

NEOLOGY IN THE WORKS OF JULIÁN RÍOS¹

NEOLOGÍA EN LAS OBRAS DE JULIÁN RÍOS

Javier ENRÍQUEZ SERRALDE

Summary: Throughout history some writers have coined neologisms in their literary works for diverse creative purposes. Those authors had the ability to extend the linguistic system in a deliberate, motivated and unpredictable manner. Among these writers, one consummate representative is Julián Ríos. He departed from generic conventions and innovated literature in more than one way. This paper describes some of his inventive and highly creative multilingual neology.

Keywords: lexical innovation, neologism, nonce-words, literary coinages, neology, lexis, word-formation, nonsense, novel, *Larva: Midsummer Night's Babel*, narrative, *Quijote e Hijos*, *Puente de alma*.

Resumen: A través de la historia, ciertos escritores han acuñado neologismos en sus obras literarias por diversos propósitos creativos. Estos autores han tenido la habilidad de extender el sistema lingüístico de una manera deliberada, motivada e impredecible. Entre estos escritores, un representante consumado es Julián Ríos, ya que se ha alejado de convenciones genéricas y ha realizado innovaciones en las letras en más de una forma. El presente artículo describe ciertos aspectos de su inventiva y altamente creativa neología políglota.

Palabras clave: innovación léxica, lexis, neologismo, jitanjáfora, acuñación literaria, formación de palabras, nonce, *Larva: Babel de una Noche de San Juan*, *Quijote e Hijos*, *Puente de alma*, novela, narrativa.

¹ This article is a portion of a larger essay encompassing several centuries of neologisms coined in literature.

The prime example of a language “destructor” in Spanish, and it is meant as the highest compliment, is the Spaniard Julián Ríos (1941-). He has been named the most inventive and creative writer of the Spanish tongue (Escandell Montiel, 2017). His first two books *Solo a dos voces* (1973) and *Teatro de signos* (1974) were collaborations with Literature Nobel laureate Octavio Paz. While Paz, Carlos Fuentes, Juan Goytisolo and numerous literary critics have highlighted his innovative literary virtuosity (Jura, 1996; Escandell Montiel, 2017; Ferré, 2018; Pagès, 2007; Hidalgo and Gijón, 2018; Nuñez Cantos, 2018), Julián Ríos has not received the credit he deserves as one of the most important world literary figures of the 20th century. His inventions and innovations are not only at the caliber of Cervantes, Rabelais or Shakespeare, but rivals heterodox novels written in the Quijote-like creativity tradition of *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha* such as *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre, oder Die Entsagenden* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Nouvelle Héloïse* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, *Gentleman* by Laurence Sterne (Escandell Montiel, 2017), in addition to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce. Additional writers who should be added are those discussed by Ríos himself in his essay *Quijote e hijos (Quijote and Sons)*; Ríos, 2008). Ríos analyzed the influence Cervantes had in some important figures in world literature such as such as Thomas Mann, Joaquim María Machado de Assis, Arno Schmidt, João Guimarães Rosa, Julio Cortázar and Vladimir Nabokov, among others.

A true language and literature innovator, Julián Ríos is a Galician novelist, poet, essayist and literary critic who founded the *Espiral* literary magazine and served on the editorial boards of others. Julián Ríos wrote 15 novels, some of which were translated into other languages like *Larva: Babel de una Noche de San Juan* (Ríos, 1983), *Sombreros para Alicia* (Ríos, 1993), *Nuevos Sombreros para Alicia* (Ríos, 2001a), *La Vida Sexual de las Palabras* (Ríos, 2001c). The novels translated to English are *Larva: Midsummer Night's Babel* (Ríos, 1991), *Loves That Bind* (Ríos, 1999), *Monstruary* (Ríos, 2001b), *Kitaj: Pictures and Conversations* (Ríos, 1994), *Poundemonium* (Ríos, 1997), *House of Ulysses* (Ríos, 2010) and *Procession of shadows* (Ríos, 2011).

