreconceits as a writer were firm in their rejection, through refinement, of older ones.

In fact, Yeats's dream of finished form *itself* led to the 'stitching and unstitching', but the field in which it operated is that of bibliographical opportunity. Yeats was a professional in a print culture. Roy Foster's two volumes offer in considerable detail the conditions of authorship and patronage in which Yeats laboured. There is, too, the world of the Irish newspapers, a mirror of fissiparous opinion where the writer saw himself, and was seen in his writing's earliest contexts. The necessity of his getting a reputation elsewhere aroused the hostility of Irish reviewers, and he had an uncanny ability to answer them. New writing is a dialogue.

Before he went to Macmillan in 1916, Yeats had as many as four publishers at a time: the mean, "illtempered" T. Fisher Unwin (who made small, dependable money for him),[6] the peevish Elkin Mathews who sold *The Wind Among the Reeds* to an audience fit though very few, Ernest Oldmeadow, a con-man who ended his days as a wine merchant and as editor of *The Tablet*, A. H. Bullen who had problems with cash-flow and drink-flow —not to mention Leonard Smithers, the charming pornographer whose *Savoy* magazine cash allowed Yeats to leave home

and consummate his affair with Olivia Shakespear in 1896. There was also John Lane in New York. Yeats had too many publishers because none who believed in him made money from him. Their deferrals led him to insist on short term contracts and new textual occasions, to a finality sought yet deferred, to provisionality.

Textual instability and textual 'improvement' therefore, look rather differently as matters of bibliographical occasion and opportunism. The textual field has about it all the contingency that is implied in Yeats's remark to Florence Farr in 1914: "when one begins to write one's books are a sufficient history".[7] Introducing a bibliography appended to *The Works of Max Beerbohm* John Lane remarked, "It is impossible for one to compile a bibliography of a great man's works without making it in some sense a biography —and indeed in the minds of not a few people I have found a delusion that the one is identical with the other" (1896: 163). One has only to glance through Stuart Mason's *Bibliography of Oscar Wilde* in order to see the truth of Lane's drollery: indeed —how appropriate that the remark is Lane's since it was Lane who refused to pay Yeats a penny on royalties due to him for sales of *The Wind Among the Reeds* in the United States.

For the moment, however, I'll put biography and bibliography at opposite ends of a spectrum. My perspective is that of the books themselves, and of the texts they contain. Yeats thought in terms of books: the arrangement and order of poems and their look on the page were part of his creative process. That obsession with *oeuvre* achieved only sporadic and partial fulfilment. Even when textual success seemed total as in *The Collected Works in Verse and Prose* (1908), financial disaster soon stirred his desire to rewrite, reshape, relaunch, and to incorporate therein new writing. When Joseph Hone had written his first biographical study of Yeats in 1916, Yeats commiserated in a letter he wrote on 2 January of the same year:

> Your difficulties have come from my house being still unfinished, there are so many rooms and corridors that I am still building upon foundations laid long ago. (1955: 605)

The posthumous scholarly editions of New Bibliographers, however, produced precisely those New Critical readings which had evidently been their editorial premiss. "As [Yeats] revised he almost always improved" (1966b: xvi) said Russell Alspach, editor of the two great *Variorum Editions* of the *Poems* (1957) and *Plays* (1966) which indifferently gather all variant states against a final text. Devoted readers from Yeats's lifetime would have reacted in horror at such a conclusion. Devoted readers in later times could hardly imagine any other state of affairs than that towards which Allt and Alspach seemed inexorably to lead them. Starting work on the *Variorum* edition of *The Secret Rose* in the early 1970s I unfacetiously

suggested (to Jon Stallworthy, then at Oxford University Press) a collation against the earliest collected texts to show textual decay, a procedure close to unthinkable in the era of Bowersite editorial practice. Collation against final texts had quite simply been established as most appropriate to this author's work.

The *Variorum* editions all represent textual change in strict chronology. The histories that might be construed from them could be baffling indeed. Textual variance is *atomised* as it is *itemised*: the exigencies of collational presentation focus on the variant line, phrase, word, or punctuation. This precise record can suggest authorial vacillation —indecision and reversal— precisely and only because some *later* reprints of earlier texts have been collated as though they were wholly *new* texts when individual poems have not in fact been revised.

The history of Yeats's books establishes textual authority. Elkin Mathews reprinted *The Wind Among the Reeds* until 1916, ten years after his contract had expired. Yeats, having produced new versions of the poems for A. H. Bullen's *Collected Works in Verse and Prose* (1908) and *Poems: Second Series* (1910) was furious at Mathews' deviousness in finding new ways to publish old texts, just as he had been by George Russell's or Arthur Griffith's habits of reprinting in Irish periodicals inaccurate texts of early poems which they loved and set from memory, long after Yeats had suppressed them.

2. The wider field of the lived life

Roy Foster has shown us how Yeats made his life "the history of his own times" (to use Eliot's words), and how essential it is to locate the poet as artist and as craftsman within this outer field. But the poet changes, his intentions change. The life of the man who is also the poet gets in the way, indeed, changes of intention might be seen as the expression of the life *in* the text. While prose stories led to the great liberating moment of Smithers' *Savoy*, the affair with Olivia Shakespear greatly complicated and further postponed *The Wind Among the Reeds*, changing its implicit narrative, and complicating its poem order (Harwood 1989: 59-82). Fortunately Yeats had finished the last poem to be written for that collection — "Aedh wishes for the Cloths of Heaven" (the lover's most abject oblation), and had sent his book to be printed before the greatest catastrophe of his emotional life, when Maud Gonne told him (in December 1898) of her long relationship with Lucien Millevoye and of their children. The revelation rocked his sustaining illusion to the core. It took Yeats eighteen months to rewind his lyric armature (Toomey 1997: 1-40). There are dozens of such examples. Mabel Beardsley's refusal to die on cue —I put it plainly, but Yeats had books to publish—bumped the Dying Lady poems from *Responsibilities* (1916) to *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919). "The New

Faces" (1912) projected the death of Lady Gregory. She urged him not to publish it "just now" —at 60 she was embarking on an affair with John Quinn and was in no mood for dying. The poem got caught up in the writing of "A Prayer for My Daughter" and re-emerged on its own in the midst of a further dispute with Lady Gregory over another poem, "Reprisals". Yeats tried to create a context for it in a revised reprint of *Responsibilities* in c. 1920-21 before slipping it in *Seven Poems and a Fragment* (1922). He did not display it openly until *The Tower* (1928), when Lady Gregory was very old. Author-annotated copies of Yeats's books show how he accommodated such biographical accidents in new bibliographical contexts.[8]

Confronted with such evidences, no one seriously engaged with a reviser's writing can divorce the work from the life, the author-function from the author, textuality from contingency. "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" (Yeats 1966a: 446). A textual biography explores both a life and a metalife, a continuum of self-reconstructions. All lives are like that, but a revising author's *oeuvre* is at every level a "strange perpetual weaving and unweaving" of self (Pater 1980: 188) complete and yet uncompleted, growing as it is revised, erased as it is renewed. In Yeats's case, constant republication leaves a unique record of the process.

3. Collected selves and the sense of *oeuvre*

Investigating that textual continuum at every textual level is a fairly big undertaking. Every collection from *The Wanderings of Oisin and Other Poems* onwards provided Yeats with bibliographical opportunities to fashion a textual self, to be received. Marginalia in John Butler Yeats's copy of *The Wanderings of Oisin and Other Poems* now in the Fisher Library in the University of Toronto show, as Michael Sidnell has observed, the "critical burden the poet bore" (1998: 266), even of mockery and sarcasm. Yeats absorbed criticism, and used it to shape his works: one lesson for me of working on *Letters* Vol II was that he never forgot certain critiques (for both praise and blame), and even absorbed their terms (such as "Antaeus-like") into his later poems.[9] By *Poems* 1895, he "chose to preserve" a retrospective assemblage of volume-units, including some, such as CROSSWAYS and THE ROSE, which had never seen separate publication but were grouped as if they had. That book is his myth of his own origins. By 1899, Yeats had begun to experiment with various arrangements of his work to reflect that growing sense of the pastness of his discarded selves, putting "The Wanderings of Oisin" at the back of the book, pushing the latest piece of rewritten work, *The Countess Cathleen* to the front —and to the forefront of reviewers' attention. *The Poetical Works of William B. Yeats* (New York 1906-7) offered him the chance to present a new chronologically arranged order of self under a new America-friendly formulation

of his name for a new (American) audience. In *The Collected Works in Verse and Prose* in 8 vols (1908), he hierarchically arranged his works by genre, as well as reassigning poems within the dated volume-units. It justified his present self as dramatist, as a "strange continuator" (Hardy 1925: 300) of his earlier selves.

4. Rewriting for the bibliographical occasion

Each 'moment of the collected works' (to use a handy French concept) presented to an author obsessed with *oeuvre* not merely moments for some sort of objective self-rearrangement. Self-appraisal is arresting: it is self-arraignment, and it frequently enough provided Yeats with a glimpse of the way forward. "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner" is the most familiar example of Yeats's habit of rewriting poems.[10] First published in *The Scots Observer* in 1890 in two stanzas, "The Old Pensioner" was, as Yeats noted, "little more than the translation into verse of the very words of an old Wicklow peasant" (Yeats 1966a: 799).[11]

I had a chair at every hearth,
    When no one turned to see,
With "look at that old fellow there,
    And who may he be?"
And therefore do I wander on,
    And the fret lies on me.

The road-side trees keep murmuring.
    Ah, wherefore murmur ye,
As in the old days long gone by,
    Green oak and poplar tree?
The well-known faces are all gone
    And the fret lies on me. (1966a: 131-132 and vv.)[12]

The "very words" of the old Wicklow peasant were fully reported by and are found in Yeats's "An Irish Visionary" (first published 1891, and included in *The Celtic Twilight*, 1893).

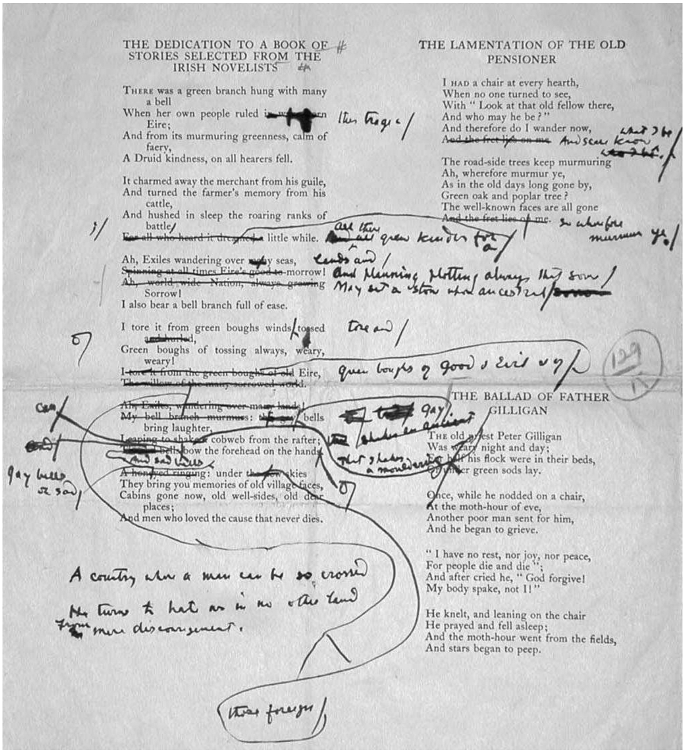
> A winter or two ago he [ie., X—] spent much of the night walking up and down upon the mountain talking to an old peasant who, dumb to most men, poured out his cares for him. Both were unhappy: X— because he had then first decided that art and poetry were not for him, and the old peasant because his life was ebbing out with no achievement remaining and no hope left him. [...] The peasant was wandering in his mind with prolonged sorrow. Once he burst out with, "God possesses the heavens —God possesses the heavens— but He covets the world"; and once he lamented that his old neighbours were gone, and that all had forgotten him:

> they used to draw a chair to the fire for him in every cabin, and now they said, "Who is that old fellow there?" "The fret [Irish for doom] is over me", he repeated, and then went on to talk once more of God and heaven. More than once also he said, waving his arm towards the mountain, "Only myself knows what happened under the thorn-tree forty years ago;" and as he said it the tears upon his face glistened in the moonlight. (Yeats 1893: 23-25; 1959: 13-14)[13]

George Russell left an independent account of the episode (not published until 1993):

> The first character which emerges clearly from the obscurity of boyhood is that of an old vagrant. My meeting with him was an adventure which began for me the unveiling of humanity. It was my first vision of the wonder and agony of the soul. I was walking with my friend John Hughes on a mountain road one evening when I saw an old man coming towards us[.] He was hugging his body as if there were none other in the world but himself that would hold it with familiar hands and he was talking to himself, and his grief seemed so great that he must speak it even if it were only to two boys passing he met in the twilight. That old man was the remains of a magnificent human being I would think over seventy years of age. He stepped before me and began to speak. I remember every word[:] "Over those hills I wandered forty years ago. Nobody but myself knows what happened under the thorn tree forty years ago. The fret is on me. The fret is on me. God speaking out of his darkness says I have and I have not. I possess the heavens. I do not possess the world. Abroad if you meet an Irishman he will give you the bit and the sup. But if you come back to your own country after being away forty years it is not the potato and bit of salt you get[,] but only "who's that ould fella?" The fret is on me. The fret is on me![."] I found this was his first day of returning to his country after forty years of absence and nobody remembered him. He had been in the Army, was in the Crimean War but saw no fighting. He lay in some place I think he called it Scutari in [a] fever covered with lice. You[,] he said to Hughes are amused[;] but you[,] he said to me[,] are watching me. You are thinking about me. And indeed I was thinking about him for life, for when the deeps of another's being are first revealed to us something from that deep enters our own being and goes on with it for evermore. The appearance and voice and tone impressed themselves on [me] with unforgettable poignancy. It was sorrow shaped by its intensity to be like a work of art. I did not write the song[,] but Yeats to whom I told the story made out of it his first version of the Old Pensioner. Meeting with that old man had other effects on me. His image, his thought flying from earth to heaven, as all profound sorrows do, the first beautiful speech I heard spoken in life, not merely found in literature, the thought of that unforgotten love under the thorn tree, what beauty might have heard that beautiful voice making poetry in her heart[;] all entered into consciousness, and I began to watch those about me to see if life had other voices so poignant, speaking with unconscious natural beauty of the adventures of the spirit wandering through time. (in Kuch 1993: 199)

The poem survived with fairly minor changes until Yeats began to work upon *Early Poems and Stories* (1925), a volume in the new *Collected Edition* of the 1920s. There he tinkered with it on the galleys,[14] alongside another vigorously altered poem, "The Dedication to a Book of Stories selected from the Irish Novelists".[15] I reproduce these to show how Yeats used proof as a new stage of composition.


THE DEDICATION TO A BOOK OF STORIES SELECTED FROM THE IRISH NOVELISTS

THERE was a green branch hung with many a bell
When her own people ruled [redacted]
Eire;
And from its murmuring greenness, calm of faery,
A Druid kindness, on all hearers fell.

It charmed away the merchant from his guile,
And turned the farmer's memory from his cattle,
And hushed in sleep the roaring ranks of battle,
For all who heard it dreamed a little while.

Ah, Exiles wandering over many seas,
Spinning at all times Eire's good to-morrow!
Ah, world-wide Nation, always growing Sorrow!
I also bear a bell branch full of ease.

I tore it from green boughs winds tossed and hurled,
Green boughs of tossing always, weary, weary!
I tore it from the green boughs of old Eire,
The willow of the many-sorrowed world.

Ah, Exiles, wandering over many lands!
My bell branch murmurs: the gay bells bring laughter,
Leaping to shake a cobweb from the rafter;
The sad bells bow the forehead on the hands.

A hundred ringing: under the low skies
They bring you memories of old village faces,
Cabins gone now, old well-sides, old dear places;
And men who loved the cause that never dies.

THE LAMENTATION OF THE OLD PENSIONER

I HAD a chair at every hearth,
When no one turned to see,
With "Look at that old fellow there,
And who may he be?"
And therefore do I wander now,
And the fret lies on me.

The road-side trees keep murmuring
Ah, wherefore murmur ye,
As in the old days long gone by,
Green oak and poplar tree?
The well-known faces are all gone
And the fret lies on me.

THE BALLAD OF FATHER GILLIGAN

THE old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day;
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once, while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

"I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die";
And after cried he, "God forgive!
My body spake, not I!"

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep;
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.

PLATE 1

On a subsequent set of proofs he added a new second stanza. The new version of the poem thus reads:

Although I shelter from the rain
Under a broken tree,
My chair was nearest to the fire
In every company,

That talked of love or politics
Ere time transfigured me.

Though lads are making pikes again
For some conspiracy,
And crazy rascals rage their fill
At human tyranny;
My contemplations are of time
That has transfigured me.

There's not a woman turns her face
Upon a broken tree,
And yet the beauties that I loved
Are in my memory;
I spit into the face of Time
That has transfigured me. (Yeats 1925: 128; 1966a: 131-132vv)

This was the first time in Yeats's career that both "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner" and "A Visionary" had appeared in one volume, and its reading proof he seeks to reapportion material between the two works. Out went the "green oak and poplar tree", and in came the "broken tree", the thorn from the pensioner's words in the prose account. Thorn trees in Yeats usually show immemorial age and its weathering, often to the point of beggary.[16]

If the rewriting of the poem for its new context involved a new reading of "A Visionary", tinkering with the poem necessitated the editing of the prose account. All versions of "A Visionary" from 1893 to 1914 had concluded with a paragraph which had been (and remained) a central statement of his beliefs.

