ANGLO-SAXONICA

REVISTA DO CENTRO DE ESTUDOS ANGLÍSTICOS
DA UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

Série II - nº 26 - 2008

Edições Colibri

University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies
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ÍNDICE

COLÓQUIOS

INTER-ART AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUES

INTRODUCTORY NOTE 7

KNOWING WORKS OF ART
Derek Attridge 13

"FRAMED-UP BY THE FRAME": DECEPTION AND POINT OF VIEW IN PETER GREENAWAY'S *THE DRAUGHTMAN'S CONTRACT*
Mário Avelar 35

GWEN HARWOOD: AN INTRODUCTORY APPROACH
Mário Vítor Bastos 55

PAINTING WHAT IS NOT THERE: VISION AND NARRATIVE IN MAVIS GALLANT'S STORY "THE DOCTOR"
Marijke Boucherie 71

FIGURING THE SELF: "OLD FATHERS" AND OLD MASTERS IN TWO CONTEMPORARY IRISH POETS
Rui Carvalho Homem 89

CREATIVE CREATURES AND THEIR CREATION SCENES: JENNIFER JOHNSTON'S *THIS IS NOT A NOVEL*
Teresa Casal 109

READING A BOOK, READING A FILM: A PORTRAIT OF YOUTH IN "MY SON THE FANATIC"
Lígia Costa 125

WORDS AS GAME: THE WRITING AND READING OF POETRY
Isabel Fernandes 137

A KISS IS JUST A KISS: AN MI APPROACH TO DIFFERENT ART FORMS
Eduarda Melo Cabrita and Maria Luísa Falcão 153

ESTUDOS

DE HARRY COOMER A HARI KUMAR. A *RAJ NOSTALGIA* E O TRADUTOR DE MACAULAY NUM PERSONAGEM DE PAUL SCOTT
Cristina Baptista 167

GARRETT E OSSIAN
Gerald Bär 197

A PRIMEIRA PÁGINA DE JORNAIS PORTUGUESES À LUZ DA ANÁLISE MULTIMODAL
Flaviane Faria Carvalho 221

MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT: WRITING IN THE DEFENCE OF WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION
Paula Pinto Duarte 245

MORE THAN A COINCIDENCE? THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND THE SIBYL VANE SUBPLOT OF *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*
Emily Eells 255

MONA CAIRD'S GENDERED WORK: A GO-BETWEEN NEGOTIATING PAST AND FUTURE
Marília Martins Gil 279

RELEITURAS

MFÁBIO LOPES DA SILVA & KANAVILLIL RAJAGOPALAN (ORGS.) *A LINGUÍSTICA QUE NOS FAZ FALHAR – INVESTIGAÇÃO CRÍTICA.* SÃO PAULO: PARÁBOLA EDITORIAL.
Marta Alexandre 293

COLÓQUIOS

INTER-ART AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUES

Introductory Note

The one-day conference *Inter-art and Intercultural Dialogues*, whose proceedings are gathered in the present volume, signalled the appearance of a newly redefined research project that emerged after 2005 in ULICES (University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies): "English-Speaking Literatures and Cultures: The United Kingdom and The New English-Speaking Countries". This project, which I have now the honour and pleasure of chairing, after Professor Maria Helena de Paiva Correia (who was responsible for it until 2008) generously entrusted it to my care, greatly benefited from the gradual arrival of new researchers and junior members linked by similar interests and beliefs.

Unlike other research units in the country, our group (also known inside ULICES as LA 4 – Linha de Acção 4 / RP 4 – Research Project 4) connects the traditions of English-speaking Literatures in Great Britain and Ireland with writings by authors belonging to non-European and/or non-British cultural traditions emphasising an innovative Inter-art and Intercultural dialogue without ignoring post-colonial perspectives. This was greatly influenced by an epistemological redefinition in the area of English Studies, imposing new ways of negotiating the hitherto hegemonic dimension of British literature with other English-speaking literatures and cultures and with other arts.

We pay special attention to all sorts of dialogic encounters at different levels and in different contexts and areas, from the microscopic level of the act of literary reading to the macrocosmic level of intercultural relationships and communication or the inter-arts correspondences and the attendant inter-semiotic translations, not to mention the specific field of reception studies. Briefly, we move in the interstitial spaces of contact and relationship, looking at the peculiar relational dynamics that characterize them.

The theoretical framework for such a broad project, so broadly defined, is to be found in the premises and principles that have recently

emerged from the "ethical turn" in literary theory and criticism, a tendency that came forward in clear reaction to the ontological uncertainties of Postmodernism and that tried to accommodate the processes of globalisation and multiculturalism. By calling attention to the importance of the face to face encounter of self and other and the need on the subject's part for accommodating and creatively responding to alterity, ethical criticism has redefined and re-envisioned the self's responsibility towards the other – be it a text, a person, a country, an ideology, etc. – in terms of an ability or pre-disposition to respond, that is a response-ability which involves both passive acceptance or hospitality (to use a Derridean term) and creative awareness of the self and the other.

Therefore it is easy to understand our emphasis on dialogue (present in the title of our conference) to express and make manifest the sensitive and vital negotiation involving self and other and determining the re-evaluation and redefinition of their respective places.

On the 15th of March 2007, at Faculdade de Letras, *Inter-art and Inter-cultural Dialogues* was a one-day conference that properly launched our renewed unit. Our guest speakers addressed various issues: from South-African art and literature (as was the case with Prof. Derek Attridge, our foreign guest speaker and an internationally recognised proponent of ethical criticism) to intermedial relationships both in literature and painting (as in Rui Carvalho Homem's lecture) and in literature and cinema (as in the case of the one by Mário Avelar). Our researchers presented papers on inter-art relationships (Lígia Costa, for instance), as well as on Irish (Teresa Casal), English (Isabel Fernandes, Luísa Falcão and Eduarda Melo Cabrita), Australian (Mário Vítor Bastos) and Canadian (Marijke Boucherie) Literatures.

The papers read by the home based researchers made manifest the type of approach and the thematic emphases that have recently occupied us and our invitations to the international scholar as well as to the national ones were also determined by similar concerns; we would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge our gratitude to our three guest speakers. We feel confident that the result is a coherent volume whose reading is nevertheless enhanced by its thematic variety.

Isabel Fernandes

Knowing Works of Art

Derek Attridge
University of York

Knowing Works of Art

I

Several recent theoretical discussions of literature have tried to capture a particular quality of the literary work by ascribing to it the capacity to *think*. Pierre Macherey's *A quoi pense la littérature?* was published in 1990, and although the 1995 English translation preferred the title *The Object of Literature*, the introductory chapter preserved the original question, "What is literature thinking about?" In 1992, a large conference was sponsored by the newspaper *Le Monde*, the University of Maine, and the town of Le Mans, to consider the question "L'art est-il une connaissance?"; one of the speakers was Alain Badiou, who entitled his talk, "Que pense le poème?".[1] And in 2003 Stathis Gourgouris published a book entitled *Does Literature Think?* It's quite striking that this string of titles associating literature with thinking returns again and again to the mode of the *question* – perhaps echoing Heidegger's questioning title about thinking itself, *Was Heisst Denken?* Heidegger's text, which has been translated into English as *What is Called Thinking?* but also "What Calls for Thinking?", is a set of lectures given in 1951 and 1952 in which he closely associates thinking – in the sense he wishes to promote – and poetry. Although one can imagine all these titles as statements, their interrogative form suggests that the question of literature and thinking *is* a question, and perhaps too that thinking as it happens in literature is never far from questioning.

---

[1] The conference proceedings were published in 1993, edited and introduced by Roger-Pol Droit, 214-24.

What I'm interested in is the implicit personification in these titles: rather than describing the work as the product or embodiment of thought, or as a spur to thought, something about the reading experience leads the theorist or critic to ascribe to the work itself the capacity to think. Although the personification in the title is not always carried through consistently in the discussion that follows (Macherey, for instance, is interested in literature as a mode of philosophy, Gourgouris in literature as a mode of what he calls "mythic thought"), it suggests that, at least for the duration of the reading, it is possible to respond to a series of words as if they had something like human consciousness.

Gourgouris elaborates on the question he wishes to address in his book as follows: "The more challenging point is not to determine *what* literature thinks (what is its cognitive object), but *how* literature thinks – what is the process by which literature might provide us with access to knowledge and what sort of knowledge this might be" (1-2). Clearly, the notion that the work of literature thinks is related to the idea that it *knows*. The question of art and knowledge, and its close relative, the question of art and truth, of course go back a long way – even further back than the time of Plato's Socrates, who refers to the *ancient* quarrel between poetry and philosophy, perhaps even further back than Hesiod, whose Muses (in the *Theogony*) describe themselves as tellers of lies that seem true and as well as purveyors of real truths. But the more specific notion of the art work as itself the knower, rather than merely the bearer of knowledge, is perhaps a more recent one.

Someone who engagingly teases out a number of the implications of such a conception of the work of literature is Michael Wood, in his 2005 book *Literature and the Taste of Knowledge*. At the outset of his book, Wood offers what he calls a rather schematic frame for his enterprise:

> Thinking of Proust and asthma, say, we could ask, not what Proust knew about the condition or what doctors know now or knew in Proust's time, but what *A la recherche du temps perdu* knows about asthma – what it knows and perhaps will not tell us directly, or what it knows that only novels know, or only this novel knows. (8)

Wood goes on: "Many see dangers in such a personification – the novel is not a person and can't know anything, only novelists and readers

can" (and one might perhaps add narrators and characters), but he wants "this form of the question … just to hang in the air" (8-9). When, later in the book, he mentions again those who have resisted the notion that literature can know – "a number of friends and colleagues with whom I have discussed the subject of this book have objected strenuously to my use of personification"– he offers a justification for its use. If I may summarise his argument: it reminds us that literature can mean something quite different from what the author meant; that its form is what makes it literature; and that reading literature is an act of creation (110-112) (– all of which I entirely endorse). And he sums up: "What literature knows, what a novel or poem or play knows, is strictly, unfiguratively, what I now know that I didn't know before I read the text" (112). Here I part company with Wood, as will become evident.

Wood is able to use the multiple suggestiveness of his primary metaphor to provide some acute readings of literary works, and to set going a number of intriguing trains of thought. But does his justification of the metaphor fully explain the temptation it seems to hold out to literary theorists?

Since we can't take these formulations literally, we have to ask what work the anthropomorphism is doing in these accounts. What is it about one's experience of a work of literature that might lead one to consider – if only through the suspension of disbelief – that the verbal object before one is capable of thinking and knowing? And is it a defining characteristic of the literary work or a property of certain works only? Are there literary works that seem to think or know nothing, or to lack the capacity to think or know?

The issue here is not one of *agency*: there seems to be no problem about ascribing to works of literature (or the other arts) a whole series of acts. A poem in F. R. Leavis's critical accounts, for example, can *offer*, *register*, *convey*, *impose*, *demand*, *pull itself up*, *recognise*, *settle into*, and *pick up*.[2] We're quite happy to say that a novel *resists* interpretation, or *challenges* conventions, or *undermines* beliefs. A sculpture can *inspire*, or

[2] I found these verbs in *New Bearings in English Poetry* and Leavis's essays in his collection, *A Selection from Scrutiny*.

entertain, or *disappoint*. Yet there are acts that we would hesitate to associate with a work of art. Wouldn't we raise an eyebrow if a colleague said, "This stanza feels profound grief"? (This would be different from saying that it feels, say, *overloaded*, where it is the reader who is doing the feeling.) Could we accept assertions that works *imagine*, or *consider*, or *hope*? All such terms imply a metaphorical leap that, at the very least, makes us pause. The difference seems to be that in these cases, unlike *register*, *resist*, and so on, the metaphor implies a consciousness rather than just agency: the work is deemed to possess a subjectivity enabling it to do things that normally only humans (or in some cases humans and animals) are capable of. After all, a desk can resist my efforts to move it, a car can demand attention, an argument can undermine one's assumptions. (A borderline case, perhaps, is Leavis's *remember*: there's no problem in saying a line *recalls* a line in another poem; but to say that one poem *remembers* another poem is perhaps to impute a psychological reality to a literary work that it doesn't possess.) Of course writers themselves, and the characters or speakers in their works, may do all these things with impunity, and some critics take care to restrict their use of words suggestive of human subjectivity to these individuals, real or fictional; but my interest is in the ascription of such terms – and in particular words suggestive of thought and knowledge – to the works themselves.

Let's take a poem that we might be tempted to say "knows"; this is an untitled piece by Jeremy Prynne:

> Lack spreads like snow
> back by the path to the iron pipe
> flaking and not succeeding.
> And over this luck comes, the bird
> making shadows like fortune,
> like heat and light, on the wing.
> Lack warms, it is the conduit
> of starlight through the shut window,
> lack of love hot now, luck cool
> by turn, the bird it likes.[3]

[3] *Poems*, 211 (reprinted from *Into the Day*, 1972).

Not only might we say, were we given to personification, that this poem knows, we might want to call it a "knowing" poem: by which we would mean it seems to harbour some secret knowledge, revealing only that it, and not we, are privy to the secret. Only the poem knows, we might want to say, how lack can spread like snow and yet acquire the power to warm, why it spreads to the iron pipe, whether it is the snow or the pipe that is "flaking and not succeeding", who or what the "it" of the last line is. It's not a matter of trying to fathom an authorial meaning: it seems pretty certain that if we cornered Jeremy Prynne and demanded answers to our questions, he would not be able to give them – or if he did, his answers would need further interpretation on our part. If the poem gives pleasure to us, it is in its refusal to answer these questions, in the activity of guessing and testing and shaping we are encouraged to engage in.

The idea of the art work having the capacity to know is not limited to accounts of literature. Michael Wood's inspiration comes in part from an earlier book, Peter de Bolla's *Art Matters*, a study in which de Bolla takes up the challenge of finding words to articulate the experience of a powerful work of art. He concentrates on three works: Wordsworth's poem "We Are Seven", Glenn Gould's 1981 performance of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, and Barnett Newman's painting in the Museum of Modern Art entitled *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*. It is in relation to the last of these that de Bolla asks what Wood calls "the truly haunting question" (8): "What does this painting know?" (31).

It may seem a surprising way to describe an abstract work of art, but one must respect the honesty with which de Bolla attempts to capture his own experience of standing in front of this painting. I can't go into the lengthy and subtle account de Bolla gives of his response to this work; I'll simply focus on his summary of the issue of knowing:

> Once again I am prompted to ask: What does this artwork know? I phrase this question in full light of the fact that it is virtually unintelligible – it might be slightly better to recast the question as, "What is its way of knowing?" – but this does not detract from the very powerful sense I have of getting closer to the work, closer yet still not close enough. This leaves me with the virtual impression of a depth to the work, of something contained within it that I have yet to fathom, a space I may, perhaps, never inhabit. (52)

Again, then, we have the impression of a secret being guarded by the work, a secret that resists any amount of looking, and one to which the artist cannot be expected to have privileged access. It is, in every sense, for de Bolla, a knowing work of art.

Figure 1 is a work by the South African artist William Kentridge. It's entitled "Man with a Megaphone Cluster", and is an etching with soft ground and aquatint dating from 1998.[4] As in the Prynne poem, there is much meaningfulness here, but also a number of unanswered and unanswerable questions: Is the man listening to something emanating from the loudspeakers? Why is he naked, apart from hat and slippers? Do the fine lines indicate sound? Are the apparent megaphones really megaphones, and if so, why are they not being spoken into? Why is one of them cabled to the floor? What is the blue line doing here? Although a knowledge of Kentridge's other work will add further resonances to the print – the bulky human figure is a version of the self-portrait used in many of his drawings, the megaphones echo numerous sound-producing devices and other technological equipment, in his work, and so on – it won't answer the questions.

Some works of art, then, might be called "knowing" in that they convey a sense of meaningfulness without that meaning being entirely graspable. (This is very different from the work of art in which we sense a knowing mind behind the mind we are presented with – as in the case of Browning's dramatic monologues: in such examples, and related examples of irony, we share in the creator's knowingness. We are knowing; the poor narrator is ignorant.) We can all think of many works of art – at least visual and verbal works – that would qualify for the adjective; most of them probably modern or postmodern examples, though not necessarily so: earlier examples might include Shakespeare's strange poem "The Phoenix and the Turtle" or Velazquez's *Las Meninas*. I'm not sure I can propose any wordless musical works that deserve the adjective; de Bolla doesn't endow Bach's *Goldberg Variations* themselves with the capacity to know, but he does say that Gould's performance recorded in 1981 "can be understood as a philosophical argument" (90). How justifiable is it to

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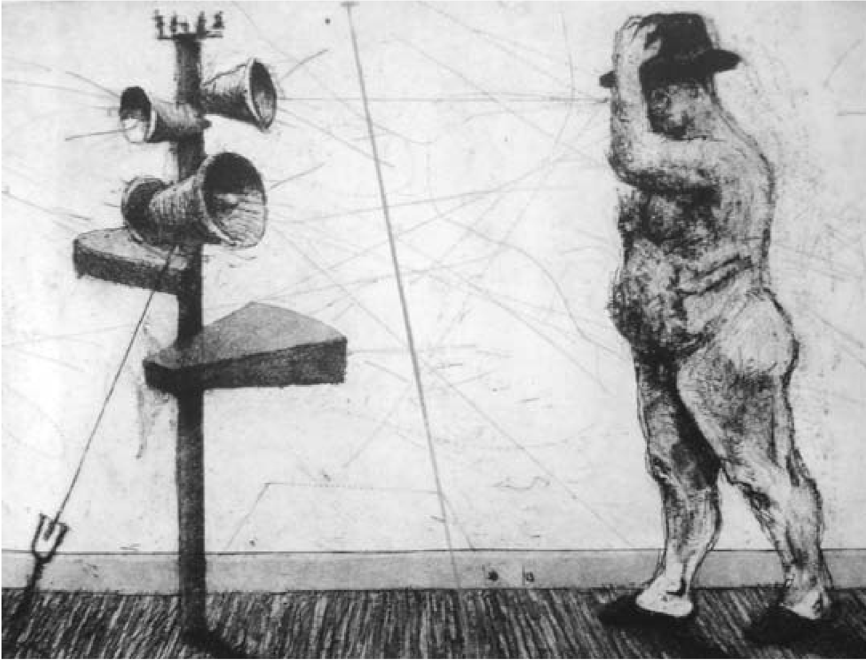
[4] *William Kentridge Prints*, 71.



William Kentridge. *Man with a Megaphone Cluster* (1998).

say that these works "know" something they are refusing to reveal? Or that they have the capacity to "think"?

II

I'd like to approach these questions obliquely by looking in a different way at thinking and knowing in works of art. There's a strong, if relatively marginal, tradition within literary theory of conceptualising the work of literature as an *event* rather than an *object*. Louise Rosenblatt, to take one example, argues powerfully for what she calls "transactional reading", emphasising that what is important is what happens when we read a work of literature, not anything we might carry away from it.[5]

[5] See, for example, *The Reader*, *the Text*, *the Poem*.

Barthes's championing of *signifiance* over *significance* and *text* over *work* is a related endeavour. Some literary theorists have tried to employ Levinas's distinction between the *saying* and the *said* to argue for the non-conceptual, event-like nature of the art-work – something of a distortion of Levinas's position, but interesting nevertheless. And of course theorisations of the event crop up in a number of philosophical oeuvres, including those of Heidegger, Lyotard, Derrida, Deleuze, and Badiou. (Although elsewhere Badiou elevates the event to something extremely rare and on a large scale, in the piece in the collection I mentioned earlier ("Que pense le poème?") he states that "the poem offers itself as a thing of language that one meets each time as an event" [215] – with which I couldn't agree more.)

In the *Singularity of Literature* I drew on a number of these sources in arguing that the work of art exists, as art, only in the event of its reception. Although artworks function in a number of ways – they convey information, they offer moral lessons, they comfort and console with familiar wisdom and memorable language, and so on – my interest was in their operation *as art*, as engaged in a practice that differs from other practices an individual or a culture might engage in. However, to use the word "event" alone is to miss the important part played by the reader, viewer, or listener: the artwork doesn't just happen, it arises out of an active engagement. (I've already signalled my agreement with Wood's claim that reading a literary work is an act of *creation*.) I therefore use the somewhat clumsy term *act-event* in order to capture the strange duality of this process, in which active and passive are not clearly separable (whether we are talking about the work or the person responding to it.)

In order to elaborate on the active aspect of the process, I relate it to the notion of *performance*. My argument is that the work of art *stages* the intersubjective practices, emotional sallies, intellectual developments, and so on, that occur "for real" outside art. It does this by using the same materials that we use for these real-life practices – colours, images, textures, tones, words, narratives, and many more – but deploying them as if in the theatre or between quotation marks. So, for instance, a string trio may stage agitation without agitating the listener; a painting may stage grief without arousing grief in the viewer; a novel may stage ethical choice without making the reader choose. They can do these things

because, outside art, sound has the power to agitate, sights can cause grief, words may be used to pose ethical dilemmas. We can say, therefore, that a poem, for instance, performs the powers of language (to move, to calm, to enrage, to bless, and so on), and that the reader, in performing the poem, performs these powers. This is the sense in which I'm happy to grant agency to the work of art.

In asking about the role of thinking and knowing in works of art from this perspective, the most obvious question is whether we find these activities being performed in the event that constitutes the art work. (This has nothing to do with the thought and knowledge that went into the creation of the work, of course.) The answer is, at least as far as literature is concerned, clearly yes. Macherey, who sustains the notion that literary works think philosophically throughout his book, uses a metaphor that seems to point to this rather different way of understanding art's relation to thought: "Literary texts are the home of a form of thought which speaks its name without displaying the marks of its legitimacy, because its exposition is a form of *theatricality*" (232, my emphasis).

There's a long tradition in Western literature of writers finding linguistic means to stage the processes of thought, something that is made possible by the close connection between language and thinking. In fact it would be hard to find a literary work that doesn't to some degree do this, though the genre that is most closely identified with the mimesis of thinking is the lyric poem. (I prefer to say "thinking", where it's not too clumsy to do so, as the noun "thought" freezes and reifies what is in fact a continuous movement.) Keats's *Odes*, for example, stage the evolution of the poet's thinking in relation to an object or imagined object. At times, the poem's involvement with thought is thematised: in the "Ode to Psyche" the poet promises to "build a fane / In some untrodden region of my mind, / Where branchèd thoughts … shall murmur in the wind"; in the "Ode to a Nightingale" "the dull brain perplexes and retards" the poet's attempt to escape the world where "but to think is to be full of sorrow"; and the Grecian urn "dost tease us out of thought". The poems are about thought, yes, but any information they provide about the workings of the human brain is irrelevant to their functioning as poems. What matters is that the reader participates in the to-and-fro of thinking, and the feelings, memories, and hopes that arise to complicate the process

– while never being under the illusion that this is anything other than a performance of the movements and proclivities of human thought.

Another poem that performs the processes of thought while foregrounding this performance is Browning's "Two in the Campagna". The poem begins by launching the reader into the immediacy of the present moment and a particular place:

I wonder do you feel today
    As I have felt since, hand in hand,
We sat down on the grass, to stray
    In spirit better through the land,
This morn of Rome and May?

The technique is like that developed by Coleridge in so-called conversation poems: the words are uttered in real time and space, as it were – the couple have been sitting down for some time, and the speaker has been trying to capture and articulate a thought, and now reflects on what has just been happening. The poem continues:

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
    Has tantalized me many times,
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw
    Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go.
Help me to hold it![6]

Here the fragility and elusiveness of thinking is not only asserted but enacted.

The twentieth century was, of course, the time of the great flowering of fictional modes designed to engage the reader in the minutiae of unfolding thought processes: Joyce, Woolf, Dorothy Richardson all developed techniques for bringing the language of prose closer to the language of thinking, and bequeathed to their successors a rich new resource. Among those successors, I'll mention only Beckett, who in the Trilogy and some of the later prose made wonderful comedy out of the rambling, self-correcting, currents of thought of his narrators. And I can't

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[6] Browning, *The Poems*, I, 728.

resist mentioning the poetry of David Antin, who performs a kind of thinking-aloud in front of audiences and then publishes edited transcriptions of these events as highly engaging poems.