Of all of his works one that stands out and considered one of the best Spanish novels of the 20th century (Ortega, 1999) is *Larva: Babel de una Noche de San Juan* (Ríos, 1983). It was titled *Larva: Midsummer Night's Babel* in the English translation or “re-creation” by Richard Francis, Suzanne Levine, and the author himself (Ríos, 1991). *Larva* is a joycean voyage to a masquerade party in London. It is pertinent to highlight that “cities” in Ríos’ novels sometimes may be not material entities, but rather literary representations (Rodríguez-Hernández, 2002). The novel is a sex-comedy-fairy-tale consisting of multilingual word-play, puns, palindromes, neologisms, portmanteau and nonce words. The narrative on odd pages contains citations of footnotes that are described and can be consulted on the even pages. Like Don Quijote and Sancho Panza, the characters/narrators of *Larva*, Milalias, Herr Narrator and Babelle, realize they have been written, they read one another, dialogue with one another,

interchange their roles of official narrators and become characters (Núñez, 2018). If in *Quijote* reading (and putting the read into practice) is the cause of madness, in *Larva* madness consists of writing and living (Molina-Castells, 1999). The novel is a descriptive Escher drawing where each character/narrator observes each other and their reflections in paradoxical thoughts and the reader is actively involved in a multi-mirror labyrinth (Núñez, 2018). Emancipating himself from the linguistic and literary tradition, Ríos created his own, following the footsteps of Cervantes, Rabelais, Quenau, Guimaraes Rosa and Joyce. Ríos continued and expanded upon Joyce's syntactico-rhythmic modulations and nonce-idioms:

God! Break water, bagman, romp up the ramp, break into the light. I order you! Or maybe it isn't worth it... Shall I renege, renegade? Renew or die. A new fashion, Miltalias, and it's back to the *spawnshop*. Can't leave it un-fin-ished. Come to my stream-bed for an extreme function. Is it all *dar!*? Come, more amor with your moray. The black waters? Dive in. Clap! Plop! of ducks in the black. Hear it? Dark night of soul, sole man, bubble your *salacities*. Remember how it smelt? Toi! Toilette and the god-fare-thee-wells. Sh! Hush! How wash it for you? A von nova? Delusions! The higher they fly, the harder they fault... (Ríos, 1991: 363).

On page 413 of the original novel in Spanish (Ríos, 1983) the following text was transcribed "as is" in the English translation:

Krioskrigcritschreihuutocrijeritanskrikkkrikkrzykscreamkialtaskravyischreeuw!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
!! (Ríos, 1991: 413)

This long onomatopoeic scream is highly reminiscent of the third paragraph on the first page of *Finnegans Wake*:

The fall, (bababadalgharaghtakamminarronkonnbronntononnerronntuonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawnt oohooorderenthurnuk) of a once wallstrait oldparr is retaile... (Joyce, 1976: 3).

Some of Ríos' texts are also evocative of some of Molly's "sentences" in Joyce's *Ulysses*, like in the following two excerpts:

Falling Angel:

Hell Angel!! Fucking Ann. Ann the Word. Always with the Word, like antonomasia, on her lips: ((Yanquijotescafornicator Ann the Word [((Fuck! Fuck the shit out of me!))] clamped on a burning Clavileño, a steed galloping at full speed, decked out with a breastplate black as night ... Ann telling us ((Ensuite! Conte! Ann sweet cunt in a little café on Fulham Road [Small Café] one of her recurring dreams phantasmotorgorias : Decked out in tight black leather suit on a motorcycle at eighty something miles per hour on a nocturnal desert highway when she's transfixed by no less than Marlon Brando, pressed against her butt [Rimette il brando vindice nella vagina!]?... (Ríos, 1991: 106).

Interruptus? Up, risa upp! a nurse, long-legged bag-of-bones blonde, interrupted noisily, lurching on stilts around the puppet and pointing a pistol: Stanza! No reverse to this verse, no longer singing the same tune, scalded coward? Come to your cat, to my lap. O those sagas you sang, sagacious one, your number will come up. Climb up my hill to my stanza, room six—sex—my charming little pad on Maple Street, right next to the Post Office phallus. Sputter isolandic phrases. Tala islenzka. You ask that almost orgasmoribund!? ...wha! you shout and spring. Spring!—the sexplosion (Ríos, 1991: 389).

Now, let's look at two Molly's unpunctuated text from Joyce's *Ulysses*:

...my hair a bit loose from the tumbling and my tongue between my lips up to him the savage brute Thursday Friday one Saturday two Sunday three O Lord I cant wait till Monday frseeeeeeeffronnnng train

somewhere whistling the strength those engines have in them like big giants and the water rolling all over and out of them all sides like the end of Loves old sweeetsonnng the poor men that have to be out all the night from their wives... (Joyce, 1961: 754), or

...ship that came up to the harbour Marie the Marie whatyoucallit no he hadnt a moustache that was Gardner yes I can see his face cleanshaven Frseeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeefrong that train again weeping tone once in the dear deaead days beyondre call close my eyes breath my lips forward kiss sad look eyes open piano ere oer the world the mists began I hate that istsbeg comes loves sweet sooooooooooong Ill let that out full when I get in front of the footlights again Kathleen Kearney and her lot of squealers Miss This Miss That Miss Theother lot of sparrowfarts skitting around talking about politics... (Joyce, 1961: 762).