> This old man always rises before me when I think of X—. Both seek —one in wandering sentences, the other in symbolic pictures and subtle allegoric poetry— to express something that lies beyond the range of expression; and both, if X— will forgive me, have within them the vast and vague extravagance that lies at the bottom of the Celtic heart. The peasant visionaries that are, the landlord duellists that were, and the whole hurly-burly of legends —Cuchulin fighting the sea for two days until the waves pass over him and he dies, Caolte storming the palace of the Gods, Oisin seeking in vain for three hundred years to appease his insatiable heart with all the pleasures of faeryland, these two mystics walking up and down upon the mountain uttering the central dreams of their souls in no less dream-laden sentences, and this mind that finds them so interesting —all are a portion of that great Celtic phantasmagoria whose meaning no man has discovered nor any angel revealed. (Yeats 1893: 23-25)

This paragraph had followed on directly from that already quoted above. But for the weakness of that one word "interesting" the sacrifice of this passage shows how

stern a sense Yeats had of the economy of the individual volume. The new version of the poem was preoccupied with civil unrest (topical in post-Civil War Ireland) and with the transfigurations of Time, into the face of which the defiant pensioner spits in the new last stanza. Yeats's new reading of both early prose and verse versions took place in the polishing of a single volume, *Early Poems and Stories* as a bibliographical unit. Its economy also demanded that "A Visionary" (the early stories follow the early poems) retain something of the unfinished misery of the old pensioner in the early version of the poem ("The well-known faces are all gone/And the fret lies on me.") Accordingly, the last paragraph was removed, leaving "A Visionary" to break off:

> More than once also he said, waving his arm towards the mountain, "Only myself knows what happened under the thorn-tree forty years ago"; and as he said it the tears upon his face glistened in the moonlight. (Yeats 1925: 149; 1893: 25; 1959: 14)

5. Rewriting and new writing

This fresh perspective opened up a whole new vein of poems for Yeats, beginning with four he first published in the *London Mercury* in April 1926 as "More Songs of an Old Countryman". Why "More"? The title must have seemed obscure to most readers. On the (undated) manuscript Yeats tries out, "Songs of a mad old man", then "More Songs of an Old Pensioner". The first poem, later "His Memories", associates Yeats himself (nearing 60) with the pensioner, whose "broken" thorn-tree becomes the locus (and focus) for Yeats's seventeen-year-old memories of the short-lived consummation of his love for Maud Gonne.

> More Songs of ~~a mad old man~~ an Old Pensioner
>
> A man should hide him self away
> That Time has made a show
> His body ~~twisted like a thorn~~ like a mountain ~~branch~~ thorn
> Whereon ~~There~~ the foul winds blow
> And ~~To~~ think of fallen Hector
> And ~~fate~~ tales none living know.
>
> The women take so little stock
> In what I do or say
> Theyd sooner leave their cosseting
> To hear a jackass bray
> My arms are like the wicked thorn
> And yet there ~~their~~ beauty lay

The first of all the ~~tribe~~ tribe lay there
And did such pleasure take
~~Who~~ She who had brought great Hector down
And put all Troy to wreck
That she has cried into this ear
Strike me if I shriek.

we should be hidden from their eyes
~~old men should hide themselves away~~
~~That are~~ Being but holy shows
~~Battered like a mountain thorn~~
~~Our bodies broken battered like a thorn~~
and bodies broken like a thorn
Where on the bleak [?black] North blows
~~And~~ To think of buried Hector
And that none living know.[17]

It has been shown that when Yeats overcomes or incorporates the influence of seventeenth century poems, he frequently works in pairs: "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" adapts the form of Abraham Cowley's "Ode on the Death of Mr Harvey" and the material (multiplicities of friendship and grieving) of Ben Jonson's "To the Immortall Memorie, and Friendship of that Noble Paire, Sir Lucius Cary and S. H. Morison".[18] Here, of course, another of his own earlier poems, "No Second Troy", aligns itself alongside "The Old Pensioner". Such dyadic rereadings of his own older texts are common in Yeats's new writing, but in this case, a third, Maud Gonne's favourite of his poems, "Red Hanrahan's Song about Ireland" seems swept into the first stanza

> The old brown thorn-trees break in two high over Cummen Strand,
> Under a bitter black wind that blows from the left hand
> (Yeats 1966a: 206)

and even a fourth, "Her Praise" where "[s]ome beggar sheltering from the wind" "by the dry thorn" will bring up the beloved's name (1966a: 351) might lurk in the "adaptive complex". These apparently diachronic self-allusions show that his own text had a simultaneity for him. The constant reconstruction of that text is inevitable to Yeats's continuing self-construction: "[w]hatever changes I have made are but an attempt to express better what I thought and felt when I was a young man" he said in 1925 (1966a: 842). And again, in 1927,

> this volume contains what is, I hope, the final text of the poems of my youth; and yet it may not be, seeing that in it are not only the revisions from my "Early Poems

> and Stories", published last year, but quite new revisions on which my heart is greatly set. One is always cutting out the dead wood. (1966a: 848)

Yeats's shaping at every point offers a unified self-reconstruct with its own chronology. Its profile —the young man old or the old man young?— is where his reading and ours intersect. Revision and new writing were not merely interdependent activities, revision of an old poem frequently made the next new poem possible. In *October Blast* in May 1927, he published such groupings as "Two Songs from the Old Countryman" and their counterparts, "Four Songs from the Young Countryman", which he had begun as early as 31 January 1926 (Wade 1968: 159).[19] More follow in letters to Olivia Shakespear, *October Blast* (1927) and *The Tower* (1928), where they found their final form in "A Man Young and Old". This sequence led in turn to "Words for Music Perhaps" which sites "Love's Loneliness" in the question

> What did we remember
> Under the ragged thorn? (Yeats 1966a: 519)

and to "A Woman Young and Old", the most consciously articulated of Yeats's mature sequences.[20]

Fresh perspectives in textual synchronics reveal that Yeats's self-reading is deeply calculated. Lafcadio Hearn protested in 1901 about revisions to "The Host of the Air":

> You have mangled it, maimed it, deformed it, extenuated it —destroyed it totally [...] you have really sinned a great sin! *Do* try to be sorry for it!— reprint the original version, —tell critics to go to perdition, if they don't like it, —and, above all things, *n'y touchez plus!*

Even as Yeats assured Hearn that he would restore parts of the poem, he confided, in his very next letter (to Thomas Hutchinson):

> even when one certainly improves ones work, as when one disengages a half hidden meaning or gets rid of a needless inversion, no body who liked the old will like the new. One changes for the sake of new readers, not for the sake of old ones. (Yeats 1997b: 101-102)

That said, there is a deep solipsism in the writer as self-reader. In 1893 Yeats had drafted a quatrain claiming that his

> [...] rhyme must be
> A dyed & figured mystery,
> Thought hid in thought, dream hid in dream. (Yeats 1994: 489)

For the author, as for those outraged older readers, revised poems are like De Quinceyan involutes, or redreamt dreams. Revision only apparently erases the precursor texts which they replace because the new text is in fact in dialogue with the old, and an imbrication of it, embracing that which it attempts to repudiate. The new text has a Janus function, it looks "before and after", and pines "for what is not" (Shelley 1961: 605).

In *bibliographical* terms, however, textual effacement inevitably goes with textual development. The new drives out the old, there is a "continual vanishing away", decay balances growth (Pater 1980: 188). Textual restlessness gradually winds down, until the presentation of poems in dated volume-units in the major editions gives the impression that poems gathered under the rubric e.g., CROSSWAYS (1889) or THE ROSE (1893) or RESPONSIBILITIES (1914) had been published in those years in the form in which readers found them. The updated poems are rather like retouched photographs.

Thus, *The Wind Among the Reeds* is barely readable without access to the forty-five pages of notes upon which its first edition is built, yet they eventually "annoyed" Yeats so much that he gradually cut them before *Later Poems* (1922),[21] and there are countless examples of such changes. In *Poems: Second Series* Yeats changed the whole dynamic of *The Wind Among the Reeds* by readmitting "The Fiddler of Dooney" and deploying it at the close. The decision relieves that book's psychodrama by allowing for a cheerful escape from the unendurable dilemma of the 1899 ordering in which "He Thinks of his Past Greatness When a Part of the Constellations of Heaven", had been placed last in the volume. Just think of "Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven" ("Tread softly because you tread on my dreams") being followed by:

> I became a rush that horses tread:
> I became a man, a hater of the wind,
> Knowing one, out of all things, alone, that his head
> Would not lie on the breast or his lips on the hair
> Of the woman that he loves, until he dies;
> Although the rushes and the fowl of the air
> Cry of his love with their pitiful cries.

In 1909, after his affair with Maud Gonne had been consummated, Yeats managed to strengthen these lines by substituting for the last two:

> O beast of the wilderness, bird of the air
> Must I endure your amorous cries?
> (Yeats 1966a: 177 and vv.)[22]

and to restructure the closure of the book with "The Fiddler of Dooney". This made it a different book, a closed chapter of his life.

In writing the life of the text, establishing the chronology of manuscripts allows one to discover the creative synergy between revision and new writing. But creative delay is also at work, according to some profound sense of textual priorities, at times a hierarchy of genres. Not-writing *The Shadowy Waters* allowed "The Wanderings of Oisin" to be written. Not finishing *The Wind Among the Reeds* allowed the revision of earlier work into *Poems* 1895, also *The Secret Rose*. Not-writing a novel, *The Speckled Bird*, made *The Wind Among the Reeds* achievable, and the revision of "The Countess Cathleen" for *Poems* (1899), and, finally, the first (1900) version of *The Shadowy Waters*. In Yeats's creative economy this poem had to be rewritten for the stage, though it also remained a poem in a simultaneous incarnation. There are famous examples such as *The Player Queen*: Yeats needed blockages as much as he needed to resolve them.

Further, lyric poetry paradoxically came as a by-product of required writing. From the perspective of the text (rather than from the perspective of the man who made the Irish Theatre), Yeats's plays and his prose are frequently a pre-text for lyric poetry.

> A year ago I found I had written no verse for two years; I had never been so long barren; I had nothing in my head, and there used to be more than I could write [...] I wrote the prose dialogue of *The King of the Great Clock Tower* that I might be forced to make lyrics for its imaginary people. (Yeats 1966b: 1309-10).

So he set to work:

> What though they danced! those days are gone,
> *Said the wicked, crooked hawthorn tree*;
> Lovely lady or gallant man
> Are blown cold dust or a bit of bone. (1966a: 788)

Here the textual biographer inevitably see things rather differently from the biographer for whom "theatre business" shows one of the heroic sides of Yeats's character. But then an exasperated Yeats roundly placed his "curse on plays" which took time from "the harvest of the Lord" (1966a: 260; 1973: 181).

In excavating various layers of writing, I am especially interested in Yeats's turn to autobiography, because it is the key moment in the "discovery, creation, and imitation of the self" (in Longley 1994: 11). Roy Foster dates it to Yeats's being "close on forty-nine" in 1914, when it is true, he wrote *Reveries over Childhood and Youth*,[23] but I date the impulse to Yeats's most sustained self-arraignment in the presence of his text, during the impasse of 1907-8, when he and A. H. Bullen

confronted, edited, rearranged, or discarded his prose memoirs such as "The Pathway" on Mohini Chatterjee and notes on dead friends such as Lionel Johnson, for the final volume of *The Collected Works in Verse and Prose*. At this point he had to write what became *Discoveries*, a series of *pensées*, for *The Gentleman's Magazine*, to make himself and Bullen (that journal's editor —another hand-to-mouth role), enough money to live on while they finished the edition, and to plump it out.

The incident accords with my general hypothesis: the author as self-reader finds his way forward to new writing. There are "hidden roads" from poem to poem (Bloom 1973: 96). T. S. Eliot once wrote that

> A poet [...] knows better what his poems "mean" than can anyone else; he may know the history of their composition, the material which has gone in and come out in an unrecognizable form, and he knows what he was trying to do and what he was meaning to mean. (1933: 130)

These days we regard such statements knowingly, and all too conscious of our rights as "empowered readers". But Eliot in fact continued:

> But what a poem means is as much what it means to others as what it means to the author; and indeed, in the course of time a poet may become a reader in respect to his own works, forgetting his original meaning —or, without forgetting, merely changing. (130)

Yeats sometimes felt this way, claiming in 1912,

> I have not again retouched the lyric poems of my youth, fearing some stupidity in my middle years, but have changed two or three pages that I always knew to be wrong in "The Wanderings of Usheen". (1966a: 848)

But Eliot also reminds us how language won't stay still, how words "strain,/Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,/Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,/Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,/Will not stay still", and how "every attempt/Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure", each venture "a new beginning".[24] To generalize a bit, it is precisely in discerning the different kinds of self-reader which an author may become that we might be able to get some purchase on his or her various self-reincarnations as a writer.[25]

Let me now return to those galley proofs for *Early Poems and Stories*, which offer a close-up of the preliminary work on the "Old Pensioner" (**Plate 1**). By contrast with the new, three stanza version, he hardly started on these galleys, and "And scarce know what I be" and "So wherefore murmur ye" are not particularly promising interventions. The new second stanza must have come into being on a lost (probably page) proof state. On 3 October and again on 6 November 1924

Yeats wrote to his wife, George Yeats, in Dublin about this poem, saying on the latter occasion: "I have made a new poem of the "Song of the Old Pensioner", and a good poem".[26]

At the same time he "worried" her with "all those revisions" for "The Dedication to a Book of Stories selected from the Irish Novelists" (numerous changes can be followed on **Plate 1**) for transmission to George Russell at the *Irish Statesman*. It is to be presumed that Russell yet again wanted an old poem reprinted and got more than he bargained for. The poem, originally "Dedication", later "Dedication to "Irish Tales", became "An Old Poem Re-Written" when placed in Russell's *Irish Statesman*. An appeal to those Irish Americans who might buy his little two-volume selection of *Representative Irish Tales* from Putnam in their Knickerbocker Nuggets Series (1891) now seemed oppressively sentimental. "Ah, Exiles wandering over many seas/Spinning at all times Ireland's good to-morrow" became "Ah, Exiles wandering over lands and seas,/And planning, plotting always that some morrow/May set a stone upon ancestral sorrow!" —note the redeployment of that stone from "Easter, 1916"— while Ireland itself became "A Country where a man can be so crossed/He turns to hate as in no other land/From mere discouragement" before becoming "That country where a man can be so crossed,/Can be so battered, badgered and destroyed/That he's a loveless man". Then on 7 November 1924 Yeats wrote to his wife:

Please make one more change in that poem: Stanza 5 should run thus

> I tore it from green boughs winds tore & tossed
> Until the sap of summer had grown weary!
> I tore it from the barren boughs of Eire,
> That country where a man can be so crossed.

So, while the "green boughs of good and evil" were abandoned, he could write to her with some satisfaction: "I think that removes the last sentimentality. If the copy has already gone to Russell send him this stanza. He can add it in proof".[27] Russell, of course, given half the chance, would have set the 1891 version from memory. Amazingly, this "sheaf of wild oats" as Yeats called it, did get to Dublin for publication in the issue dated 8 November 1924 (1966a: 129). But then, after the Nobel Prize, things did tend to get done for Yeats.

Thus far, then, biography serves its turn: Senator Yeats, the poet of "Meditations in Time of Civil War" whose bridge at Ballylee has been blown up in 1922 and whose Merrion Square house has been shot up (George Yeats was slightly injured), wishes to extirpate sentimentality. But there is more. By 12 November: Yeats is writing "[...] I am exceedingly lively & have wholly rewritten "The Death of Cuchulain". He does not now die at all. To rewrite an old poem is like dressing

up for a fancy dress ball". Or, "I have just turned an absurd old poem of mine called "The Sorrow of Love" into a finer thing".[28] I greatly admire that move from "absurd" to "finer"! What had he done? Setting aside numerous verbal changes, I turn only to the second stanza.

> And then you came with those red mournful lips
> And with you came the whole of the world's tears,
> And all the trouble of her labouring ships
> And all the trouble of her myriad years.

becomes

> A girl arose that had red mournful lips
> And seemed the greatness of the world in tears,
> Doomed like Odysseus and the labouring ships
> And proud as Priam murdered with his peers;
> (Yeats 1966a: 120 and vv.)

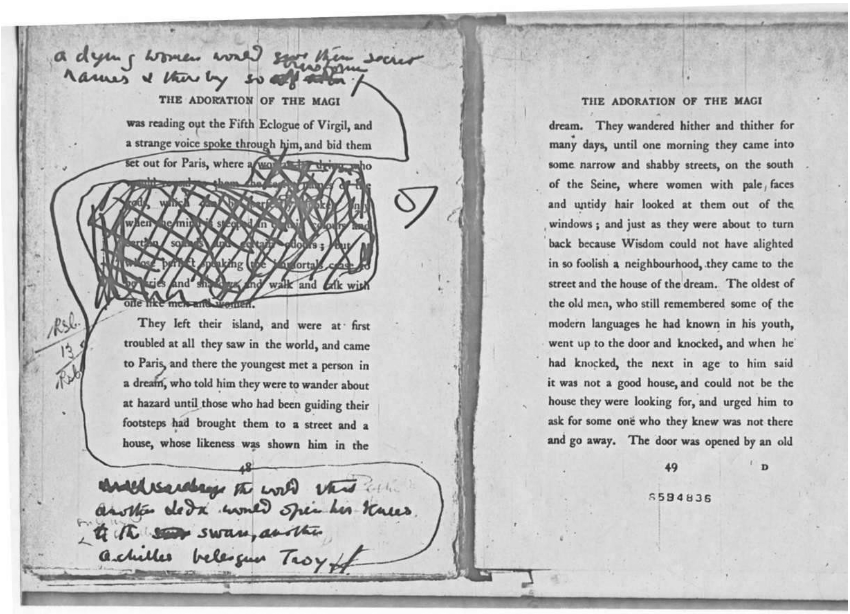
Here there had been implicit references to the Trojan War (the "lips/ships" rhyme gives it away, as does the *lacrimae rerum* reference in "the whole of the world's tears") ever since the poem's first publication and collection in *The Countess Kathleen and Various Legends and Lyrics* in 1892. There had been only one verbal change in that stanza (the key Yeatsian word "trouble" replacing "burden" in 1895 to form a repetition the last line of that stanza). Now, however, Yeats is determined to make the Trojan dimension explicit: "Doomed like Odysseus and the labouring ships/And proud as Priam murdered with his peers".

Why? Irish poets have frequently sought a Trojan frame of reference for Irish troubles from *aisling* poetry to such contemporary poets as Michael Longley and Seamus Heaney.[29] Yeats's turn from the vague and stately to the explicit ("doomed", "murdered") might again reflect the savagery he had witnessed and expressed in his civil war poems.

But the refurbishment of an ancient intention accords well with work going on elsewhere in *Early Poems and Stories* proof materials. **Plate 2** shows the setting copy for the republication of "The Adoration of the Magi".