In the non-verbal arts, however, the staging of thinking is less easy to detect. Could one say that the transitions and juxtapositions in the *Eroica* symphony present themselves to the listener as an echo of the movement of thought? Does the viewer of Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* move around the visual space in a process akin to thinking? To make such claims, one would have to show that we can think with sounds and with visual images. The latter is the more likely, though one needs to distinguish between a static image and the essentially motile character of thought. The moving images of film are a much more likely place to find the staging of thought processes – or the breakdown of sequential thought processes, as in Christopher Nolan's *Memento* and Michael Gondry's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. Kentridge produces short animated films that feel very like thinking by using a technique of repeatedly altering a charcoal drawing, photographing each stage, and putting the sequence together into a shifting, self-transforming parade of images.

Thinking, then, can be staged in art. What about *knowing*? Badiou, in "Que pense le poème?", argues that a poem presents thought without knowledge (223), thought as act, and although this seems correct, it doesn't mean that poems – or art – have nothing to do with knowing. Do we use language, sounds, colours, images to know? Or to strive for knowledge? The answer is surely yes, but it's somewhat harder to find art works that exploit this fact in order to perform knowing, or trying to know, or failing to know. The prime literary example here would probably be *What Maisie Knew*, a novel in which Henry James limits the perspective on the events of the plot to the understanding of a growing girl and allows us to share with her her increasing knowledge of the world and its (mostly wicked) ways. So we get passages like the following:

> I so despair of courting her noiseless mental footsteps here that I must crudely give you my word for its being from this time forward a picture [the picture of her governess Mrs Wix as "almost … sublime"] literally present to her. Mrs. Wix saw her as a little person knowing so extraordinarily much that, for the account to be taken of it, what she still didn't know

> would be ridiculous if it hadn't been embarrassing. Mrs. Wix was in truth more than ever qualified to meet embarrassment; I am not sure that Maisie had not even a dim discernment of the queer law of her own life that made her educate to that sort of proficiency those elders with whom she was concerned. (208)

James's syntactic labyrinth, his almost obsessive self-qualification, here succeeds in involving the reader in the gradually expanding realm of Maisie's knowledge. And we might note the narrator's "I so despair of courting her mental footsteps" and "I am not sure that Maisie had not even a dim discernment...": the language also enacts the question of knowing, or not being able to know, how much Maisie knows.

Religious poetry often stages knowing, trying to know, or being satisfied with not knowing: think of John Donne or George Herbert. *The Divine Comedy* offers a performance of the protagonist's increasing knowledge. Knowing is also tied to memory, and there are many works that enact the process of uncovering the past, from Rousseau's *Confessions* to Banville's *The Sea*. We might think of Hugh McDiarmid's brilliant long poem *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* as a work that performs a striving for knowledge and self-knowledge, and Yeats's "Leda and the Swan" as exploring the drama of a human in the act of – perhaps – acquiring divine knowledge. Speculating more generally, the tradition of the *Bildungsroman* engages with the acquisition of knowledge; and the tradition of the sublime deals with the breakdown of the capacity to know. And one might say that detective fiction stages the search for knowledge.

With the other arts, we are again on trickier ground. It's hard to relate absolute music to the act of knowing, and programme music usually relies on a verbal narrative. (Opera, of course, is a different matter: *The Magic Flute*, *Parsifal*, *The Midsummer Marriage* – to go no further – could all be said to involve the audience in the activity of knowing as well as desiring to know.) In the visual arts, too, it might be difficult to find examples of the staging of knowing. Could one say that in order to give oneself fully to Masaccio's famous representation of the expulsion of Adam and Eve one has to share in the enactment of a terrible knowing? Or could one say that some of the great paintings of the Annunciation

invite the reader to participate in the offering and accepting of knowledge, knowledge that annuls that which Adam and Eve acquired? I leave these questions open. Just let me note that there are plenty of visual representations of *knowledge*, just as there are verbal ones; but art this capacity to provide knowledge is something art shares with other cultural products (the illustrated encyclopaedia, for instance).

To sum up: if we conceptualise the work of art as an act-event, rather than an object, and as coming into being in the performance of a viewer or reader, thinking and knowing can be seen to be central to many verbal or visual texts. Works of art, engaged with in a creative manner that is at once passive and active, can produce an intense experience of the mind's workings, albeit an experience that is framed and controlled. In such cases, however, the thinker or knower can often be understood as a character, even if only in the sense of the persona conjured up in a lyric poem; and so we are not likely to say that the work *itself* "knows" or "thinks". Nor are the examples I've been discussing necessarily what we would call "knowing" works of art: they don't convey that sense of secrets withheld that we associate with knowingness.

III

I want now to return to my earlier examples of knowing art in this sense of seeming to guard a secret, to which we will never gain access, and which the artist is not in a position to divulge. If these works are only artworks in so far as they happen, over and over, as events, when performed by the responsive and creative reader or viewer, is there a way of redescribing these qualities without personifying the works in question? I have argued elsewhere that what we respond to when we perform a work of art can be described in terms of an interdependent trio of properties, *singularity*, *alterity* or *otherness*, and *invention*: that the work that comes into being in our performance strikes us with its difference from all other works, by its challenge – great or small – to the norms and habits by which we comprehend the world, and by a sense that its coming into being as we experience it is an opening into new ways of thinking, feeling, and knowing. In responding fully to the work, therefore, we are changed – perhaps only momentarily, perhaps permanently – as we adjust our own

frames of understanding, our own habits of feeling, our own ways of knowing to allow us to perceive what is before us in its singularity, inventiveness, and alterity.

When a work seems to be possessed of its own capacity to think, to question, to harbour knowledge, so much so that we call on metaphors that supply it with a brain, a will, a consciousness, it is a sign of both its otherness and its inventiveness. It is other to the world of assumptions, connections, narratives, habits that the artist and the audience share: it operates according to a different set of norms and conventions. We can shift our own frames of understanding to find in it some meaning, but in that very shifting we experience the alterity of the work. And that sense of a different world with different norms is also – if we are able to find in the work something we register cognitively and emotionally as art and not just as an ineffectual rearrangement or rejection of convention – a sense of inventiveness, of the creation of fresh possibilities for thinking, feeling, knowing.

Crucial to the work's power to open onto new worlds is its *form*; but form, even in the visual and plastic arts, must be understood as taking place in the viewer's or listener's experience, not as a static set of properties or relationships. Michael Wood reminds us of the power of form, using his favoured personification: "My hunch is that the villanelle" – he is discussing Elizabeth Bishop's "One Art" – "may well know quite a lot about things like love, loss, repetition, design, language, memory, longing" (136). Putting this in terms that avoid personification, we might say that the form of the villanelle, as it unfolds its repetitions and variations, is an excellent vehicle for the staging of love and loss, memory and longing.

Standing in front of the painting by Barnett Newman, de Bolla finds himself prompted to ask "What does this artwork know?" Let me attempt to rephrase the question without the personification. How, in confronting this work as it hangs on the wall of the Museum of Modern Art, in scanning across its width and height, in moving closer and further away, in absorbing its colours, in registering the relative sizes of the different bands, in allowing remembered paintings and sights to be recalled, in testing the title against the painting's forms and colours, in bringing to mind the discourses that might bear upon it, how, in doing all this, do I find myself adjusting, for the moment at least, my familiar grip on the

world? Does the scale of the work, along with its comparative simplicity, require recalibration of my sense of the relation between a painting and the human body? Does the title, *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, encourage me to rethink notions of heroism and sublimity, and the tradition of heroic painting? Do I find myself reinterpreting the many religious triptychs I have seen, busy with figures, but here repeated as sheer colour? Does the remarkable confidence of the work inspire a new acknowledgement of human energies?

I could go on; but the point is that a full engagement with a work of art involves such processes of thought and feeling; and if the work seems to know things that we don't, it is because it brings us to the limits of our own understanding, raising questions and making connections that have not hitherto been part of our mental – or physical – universe. Similarly, Kentridge's "Man with a Megaphone Cluster" prompts a reconfiguration of our conceptions of the machine and the body, of the operation of the loudspeaker (and, if we bring to bear on the image our awareness of the South African context, of its role in political repression), of the very process whereby lines on paper might be able to represent sound and movement.

Prynne's poem does not simply hug its secrets to its chest; it invites the reader to become intimate with the workings of words, with the semantic resonances between *luck* and *lack*, with the capacity of syntax to branch in numerous directions, and in so doing to reassess the logical and referential functions of language. Were the poem simply nonsense, its power in this respect would be very limited: we would remain outside it, and note how easily words lose their coherence and referential power. It's the moving towards and away from sense that engages the reader, the invocation of a poetic tradition – one can imagine the first line leading on to a rather conventional poem – and its undermining, the oscillation between the concrete and the abstract ("flaking and not succeeding"), the restless refusal to settle on a coherent image or assertion. The event of the poem is the reader's performance of these echoes and disjunctions. It is not so much a knowing poem as a poem that tests the relation between sentences of English and knowing.

Works of art don't "know" or "think", then, though they can involve the viewer, reader or auditor in a performance of knowing or thinking. If

they appear to have these human capacities, it is because in responding to their alterity, singularity, and inventiveness we find our cognitive faculties engaged and tested; our familiar maps prove inadequate, and we move into new and strange territory. When Michael Wood says, as I noted earlier, "What literature knows, what a novel or poem or play knows, is strictly, unfiguratively, what I now know that I didn't know before I read the text", I'm tempted to correct him: what makes us want to say that literature knows is the experience of challenge and discovery that makes us different after reading the text – though this difference is not a matter of knowledge acquired. I prefer Gourgouris's formulation: "One gains a sense of knowing something other than the knowledge that comes from the words one has read, a knowledge that alters not only one's relation to those words but also the relation to one's sense of self as a 'knowing subject'" (13). I would want to add that it is also possible, as in some of the examples we have looked at, that what is changed by this knowledge – I would prefer to say this engagement with knowing – is our relation to knowledge itself. Roland Barthes is among those who use the anthropomorphic formulation "literature knows", but he is clear about what it knows: it knows about *language*, "The great *mess* of language, upon which men work and which works upon them" (463). I can almost accept the idea that literary works know something when the object of knowledge is language; they certainly demonstrate the manifold capacities of language. And Wolfgang Iser articulates a position close to mine when he writes in *The Act of Reading*:

> Reading has the same structure as experience, to the extent that our entanglement has the effect of pushing our various criteria of orientation back into the past, thus suspending their validity for the new present. This does not mean, however, that these criteria or our previous experiences disappear altogether. On the contrary, our past still remains our experience, but what happens now is that it begins to interact with the as yet unfamiliar presence of the text. This remains unfamiliar so long as our previous experiences are precisely as they had been before we began our reading. But in the course of the reading, these experiences will also change, for the acquisition of experience is not a matter of adding on – it is a restructuring of what we already possess. (132)

This capacity to reconfigure one's grip on the world and on oneself is a power that all art possesses: it's not limited to those works we might call "knowing". But there's a way in which we could consider such works as paradigmatic rather than exceptional. Jacques Derrida has linked the literary itself with the notion of the *secret*; to summarise brutally, the work of literature – and we can extend this observation to all works of art – retains its secret because it is a secret without hidden depths, without concealment.[7] A work of art states what it states, presents what it presents, no more, no less; and it refuses to say anything further, no matter how hard we press it. Discussing Baudelaire's short narrative "Counterfeit Money" in *Given Time*, Derrida points out that we can never know whether or not the coin given to the beggar is by the narrator's friend is counterfeit. "Baudelaire does not know, cannot know, and does not have to know, any more than we do, what can be going 'through the mind' of the friend, and whether the latter finally wanted to give true or counterfeit money, or even wanted to give anything at all" (152). He continues, "As these fictional characters have no consistency, no depth beyond their literary phenomenon, the absolute inviolability of the secret they carry depends first of all on the essential superficiality of their phenomenality, on the *too-obvious* of that which they present to view" (153). J. Hillis Miller underscores Derrida's point: "There is nowhere to go behind the smilingly enigmatic words on the page, no authority to whom to appeal, not even to the author, in order to decide this question, even though the decision is essential to our reading of Baudelaire's text" (309). Here's a new personification to add to the list: for Miller, a text can smile. It's the same quality of the work of art that leads commentators to use words like "know" and "think"; and what could be a better synonym for the adjective "knowing" than "smilingly enigmatic"?

If a work of art advertises its possession of secrets in a flagrant manner, we may want to call it "knowing"; we may want to say it knows more than it is revealing. Derrida and Miller show how Baudelaire's text falls into this category. But *no* work of art reveals everything we might want to know, precisely because its secrets have no depth to which we

[7] See Derrida, "Passions" 20-24 and "La Littérature au Secret."

could penetrate in pursuit of that knowledge. I return to my point about the work of art as event and act: though the work may stage the search for knowledge, and the reader or viewer may feel thoroughly involved in this staged search, there is no knowledge as such waiting to be uncovered. Every work is a knowing work, every work smiles enigmatically, because there is no way we, or it, can satisfy the thirst for knowledge that it produces.

Of course there is another way of understanding my title: as raising the question: "Is it possible to know works of art?" In a trivial sense, of course we can; we can recall colours, shapes, tones, phrases; some of us can recite poems or play sonatas. In a deeper sense, though, as I have been suggesting, the work of art *resists* knowing, refuses to convey knowledge and refuses to be known as a cognitive entity. As Derrida says in his brilliant essay on the poem as hedgehog, "Che cos'è la poesia?", "[The poem's] event always interrupts or derails absolute knowledge" (235). Prynne's poem and Kentridge's drawing defy our attempts to know in an obvious way; but if I am correct in my claim that every work of art has its being as an event (or act-event), not an object, we can't be said to know novels, or symphonies, or paintings. We can re-experience a work with which we are already familiar with a sense of recognition, but when we do it is never quite the same as it was last time, and there is a sense in which every reading or hearing or viewing starts afresh.

Knowing works of art – or works that we are inclined to call "knowing", or to which we find ourselves tempted to ascribe the capacity to think or to know – may be relatively few; but every work of art, coming into being as a performed event, engages with our epistemological desires. We act out our knowing, our wanting to know, our wanting to know what it is like to know or not to know; or rather these things are acted out in the experience that is the event of the art-work. If we are different after this experience, it is not because we have added to our store of knowledge, it is because, in gaining access to the work's alterity and singularity, we have discovered new ways of knowing and perhaps new ways of not-knowing. Ascribing to works of art the capacity to think or to know (or to smile) is one way of registering metaphorically that process of discovery – or rather of discovering, since we don't have any treasure to show when we stop listening or looking or reading. And that, of course, is why we go on doing it.

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"Framed-up by the frame": Deception and point of view in Peter Greenaway's *The Draughtman's Contract*

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“Framed-up by the frame”: Deception and point of view in Peter Greenaway’s *The Draughtman’s Contract*

While doing my research for this essay some lines from Frank O’Hara’s poem on Billie Holiday’s death, ‘The Day Lady Died’, kept coming back to my mind: ‘It is 12:20 in New York a Friday/ three days after Bastille day, yes / it is 1959 and I go get a shoeshine.’ (O’Hara, 146) The American poet records a succession of ordinary events until he reached ‘the tobacconist in the Ziegfeld Theatre and / casually ask[ed] for a carton of Gauloises and a carton / of Picayunes, and a NEW YORK POST with her face on it.’ (146) Those banal (non-)events that sooner or later would be deleted from his memory, are recorded by the mind and by the poem because something powerful happened; something powerful made them meaningful.

Everyone has been through this kind of survival of the ordinary by memory. Sometimes the pathos of loosing someone dear; sometimes something in the community sphere – everyone reminds the non-events lived when the news of the twin towers attack reached each and everyone of us – fixes banality in our minds. Hopefully the survival by memory may touch us because of powerful aesthetic events.

One of the most powerful aesthetic experiences that I have been through, happened in the early 1980’s when I first saw Peter Greenaway’s *The Draughtman’s Contract*. It was a spring sunny afternoon – I can’t promise it was spring but that’s the way I like to recollect it. Anyway, I’m sure I didn’t forget the place I went to afterwards, the people I met and with whom I shared my perplexity. I may have written a review of this film, since in those days it was something I used to do every week. As I lost track of those pieces, I just cannot be sure if I did. Anyway, I remember the perplexity I felt, mainly because of the way Greenaway articulated the memory of discourses and genres (the historical film) with

unexpected ones (Agatha Christie's mystery novels) that functioned as a kind of subtext. Besides there was Michael Nyman's music. His music had a hybrid texture – revisiting Henry Purcell's with a minimalist rhythm – and functioned as an ironic counterpoint to the narrative eventually emerging as a subtext.

In this essay I will ponder on a specific topic that still remains for me one of this film most intense aesthetic dimension: how the frame and the space remaining outside its limits helps building a point of view. My analysis will be anchored on one chapter of Gilles Deleuze's *L'Image-Mouvement*, "Cadre et plan, cadrage et decoupage".

In *Narration in Light – Studies in Cinematic Point of View*, George M. Wilson reminds how the viewer usually interacts with film: 'In most films, the film maker presupposes a commonplace perspective that is automatically and unthinkingly available to a standard, contemporary audience. The narrational strategies that are employed are correspondingly conventional and undemanding.' (Wilson, 7) Wilson stresses the innocent complicity between the viewer and the object; a complicity anchored on a tradition of seeing. In contemporary Western societies this tradition relies mainly in the so-called Hollywood aesthetics, with its own imaginary, rhythm, genre and narrative conventions, and foreseeable dénouements. Rhythm plays a determinant role in the interaction between the viewer and the object, since it has been connected with an increasingly accelerating process of perception. This process involves two dimensions: the movement of the camera, and the 'durée', the length of time of each shot. By the end of the silent era 'about one shot in ten involved a moving camera, whereas in 1935, one shot in three involved a moving rather than a stationary camera.' (Pramaggiore and Wallis, 91)

The stationary camera implied a considerable duration of each shot. Nowadays shots become even shorter, and the stationary camera may even be dynamized by the editing process. Pramaggiore and Wallis quote film scholar Michael Brandt on this issue: 'films cut traditionally [have] an average shot length of 5.15 seconds, compared to 4.75 seconds for the electronically cut films…' These technical and also aesthetic changes imply deep changes at the perception level: 'Other studies have shown that it takes an audience anywhere from 0.5 to 3 seconds to adjust to a new shot. If it takes the audience to adjust to a cut to a shot, what

happens when the average shot length is so short that the audience is never given a chance to catch up? … Certainly, as each viewer picks and chooses the shots he or she pays attention to, there must be shots which audience members never fully absorb.' (Pramaggiore and Wallis, 166)

One of the most ordinary comments on Portuguese contemporary cinema and on its most distinguished author, Manoel de Oliveira, deals with his 'theatricality,' meaning, among other things, a certain rhythm that definitely goes against the dominant current usually connected with American movies. Peter Greenaway's *The Draughtman's Contract* also goes against the current when he chooses to rely on the stationary camera as single eye observer instead of relying on editing (at this level he also goes against Eisenstein's editing aesthetic emphasis). The stationary camera in a certain sense juxtaposes its point of view with the viewer's: the film frame 'comes closer' to painting. This aesthetic option somehow reminds the aesthetic of the silent era: '… quelle était la situation du cinema au début? D'une part la prise de vue était fixe, le plan était donc spatial et formellement immobile; d'autre part l'appareil de prise de vue était confondu avec l'appareil de projection, doué d'un temps uniforme abstrait.' (Deleuze, 12) I wrote 'somehow' since Greenaway is not technically forced to follow that strategy; instead in a rather evident post-modern pastiche he *seems* to mimic those earlier strategies. His relying on the fixed camera demands an obvious attention from the viewer: 'alors le plan cessera d'être une catégorie spatiale pour devenir temporal.' (12) Each frame welcomes signs that are memories of previous events, and signs that foreshadow coming events. Besides each frame may enhance a dialogue with visual arts such as drawing and painting. In his 1950 essay 'Painting and Cinema' André Bazin focuses on the frame in order to distinguish these arts: 'The frame of painting contains a special world that exists exclusively by itself and only for itself. Filmic space, by contrast, moves outward, centrifugally, by reaching far into the deepest and lowest recesses of daily life.' (Vache, 21) Even in its stillness each frame is a microcosm diachronically dealing with a line in time: a past and a future. Each frame implies a continuum (time) and a macrocosm (place).

The framing process may have semiotic implications beyond the aesthetic level. Deleuze's definition unveils the system underlying the frame as semiotic soil: 'On appelle *cadrage la determination d'un système clos,*

relativement clos, qui comprend tout ce qui est present dans l'image, décors, personnes, accessoires. Le cadre constitue donc un ensemble qui a un grand nombre de parties, c'est-à-dire d'éléments qui entrent eux-mêmes dans les sous-ensembles. … Évidemment, ces parties sont elles-mêmes en image. Ce qui fait dire à Jakobson que ce sont des objets-signes, et, à Pasolini, des «cinèmes».' (Deleuze, 23) How some of these notions work can be exemplified by the very beginning of *The Draughtman's Contract*.

When the initial credits show the name of one character and of the actor who plays it, the viewer may notice an apparently minor reference: 'August 1694'. The whole background is black, the name of the actor is written in white letters, and the character and the date in red letters. The color unifies these signs. Some details definitely matter. Many films have used the device of setting the action somewhere in time, quite often in the near future. *2001: A Space Odissey* or *Jonas qui aura vingt ans à l'an 2000* even turn this setting into the title of the film. When Greenaway places the action in the summer of 1694, he was summoning both a specific natural light and a specific historical background.

As he reminds in his comments inserted in the DVD version[1], the year of 1694 is connected with meaningful references that function as non-diegetic devices. The Dutch protestant aristocracy was firmly established in England. The Roman Catholic of the Stuart family had become a subtext in the main text of power (James II was put away from the throne). 'In Ireland, defeat at the Boyne in 1690 marked the final eclipse of the culture of the "Old English".' (Kearney, 170) The concern with inheritance and old values were changing: 1694 was the year of the first Married Woman's Property Act. Besides style and fashion were changing. With William of Orange a court built under French influence was replaced by a Dutch style, eventually by a German style. 1694 also was the year of the formation of the bank of England. As Greenaway says: 'The world in England had changed. Modern history begins.' (http.//greenaway.bfi.org.

[1] I shall rely on Greenaway's precious insights both on the film structure and meaning, and on his artistic-biographical profile, which are inserted in the DVD. Among these I stress the idea of 'framing-up', and the notion: 'draw what you see, not what you know.' (cf. htpp.//greenaway.bfi.org.uk)

uk) A new *ethos* was emerging. Mannerism gave way to a new aesthetic, the Baroque, with its 'mighty katharsis by spectacle, by an expressive power aesthetic.' (Sypher, 185) Baroque 'law for exuberance' supported this emerging *ethos*. *The Draughtman's Contract* characters will mirror this exuberance.

The Draughtman's Contract is thus anchored on a Historical subtext that may be perceived by a viewer who is willing to go through a veiled network of signs. It is here, in this network that different subplots of power, involving religion, culture, nation, and gender, emerge echoing in the main plot. This Historical subtext is hinted at by those small and yet meaningful words in red: 'August 1694'. Though remaining out of the frame, its relevance is determinant in the development of the narrative.

There are other ways of implying a historical subtext, namely through the depiction of certain *ordinary* signs in a rather staged composition. Later in the narrative the viewer witnesses a social ritual: two characters have tea. In its simplicity this is a rather beautiful picture: both characters sit in a virtually closed space – virtually because the space is opened up by the background window; a frame within the frame. This window also frames them thus providing a sense of theatricality inherent both to the ritual and to the situation depicted: 'il y a dans le cadre beaucoup de cadres différents. Les portes, les fenêtres, les guichets, les lucarnes, les vitres de voiture, les miroirs sont autant de cadres dans le cadre. … Et c'est par ces enboîtements de cadres que les parties de l'ensemble ou du système clos se séparent, mais aussi conspirent et se réunissent.' (Deleuze, 26).