The omnipresent lasciviousness of Ríos' narrative that pervades throughout the novel is also comparable to some sections of Joyce's works, as in the following examples:

That he leaves nyet is my grafe. He deared me to it and he dared me do it, and bedattle I didaredonit as Cocksark of Killtork can tell and Ussur Ursussen of the viktaurios onrush with all the rattles in his arctic! (Joyce, 1976: 353; *Finnegans Wake*)

Six years as a semenarist! he ejaculated" (Ríos, 1991: 61).

with peewee, and powwows inbeggybaggy, on her bickybacky, and a flick flask fleckflinging its pixylighting pacts' huemeramybows, picking here, pecking there, pussypussy plunderpussy (Joyce, 1976: 11; *Finnegans Wake*).

Cunt on your fingers (Ríos, 1991: 176).

I wanted to kiss him all over also his lovely young cock there so simple I wouldnt mind taking him in my mouth if nobody was looking as if it was asking you to suck it so clean and white he looks with his boyish face I would too in 1/2 a minute even if some of it went down... (Joyce, 1961: 776; *Ulysses*).

...the whorehouse where the seminarian jerk-off (after the sin comes the penetrance) knew, in the biblical sense, his first woman (Ríos, 1991: 60).

The original text in Spanish of the last quote reads:

...casa de putas en donde el seminarista gilipollas (después del pecado la penitencia) conoció bíblicamente la primera mujer (Ríos, 1983: 60).

The English translation of this quote is exemplary, but a couple of tweaks might convey a distinct sense as well as the *neologistic* flavor of the original in Spanish: "...the whorehouse where the jerk-off seminarian (after the sin comes the penistence) knew, in a biblical sense, his first woman."

For discernible reasons, the commendable English translation of Ríos' word-play on occasions could not fully capture the "musicality" of the original text. That is the nature of translation of poetry or difficult prose such as Ríos' *Larva*. An exception to the above is in the following excerpt from the novel. The original Spanish with its difficult multilingual double sense, puns, the rhythm with the pervasive use letter "ch" and its consequent "sounds" that reads:

Motherato cuntabile of a cunning linguist:

Chop chops! chamullando contra su chichi chicloso. Chitón! La chicharra chinchosa no chanela ni pijo de Spanish pero le pone cachonda que chacharee chabacanas en su concha el apuntador chichisbeo, cheat ! chat ! chaw !, chocarreando con la bocacha llena a la chacha chocha el chucho le achucha el chocho, chow ! chow !, así con el chicheo y chupeteo hasta que le da el choc a la muy chupeteada achuchorra. Charming! Again please! [Pero lo mejor eran los ejercicios de las jotas que sajaban como navajas...] (Ríos, 1983: 314).

The same excerpt from the English translation demonstrates how it superbly conveyed the original wordplay nuances:

Motherato cuntabile of a cunning linguist:

Chop-chops! Chattering around her chewy chichi. The chunky chatterbox didn't speak any Spanish but she got excited when he whispered dirty things in her chamfered conch, cheat! chat! chaw! chewing the fat with his mouth chock-full: "a la chacha chocha el chucho le achucha el chocho, chow ! chow !, así con el chicheo y chupeteo hasta que le da el choc a la muy chupeteada achuchorra."

"A trenchscription of this churlish chainsaw Spanish chapter might go like this: the pooch chews the chunky chick's cunt, chow, chow! with his chortle chomp and chunter until, chain reaction! he gives the shock to the choice chick. Charming! Again please! [For a jarring change of joke, the jongleur jerked her into a joust of j's that jangled and jolted with jagged jabs...] (Ríos, 1991: 314).

The remarkable English translation of the Spanish *Larva* to *Larva: Midsummer Night's Babel* rather than a translation is a *tour de force* re-creation that faithfully transmitted both the literal sense and the musical linguistics of the difficult, humorous and sexually charged novel. The translators Richard Francis, Suzanne Levine and the author himself deserve an independent credit for the unsurmountable, creative endeavor. As de Sart (2017) wrote in regards to translating *Larva* into French, translation fully equates to creation.

As pointed out above, one brilliant aspect of the quoted paragraph, particularly in the original Spanish, is the extensive used of the letters "c" and "h" together, which in Spanish is the letter "ch" with its unique voiceless palato-alveolar affricate (IPA: tʃ APN: č), displayed orthographically with the grapheme <ch>. The reiterative sounds of the letters within the words, as in *chad*, *chump*, *chimp*, *church* or *Chuck*, shudder and resonate in the reader's mind and bestow unique images and emotions.