This rather vigorously cross-hatched revision of the 1904 text shows Yeats deleting the passage about the secret names of the immortals given to the three old men by the dying prostitute in Paris, in 1924. In erasing thus the return of the Irish gods, he offers instead:

> a dying woman would give them secret names & thereby so transform the world that another Leda would open her knees to the swan, another Achilles beleaguer Troy. (Yeats 1992: 166-7)


THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

was reading out the Fifth Eclogue of Virgil, and
a strange voice spoke through him, and bid them
set out for Paris, where a

one like men and women.

They left their island, and were at first
troubled at all they saw in the world, and came
to Paris, and there the youngest met a person in
a dream, who told him they were to wander about
at hazard until those who had been guiding their
footsteps had brought them to a street and a
house, whose likeness was shown him in the

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THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

dream. They wandered hither and thither for
many days, until one morning they came into
some narrow and shabby streets, on the south
of the Seine, where women with pale faces
and untidy hair looked at them out of the
windows; and just as they were about to turn
back because Wisdom could not have alighted
in so foolish a neighbourhood, they came to the
street and the house of the dream. The oldest of
the old men, who still remembered some of the
modern languages he had known in his youth,
went up to the door and knocked, and when he
had knocked, the next in age to him said
it was not a good house, and could not be the
house they were looking for, and urged him to
ask for some one who they knew was not there
and go away. The door was opened by an old

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PLATE 2

Here one sees how new writing impinges on old. “Leda and the Swan” had been first drafted on 16 Sept 1923, with Yeats staying up until 3 am to get a version of it done, and it had been first published in the *Dial* in June 1924 and again in that short-lived adventure of Francis Stuart and others, *To-morrow*, in August 1924. This new poem was now crucial. As Yeats laboured over the proofs of *Early Poems and Stories,* he was also desperately finishing the first version of *A Vision* for which “Leda” functions as the proem to Book III, “Dove or Swan”. The “annunciation that founded Greece” is imagined by Yeats as having been “made to Leda”: “Leda, War and Love; history grown symbolic, the biography changed into myth” (Yeats 1978: 181, 214). So obsessed was Yeats with this *topos* that the rape of Leda is now thrust, if you please, into Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue. In Mackail’s translation: “Then shall a second Tiphys be, and a second Argo to sail with chosen heroes; new wars too shall arise, and again a mighty Achilles be sent to Troy” (Virgil 1950: 274-275).

Now it would be possible to chart the immediate history of this obsession, perhaps from the sprightly preface Yeats wrote for Oliver Gogarty’s *An Offering of Swans and Other Poems* on 30 August 1923, up to and through the “Two Songs from a

Play" of May 1925 through to 1931 when he adds a new stanza and the poems entwine themselves into "The Resurrection":

> Another Troy must rise and set,
> Another lineage feed the crow
> Another Argo's painted prow
> Drive to a flashier bauble yet.
> (1966a: 437; first pub. 1927)

If we did so, we might miss one vital point. The top line of the page being corrected in "The Adoration of the Magi" in **Plate 2** has one of the old men "reading out the "Fifth Eclogue of Virgil"" (a schoolboy howler, of course Yeats means the Fourth Eclogue). In the Cumaean prophecy, the "world's great age begins anew" (Shelley 1961: 477): all the Trojan *topos* had, then, been implicit in the story as written in late 1896, and as published in 1897. Yeats renewed himself by rereading himself, the old inflects the new as the new inflects the rewriting of the old: new writing and rereading show him writing while discovering his intention to write. *Early Poems and Stories* compelled such self-intertextuality, and not merely because of the co-presence in that volume of the early verse and prose (itself, of course, Yeats's and Macmillan's way of defeating T. Fisher Unwin's claim on all editions of the early verse except those in "collected editions" of the works).[30]

It was for Yeats (as he said), "difficult to get back into the atmosphere of things written so long ago".[31] But, finishing *A Vision*, he needed to reread himself. Self-refurbishment in any case helped him to "make as much as I can of this new wave of interest in my work", as he said on the award of the Nobel Prize.[32]

It would be possible, perhaps, to contrast the "revisionary ratios" of "The Sorrow of Love", the "Old Pensioner" and the "Dedication [...]", following the lead of Harold Bloom in charting those "hidden roads" from poem to poem. Some are mere by-ways of course, as when Yeats and F. R. Higgins thought of a book for Macmillan which would offer:

> a hundred Irish songs old & new [...] as in the case of *The Broadsides* many of the traditional songs will be worked over by Higgins & myself, you cannot imagine what an improvement it is when all 'steeds' become 'horses' & all 'maids' 'girls'. I find it amusing & easy work & that it incites me to write my own poetry.[33]

As early as 15 June 1943, George Yeats wrote of the freedom she had accorded to Joseph Hone in the writing of his biography.

> I liked the book (Joe Hone's "Life") because, to me, it did not spoil my own image of the man. When the book was started I arranged with Joe that I should see no script or part, because if I were to ask for that the writer would have no freedom.

> When I read the book I was sure that I was right in making that decision. It was a most difficult task —to write of a man at a time when so many of his friends and relations were still alive.

But there was a further intractability: the 1949 *Poems* was still far from publication, and so she continued:

> The lack of co-ordination of Yeats' poetic development with his life was almost inevitable in a book of this sort. To begin with, the "Collected Poems" (Macmillan) arranged by Yeats' [*sic*] himself, are far from being in a chronological order —as un-chronological as many of the poems published in magazines etc. Then, unless a biographer's mind is naturally so concerned and saturated with poetry that he is compelled against his own will to write from that bias, what can he do but tell a story that will make a picture? Someone else will write another "Life" from the only "point of view" that I myself care for at all —poetry.[34]

What is that point of view? It is, I think, the point of view of the author, in this case one who famously said that "works of art are always begotten by previous works of art", and that "images [...] yet,/Fresh images beget" (Yeats 1961: 352; 1966a: 498). Such a book would be a life of the text, and it lies beyond edited forms of it, in the history of books, in publishers' archives such as Macmillan's and in research collections of life documents and MSS. Every serious reader of Yeats engages at some level with that life of the text, which is why I am trying to write it.

For the revising author, the text is a pre-text (in both senses —an *avant-texte* and an excuse or occasion). Revising authors proceed by a series of closures. Perpetual genesis and textual imbrication can be followed by a combination of old-fashioned textual comparison with archival research into the surviving correspondence and proof states among the papers of authors, agents, publishers and printers. I find such methods permit an intimate and sustainable recuperation of that concept so derided a few years ago: intention, a recoverable, mutating, demonstrable intention not foreclosed at, or by, the publication of the text.

My argument, then, is a plea for the application of book historical methods to the construction of inner lives. It involves an accommodation of literary genetics, as practised, for example, at l'Institut des Texts et Manuscrits Modernes in Paris, and publishing history (as practised, let us say, at l'Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine) to single author bibliography. If this sounds formidable, then I have no doubt it is. An accommodation of the publishing standards of the CNRS to the representation of literary MSS in the Anglo-American tradition, where production values are quite frequently visually poor, is also long overdue.

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Notes

1. See Foster ([1997] 2003).

2. A by-product of working on 'life documents' and canonical works is my forthcoming *Yeats's Permanent Self*, a biography of the text itself to 1916 (when Yeats took his commercial publishing to Macmillan on the failure of A. H. Bullen's Shakespeare Head Press). I had written on Yeats's relations with Sir Frederick and Harold Macmillan elsewhere, and I wanted to know what sort of a writer Yeats had been *before* he came to Macmillan. I soon saw that a rather different kind of study could emerge from publishers' archives and the author's letters.

3. A remark made, in any case, to distinguish such rewriting from the "endless" correction of prose which, "has no fixed laws" (Yeats 1964: 22).

4. Elsewhere Shields extols "the feeling every poet knows of arrival home, the self returned to its self" (2003: 5).

5. *The Art of Poetry* (vol. 7 of the *Collected Works* of Paul Valéry) opens with an influential preface by T. S. Eliot:

> I think I understand what Valéry means when he says that a poem is never finished: at least his words to this effect have a meaning for me. To me they mean that a poem is "finished", or that I will never touch it again, when I am sure that I have exhausted my own resources, that the poem is as good as *I* can make *that* poem. It may be a bad poem: but nothing that I can do will make it better. Yet I cannot help thinking that, even if it is a good poem, I could have made a better poem of it —the same poem, but better— if I were a better poet (1958: xiii).

This volume includes the translation of the original passage in Valéry's "Au Sujet du *Cimitière Marin*", where he writes of the elaboration of poems over a long period, "entre l'être et le non-être", fashionable in the 1890s and at that time a custom taking on "l'importance secrète d'une entreprise de réforme de soi-même". Then there had, he says, been "une sorte d'*Ethique de la forme* qui condusait au travail infini". Such an attitude comes "insensiblement à confondre la composition d'un ouvrage de l'esprit, qui est chose *finie*, avec la vie de l'esprit même — lequel est une puissance de transformation toujours en acte. On en arrive au travail pour le travail [...] Aux yeux de ces amateurs d'inquiétude et de perfection, un ouvrage n'est jamais *achevé* —mot qui pour eux n'a aucun sens— mais *abandonné*; et cet abandon, qui le livre aux flammes ou au public (et qu'il soit l'effet de la lassitude ou de l'obligation de livrer), leur est une sorte d'*accident,* comparable à la rupture d'une réflexion, que la fatigue, le fâcheux, ou quelque sensation viennent rendre nulle".

To Valéry, however, this was not a desirable state of affairs:

> J'avais contracté ce mal, ce goût pervers de la reprise indéfinie, et cette complaisance pour l'état réversible des

> oeuvres, à l'âge critique où se forme et se fixe l'homme intellectuel.

Worse was to come when he returned at the age of fifty to the writing of poetry, and was forced again to live a great deal with his poems, and for nearly ten years they became "une occupation de durée indé —un exercice plutôt qu'une déliverance, une manoeuvre de moi-même par moi-même plutôt qu'une préparation visant le public". Above all, he wrote, "Je ne conseille pas cependant que l'on adopte ce système". It seemed particularly disastrous for "une époque pressante, confuse, et sans perspective. Nous sommes dans un banc de brume [...]".

In Valéry's original context the passage looks rather different without the interpretative twist Eliot supplies when he observes that Valéry had "ceased to believe in *ends*, and was only interested in *processes*". Valéry himself had discovered that he was "much more concerned with the formation or fabrication of works [of art] than with the works themselves". Eliot translates this remark from *Variété V* in his *From Poe to Valéry* (1948: 27-8). W. H. Auden enthusiastically offers an endorsement as "a matter of principle", quoting Valéry in the preface to his *Collected Shorter Poems* (1950: 16). Auden, "nearing sixty" decided that "I know myself and my poetic intentions better" and therefore rearranged his poems in an overall chronological array, and claimed that he had "never, consciously at any rate, attempted to revise my former thoughts or feelings, only the language in which they were first expressed when on further consideration, it seemed to me inaccurate, lifeless, prolix or painful to the ear" (15-16). Thus Valéry's remark was invoked as a nostrum of English Modernism, and as an excuse for post-publication revision (which was not, of course, what Valéry had in mind).

6. See *British Library Additional MS* 54898 f. 55, n.d.; *British Library Additional MS.* 54898 f. 138, 30 January 1922. See also Gould (1995: 212).

7. W. B. Yeats to Florence Emery, 4 October 1914 (Private).

8. See Wayne K. Chapman, "The Annotated *Responsibilities*: Errors in the *Variorum Edition*" and a New Reading of the Genesis of Two Poems, "On Those That Hated "The Playboy of the Western World", 1907" and "The New Faces", in Gould (1988: 108-133, esp. at 118).

9. See *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* Ed. Warwick Gould, John Kelly, Deirdre Toomey. *Volume II, 1896-1900* and *Volume III, 1901-1904: 107-108, n.1.*

10. Peter Kuch has discussed the textual changes in relation to "the distinction that [George] Russell draws between the Irish imagination and the European imagination", seeing the rewriting as a move towards "Europeanism". See his "A Few Twigs from the Wild Bird's Nest: Yeats the European": 103-5.

11. Yeats offers another perspective on his association with W. E. Henley, editor of *The Scots Observer*, who "rewrote my poems as he re-wrote the early verse of Kipling, and though I do not think I ever permanently accepted his actual words I always knew he had found a fault" (Yeats 1973: 38) (I am grateful to Deirdre Toomey who alerted me to the possibilities of this passage).

12. First published in *The Scots Observer,* 15 November 1890. The text here is as in *The Countess Kathleen and Various Legends and Lyrics* (1892).

13. "X" is George Russell (AE). Other comments place the conversation as occurring on the Two Rock Mountain, south-west of Dublin, eg., "Russell has just come in from a long walk on the Two Rock mountain, very full of his conversation with an old religious beggar, who kept repeating, "God possesses the heavens, but He covets the earth —He covets the earth" (Yeats 1893: 249). See also Yeats (1966a: 844), and "My Friend's Book" (Yeats 1961: 412-413) for AE's meditating there.

14. The galleys are dated 8 Oct, 1924 (Berg Collection, New York Public Library). *Early Poems and Stories* was published on 22 September, 1925.

[15]. which, in even more altered form, he quickly published in the *Irish Statesman*, 8 Nov 1924.

[16]. A few examples only will suffice: "They had hands like claws, and their knees/Were twisted like the old thorn-trees"; the "old thorns innumerable" of "My House"; "What though they danced! those days are gone,/*Said the wicked, crooked hawthorn tree*" (1966a: 208, 419, 788); trees on the west coast of Ireland "grown into the semblance of tattered beggars flying with bent heads towards the east" (in "Rosa Alchemica"; see Yeats [1992: 137]). Yeats's change produces some arresting reactions: Tom Paulin, for instance, tells me that he thinks "Green oak and poplar tree" is the best line in the whole set of verses. Few, I imagine, automatically associate poplars with Ireland.

[17]. National Library of Ireland, MS 13589. The transcription offers a necessarily simplified view of a very difficult draft.

[18]. Wayne K. Chapman develops these ideas of the "adaptive complex" in *Yeats and English Renaissance Literature* (1991: 137 & ff).

[19]. The MS can be found in the National Library of Ireland, MS 13589, and the date is established by the MS of "The Death of the Hare".

[20]. Yeats wrote to Harold Macmillan while preparing proof of *The Winding Stair and Other Poems*, "Please leave the section called "Words for Music Perhaps" as I have arranged every poem with its number. It is a series of poems related one to another & leads up to a quotation from The Delphic oracle, as the two other series "A Man Young & Old" and "A Woman Young & Old" lead up to quotations from Sophocles. The poems in "Words for Music Perhaps" describe first wild loves, then the normal love of boy & girl, then follow poems about love but not love poems, then poems of impersonal ecstasy & all have certain themes in common" (*British Library Additional,* MS. 55003 f. 147). Harold Macmillan's reply on 9 August 1933 was that the "explanation of the scheme" had been "very interesting" and that "the numbering will make the arrangements clear" (*British Library Additional,* MS. 55743 f. 19).

[21]. When I wrote these poems, I had so meditated over the images that came to me in writing "Ballads and Lyrics", "The Rose", and "The Wanderings of Oisin", and other images from Irish folk-lore, that they had become true symbols. I had sometimes when awake, but more often in sleep, moments of vision, a state very unlike dreaming, when these images took upon themselves what seemed an independent life and became part of a mystic language, which seemed as if it would bring me some strange revelation. Being troubled at what was thought a reckless obscurity, I tried to explain myself in lengthy notes, into which I put all the little learning I had, and more wilful phantasy than I now think admirable, though what is most mystical still seems to me the most true. I quote in what follows the better or the more necessary passages (Yeats 1966a: 800). The cut passages are recoverable in the *Variorum Edition*, but a broad summary might be helpful. Yeats cut entirely the notes entitled ""Aedh", "Hanrahan" and "Michael Robartes" in these Poems", ""A Cradle Song". "Michael Robartes asks Forgiveness because of his many Moods"" and "Michael Robartes Bids His Beloved be at Peace". Passages within notes were cut, such as those from "A solar mythologist" to "little at a time" (in the note to "Mongan laments the Change that has come upon him and his Beloved" and "Hanrahan laments because of his Wanderings"); from "It is possible" to "different countries" (in the note to "The Valley of the Black Pig"), from "Two Birds" to "forgetfulness" in the note to "The Secret Rose", which removes the entire history of Cuchulain, recoverable from Lady Gregory's *Cuchulain of Muirthemne*. In the same note, the gesture to Yeats's source for Caoilte mac Rónáin ("I am writing away from most of my books") is made more triumphantly evasive: "maybe I only read it in Mr. Standish O'Grady, who has a fine imagination, for I find no such story in Lady Gregory's book". The same note is further cross-referred to Yeats's own *Deirdre* (Yeats 1966a: 814).

[22]. Such closing questions are a well-known signature of Yeats. See Smith (1968) and Zimmerman (1983). They were a characteristic of his work from very early on, and pervade the 1899 volume.

> Surely thine hour has come, thy great wind blows,
>
> Far-off, most secret, and inviolate rose?

Where Yeats also uses a characteristically troubling polysyllable in a last line, something Shelley —"Ode to the West Wind" was Yeats's model here— did not.

[23]. "He was completing a long process of self-examination, concentrated since 1912 but going back at least to the aftermath of Synge's death" (Foster 2003: 526).

[24]. See "Burnt Norton", ll. 152-6 and "East Coker", 176-184.

[25]. It is this which drew my attention to that mysterious dotted line from reader back to author in Robert Darnton's communications circuit in his 1982 essay "What is the History of Books?". See his *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (1990: 107-135). Readership studies are already a growth area in the History of the Book. I imagine that the study of authors as self-readers (within that larger field) could in future qualify theories of reading, and help the History of Books to provide a new context for criticism.

[26]. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* (2002). Accession No. 4669 (7 November 1924).

[27]. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* (2002). Accession No. 4670 (7 November 1924).

[28]. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* (2002). Accession No. 4672 (12 November 1924); Accession No. 4675 (13 November 1924).

[29]. As Yeats himself acknowledges in "Dust hath closed Helen's Eye". See Yeats (1959: 28).

[30]. Letters from Yeats to his agent, A. P. Watt, and to Ernest Benn. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* (2002). Accession Nos. 4277 (31 January 1923) and 4280 (2 February 1923).

[31]. Letter from Yeats to A. P. Watt, quoted in a letter from Watt to Messrs. Macmillan. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* (2002). Accession No. 4628 (19 August 1924).