The interaction between the obvious vertical lines (the candle, the teapot, the window, the stained-glass, the lines of the bodies) and the more subtle horizontal lines (the window, upper parts of the tea set, the line in upper left background, the lines of arms and hands, the man's wig) emphasise a decorous balance and stability. Like in Leonardo the chiaroscuro generates a feeling of depth. But the ceremony needs further reading. Lucile H. Brockway's *Science and Colonial Expansion – The Role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens* unveils the connection between this

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[2] Greenaway informs that the ceramic used in this scene was actually manufactured in Delft, Holland.

ritual and wealth/power: 'Tea [was]… unknown in the West until the early seventeenth century when the Dutch had the reexport monopoly from their Indonesian bases. The first direct tea shipment to England was in 1699, and the British East India Company thereafter had a monopoly on the English and North American tea trade, which was heavily taxed.' (Brockway, 52) Five years before the first direct tea shipment to England this social ritual implied status, wealth[2], and power. As I have previously shown by the elliptical Historical context the British aristocracy was discovering new cultural horizons. 'Décors, personages, accessoires' all build a cultural and social frame within the frame. George Wilson rightly reminds that '[a]s a film proceeds, an audience's understanding of narrative developments depends not only upon its assimilation of the information with which it is directly presented but also upon its grasp of an imposing complex of inferences that it must make, consciously or unconsciously, from the visual manifolds that it is shown.' (Wilson, 4)

At this stage one must put forward a concept of point of view that implies the unfolding of a whole semiotic system. I shall quote again from Wilson's *Narration in Light – Studies in Cinematic Point of View*: 'The concept of point of view should impose a categorization upon the domain of visual narration in actual films, a categorization that depends upon the structuring properties of the film's overall rhetorical organization, properties that determine the base from which an ideally perspicuous viewer assigns epistemic significance and value to the image track throughout its course.' (8)

Can we view this film on a strictly narrative dimension? The scene I have just briefly mentioned takes place close to the dénouement. At this stage the viewer is aware of the narrative aesthetic demands. The viewer already knows that he or she must be an active reader of each succeeding frame, of each composition, sign, micro-narrative, colour. As the tea ceremony has shown the composition functions as structural device in a formalist agenda which Greenaway anchored on a specific epoch: 'Here was formalism of another kind, using the stiffness and theatricality and artificiality of Restoration drama, using elaborated spoken texts that often, but never completely, threaten to defy comprehension because of their extended conceits and indulgent word-play, and using music that always announces its self-conscious presence as though it was a concert

piece existing on its own terms and not merely fulfilling the obligations of illustrative film-mosaic.' (htpp.//greenaway.bfi.org.uk) The word and its vocal articulation should also be conceived of as nuclear elements in the narrative. The close-up emerges as a privileged rhetorical device in order to affirm their centrality.

The first frame of a character actually is a close-up: a face emerges in the screen filling the whole space. In his essay 'The Face in Close-Up' Jacques Aumont states that: 'A face that is filmed intensively is always in close-up, … A close-up always shows a face, a physiognomy. «Close-up» and «face» are thus interchangeable, and what is at their common root is the process that produces a surface that is both sensitive and readable at the same time…' (Vacche, 134) In my view Aumont narrows this reading to the pathos consistent with artists such as Sergei Eisenstein. In *The Draughtman's Contract* the face actually functions as a social mask, thus concealing its readability. This close-up reveals a preface, an introductory story of deception and betrayal where gardens and gardening play a centre role: 'they discussed plum trees ad nausea'. Ironically the story foreshadows certain dimensions of the narrative that the viewer is about to witness. This tautological dimension will play a structural role in the film.

Another aspect must be mentioned: the social setting deleted by the close-up. In the space surrounding the frame the viewer may perceive an audience whose attention is kept by the irony of the story. As Deleuze reminds: 'Tout cadrage détermine un hors-champ. … il y a toujours hors-champ, même dans l'image la plus close.' (Deleuze 29, 31) There is a speaker who is seen by the viewer, and an audience whose presence is only felt. The viewer also becomes aware of an aesthetic built upon composition and theatricality. The artificial candlelight emphasises the idea of frame as composition. At the same time the candlelight creates an intimacy, a complicity between the speaker and the audience that is listening to his story. By the end of the narrative, there is a raccord with this close-up: the face emerges again full screen but now the mask has been fully assumed as theatrical social sign.

As I mentioned above the close-up frame implies an audience, an ensemble. In the next frame the camera depicts the ensemble: Mrs. Virginia Herbert, the lady of the house, tells a story; a story of (prosaic) tradition yet able to remind the viewer that the house belonged to her

father. Thus it subliminally implied that Mr. Herbert, her husband, 'inherited' the whole estate by marrying her. Gender, tradition, and power lightly emerge in the narrative. Greenaway consciously created 'a sense of artificiality and insularity by exaggerating the costumes, by the excessive wigs, by the great display of lace with the women going back to the Huguenot of the North of France: the more lace a woman could display the more wealth she showed.' (htpp.//greenaway.bfi.org.uk) Baroque exuberance and theatricality enhance a sense of dramatic composition where characters play their own excessive roles.

In this frame the composition is spatially divided in two identical opposite fields: women vs. men. Like in Renaissance painting both spaces geometrically concur when they outline two diagonals that lead the eye of the viewer to a vanishing point: a mirror highlighted by two candles. The mirror is a rather relevant sign since it reflects the characters, simultaneously reproducing them and closing the space on itself. In an ostentatious postmodern context of explicit and subliminal dialogues, the viewer as reader should be aware of an artistic and semiotic echo: Velasquez' *Las Meninas*. Michel Foucault prefaces *Les mots et les choses* with a famous reading of this painting. He seems to foreshadow this scene when he writes: 'Au fond de la pièce, ignoré de tous, le miroir inattendu fait luire les figures…' (Foucault, 24) There is however another reference that strikes me by the way it illuminates a relevant cultural theme of *The Draughtman's Contract*; the connection between the representation of this sign and Dutch painting: 'Dans la peinture hollandaise, il était de tradition que les miroirs jouent un role de redoublement: ils répétaient ce qui était donné une première fois dans le tableau, mais à l'intérieur d'un espace irréel, modifié, rétréci, recourbé.' (23) When the mirror emerges as nucleus and reminder of the Renaissance vanishing point, it summons a whole tradition in its cultural and aesthetic diversity. Besides we shouldn't forget the importance of French aesthetic sensibility in England in those days.

Its relevance will be asserted a few frames latter. Mrs. Virginia Herbert and Sarah Talmann, her daughter, are depicted in a rather geometrical setting, framed by two candles in the foreground. The lines of their framed hair reinforce the vertical lines drawn by the candles. In the background three candles emphasize the whole visual geometry. The mirror plays an identical function in this virtually closed space. I used the word 'virtually'

because of a subtle but relevant difference: the women's eyes open up the space when they draw a line that goes beyond the frame, 'le hors champ'. The fruit in the foreground reminds the viewer of the story told in the first frame while, at the same time, subliminally stresses the garden theme.

I mentioned that the women's eyes draw a line that goes beyond the frame. They actually are focused on a man, Mr. Neville, a reputed draughtman. The next frame shows Mrs. Herbert and Mr. Neville in a rather elaborated and stable composition (the square) whose signs summon the previous frames: a frame divided in two fields (male vs. female; black vs. white); the candles drawing the vertical lines that frame the characters; the window (subtle reminder of the mirror) also framing them; the fruit in the foreground; implicit diagonals – an inverted triangle – creating a depth of field and driving the viewer's perception into a vanishing point; the *chiaroscuro*. The whole composition evokes a pictorial agenda – a 'pédagogie de l'image' (Deleuze, 24) – visually stressed by the stationary camera. I shall return to this topic a little further.

For the time being I must focus on Greenaway's pictorial aesthetic. His aesthetic runs through the film in three main directions: as structural device, as aesthetic sympathy, and as subtext. I will focus the structural device a little further. Now I just want to point out that the aesthetic

sympathy may summon '[t]he new anti-mannerist naturalism [that] appears in the early Caravaggio, who shows, in spite of his tenebrist somber vision, a concern to get back to «reality».' (Sypher, 188) The Baroque atmosphere consistent with *The Draughtman's Contract* background is thus subliminally hinted at by Caravaggio's memory.

There is another moment when Greenaway's hospitality towards painting becomes central in the building of a composition. In this scene/frame the characters, Sarah and her German husband, Mr. Talmann, have an argument on inheritance and betrayal. The 'wide shot' summons Dutch genre painting: both the door at end of the room and the chandelier remind Vermeer, namely in *The Art of Painting*.[3] The stationary camera brings a feeling of suspension, while the single shot lasts for several minutes during which the characters move in the scenery. This 'durée' emphasizes both the inner psychological tension of the characters and the pictorial dimension. The space outside the frame is hinted at by the open door in background and by the sunlight that comes through the window on the right enlightening Mr. Talmann. Greenaway's feeling for composition is also present in the different scenes depicting meals, which he shoots in a continuous single plan/traveling without any cuts. These scenes would become the author's signature.

The third direction I have pointed out above – the pictorial as subtext – may be represented in this frame. The picture behind the characters provides a subtext of betrayal and power, the betrayal of Samson by Delilah. Latter the viewer will understand how this 'innocent' image in the background actually emerges as a powerful signifier of a radical struggle for power, a symbol of women ascending to power. The sign ominous and ghostly presence may be summoned in a more conventional visual context; for instance when fire and smoke create an atmosphere surrounding Mr. Neville's return. Later the viewer will understand how fire is a source of radical cleansing and destruction.

Why? Well, so far I have omitted any consistent reference to the main plot. Actually the reader may wander if I have been infected by any subspecies of structuralist virus. I think the moment has come for me to

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[3] Greenaway's comments inserted on the DVD version.

outline the main plot: Mrs. Herbert asks Mr. Neville, to make twelve drawings of her Jacobean house and estate while Mr. Herbert is away in Southampton. Mr. Neville is famous and busy, so he declines. However he will be persuaded when Mrs. Herbert agrees to meet some – should we say? – peculiar demands: twelve drawings will mean twelve sexual encounters. The house, sign of wealth and power, will be the centre – even if a subliminal centre – of Mr. Neville's drawings. But the house also was in those days an aesthetic centre from which a whole composition, the gardens, the estate, should emerge and be conceived of. In a treaty written a few years later, *De la composition des paysages*, René-Louis de Girardin stated: 'C'est autour de l'endroit qu'on habite qu'il faut conduire la nature à venir à habiter.' (Girardin, 24) Hence the analogy between architecture and painting, between geometry and gardening in the building of a balanced harmony: 'Tous les objets qui peuvent être aperçus du même point doivent être entièrement subordonnés au même tableau, n'être que des parties intégrantes du même tout, et concourir par leur rapport et leur convenance à l'effet et à l'accord general. … C'est donc sur l'ensemble, ou le plan general, qu'il convient de réfléchir mûrement…' (25) It is important to notice the analogy between architecture and painting. The composition should depict an ideal ensemble where every single sign 'hors champ' would be perceived or hinted at by the centre. Mr. Neville will follow this notion when he starts drawing the house. Though he possesses the knowledge and the skills that allow him to reproduce the geometry of the place, in a certain sense, Mr. Neville is a stranger and he has a certain difficulty in understanding the atmosphere that surrounds him. So he definitely gets it wrong: when everybody dresses in white, he wears black; later, when he chooses white, the others choose black.

Like Peter Greenaway when he took his first lessons in painting and drawing, Mr. Neville follows the dictum: 'Draw what you see, not what you know.' An optical device similar to the one used by painters like Canaletto supported his rigorous approach to his object. This device also provides a theoretical approach to film narrative: the point of view which plays a structural role in Greenaway's 'pédagogie de l'image.' The draughtman's point of view, his vision field, coincides both with the viewer's and with the director's. The draughtman and the director are metonymies of painting/drawing and of cinema. The analogy between

these two identities demands a readjustment of the viewer's perception. The viewer is visually influenced by the 'Hollywood dynamic', with its sometimes-schizoid rhythm. *The Draughtman's Contract* 'pédagogie de l'image', its pictorial dimension, point towards suspension. This suspension is emphasised by the stationary camera and by the 'durée' of long shots that tell the viewer to act in the movie theatre as if he or she were before a painting in a museum. Each succeeding frame functions as a picture at an exhibition enjoyed and read by the viewer/beholder while he or she builds a narrative succession: each frame/picture is a microscosm that summons the memory of previous frames/pictures, anticipates the frames/pictures to come, and inscribes itself in the main plot/gallery. I must remind André Bazin's words: 'Filmic space, …, moves outward, centrifugally.' Hence the strength of the pictorial analogy provided by the grid, both in terms of artistic creation (draughtman – director) and of artistic perception (viewer of the film as beholder of a painting). The empty space between each picture in the wall of a gallery becomes identical to the ellipsis rhetoric in the editing process. This is another empty/void space that must be summoned and filled; an intensifier of the 'hors champ' inherent to each frame.

I mentioned above that Greenaway's pictorial aesthetic runs through the film in three main directions: as structural device, as aesthetic sympathy, and as subtext. I already approached the second and the third, now I must approach the first, pictorial aesthetic as structural device. The draughtman's rigour made him capture with his grid all the changes that eventually took place in the different sceneries. Like his grid the drawing sheet is also symmetrically divided in squares. Mr. Neville's fidelity to a mimetical principle would lead him into a dangerous process of revision of his drawings: he actually inserted signs that were not present when he first drew the different sights. When he was starting his first drawing a maid opened the window and unfolded a white sheet. He stopped for a moment to think about what had just happened, and draw the new emerging reality. Mr. Neville's depiction of the gardens adorned with a row of large obelisks – artificial forms framing nature geometry – follows the same mimetic notion. In this shot Greenaway almost juxtaposes the grid with the screen, creating a frame within the frame. The viewer is reminded that his or her perception and the draughtman's coincide. Both

perceptions also coincide with the director's: 'on dira du plan qu'il agit comme une conscience. Mais la seule conscience cinématographique, ce n'est pas nous, le spectateur, ni le héros, c'est la caméra.' (Deleuze, 34) Framing deals with power, since it means capturing some signs and deleting other signs, 'le hors champ'; these deleted signs will remain as ghosts in the viewer's memory. Then Mr. Neville enters stage and saturates the frame powerfully concealing the whole scene from the viewer. He reminds the viewer that he is in charge. When he inserted himself in the narrative/picture he also became part of it; he became an actor/an extra and summoned not only Hitchcock but a whole filmic tradition.[4]

Mr. Neville also exercises an obvious power over the landscape. He even criticizes the way man dealt with nature's inner geometry: 'the angles between the branches are not correct.' According to his instructions all the spaces that he is drawing must be kept clear of servants and household. Nevertheless he concedes that 'animals are allowed to stay.' Mr. Talmann asserted that Mr. Neville had the power of emptying nature. His wife, Sarah, sharply replied that 'for Mr. Neville nature is strictly material'. There is however some irony moving beyond his despotism. The innocent eye of the child who mimics him somehow represents this irony. Like Mr. Neville he tries to draw what he sees. The child may be innocent when he is trying to reproduce reality. But Mr. Neville, who is an adult, cannot be innocent. He is blinded by his hubris. And hubris leads to deception. The child also introduces another sub-text: the subliminal tension between Catholics and Protestants. Because of his father's death Mr. Talmann took him under his protection. 'He was an orphan', Sarah says. 'An orphan?' Angrily replied Mr. Neville. 'Because is mother is a Catholic?!' This episode concurs with the sub-text of religion and power that will underline Mr. Neville's status as Other among 'la morne figure du Même' (Foucault), the Protestant dominant ethos.

The first moment of deception is depicted in this scene. Mr. Neville had drawn the sheets drying in the sun. In the following day when he returns determined to complete his drawing, he realizes that a coat had been inserted between those sheets. After some inquiries and some

[4] I owe this reading to Professor Mário Jorge Torres.

suspicion concerning who put it there and who the owner is, he decides to insert it in his drawing. The same thing will happen later. He starts a drawing with a tree that somehow frames the house. When he returns to this drawing, he looks through the grid – his point of view is also the viewer's – and realizes that a shirt is hanging on the branches. He stands up and walks towards the tree with the purpose of removing the shirt. At this stage the grid frames him. The viewer's point of view replaces his. Then he looks at the grid – like the painter in *Las Meninas* his eyes touch the viewer's – and decides to insert the shirt in his drawing. Sharply Mrs. Talmann notices: 'The shirt is very strong in your picture.' The prosaic Mr. Neville replies: 'Madam, I try very hard not to destroy or disguise.'

Without being aware of it, he is now framed-up. The next situation happens with another drawing of the house. When he returns to complete it, he looks through the grid and notices that a ladder had been placed there. This ladder actually leads to Mr. Herbert's office. Although he suspects that something strange is happening, since 'he draws what he sees, not what he knows,' he decides to insert the ladder in his drawing. Deleuze writes that: 'Le cadre est inséparable de deux tendances: à la saturation ou à la raréfaction. … des images raréfiées se produisent, … lorsque tout accent est mis sur un objet.' (23-4) When Mr. Neville fills the frame he is saturating it. When the viewer is directed to the ladder he or she is involved in a process of rarefaction. Both processes have implications beyond an aesthetic level. As Deleuze also reminds: 'des deux côtés, raréfaction ou saturation, le cadre nous apprend ainsi que l'image ne se donne pas seulement à voir. Elle est lisible autant que visible. Le cadre a cette fonction implicite, enregistrer des informations non seulement sonores mais visuelles.' (24) I wrote above that the frame must be read as a microcosm that deals with a macrocosm, with a space that remain concealed, forgotten, outside the frame, 'le hors champ.' Like Agatha Christie's mystery novels, the film becomes a 'mystery narrative.' The coat, the shirt, and the ladder are 'crucial objet-signes' or 'cinèmes' in this mystery.

When Mr. Neville returns in order to finish a panoramic view of the house, he notices that a pair of boots had been left close to his seat. He turns to Mr. Talmann and says: 'You forgot your boots, Mr. Talmann.' Mr. Talmann replies: 'They are not mine. I thought they were yours, Mr. Neville.' The riding boots had been ominously mentioned before when

Mrs. Herbert asked her servant: 'Did my husband take the riding boots?' Also rather ominously she further asked: 'Do you know which road he will take back?' At this stage the viewer already is aware of several signs pointing to some mystery. And so does Mr. Neville. Since he draws what he sees, not what he knows or thinks he knows, these signs became a kind of puzzle that he had depicted in his drawings. He recorded proofs and created a subliminal plot that actually leads to a murder. Like the most perceptive characters the viewer must face the revision process of the drawings as a narrative that is in the process of being built and fulfilled.

This is the turning point of the narrative: Mr. Neville's method, his devotion to rigor and to the mimetic principle framed him-up. Mr. Neville previously tried to interpret the events depicted in a painting of a garden inside the house. His attempt was ironic since the painting mirrored what was happening to him. He asked: 'Do you see any narrative in these unrelated episodes? … What intrigue is here? … What infidelities are here portrayed? Do you think that murder is being prepared?' The next scene reveals Mr. Herbert's horse coming back home alone. 'Painting requires a certain blindness. A partial refusal of certain options. … An intelligent man knows more of what he's drawing than what he sees.'

As this frame shows, his point of view doesn't coincide with the viewer's. He is no longer in control. Standing, Mrs. Sarah Talmann is now in charge. Sitting, in submission, Mr. Neville will accept the terms of a new contract; a contract under her terms. So far her marriage has produced no heir, and Mr. Talmann impotency has been previously suggested. The new contract will imply that Mr. Neville should meet Mrs. Talmann demands. Without being aware of it he will help her to produce the heir that will allow them to keep the estate in their hands. When Mr. Neville keeps on recording the gardens he is also forced by his own method to insert the signs of another betrayal, Sarah's.

So far the main scenes of deception have taken place in the gardens. The reader may remind that the first close-up was connected with a story of gardens and gardeners. Another relevant subplot is implied in this theme, the one that opposes Mr. Neville to Mr. Talmann: Catholics vs. Protestants. Mr. Talmann didn't like carps because they lived too long. So they reminded him of Catholics. On the other hand Mr. Neville told Mr. Talmann that God had planned the Garden of Eden for Ireland. Later

the Catholic agenda will be definitely deleted when the Dutch puritan Mr. Van Hoyton will be hired in order 'to soften the geometry in the garden.' Mr. Van Hoyton who worked in the Hague (the same place Mr. Neville was supposed to be appointed to), talks in Dutch with Sarah. Since his words are not translated the viewer will share Mr. Neville's status as outsider. Despite the fact of being 'at home', he actually becomes what he always had been: a stranger, the Other. The landscape – the garden – is thus a text subjected to cultural changes, to different inscriptions, and readings according to the main representations of power. Consequently, its parts, its signs – fruits, for instance – also play a textual role in the changes of the narrative. Eventually the garden is a reminder of the Original Garden, the Garden of Eden: its geometry should remind Its primeval Presence.

In the beginning of the narrative the child's perceptress told him (in German) the story of Persephone. Following a tautological structure this episode anticipated another one close to the end of the narrative. When Mr. Neville returned to the estate after having met his contract demands he had another sexual encounter with Mrs. Herbert. They were lying on the bed – actually on a Persian carpet (these carpets came from the Middle East and were very expensive; the Dutch considered them far too expensive to put them on the floor so put them on beds, and hang them on walls; with William of Orange these Dutch habits were imitated by the British aristocracy) – and Mrs. Herbert told Mr. Neville about the Persephone's myth and reminds him of the fruit associated with it, the pomegranate. Looking to the left lower foreground the viewer notices three pomegranates on the floor. When she finished her story, he questioned with a clumsy irony: 'A cautionary tale for gardeners, Madam?' And she wisely replied: 'No. A cautionary tale for mothers with daughters, Mr. Neville.' The pomegranate is a symbol that functions in the main plot as 'objet-signe' or 'cinème'. The reader must bear in mind that at this stage women are in total command even when their power is subliminally exercised. The women had learned a lesson from Persephone's cautionary tale and they acted accordingly in a functional and rather pragmatically way. They knew that one could be fooled by illusions, even the attentive eye of the painter could be deceived by colour: the pomegranate juice looked like blood. Mrs. Herbert showed him this illusion

while her daughter Sarah entered the room and stood behind them. Because they have learned from Persephone's myth both women are associate in this plot for survival; a plot that may provide them an heir that will assure the ownership of the estate. Then the women left the frame and placed themselves somewhere 'hors-champ'. Though absent they remained a real presence. Mr. Neville looked puzzled since only then he started to realize that he had been an instrument of their designs. Significantly… and symbolically he is on his knees looking to the space outside the frame, first to the left, then to the right, then to the left again and so on. In this space 'hors-champ' the viewer senses powerful presences, the presences of both women who now control the whole situation. Then in the next shot, the stationary camera is placed behind Mr. Neville. The viewer sees the two women in a rather geometrically balanced setting, aesthetically framed by the plants. Sarah dressed in black, and Mrs. Herbert, in white, are not two fields of a dichotomy, but two parts of a whole.

Mr. Neville had fulfilled their wishes, but he also had been a victim of his own method: his drawings were filled with compromising signs. A perceptive reader could recognise in those twelve drawings two narratives: a narrative of a murder, and a narrative of sexual betrayal. Mr. Neville and his drawings were too dangerous so only one solution remained: the death of the author, and the burning of the evidences.

Despite the Historical setting and background it has become clear that this plot echoes Agatha Christie's murder mysteries. Actually like in *Murder in the Orient Express* all the family is responsible for the murder. The perceptive viewer has gathered information from successive signs: textual signs, objects, colours, settings, dialogues with other arts. The stationary camera and the prolonged shots allowed the viewer to ponder on their presence, and on the relation that they established with the powerful absence of the signs outside the frame. With this dialogue between drawing and filming *The Draughtman's Contract* puts forth a brilliant 'pédagogie de l'image'. The perceptive viewer will be enriched by its powerful aesthetic emotions.

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Gwen Harwood: An Introductory Approach

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Gwen Harwood: An Introductory Approach

Gwen Harwood (1920-1995) is still relatively unknown outside her country. In Australia, however, since the 21st century her writing has found its place in the curricula of literature in the advanced degrees of secondary courses as well as in the universities. Her case in Australian 20th century poetry is unique as a poet with her own voice, with an array of multiple forms and themes and complex dialogues with the cultural past and present. This makes her writing, with all its heterodoxy, didactic (even when it feigns that is not) and a paradigm for the study of poetry and general poetics in Australia today. As an adult, she lived in the town of Hobart on the southern part of the island of Tasmania, raising a family of four children and working as a secretary. Even so, she succeeded in writing verse, almost ceaselessly, until her death in 1995. Most of what we know about her life, ideas and views on poetry (apart from the poems about the art of poetry) comes from the voluminous correspondence with friends and Australian intellectuals,[1] to whom she dedicates many poems. The grand thematic scope of her poetry ranges from the trivial to the reflexive, from literature, culture and History to family, the cats, dogs and frogs in the neighbourhood. Dreams and nightmares, eroticism, social satires, the Australian natural landscape, art, particularly, music, philosophy and religion also have an outstanding presence in her poetry. She is at ease with the lyric, narrative and dramatic modes, and her poetry includes a few recognizable characters and *personae*.

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[1] Gwen Harwood. *A Steady Storm of Correspondence: Selected Letters of Gwen Harwood 1943-1995*, edited by Gregory Kratzmann. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2001. In fact, as the work of her excellent editors, Alison Hoddinott and Gregory Kratzmann, show, many of her letters are invaluable to the exegesis of her work.