Along with a few other writers who creatively and successfully exploit nonsense in literature, Ríos excels in it and further expands it's cadence with a plethora of languages. To quote the words of Lecercle (1985: 107) in a sense, the nonsense of Ríos is meta-sense. Ríos' careful arrangement and associations of words take into account grammar, sound, form and rhythm. As a whole, his prose is fully sensible, full of encyclopedic knowledge, filled with humor and fully multilingual. The associative root of this inventiveness is exemplified by Lecercle referring to Cromwell's "revolution" as it was called "the great rebellion" by his opponents:

From "revolt" ((from Latin *rebellare*), we derive the present participle "revolting." But "revolting" is also an adjective that corresponds to the noun "revulsion" (from Latin *revellere*). So that the process of corruption, through what historical linguists call "homophonic collision," produces the following associative chain: revolution - revolt - revolting - revulsion. The fulcrum of this semantic series is the "pun" on "revolting", but the false prefix "rev-," which functions as one of Whorf's phonesthemes... (Lecercle, 1990: 213).

Larva has been categorized as metafiction, anti-novel, vanguard, postmodern, meta-novel and other labels that do not really say much. Similar epithets have been applied to his other novels. However, Ríos cannot be "caged" just as the author of *Larva*. His literary works and styles are varied, highly creative, cultured and versatile. As critics critique innovative artistic works in any art form may vary, particularly when the innovation is groundbreaking and imaginative, the opinions and criticisms of *Larva* are widely divergent. To some literary critics, the language(s) incessant word-play of the

“antinovel” is on occasions clever, on occasions gratuitous, can dazzle and entertain, but sometimes results disconcerting and overwhelming to the point that can become tiresome to some readers due the excessive experimentalism (Sobejano, 1989; Molina-Castells, 1999; Escandell Montiel, 2017). To other critics, Ríos’ work is a masterpiece that emerged as a newly formed island in a colorless ocean of esthetic conservatism, of foreseeable dullness and platitude of literary works published and distributed by the monopoly of the publishing industry (Jura, 1996; Ferré, 2018; Pagès, 2007; Hidalgo and Gijón, 2018; Nuñez Cantos, 2018). In essence, what Ezra Pound classified as “Best Sellers” (Pound, 1951: 39-40) or the contemporary “deculturized” works or the intellectual mediocrity that André Schiffrin (2001) sadly described in his book *The Business of Books* and summarized as: a product of the profit-seeking mass market publishing by industry’s conglomerates. In *Larva*, Ríos sometimes deletes a letter to a word or adds one to completely change the meaning which, combined with the wordplay, the puns, palindromes, paronomasias and a whole system of analogies, antithesis and parallelisms that logarithmically increase when inserting, by association, words and phrases from other languages which in turn multiply the density of meaning with endless permutations. To other critics, Ríos transforms portmanteau into a *mise en abyme* (Ortega, 1985: 123).

Taken together, these and other opinions shed “between-the-lines” that close reading and re-readings of *Larva* are necessary to grasp the layers of meaning behind the multilingual pyrotechnical lexical displays and intertextuality. The analogies between *Larva* and *Finnegans Wake* highlighted above are, conceivably, some of the many possible inspirations Ríos had. There is no reason to search for common denominators between Ríos and Joyce, or Ríos and Guimarães Rosa, or Ríos and Quevedo, or Ríos and Cervantes, Rabelais, Sterne, Lear or Carroll or many other writers. Ríos’ style, his own voice, is quite different:

...my vampire Count Orgasm, my Wild Phantom of Cunterville returning (Isn’t it about time, Dr. Who?) from his pornoctambulations through the erogenous zones of the surreal fantasy (Ríos, 1991: 525).

Tan-Tan-Tann, Tannhäuser! the Rubenesque blond in a torn negligee thumping the tam-tam with her chains. Come come Come. In a blink, entangled scheme-weaver, you came undone when you heard the password through the pipe. Three tum-ta-tums, Tan-Tan! two short ones and a long: Tann! To the climax forest of Venus, mount that mound, bush-beating tangler... give me the last pa-rumpa-pum-pum. Tandem D.O.M. What? Constantly riding tandem... (Ríos, 1991: 439).