[32]. Quoted in a letter from Yeats to A. P. Watt, in a letter from Watt to Sir Frederick Macmillan. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats.* (2002). Accession No. 4405 (20 November 1923).

[33]. ALS to Edith Shackleton Heald, nd 1937, Harvard.

[34]. TLS Private.

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THE CANON PRO AND CONTRA: 'THE CANON IS DEAD-LONG LIVE PICK AND MIX'

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The subtitle of my lecture is taken from an article by Jessica Munns from 2001 called "Cannon Fodder". This militant pun reminds us not only of similar ones like Lillian S. Robinson's *In the Canon's Mouth* (1997), but also of the fact that most of the "canon bashing" within the last few decades took place within the animated American struggle about the revision of the English curriculum that at times turned into veritable "culture wars" (Jay 1997). Leaving aside for the moment the wider ramifications of this development, I will refer to the many arguments against what is again and again simply called "the canon" which deserve closer attention —even if it sounds a bit much when we read that

> the list of crimes now imputed to the canon is extraordinary, for example, for a group of graduate students in California: departmental and professional tyranny, frustration of initiative and interdisciplinarity, suppression of the Third World; articulating social and political power; marginalizing women and reinforcing phallocentric gender oppositions; denying history; imposing judgment; repressing subjectivity; declaring works to be classics that are lucky survivors of an anecdotal process.

I have taken this quotation from Jeffrey S. Sammons' essay "The Land Where the Canon B(l)ooms: There and Here" (Sammons 2001: 127-128), and as the title indicates the topic seems to invite puns. Let us concentrate on the fact that "Anti-canonists see the canon as the vehicle for national, racial and gender superiority"

(Gorak 1991: 235). For though the strife within the American academy was above all about the canon of American literature, this reproach can also easily be upheld regarding the canon of English literature which is my concern in this paper.

Firstly, the view that the literary canon has been used to demonstrate national superiority is all too well founded. At the time of the Renaissance, Britain was still hard put to show that its literary culture was not far behind that of classical antiquity, and above all that it could compete with that of the other early modern European nation states. Thus John Leland in his first history of English literature from the early 1540s presented no fewer than 674 British authors and patrons of learning in order to prove

> that not alonly the Germanes, but also the Italianes themselfe, that count as the Grekes full arrogantly, all other nacyons to be barbarous + unlettered, sauinge their owne, shall haue a direct occasion, openly of force to say. *That Britannia prima fuit parens, altrix (addo hoe etiam), et iure quidem optimo) conservatrix eum uirorum magnorum, tum maxime ingeniorum.* (Hall 1709: B 8r)

That is to say that it was Britain that first parented and subsequently fostered great and most ingenious men. And John Bale expressly states in his *Scriptorum Illustrium maioris Brytannie, quam nunc Angliam & Scotiam vocant: Catalogus* from 1557 to 1559 with its 1400 entries, that it is also his aim to make the most excellent English writers known "ultra Oceanum" (1557 α 3^{v}), "beyond the Ocean", "on the continent". Even William Winstanley in his *Lives of the most Famous English Poets* from 1687 is content to assert that "we come not behind any Nation in the World" (A 2^{v}). Yet already in *The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland*, a literary history published by Theophilus Cibber in 1753, we read that

> The British nation, which has produced the greatest men in every profession, before the appearance of Milton could not enter into any competition with antiquity, with regard to the sublime excellencies of poetry. [...] When Milton appeared, the pride of Greece was humbled, the competition became more equal, and since Paradise Lost is ours; it would, perhaps, be an injury to our national fame to yield the palm to any state, whether ancient or modern. (Cibber 1753: 108)

And it is less surprising that we find ample evidence of this sense of superiority in the literary histories from the late 19th century. Let me quote some telling examples from Henry Morley's *First Sketch of English Literature* (1873) presented by Margit Sichert in her *MLQ*-article on "Functionalizing Cultural Memory" (2003). Here is the first one: "If this be really the strong spirit of the people, to show that it is so is to tell how England won, and how alone she can expect to keep her foremost place among the nations" (Morley 1873: 1; cf. Sichert 2003: 204). The second

one, which also may stand for nineteenth-century racist deliberations, grounds the superiority of the English on the fact that the English race is an ideal mixture of Celtic and Teutonic: "None can distinguish surely the forefathers of these most remote forefathers of the Celt and the Teuton, in whose unlike tempers lay some of the elements from which, when generations after generations more had passed away, a Shakespeare was to come" (Morley 1873: 2; cf. Sichert 2003: 205). Yet in the course of the 20th century such obvious references both to national and racial superiority were to disappear, and what more recently in the US was meant by the nationalist and racist quality of the canon was the so-called "Euro-centrism" of the canon of American literature as presented in the leading anthologies and accordingly taught in the curriculum.

Yet the most far-reaching attack on the canon as such has come from the quarter of certain feminist writers like Lillian S. Robinson or Jessica Munns. Not that they were wrong in pointing out that the traditional canon has been, as Robinson writes, "an entirely gentlemanly artefact" (Robinson 1997: 3). As far as the canon of English literature is concerned, women authors fared better in the earlier literary histories than in the later ones. Cibber in 1753 included thirteen, and due to the fact that he was, above all, out for interesting life stories, he gave no fewer than seven of them (Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, Delarivière Manley, Elizabeth Thomas, Elizabeth Rowe, Catherine Cockburn and Laetitia Pilkington) between ten and twenty pages of space —as much as Chaucer, Spenser and Ben Jonson. And though neither Samuel Johnson in 1781 nor William Hazlitt in 1818 counts a single woman among "The English Poets", Robert Chambers in his *Cyclopaedia of English Literature* (1843) at least gives credit to a few, and among the 90 novelists from the period 1780-1840 he mentions, no fewer than 32 are women. This is much more than what we find later until the 1980s, even if in the meantime women authors like Jane Austen and Virginia Woolf had found a place within the core (or elite) canon.

Yet the acknowledgement of women's share in the writing of literature, be it American or English, and the concurrent inclusion of more women authors in "the canon" is not Lillian S. Robinson's objective when she stresses that:

> We need to understand whether the claim is being made that many of the newly recovered or validated texts by women meet existing criteria or, on the other hand, that those criteria themselves intrinsically exclude or tend to exclude women and hence should be modified or replaced. (1997: 8)

Starting with the rhetorical question, "Is the canon and hence the syllabus based on it to be regarded as the compendium of excellence or as the record of cultural history?" (11), Robinson goes on to further ask whether feminists are not "calling the idea of 'greatness' itself into question, insisting on radically redefining what

comprises it" (25) and thus "the entire aesthetic discourse [...] is fundamentally challenged by consideration of women's work?" (26).

It is only fair to say that in Lillian S. Robinson's view, the traditional literary canon should not be obliterated but rather complemented with cultural history and cultural anthropology in a very wide sense:

> I believe I help bring together the culture defined by custom, ritual, daily life, material survival, belief systems —the anthropologist's culture— with the culture of books, plays, music, and painting —the critic's culture— in a way that frees and potentially empowers all of us. (102)

Compared to this, then, someone like Jessica Munns sounds much more radical. Just listen:

> From the desire to rethink the idea of the literary text to include instead of exclude women as writers, women's studies have broadened —and destroyed— the traditional canon because they have undermined the categories of inclusion and evaluation on which it was based. (2001: 23)

And though realistic enough to admit that —for economic reasons— "anthologies, the modern vehicle of the canon, are for the moment here to stay" (25), she nevertheless ends her programmatic essay in Jan Gorak's *Canon vs Culture* with a vision:

> We can all make our own canon: every teacher their own Norton: is this liberating and exhilarating, or just plain terrifying? I am not at all sure; but I am sure that the emergence of women's literary studies, allied with computer technology, has made this a potential future. The emergence of an infinity of canons of British literature is, perhaps, the appropriate postmodern solution (or solutions). The canon is dead: long live pick-and-mix. (26)

Now before we start discussing the likelihood, quality and effects of this brave new world, it seems appropriate to reflect briefly on the various meanings of "the canon" in order to understand what exactly it is that has been killed off by the inclusion of women's writing. Coming from the Greek "Kanôn" denoting a straight rod or bar and then a rule or model in law or in art, the word "canon" was first applied to a list of classical Greek authors by David Ruhnken in his edition of Rutilius Lupus in 1768 (cf. Kennedy 2001: 107). Since then it has been applied in the literary field to collections of the most different sizes and functions: from vast catalogues of national or period writing to more or less comprehensive literary histories; from anthologies or reading lists guiding or determining university curricula to publishers' series of "classical authors" or more general anthologies like the *Oxford Book of English Poetry*; down to the syllabuses that determine the

teaching of literature in secondary and primary schools. And that we are not only dealing with different quantities but also with different functions becomes clear when we look at, say, Frank Kermode's view that it is the "literary institution" that "controls the choice of canonical texts" (Kermode 1979: 80); or Charles Altieri's, according to which they are "an institutional means of exposing people to a range of attitudes", a kind of "grammar" (Altieri 1990: 27); or the more elaborate one given by Robert Weimann when writing about *Shakespeare (De)Canonized*:

> As a cultural institution, a literary canon may be defined as a publicly circulating, usable body of writing which, by definition, is held to be as much representative of certain national or social interests and traditions as it is unrepresentative and exclusive of others. In fact, the very representativity of this privileged body of writing appears as a sine qua non for its function as a tradition or heritage, for receiving and projecting patterns of social, cultural and national identity. (Weimann 1988: 68)

The functional aspect that comes out in these definitions enables us to understand very clearly why —as Paul Lauter, the coordinating editor of the 1990 *Heath Anthology of American Literature* notorious for its canon-broadening, proclaimed: "the question of the canon becomes a conflict of values and therefore, translated into public policy, of politics" (Lauter 1991: 156) or more concretely, as Sandra Lea Meek in her essay on "The Politics of Poetics" has pointed out, "during the past twenty-five years, the literary canon has come under fire for [...] locking out culturally marginalized groups" (Meek 2001: 81).

One further aspect in which canons significantly differ is their degree of validity that reaches from mere information to being obligatory or compulsory. As the comprehensive canons we find in literary histories can generally not be more than informative overviews and the university curricula in most European countries are not tightly regulated, the significance of the war cry to "open up the canon" (Fiedler and Baker 1981) within the American canon debate could only be understood by those who knew the extent to which the teaching of undergraduate literature courses over there is determined by some leading anthologies. This the more so since the canon of "English literature" in particular has in most respects been relatively wide open for a long time, for instance much, much wider than that of "German literature". This has to do with the fact that from the 16th to the late 18th century there existed in Britain two canons side by side. One of them was very wide indeed, if not all authors and texts, then at least all those deemed important from all domains of discourse. While Leland and Bale aimed at being all-inclusive, John Berkenhout in his *Biographia Literaria*, or *Biographical History of Literature* from 1777 was content with a limited number of entries for specialized canons presenting 'Historians and Antiquarians', 'Divines', 'Lawyers', 'Physicians', 'Poets', 'Philosophers and Mathematicians', 'Grammarians', 'Politicians',

'Travellers', and 'Miscellaneous'. The other, much narrower canon that mostly went under the title of 'Poetry', contained only authors of imaginative literature, ranging from an array of slightly more than a dozen names from Chaucer to Spenser in William Webbes' 1586 *Discourse of English Poesie* to William Winstanley's 145 entries in his *Lives of the most Famous English Poets* in 1687. This expanded to over two hundred in Theophilus Cibber's *Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland* from 1753 before being reduced in Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* to just 52 and in William Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets* to merely 18, although Joseph Ritson in his *Bibliographia Poetica* from 1802 had listed 541 alone from the 16th century.

What is more important for an assessment of the more recent situation is, however, that ever since Robert Chambers' *History of English Language and Literature* (1836), following the lead initiated by Thomas Warton's placing of imaginative literature within a wide context of cultural history in his first narrative history of English literature from 1774-81, the presented canon has been a compromise between the former two separate ones, that is, a canon privileging imaginative writing yet also including authors and works from almost all domains of writing held to be important for British cultural history. This kind of canon-formation reached its zenith in the 15 volumes of *the Cambridge History of English Literature* (1907-16) which comprise also Latin texts by English authors, sermons, a large number of philosophical, historical and political writings, important works by natural scientists, educational tracts, private letters and diaries, examples of earlier journalism etc. And even literary histories that follow the example of George Saintsbury's *History of English Literature* (1898) and give priority to aesthetic criteria as a principle of selection, include at least important theologians, philosophers, and historians.

A further aspect that has to be mentioned is that not only works, but also their authors have traditionally played an important role in the canon and continued to do so at least as synthesizing categories even after having been declared dead by postmodern theorists. Up to the mid-eighteenth century, literary histories consisted in every case of sequences of authors' life stories with lists of their works, and when Samuel Johnson began to devote one third or even half of the space for each entry to an analysis and assessment of the author's works, he produced the model for the life-and-letters approach that was to become the standard until the mid-twentieth century. A typical example for subsequent meaning is to be found in the old *Oxford History of English Literature* and the *Pelican Guide to English Literature* where whole chapters are devoted to some eminent authors and the lesser lights are presented within overviews of the literature of a period or a genre.

Thus the fact that the traditional British canon of English literature was rather broad does not mean that there was no clear hierarchy. A core or elite canon of only a few authors within this wider canon has proved to be extremely stable over the last two centuries, always privileging Shakespeare even within this group. Until World War I it comprised —in addition to Shakespeare— Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Samuel Johnson, Wordsworth, Dickens and Tennyson; and later Jane Austen, George Eliot, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett were added. The much larger group of authors held to be important yet not quite as much so has been less stable and betrayed the influence of changes in literary criticism (just think of the Donne-revival earlier in the 20th century). We generally have then a third level of authors and works that at least receive a short commentary, and below this there is still another one consisting of mere name dropping and obviously serving the purpose of showing that there is still so much more in English literary and cultural history than unfortunately can be dealt with.

Thus any canon-formation implies competition, and with the anti-authoritarian tendency prevalent not only but also among critics in the wake of the 1960s, it is no wonder that this kind of competition and the ensuing hierarchy of authors came under heavy attack. Being too intelligent to overlook the fact that there is, however, no real chance of democratizing the arts, the critics of the canon have brought the battle into the field of cultural history (this can be seen in the argumentation of Lillian Robinson and Jessica Munns I presented earlier), that is, they have dealt with literary texts merely as documents of past cultural stages and conditions.

This shift away from the aesthetic or literature as language art of course also included a questioning of the criteria for canonization. The tendency has been to reduce the question to the aspect of social power or prestige. Even the relative disinterestedness espoused by authors of literary texts over the centuries has been interpreted by Trevor Ross as no more than an attempt "to make their practice seem distinctive and their assertions credible" (Ross 1998: 19). This is the kind of logic according to which doctors are above all interested in keeping you ill in order to stay in business. When Frank Kermode thus tries to reduce the difference between works that are in the canon and those that are not, simply to the fact that "continuity of attention and interpretation" was only "reserved for the canonical" (Kermode 1985: 74), he forgets that it first has taken a considerable amount of attention on the part of editors, publishers, readers, critics and educational institutions for a work or author to get into the canon at all. And the mere fact of being included in the canon of literary histories, for instance, by no means guarantees a continuity of attention. All it effects at best is rescue from being totally forgotten; the attention has to be revived again and again by critics, publishers and above all by those who teach at all educational levels.

It is indeed not easy to make a rational claim for artistic excellence; it can to a point be demonstrated yet hardly be proved by argumentation. And as it is more than difficult to explain the effect of colors to the blind, the attempt to convince people who just lack the necessary sensitivity of differences in aesthetic quality sometimes seems hopeless. Acquaintance with a large number of excellent literary works may help to eventually develop a sense of quality, even if there have also been innumerable and quite helpful attempts to somehow grasp the phenomenon on the conceptual level. Northrop Frye has, for instance, pointed out that canonized authors more than others enable the reader "to communicate with times and spaces and cultures [...] far removed from his own" (Sandler 1986: 1). The German scholar-critic Gert Mattenklott thinks that the canon privileges works "whose formal perfection is not bought with a reduction into finitude of the values it contains; whose ethical dimension on the other hand must not be paid for with a loss of its aesthetic sovereignty" (1992: 357).

In spite of, or even because of, all the theoretical arguments against the canon and the criteria upholding it, in the last few years for the first time in history a large number of new popular histories of English literature have been published in Britain with a canon made up almost exclusively of imaginative texts, of literature consisting only of poems, plays, stories and novels, as a glance at these histories will show: *Routledge History of Literature in English: Britain and Ireland* from 1997, Michael Alexander's *History of English Literature* from the year 2000 or the even more recent *Brief History of English Literature* by John Peck and Martin Coyle, published by Palgrave.

If this looks like a rescue operation in view of the more recent neglect of the aesthetic in cultural studies, it should not be discredited by stamping it as revisionist. I will return to the most interesting relationship between literary history and cultural history in a moment —right after I have referred to the various functions the literary canon has served and perhaps still serves.

As I have already mentioned, the oldest function that led to the first formation of a canon of English literature as far back as the 16th century was a patriotic one. And in the nineteenth century the importance of a national canon of literary heroes for identity formation and the furthering of internal unity was fully recognized. "In our common reverence for a Shakespeare, a Milton, a Scott", writes Robert Chambers in the preface to his *Cyclopaedia of English Literature* (1843), we have a social and uniting sentiment, which not only contains in itself part of our happiness as a people, but much that counteracts influences that tend to set us in division" (Chambers 1843: Preface). Perhaps the most tangible proof of the strong belief in this function of the canon can be seen in the fact that a three-hour exam on English literature became part of the public examinations for entry into the

Indian Civil Service in 1855 and for entry into the Home Civil Service not much later —something made possible only by the new literary histories of Chambers and Craik, and soon special "Manuals" were produced by Craik and Dobson and others with the right sort of canon to prepare for this exam. In my personal opinion, it think it would not hurt if candidates for the civil service today had to pass not only a physical examination but also had to show some acquaintance with the culture of the society for which they want to work and by which they want to be employed (a vain hope, though). As Paul Ricoeur has pointed out, by its canon-making "a community recognizes what is consistent with its own existence, what founds it" (Ricoeur 1977: 35), and Aleida Assmann in a hyperbolic way stresses its identity forming function: "[...] whether voluntarily chosen or enforced in educational institutions, canonical texts are written into memory and into the bodies. The canon is an embossing press of identity, whether one wills it our not, whether one acknowledges it or not" (Assmann 1998: 59).