Gwen Harwood was born in middle-class suburban Brisbane in 1920, within an English-Australian family and raised in that city, where she received formal training in piano and organ. Her father was an English musician, who played the violin and the piano. Her mother was born in Australia and noted to her interest in religious matters (Anglicanism) and social activities. As an adolescent, some of Harwood's performances at the Brisbane's Anglican cathedral were memorable, and her relationship with music, like that with verse, lasted throughout her life. Music (in particular Austrian and German) is a major theme in all her poetry, being at the core, root and "flowering" of each of her poems, as in the one which borrows accidentally its title from Schubert's *Lied* "An die Musik", and which is full of references to composers, musical styles and phenomena. Contrary to what is more usual in Gwen Harwood, the rhythm of this poem is anaphoric (as in the *Psalms* and in Whitman) and unrhymed: "You of the Minute Waltz and the Four Seasons,/ you of the earthen flute and grand piano, you with your immortal number:/ the Nine, the Thirty-Two, the Forty-eight;/ you of the infant trying out the pitch, of its few syllables, you of the birds/of the first cuckoo in spring, the lark ascending/to carve its empire in a thousand notes; […]".[2] Music can have, in her world, a social defining function as in "A Gypsy Tune",[3] a poem reminding us of Francis Geyer and the Hungarian-Australians. In short, music is in the end a transcendental but always present religion: "*If God exists/ then music is his love for me.*"[4] for: "Music, my joy, my full-scale God".[5] This functional presence of music as theme, motif and form was to gain a final expression, from the 60s onwards, when Gwen Harwood worked as a librettist to Australian composers of her generation, such as Larry Sitsky, James Penberthy, Don Kay and Ian Cugley. This set of librettos include,

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[2] Gwen Harwood. *Collected Poems, 1943-1995*, edited by Alison Hoddinott and Gregory Kratzmann. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2001, "To Music", p. 567.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 427.

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 291.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 354.

for example, an adaptation written in 1965 of Edgar Allen Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" to the homonymous work of Larry Sitsky, and the text for the opera *The Golden Crane* by Don Kay in 1985.[6]

When she was 25, her marriage to the linguist Bill Harwood took her to Hobart,[7] to experience a life radically opposed to that she had known in Brisbane until then, as her verse remind us, in its typical autobiographical-confessional mode: "Nineteen forty-five. I have been sick/ all the way from Brisbane; first time in the air./ Another name now. All those burning glances/ cancelled, all those raging letters burned./ And my mocking friends – 'Holy MaTRIMony!'/ 'You've had your wings trimmed. You'll be Mother Goose. […]."[8] A familiar character in her verse, the professor of music Kröte, would say "later", presumably about her: "How could this brilliant girl become/ this shabby housewife? […]."[9] At first Tasmania, itself an Australian periphery, was for Gwen Harwood a place of "exile and knowledge",[10] a remote part of her country and "civilization", although it was also there that she wrote the bulk of her verse. Brisbane would remain the native land, the place of original memory, of her first joys and sorrows: "In the old bridge in flaring sunlight/a ghost is waiting, with my face/ of twenty years ago, to show me/ the paths I never can retrace// Here as of old upon the river/ float light's beguiling images./ Over a quilt of blue branches/ bend with domestic tenderness.// Here, to my blood's exalted rhythm,/ silly with love I'd pace the hours/sifting the piecemeal revelations/ of life and time through falling flowers. […]".[11] The sometimes over romanticized Brisbane gave place to Hobart in the poet's life, as she was "Changed from sex kitten into wife/ [and] learned the serious facts of life."[12]

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[6] This part of her work is excluded from the present study.

[7] She was born Gewndoline Foster, but took her husband's surname, Harwood, as pen name.

[8] Gwen Harwood, p. 407.

[9] *Ibidem*, p. 355.

[10] *Ibidem*.

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 169.

[12] *Ibidem*, p. 556.

With time, Tasmania lost its initial hostility, as Gwen Harwood came to understand it better in its natural beauty and Aboriginal heritage. In fact, Tasmania has a complex meaning in her work[13] which cannot be reduced into a simple love-hate relationship.[14] I will divide it roughly into four phases: initial estrangement; contact; understanding; and fusion. The first one is defined by the tension created between the urban, civilized and "westernized" Brisbane of the past and wild Tasmania of the present. Through nature, Gwen Harwood had her first positive *contact* with Tasmania, a process later evolved into a wider *understanding* of that island, as shown in the recurrent poems written about the place of Oyster Cove,[15] where historically the last Tasmanian Aboriginal tribes died, a fact never mentioned in her writing in a straightforward way (*fusion*). After her *initial estrangement*, she was able to capture the natural beauty of Tasmania and, through it, overcome the isolation she felt. In the following example, a wild autumnal landscape becomes the backdrop for the pains of loss she had when she got married: "Suns through a lofty bleakness fall./ Horizon, earth and sky remain./Above the acing wilderness/ a warmth is kindled, glows with air./ Birds of prey with fiery quills/ scissor the fabric of the light./ Time drips to stone. A child knocks over/ a dusty god stuck in a case./ Doomed to repeat their honeycomb/ bees in an empty mask./ Unbearable, a voice intones:/ *Suffer and love, burn, shine and sing*."[16]

As an Australian woman and poet, Gwen Harwood, like Australia herself, underwent significant transformations from 1943 to 1995. She envisaged early that Australian verse was, at this stage, to continue, at least

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[13] *See* as an example the poem starting with "No word can snatch or hold" (*Ibidem*, p. 106).

[14] I do not agree with Peter Porter when he wrote, on his review of Gwen Harwood's *Collected Poems*, *op. cit.*, that she had always hated living in Tasmania, longing for native Brisbane the whole time. See Peter Porter, "Satires in C major". *Times Literary Supplement*, 07/05/2003.

[15] As in "Oyster Cove", "Evening, Oyster Cove", "Oyster Cove Pastorals" or, "Springtime, Oyster Cove" (*Ibidem*, pp. 237, 302, 306-307, 360). These poems remind vaguely and offer an analogy to the impressionist technique of catching in canvas the different light and colours of a place during the phases of the day and of the year.

[16] *Ibidem*, p. 107.

formally, the "mother" English tradition. While confronting herself with only a few relevant examples in the Australian Anglo-Saxon tradition,[17] from which she could draw continuity and identity, she turned to the English tradition as her main source of tools, and, to a lesser extent, to thematic inspiration. Although the first verse dates back to the early 40s, her first book, *Poems*, was published in 1963. Her affinity with Australian poets of her age, such as the expatriate Peter Porter (b.1929), is more superficial than real, while the main poetic influence on her comes from another significant Australian poet almost unknown in the northern hemisphere, A. D. Hope (1907-2000). Gwen Harwood was even able to easily impersonate Hope's style, with fondness.[18] Like her, Hope was a cultivator of traditional forms. This may explain, in part, why the radical Australian surrealist group, the influence of the *Angry Penguins*, who shook the Australian literary milieu of the 40s, are not seen in young Gwen. Besides A. D. Hope's example, Gwen Harwood's young formal conservatism is akin, *grosso modo*, to that of the English poets of the *Movement* and to that of the American *New Critic* and *Confessionalist* poets of the 50s. Like early Donald Davie, Thom Gunn or Philip Larkin in England, Gwen Harwood was cautious about the "open" modernist modes. However, she often turns what is traditional (an Elizabethan or Romantic formal basis, motto or element) into the unmistakeably original contemporary poem. Such poetic hybridisations as "A Valediction",[19] a modern variation on the famous poem by John Donne, and her Two Meditations on Wyatt[20] are exemplary of this type of work. Occasionally, however, as her poetry progressed she allowed a certain formal modernist

[17] The Australian Aboriginal oral tradition, until recently almost neglected, has in fact a much longer tradition, and the identity cohesion – crucial for the emergence of a poetic-literary canon – that the poetic Australian Anglo-Saxon tradition still has not.

[18] "A Divination". Besides this poem, Gwen Harwood dedicated at least two more poems to Hope in which she recognizes her debt to him, in particular in the first: "To A. D. Hope" and "Shrödinger's Cat Preaches to the Mice" (*Ibidem*, pp. 192, 195-197, 392-393)

[19] *Ibidem*, pp. 335-336.

[20] *Ibidem*, pp. 270-271.

openness into it. As she wrote: "We poets are as diverse as birds, varied in sound and feather […]",[21] while insisting on the classic-modernist rule, according to which "the physical material of poetry was *sound*."[22] Moments like these form part of the ironic and meta-poetic dimensions in her verse. The poetic colloquial style of Gwen Harwood, however, makes many references to the modernist culture – and here starts the hybridisation –, towards various expressive purposes, as in this reminiscence of former old times in Brisbane: "[…] O the heady taste! –/ Joyce, Eliot, Proust, the mighty Russians,/ Berg, Bartok, Schoenberg, Beckmann, Klee/ the wind has blown so much away,/ but never those late-night discussions/ on literature and life and art/ with lively friends close to my heart.".[23] This hybridism extends to the expressionist voice and satiric barbs heard in many of her lines,[24] as in those where the Brisbane of past childhood is remembered with all its cruelty. The childhood memories form a set of texts which are the central part of her 1989s book *Bone Scan* where poems with titles like "Class of 1927"[25] redirect us to the personal past of

[21] *Ibidem*, p. 563.

[22] *Ibidem*.

[23] *Ibidem*, 454. Joan Miró, Jean Cocteau, Wallace Stevens, Stravinsky are among the many other modernists mentioned in her verse.

[24] A good example of this expressionist trend is "Out of Hell". Written in 1991, is one of her most painful and nightmarish poems, that seems to explore the ambiguous impact made on her by the paintings of the American abstract painter Jackson Pollock, when she saw them for the first time at an exhibition in Brisbane in 1974 ("Notes", *Ibidem*, p. 602). Pollock's painting "Lucifer" (1947) plays an important role in that poem, which is in fact a lobotomy nightmare written in "free verse", which brings to mind Wittgenstein ("Mental events are physical events)" in his guise of Lucifer after the fall: "One morning when my brain was open/ I heard the neurosurgeon say/ "Mental events are physical events."/ They showed me Pollock's *Lucifer*./ I felt it as a linear headache./ Skeins of enamel clogged my frontal sinus.// the aluminium paint thrilled my back fillings./ "Nothing", the surgeon said. The students/ dutifully echoed, "Nothing."/ The pretty nurse said, "Not a trace."// They closed my head up. Now I don't/ speak, but fly at dawn and dusk/with webbing in my arms and high-/frequency shrieks. The surgeon says/ "Cognitive dissonance", and asks me: "What is it like to be a bat?" (*Ibidem*, 478).

[25] *Ibidem*, pp. 365-367.

the poet, to present us with the little cruel bullies she knew as a child, as well as other peculiar children.

This modernist presence is crystallised in a poetic-philosophic dialogue with the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, a true obsessive lifelong intellectual companion of Gwen Harwood. Only the name of the Viennese (and somewhat Anglicised) Wittgenstein is more frequent than the names of musicians, in her work. In fact, Wittgenstein embodies for her everything that is universal and true, beautiful, uncanny and contradictory, metaphysical and physical: "Wittgenstein was handsome/ as Lucifer before the fall.[26] Born in Vienna (a much beloved city to her), and having a concert-pianist as brother, Wittgenstein's symbolic presence is also strongly musical, as when she remarks that: "(Wittgenstein had learned/ to play the clarinet;/ could whistle, too, in perfect pitch, / one part from a quartet)".[27] In fact, Gwen Hardwood engaged almost all her poetic career in a sort of "game-dialogue" with Wittgenstein. She incorporated in one of her last poems on the Austrian philosopher what, perhaps, she wanted to "hear" from him as a reader of poetry: "[…] "a poem can pierce us"/ he wrote. Also, "A poem is not/ used in the language game of giving information"".[28] Logically, she was able to make a poetic synthesis, an encapsulated reading, of Ludwig Wittgenstein's thoughts and their evolution, spoken by an impersonation:

> Show me the order of the world,
> the hard-edge of this-is-so
> prior to all experience
> and common to both world and thought,
> no model, but the truth itself.
>
> Language is not a perfect game,
> and if it were, how could we play?
> the world's more than the sum of things
> like moon, sky, centre, body, bed
> as all the singing masters know.

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[26] *Ibidem*, p. 483.

[27] *Ibidem*, p. 313.

[28] *Ibidem*, p. 483.

> Picture two lovers side by side/
> who sleep and dream and wake and hold/
> the real and the imagined world/
> body by body, word by word/
> in the wild halo of their thought.[29]

Unexpectedly, the poem ends with a quasi-reminiscence of a surreal love scene, as depicted in Magritte's small series of paintings, of 1927-28, in which the identities of the lovers (of a man and of a woman) are mysteriously shrouded, in white cloth.[30] She was acquainted with the *Tractatus Philosophicus*, from which she often quoted, and was familiar with the "game theory", as developed later in *Philosophical Investigations*, as with the rest of Wittgenstein's thought and life. Sometimes this fundamental influence is turned into a personal (love/hate) dialogue with Ludwig "Wittgenstein, austere and lonely",[31] interweaved with the English poetic tradition, as at the beginning of the poem starting with a line from the famous sonnet of Auden on old Yeats: "We all know that Yeats was silly/ like us, but Wittgenstein was sillier/ and really like not us at all. He said himself he wrote for men/ who'd breathe, one day, a different air./ In the case, they'd need different lungs./ Never rely on metaphor."[32] One is tempted to ask, how could she admire this clever man (that she never met personally), who, sometimes, is depicted cold in his feelings to the point of hating mankind. In short, not only does Gwen Harwood make of Wittgenstein a poet, he is also a major factor in making her a poet-philosopher.

As a woman and a creator of her own era, in her relative Tasmanian isolation, she was attentive both to the "little" life surrounding her and to

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[29] *Ibidem*, "Thought Is Surrounded by a Halo – *Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 97*", *Ibidem*, p. 274.

[30] Incidentally, one of these paintings (oil on canvas), *Les Amants* (1928) was bought by the National Gallery of Australia in 1990, but it is improbable that Gwen Harwood had seen it by the time she wrote this poem on Wittgenstein. See also Miriam Stone's poem "The Blind Lovers" (*Ibidem*, p. 163).

[31] *Ibidem*, p. 474.

[32] *Ibidem*, p. 483.

the changes in the world during her lifetime, which roughly overlapped with the Cold War era. For this reason, she was occasionally a poetic chronicler of her times, as in the sonnet on Yuri Gagarin's first trip ever into outer space, made in 1961. Gagarin is here a god-like entity who acknowledges himself in his first orbit of the earth "reduced" to the condition of the first poet: "Yuri Gagarin, first of men since time/ began, hurled into empty space, flies spaceward, and lives.[…]" He has "[…] a god's eye view/ of mankind […]/ but knows no more than any poet knew// since time began; since the first poet dreamed/ that calm in dizzying solitude above […]" Gagarin's huge accomplishment ends being of a lesser personal degree of importance than his first discovery of love for – as stated in the Eliotesque/ Augustinian end of the poem – "it seemed/ less than the vision when he kissed his love/ and lay with the world's fever, burning, burning."[33]

Until the 70's, she was sometimes "heteronymic", an episodic tendency in contemporary English poetry and, even more, in Australian poetry.[34] Yet, the modern origin of the use of masks in English goes back to the former traditions of Shakespeare and, in particular, of Robert Browning's dramatic monologues which had continuity with the poetic masks made by the early Anglo-American modernists,[35] and by Fernando Pessoa in Portugal. Yet, she never lost her typical colloquial bend in those specific poems. This universe peopled with characters, masks and pseudonyms denotes in Gwen Harwood the still modest place of women in

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[33] *Ibidem*, p. 95.

[34] It is not clear when and how Gwen Harwood discovered the technique of "heteronomy". I am not sure she ever came to know the heteronyms that the modernist Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa invented. Certainly not when she began experimenting with this technique. A poet associated with the *Movement*, John Wain, only discovered Pessoa in the late 70s, as his 1980 poem "Thinking about Mr. Person" seems to suggest. Wittgenstein's game theory may offer, as well, a conceptual framework for this phenomenon. The same is applied to Michael Hamburguer's book, *The Truth of Poetry*, which presented Pessoa's heteronomic theory and practice to a wider Anglophone academic public, which knew the first edition in 1968.

[35] Her knowledge of Wittgenstein's game theory may offer, as well, a conceptual framework for this particular poetic technique made by Gwen Harwood.

the Australian poetic-literary *milieu* in mid 20th century, although it goes beyond, by amplifying the illusion of greater poetic activity in Australia. These "heteronyms" occupy a significant part of Gwen Harwood's work of the early 60s. Walter Lehmann, Francis Geyer, Miriam Stone and Timothy Kline are among those lyrical masks. Sketchy as some are, each one has a precise social ideological and cultural function. Francis Geyer, for example, is the young Hungarian refugee, representative of the former Hungarian immigrants in Australia of the 50s. In 1961, "he describes himself" in the following way: "I am a musician, particularly interested in Bartok and who have spoken English fluently from about the age of seven."[36] A musician, Geyer is also the creator of the character Professor Kröte – another fictional musician with a wider role in Harwood's universe than Geyer.[37] We may even notice that among these *personae*, the Tasmanian farmer Walter Lehmann is a virtuoso sonneter. By the end of the 60s the "heteronym" Timothy Kline was created, a young Vietnam protester, wild and provocative, who was born in Hobart, in 1946,[38] and who wrote poetry between 1968 and 1975 (in fact, Kline seems almost like a son of Gwen Harwood). By the end of the 70s this technique, however, disappeared from Gwen Harwood's writing, as if dissolved in the texture of the remaining 20 years of her poetic work.

Created in 1961, Miriam Stone was her only feminine mask. She stood for the frustrated woman with a housewife's routine, who started writing "confessional" poetry, with her hints (Miriam's) on the sacrifices of relocation and acceptance of the traditional family duties. Miriam Stone's style was in fact very close to Gwen Harwood's and her themes, which match those of the isolated woman. Gwen Harwood wrote moving lines about her mother – as in the poem starting with "Mother who gave me life/ I think of women bearing/ women. Forgive me the wisdom/

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[36] "Notes", *Ibidem*, p. 583.

[37] Kröte ("the ugly musician", *Ibidem*, p. 583), means *toad* in German, and young Gwen Harwood looked at him as if he, one day, could turn, perhaps, himself into "Prince Charming". See also about this subject the poem of Timothy Kline, "Prince Frog" (*Ibidem*, p. 218).

[38] "Notes", *Ibidem*, p. 588.

I would not learn from you. […]".[39] This is a touching confession of the divergent ways two women, mother and daughter, took in their lives and the self-sacrifices involved in them. She also wrote several poems about the Biblical Eve,[40] an archetypical persona adapted to the contemporary world, and one of her more powerful masks. This "modern Eve" is particularly evident in Gwen Harwood's last phase, where the struggles between man and woman are counter-balanced with intelligence, humour and irony, as in this rap-like song of 1992: "Look how I tamed/ the unicorn/ who laid in my lap/ his fearful horn/ and now adores me/ says he's my slave/ and buys me a Porsche/ and a microwave/ and a washing machine/ and a fan-forced oven/and all the symphonies/ of Beethoven/ on compact disc/ and a great TV/ and queensized waterbed/ just for me." [41]

The "heteronimic" phenomenon in Gwen Harwood seems strictly associated with her confrontation with the cultural reality of Europe. Sometimes she is concerned with exploring the limits of national identity, when she imagines a cosmopolitan alternative country with its centre in Europe, more precisely, and in the Austrian capital, Vienna, the ideal and idealized place, enhanced by Harwood's knowledge of German poetry and music, of Wittgenstein's philosophy and life, and characters such as the professors of music Eisenbart and Kröte. This invented alternative geographical world, the "perfect" Austria, cannot, therefore, be estranged from the Australian/Tasmanian reality she lived in. It is as if the cultural sophistication of little Austria knocked down the meagre cultural landscape of big Austr(al)ia. "Austria" becomes, in this context, an ideal of what Australia should be. In her work, 19th century and early 20th century Austria (and to a lesser extent Germany) – with their intellectuals (Wittgenstein hovering above them all) and musicians at the centre of civilization in the northern Old World (Europe) – is contrasted with the white barbarism she still felt and saw in Australia. For this reason, the

[39] *Ibidem*, p. 361.

[40] See "The Farewell", "Songs of Eve I" and "Songs of Eve II", among others (*Ibidem*, pp. 143, 428, 489).

[41] *Ibidem*, p. 490.

poetic self of Gwen Harwood is often located within this "Austro" dialectics between the old, now smaller civilized and central-eastern European country (*Austria/ Österreich*) and the new southern and far-eastern continental country where she lived most of her life. In these ideal moments, western civilization comes to full size in a sort of imaginary "eastern empire" (literally *Österreich*), embracing western civilization in a far-eastern land, Australia, where South is at the heart of its name with Far-East, as well as South, as its main cardinal points. The East is then the West in Austria, while the West becomes the East in Australia. This compass rose cultural paradox, however, is not without flaws, although the powerful fixation in Viennese Austria and the German-speaking world was to last in her work. Symptomatically, Britain, as mother-country, has a discrete presence in her recreation of European civilization and geography. With this "alternative world", she is perhaps again betraying the limits of her unconscious wish for an Australian cultural coming of age.[42]

Eroticism has significant part in her writing as well. "David's Harp"[43] has organ playing as a setting. Here, a seventeen-year-old organ player (in Brisbane) falls in love with a stranger, more imaginary than real, thirteen years older than her, in a situation that seems more like a *reverie* than a distant memory. The past excitement and ignorance are gradually substituted by knowledge and coolness: "Saturday morning. I rehearse/ the Sunday hymns, fortissimo,/ in the cool twilight of the church,/ adding new stops at every verse. […] The undying flow/ of music bears him close again,/ handsome and young, while I am tired/ in time's harsh fires. Dear Man, I know/ your worth, being now less ignorant of / the Nature and

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[42] A rare (although also seeming) exception to this imaginary Germanic landscape where part of Gwen Harwood's poetry evolves is the poem "In Highgate Cemetery" (*Ibidem*, 346). This well-known cemetery is located in London and is famous for being the burial place of the social philosopher Karl Marx, which incidentally has a big headstone with the shape of a grand piano. So even in this ironic London poem, German culture, society and music insist on making themselves prevail, even at the traditional centre of the Anglophone culture. Wittgenstein offers as well an important exception for he not only studied in Cambridge under Bertrand Russell and was his associate, but because he ended his days there in 1951.

[43] *Ibidem*, p. 261-262.

the names of love".[44] In the sonnet "The Lion's Bride" (which gives the title to her 1981's book) the visionary eroticism is harsher, nightmarish and perverse, gothic and expressionist, with the convergence of several of Gwen Harwood's motives. Based on a legend of a lion in the zoo of Vienna who became infatuated with the keeper's daughter and killed her when the beast found out she already had a love of her own. This disturbing story of jealousy was first put into verse by the German romantic poet Adalbert von Chamisso, in 1826 which, in turn, provided the lyrics to Schumann's weird homonymous *lieder*. In the second stanza of Gwen Harwood's version of this odd romantic tale, the impersonated lion confesses his disturbance, after the slaughter of his beloved, by deliriously inviting her ghost to join him in the bloody feast, without realizing that she was dead by then: "[…] an icy spectre sheathed/ in silk minced to my side on pointed feet./ I ripped the scented veil from its unreal/ head[45] and engorged the painted lips that/ breathed our secret names. A ghost has bones, and meat!/ Come soon my love, my bride, and share/ this meal."[46] An allegory for the tensions and difficulties underlying "marriage" as an institution in Australian and European culture, the poem tragically stresses (even if with some regret) the ultimate victory of brutal nature over culture.[47]

In the last years of her life, in the 90s, when her themes became more philosophical, the value of Gwen Harwood's writing was, finally, acknowledged, as her verse had been since then studied in academic and

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[44] *Ibidem*.

[45] The image of the lover with his head covered reappears, as in "Thought Is Surrounded by a Halo" (*Ibidem*, p. 274) discussed above.

[46] *Ibidem*, p. 281.