[Hop! grasshopper. Pass a joint to the gressivehopper bounding o’er the mound of Venus... Doped: feeling the dope flowing, letting the grass grow under your feat. That hyperboaran beast still grazing in his Swedish soiree. Greased piglet in a rosebed, days of swine and ruses, and nights of wine and cyrrhosis. The impassive High Priest, patient and alienating, thumbing through a Swedish pocket Talmud (Flickordbok! Samlagbok!) while the two perspiring aspirants (Suga, sugga, sugar! Take a walk on the wild slide) crouching so merrily. Umm! Agh! over all him orally, spermutating back and forth till the dawn comes, good until the early moaning dewdrop] Drop... Drop... Drop... drop-forging the final blow, while his Swedish succubus vigorously sucks, and Tala, breathless and panting, passes it to Gisele. And Gisele, tongue hanging out, returns it to Tala. Two misslickers kneeling over the undonned doped myope. Not even a drop. [The same old sack race. And it’s blow, blow, blow the man down. Always the same witch (which?) switching masks. Saddle up that nightmare that bites its own tail and licks its apocalypse.] Now he falls asleep, mummutating mutteringly. [Purring in heat. Snarkameleon! hunting the beast with two backs... The bedlambastard Chameleon in his Camelot! He sure Camelot – from bed to verse! Night and day in his Swedish soiree. Such a knightmarathon! On with the saga? (Narr-ate to us!) Yes, sally forth on the Farce side Saga of London... (Ríos, 1991: 459-460).

As pointed out earlier, translating this *neologistic*, multilingual, pun-full prose is a highly challenging, perhaps an insurmountable task. Also, as any other creation, different translators can compose diverse versions from the same original text. For example, re-examining the first sentences of the last quoted passage, the original Spanish novel read:

[Hop! grasshopper. Dale el cigarrón, saltamontes de Venus... Enherbado sintiendo crecer la hierba... (Ríos, 1983: 460).

The translation by Francis, Levine, and Ríos himself:

[Hop! grasshopper. Pass a joint to the gressivehopper bounding o'er the mound of Venus... Doped: feeling the dope flowing, letting the grass grow under your feat (Ríos, 1991: 459).

The multi-sense, multi-pun, word-playing could have multiple interpretations, translations and multi-versions in different languages. For example, another option for the English translation could have been: "Hop! grasshopper. Hit the grass and pass the joint, onslaughter hop-hopper of the mound of Venus. High, feeling the highness grow with the dope flowing..."

The rest of the paragraph of the English translation, like many other sections of the novel, are different from the original Spanish, but convey the heart of this literary masterpiece.

As Ríos himself points out in his Anthology *Larva y Otras Noches de Babel* (Ríos, 2007), the narrative consists of "phonetic copulations" where "words fuse and form other languages" (Ríos, 2007: 173). Deliberate excesses in text, *intertext*, *transtext* and *metatext* to deliver a "texsticle" where a "venereal deliverer of images... of words, pronounces, articulates and almost palates [savours], yes its syllables *con-cu-pis-cense* without censure, incensed [syllables]" (Ríos, 2007: 170). The "play of phonemes-graphemes-syllables-morphemes-semes is more ingenious and fun than absurd [because it] generates a lavish diegetic cacophony" (Dehennin, 1995). In addition, his central characters are in continuous games of hide-and-seek, of lost and displaced identities where they become multiple in one literary construct and not only a gratuitous word-play (Jura, 1996).

With *Larva*, Julián Ríos introduced a new territory in Spanish literature. Despite negative criticisms, Ríos is not one of the "ludic authors of *minimilarity* through a verbal *maximality*" (Vázquez, 1989) because, as in his other works, the experimental novel *Larva* went beyond a simple ludic word game and had a multiple cultural strata within the vertiginous prose (Dehennin, 1995). As Ríos himself wrote: "...the main way to access the text is an interminable anal-ysis... of forbidden copulations... of polymorphic per-vert-satil... [where] every word is a palimpsest, a pale-incest... (Ríos, 2007: 179)." The impermanence and fluidity of spatial and temporal boundaries facilitate spontaneous activity and mirror 'the most radiant freedom of thought'" (Gilloch, 1996). In prose and rhyme he carefully crafted minutiae of selected and arranged words so that the narrative acquires a forceful life on their own. Julián Ríos is a true literary innovator who breaks away from the Hispanic norm, from the global norm. He introduced a new genre, mixing dozens of languages with nonce words, neologisms, like simultaneous nonsense and sense for mature audiences that is a monumental encyclopedic puzzle

within a *Babelic* labyrinth. His unique style goes beyond nonsense. His texts have a synesthetic quality, evoking more than one sense in his readers' senses.