It may just have been the increased awareness of the finally coercive function of the canon as a "hidden persuader", as an indirect (and therefore most probably even more effective) medium for the dissemination of certain sets of values and finally of particular world views, that led to its discrimination as an instrument of ideology. And it seems understandable that at a time when the individual was considered to be caught "in the prisonhouse of language" and to be largely "written by" culture, the reaction following this awareness was extremely negative. The canon appeared as just one more sinister ploy to suppress any freedom of choice still left to the individual, the choice to determine which books to read. The fact that the wider canon of literary histories at least also had the opposite function of informing about how much there actually was to choose from, and what generation after generation had been thrilled by, was, however, lost sight of in this process.

The canon's function as a medium of dissemination of values also explains why the canon debate was seen as a conflict of values and as a political issue. And in order to show that it has been such an issue not only since yesterday I cannot refrain from quoting again William Winstanley who in his *Lives of the most Famous English Poets* written in 1687 from a Tory perspective, allotted Chaucer 10 pages and Surrey and Sidney 7, yet Milton only the following few lines:

> John Milton was one, whose natural parts deservedly give him a place amongst the principal of English Poets, having written two Heroick Poems and a Tragedy; namely *Paradice Lost*, *Paradice Regain'd*, and *Sampson Agonista*; But his Fame is one out like a Candle in a Snuff, and his Memory will always stink, which might have ever lived in honourable Repute, had not he been a notorious Traytor, and most impiously and villainously bely'd that blessed Martyr King *Charles* the First. (Winstanley 1687: 195)

The issue in the canon debate was, of course, not the lack of loyalty to a King but the lack or inadequate representation of the ethnic minorities in a multicultural society such as the United States and of one half of the population, namely women. And as you cannot have failed to notice, this is where "the canon" both of the anthologies for teaching and of literary histories has undergone considerable changes in the last few decades. This also holds true for the canon of English literature as presented in British literary histories. It is, of course, impossible to change history itself in retrospect although we can rewrite it; and the diminished opportunities for women writers in a patriarchal society have caused an irremediable waste of talent. Yet, as a result of these recent changes, at least more of what has been produced by women writers has found acknowledgement, even in a very conservative literary history like the *Short Oxford History of English Literature*. And when one looks into Peck and Coyle's recent *Brief History* one can also see that the idea of inner-British devolution with its heightened respect for cultural difference regarding Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the importance of so-called diaspora writing and feminist ideas have left their traces.

Many other changes that the canon of "English literature" has undergone in the last few decades as part of the university curriculum have a lot to do with what Trevor Ross has called "presentism": the fact that "works from the distant past could be deemed canonical only if they could be shown to contribute to the productivity and stature of the present age and to the circulation of contemporary values" (Ross 1998: 9). Ross is mistaken, however, when he writes that this view is restricted to the period determined by rhetoric, that is, before the 18th century; he overlooks the fact that it came back —together with the revival of rhetoric— in the later 20th century. Presentism became powerful in the 1960s under the name of "relevance", the criterion according to which works from the past had to prove that they were not only worth being stowed away somewhere in the archive of cultural memory, but also being kept alive in collective memory. This was, after all, a wonderful occasion for critics and teachers to demonstrate their interpretative ingenuity, for even the most deliberately nonsensical text could be given a "relevant" meaning by means of a kind of negative dialectic, and soon deconstruction opened up the further possibility of focusing on what was admittedly not in the texts, and therefore must have been suppressed, but could at least be discussed on the level of mere potentiality. Anyway, if in Germany —as Karl Kraus wrote in the 1930s— revolutions are carried out by changing street names, in Britain they are achieved by devising "alternative Shakespeares". Further, presentism has effected the inclusion of more and more works by women and postcolonial writers in the teaching canon, at least in Germany, and I assume also in other European countries and the US.

The most important function of the canon in its various shapes has, however, hardly been touched on so far in my presentation. It is, after all, the function to keep the literature from the past (and mind you, the past begins yesterday and even today will already belong to the past tomorrow) within cultural memory, that is, in the archive of works deemed to be sufficiently significant for a particular culture —in this case British culture— or even for European or world culture; or even worth being kept alive within the operative collective memory of the nation, the respective wider cultural sphere, or at least potentially the whole world. For it must not be forgotten that poems, plays, stories, books depend for their survival on their being preserved, reprinted, read and re-read, on being propagated, taught, interpreted again and again and discussed in order to not sink into relative or utter oblivion. Therefore literary canons are first and foremost rescue operations, attempts to keep alive what tends to become of itself no more than the contents of dusty shelves. Those who edit and publish older works, read and love them, teach and discuss them, those who put together canons in literary histories and defend them in articles and lectures —that is, you and I and our likes— are the only ones who ensure that our cultural memory is filled not only with history in terms of politics and military power. We propagate a cultural memory that also consists of an awareness of texts that can give us more insight into past mentalities, can mirror concretely past views of the world and the self and give us insight into past discrepancies between desire and the real.

And because the main function of the canon is to implant literature in and keep it within cultural and collective memory, we should think twice —or rather much more often— before demanding its dissolution.

To be well integrated in cultural memory entails, however, certain structural requirements. A canon has to be more than a wild assortment of names of authors and works for it to be easily memorized, and as cultural memory is largely determined by the chronological view of general historiography, it also has to be structured in a roughly chronological way for it to be more easily integrated. That is, the vast archive of extant literary works has to be turned into the usable past of the canon, not only by selection but also through a particular structuring, through a grouping of authors and works into periods and genres. We are so used to this that it sounds like no more than stating the obvious, but for almost three centuries of canon making through the writing of literary histories —more exactly from the 1540s to the 1830s— this was not the case. With the exception of Thomas Warton —who actually was the first literary historian in Britain to work with the concepts of periods and genres in his *History of English Poetry* but was much too fond of extensive excursions into cultural history to get further than the mid-sixteenth century and to establish something like a clearly discernible canon— any extensive body of information about earlier English literature was in the form of an either

chronological or alphabetical listing of authors, with no further structuring whatsoever.

Thus when nineteenth century writing of literary histories began in 1836 with Robert Chambers' *History of the English Language and Literature*, the most important innovation regarding the integration of literary history within the larger frame of general and cultural history was the splitting up of the chronological account of the literary heritage into smaller units of historical "periods". And as a first step towards a realization of the relative autonomy of the development of literary forms and genres we also find here already a rough subdivision of the literature of a period into separate genres. There is no space here to give further attention to the problems and pitfalls of literary periodization, especially since you will find them discussed in the next volume of the literary yearbook *REAL* due to appear in a few weeks' time (and there will be even more on the subject in next year's volume entirely devoted to the relation between literature and cultural memory). Yet it can be said that in most cases periodization has been conceived of in such a way that a linking with the structures of general and cultural history is made easy.

What is not so easy is to negotiate the relationship between literary history, in the narrower sense of a history of language art, and cultural history, especially in the shape of the history of written culture, when it comes to the selection of authors and works for the canon. Cultural history is, of course, a much broader field of investigation, which on the textual level comprises all kinds of different discourses. And if we want to see the dominant ideas, values and mentalities of past phases of culture represented, we have to include at least the more influential texts which disseminated theological, philosophical, political, historical, legal, economic, scientific and aesthetic ideas in the canon. The imaginary works of literature are, of course, also in many ways representative of the world view of the time of their creation, yet through various strategies of presentation and the greater freedom of the imaginary quite a few of them are able to transcend the limits of the culture they have grown out of. This becomes, of course, most obvious in the impact they still have on later generations, and the so-called "test of time" has been a reliable criterion for canonization. Though there is, of course, room for a history of culture that reads literary texts only for their documentary value, and also room for a history of literature focused on the development of forms of expression and almost devoid of cultural deliberations, for reasons I could only hint at, a combination of the two turns out to be much more fruitful —both for those more interested in cultural history and those more interested in the specific impact of literature. From the perspective of someone intensely engaged in the pursuit of cultural history, Catherine Belsey has stressed the specific value of literature, because it

> confronts the outer edges of language, and thereby the limits of the culture inscribed in language. It thus marks the finitude of all culture, and the relativity of all cultures, and in the process the finitude and relativity of the subject that is their effect, as well as pointing to a relation of difference between language and the real that resides beyond the purview of culture. (Belsey 2001: 47)

Therefore, while the pragmatic canon combining more important works from various domains of discourse with a broad range of literary texts as we find it in the more traditional British literary histories may be in need of change due to, for instance, its undue neglect of writings by women and marginalized social groups, it seems to me in principle a better solution than many others. At least it appears to be more open to reform because it is less founded on strict theoretical principles. Provided that the canon has a future at all.

Regarding the relatively broad canon of literary histories, I am pretty confident that it will survive. Even at a time when there was one theoretical attack after another on existing canons and canonization as such, new histories of English literature were published and older ones reprinted as if nothing had happened. There seems to be a need for this kind of usable archive of cultural memory. What is less certain is the survival of a sizeable canon as a storehouse of collective memory —even with those who study English. In Germany at least, in the wake of the 1960s survey, lectures were discredited, and reading lists were withdrawn because they were held to be suppressive. In the meantime, however, even in the always rather politicized "Germanistik", a new affirmation of the canon has set in with the aim of correcting some of the mistakes made in the last 30 years, and the effect of the abolition of the canon has been described as "literary waywardness" ("literarische Verwahrlosung"; cf. Klaus Laermann quoted by Vöhler 2003: 39). The slogan "long live pick-and-mix" sounds liberating; it is so, however, only for that older generation that is still acquainted with a sizeable canon of works to pick from. Yet where is the freedom of choice for Jessica Munns' students who have nothing else to choose from than her individual mix? And what about communication between anglicists whose acquaintance with English literature has been totally determined by the arbitrary picking and mixing of their teachers? The result of such a "liberation" has already become discernible in conferences and especially in articles by theorists. In the former case you find now any number of minute analyses of works which hardly any one in the audience has ever read and in the latter case the canon of works used for the demonstration of theoretical issues has shrunk to one author: Shakespeare. I know that there would not be much chance of coming to an agreement even about a core canon, and some agreement would be necessary for a canon to work because it is by definition a collective enterprise. Two or three dozen authors, each with their most important work on a reading list for a three

or four year course of study would at least be a common ground for comparisons or pertinent examples. Even a dozen would be better than the swan of Avon alone. Such a core canon could perhaps also function as a kind of provocation, for with everybody just picking and mixing *ad libidum*, where's the rub? There is, after all, an "anxiety of influence", not only with every new generation of poets but also with readers. Both want to assert their identity by intensely trying to be different. And in order to do so they have to be acquainted with what they decide to distance themselves from, as they have, for instance, with quite a few of the habits, preferences and values of the generation of their parents. For that reason alone we should give them a chance and allow them to become acquainted with a fair number of works held for a long time now to be particularly innovative and attractive. They could then still wait for the next instalment of Harry Potter —not only, but also. A reasonably small core canon would certainly leave space for the more trendy items among the novelties that beset them and us.

Additional Note

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EUROPA IN WONDERLAND: GOBLIN MARKET OR SAPPHO'S GYMNASIUM?

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"Alice [I mean Europa] was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank [I mean the seashore], and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book [I mean the papyrus] her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book', thought Alice [or Europa], 'without pictures or conversation?' So she was considering in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit [I mean a White Bull] with pink eyes ran close by her" (Carroll 1946: 23). Rabbit or Bull serves the same role in texts divided chronologically by hundreds of years, as an initiator and guide for the young women, Alice and Europa, into unknown territories; the two animals signify the proximity to a threatening liminality related to an 'awakening'. So Europa, I guess, would be a most appropriate hostess and instructor in the diachronic pedagogic journey over the European humanistic landscape that I wish to make in this presentation. "Let us go then, you and I" (Eliot 1954: 11) tracing Europa's adventures in wonderland.

The myth of Europa, in the fullest version that has come down to us, by the ancient bucolic poet Moschus, begins with Europa, Phoenician princess and daughter of king Agenor, dreaming that "two continents contended for her, Asia and that which faces it, and they wore the shapes of women. One had a stranger's form, but

the other was like a woman of her own country and clung the closest about her daughter and kept saying how she herself had borne her and nurtured her. But the other, laying strong hands upon her, drew her nothing loth away, for by the will of aegis-bearing Zeus, the figure said, Europa was destined to be hers" (Moschus 1953, 1972: 8-15). Terrified but also attracted by the unknown (in the form of a woman), Europa wonders upon waking, "Who was the stranger that I beheld in my sleep? How yearning for her seized my heart; and she, how fondly she welcomed me, and looked at me as though on her own child!" (24-26). Europa's desire for the (uncanny) woman, her balancing between the 'familiar' and the 'other' mother, is to be mediated through the intervention of the male Zeus. Europa's fearful 'transference', her sea-change, is marked by cries of agony as the bull-god carries her toward the unknown (mother) land: "Crete came into sight" (162).

Interpretations of the myth of Europa begin with attempted etymologies of her name; though the lingustic connections between the girl and the continent that was to become her nuptial home are considered 'coincidental' by some scholars, her name has been taken to mean the "western", or "dark", related to the "willow" (of vegetation cult) but also to the "moon" —"wide-eyed" or "broad-faced" (Barkan 1986: 15). Europa, earth-mother or moon-goddess, belongs to a mythical genealogy of women (Io, Telephassa, Pasiphaë, Phaedra, Ariadne, Aerope) most of whom have been victims of divine rape one way or another, instances of the Great Rape, the triumph of the Indo-European sun-bull/Zeus over the Mediterranean Great Goddess —with a deepening chasm separating 'culture' from 'nature'. So Europa may be taken to be "the manifestation of the Great Goddess as the mother of an entire continent" (Gadon 1989: 106). Once in Crete, Zeus and Europa, the story goes, were united in the Juhtan cave or under a plane tree, in *hierogamy*; subsequently, Zeus married her off to Asterion, king of Crete at the time. The passage of Europa from Phoenicia to the Cretan island indicates the transfer of the Great Goddess cult from Anatolia to the Mediterranean. In this respect, Europa becomes one aspect of the feminine divinity that reigned supreme in Bronze Age Crete, and beyond (Gimbutas 1989: 318).

Minoan civilization was not brought ready made from Asia or from Africa, but was an original native creation wherein foreign techniques and ideas were assimilated and blended to form a novel and essentially European tradition. The Bronze Age civilization of Crete, and its later Mycenaean development, permeated and shaped almost all of what was later to become Greece —and Europe. There is uncontestable proof, I think, that whether matriarchal, matrilineal, matrilocal, matrifocal, or matrisexual, Crete, the originating point of Europe, had established a female-dominant or at best an egalitarian society (Stone 1976: 46-49), where woman was as much a cultural subject as man, initiator of value and meaning in

personal, communal, and religious life —having an original 'symbolizing' power of which she was gradually deprived— and depraved (Castleden 1990: 9-29). A pervading characteristic of Cretan society, even at its zenith, is that it is a non-dominator society, showing no personal ambition, aggressiveness, or desire for control. In the abscence of hierarchical 'difference', women (and men) seem to enjoy a social prehistoric freedom, equally participating in public activities, leading a way of life that is fearless, joyful, relaxed, exuberant, 'aesthetic' (Hawkes 1968: 110-17). Education in Crete was highly regarded, full of elevated religious feeling, showing concern for the development of the whole human being, for an ideal inner perfection. Writing was a sacred activity, of divine origin and inspiration, placed under the patronage of a god.

For the Greeks, education, *παιδεία*, was based, essentially, on a profound relationship between two people, one young and the other mature, who was at once model, guide and initiator (Marrou 1956: 31). Throughout Greek history the contact between master and pupil was to be a matter of personal 'care': education remained in principle not so much a form of teaching, an instruction in techniques, as an investment of loving effort by an elder concerned to promote the growth of a younger person. The older type of an educational institution, the 'gymnasium', we find in Lesbos towards the end of the seventh century, where girls could be instructed. This higher education took place within a community life, in a school, "the abode of the disciples of the Muses", comprising a religious fellowship, *θίασος*, dedicated to the goddesses of culture —a form that was later to be adopted by the schools of philosophy from the time of Pythagoras onwards. Here, under the direction of a mistress, whose typical representative was the poet Sappho, the personality of these young women was fashioned to conform to an ideal of beauty, aspiring to wisdom. From the technical point of view the school was the equivalent of an Academy of Music following the joyful rhythm of a series of festivals, religious ceremonies and banquets (Marrou 1956: 34). Sappho is quoted (by Maximus of Tyre) as saying, "For it is not right that there should be lamentation in the house of those who serve the Muses. That would not be fitting for us" (Sappho 1982: 161).

This remarkable educational system brought out the pedagogic value of music, and the other arts, which was to remain fundamental throughout the whole classical period; indeed it seems to have been the object of theological reflection even in Sappho's time —a fragment of hers dealing with these questions clearly expresses the doctrine so dear to Greek thought, that immortality could be gained by the cult of the Muses (Marrou 1956: 34). Sappho is also quoted (by Stobaeus) as having reproached an uneducated woman in the following way: "But when you die you will lie there, and afterwards there will never be any recollection of you or any longing for you since you have no share in the roses of Pieria [probably poetic skill];

unseen in the house of Hades also, flown from our midst, you will go to and fro among the shadowy corpses" (Sappho 1982: 99). Sappho expected her pupils, because they had known an aesthetic sublimation with her, to pursue the bright and the fine things in life, for her ultimate lesson was that true beauty inhabits any natural form. This is why the ancients compared her to Plato's Diotima, Socrates' instructor in making the ascent to the beautiful. In the Greek culture which is focused on aesthetics, beauty is the central topic of both Sapphic poetry and Platonic philosophy. Sappho's sense of 'beauty' is apparently physical and concrete; Plato's metaphysical and abstract. Yet both ancient instructors exhibit a similar pedagogical model, based on a shared quest after beauty and truth through erotic attention and devoted engagement.

If we follow the testimony of Maximus of Tyre, we see that, in his *Orations*, he openly compares Sapphic and Socratic educational tactics: "What else could one call the love of the Lesbian woman than the Socratic art of love? [...] For they said they loved many, and were captivated by all things beautiful" (Sappho 1982: 21). To put matters in the proper historical perspective, one wonders if we should call Socrates' —or Plato's— educational politics 'Sapphic', rather than vice versa, seeing as indebted to the feminine origination of *ἔρως*, *ποίησις* and, perhaps, philosophical *λόγος*. Maximus of Tyre (in *Orations* again) detects a parallelism in the conception and definition of eros given by the male 'ventriloquist' philosopher and the female poet: "Diotima says that Love flourishes when he has abundance but dies when he is in need: Sappho combined these ideas and called Love bitter-sweet (Sappho 1982: 147) and 'pain-giver'" (Sappho 1982: 175). Similarly, "Socrates calls Love a sophist, Sappho 'tale-weaver'" (Sappho 1982: 181).