[47] Yet, Gwen Harwood made also a lighter and comic reference to this tale, full of dark humour. In fact, Schumann's "The Lion's Bride" is mentioned in another poem of the volume in friendly familiar context: "Jim's wineglass set on my piano, as he sight reads through a book of lieder./ He tries "The Lion's Bride", by Schumann./ At the moment when the love crazed lion/ begins to crunch the keeper's daughter, the translator/ makes the youth calling for a weapon,/ ineptly cry, "Give me an arm"/Jim roars and chokes and waves his wine glass,/leonine, overwhelmed by laughter (*Ibidem*, p. 318).

educational circles, for her thematic density and prosodic virtuosity, and the ease she explored the Horatian balance between pleasure and knowledge. Gwen Harwood's realism, naturalism, knowledge and formal virtuosity remain her hallmarks, while the seeming popularity she enjoys in Australia remains somewhat of a mystery and debatable from the outside. Her cultivation of traditional English forms, which makes her oeuvre didactic, but the achievement of Gwen Harwood goes beyond that, for she is now a clear reference in the emerging canon of Australian poetry. At the beginning of the 21st century, her verse is at the centre of what has been Australian culture and poetry in English over the past 50 years. More than that, Gwen Harwood remains an intellectual challenge, and an invitation to those who wish to understand a poetic hermeneutic system where music, aural and *ekphrastic* aesthetic effects, the incursions into philosophical enquiries and ironic hedonism make the central themes and techniques.

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Painting what is not there: Vision and narrative in Mavis Gallant's story "The Doctor"

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Painting what is not there: Vision and narrative in Mavis Gallant's story "The Doctor"

> "Literature is no more and nothing less than a matter of life and death."
> Mavis Gallant

> "Memory is something that cannot be subsidized or ordained. It can, however, be destroyed; and it is inseparable from language."
> Mavis Gallant

The interpretation of boundary as a mobile term freed from the inexorable grip of binary oppositions is one of the tenets of post-structural criticism. It is related to a view of reality as fluid and to a conception of words as indeterminate, caught up in the dynamic delineation of possible meanings without predestined or predictable end. Yet, and as the story "The Doctor" by Mavis Gallant suggests, the act of narration demands footholds, provisional stances over the unavoidable "seams and cracks" (503)[1] of life, the gaps which demand the never ending braiding of memory and language to continue. "The Doctor" is about the vulnerability of such stances and their necessary re-adjustments for the narrative to accommodate – in fits and starts – former misreading, false memories and partial understandings. For Gallant, who has been compared to Proust, the question is not so much to write in search of lost time but rather to find truthful ways of showing the irretrievable nature

[1] The page numbers refer to "The Doctor" in Mavis Gallant's collection of 1989, *Overhead in a Balloon and Other Stories* (London, Boston: Faber and Faber, 1989) 484-505.

of the past which resists memory and narrative appropriation. In this way, and as the critic Karen E. Smythe aptly points out, high demands are made on the reader who becomes a necessary presence in the evaluation of the story: "Gallant's narrator and character elegists… most often use memory to escape from the past rather than to understand it… Thus a judgement of character and of self is implicitly demanded of the reader of Gallant's work". (1992:11).

"The Doctor" was written in 1977 and belongs to the Linnet Muir cycle, six short stories featuring the eponymous female character. The stories first appeared in *The New Yorker* between 1975 and 1977 and were published together in Gallant's collection *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories* of 1981 (Lynch, 2004: 1). Entitled "In Youth is Pleasure" (1975), "Between Zero and One" (1975), "Varieties of Exile" (1976), "Voices Lost in Snow" (1976), "The Doctor" (1977) and "With a Capital T" (1977), all the stories use autobiographical material: the Montreal of Gallant's childhood and youth.

Mavis Gallant was born in 1922 in Montreal, Quebec, to English-speaking parents. Raised as a Protestant, and in English, she was sent to a Catholic French boarding-school at the age of four. The overlapping of bi-lingual, bi-religious and bi-cultural realities were part of her upbringing and an exception at the time – the decades after the First World War – when, the English speaking and French speaking communities in Montreal were hostile or simply ignored one another.[2] In "Preface" to *The Collected Stories*, the author stresses the peculiar cultural coordinates of her identity in Canada: "there is no such thing as a Canadian childhood. One's beginnings are regional. Mine are wholly Quebec, English and Protestant, yes, but with a strong current of French and Catholic. My parents sent me off on that current by placing me in a French convent school…. It was a singular thing to do and in those days unheard of. It left

[2] In "The Doctor", this is how the narrator defines the society of Montreal: "…. most other people simply floated in mossy little ponds labelled "French and Catholic" or "English and Protestant", never wondering what it might be like to step ashore; or wondering, perhaps, but weighing up the danger. To be out of a pond is to be in unmapped territory". (494).

me with two systems of behaviour, divided by syntax and tradition; two environments to consider, one becalmed in a long twilight of nineteenth-century religiosity; two codes of social behaviour; much practical experience of the difference between a rule and a moral point" (1996, XV).

At the age of twenty seven – in 1950 – and after some years as a journalist in Montréal, Gallant left for Paris in order to become a writer. In this she succeeded, writing mostly for *The New Yorker*, a fact which has contributed to the late recognition of the author in Canada. From the 1980s onward, however, Gallant has been acknowledged as one of Canada's most important short story writers. Among her many awards, the most significant, in November 2006, is the Prix Athanase-David, an award from the province of Quebec that, for the first time in 38 years of existence, was given to a Canadian author writing in English. [3]

Gallant, who still lives in Paris, is a polyglot. She speaks predominantly French, but her writing is done in English, which she defines as the language of the imagination linked to her childhood: "I owe it to children's books … that I absorbed once and for all the rhythm of English prose, the order of words in an English sentence and how they are spelled. I was eight before I was taught to write and spell English in any formal way, and what I was taught I already knew. By then, English was irremovably entrenched as the language of imagination." (1996: XVI). The author is adamant about the unique nature of each language – "the unbridgeable inequalities of language" – and stresses the asymmetric relationship between French and English. In the introduction to *Home Truths*, she states: "I cannot imagine any of my fiction in French, for it seems to me inextricably bound to English syntax, to the sound, resonance, and ambiguities of English vocabulary. If I were to write in French, not only would I put things differently, but I would never set out to say the same thing. Words have an association that the primary, dictionary definitions cannot provide, and that are all translations usually offer." (1997, 235).

The fierceness with which Mavis Gallants maintains French and English in separate compartments echoes the way the author defends her writing from her private life. One could ague that, living in a foreign

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mavis_Gallant.

country yet sustained by her mother tongue, Mavis Gallant is in a privileged position to portray the dislocations of characters lost in "varieties of exile"[4]. In the fissures between languages, cultures and homelands, the possibilities of connectedness and communication meet their limits and threaten to disintegrate. The critic Ronald Bryden writes that "Transit, noise and the symbiosis between them ….are Mavis Gallant's major themes – noise, that is, in the philosopher's definition of data that carry no meaning to the senses they fall on". (1989, 2). [5]

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"The Doctor" is a first person narrative in which the twenty two year old Linnet Muir tries to make sense of herself by calling up successive scenes from her childhood: the world of herself and her parents in Montreal, her parents' friends, houses, interests, and secret games. The myriad elements of those memories gravitate around the exclusive relationship Linnet remembers having had, as a very small child, with her paediatrician, Dr. Raoul Chauchard, also a personal friend of her parents. When Dr. Chauchard gives her the engraving of a doctor watching over a dying girl, the four year old Linnet thinks he is giving her a portrait of himself, "timeless, like God the Father" (485). Reminiscing later about the incident, Linnet will trace the stages of her growth into awareness as the gradual dislocation from the centre of the picture to a place where she is obliged to face "a feeling of loss, of helpless sadness" (500).

Unlike Henry James's character in *What Maisie knew* [6] which is upheld by an almost invisible third person narrator, in "The Doctor" the love of the small child for the paediatrician is told by Linnet's twenty year

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[4] "Varieties of exile" is the title of one of the Linnet Muir stories and was chosen for the New York Review of Books' edition of a Mavis Gallant collection. *Varieties of Exile* (New York: NRB, 2003). It is the perfect expression to synthesize Gallant's work.

[5] It is no coincidence that Mavis Gallant starts the "Preface" to *The Collected Stories* with a comparison between herself and Samuel Beckett: "Samuel Beckett, answering a hopeless question from a Paris newspaper – "Why do you write?" – said it was all he was good for: 'Bon qu'à ça.'"[sic]. (1996, IX).

[6] Henry James. *What Maisie Knew*. 1897 (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1998).

old self whose vision of the past is rendered in a lucid, pitiless tone. This makes for painful[7] reading, because the reader's access to the child is barred by ironic, sometimes caustic portrayals forcefully controlled by the narrative stance. However, the story is itself the narrative of its own necessarily provisional nature and thus allows for "seams and cracks" where the reader may glimpse maladjustments between former experience and later remembrances.

The words "seams and cracks" belong to the narrator and appear at the end of the story, when, as an adult, Linnet's image of Dr. Chauchard is shocked out of its self-complacency when she learns, from his obituaries, that the doctor was also a poet and a founder member of "The Arts and Letters Society of Quebec" (502). It is something that Linnet's English speaking parents were ignorant of and that Dr. Chauchard could never tell them, forced as he was to obliterate the French part of himself when mixing with the English-speaking cultural elite of Montreal of the twenties: "In mixed society, such little of it as existed, English seemed to be the social rule. It did not enter the mind of any English speaker that the French were at a constant disadvantage, like a team obliged to play all their matches away from home" (493).

What language belongs to what group, which language determines the intimacy of a relationship, and the perplexities resulting from having to move constantly between identities marked by different languages, are the recurrent obstacles that Linnet must learn to recognize and make sense of in order to retrieve a sense of self.[8] The story, "The Doctor", is precisely that, a sequence of scenes which are put together in a way that

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[7] "If, for the most part, Gallant's irony feels to the reader more like an affliction than a pleasure of the text, it may be because, in Blanchot's phrase 'Affliction is the loss of a dwelling place'" Nicole Côté, "Introduction", Nicole Côté and Peter Sabor, eds, *Varieties of Exile. New Essays on Mavis Gallant* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002) 3.

[8] The child Linnet's perplexities are reminiscent of *David Copperfield*, especially the scene where David tries to make sense of how the people of Mr. Pegotty's household are connected. There are more echoes of Dickens' novel in Gallant's story, inevitable perhaps, as David Copperfield is the paradigm of the child lost and ordered about by adults. There is a connection with Luke Fildes who was the illustrator of Dickens' last and unfinished novel: *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

allows for the small child to sail through and around the bewilderingly complex world of the adults which conveys puzzlement, fear and even sadness, all safely kept at a distance through wit and irony.

When Linnet finally learns that Dr. Chauchard was also a writer, however, the impact of this new piece of information forces her to acknowledge the partial point of view of her childhood memories and reveals the concomitant erroneous nature of her narrative. The discovery is said to be "an earthquake, the collapse of the cities we build over the past to cover seams and cracks we cannot account for" (502). As a consequence, the reader is thrown back to the beginning of the story and made to glimpse, beyond the caustic tone, the absences in Linnet's tale which now become visible in the seams of the narrative texture as a "figure of grief" (Karen Smythe, 1992).[9] Linnet goes so far as to recognize her sorrow herself and the story ends upon a lament, a lament for not having heard, as a child, Dr. Chauchard's "real voice, the voice that transcends this or that language ….I ought to have heard it when I was still under ten and had all my wits around me" (505).

The story, "The Doctor" may thus be said to be a portrayal of the artist as a young Canadian woman – the critic Gerald Lynch calls the Linnet Muir cycle a *Künstlerroman* in the tradition of Joyce (Lynch: 2004, 1) – who must distance herself from the past and get in touch with it through successive imaginative recreations. Indeed, the ending of the story reaches out to what, at the beginning, is scorned as infantile omnipotence: the love of the child Linnet for Dr. Chauchard.

Dr. Chauchard is introduced in the story as a figure in a picture which only later in the story is identified as a reproduction of a painting of 1891 by Luke Fildes., "The Doctor".[10] Determined to distance herself

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[9] The elegiac nature of Mavis Gallant's use of irony is discussed in Karen A. Smythe, *Figuring Grief. Gallant, Munro and the Poetics of Grief* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1992).

[10] "The Doctor" by Sir Luke Fildes, R. A. (1844-1927) … was once one of the best-known of all late-Victorian paintings, in part because reproductions of it hung in many doctor's offices" cf. www.victorianweb.org/painting/fildes/. The painting was commissioned by Henry Tate and Fildes was inspired by the doctor who watched

from the childish longings that, as a child, Linnet projected into the engraving, the narrator disparages Fildes' English and late Victorian mimetic art. Reproductions of the picture are said to flow "into every crevice and corner of North America and the British Empire" (484) as if its foreign – British and colonial – sentimentality were a viscous glue that deceitfully unifies the irregularities in real and mental landscape: "Who can remember now a picture called, 'The Doctor'? From 1891, when the original was painted, to the middle period of the Depression, when it went finally out of style, reproductions of this work, flowed into every crevice and corner of North America and the British Empire, swamping continents."(484).

The picture is not even introduced as a work of art but as a didactic image of "Christian submission or Christian pessimism, depending on the beholder" (484) and immediately rejected as kitsch for the false hope it promises: "the monochrome promise that existence is insoluble, tragedy static, poverty endearing and heavenly justice a total mystery" (484). [11]

Fildes' painting – a narrative picture of a deathbed scene in a workman's cottage with, in the foreground, the sitting figure of a doctor watching over a dying or very ill child – is therefore violently rejected.[12]

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over his own dying son. "The painting shows a concerned physician watching a dying child. *The Doctor* was acclaimed by critics and became one of the best-selling engravings of the Victorian era. One doctor told his fellow students that a library of books would not do what this picture has done and will do for the medical profession in making the hearts of our fellow men warm to us in confidence and affection'." www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jfildes.htm.

[11] In his discussion of "KITSCH" in *The Dictionary of Art* (London: Macmillan, 1998), Dennis Dutton cites Clive Bell who in *Art* (1913) "denied that Sir Luke Fildes' *The Doctor* (1891, London, Tate) was a work of art because its effect relies wholly on its sentimental subject-matter: the painting is 'worse than nugatory because the emotion it suggests is false. What it suggests is not pity and admiration but a sense of complacency in our own pitifulness and generosity.'" (www.denisdutton.com/ kitsch-macmillan.htm/.

[12] Contrary to Gallant's story, Fildes' painting inspired the English poet U. A. Fanthorpe to write a poem, "The Doctor", which celebrates the ethics of the aesthetic gaze. It is

The conventional deathbed scene and the perspective of the light falling on the faces of the doctor and the child, bringing them together in affective intimacy, are stylistically disdained as sentimental regression. Continents like North America and the British Empire, the text suggests, require an art that does not obliterate the roughness and angularity with flowing sentiment. As such, "The Doctor" is also a story about finding new forms that will do justice to the irreconcilable realities the narrator inhabits. It is a way of inventing a Canadian art that, to be truthful, must break with the homogeneity of the traditions that dominate it. Thus, and trying to find a reason why Dr. Chauchard did not tell his English friends that he was a poet, the narrator remembers how, to her parents' generation, the concept itself of a Canadian art was unthinkable: "French books were from France; English books from England or the United States. It would not have entered their minds that the languages that they heard spoken around them could be written, too" (502).

The incapability of Linnet's parents and their friends to conceive of themselves as non-colonised, i.e. as autonomous from their home countries – France and England – reflects, in a sense, Margaret Atwood's thesis on Canadian literature, aptly called *Survival* in which she claims that "Canada *isn't* a self-respecting nation" (2004, 21),[13] and that whereas American Literature may be said to have a central symbol called "The Frontier" (40)

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the introductory poem of Fanthorpe's collection *A Watching Brief* (London: Peterloo Press, 1987) which has Fildes' picture on the cover. In Canada, the writer, Alice Munro also alludes to Fildes' picture. In her novel of 1971, *Lives of Girls and Women*, a *Bildungsroman* of a young Canadian woman artist, the main character isolates herself in her parents' front room to study for the exams: "…I noticed nothing, only noticed, without being aware of it, the things in that room, which was my cell or chapel. The faded pattern of the rug… and two pictures –one of the Castle of Chillon, dark out of the pearly lake, *and the other of a little girl lying on two unmatched chairs, in a rosy light, parents weeping in the shadows behind and a doctor beside her looking tranquil, but not optimistic*." (Alice Munro, *Lives of Girls and Women*. 1971 (London: Penguin Books, 1973) 175-238, 204. Emphasis added. A comparison between Munro, Gallant and Fanthorpe in relation to Fildes' picture is a forthcoming project.

[13] Atwood's emphasis

and English Literature "The Island" (41), Canadian literature is dominated by the symbol of "Survival, *La Survivance*" (41)[14].

Although Gallant may be called a writer who shows the exhilarations of life on the margin – after all, she went abroad in order to write – in the story "The Doctor" the rejection of Fildes' picture implies the refusal of a pure and unique English tradition, also and especially when, "to overseas visitors … 'The Doctor' is incarnated as an oil painting in the Tate Gallery in London, in the company of other Victorian miseries, entitled 'Hopeless Dawn' and 'The Last day in the Old Home'" (485). In the new context, however, the painting does not acquire artistic value but doubly confirms its falsity, now also as a work of art: "In museum surroundings – classified, ticketed – "The Doctor" conveyed a new instruction: Death is sentimental, art is pretense" (485).

What is no pretence, however, is the small child's desire to be the centre of attention, the possibility of which she glimpses in Fildes' picture. The child's totalizing vision is thus projected into a work of art that is confused with reality: "When he took the engraving down from the wall of his office, I understood him to be offering me a portrait of himself" (485). It is a false art, however, which the grown up Linnet will reject as a child's magical thinking: "What I was sensitive to is nearly too plain to be signalled: the dying girl, a child, is the heart of the composition. The parents are in the shadow where they belong. Their function is to be sorry. The doctor has only one patient: light from a tipped lampshade falls on her and her alone" (485-86).

True art will be her own story, the story of herself "learning to look" (Clement, 2000) bringing into the foreground the parents and their love games which include Dr. Chauchard who is coveted by Linnet's mother. Thus, and as the doctor is drawn into the exclusive group of the small English speaking Montreal elite, he gradually sides with the parents against Linnet who still believes that, as in Fildes' picture, she and the doctor are bound as equals in a unique relationship carried out in French. "Open the door: *c'est moi*", she calls through the letter-box of the doctor's office, when, still a little girl she cannot yet reach the bell: "His front door,

[14] Atwood's emphasis

painted in that gloomy shade my father called Montreal green, is seen from below, at an angle – a bell too high for me during the first visits, a letter box through which I called, "Open the door; *c'est moi*," believing still that *moi* would take me anywhere (486-7)[15].

Thematically, the scene echoes Fildes' picture in the role that the main character claims for herself: "moi", the centre of the universe, suspended and upheld by the doctor's gaze. Formally, however, the scene is depicted from the outside: the narrator shows the child's point of view through a series of concrete objects whose inaccessibility exposes the delusion of the child's sense of omnipotence. In extension, all points of view that pretend to embrace the whole picture – Fildes', for example – are denounced as false. In a very literal way, Gallant's story replaces the centralizing composition of Victorian art with an aesthetic which allows for displacement, fragmentation and incompleteness. The techniques of modernism are required to picture Linnet's growing sense of loss when the confrontations with the mysteries of the adult world gradually pull her out of the centre and displace her, first to a French Catholic boarding school and, when at home, to her room or outdoors play. The particular variety of exile that is Linnet's is the exile of small children in the world of the grown ups, the way they are ordered about, dismissed, coveted and rejected in turn.

There is no sentimental dramatizing of childhood loneliness in "The Doctor" but lucid pictures of parental double-binds and a child's strong sense of injustice. It is also the record of how the child finds the resources to react through playing, when, alone in her room, she builds a "foreign"[16] city, called Marigold, which to "a visitor … was a slum of empty boxes, serving trays, bottles, silver paper, overturned chairs" but to the little girl "streets and houses, churches and convents, restaurants and railway stations." (500). It is here, in Marigold, with the assistance of Ruby the maid that she stages her first plots: "The insane Stepmother", "The Rich, Selfish Cousins", "The Death from Croup of Baby Sister"

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[15] Gallant's emphasis

[16] My emphasis.

(500). It is no coincidence that Linnet finds solace in the presence of the maid, the only other powerless character in the household. The indifference of her parent's clique[17] towards someone like Ruby, a Canadian from the Maritimes, is emphasized by the inhuman epithet that defines her as "the homesick underpaid Newfoundlander" (492).[18] Differences of class and differences between adults and children are seen as analogous to colonial relationships: asymmetric, abusive, silencing.

Marigold is one of Linnet's first transformations of the confusion, loneliness and revolt of childhood, the translation into other languages of the "desires and secrets and second thoughts threading from person to person, from bachelor to married woman, from mother of none to somebody's father…. matted, invisible, and quite dangerous" (491).[19] It is related to the biography of the author, Mavis Gallant, who, in the "Preface" to *The Collected Stories* explains that "talking Marigold" was the name she gave to a language that she made up as a child, a mixture of English, French and Italian syllables: "I made up a mishmash of English, French, and the mysterious Italian syllables in recordings of belcanto, which my mother liked and often played. I called this mixture "talking Marigold." (CS, XVI). But just as Gallant had to abandon the mixture of languages and choose only one to become an author, Linnet's Marigold will be a step towards choosing better pictures of life, pictures that do

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[17] The narrator speaks of their "ruthless kind of exclusiveness" (494).

[18] A Newfoundlander is an inhabitant of Newfoundland but also the name of a breed of dogs. Thus Ruby and Linnet occupy the level of dogs: "'down, *down*'" (494) (narrator's emphasis). Linnet compares the way her father treats her to the way he treats his dogs: "Down" (492)… "There came a point …where orders to dogs and instructions to children were given in the same voice. The only difference was that a dog got "Down, damn it," and of course, no one ever swore at me"." (494)

[19] I read into the story an unspoken allusion to Dr. Chauchard's homosexuality: he dies a bachelor, and although he is always accompanied by a female companion, Mrs. Erskine, (the child Linnet senses that "Dr. Chauchard and Mrs. Erskine were somehow together but never went out alone": 493), Mrs. Erskine's huge sexual appetite for younger men is extensively dwelled upon and positively evaluated by the narrator, so that the link between Dr. Chauchard and Mrs. Erskine may be seen as a cover up for non conformist versions of sexuality.

justice to what she calls "polychrome" life (503) as opposed to Fildes' monochromic parable (484).

Such a picture is provided by her story, which, in a sense, pays homage to Fildes' vision of doctor and child by transforming its harmony into an art that is more truthful to Linnet's ambivalent and contradictory experience. It is an art that breaks up the absorption of the two figures and brings into the new picture the recognition of separateness and thus of loss. If Fildes' painting conveys that death is sentimental and art pretence, as the narrator claims, in her own story death is real and art a necessary truth capable of creating pictures of life which are neither complete nor sentimentalized but bracing, capable and full of pain.

The title of Lesley Clement's critical study, *Learning to Look* (2000) constitutes a perfect synthesis of "The Doctor". Not only does it comment on the cinematographic structure of the story, it also emphasizes the difficulty inherent in "seeing", be it of a painting or of people. "The Doctor" shows how looking is influenced by the passions and desires of the observer and thus always biased and incomplete. It also suggests that one only sees what one has concepts for and that, therefore, looking and seeing require language. The child Linnet intuits the secrets that circulate among her parents' and their friends, but she cannot make sense of them because she cannot name them: "Unconsciously, everyone under the age of ten knows everything. Under-tens can come into a room and sense at once everything felt, kept silent, held back in the way of love, hate, desire, though he may not have the right words for such sentiments". (493).

The new piece of information about Dr. Chauchard's authorship presented at the very end of the story is a clue for all the things the child Linnet did not see when she thought herself to be the centre of the universe, the "I"/"Eye" in/of the picture. She did not hear Dr. Chauchard's "real voice" (505), for example, "the voice that transcends this or that language" (505) although she was under ten and supposed to sense everything: "I ought to have heard it when I was still under ten and had all my wits about me" (505).[20] The concluding sentence of the story confirms

[20] These are the concluding words of the story.

that Linnet's initial vision was an illusion and that the work of memory must take into account the time-bound nature of language and the shifting perspective of the observer. All narratives, the ending suggests, including "The Doctor", are necessarily bound up to incomplete understandings and partial views. Thus, what distinguishes Dr. Chauchard's "real voice" is not an otherworldly language analogous to the metaphysical illumination of Fildes' picture. Dr. Chauchard's "real voice" is the voice that lives independently of the narrator's projections and desires, the voice of an otherness that cannot be possessed. It is the voice that is heard for the first time in an obituary when the narrator is made aware of the inexorable nature of death and the irreversibility of time which, as an illuminating blow, bring to the foreground the irreplaceable singularity of the Doctor of which his poetry and diary are the (holy?) remains: "When I read the three obituaries it was the brass plate on the door I saw and 'Sur Rendez-vous.' That means 'no dropping in'. After the warning came the shut heron door and the shut swan door and, at another removal, the desk with the circle of lamplight and R. É.[21] himself, writing about X, Y, Z, and Mozart. A bit humdrum perhaps, a bit prosy, not nearly as good as his old winter Saturday self, but I am sure that it was his real voice, the voice that transcends this or that language. His French-speaking friends did not hear it for a long time (his first books of verse was not sold to anyone outside his immediate family), while his English-speaking friends never heard it at all. But I should have heard it then, at the start, standing on tiptoe to reach the doorbell, calling through the letterbox every way I could think of, "I, me". I ought to have heard it when I was still under ten and had all my wits about me." (504-405).