Describing Ríos' literary innovations and neologisms in his works would require a whole book. There are too many neologisms in his novels to enumerate them all, especially considering that each one of his novels is novel. He is not an author who keeps copying himself. Rather, his literary production is remarkably heterogeneous. His last novel *Puente de Alma* (*Alma Bridge* or *Soul Bridge*; Ríos, 2009), for example, is the least "experimental" of them all. Not yet translated in English, *Puente de Alma* is a fusion of classical and innovative narratives with amalgamations across Anglo-American, French and Hispanic literary cultures, mixing fiction and non-fiction in sometimes critical, sometimes journalistic ways (Durham, 2014). As it has been written about Ríos' other works, the novel is "an onion-tological way of looking, [. . .] the peeling away of being or non-being and nothingness, to reach the heart of the problem." (Donovan, 1998). *Puente de Alma* is an essay formatted as a novel. To put it in his own words extracted from the novel/essay: "A novel is in itself a genre of genres, a patchwork of makeshift repairs" ("La novela es ya género de géneros, un patchwork de remiendos;" Ríos, 2009: 269). In *Puente de Alma* there are interesting historical parallelisms, anecdotal connections, artistic links intertwined with unheard-of components (Ferré, 2018) where he makes countless associations, analogies, relations, allusions and correlations along with double, triple and more multilingual senses, unifying linguistic borders with the inexhaustible fountain of his fluid creative ligature, with the magical elastic band of his imagination. As an example, when he makes reference to the noble beginnings of the cigarette brand Benson & Hedges, was created originally in 1873 for the Prince of Wales, the future king of England Edward VII: "Lady Nicotine with gotha produces a distinguished death" ("Lady Nicotine con gotha produce una muerte distinguida" Ríos, 2009: 239). The wordplay is that the disease gout is named "gota" in Spanish and the United Kingdom's royal family name was "Gotha," as it was Saxe-Coburg and Gotha until renamed Windsor in 1917. The novel has indeed a royal theme as the *labyrinthic* prose surrounds the tragic death of the Princess of Wales, Lady Diana in a car accident which occurred in the Paris tunnel named Pont de l'Alma (*Puente de Alma*). The bridge was named to commemorate the 1854 Battle of Alma during the Crimean War, in which the Ottoman-Franco-British alliance achieved victory over the Russian army. "Alma" is the Crimean Tatar word for an "apple," but in Spanish it means "soul."

Puente de Alma is an "iceberg-book" in which the visible and within reach is sustained by the invisible or as the narrator of the novel put it: "an iceberg that hides a lot more than what it shows... And the occult supports and provides strength to the visible" (Ríos, 2009: 238). Thus, the novel is accessible to wide audiences satisfied with a passive, unchallenging read in view of the familiar themes (Lady Di, her accident, conspiracy theories about the non-accidental accident, history, art, popular culture, etc.). The novel, following the multiple paths of the French expression *fait divers*, meaning news story with sensational means (mysterious deaths, missing persons, unhappy love affairs, supernatural occurrences, etc.), allows the reader to go freely through time, space, coincidences and genre with a solid foot in reality. But at the same time the novel invites curious readers, in the fashion

of Raymond Roussel, to actively participate to explore and reflect upon the reality-based, hidden nooks of the narrative structure and the metaphorical reconstruction of the text (Durham, 2014). The novel is a contemporary “A Thousand and One Nights” of several realities chiseled by the demanding and innovative pen of Ríos in which words, images, characters and stories are spatially coincidental and filled with *palimpsestic* beauty, depth and vibrant multilingual music that a reader and, more likely, an active re-reader versed in Spanish, English and French might “see.” The first-person narrator of the novel is “Emil Alía,” also a narrator in *Monstruario* (Ríos, 1999) and *Loves That Bind* (Ríos, 1999), evoking “Milalias” (“a thousand aliases”) from *Larva*. With such plethora of aliases, the novel opens up to multiple narrators such as paparazzis, drag queens, artists, businessmen, etc.) reminders of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* to recount and tell their own stories surrounding Lady Di’s death in their own idiolects. One of them is Aparicio, a narrator who appears and disappears and among many apparitions and disappearances he encounters in 1969 a transposed individual on a train, a double of himself and the first man ever appearing on the first daguerreotype (i.e. photograph) taken by Louis Daguerre one hundred and thirty one years earlier in the, as it was known, Boulevard of Crime, which corresponds to boulevard du Temple where years later Pont de l’Alma would be built and *voilà*, the title of the novel. The eerie effects of the fantastic in fiction and the fantastic in reality are that the ordinary appears unexpectedly extraordinary and vice versa (Durham, 2014). Simultaneously, many people who died, like Princess Diana, on August 31st, are at a hallucinatory masquerade and afterwards Diana is manifested in re-embodiment, metempsychosis and other fictional means. And then in a spiral recount of Aparicio’s story, Emil describes to another photographer, who lives incidentally in rue Daguerre, a drawing pointing to a man who Aparicio calls Question Marc and who has also disappeared (Ríos, 2009: 205). Another reference to spiral is when the character Alonso, mourning the death of an aunt in the hospital Nestlé in Lausanne in 1977 sees a light composed of luminous dots as the fluttering of a butterfly: “Volaba libre a dimensiones invisibles mediante invisibles ráfagas” (274). Alonso did not know that in that precise hospital had just died Vladimir Nabokov. The first letter of each word in the quoted phrase is an acrostic that spells the name “Vladimir,” using the same strategy that Nabokov used in the last paragraph of his short story “The Vane Sisters” (Ríos, personal communication; Nabokov, 1997).