In the opening of the *Phaedrus*, Socrates is called upon to pronounce on whether a youth should entrust his education and ethical formation to a teacher motivated by a deep devotion. Socrates seeks support for his position in 'forefathers' and certainly 'foremothers' —"the wise men and women who in past ages have spoken and written on this theme" of eros (235b). Socrates appropriates ancestral voices that are feminine —"from the fair Sappho maybe" (235c)— which instruct him in the mysteries of love as an educational method. The bond between teacher and pupil, as Socrates sees it, is the homologizing of both partners to a common god; they project upon their love-objects the image of divinity, their inner daemon, and "as they follow up the trace within themselves of the nature of their own god their task is made easier, inasmuch as they are constrained to fix their gaze upon him, and reaching out after him in memory they are possessed by him, and from him they take their ways and manners of life, in so far as a man can partake of a god" (252e-253a). So education is given the character of 'mystery rite' that initiates into a sublime transcendence of the human condition, making men 'equal to the gods'. The Platonic Socrates realizes that only dedication to the young can be a deep

educational force because it sets up a communicative bridge between (wise) teacher and (ignorant) pupil; so the Socratic method can be defined as the transformation of erotic attraction into an instrument of instruction.

The other dialogue where Plato 'steals' a woman's voice to talk about an eros-based education is of course the *Symposium*. Diotima, the prophetess of love, like the poetess of love, Sappho, locates the origin of wisdom in "frenzy" or "divine rage". Sappho of Lesbos and Diotima of Mantinea are actually the female figures that Socrates recognizes as 'instructors'. The well-known position advocated by Diotima, and transmitted by Socrates to his pupils, is that eros is a daemon, a mediator between humans and divinities, the only channel through which "man can have any intercourse, whether waking or sleeping, with the gods" (203a). Diotima defines the essential attribute of eros as a longing of mortals for the condition of immortality, and Socrates concludes his report of Diotima's revelation by avowing full allegiance to this 'womanspeak', and admitting that if we are to achieve the transcendence of human limits, "Love will help our mortal nature more than all the world" (212b). The master metaphor of Diotima's metaphysics of eros as an ascent from the bodily to the spiritual domain in search of "the beautiful", *το καλόν* —which is not to be sought for itself but "for the conception and generation that the beautiful effects" (206e)— is the female generative process: "To love is to bring forth upon the beautiful [*τόκος εν καλω*], both in body and in soul" (206b). Conception, pregnancy, labour, parturition, and midwifery are the dominant images of the Platonic dialogues —female biology becoming the subtext of the philosophical process. Philosophy proclaims itself to be 'woman' —the maternal body being used as a relational entity between the *bio* and the *socio*. Once again, 'culture' mirrors 'nature'. Also, in the *Theaetetus*, comparing the pedagogue to a midwife, Socrates avows: "My art of midwifery is in general like theirs; the only difference is that my patients are men, not women, and my concern is not with the body but with the soul that is in travail of birth. And the highest point of my art is the power to prove by every test whether the offspring of a young man's thought is a false phantom or instinct with life and truth. [...] The many admirable truths they bring to birth have been discovered by themselves from within. But the delivery is heaven's work and mine" (150b-d).

In the *Republic*, Plato, describing the education of the "good old days", tells us that it was two-sided, comprising "gymnastics" for the body and "music" for the soul —"for the harmonious adjustment of these two principles by the proper degree of tension and relaxation of each" (411e-412a). From the beginning, Greek culture and hence Greek education included an element that was at once spiritual, intellectual and artistic (Marrou 1956: 41). For Plato, music, *μουσική*, signifies the domain of the Muses in the widest sense; in the *Laws*, he confirms what seems

to be common knowledge: "May we assume that our earliest education comes through the Muses and Apollo, or not?" (654a). The expression "ancient education", *αρχαία παιδεία*, also denoted the type of schooling current in Athens in the first half of the fifth century, before the great changes that were made towards the end of the period by the Sophists, initiating the pedagogical revolution which introduced 'Sophistry' as a new model of instruction. The Sophists were the great forunners, the first, so to speak, instructors of higher education, professional men for whom teaching was an occupation whose practical application proved its social utility (Marrou 1956: 48). The aim of their teaching was to educate the ambitious young men of Athens (women were restricted to domestic occupations only), to prepare them with the necessary skills for a successful political career. The Sophists were pioneers who discovered and applied a whole series of new educational methods, all of which followed an extreme utilitarianism and commercialism, 'selling' the knowledge that would enable the future politician to impose his will on the city. In Plato's words, the Sophist can "impose upon the young who are still far removed from the reality of things, by means of words that cheat the ear, exhibiting images of all things in a shadow play of discourse, so as to make them believe that they are hearing the truth and that the speaker is in all matters the wisest of men" (*Sophist* 234c); he appears in many guises "as the hired hunter of rich young men [...] as a sort of merchant of learning [...] as a retail dealer [...] as selling the products of his own manufacture" (*Sophist* 231d). So the antinomy between professionalism and humanism was already present in ancient Athens, distinguishing between education as private interest and as public good. This problem, which was also to become a crucial issue in the higher education of the third millenium, was certainly not settled in the fifth century BC —in fact it was aggravated, when against the type of instruction offered by the Sophists there arose the severe criticism of Socrates. When he charges the Sophists with being too exclusively concerned with political manoeuvring, with effective action, and thus in danger of adopting an attitude of cynical amoralism, he takes his stand on spiritual values, first among which, in education, was ethics, 'virtue', *αρετή*. Socrates' great annunciation is that "virtue *is* teachable" (*Protagoras* 361b). Let us not forget, though, that Socrates suffered 'capital punishment' for his educational views —being accused, arrested, imprisoned, convicted and executed in the year 399 BC.

Faced with the extreme utilitarianism of the Sophists' educational policy, which sees every branch of study as a means to increased political power and social promotion, Socrates asserted the transcendent existence of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty as guiding principles for the wise instructor: "But we must look for those craftsmen who by the happy gift of nature are capable of following the trail of true beauty and grace, that our young men, dwelling as it were in a salubrious region, may

receive benefit from all things about them [...] and so from earliest childhood insensibly guide them to likeness, to friendship, to harmony with beautiful reason" (*Republic* 401c-d). Here Socrates comes forward as heir to the great pre-Socratic philosophers, to that mighty effort of thought directed with such high seriousness towards the unravelling of the mystery of things, the quest after Being (Marrou 1956: 58). It is by dedication to the idea of the Good and not by any persuasion-technique that he will lead his pupils to spiritual perfection, to "virtue": "This reality, then, that gives their truth to the objects of knowledge and the power of knowing to the knower, you must say is the idea of the good, and you must conceive it as being the cause of knowledge, and of truth in so far as known" (*Republic* 508d-e). The ultimate aim of education is achieved by reaching the state of "wisdom", when the pupil "passes into the realm of the pure and everlasting and immortal and changeless [...]. And this condition of the soul we call wisdom" (*Phaedo* 79d). The appropriate attitude of the 'knowledgeable' teacher is to admit that 'he knows nothing', standing before the world 'unknowing' —always questioning: "It isn't that, knowing the answers myself, I perplex other people. The truth is rather that I infect them also with the perplexity I feel myself", Socrates confesses (*Meno* 80c).

Many Platonic *Dialogues*, such as the *Sophist*, *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Greater Hippias* and *Lesser Hippias*, explore the pedagogical role of the Sophists, as "one producing belief without knowledge" (*Gorgias* 454e). In the *Sophist*, Plato undertakes to study the character of the Sophist and "bring his nature to light in a clear formula" (218c), proposing that "his art may be traced as a branch of the appropriative, acquisitive family" which "hunts man, privately, for hire, taking money in exchange, having the semblance of education —and this is termed Sophistry, and is a hunt after young men of wealth and rank" (223b). Comparing the Sophist to the merchant who travels around selling goods, Plato suggests, "And would you not call by the same name him who buys up knowledge and goes about from city to city exchanging his wares for money?" He continues: "And so this trader in virtue again turns out to be our friend the Sophist, whose art may now be traced from the art of acquisition through exchange, trade, merchandise, to a merchandise of the soul" (224b-d).

> Morning and evening
> Maids heard the goblins cry:
> 'Come buy our orchard fruits,
> Come buy, come buy:
> Apples and quinces,
> Lemons and oranges,
> Plump unpecked cherries,
> Melons and raspberries,

Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries;—
All ripe together
In summer weather,—
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy: (1-19)

Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (written in 1862, that is twenty-four centuries after the Platonic *Dialogues*), a fairy-tale and nonsense poem (something like *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) can be read as a socio-economic allegory reflecting the industrial society that 'produced' it. The goblins' goods represent, among other things, economic power and imperial capitalism, and the poem argues (imaginatively) that everything can be 'marketed' in unprecedented 'exchanges'. The poem's ultimate target is to show how the woman's world, the innocent and protected 'home', is contaminated like everything else by the market principles of selling and buying (Helsinger 1995: 189-91). The goblin merchants tempt the two sisters of the story —Laura and Lizzie— with fruits that promise to satisfy their desires, to fulfil the women's longings. The sisters enact a drama which displays what moral defences have to be exerted in order to learn how to face and handle the tempting world of market forces. *Goblin Market*, read in terms of the economic exchange incorporated in it, turning things and people into commodities, becomes a parable about power relations. Although it attempts to imagine a *topos* for women outside a capitalized society, it totally surrenders to an 'economic' language and metaphors, contaminating everything by the laws of exchange. *Goblin Market* is the place of fantasy and marketing, playing by the rules of magic and money. It thus uncannily echoes the growing commodity morality of nineteenth-century culture. As the poem moves toward its conclusion, however, communal solidarity erases commercial corruption, with Lizzie and Laura triumphant. At the end of the poem, Laura turns from 'sufferer' to 'narrator', confirming her ultimate control. In her re-membering and retelling of the story she must repeat the goblins' fruit-cry "come buy", thus appropriating their merchantile play. Incorporating their text into her own 'tale', Laura seems to bring the entire system of exchange —the goblin market and its rules— with all its disquieting iterations, under her power. In her assumption of the goblins' role —yet giving her 'goods' to her listeners-customers 'for free— she leaves the world not purged of goblin marketing, but 'embraced' into a wider system of 'home' economics and feminine values. The question left

open might be: Can women actually handle a market so dominated by goblins? (Holt 1996: 141). Or, to put it in educational terms: Can women find an instructive voice in a goblin market society? That its closing lines portray a woman as an effective 'teacher' is a positive gesture, delivering a prophetic message to the future: the need for an alternative symbolic order which 'uses' (without being 'abused' by) market practices.

> Days, weeks, months, years
> Afterwards, when both were wives
> With children of their own;
> Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
> Their lives bound up in tender lives;
> Laura would call the little ones
> And tell them of her early prime,
> Those pleasant days long gone
> Of not-returning time:
> Would talk about the haunted glen,
> The wicked, quaint fruit-merchant men,
> Their fruits like honey to the throat
> But poison in the blood;
> (Men sell not such fruit in any town;) (543-56)

Do they not?

Taking the 19th century 'home' as a paradigm and bridge to bring us to the 20th, or rather 21st century academic 'home', the university, which is my ultimate goal in all this 'wandering' in the literary wonderland —with Europa as our guide— I would like to make a stop on September 18th, 1988, in Bologna, where the Rectors of European universities signed the *Magna Charta Universitatum*, making the following declaration: "The undersigned Rectors of European universities, gathered in Bologna for the ninth centenary of the oldest university in Europe [...]; looking forward to a far-reaching co-operation between all European nations and believing that peoples and States should become more than ever aware of the part that universities will be called upon to play in a changing and increasingly international society, Consider —that at the approaching end of this millenium the future of mankind depends largely on cultural, scientific and technical development; and that this is built up in centres of culture, knowledge and research as represented by true universities". The fundamental principles which must, "now and always", support the vocation of universities, "as proclaimed to all States and to the conscience of all nations" are the following: "The university is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organized because of geography and historical heritage [...]. To meet the needs of the world around us, its research and

teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power".

Eleven years later, on the 19th of June 1999, the European Ministers of Education convened, in Bologna again, issuing the Joint Declaration which was to chart the *European Higher Education Area*. The Bologna Declaration was initially politically driven. We must not forget that the premises of the whole Bologna issue are to be found in an earlier paper, the Declaration of Sorbonne on "Harmonisation of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System", signed in Paris, in May 1998, by the education ministers of four States: France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. The key words underlying the Paris Declaration were "mobility" (of students and teachers), "transparency" (of degrees), and "integration" (of graduates into the common European labour market). Embodying the Paris principles of the 'four' into the Bologna agenda of the 'twenty nine' States, the Ministers declared: "A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship". To conclude with the following commmitment that establishes the single European (goblin?) market of education: "We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries" —with the unprecedented terms 'competitiveness' and 'measurement' revealing a fresh concept of 'brave new education' as a marketable good, a commodity.

The next step was to move *Towards the European Higher Education Area*, taken in Prague on May 19th, 2001, resulting in the Protocol which proposed further actions for the implementation of the objectives of what is by now known as the 'Bologna Process': "As the Bologna Declaration sets out, Ministers asserted that building the European Higher Education Area is a condition for enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of higher education institutions in Europe". They supported the idea that "higher education should be considered a public good" but "agreed on the importance of enhancing attractiveness of European higher education to students from Europe and other parts of the world": students-'customers', that is, "come buy".

The third stage for *Realising the European Higher Education Area* took place in Berlin on 19th September 2003, issuing a new Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers, which attempts a reconciliation of opposites, with the paradoxical cohabitation of 'competition' and 'cooperation': "Ministers reaffirm the importance of the social dimension of the Bologna Process. The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social

characteristics of the European Higher Education Area [...]. In that context, Ministers reaffirm their position that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility".

Parallel to the Ministers' conferences and communiqués, the Commission of the European Communities, "seeking to start a debate on the role of Universities", publicized, in the same year 2003, the following Communication entitled *The Role of Universities in the Europe of Knowledge*, asserting that: "Given that they are situated at the crossroads of research, education and innovation, universities in many respects hold the key to the knowledge economy and society. [...] European universities have for long modelled themselves along the lines of some major models, particularly the ideal model of university envisaged nearly two centuries ago by Wilhelm von Humboldt [...]. Today the trend is away from these models, and towards greater differentiation". Focusing especially on the new challenges facing European universities, the Communication from the Commission asks "the fundamental question: can the European universities, as they are organised now, hope in the future to retain their place in society and in the world? [...] If it is to achieve its ambition of becoming the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy and society, Europe simply must have a first-class university system".

What do universities say responding to these challenges inviting them to perform this new educational role of promoting Europe as a knowledge-based society and economy? Let us listen to some familiar voices, expressed by members of ESSE and recorded, where else? in the *European English Messenger*. ESSE's 'Socratic' criticisms of the 'Sophistic' turnings of modern higher education originate in the address of its first President, Piero Boitani, Universita di Roma, at the Bordeaux Conference in September, 1993. An excerpt from the address appeared in volume III of the *Messenger* in Spring 1994, entitled "The ECU". Setting the question, "What is an ECU worth to members of ESSE?" Boitani proposes unthought of readings of the acronym, asserting: "We badly need an ECU, a European Common *Universitas*, which is to say, the cultural unity of European intellectuals, of European humanists and critics, acting in all spheres of life. In short, we need a true ECU, a European Currency Unit to be not an abstract entity but the daily basis of our 'negotiations' —and I mean this both literally and allegorically, both politically and culturally". Having set the goals and hopes for Europe's future, he concludes: "The first Chairman of ESSE will leave you by ideally toasting to the ECU —a European Common Utopia" (55-59).

From "The President's Column", in volume VII, Autumn 1998, we hear the voice of Helmut Bonheim, University of Cologne, as President of ESSE, exposing the vagaries of "The Information Society": "Agreed, *information society* is not a term

without charm. We do live, if we contrast our age with earlier ones, in a media (or misinformation) society". And he concludes, "These are only some of the reasons why the narrow view of modern life as an information society threatens to warp secondary and tertiary education. [...] For higher education is not first of all about facts and dates. It is about developing a sense of what questions are worth putting" (4-5).

The presence of Seamus Heany in volume X of Autumn 2001 introduces another dimension to this academic debate over the (precarious) present and (bleak) future of education. In "Time and Again: Poetry and The Millenium", Heany, seeking shelter from the dazzling and dangerous glitter of information technology, turns to poetry and the cultural heritage because "poetry is an art which reaches after those hovering meanings and tries to connect them with the ground of our immediate experience". Asserting his firm belief that "new life can only stream from the old sources if the lines to those sources are kept open", he declares that "the university has still a vital humanist role to play", adding that if "the cultural heritage is not maintained, if the ongoing work of retention and reinterpretation is not kept up by the academy, then in a short enough time a shared idiom may be no longer possible". And he prophesies: "At the beginning of the new millenium, in other words, on the verge of the new technological era, when the galactic glare of new technologies seems capable of burning off the ozone layer of our cultural memory, it looks as if the work of the humanities departments is more necessary than ever" (19-23).

Adolfe Haberer, President of ESSE today, gives a penetrating 'internal' view from "The President's Column" in volume XI of Spring 2002, on "The Bologna-Prague Process and English Studies". Starting from the decisive 'beginning', the Paris meeting of the four Ministers in 1998, he asserts that "The ultimate general objective was the development of a European Higher Education Area (or 'Space') that would match, and operate in relation with, the economic, commercial and financial markets set up by the European Union since the Treaty of Rome". Critically tracing the whole development of the European educational policy, he notes that "a '*single* European area of higher education'" is "a formula which seems to be copied from that of the '*single* European currency'". The President of ESSE places his hopes on human academic resources to refute the intentions of politicians: "The challenge for the present and future generations of teachers will be to maintain their moral and intellectual independence in a world increasingly concerned with economic competitiveness, market forces and productivity" (2-6).