The story gives no access to Dr. Chauchard's art other than through Linnet's judgement, and yet, it restores what the hurtful irony of the narrative has tried to deny: Dr. Chauchard's recognition of Linnet's singularity as "*une sensible*"[22] (485) sealed by the gift of a Victorian engraving and Linnet's response to it by writing her own version of the

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[21] R. É. is how Dr. Chauchard appears in the obituary as a poet.

[22] Emphasis in the text.

scene. Using the strong art of modernism, the helpless dying girl of Fildes' painting steps out of the picture, walks away from the passive stance of a loved object and returns the gaze. She abandons the consolation of her magical projections, embraces the loneliness that relations of reciprocity require and becomes the doctor's fellow artist, albeit a different one. Through techniques of depersonalization, cinematographic editing, savage imagery and precision of language, Linnet creates an unassailable surface which echoes in its "seams and cracks" what the Victorian artist had to negate in order to paint the consoling deathbed scene and what the poet Chauchard could not bring himself to say, even to himself. In their place, the reader receives Linnet's vigorous story built in a sequence of juxtaposed scenes which "show" what it means to be displaced in affection, in language and in love and the strong art that can be made from those ingredients: an art about one's experience of dispossession in one's time and place, in one's own language(s); an art that does not smooth over "crevices and corners" (484), that is not "a lesson", "a statement of Christian submission" or "a parable" (484) but a work of art full of authority that precludes sentiment and demands to be seen. [23]

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[23] For the shift from negation to deletion in modernism, cf. "Modernism: Deletion versus Negation" in Maire Jaanus Kurrik, *Literature and Negation* (New York: Columbia Press, 1979).

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Figuring the Self: “Old Fathers” and Old Masters in Two Contemporary Irish Poets

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Figuring the Self: "Old Fathers" and Old Masters in Two Contemporary Irish Poets

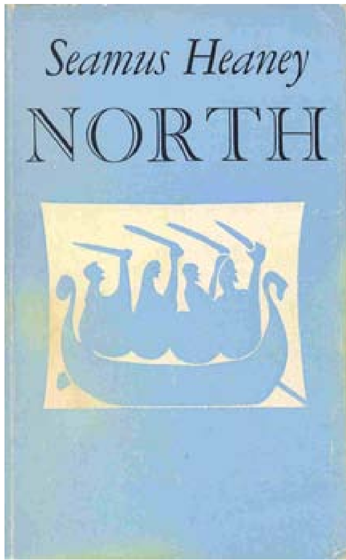
The wordplay in the second half of the title above is meant to be intriguing, but it may sound familiar to readers of Irish literature. In fact, the phrase "old father(s)" (plural or singular) famously occurs, as an apostrophe, in the work of both W. B. Yeats and James Joyce. Joyce employs it at the very end of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, when Stephen, prayer-like, addresses "Old father, old artificer" with the plea to "stand me now and ever in good stead" (Levin, 526); and Yeats uses it in at least three poems: in the "Introductory Rhymes" to *Responsibilities* – "*Pardon, old fathers, if you still remain / Somewhere in ear-shot for the story's end*"; in "Love's Loneliness" – "Old fathers, great-grand-fathers"; and (no longer as apostrophe) in "Meditations in Time of Civil War – IV, My Descendants": "Having inherited a vigorous mind from my old fathers, ..." (Yeats, 113, 298, 228). It is hardly irrelevant that the two authors who for more than half a century have loomed as alternative father-figures over the Irish literary tradition should themselves so memorably apostrophise predecessors – in Yeats' case provocatively addressing a blood lineage, but aestheticising its import and its history; in Joyce's, no less provocatively construing the invoked lineage as defined by a craft. And it is no less relevant that they should do that as part of *oeuvres* that are so emphatically concerned with self-fashioning and self-recognition.

In this paper I will be foregrounding the continued presence of these concerns in the work of two contemporary Irish poets, Seamus Heaney and Medbh McGuckian, but I will be addressing the issue from the perspective afforded by the mutual dynamics of verbal and visual representations. With regard to the visual, I will probe into some of the reasons for the favour given by the poets in question, as regards their ekphrastic ventures, to "old masters", i.e., celebrated instances of European painting

from the Early Modern period; and, with only partial overlap in my pictorial references, I will also be inquiring into the favour that is similarly given to the portrait genre in the poets' explorations of self.

In the work of Seamus Heaney, the phrase "old fathers" occurs twice. In the closing canto of "Station Island", his 1984 sequence of "encounters with familiar ghosts", the ghost of Joyce is addressed as "old father, mother's son" and replies by advising the poet to release his poetic self from the constraints of historical and communal allegiances: "it's time to swim // out on your own and fill the element / with signatures on your own frequency" (Heaney, *Station* 93-4). In Heaney's work, the consequence of such constraints had become famously explicit nine years earlier, in *North*, the volume that registers the other occurrence of the same phrase. In "Viking Dublin", the Yeatsian apostrophe is rephrased in a quasi-liturgical way – "Old fathers, be with us" – and applied to the Vikings, so as to serve the trans-historical and trans-spatial design proper to Part I of that collection (Heaney, *North* 24). The imagery of mayhem that the poem associates with the Viking conquering methods means that the apostrophe's original connection, in Yeats, with a proud reference to *blood*lines gains an ironically literal dimension. But the context in which the invocation takes place may also involve a Joycean reference: Joyce's summoning of the "old artificer" Daedalus is surely an intertext for the disturbing image in the immediately preceding lines, "With a butcher's aplomb / they spread out your lungs / and made you warm wings / for your shoulders" (24). Besides, the poem's subtitle is "Trial Pieces", a meta-artistic phrase for a tentative creation that chimes in with the Joycean notion of an artist in the making, and that allows the reader to notice that the Vikings as predecessors (as founders of Dublin) are here also being darkly celebrated for their craft, as "old artificers" (old masters) of murder and conquest.

It is a commonplace of Heaney criticism to highlight that, even when he seeks external objects of representation in the domain of history, the overarching meta-artistic, metapoetic concern remains dominant; and that both dimensions interact closely with the exploration of self that is a persistent defining trait of the lyric, a trait that Heaney hardly ever eschews. But in this case I am interested above all in underlining how insistently *visual* the meta-artistic element is throughout *North*. It is an aspect that is seldom dealt with in connection with this book, probably



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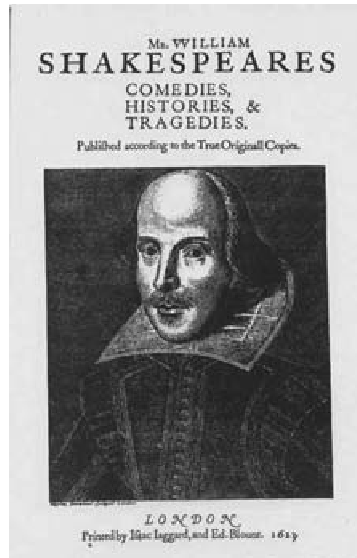
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because the visual dimension in his writing is more commonly associated with the books that follow "the swerve", as Heaney himself has called the change in his referential scope and in his writing that was so strongly signalled in 1991 with *Seeing Things* (cf. Homem, "On Elegies": 28).

In *North*, though, albeit in different ways, visuality comes as strongly to the fore in terms of representation as any other sensorial dimension. Several poems in Part I of the volume were famously prompted by the starkness and pathos of the photographs of ancient sacrificial victims published in P. V. Glob's *The Bog People* (1969). Since some of those preserved and retrieved corpses have been culturally processed as museum pieces, their verbal representation becomes a series of instances of ekphrasis, and the poet's explicit *sympathy*, his ability and willingness to identify with them, realises my theme also with regard to a representation of self mediated by other representations. But the volume's mythopoeic design does not entail that representations of visual artefacts throughout *North* cannot take more conventional forms. The book includes a poem explicitly about the clarifying effect of a visit to a museum – "Summer 1969", famously about the poet's confrontation with pictures of violence and death on the walls of the Prado at the same time sectarian violence was erupting in Northern Ireland (69-70). Besides, *North* opens with a highly pictorial diptych titled "Mossbawn", a name for home in Heaney's personal experience and hence in his writing.

It is hardly irrelevant that a volume otherwise so much about darkness and the ground should open with a poem called "Sunlight" (the first in the "Mossbawn" diptych); shunning for a moment the world of history-as-myth that will take up much of *North*, Heaney offers the reader a domestic scene with idyllic features, a true pastoral of the home – marked by the warmth of a kitchen where a woman, "in a floury apron", bakes scones, but also by "love / like a tinsmith's scoop / sunk past its gleam / in the meal-bin". Apart from its specific elements of visual description, the poem also rests, more specifically, on a recognisable pictorial assimilation – a verbal nod in the direction of genre painting, those renderings of domestic scenes that entered the European visual imagination with seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish painting. Heaney himself has referred to "Sunlight" as "a Dutch interior set in Ulster" (cit. Longley, 239), and the critic Edna Longley has written of his penchant for Flemish

interiors (227-52 *passim*): Vermeer's *The Milkmaid* and De Hooch's *Woman Peeling Apples* promptly spring to mind.

But if "Sunlight" summons a pictorial analogy only to the mind of the visually educated reader, the second poem in the "Mossbawn" diptych, the sonnet "The Seed Cutters", does so explicitly. The reference is Flemish again – but, rather than a domestic scene, it prompts an agricultural scene, and a segment of tradition a whole century earlier: "They seem hundreds of years away. Breughel, / You'll know them if I can get them true" (10). Apostrophising Brueghel (supposedly Pieter Brueghel the Elder, aka *Peasant Brueghel*) does not in this case mean identifying a specific referent in his work for an exercise in ekphrasis, but rather suggesting that the scene, as observed by the poet, can only be construed by his educated consciousness in terms of a pictorial analogy. The pictorial referent is generic and thus non-existent, only definable as "a picture such as ..." – and the suspension points could be replaced by a range of Brueghel(esque) pictures (a likely candidate for providing the analogy with a content would be *The Harvesters*). But making those peasants Brueghelesque depends on the poet's ability to "get them true", i.e., to translate them from their hypothetical visual representation and to domicile them in the verbal medium, bringing them home (i.e., to Mossbawn) to his verse. The poem indeed opens with a self-directed challenge, the statement of an ambition for accurate rendering that explicitly seeks a model and a gauge of its success in the old master's representational skills – somehow paralleled, by the middle of the poem, by the seed cutters' skill with their "sharp knife", their craft of peace that contrasts with the Vikings' "butcher's aplomb". It closes with a quasi-triumphal assertion (coinciding with the final tercet), launched by the exclamation "O calendar customs!", that the feat has been accomplished.

Ultimately, the poem celebrates as much the old master's imaginative consequence as the poet's successful emulation. The representational move from the third person in the second line, "You'll know them if I can get them true", to the first person plural in the last line, "With all of us there, our anonymities", marks the poet's self-inscription in the composed "frieze", a self-canonising gesture under the sought tutelage of the old master. This, I believe, holds true in spite of the paradoxical import of "anonymities", since its basic meaning and its plural form indeed

counter two dominant purposes of portraiture (even when it is *group* portraiture), of pictorial self-inscription: the singularity of having one's picture made, and its appertaining promise of memorability, of recognition. As recently pointed out by Shearer West and Catherine Soussloff, "the [portrait] genre actively works against anonymity" (Soussloff, 23); "The portrait [serves] as commemoration and memorial" (West 62; cf also Beyer, 16).

Reading this emphasis on self-inscription and self-canonisation into one of the placid introductory poems to *North* may seem perverse on several counts: first, the diptych celebrates domestic, communal, and traditional values ("calendar customs"), that may appear to be alien to an emphasis on individuality and self-concern; secondly, the volume as a whole still stands out as Heaney's most outspoken pronouncement on community and history, rather than as an instance of self-representation (the "proper" domain of the lyric). It is tenable, though, that *North* is informed by a tension between these two dimensions ("epic" and "lyrical"), and that they are in fact made apparent, paratextually and visually, on the volume's front and back covers: a drawing of a Viking ship *vs.* a reproduction of a portrait of the poet by the Irish painter Edward McGuire, a reminder of the lyric's traditional representation of the "speaking" self, a space for subjective revelation.

This is in fact emphasised by the particularities of McGuire's visual representation. The poet returns our gaze from the painting, i.e., the gaze of a reader turned viewer, as if reading the book were indeed tantamount to knowing the man – or indeed "figuring" him; as Gen Doy recently remarked, "Portraits of authors are often used on the covers of their works. Our expectation that the portrait shows us the subject, the self, of another person, is (...) a historically and socially constructed belief (...) which persists in this post-modern period" (22). The canonising import of this practice is obvious, although the suggested equivocal play between the author's image and his book might seem to hark back ironically to an injunction that marked (some would say) the birth of authorial presence in Early Modern literature, in two of the prefatory lines to Shakespeare's First Folio of 1623: "Reader, looke / Not on his Picture, but his Booke". Only in this case the reader is invited to look at *both* in more senses than one, since the picture on the back cover contains the book – or *a* book,

the one that Heaney is shown holding in his hands while (rather monastically) sitting at a small table; the *mise-en-abyme* suggests, of course, that the book is the same we ourselves are holding. The writer is also depicted as reader, but the mirroring effect takes on added complexity: the poet's gaze is not directed towards his book, but rather towards his viewer (his reader), and this can highlight the poet's presence as source of the inscription on the book: the metonymic play may also take in that one of the many acceptations of "face" is *typeface*. In short, the back of the book gives us the poet in full mastery of his text – indeed as a stern *book-holder*; or should we say *copyholder*? Sitting at a table for one, in a space that accommodates only one person, the individually defined author mirrors and confronts the closet reader.

The hyperfigurative characteristics of the painting are not indifferent to its rhetoric or to my theme either. One of the effects of the birds and foliage represented in close detail beyond the window panes (typical though they are of McGuire's work) is to emphasise that this is an interior scene, and to remind readers of Heaney's dual status as poet of nature and of the domestic space – a duality embodied, as noted above, in *North*'s opening diptych. Heaney's reported acknowledgement of a wish to appropriate the "Dutch interior" reflects an interest in (and a taste for) the seventeenth-century pictorial "invention" of the private scene (Vermeer and De Hooch, rather than Brueghel) with genre painting. That interest finds confirmation in the "homely" framework of the McGuire portrait, and indeed in a poem that Heaney was to include in 1991 in *Seeing Things* that muses on the experience of posing for that portrait.

The poem's title and objective point of departure – "A Basket of Chestnuts" – would seem to concern a still life, rather than a portrait, and indeed the first stanzas reflect the poet's visual *fruition* of the chestnuts (autumnal produce brought home), culminating in a yearning: "And I wish they could be painted" (Heaney, *Seeing* 24). This might sound like an admission of representational insufficiency, but the wish in fact foregrounds the intermedial translation performed by the verbal description of the chestnuts in the preceding lines, in characteristic Heaneyesque diction: "all drag / And lustre, opulent and gravid". And it prompts a recollection of an actual painting – of its making, rather than of the finished artefact. As so often is the case with instances of ekphrasis, though, the

poem's focus will seem to be outside or beyond what is to be seen on the canvas, in this case *other* chestnuts, present decades earlier at the posing, the chestnuts "that he did not paint when he painted me", but nonetheless indirectly represented in "the light / He captured in the toecaps of my shoes". Besides these deflections of the focus, the occasion evoked (portraying the poet), together with the emotional emphasis on the poet's recollections of the now dead painter, ensure that the poem does not lack a lyrical concentration on the self, sharing with the evoked painting the fact that they are both representations of the poet, complementary but also overlapping. Indeed, if the lyric, in its prevalent understanding since the Romantics, is supposed to represent an inner conformation, then a conventional gauge of the portrait painter's success in capturing the "truth" of his/her object is also his/her inferred ability to represent the life that lies beyond an outer appearance – often believed to be accessed through a face or a gaze (cf Beyer, 15; Feldman, 10; West, 21 and *passim*). And it is certainly curious that Heaney's poem about posing for a portrait should in fact voice the age-old longing for a representation that will capture what lies beyond outer form, even if the deflected object is the basket of chestnuts: "And I wish they could be painted, known for what / Pigment might see beyond them, what the reach / Of sense despairs of as it fails to reach it" (Heaney, *Seeing*: 24). In this yearning for representational mastery Heaney is yet being true to his old-master models: the poem is about the produce of a harvest brought into an inhabited interior – the still life coming together with the portrait; and his avowed attraction to the "Dutch interior" concerns a moment in the history of pictorial representation in which the invention of the ordinary home setting (the lives of ordinary individuals) as a fit subject for paintings historically coincides with the much charted construction of modern subjectivity.

Heaney's alertness to fundamental moments in the historical construction of a sense of the human, and his willingness to invoke visual embodiments of that process for his representations of self, found a memorable and arguably self-parodic instance in a poem included in *Electric Light* (2001). The collection takes the totality of the poet's experience, retrospectively and prospectively, for its object. It is therefore "fitting" (but no less puzzling for its potential crassness) that "Vitruviana" should juxtapose the self with a famous image from humanist culture:

In the deep pool at Portstewart, I waded in
Up to the chest, then stood there half-suspended
Like Vitruvian man, both legs wide apart,
Both arms out buoyant to the fingertips,
Oxter-cogged on water.
My head was light,
My backbone plumb, my boy-nipples bisected
And tickled by the steel-zip cold meniscus.

(Heaney, *Electric* 53)

The use of this image of human centrality to represent the self straddling two elements, while remaining fixed and balanced, indicates the sense of celebration, rather than despondency, that pervades Heaney's work of the past two decades. But a consciousness of excess surely pervades the willingness of the mature poet, who has so often shown his awareness of the risks of being lionised (as some would say) by readers and critics alike, to inscribe himself onto Leonardo's famous drawing of the human frame as centre, standard and norm. And, indeed, the hubris of this pose is duly balanced by the following section of the poem – again autobiographical, involving a similar physical stance, but fundamentally different in its cultural and ethical implications:

On the hard scrabble of the junior football pitch
Where Leo Day, the college 'drillie', bounced
And counted and kept us all in line
In front of the wooden horse – '*One! Two! In! Out!*' –
We upped and downed and scissored arms and legs
And spread ourselves on the wind's cross, felt our palms
As tautly strung as Francis of Assisi's
In Giotto's mural, where angelic neon
Zaps the ping-palmed saint with the stigmata.

(Heaney, *Electric* 53)

The secularised environment of the physical education class does not prevent the outstretched pose from evoking the Crucifixion and – derivately, as is proper to a due Christian humility – the ordeal-as-grace experienced by the stigmatised saint. Concomitantly, the pictorial referent – "Giotto's mural" – compounds the antithetical play between the first and

second sections of the poem by offering the visually curious reader a fine example of painting prior to Renaissance perspective – prior, that is, to a development in perception and representation that has so often been read (sometimes not altogether accurately – cf. Doy, 13ff) as tantamount to the emergence of modern subjectivity; Leonardo's depiction of "buoyant", normative humanness, and Giotto's depiction of emaciated sainthood, are here obvious synecdoches for opposed mindsets and outlooks.

*

Albeit in the context of a very different poetics, the reflections pursued so far on approaches to the self will certainly prove relevant to any consideration of the visual arts in the poetry of Medbh McGuckian. The indirection that is a characteristic of her poetry (one of the factors of her supposed and much discussed "obscurity") entails that representation of the self will tend to take on a fundamentally diverse, less vocal and less "public" form from Heaney's. This difference is compounded by McGuckian's sustained interest in offering images of the self's secluded environment, of home as mediated by a woman's experience. Further, McGuckian's half-ironical retrieval of women's traditional skills, as construed from a bourgeois, quasi-genteel perspective, will not be devoid of implications both to her self-representation, and to her interest in painting – the artistic skill and set of techniques that, taken in largely conventional terms, provides a focus for McGuckian's interest in the visual and in chromatic perception.

McGuckian's titles often have an explicit painterly reference, examples including "The Sitting," "Scenes from a Brothel," "Self-Portrait in the Act of Painting a Self-Portrait," "Impressionist House," "Sky Portrait," "Drawing Ballerinas," and "The Pochade Box." Some of these seem to promise a promptly recognisable verbal appropriation of the circumstance they name, but this can be as misleading as the apparent discursive transparency suggested by a conventional syntax. From behind it, McGuckian produces a set of representational strategies that proves highly challenging as regards readers' ability to match the resulting representations against recognisable segments of experience and the real (cf. Longley, 54). This slanted relationship between McGuckian's language and the real is in fact confirmed and duplicated in the way she verbally construes the visual

representations that so often become objects of her poetic discourse. The assumption that visual representation appropriates the real with a literalness that escapes other artistic forms is a long-lived fallacy, supported by the apparent immediacy of sight – and seemingly confirmed by figuration. In her ekphrastic poetry, McGuckian has favoured pictorial genres – the still life and the portrait – that should seem to lend themselves more promptly to that fallacy; but closer scrutiny easily proves expectations of literalness to be as little substantiated as expectations that the conventional syntax of her poetry might make it "easy reading". In short: Medbh McGuckian's poems with pictorial referents may give readers the initial impression of consisting of conventional lyrics on conventional paintings; the discovery that they are hardly so also confronts readers with her interrogation of the whole process of reference.[1]

One of the first of McGuckian's poems on paintings to have attracted critical attention was "The Flitting", first published in 1982 in her first collection, *The Flower Master*. The poem's title refers to a domestic uprooting: in Scots and in northern English dialect, the word means "to move house", one of those displacements that in a conventional social order have always proved both a source of excitement and trauma for women. The female speaking self acknowledges the shock, physically realised in the harshness of interior walls still waiting for a smoother finish. Ironically, she covers the rough surfaces with reproductions of Dutch paintings – old masters – depicting women involved in domestic chores or placid indoor leisures:

> Now my own life hits me in the throat, the bumps
> and cuts of the walls as telling
> as the poreholes in strawberries, tomato seeds.
> I cover them for safety with these Dutch girls
> making lace, or leaning their almond faces
> on their fingers with a mandolin, a dreamy
> chapelled ease abreast this other turquoise-turbanned,
> glancing over her shoulder with parted mouth.
>
> (McGuckian, *Selected* 26)

[1] The material in the following three paragraphs appeared in an earlier version as part of my study of "McGuckian, poems and portraits" (191-3).

The final example is plainly identifiable as one of the best-known and most intriguing instances of seventeenth-century Dutch portrayals of women: as noted years ago by Neil Corcoran (224), Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is here the pictorial referent (summoned long before Tracy Chevalier's eponymous novel and the ensuing film caught global attention). The picture is somehow beyond the pale of the placid domesticity that the previous lines briefly characterise. Indeed, it is singled out not only by the mystery of a face that challenges us at much closer range than most other contemporary depictions of women (e.g. Vermeer's own, or Pieter De Hooch's), but also by the exotic note introduced by the turban, and by the dark background that denies the viewer the conventional surroundings of a bourgeois home. McGuckian's ekphrastic gesture discreetly adds a historical dimension to the painting: by imagining the girl as "clove-scented," the poet reminds the reader that from the early seventeenth century the Dutch were in control of the Spice Islands, renowned and coveted precisely for their cloves and mace. But this crossover from the gaze of the anonymous girl and her close surroundings onto the broader stage of history, greed and possession is characteristically understated. This is in tune with McGuckian's dislike of the more heavy-handed treatment of the politico-historical scene one might find in other poets' interrogations of identity. Besides, the historical allusion may query the anonymity to which the women who posed for Vermeer and De Hooch were consigned, despite the apparent individuality of their features: as Shearer West also remarks, "slippages between the portrayal of women and the embodiment of abstractions has [sic] been interpreted as denying women the kind of character and public roles emphasized so often in portraits of men" (West, 148).