While there are significant linguistic, literary, artistic, historical and cultural sediments and there are many non-visible components for an avid reader, the basic nature of the novel is non-experimental. Yet, in *Puente de Alma* there are, at least, 40 neologisms coined by Ríos (2009) which can be easily interpreted by a reader:

- zanjo (male noun of trench; Ríos, 2009: 10)
- fotogenialidades (literally *photogenialities*, but meaning *photogeniusities* or genius photography; 14)
- pelambreira (bright fuzz; fire-like body hair; 14)
- azulesmeráldicas (emerald blue; 23)
- verdemar (green-colored sea; 24)
- visagistas (*seer-and-be-seener*; see and be seen professional or enthusiast; 47)
- chincheteada (thumbtacked; 56)
- muequeante (*grimacy*; 56)
- verdegray (grayish green; 82)

- perogrullescamente (*platitudinously*; 86)
balletómano (*balletmaniac*; 113)
montmartrés (of Mont Martrés origin; 115)
macdolinizados (*macdonaldized*; 117)
matadolores (painkillers; 118)
duncancán (Isadora Duncan cancan dance; 143)
ducancangurú (a guru of Duncan-like cancan dance and/or wordplay of kangaroo-like cancan dancing Duncan style; 143)
marketizó (commercialized or marketed; 169)
papela (female of the noun paper; 188)
plaf (onomatopoeic sound; 219)
clac (onomatopoeic sound; 220)
gotha (gout with th: *gouth*, to mimic Gotha the British royalty surname; 239)
reví (*to resee*; I saw again; 241)
psicoliquescente (*psycoliquescent*; 293)
spiralman (*spiralman*; 293)
rayografías (*raygraphs* 295)
paramitas (plural of paramita: one of the perfect virtues in Buddhism; 297)
separapiernas (*legsplitter* or *leg-splitter*; 304)
apoyapiernas (*legrest*; 304)
felacionado (*fellationated*; 304)
simbólogos (symbologists; 312)
postenística (*postennistic* or after tennis; 312)
alcohólogo (*alcoholologist*; 314)
italofobia (*italophobia* or strong dislike or fear of Italy or Italians; 326)
dianólogo (*dianologist* or expert in Lady Diana; 326)
alhambresco (Alhambresque; 335)
tajmahalescas (*Taj-Mahalesque*; 335)
chaplinesca (Chaplinesque; 337)
incesticida (*incesticide*; 348)
negriespejeante (*negribright* or *blackgleaming*; 356)
bonza (female of Bonzo; 358)

The enthralling aspect of the inventive neology of his work is the context in which each neologism is applied, at times thought-provoking, on occasions funny, witty or playful. Ríos' neologisms are an additional layer and yet an intrinsic component of his largely unrecognized ingenious literary production. To conclude and replicate Stéphane Pagès' book title, Julián Ríos is "The Rabelais of the Spanish Letters" (Pagès, 2007). No other analogy would be more appropriate in French, as it would be in other languages such as Joyce in English or Cervantes in Spanish. Ríos' prose is lush, luxuriant, lustrous, lucid, lustful, ludic, luscious, lubricious... in one word *luciferogenic*.

Bibliography

- DEHENNIN, E. (1998). "La vida sexual de las palabras" según Julián Ríos, en *Actas del XII Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas: 21-26 de agosto de 1995, Birmingham*, pp. 64-71.
- DONOVAN, L. (1998). *Emil's Erotic Tales Plucked from Modern Classics*. The Miami Herald, (May 17), 1-2.
- DURHAM, C. A. (2014). Masking and Unmasking the Subject(s): Julián Ríos's Puente de Alma. *L'Érudit franco-espagnol*, (5), 39-48.