In volume XII of Autumn 2003, Robert Clark, Founding Secretary of ESSE, in an article bearing the title "English Studies and the Current Crisis. Or; The Condition of the Subject and the War in Iraq", invites us to look again at the

British educational system as a forerunner, or even a paradigm of what came to be known later as the "Bologna Process", with a postmodern concept of education transforming "the solitary searcher intellectual or seer" to "the cunning producer of commodities, the salesman of celebrity", an education that "has to provide skills to the economy and ensure political control". Going even deeper and setting the academic problem in a globalized political and ethical context, he asserts: "But of course the State does not want 50% of the population thinking independently so the quality of education has to change [...] because, at base, the ruling elites of the Western world are aware that not only is the oil running out, but the water, and even the air". What more can be said, after such disheartening knowledge, but to agree with Clark that "the function of the university has to be to ask those questions the State does not want asked, and when this is forgotten a university education is not worth its name" (46-49).

Most appropriately, I conclude this presentation of ESSE anticomformist voices with Jina Politi, Emeritus Professor, University of Thessaloniki, who, in this same issue, inscribes her "Reqiem for a Clerk", her lament for the "death" of the scholar as we knew him/her. She begins: "No one is ignorant of the fact that there had always been a very small market for Aristotle, Petrarch or Chaucer. Yet, until recently societies showed a respect and endeavoured at all costs to preserve 'the best that had been thought and said in the world'. The Global Market, however, reckoned that as these luxurious products were non profit-making they had better be withdrawn from circulation". Moving beyond literature to the largest issue of academic politics, she asserts: "The University was also assailed. [...] The new World Order decided that 'education' was there to serve the pressing economic needs of society" (67-70).

Now it is time, I think, to open up the vistas of our concern and attend 'care-fully' to thoughts that "lie too deep for tears", setting the whole problem of the academic situation today into a larger philosophical and humanistic context. Martin Heidegger reminds us that "man is the *animal rationale*, the living creature that demands and gives an account": "According to this definition, man is the calculating creature, calculating understood in the broad sense, which Cicero already attributed to the word *ratio*, originally a word of Roman merchants, in a time when Greek thinking was transposed into Roman thought". So, based on the ancient definition that "Man is the living creature that calculates", Heidegger asks: "Does the definition of man as the rational animal exhaust the essence of man? [...] May we, if this should be the case, abandon what is worthy of thought in favour of the madness of exclusively calculative thinking and its immense success?" For Heidegger, "This is the question. It is the world-question of thinking. Our reply to it will decide what will become of the earth and what will become of the existence of man upon the earth" (1975: 222). The answer to the "question of

thinking", according to Heidegger, is the "thinking of the question"; the questioning attitude which bears witness to being in a crisis: "The closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become. For questioning is the piety of thought" (1977: 35). And he goes on to explain: "Questioning is then no longer a preliminary step, to give way to the answer and thus to knowledge, but questioning becomes itself the highest form of knowing. [...] Questioning then forces our vision into the most simple focus on the inescapable", which is "the spiritual world" (1985: 474).

Hans-Georg Gadamer also supports the hermeneutical priority of the question: "It is clear that the structure of the question is implicit in all experience. We cannot have experiences without asking questions". So, "to question means to lay open, to place in the open". He also reminds us of the importance of questioning for the Greeks, beginning with Socrates: "Among the greatest insights given to us by Plato's account of Socrates is that, contrary to the general opinion, it is more difficult to ask questions than to answer them. [...] In order to be able to ask, one must want to know, which involves knowing that one does not know". Gadamer supports the Platonic view that the enemy of questioning is the power of popular opinion, *doxa*. Hence, "as against the solidity of opinions, questioning makes the object and all its possibilities fluid. A person who possesses the 'art' of questioning is a person who is able to prevent the suppression of questions by the dominant opinion". Hence, "The art of questioning is that of being able to go on asking questions, i.e. the art of thinking" (1975: 325-30).

Jacques Derrida, in his work *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, engages with the "question of the question" in Heidegger, "the essentially questioning form, essence and dignity of thought or the path of thought"; "freedom" is the common ground correlating the "questioning" with the "spiritual" (1989: 9). With an impressive gesture, putting his theory into practice, and turning to the current issue of the role of the university in our times, Jacques Derrida asks: "Today, how can we not speak of the university?" In a 'timely' article, though published in 1983, entitled "The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of its Pupils", he poses the 'overwhelming' question: "Does the university, today, have what is called a *raison d'être*?" Defining the University as "the place where people know how to learn and learn how to know", he declares that he is "resolutely in favor of a new university Enlightenment" (thinking of Schelling and Kant), and unfolds a new series of questions: "What *is* the essence of the university?" and "Where does the university stand in relation to the principle of reason?" In an attempt to enlighten the postmodern condition and to predict the university's trajectory, Derrida notes that the university is "built both on the principle of reason and on what remains hidden in that principle", what "remains unthought", "elaborated above an abyss".

At this point, he introduces his much quoted proposition or annunciation that might save the university from its fatal dead end: "Those who venture forth along this path [...] need not set themselves up in opposition to the principle of reason, nor indeed give way to 'irrationalism'. They may continue to assume *within* the university, along with its memory and tradition, the imperative of professional rigour and competence. There is a double gesture here, a double postulate: to ensure professional competence and the most serious tradition of the university even while going as far as possible, theoretically and practically, in the most directly underground thinking about the abyss beneath the university, "to think at one and the same time the entire [...] landscape [...] and the abyss itself". Following in the wake of Aristotle, Kant, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, he defines the university as "a place where truth has to be spoken without controls and without concern for 'utility'". For Derrida, "'thought' requires *both* the principle of reason *and* what is beyond the principle of reason, the *arkhe* and an-archy". Conclusively, he reminds us that in a period of crisis, "provocation to think brings together in the *same* instant the desire for memory and exposure to the future": "Keep the memory and keep the chance —is this possible?", he wonders, transmitting his confidence that "that double guard will be assigned, as its responsibility, to the strange destiny of the university" (1983: 2-20).

But what 'memory' are we speaking about? Memory —from the Latin *memor*, mindful? Shall we follow the verbal game over a memory that 'speaks' (in Latin) its own signification of 'mindfulness'? Or, the Greek Titaness, *Μνημοσύνη*, Mother of the Muses? Memory, in this maternal or primordial sense, attains to the status of Platonic *ανάμνησις*, as in Plato's theory of recollection, where the philosopher-poet comprehends all things and re-members them, that is re-constellates them, in the creative act of *ποιειν*. Plato's use of a language full of erotic overtones to describe the manner of approach to the vision of essential Being through recollection, is probably justified (among other things) by the etymological aura around the anamnestic process: *ανά-μνησις*, as a 'calling to mind' is a derivation from *μνάομαι* —to be mindful of, to turn one's mind to, to woo for one's bride, to court. 'Remembering' as 'courtship' is seeking the favour of the 'beloved', endeavouring to 'please' by constant 'attentions'; not allowing the mind to become forgetful (of itself), *ανάμνησις* keeps it grounded and collected and becomes itself an intensifying force in the pursuit of Being, *η του όντος θήρα*. Erotic attention and devoted engagement is for Plato the motivating power in the quest after knowledge, a knowledge that comes suddenly, illuminating the mind: "Hardly after practicing detailed comparisons of names and definitions and visual and other sense perceptions, after scrutinizing them in benevolent disputation by the use of question and answer without jealousy, at last in a flash understanding of each blazes up, and the mind, as it exerts its powers to the limit of human

capacity, is flooded with light" (*Seventh Letter* 344b). *Ανάμνησις* means infinite care for learning what reality is, the 'loving mind', *νους ερων* that cultivates a devoted and wondering attitude; it becomes the energy itself that solves the riddle of Being.

Μνημοσύνη, Mother of the Muses, mother of music, and poetry and all the arts (and sciences) perhaps inhabits the 'wonderland' nominated, among other definitions, as *chora* by Julia Kristeva, "enigmatic and feminine, this space underlying the written", which is "rhythmic, unfettered, irreducible to its intelligible verbal translation; it is musical, anterior to judgment" (Kristeva 1984: 29). Seeking the Mother of the Muses, let us return with the Greek-American poet Olga Broumas to "Sappho's Gymnasium" (Broumas 1999: 334-37), in a backward journey from the postmodern to the archaic, taking us to the primal educational scene that might give forgotten 'signs' to guide us through the schizoid split tormenting today's academy:

Outside memory worship never dies

That wish to embrace the great poplar

I woke and my head was gleaming

Trees fill my heart

[...]

Preumbilical eros preclassical brain

Her face could still last tone of swaying habit
as if by accident the sea
exactly

[...]

Bird is drunk inside me
remembering the smell
at your door

You are the guest
heart traces

[...]

Laurel to air I speak your lips
lantern in the abyss

I am what astonishment can bear
tongue I owe you

Pupil only to you

[...]

Simone de Beauvoir announces the arrival of a feminine creature, the new woman (or old goddess) who may teach us 'to think and not to think': "She comes from the remoteness of ages, from Thebes, from Crete [...] she is a helicopter and she is a bird; and there is this, the greatest wonder of all: under her tinted hair the forest murmur becomes a thought" (de Beauvoir 1960: 729).

Will she?

Additional Note

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THE LANGUAGE OF FILM: CORPORA AND STATISTICS IN THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY. *NOTTING HILL* (1998) —A CASE STUDY

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1. Introduction

Recent research projects conducted jointly by a number of Italian universities (Trieste, Padua, Pavia, Pisa) have borne such names as CITATAL, LINGUATEL, DIDACTAS, etc. Dissecting the acronyms, the terms 'corpus', 'text', 'text analysis', 'translation', 'dubbing' and 'subtitling' regularly emerge, and it is the purpose of this paper to focus on just these aspects of a much wider range of research interests represented in the various projects. In short, the texts for analysis are film scripts, subsequently to be translated and adapted for dubbing or subtitling. The corpora of spoken language provide a means of comparing the film 'texts' —both scripts and transcriptions— with genuine oral language. The data emerging from the comparisons provides information about speech characteristics that the translator and dubber or subtitler need to be aware of in adapting a film text and transferring it to another language and culture.

It is now well known, especially in screen translation circles, that film scripts generally fall short of capturing the varied and subtle characteristics of spontaneous dialogue, though it is less clear exactly how and to what extent such language fails in this respect. The Trieste branch of the research group thus set out to analyse the components of both spontaneous talk and screen discourse over a wide range of film and television material including feature films, TV soap operas, cartoons,

documentaries, etc. Comparisons of British and American film and TV scripts with spoken language corpora such as the Cobuild Bank of English and the San Diego corpus of spoken English, provided the necessary data to enable initial confirmation of hypotheses about the lack of authenticity in film material to be made. Furthermore, the original findings of our corpus linguistics studies, backed by the assistance of statistics experts from other university departments, led to the uncovering of some very interesting phenomena relating directly and indirectly to the original aims of the research.

2. Multimodal Texts

It is important to remember firstly that a film text is a multimodal text and does not create meaning through language alone. A number of 'semiotic modalities' (written and spoken words, visual images, music, sounds, gestures, colour, light, etc.) operate together to provide a single meaning specific for that 'text'. In order to analyse such texts, it is necessary to have a clear picture of all the components and ascertain how they create a meaningful whole. Thibault (see Baldry ed. 2000) devised what he called the 'multimodal transcription' to do this very job. Fig. 1 shows a slightly modified version of Thibault's original model.

T	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack
1		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium VS Tony VC window, blinds, upturned chairs, street CO natural C dark green/light grey	Sitting motionless, slightly moving hands Gaze vector down Tempo S	William speaking off: "standing in front of a boy"
2		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium close VS Max VC window, upturned chairs, street CO natural C blue, black	Sitting motionless, slight head movement GV down	William speaking off: "asking him... to love her"

T	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack
3		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium VS Bella VC furnishings, upturned chairs, shoulders of others CO natural C black and white	Sitting motionless GV towards William	silence
4		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium VS Honey and Bernie VC assorted objects CO natural C blue and white, ginger	Sitting motionless, girl moving head to left GV at William/closed	silence
5		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium close VS William VC window, blinds, upturned chair, CO natural C white, dark hues	Sitting motionless, head bowed, desperation GV at floor	"Oh, sod a dog, I've made the wrong decision, haven't I?"

FIGURE 1

It is a multimodal transcription of a five-frame clip from the film *Notting Hill*, chosen to act as the vehicle throughout the paper to illustrate the analytical methodology. As can be seen, the clip is portrayed as a series of chronological frames accompanied by a detailed and codified description of what is happening in terms of all the semiotic modalities in operation. The first column on the left marks time (in this case at intervals of a few seconds between one frame and another), the second column is the visual image itself, the third column describes that image, the fourth describes the kinesic action that can be observed and the fifth reports the dialogue and any other element of soundtrack such as the musical background or other sounds. The coding (CP, HP, VS, etc.) is a kind of shorthand referring, respectively, to Camera Position, Horizontal Perspective, Visual Salience, etc. While a detailed explanation of this methodology is not necessary for the purposes of this paper, it is important to remember the following words of Thibault (2000: 311): "Multimodal texts are texts which combine and integrate the meaning-making resources of more than one semiotic modality [...] in order to produce a text-specific meaning".

Having said this, the particular emphasis here will be on the spoken language, but never in the absence of the other meaning-making resources employed in the text. For the particular purposes of this study, the present author further adapted the Thibault-Baldry model to incorporate translation for dubbing and/or subtitling. As can be seen in Fig. 2, two of the columns seen in Fig. 1 have been collapsed into one and an additional column added for the translation of the dialogue. In this way the verbal element can be viewed in terms of its interaction with the other semiotic elements. This is particularly important in the case of subtitling, but also on occasion for dubbing, as the major strategy adopted in this kind of translation is one of condensation of some kind, be it the elimination of seemingly superfluous material, the simple reduction of the text without any semantic loss, or the wholesale deletion of entire chunks of verbal discourse.

T	Visual Frame	Visual Image + Kinesics	Soundtrack	Translation (dubbing)
1		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium VS Tony VC window, blinds, upturned chairs, street CO natural C dark green/light grey Sitting motionless, slightly moving hands Gaze vector down	William speaking off: "standing in front of a boy"... "che stava di fronte a un ragazzo"...	
2		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium close VS Max VC window, upturned chairs, street CO natural C blue, black Sitting motionless, slight head movement GV down	William speaking off: "asking him...to love her"	"e gli chiedeva di amarla"...

T	Visual Frame	Visual Image + Kinesics	Soundtrack	Translation (dubbing)
3		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium VS Bella VC furnishings, upturned chairs, shoulders of others CO natural C black and white Sitting motionless GV towards William	silence	
4		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium VS Honey and Bernie VC assorted objects CO natural C blue and white, ginger Sitting motionless, girl moving head to left GV at William/closed	silence	
5		CP stationary HP frontal VP median D medium close VS William VC window, blinds, upturned chair, CO natural C white, dark hues Sitting motionless, head bowed, desperation GV at floor	"Oh, sod a dog, I've made the wrong decision, haven't I?"	"Sono tutto suonato, ho preso la decisione sbagliata."

FIGURE 2

The point at issue is on what basis are such condensation decisions made. The multimodal transcription allows us to see how the verbal element is integrated with the other semiotic resources and thus how those other resources can at times compensate for the verbal, and allow the translator to do some judicious trimming.

3. Film Language

Before analysing the integration of film discourse with the other semiotic modalities, we must determine the nature of film language itself, and thus return to the analysis of the written texts, and investigate their level of authenticity. If we equate authenticity to some extent with realism and heed Barthes' 1973 view of realism in literature, which he described as a form that tries to efface its own production, then a film's authenticity can be judged by how successfully it convinces the audience that it is real. But this takes no account of the suspension of disbelief factor that film-goers take with them to the cinema. If Lacey (2000: 72) is right in affirming that "realism must be derived from the interaction between the text's own logic and its reference to other texts, its intertextuality", then the interaction of film texts and other texts must also be seen as a yardstick for measuring levels of authenticity. But returning to the suspension of disbelief and societal expectations regarding film dialogue, the question of authenticity is problematical. Given that film texts are inevitably false to some degree (scripts are invented, written usually by one person putting discourse into the mouths of many diverse characters), the question to ask is how authentic can a film text be expected to be, and how desirable is it that it be realistic. Following from this, the translator of such texts must decide whether to translate an inauthentic text in language/culture 'A' into an inauthentic text in language/culture 'B', or to attempt to render it more authentic. Alternatively, if the scriptwriter has achieved a high degree of authenticity (cf. social-realism dramas), should the text be translated with the same degree of authenticity or rendered less realistic, that is more conventionally filmic, for the target culture.

Linguistically, from a systemic-functional perspective, and this is the principal theoretical model underpinning the analysis, a conversation takes place in a social context which shapes the structure and features of that conversation. Speakers create spontaneous discourse from restricted paradigms depending on that context. This is what we shall consider to be realistic, authentic language, though Eagleton (1983: 135-6) warns that the idea of realism "helps to confirm the prejudice that there is a form of ordinary language which is somehow natural. This natural language gives us reality *as it is*". His use of the word 'prejudice' suggests that he does not entirely believe in this 'natural' language, but for the purposes of this article, the genuine spoken discourse taken from the above-mentioned corpora will be held to be 'authentic'.

However, spoken language is not a homogeneous whole and not devoid of rules and observable patterns; many spoken genres have been identified in terms of structure, style, function, etc. From such broad categories as narrative, descriptive,

informative to more circumscribed sub-genres such as 'classroom conversation', 'telephone talk', even 'gossip', it can be seen that oral discourse is subject to context and paradigm constraints. In 'less spontaneous' genres, such as classroom talk (cf. Sinclair and Coulthard 1975), participants know their roles and the structure forms itself relatively effortlessly. In the case of film or drama conversations, we are dealing with a deliberately non-spontaneous and non-authentic form of spoken discourse, and its lack of genuineness is immediately observable except when in the hands of consummate professionals. Suffice it to think of children in the school play or footballers on television commercials.

Thus, in order to investigate further the phenomenon of (un)authenticity, a series of experiments was carried out at Trieste University to test the hypothesis that the 'artificially produced situations' in films would inevitably produce discourse that was to some extent unrealistic. Firstly, the language of film was compared to the language contained in the spoken corpus of the Cobuild 'Bank of English'. Firstly, a number of typical features of spoken language were identified by delving into the copious literature on the subject. In the first experiment, heeding Brown and Yule's 1983 reference to spoken language containing large numbers of prefabricated fillers such as 'so' and 'well', McCarthy's point that "immediacy of context [...] is reflected in a high number of discourse markers e.g., well, right" (1998: 39), and more recently Stenstrom who speaks of the "use of pragmatic markers" (2004: 260), it was decided to concentrate on the use of discourse markers as a key to identifying spontaneous oral language use. The discourse markers chosen (NOW, WELL, RIGHT, SO, OK, YES) have been shown to be particularly significant in analysing conversation in that they transcend the barriers of clauses and sentences which are the province of written language.