The main emphasis of the poem remains on the personal and the domestic, on the bland still world of delusive serenity and of a "casual talk" which papers over the broadest of issues (in the same way the reproductions of paintings covered the rough walls). Further, the piece dwells on the possibilities of self-projection that this portrait offers the writer as viewer – and ultimately as hypothetical painter:

> Her narrative secretes its own values, as mine might
> if I painted the half of me that welcomes death
> in a faggotted dress, in a peacock chair,

no falser biography than our casual talk
of losing a virginity, or taking a life, and
no less poignant if dying
should consist in more than waiting.

(McGuckian, *Selected* 26)

The speaker thus contemplates a fictionalisation of the self, curiously through painting rather than through writing, and hints at a moral and emotional darkness of background as stark as that which physically surrounds the girl on Vermeer's canvas. But the closing section of the poem suggests the speaker's contentedness with present domestic and familial rootedness, and a deferral of her "immortality for my children" (those who, Shakespeare-sonnet-like, immortalise her); in this latter-day book of *hours*, they are told by a "digital clock," anyway.

If "The Flitting" rehearses the possibility of painting a "half of me," "The Sitting," a later poem, would seem to enact that possibility from its first line: "My half-sister comes to me to be painted" (McGuckian, *Selected* 33). But this painterly confrontation with her "female *alter ego*" (Allen, 295) will fail, at least to the extent that the procedure will not be pursued to the end. Reluctant from the start – "she is posing furtively, like a letter being / pushed under a door" – the poet-painter's "half-sister" will disagree with her *modus operandi* and will refuse to proceed:

I am
painting it hair by hair as if she had not
disowned it
[...]
and she questions my brisk
brushwork, the note of positive red
in the kissed mouth I have given her,
as a woman's touch makes curtains blossom
permanently in a house: she calls it
wishfulness, the failure of the tampering rain
to go right into the mountain, she prefers
my sea-studies, and will not sit for me
again

(McGuckian, *Selected* 33)

Rather than just a squabble over technique, the source of that refusal lies both in the painter-poet's "wishful" figurative strategy, and in the supposed housewifely attitude that is akin to it, as McGuckian self-parodically suggests with the simile about the uplifting and literally flourishing virtue of "a woman's touch". This most declarative and explicit of McGuckian's meta-artistic poems ultimately takes on the heuristic value that Michael Allen, in a revealing pictorial analogy, has ascribed to those "excellent poems [of hers] which are not obscure at all", as enlightening as the "naturalistic works of [otherwise] abstract painters" may prove to be with regard to the rest ot their work (Allen, 287). The counter-voice and counterperspective provided by the speaker's half-sister will literally have the last word, to the extent that her refusal to complete "The Sitting" will leave the poem's pictorial referent unfinished, as the closing lines make clear: "something half-opened, rarer / than railroads, a soiled red-letter day" (McGuckian, *Selected* 33). However, the rhetorical uplift of its alliteration and assonance gives this ending a celebratory ring which, in turn, endows the failure to complete the painting with a paradoxical sense of achievement, and converts its truncated outcome into a visual correlative for a poetics that proves averse to the punctilious, the explicit, and the fully finished.

*

To sum up and conclude: the examples of a verbal confrontation with the pictorial that this paper has addressed foreground what would seem to be fundamentally different poetics. Even if not devoid of a humorous element, Heaney's Brueghelesque approach in "The Seed Cutters" does not conceal the element of self-challenge and of a coveted emulation of an "old master" that is swiftly followed by a confirmation of achievement – of self-inscription and presence: "all of us there". This foregrounding of presence, and of the self as central object of the lyrical endeavour is forcefully assisted by the poet's portrait as part of the representations offered by his *book*, in its most material and literal definition. To the extent that the poet offers with the book a reproduced picture of himself (rendered even more forceful by the returned gaze) that becomes homologous with the book, it is as if the portrait were being reconfigured as *self*-portrait, indeed focusing a sense of authorship in such a way that preempts an awareness

of the *other* author – the painter. Gratefully and graciously, Heaney will later honour the painter and the occasion with a poem, but the piece in question does not attempt a description of the "frozen scene" – but rather of the visual dynamics of the moment, of what those present on the occasion could see and enjoy, but could not be captured on the canvas, or was so in an indirect, deflected way: the shine of chestnuts glimpsed on toecaps. True, the poet's full awareness of the self-absorption that his pictorial referents confirm also foregrounds an element of self-irony, when Vitruvian centredness and Franciscan humility vie for the position of enabling visual and ethical models, cancelling each other out – but each and both amounting to blatant hubris, however tinged by self-directed humour.

Deflection and irony can be said to define McGuckian's writing, and doubly so her writing about representations in other media. Rather than portraits of herself, her ekphrastic poems tend to be about portraits of women that could be (but are not quite like) herself. A suggestion that the domesticity against which those women are glimpsed is construed as partaking in the broader dynamics of history is hinted at, but discreetly enough not to allow readers to find in this an unequivocal denunciation of patriarchy – McGuckian always having shown her wariness of stridency in her vindication of a woman's place. Her approach to Vermeer's portrait of a young female face is intrigued and intriguing, but it stops short of complete identification; and the unachieved constitution of an alter ego that this might suggest is reiterated with the truncated portrait of a half-sister, done at a half-sitting; if in "The Sitting" McGuckian offers us for once a discursive and explicit ekphrasis, she does so with relation to a painting that never really comes to exist.

And yet the affinities remain. One cannot deny the extent to which McGuckian, in Edna Longley's words, has "challenged (...) the formal order established by Heaney" and the dominantly male poets of his generation (Longley, 52); but this is a challenge in which, with regard to McGuckian's visually determined poetry, the perception of a strain towards "differentiation" (still Longley's words) cannot erase the counter-perception of an "intense proximity". This proximity can be verified both in formal terms and with regard to the poetry's dominant references: the "challenge", after all, only exists to the extent that the older poet's characteristic procedures are replicated – even if submitted to subtle irony. Summoning

"old masters" to one's verse has an undisguisable (and nominal) canonical import, that subtle irony will not easily erase; and a tendency to address figurative, rather than abstract art is arguably close to a prosody that (even if subverted beyond the surface) remains on the whole traditional. Indeed, obscurities of reference and imagery do not altogether cancel the discursive effect of conventional syntax. And when the visual representations favoured by the poet regularly seek the generic framework of the portrait, then the space of the self is once more vindicated as the traditional domain of the lyric – even if rendered less blatant and more challenging by a strategies of indirection.

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Creative Creatures and their Creation Scenes: Jennifer Johnston's *This Is Not a Novel*

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Creative Creatures and their Creation Scenes: Jennifer Johnston's *This Is Not a Novel*

Introduction

Jennifer Johnston was born in Dublin in 1930 and has lived in Derry, Northern Ireland, since the mid-seventies. So far, she has written fifteen novels and various short plays, some of which have been translated into several languages, while all of her novels are available in French translation.

Primarily known as a novelist, her work resists the monothematic categorisations under which it has predominantly been read, such as Big House, Troubles, or women's literature. Her first novel, *The Captains and the Kings*, was published in 1972, and her latest, *Foolish Mortals*, in October 2007. She therefore started to write at a time that coincided with the onset of the Troubles in Northern Ireland in 1968, with sectarian strife and paramilitary and military violence transforming the province into a war zone until the 1994 ceasefires and the 1998 Belfast Agreement. Her career spans a period that largely overlaps with the three decades of violence, mistrust, trauma and a sense of impasse in Northern Ireland. Yet it also responds to the turn-of-the-century changes on both sides of the Irish border, specifically the "Celtic Tiger" economic boom and social changes in the Republic, and the painstaking peace process in Northern Ireland which culminated in a power-sharing government inaugurated on Devolution Day (8 May 2007). Her work responds to a historical shift in Ireland's experience of the past, so that the perception of the *excessive* and paralysing presence of the past in the present during the Troubles – which, though affecting primarily Northern Ireland, was tangible in the South as well – gives way to a *thinning* of the past in today's confident, affluent and rapidly changing Republic.

However, both when depicting the entrapment in the past in her earlier novels, and the fleeting immediacy of the present in her recent ones, Jennifer Johnston's work suggests that it is only by putting the internalised past in perspective that the present and the future may be envisaged. They do so both formally and thematically. Formally, their elliptic prose and increasing display of their narrative and fictional status unsettles the expectations and internalised mechanisms of realistic-minded readers, thereby inviting what Derek Attridge calls "readerly hospitality, a readiness to have one's purposes reshaped by the work to which one is responding" (Attridge, 59). Thematically, they do so by portraying characters whose perception of life is disrupted, usually by exposure to violent circumstances, and who must re-approach their lives from an exploratory and deframed perspective which usually involves a dialogic process with themselves, through introspection and retrospection, and with some sort of an interlocutor.

In increasingly explicit ways, Johnston's novels draw the reader's attention to their fictional and narrative status. They thus ostensibly "suspend the eschatological in order to inscribe us in a meaningful past," as argued by Ricoeur:

> To "repeat" our story, to retell our history, is to re-collect our horizon of possibilities in a resolute and responsible manner. (…) To say that narration is a recital which orders the past is not to imply that it is a conservative closure to what is new. On the contrary, narration preserves the meaning that is behind us so that we can have meaning before us. There is always *more* order in what we narrate than in what we have actually lived, and this narrative excess (*surcroît*) of order, coherence and unity, is a prime example of the creative power of narration. (Ricoeur, 103-4)

This is precisely what happens in *This Is Not a Novel* (2002), which draws attention to its fictional or non-fictional status by overtly playing with its allusion to Magritte.

"Intertwining" echoes: *This Is Not a Novel* (2002)

This Is Not a Novel[1] is a novel of echoes: it announces itself as "not a novel" (TINN 1), but a "*cri de coeur*, a hopeful message sent out into the world, like a piece of paper in a bottle dropped into the sea." Imogen Bailey, the narrator, hopes that her "brother Johnny (…) may read it and may pick up the nearest telephone" (1-2). The dialogic frame within which the writer addresses her brother is replicated within the "message" itself: Imogen's memoir is prompted by the letters and diaries found in the family trunk that she inherited after her father's recent death, and reproduces and comments excerpts from those fragments of the past. This familiar enough fictional device has a double effect: it affords snapshots of the family's, and Ireland's, twentieth-century history; and this polyphonic view of the past in turn offers internal and external perspectives of the narrator's predecessors, so that older and younger generations may reveal aspects of one another. It is precisely the voices behind the chronology of events that Imogen seeks to retrieve as she listens to the echoes from the past and incorporates them in her own assessment of how they developed into the present. If, as Richard Kearney puts it, "It takes two to story" and "there is no common genre of telling one's story *to oneself alone*" (Kearney, 45),[2] Imogen acknowledges this necessary dialogue with the others belonging to her present and to her past when, just before her final words, she writes in a letter to her brother:

> I would love to think that there was someone in the world with whom I could share the past and try to untangle the threads of our inheritance, our weaknesses and whatever strengths we may have.
> It is our past, Johnny. (TINN, 211)

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[1] Henceforth quotations from *This Is Not a Novel* are indicated in the text by the abbreviation TINN.

[2] Commenting on "narrative therapy" and citing Adam Philips's *Flirtation* (1994), Kearney makes the point that there is always an explicit or implicit addressee in stories: "Even personal diaries and journals, it could be said, are implicitly addressed to another, even if it is an alter-ego of the diarist her/himself as s/he imagines her/himself to be, residing at some remove from the immediacy of the experiences described in the diary itself." (Kearney, 165n15)

In her wording, the communication and commonality that she seeks through dialogue involves "sharing" and "untangling" a common "inheritance." The past is therefore not perceived as an immutable given that in some deterministic way produces a given present; nor is it a finished event, open as it is to revisitations from the present which, by engaging with testimonies from the past, may turn an overpowering burden into an accepted "inheritance."

Imogen's narrative, in constant dialogue with past voices and a present addressee, shows how she conceives this process: she does not obliterate others' voices, rather listens and responds to them, allowing previously held views and feelings to be changed in the process; she recognises family resemblances and derives a sense of belonging from them, yet does not regard others' life-stories as fatal verdicts on her own; she treasures continuity, but does not equate it with repetition. Telling her story thus involves putting it in perspective and in dialogue with other, and others', perspectives: the "large trunk full of papers, letters, diaries, press cuttings and old photographs, all pertaining to [her father's] family" (TINN, 10), provides the tangible remains which lead her to a literal rereading of both past and present.[3] As the appeal to her brother shows, such re-reading is not final; it is rather an opening engendering other openings, like an unfolding and unpredictable dialogue.

By claiming the vital interestedness of her "message," and disclaiming the potentially solipsistic superfluity of fiction, Imogen stresses the dialogic, dynamic and unfinished format of her utterance. However, given the recognisable fictional traits that characterise her attempt to authenticate her narrative as non-fiction – it is not a novel but "a piece of paper in a bottle dropped into the sea" (1) –, Imogen's claim of her narrative's bearing on reality ends up applying to what is, after all, a

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[3] Imogen, like many a Johnston's reminiscing protagonist, illustrates Ricoeur's point about the "ethics of memory," which "is possible because memory has two kinds of relation to the past," the first being "a relation of *knowledge*, while the second is a relation of *action* [for] remembering is a way of *doing* things, not only with words, but with our minds; in remembering or recollecting we are exercising our memory, which is a kind of action" and raises the issue of the "*use* and *abuse* of memory," hence of ethics. (Ricoeur, 5)

fictional narrative. Imogen's attempt to emphasise the differences between fiction and non-fiction therefore highlights some similarities instead. As a result, it unsettles both the notion that fiction is inherently solipsistic and superfluous, and the notion that non-fiction requires belief in its truth and dispenses with interpretation.

Ambiguously placed (and played) between fiction and non-fiction, Imogen's narrative makes the reader aware of "the experience of fiction," which Peggy Kamuf describes as "essentially equivocal, hanging as it does between the suspension of the referent, as signalled by fiction's mark, and the persistence of the assumption of referential language, whereby fiction also always exceeds itself toward something other" (Kamuf, 163). The reader is thus faced with the need to assess the *relation* between reality and fiction.

In the beginning was "ceci n'est pas une pomme": narrative frameworks

The reader coming for the first time to a book called *This Is Not a Novel* will be confronted with the provocative title printed on a cover that reproduces René Magritte's painting "*L'Empire des Lumières*" (1954), translated on the back cover as "House of Lights." The painting is a seemingly realistic depiction of a house partly revealed by internal and external light, and partly concealed in the shade by its closed shutters, surrounding trees and darkness, in a *chiarioscuro* that is further reflected in a pond. At first sight, it is a nocturnal scene, yet a second look will detect how realism is undermined by surrealism since the nocturnal scene is set against a diurnal sky. The painting unsettles the innocent viewer, as does the title, though the artistically literate reader will find in Magritte an anchor for this procedure of defamiliarising certainties, making you aware of the conventions upon which representation rests (one cannot light the image of a pipe or the word "pipe" any more than one can bite the image of an apple or the word "apple"), and asking you to step into a world where day and night, revelation and concealment, coexist, as in "House of Lights."

How is one then to read a book that declares itself not to be a novel, yet offers contradicting signs to that effect, since the claim is made both

by the author Jennifer Johnston, whose name features on the cover under the title, and by Imogen Bailey, the narrator, who begins her account by stating that "This is not a novel" (TINN, 1)? Moreover, the book carries two dedications, one before and the other after Imogen's narrative: the first is to a friend of the author's, while the latter, in memory of Francis Ledwidge, could be attributed either to the narrator or to the author. Following the title page, there is the usual statement that "All characters in this publication are fictitious and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental." Imogen is Johnston's creation but whereas the author writes fiction, the narrator asks to be read as non-fiction, with its attendant truth-claims and ethical implications. Caught in this conundrum, the reader, like the viewer of Magritte's variations on "The Betrayal of Images" theme, is provoked into a cautious awareness of the implied codes for reading fiction and non-fiction and is likely to neither adopt the suspension of disbelief required by realistic fiction, nor endorse the truth-claims of non-fictional memoirs.

Stripped of certainties from the beginning, the reader will have to adjust her or his expectations and degree of belief or disbelief in the process of reading, in what parallels Imogen's own exercise of memory, which consists in the process of reading and re-reading signs from the past. The "House of Lights" reproduced on the book's cover, with its realism undercut by surrealism, is an apt metaphor for the reader's predicament (caught between reality and fiction), while hinting at the Baileys' family house called Paradise, which turns out to be a rather problematic Garden of Eden, not unlike, after all, the imponderable biblical one.

Creative creatures and their scenes of creation

Imogen's piecing together of her family's past and its echoes and variations across generations is itself framed within the scene of creation that opens the novel:

> This is not a novel.
> I want to make that perfectly clear.
> Normally when I set out to write a piece of fiction, I invent
> a setting, a landscape, a climate, a world, in fact, that has no

> reality outside the pages of the book, and into that world I insert my characters. I become the puppet master and I tweak and push these wretches, who, like us, have never asked to be born, through all sorts of contortions, until that merciful moment when I type those exultant words, 'The End'.
> A bit like God, really, who I'm sure had the best intentions when he created the world and then popped those two innocents into his Garden of Eden. Did he, at that moment, sit back, fold his hands and smile at his own handiwork? If so he must have got the shock of his life when that old serpent slithered on to the scene and blew his scenario sky high.
> I am not sure into what category this piece of writing should fall. (TINN, 1)

If writing a piece of fiction involves "inventing" a world "that has no reality outside the pages of the book," it nevertheless bears two crucial likenesses to that reality: it makes the writer "become the puppet master (…) a bit like God," and it makes her creatures be born "like us [who] have never asked to be born." This "world that has no reality outside the pages of the book" is then created in the likeness of Imogen's version of the genesis, featuring a non-omnipotent creator who sees his newly created Garden of Eden being intruded upon by "that old serpent." One is tempted to wonder whether the old serpent was part of God's creation or belonged to the obscure origins from whence God emerged. Be it as it may, both creator and creatures are exposed to forces beyond their control: human beings have no control over the fact that they are born at all, and God has no control over what happens in his newly created garden. In Imogen's playful rendering, the imponderable unknown belongs to creation from the very beginning: to create is to play with the possibilities of the world, setting in motion unforeseen connections that involve the potential confrontation with the feared unknown; it further involves playing with the possibilities of the word which likewise elude the experienced writer's *a priori* categorisation: "I am not sure into what category this piece of writing should fall." Imogen thus invites the reader into a scene of creation rendered as unfinished and open to unpredictability, change and questioning:

> What would have happened, I wondered, if that serpent, at the last moment, just as Eve was about to take the fateful bite, had said softly into her ear, 'And by the way, Madame, *ceci n'est pas une pomme*'?
> Would she have clobbered him with a fig leaf and thrown the apple away? In which case, would the world now be a very different place, filled with harmony and love, fraternal feelings everywhere, nobody eating apples or writing books more subversive than 'Noddy in Toyland'? (TINN, 2-3)

In the beginning of the story then was curiosity, with the desire to know prevailing over the injunction to obey and remaining as the inherent mark of creation and its creative creatures; these are both created *and* creators since the possibility, and attendant responsibility, to take or not take "the fateful bite" is inscribed in their genetic code from the beginning. Imogen's choice of the adjective "fateful" to refer to the bite further intimates what Corey Robin notes in the opening lines to *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (2004). As he writes, what follows from that curious bite is fear, "the first emotion experienced by a character in the Bible" (1): "Not until they eat the forbidden fruit do we hear of felt experience. And when we do, it is fear. Why fear? Perhaps because, for the authors of the Bible, fear is the most electric of emotions. (…) Shallow temptation gives way to dramatic choice, inertial motion to elected action." (1)

That to tell is itself an "elected action" is highlighted in Imogen's re-telling and questioning of the scene of creation, a gesture that casts *the* beginning as *a* beginning that is narratively created *a posteriori*. This is in line with Rob Pope's understanding of myths of creation as "*re*-creation myths" for two reasons: firstly, "every creation myth involves creation from something"; secondly, "every telling or presentation of a creation myth is in some measure a re-telling or re-presentation of a version or vision that is held already to exist" and "it is the very words, stories, images and associated actions of a myth which themselves in the *event* – *through* the processes of narration and dramatisation – *realise* the moment of creation [and] *bring* its truth *into being*," so that the "telling or performance of the myth (…) can be grasped as an *embodiment* and an *enactment*, not simply the record or rehearsal of a prior state" (Pope, 137). If narration re-enacts

creation, it does so in a dialogic framework that includes an interlocutor in the role of witness and co-creator, thereby reiterating Kearney's argument that "God depends on us to be. Without us no Word can be made flesh" (Kearney, 4). Creativity is thus presented as a dialogic and collaborative process in which the creator and the creature participate as co-responsible and interdependent creative agents. Just as the reader has ceased to be a "passive consumer of literature" (Eagleton, 53), in this democratic genesis creation is not the finished product of an autocratic creator and, out of curiosity and fear, the creature has become co-creative.

Imogen's account of the co-responsible relation between creator and creature is akin to Collette Fellous's rendering of the relationship between God whose word was made flesh and the creature that now re-creates through words. In *Aujourd'hui* (2005), the French writer born into a Jewish family in Tunisia recreates the day (5 June 1967) that marked a turning point in her own and her native country's history. Her narrative is a tentative re-creation that stretches towards past and future "todays" and inscribes itself in a genealogy of scenes of creation. Early on the narrator announces the scene as it was played for the first time: "Voici la scène quand elle a été jouée pour la première fois" (28); yet, after playing it, an interlocutory voice claims not to have understood and asks to be told the story "plus précisément," to which the narrator acquiesces: "Alors, viens plus près et regarde. Voici un autre jour pour compléter la scène. Mais c'est juste un exemple." (29) No telling, it emerges, will ever exhaust the story to be told so that every retelling is a tentative and approximate "example" of the creative scene. In *Aujourd'hui*, God is "celui qui a eu la délicatesse de s'absenter du monde. Il déteste entendre dire qu'on croit en lui, il est l'allié de ce que je ne sais pas prononcer, il aime mon silence, et comprend toutes les langues, même celles qui n'existent pas encore. Il est à la fois une espèce de double et d'étranger en moi. En cela, il me donne de l'espace, il me laisse vivre" (29). This is not a God who demands obedience as a tribute to his creative power ("he hates to hear that one believes in him"), but a God who expects his creatures to honour the creative power in them. Accordingly, he has "the politeness to absent himself from the world" so as to engender a vital space where his creatures may "live," hence exercise their creative agency vis-à-vis their own lives. This room for possibility and choice is also the room of what

may be said and lives as potentiality in the interstices of words.[4]

Creation is therefore generated not by words alone, but in the silent and pregnant space between words, in the interplay between the said and the unsaid, and in the dialogue between "the double and the foreigner in me." God is conceived as my same ("double") and my Other ("étranger" [foreigner]), thus in the likeness of the interlocutor with whom relation is possible because of a shared sameness, and necessary because of a challenging difference. Creativity therefore occurs in the vital space between sameness and otherness, which is configured in these re-creation scenes as the interplay between creative creatures and their co-created creator. This interplay also prefigures the intra– and intersubjective spaces where sameness and otherness are negotiated within the self and among individuals.