- ESCANDELL MONTIEL, D. (2017). Prado sin Ríos: espacios en el canon metaliterario de la narrativa de la memoria. *Ogigia: Revista electrónica de estudios hispánicos*, (21), 5-24.
- FERRÉ, J. F. (2018). La novela Ríos o la cuadratura del círculo vicioso de Babel. *Quimera: Revista de literatura*, (411), 32-38.
- GILLOCH, G. (1996). *Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City*. Cambridge, Polity.
- JOYCE, J. (1961). *Ulysses*. New York, Vintage Books.
- JOYCE, J. (1976). *Finnegans Wake*. New York, Penguin Books.
- JURA, J. O. (1996). Marginally Normal and Normally Marginal: the Concept of Decentered Self in Julian Ríos's Fiction. *Lucero*, 7(1), 13-18.
- LECERCLE, J. J. (1985). *Philosophy through the Looking-Glass: Language, nonsense, desire*. London, Hutchinson.
- LECERCLE, J. J. (1990). *The Violence of Language: Interpretation as Pragmatics*. London, Routledge.
- MOLINA-CASTELLS, I. (1999). Escribir la Novela: Cervantes y Julián Ríos. *España Contemporánea: Revista de literatura y cultura* 12(1), 21-44.
- NÁCHER, M. H., & GIJÓN, M. M. (2018). Leer a Julián Ríos. *Quimera: Revista de literatura*, (411), 10-11.
- NABOKOV, V. (1997). *The Stories of Vladimir Nabokov*. New York, Vintage International, Vintage Books, a division of Random House.
- NUÑEZ CANTOS, M. A. (2018). "Larva": a great feast of slanguages. *Quimera: Revista de literatura*, (411), 29-31.
- ORTEGA, J. (1985). *Transformaciones de Larva*, en A. SÁNCHEZ-ROBAYNA, G. DÍAZ MIGOYO, eds., *Palabras para Larva*. Barcelona: Edicions del Mall.
- PAGÉS, S. (2018). "Larva", agudeza y arte de novelar. *Quimera: Revista de literatura*, (411), 26-28.
- POUND, E. (1951). *ABC of Reading*. London, Faber and Faber Limited.
- RÍOS, J. (1983). *Larva, Babel de una Noche de San Juan*. Barcelona, Edicions del Mall.
- RÍOS, J. (1991). *Larva, Midsummer Night's Babel*. Translated by Richard Alan Francis, Suzanne Levine, and the author himself. Elmwood Park, Illinois, Dalkey Archive Press.
- RÍOS, J. (1993). *Sombreros para Alicia*. Madrid, Muchnik Editores.
- RÍOS, J. (1994). *Kitaj, Pictures and Conversations*. London, Hamish Hamilton.
- RÍOS, J. (1997). *Poundemonium*. Translated by Richard Alan Francis. Elmwood Park, Illinois, Dalkey Archive Press.
- RÍOS, J. (1999). *Loves that Bind*. Translated by Edith Grossman. New York, Vintage Books.
- RÍOS, J. (1999). *Monstruario*. Barcelona, Seix Barral.
- RÍOS, J. (2001^a). *Nuevos Sombreros para Alicia*. Barcelona, Seix Barral.
- RÍOS, J. (2001^b). *Monstruary*. New York, Bullseye Books, Alfred A. Knopf.
- RÍOS, J. (2001^c). *La Vida Sexual de las Palabras*. Barcelona, Seix Barral.

- RÍOS, J. (2007). *Larva y Otras Noche de Babel (Antología)*. Mexico City, Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- RÍOS, J. (2008). *Quijote e Hijos*. Barcelona, Círculo de Lectores S.A. Galaxia Gutenberg.
- RÍOS, J. (2009). *Puente de alma*. Vol. 66. Barcelona, Galaxia Gutenberg.
- RÍOS, J. (2010). *The House of Ulysses, A Novel*. Translated by Nick Caistor. Champaign, Illinois and London, Dalkey Archive Press.
- RÍOS, J. (2011). *Procession of shadows, The Novel of Tamoga*. Translated by Nick Caistor. Champaign, Illinois and London, Dalkey Archive Press.
- RÍOS, J. (2012). *Nuevos sombreros para Alicia*. Pamplona, Leer-e.
- RODRÍGUEZ-HERNÁNDEZ, R. (2002). Love among the archetypes: Julián Ríos and the millennial flâneur. *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory*, 13(4), 333-351.
- SART de, A. (2017). Transfere in fabula Larva: Babel de una noche de San Juan et le travail de la traduction. *Doletiana: revista de traducció, literatura i arts*, (7), 1-29.
- SCHIFFRIN, A. (2001). *The business of books: How international conglomerates took over publishing and changed the way we read*. London, Verso.
- SOBEJANO, G. (1989). Novela y metanovela en España. *Ínsula*, 512-513, 4.
- VÁZQUEZ MONTALBÁN, M. (1989). Contra la novela policiaca, *Ínsula*, 512-513, 9.