The corpus of films used for the experiment consisted of fifty contemporary movies chosen because they portrayed 'real people' in 'real situations' (i.e. not cartoons, science-fiction movies or medieval dramas). A typical example was *As Good as it Gets* (Brooks 1997), a film script containing a total of 21,161 words (one of the first serendipitous findings of the research was that most of the films included in the corpus contained approximately 20,000 words). The frequency of occurrence of the afore-mentioned discourse markers in the film was as follows:

NOW	4
WELL	31
RIGHT	3
YES	4
OK	32
SO	39

Taking all the fifty films together, the total number of words uttered is 995,746. The breakdown per discourse marker is as follows:

NOW	377
WELL	1,179
RIGHT	260
YES	238
OK	670
SO	1,032

Although these overall figures seem high, when compared to the frequency of occurrence of the same features in the Cobuild spoken corpus (taking a random sample of approximately one million words), the difference is immediately apparent.

NOW	620
WELL	2.990
RIGHT	3,650
YES	3,830
OK	1,150
SO	4,800

These statistics are represented in graphic form in fig. 3.

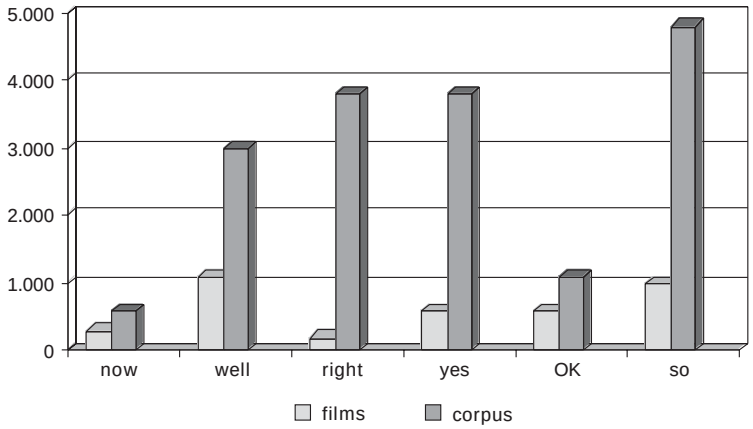

FIGURE 3

The figures seem to prove the hypothesis, at least in part (similar experiments involving spoken language features such as hedges, vague language and the use of parataxis have not shown the same disparity) that film language is distant from real language. But an extremely important proviso must be introduced immediately.

When a film script is compared to an actual transcription of the words that the actors utter, a rather different picture emerges. In order to compare these two versions, a further experiment was conducted using the film *Notting Hill* as vehicle. In this case we tested the frequency of occurrence of ten discourse markers, six hedges and eleven tag questions. Figs. 4 shows the results pertaining to the discourse markers. As can be seen, more of these features, in some cases considerably more, appeared in the transcription of what was actually said in the film. Similar findings were obtained for the other variables. The respective uses of 'right', for example, were 67 and 93, the uses of 'isn't it?' were 3 and 8, and even in the case of hedges, the total figures show a discrepancy of 43 to 58. A similar experiment carried out on American TV crime series produced similar findings.

DISCOURSE MARKERS

	SCRIPT	FILM TRANSCRIPTION
NOW	24	28
OK	21	24
RIGHT	67	93
SO	47	67
UM	0	99
WELL	59	82
YEAH	5	64
YES	63	48
YOU KNOW	23	33
YOU SEE	3	6
Total	312	502

FIGURE 4

All this would seem to suggest that it is the actors who are doing something to the original script as they enter into what Minsky (1975) describes as "frames" (cf. Schank and Abelson's (1977) "scripts", Sanford and Garrod's (1981) "scenarios", etc.), that is when they create for themselves an (artificial) context of situation and

attempt to 'live it'. Gregory (2002: 319) refers to the 'communicating community context' which in a novel or a film is usually invented but purporting to be real. It is the gift of the accomplished actor to occupy this context and to act it and speak it. As the probabilistic grammar of the spoken language is motivated by interpersonal as well as by ideational factors, in the Hallidayan sense of these terms (see Halliday 1994), the stance the speakers take is important. In enacting film scenes, modern method actors interact in a realistic way adapting the language given them in the script to the context in which they are supposed to find themselves. This language becomes, in Gregory and Carroll's (1978) words, "written to be spoken as if not written" as the actors simulate reality and actually add, remove and bend the original, behaving as they would if they were actually in that context. The intertextuality mentioned earlier, as a sign of realism, is rooted in the repetitious nature of human activity. Words and expressions co-occur and re-occur with extreme regularity in spontaneous exchange. Biber et al (2004: 31) refer to clusters and bundles of items that are attracted to one another in particular contexts. Such words and expressions that co-occur and re-occur in particular contexts are said by Hoey (2004: 385) to be 'primed' to appear (or not appear) only in specific parts of a text or specific circumstances of discourse production. By way of a rather obvious example, it would be difficult to think of an environment for the words "... I love you too" outside of the context that produces an initial "I love you". In a more general sense, certain words and expressions and grammatical configurations can be seen to be primed for use in spoken language, and negatively primed for use in written language. It is therefore legitimate to expect that certain forms are primed for use in film scripts, to the extent that scholars claim to have identified the language of film and its components (cf. Lacey 1998, for English; Di Giusti 1990, for Italian), and screen responses can often be predicted. And thus a tension exists between the (subconscious) conventions of film scripting and the priming mechanisms inherent to spontaneous talk adopted by actors.

If all the oft identified features of spoken language (hesitation, repetition, ellipsis of subject pronouns, auxiliaries, articles and initial parts of set expressions, pre-and post-placed items, etc.) are 'primed out' in scripts, it seems that they are to some extent primed in again by the actors when they interact. The evidence from *Notting Hill* bears this out. The film script begins:

> Of course I've seen her films and always thought she was, well, fabulous... but, you know, million miles from the world I live in. Which is here, Notting Hill, not a bad place to be... ... There's the market on weekdays selling every fruit and vegetable known to man. The tattoo parlour...

Although the scriptwriter has made an effort to include genuine spoken language features (discourse markers, ellipsis, hesitation, etc.), in the actual acting out of the

scene, the actor Hugh Grant adds some repetition and changes an expression to one he presumably found more spontaneous.

> (transcription of film text)
> Of course I've seen her films and always thought she was, well, fabulous... but, you know, **a million** million miles from the world I live in. Which is here, Notting Hill, **my favourite bit of London**... There's the market on weekdays selling every fruit and vegetable known to man. The tattoo parlour...

The following sequence from the script also seems to have taken account of the spontaneous nature of spoken language but the actor intervenes again:

> Would you like something to nibble —apricots soaked in honey— quite why, no one knows —because it stops them tasting of apricots, and makes them taste like honey, and if you wanted honey, you'd just buy honey, instead of apricots, but nevertheless—there we go.
>
> Would you like something to **eat? Uh, something to nibble** -**Um**, apricots soaked in honey? —quite why, no one knows— because it stops them tasting of apricots... and makes them taste like honey, and if you wanted honey, you'd just buy honey, instead of... apricots, but nevertheless -there we go **there**.

Fig. 5 shows a breakdown of the script and transcription of the 'birthday party' scene in the film, in which the actors' contributions can be observed. The addition of exclamations and fillers, the use of repetition and changes to the text can all be observed.

***NOTTING HILL* "BIRTHDAY PARTY" SCENE**

SCRIPT	FILM DIALOGUES
MAX: Right —I think we're ready.	MAX: Right, I think we're ready.
They all move towards the kitchen.	
	HONEY: Oooh! BELLA: Okay!
ANNA (to Bella): I wonder if you could tell me where the...? BELLA: Oh, it's just down the corridor on the right. HONEY: I'll show you.	ANNA: Bella, can you tell me where I can find— BELLA: Oh, sorry. Yeah, yeah. It's down the corridor on the right. HONEY: I'll show you. I'll show you.
A moment's silence as they leave —then in a split second the others all turn to William.	
BELLA: Quickly, quickly —talk very quickly, what are you doing here with Anna Scott? BERNIE: Anna Scott? BELLA: Yes.	BELLA: Quickly, quickly, quickly, talk very, very quickly. What are you doing here with Anna Scott? BERNIE: Anna Scott? BELLA: Yes! MAX: Shh! BELLA: Shut up!
BERNIE: The movie star? BELLA: Yup. BERNIE: Oh God. Oh God. Oh Goddy God.	BERNIE: What, the film star? BELLA: Shh! BERNIE: Oh God.
The horror of his remembered conversation slowly unfolds. Honey re-enters.	WILLIAM: What? BERNIE: Oh, oh God. Oh, Goddy God. WILLIAM: What did you say to her?
HONEY: I don't believe it. I walked into the loo with her. I was still talking when she started unbuttoning her jeans... She had to ask me to leave.	HONEY: I don't believe it. I don't believe it. I actually walked into the loo with her. I was still chatting when she started unbuttoning her jeans. She had to ask me to leave. BERNIE: Oh God. So you knew who she was? HONEY: Of course I did, but he didn't, he didn't! BERNIE: Well, I did, but not instantly, but I-I-I got away with it. *(laughs, overlapping utterances)*
INT. MAX AND BELLA'S CONSERVATORY —NIGHT *A little later. They are sat at dinner.*	

FIGURE 5

At this point, having gone some way to proving the hypothesis that film language lacks some of the spontaneity of genuine spoken dialogue, but having also observed that film actors are responsible for making written scripts more realistic, what lessons can be learned by the screen translator, and by the dubber or subtitler?

Returning to the question posed earlier, should subtitles, for example, which are written, follow the canons of written script or go with the transcript and add interpersonal elements? Should the translation merely provide ideational input to keep the viewer informed of the plot, or should it try to emulate real talk, perhaps unsettling the audience in the process by interfering with expectations regarding written text? At the risk of seeming to search for the easy compromise, it will be suggested here that the translator should heed the actors' attempts to create realistic dialogue, but clearly within the time and space constraints imposed by the subtitling process. Fig. 6 shows a suggested succession of subtitles in Italian for the 'birthday party' scene which include attempts to recreate the hesitation, repetition and invention (Oh Goddy God!) of the original transcript.

- Bene, è pronto.
- Bella, mi diresti dov'è...
- Oh, sì, scusa... è in fondo a destra
- Ti ci porto io, ti ci porto io
- Su, su, dai... racconta, svelto
- Che ci fai qui con Anna Scott?
- Anna Scott!
- Zitto!
- Ma chi, l'attrice?
- Oddio
- Che c'è?
- Oddio. Oddio. Oddiddio!
- Cosa le hai detto?
- Niente
- Non ci credo
- Sono entrata in bagno anch'io
- Ero lì che chiacchieravo
- Quando si è sbottonata i jeans
- Mi ha dovuto chiedere di uscire
- Oddio
- Allora tu, tu sapevi chi era?
- Certo che lo sapevo, ma lui no, lui no
- Beh sì, magari non da subito
- Co-comunque. Mi è andata liscio.

FIGURE 6

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be claimed that the use of corpora, both already existing major databanks such as the Bank of English and custom-built corpora such as the fifty

contemporary film scripts, can be instrumental in proving intuitive hypotheses about the use of language. For the purposes of this paper, the statistics derived from a comparison of film texts with genuine spoken language were eloquent in pointing out the specificity of screen discourse. However, statistics relating to one film, *Notting Hill*, were also instructive in tempering the original findings. It was discovered that a substantial change can be observed in the use of language between the writing of the original script and the acting out of that script. The second version almost invariably contains more 'spoken language' elements. This in turn has important repercussions for the film translator, especially the translator for written subtitles. While the dubber is constrained by considerations such as lip synchronisation and his/her text is then probably modified by choices made by the dubbing actors, who probably behave in much the same way as the original actors and make their own adjustments, the subtitler has to produce a new written text to add to the original. There is therefore pressure to be as brief as possible while still conveying the meaning. This would seem to favour a purely ideational approach in that interpersonal elements may add nothing to the essential storyline of the film. However the clear, even if subconscious, importance given to the interpersonal by the actors (and to a certain extent by the scriptwriters themselves, as has been shown above) would suggest that even the subtitler should pay some attention to this aspect. And thus it is hoped that the experiments conducted and the results so far obtained have made some small contribution to the aim of producing reliable guidelines for subtitlers in their attempts to create clear, well-balanced translations.

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Abstracts

WRITING THE LIFE OF THE TEXT: THE CASE OF W. B. YEATS

Warwick Gould

Using authors' and publishers' archives textual biography can trace multitudinous textual lives, afterlives and new lives in real incarnations. Those latter categories are whole subjects in themselves, and for other occasions: my examples in this paper are confined to the lives of certain texts during the lifetime of W. B. Yeats. My point of departure is Yeats's well-known textual restlessness. He endlessly revised his work, and I was once inclined to see this as others had seen it, as evidence of a Darwinian process of aesthetic self-criticism, within the narrow focus of the work —the word, the line, the poem. At the core of such textual instability is authorial intention itself: in Yeats's case the destabilising dream of finality, perfectionism, a collected works, an *oeuvre*, which he openly wanted from 1895 onwards. What might be labelled as the life of the text would lie beyond edited forms of it, in the history of books, in publishers' archives such as Macmillan's and in research collections of life documents and MSS. Every serious reader of Yeats engages at some level with that life of the text, which is why I am trying to write it. I find this process permits an intimate and sustainable recuperation of that concept so derided a few years ago: intention, a recoverable, mutating, demonstrable intention not foreclosed at, or by, the publication of the text. My argument, then, is a plea for the application of book historical methods to the construction of inner lives. It involves an accommodation of literary genetics and publishing history to single author bibliography.

Key words: Yeats, authors'/publishers' archives, textual biography, *oeuvre*, rewriting/revision, textual instability, authorial intention, literary genetics, publishing history, author bibliography.

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THE CANON PRO AND CONTRA: 'THE CANON IS DEAD —LONG LIVE PICK AND MIX'

Herbert Grabes

The chief argument against the traditional canon is, of course, that it has been a vehicle for national superiority. Yet it is indubitably the case that the creation of a canon of English literature over the centuries is indeed closely bound up with the formation of British national identity. What was produced in this way was largely "an entirely gentlemanly artefact" (to use Lillian S. Robinson's phrase for the blatant neglect of women authors), as has been amply demonstrated by feminist scholars in recent decades. Quite apart from this, however, the traditional British versions of the canon of English literature are astonishingly broad and are much less in need of an "opening up" than many of the more belligerent "canon busters" claim.

Without denying that any canon-making implies competition and value-statements that create hierarchies, it is argued that the formation of literary canons is indispensable in order to keep the literature of the past within cultural and collective memory (not forgetting, too, that the past begins yesterday). Only those acquainted with a fair amount of our literary heritage, after all, will have a chance to individually "pick-and-mix" —and thus to subvert the canonical order that has been their starting-point. This also means that the canon is not a sanctuary but an ongoing project— and one that we relinquish at our collective peril.

Key words: Canon, literature, national identity, cultural memory.

EUROPA IN WONDERLAND: GOBLIN MARKET OR SAPPHO'S GYMNASIUM?

Ekaterini Douka Kabitoglou

Europa, the 'godmother' of Europe, operates as a hostess and 'instructor' in the diachronic journey over the European pedagogic landscape that is attempted in this presentation, initiating us into an adventure in the educational wonderland which begins at the *topos* of her 'adopted' country: Greece. Taking for granted that for the Greeks education was based on a profound relationship between two people, one young and the other mature, who was at once model, guide and initiator, and moreover that it adopted a cult of the Muses seeking wisdom through an aesthetic and 'erotic' approach to life, Sappho and Socrates are introduced as paradigms of the Greek system of schooling. Socrates' educational 'opponents', the Sophists, are seen as the founders of utilitarianism, forerunners of the modern commercialism of education.

Christina Rossetti's poem *Goblin Market* is used (because of its multi-layered title suggesting the triumph of a 'commodity' morality) as the bridge to carry us to the

present condition of the European university. Tracing the steps that have led to the formation of the European Higher Education Area, the presentation highlights the gradual transformation of education from a public 'good' to a marketable 'product'. Attending to voices of dissent (expressed by members of ESSE) and setting the whole problem in a larger philosophical context, we can hear a Socratic echo in Heidegger, Gadamer, and Derrida who profess the 'questioning' attitude as the only form of knowledge. Hoping that 'memory' may reveal forgotten signs from the past to guide us through the schizoid split tormenting today's academy, we return with Olga Broumas to "Sappho's Gymnasium" lest that 'maternal' presence may give/be the answer.

Key words: Education, eros, Greece, question, university.

THE LANGUAGE OF FILM: CORPORA AND STATISTICS IN THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY. *NOTTING HILL* (1998) —A CASE STUDY

Christopher John Taylor

While it is well known that film scripts generally fall short of capturing the varied and subtle characteristics of spontaneous dialogue, it is less clear exactly how and to what extent such language fails to 'ring true'. Extensive investigation into the components of both spontaneous talk and film discourse over a wide range of film and television material have proved a solid basis on which to extend research in this field. With the aid of corpus linguistics and the assistance of statistics experts, some interesting phenomena have been uncovered relating directly and indirectly to the original aims of the research.

For example, comparisons of British and American film and TV scripts with spoken language corpora such as those within the Bank of English project and the San Diego spoken language corpus, have already provided material to prove the hypotheses about the lack of authenticity in film material. But observing the changes that take place between an original script and the transcription of the final version of a film text is more illuminating, as are the statistical analyses that show how particular language features occur in clusters and bundles (Biber et al 2004), and how combinations of word and word groups seem primed (Hoey 2004) for different film genres. This paper therefore sets out to illustrate the methodology employed in this particular study of film language, explain the results obtained and present the serendipitous findings that the research threw up, with particular reference to the film *Notting Hill*.

Key words: Film, text analysis, translation, subtitling, corpora.

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...this issue has received a lot of attention by relevance theorists (Blakemore 1987, 1992; Wilson and Sperber 1993).

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