Creativity as an aesthetics and ethics of response

The creation scenes described above perform re-creations. They thereby deviate from the notion of creation *ex nihilo* and pragmatically and conceptually propose creativity as ongoing re-creation. As re-creations, they participate in a long lineage of past and present understandings of

[4] In her essay "Por qué se escribe" [Why one writes], the Spanish philosopher María Zambrano claims that this interplay between the said and the unsaid is preserved in the "act of faith" of writing, which consists in sharing a "revealed secret" that resists explanation but calls for communication: "Puro acto de fe el escribir, y más, porque el secreto revelado no deja de serlo para quien lo comunica escribiéndolo. El secreto se muestra al escritor, pero no se le hace explicable; es decir, no deja de ser secreto para él primero que para nadie, y tal vez para él únicamente, pues el sino de todo aquel que primeramente tropieza con una verdad es encontrarla para mostrarla a los demás y que sean ellos, su público, quienes desentrañen su sentido" (Zambrano, 40). [To write is a sheer act of faith, and all the more so since the revealed secret does not lose its secrecy to the person who communicates it through writing. The secret reveals itself to the writer but does not render itself explicable; that is, it does not lose its secrecy to the writer before losing it to anybody else, and maybe to him only, for the fate of he who first stumbles upon a truth is to find it so as to show it to others, and it is for others, his public, to disembowel its meaning.]

creativity as divine creation, secular creativity and natural procreation.[5] Over time, the topic has attracted interest from various quarters, ranging from theology to business, physics, biology, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, and the arts. As Rob Pope notes in *Creativity: Theory, History, Practice* (2005), there has been a shift from *object*-centred approaches to creativity, derived from a Judeo-Christian "notion of 'creation from nothing' [that] persisted, and was maintained even by a rational empiricist such as John Locke" (37), to some contemporary *process*-centred approaches:

> [T]his emphasis upon what may be called *creation as past fact rather than current act* was to prove of enduring significance. It is maintained in object-centred approaches to aesthetics which stress the overriding importance of the finished work of art as 'the artist's creation', as distinct from practice-based approaches which stress the activity of creating and the more or less artisanal process of making. (…) Its counterpart in commodity aesthetics – in advertising and marketing, for instance – is an emphasis on the shiny product for consumption rather than the messy process of production (…). An emphasis upon the creat*ed* rather than the creat*ing* aspects of creation is also there in approaches to literature and the arts that stress appreciation of the finished work rather than an understanding of its manner of composition and modes of transmission and reproduction. In all these cases, the model of 'divine creation from nothing' underwrites an aesthetics and a politics of fixed (not fluid) form and absolute (not relative) value. (Pope, 38)

[5] See Raymond Williams's entry on "Creative" in *Keywords* (1988, 82-4). In the beginning was divine creation, according to which "the 'creature' – who has been created – cannot himself create"; only in the Renaissance was this Augustine meaning extended to "indicate present or future [human] making" (82). "Creativity, a general name for the faculty" to create, emerged in the twentieth century (83). For a more developed history of the term, see Paul Dawson's "From imagination to creativity" in his *Creative Writing and the New Humanities* (2005, 21-47); and Pope's chapter "Re-creation myths, ancient and modern" (Pope, 137-67).

Accordingly, Pope offers a dynamic and dialogic definition of creativity: "Creativity is extra/ ordinary, original and fitting, full-filling, in(ter)ventive, co-operative, un/ conscious, fe< >male, re…creation" (Pope, 52). Rather than "a once-and-for-all act," he redefines creativity as "re…creation" (84), hence as a dynamic and open-ended process of collaborative relations which shares "the performative aspect of speaking/ writing and listening/ reading" as proposed by speech act and reception theories, and "resonates with Bakhtin's notion of the vibrantly 'dialogic' utterance that is constantly 'response-able' (i.e. both responsive and responsible) with respect to current conditions and surrounding people"; thus, "[t]o be fully 'response-able' is inevitably to be involved in *re…creation*" (85).

Jennifer Johnston's (and Colette Fellous's) re-creations notoriously "counter-sign, re-invent, re-vision and re-member" the Judeo-Christian genesis, just as they deviate from its Romantic derivative, the "genius" as "the ultimate embodiment, of 'the great man as 'creator' – or 'destroyer'," hence "the personalised quintessence of a highly individualised brand of creativity, [of] 'creativity as hero', with an overwhelming emphasis on the male" (Pope, 105). In the face of a divine creator traditionally conceived as male, and of a history of hu*man* creators self-engendered in the likeness of their divine forefather, these "fe< >male" re-creations reconfigure the relation between creator and creature as a collaborative, dynamic and open process rather than as a hierarchical, autocratic and finished gesture. By restoring agency to the creature and going beyond active and passive polarities, they re-envisage *being* as *becoming*, so that, as Pope argues, "the 'human being' had perhaps be better conceived as a series of *human becomings*" (78).

In recent literature on creativity, as in Jennifer Johnston's novels, *being* is rendered as a creative process of *co-becoming*. Like the theories, the novels enact this in-between space of relation where sameness and difference, subjectivity and objectivity come into play. They further take a close look at how the multiple reverberations of specific constraints require intricate choices and the ability to devise possibilities of co-living with others and with the otherness of change and the unknown.

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Reading a Book, Reading a Film: A Portrait of Youth in "My Son the Fanatic"

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Reading a Book, Reading a Film: A Portrait of Youth in "My Son the Fanatic"

Youth is usually regarded as the image of the future, of something new, yet to come. This future is frequently associated with a rupture with the values of the past, a significant break with the standards, specifically the moral standards, of our parents – a break often involving conflict between generations.

It is often considered that young people are more liberal, more tolerant than their predecessors. But what to think when youngsters stand up for the conservative values that their fathers have rejected and even fought against?

This is, apparently, the case in "My Son the Fanatic"[1], a short story by Hanif Kureishi, which explores the relations within a Pakistani family, specifically between a father, fully adapted to the English way of life, and a son, caught in the mesh of religious fundamentalism.

What my paper wishes to explore, however, goes beyond this father/son relationship, and takes, as its starting point, another dualism: the connection between Kureishi's short story and its film adaptation by Udayan Prasad[2]. Therefore, it is my aim to compare and contrast the short story with the film: how different is it to create a film having as its starting point a novel from creating a film by taking a short story as its basis, especially, as is the case here, when that short story doesn't amount to more than thirteen pages? How do we as readers and/or viewers stand before each of the two narratives?

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[1] Hanif Kureishi, "My Son the Fanatic" in *Love in a Blue Time*. (New York: Scribner Paperback Fiction, 1997).

[2] *My Son the Fanatic*. Directed by Udayan Prasad. Screenplay by Hanif Kureishi. (UK: Miramax Films, 1997).

To address these questions, we need first to consider the connections between these two arts, literature and film. James Monaco, a film theorist, compares film with the other arts, from theatre to music, and reaches the conclusion that the novel is the art form that comes closest to film, due to their respective narrative potential: "The narrative potential of film is so marked that it has developed its strongest bond not with painting, not even with drama, but with the novel. Both films and novels tell long stories with a wealth of detail and they do it from a perspective of a narrator"[3]. This may be one of the reasons for the profusion of film adaptations of novels.

In *My Son the Fanatic*, the short story sets the foundations for the film, by providing the setting and the main characters, but it gets nowhere near the level of development of the latter. Kureishi wrote the script himself and he is an awarded screenwriter with a considerable part of his work having been either adapted or used as a source of inspiration for audiovisual media. Some examples are the adaptations of *The Buddha of Suburbia* as a television series, or the film *Intimacy*, based upon the homonymous novel and several of his short stories.

As Timothy Corrigan argues, films frequently elicit 'a strong emotional or intellectual reaction'[4] so that they are privileged means for both conveying and eliciting feeling. By adapting "My Son the Fanatic" to cinema, Hanif Kureishi, was able to extend his work in several ways: he added more characters; he changed the general tone of the story, introducing a touch of humour, that, in my opinion, is totally absent from the short story; moreover, he could reach a wider audience, thus contributing to a deeper discussion about the moral issues lightly touched upon in the book; to mention but a few of the more relevant differences between written text and film.

Nevertheless, a film is a collective work, whereas writing is an individual work, as George Bluestone says, in the classic *Novels Into Film*:

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[3] James Monaco. *How to Read a Film*. 1977 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[4] Timothy Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 2001) p.5.

"An art whose limits depend on a moving image, mass audience, and industrial production is bound to be different from an art whose limits depend on language, a limited audience and individual creation."[5] It is very hard to discern how far Kureishi's collaboration goes beyond the writing of the script. For instance, did he have anything to do with the choice of actors, did the director give him any indications on how he wanted the film to be, did he have anything to say about the chosen musical score, or, most of all, did he even like the final product? If, on the one hand, my argument is that the film is an extension of the writer's work which I wish to analyse as such, on the other hand, I wonder how much of Kureishi's point of view is there in this film. What was he trying to achieve when he decided to develop the short story – not only develop it, but turn it into a different object – by using a medium that enables the message to reach so many more people than a book?

According to George Bluestone, adapting a written work to a film involves a process of additions, alterations and deletions.[6] The screen-writer and/or the director choose(s) what they want to keep, alter or omit. Sometimes the ending is changed, or a character is omitted, other characters are added or given depth, some dialogues are maintained exactly as they appear in the novel, while others involve different characters.

Kureishi's short story deals, essentially, with people and feelings, while the film develops the political, social and moral implications of the action more thoroughly. In the short story, the plot develops around the impotence of the father, Parvez, as he feels that he is losing his son to the fundamentalist way of thinking which he voluntarily abandoned years ago. In both formats, the son takes upon himself the role of judging his own father, of being the role model for the family. We know that he once had an English girlfriend, enjoyed art and music and collected loads of material things (records, videogames, fashionable clothes, etc). Now he throws the material things away, replacing them with praying and taking

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[5] George Bluestone, *Novels Into Film: The Metamorphosis of Fiction Into Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957) pp.63-64.

[6] idem.

action within the community. At first, like most parents, Parvez looks for hints of subversive behaviour to account for the son's strange conduct. But what bewilders him is that Ali is getting tidier and he has even grown a beard, a detail which curiously will be omitted from the script, as well as his request that his father should grow one, too, or, at least, a moustache. It's almost as if moral uprightness should be shown in terms of physical appearance.

The son's actions are mistakenly taken by the father for signs of maturity, as can be read on the first page of the short story: "Initially Parvez had been pleased: his son was outgrowing his teenage attitudes."[7] But gradually, Parvez comes to realize the complex implications of the son's newly adopted course of action.

On the whole, the story foregrounds the extent to which youth is a decisive period for acquiring values and choosing ways of behaviour; at the same time, it draws attention to how exposed to all sorts of external influences youngsters are. In Parvez's case, his youth experience determined the path he followed, away from the rules of the Koran. He tells a story about his religion lessons that illustrates his reluctance towards any religion: "To stop him falling asleep when he studied, the Moulvi had attached a piece of string to the ceiling and tied it to Parvez's hair, so that, if his head fell forward, he would instantly awake. After this indignity Parvez avoided all religions."[8] In Ali's case, the absence of the father, working too many hours a day away from home, favoured the youngster's search for an alternative model. Ali, whose name in the film is Farid, turned to religion. The paradox is that, superficially, this could be considered a good thing. In the short story, Parvez is even relieved when he discovers that the son's strange behaviour is due to praying and not drug use, as he, initially, suspects. When he tells his friends, they are also puzzled: "The friends, who had been so curious before, now became oddly silent. They could hardly condemn the boy for his devotions."[9]

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[7] Hanif Kureishi, "My Son the Fanatic" p.119.

[8] idem, p.123.

[9] idem, p.123.

But, what could be a source of pride to a parent, becomes an unexpected generation gap too wide to be crossed, for Parvez wished that his son would take advantage of Western prosperity, instead of renouncing to it.

Parvez is a man desperately looking for love and companionship, and he finds it in the moments that he spends with Bettina, the prostitute and friend. Many of his thoughts in the short story become dialogues with her in the film. In the film his wife, who remains nameless in the short story and is referred to in a single paragraph, becomes another critical voice, alongside Farid's. Thus, he finds comfort in this relation with the prostitute. In the short story, Parvez and Bettina just talk and keep company with each other. In the film, Kureishi chose to extend this relation physically, with the camera frequently focusing on Bettina's body, as if it were Parvez's own look, in a growing desire that culminates in a sexual relationship – one more thing for Farid to criticize.

For the moment, let's focus on the short story. It is told by a third-person narrator, but the whole narrative is focused on Parvez. We accompany Parvez's actions and follow his thoughts, in a way which makes us sympathize with his misfortunes. Although in Farid's eye, Parvez is portrayed as being corrupted by Western culture – 'a sink of hypocrites, adulterers, homosexuals, drug takers and prostitutes'[10] – the fact that the reader sees through Parvez's eyes avoids any feeling of real antipathy towards this man. In fact, what the story makes apparent is paradoxically Parvez's human dimension, with his shortcomings and his perplexities which the reader shares as he goes along. The more Parvez sinks into drinking, friendship with a prostitute, and other offences against the laws of the Koran, the more he can be considered, after all, a human being, trying to live as best he can: 'He had a conscience. There were a few things of which he was ashamed, but on the whole he had lived a decent life'.[11] The son, on the contrary, ascribes himself superior righteousness, although estranging himself from his family, disrespecting his father, defending segregation, racism and sexism. At least, that would be the reader's

[10] idem, p.126.

[11] idem, p.125.

perception when faced with the following statements: “Yet Parvez felt his son’s eccentricity as an injustice. (…) And so, for Ali, he had worked long hours and spent a lot of money paying for his education as an accountant. He had bought him good suits, all the books he required and a computer.”[12] Who wouldn’t feel sympathetic with the effort of this father, trying to provide for his son a quality of life he could never have for himself? When Ali tries to judge his father’s conduct, accusing him of breaking “countless rules of the Koran”[13], he can only point out that Parvez has been eating pork and drinking alcohol. He is unable to accuse him of anything that the reader could consider as a serious and unforgivable sin.

Of course, this isn’t exactly the case in the film. There is no third-person narrator, adopting Parvez’s point of view, except for the camera, which can be a very crude observer and critic. So what does the camera show? First of all, while in the short story we only see through Parvez’s eyes, in the film there is enough room for the rest of the characters to emerge, especially Bettina, who becomes the father’s escape from the loneliness he feels in his own home. What was a story centred on the father/son relationship, becomes a more complex tale which mixes family, love, and moral issues. The viewer stands in a different position from the reader, seeing through the camera, instead of seeing through Parvez’s eyes. Kureishi’s script allows the viewer to constantly redefine his position, as he walks with Parvez through the night life, drinking, and, especially, the adultery which didn’t exist in the short story. As Kenneth C. Kaleta puts it when discussing the short story, “The setting is the world of late night, a world of cabbies, dealers, and whores in north England.”[14] The director transposes this setting accurately in the film.

If, on the one hand, Parvez is still shown as a likeable character, due to his humanity, on the other hand, we are faced with a man who cheats on his wife, arranges clients for the local prostitutes, etc. This portrait of

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[12] idem, p.119.

[13] idem, p.125.

[14] Kenneth C. Kaleta. *Hanif Kureishi: Postcolonial Storyteller* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998) p.158.

Parvez emerges with the help of the German character, Mr. Schitz, an addition to the plot, who takes Parvez through the meanders of nightlife, prostitution, drugs and decadence, making Parvez and the spectator fully aware of the negative side of Western culture that Farid so much emphasizes. Two parallel sequences in the film show a journey crossing today's Northern England, with all its contrasts. In the first sequence, Parvez drives Schitz through some places that remind him of his early days in that country, the tone being a bit nostalgic. In the second sequence, Parvez takes a detour, against Farid's wishes, to drive the mullah (an addition to the story, which highly amplifies hypocrisy inside religion itself) through what he calls the "real life", while Farid wanted to give him a guided tour which would leave out shameful visions of prostitutes wandering around the streets, and, worst of all, greeting Parvez. Another similarity can be found in the way the director films the preparations for the religious visit and Schitz's party simultaneously. Farid, his mother and his friends are shown untiringly preparing the house for the mullah, putting everything as respectable as possible and getting rid of what could be embarrassing (like pictures and specific objects). Set against this sequence is Parvez, hiring prostitutes and taking care of drinks and other luxury details, for the German's party. Both of them are busy and engaged in their affairs with the same devotion.

The German is also used by Kureishi to destroy Bettina's image in the short story where she almost takes the role of a psychologist or a family therapist than that of a prostitute, since she gives advice, companionship and understanding. Seen through Parvez's eyes, there is no evil in her, in spite of her way of life. In the film, however, the camera can't help but reveal the depravation of the world in which Bettina moves. To smooth this alteration, she is given a double identity: Bettina, the prostitute, can become Sandra – her real name – when she's alone with Parvez and redeemed of her sins.

Against Parvez stands Farid. In the film, he is still a disagreeable character, though capable of arousing mixed feelings within the elderly Muslim community. Farid and his friends are not welcome by the local religious congregation, for their approach is too violent and radical, but the elders cannot help feeling a certain admiration, because the boys stand up for their beliefs and their religion whereas they (Parvez and the rest of

the adult community) never did that. The scene where this is shown forces the viewer into a different level of approach, because it enhances the image of the father as someone who has unquestioningly adopted the Western way of life. Recent events in world history may have increased religious fundamentalism, so we tend to forget that many Muslim immigrants went to England and other Western countries in search of Western commodities. However, the sons and daughters of these immigrants, trying to build their identity, are easily enticed towards a sort of conservative point of view that most of their parents have already lost, as a result of a lifetime submerged in hard work. The growth of the Pakistani and other Muslim communities has forced England to deal with these two positions, which have been responsible for disturbances within and without the Muslim community that can no longer be ignored.

The general impression is that Kureishi didn't want to free anybody or anything from guilt or from a critical perspective in the film. Everyone is shown as having a negative side, as well as a positive one: Parvez, Bettina, Farid, the religious fundamentalists… Kureishi leaves it up to the viewer to decide for him/herself which side to choose. The short story provides us with a more limited freedom of approach, as we only have access to Parvez's point of view. On this topic, Kaleta states: "The short-story genres suits Kureishi's storytelling here, since there are no subplots that might distract from the impact of its central power struggle between Parvez and Ali that implodes to its inevitable violent conclusion."[15]

The short story ends with Ali asking "So who's the fanatic now?", a line that is kept in the film, but doesn't end it. The son is violently beaten by the father, both in the short story and in the film. Nonetheless, in the first instance, the beating seems to be a consequence of Parvez's drunkenness, whereas in the film, this beating only occurs after a series of other violent events which are not instigated by Parvez: the uncanny visit/invasion of the mullah, the violence of the Muslims against the prostitutes, the constant judgement of Parvez by his own son and wife, Parvez's economical difficulties caused by his son's debts, etc. The initial

[15] idem, p.159.

humour gradually fades out throughout the film, and the tone becomes increasingly aggressive. When we get to the scene where Parvez beats Farid, the spectator and Parvez have respectively surpassed the limits of patience and sense. Both are exhausted by having had to deal for too long with violence, injustice, etc. Both want it to end. In the short story it does indeed end, but the film goes on to explore the family's increasing dismemberment. Farid leaves home, before Minoo, the wife, returns to India, all because of Parvez, or was it not exclusively Parvez's fault? Minoo makes clear that what has happened was a consequence of Parvez's selfishness: "Put self before family" is her accusation. Parvez seems to admit to his guilt by saying "I have managed to destroy everything"; yet, he says so with a slight tone of relief. And where does Parvez end? With or without Bettina, the final scene shows Parvez and his bottle of alcohol, and the final words we hear, after all the violence, are those of Percy Mayfield's song "Please Send me Someone to Love".

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Words as Game: The Writing and Reading of Poetry

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The Writing and Reading of Poetry

«L'artiste (…) sait que rien n'est simple et que l'autre existe.»
Albert Camus, "Témoin de la liberté" (November 1948)

1. The writer as hunter

Some time ago I had to make a selection of texts to include in a textbook for a literary propaedeutics with a view to illustrating one of the discussion items in the programme, namely, the peculiar relation writers in general and poets in particular, hold with language. My purpose was to make students aware of the contrast Jean-Paul Sartre established back in 1948 between the poet's attitude to language and that of the common speaker. In *Qu'est-ce que la literature?*, Sartre writes:

> En fait, le poète s'est retiré d'un seul coup du langage-instrument; il a choisi une fois pour toutes l'attitude poétique qui considère les mots comme des choses et non comme des signes. Car l'ambiguïté du signe implique qu'on puisse à son gré le traverser comme une vitre et poursuivre à travers lui la chose signifiée ou tourner son regard vers sa *réalité* et le considérer comme objet. L'homme qui parle est au-delà des mots, près de l'objet; le poète est en deçà. Pour le premier, ils sont domestiques; pour le second ils restent á l'état sauvage. Pour celui-là, ce sont des conventions utiles, des outils qui s'usent peu à peu et qu'on jette quand ils ne peuvent plus servir; pour le second, ce sont des choses naturelles qui croissent naturellement sur la terre comme l'herbe et les arbres. (Sartre 18)

The instrumental attitude of the speaker in relation to language here, is contrasted with the poet's in metaphorical terms that, at a certain point, rely on the distinction between domestic and wild as applied to

words, implicitly likened to animals («Pour le premier [l'homme qui parle], ils sont *domestiques*; pour le second [le poète] ils restent *á l'état sauvage*» – my emphasis). In my search for texts (both in verse and prose, and written both by Portuguese and English writers and critics) to illustrate and discuss this issue, I was surprised to find the recurrent metaphor of words as wild game the writer had to chase and capture. So much so that in my textbook there came to be a section containing poems and parts of essays that you could aptly call "On Hunting." I will give you some examples before focusing on the one I have selected for my talk today. Let me start with an essayistic text. The critic Manuel Poppe, for instance, commenting on artistic activity in general writes: "O artista é um caçador de palavras, de cores, de símbolos. E, muitas vezes, um esbanjador e um caçador frustrado. Nem todas as palavras, nem todos os símbolos servem."[1]

Twentieth-century poets as diverse as Ruy Belo, Eugénio de Andrade, Alexandre O'Neill and Carlos de Oliveira have written on this hunting activity in various tones and styles. Let's take Oliveira's short poem, entitled "Vento" ("Wind"). There we read:

> As palavras
> cintilam
> na floresta do sono
> e o seu rumor
> de corças perseguidas
> ágil e esquivo
> como o vento
> fala de amor
> e solidão:
> quem vos ferir
> não fere em vão,
> palavras. (Oliveira 192)[2]

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[1] "The artist is a hunter of words, of colours, of symbols. And he is often a spendthrift and a frustrated hunter. Not every word, not every symbol suits him." All translations are mine, unless otherwise signalled.

[2] "The words / twinkle /in sleep's forest /and their whisper / whirring by as does in the chase / agile and wild / like the wind / speaks of love / and loneliness: / whoever hurts you, / won't hurt in vain, / words."

Eugénio de Andrade, for his part, complains that words obey him much less now than they used to in the past: "obedecem-me agora muito menos, / as palavras," he says in "Agora as palavras" ("Now Words"), a poem where he implicitly likens them to animals that react against his previous short leash ("rédea curta"); fortunately or unfortunately enough he seems to prefer the most capricious of them all, those that resist him most. He concludes his poem with a question: "Ou será que / já só procuro as mais encabritadas?" ("Or is it that / I only look for the most capricious?"). (Andrade 527-28)

In the case of Ruy Belo, even though his intimacy with words would apparently allow him to cast himself in the role of a "word tamer" ("domador de palavras"), he knows better and recognises words' ascendancy and their power over him. In his prose poem "Não sei nada" ("I know nothing"), referring to words, he writes: "Mas só eu – eu e os meus irmãos – sei em que medida sou eu que sou domado por elas. A iniciativa pertence-lhes. São elas que conduzem o meu trenó sem chicote, nem rédeas, nem caminho determinado antes da grande aventura." (Belo 258-59)[3] This ironic role reversal, however, should not blind us to the challenge posed by words to the poet and the way in which, most of the time, instead of reducing him to passivity they trigger in him the need to react and give them chase.

In another instance, words are seen as being sick, as in O'Neill's poem entitled "Sick animals" ("Animais doentes"), and it is the poet's role to heal them and bring them to life again. He sees them as all sorts of animals from insects, such as wasps, ants or grasshoppers to sheep or doves, lizards or even "stupid, commonplace chicken" (O'Neill 82)[4] Here it is not so much the poet as hunter as the poet as healer that is at stake.

As can be deduced from the examples given (and I can assure you that I could multiply them if need be)[5], one should ponder on this

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[3] "But only I – I and my brothers – know how far I am indeed tamed by them. The initiative is theirs. They drive my sleigh without whip or reins, or a predetermined route before the great adventure."

[4] "estúpidas galinhas corriqueiras."

[5] Another way of referring to words metaphorically is associating them with women

widespread insistence on words as animals and the poet as their hunter, as a metaphor for expressing the writer's obsession with language as his prime material – something to be both admired and tamed, chased and captured or possessed. Maybe it is no accident that all my examples come from male writers. As far as my research went I could not find similar poems written by women. No wonder, since hunting is traditionally a predominantly masculine activity. Another topic for further research and another paper, then, would be to look for the metaphors used by women writers when referring to their privileged relation with language…

But it is now time to turn your attention to the English poet I have included in this section of my textbook on poets as hunters. As many of you may have guessed by now the one I have in mind is Ted Hughes and the poem, "The Thought-Fox." It so happens that besides being an adequate illustration of the poet as a hunter, the poem also functions at other important levels and helps us understand other issues involved in the creation and the reading of poetry, thus outwitting the Portuguese poems so far alluded to and allowing me to make students aware of those other issues as well.

2. Creating the other: Ted Hughes's "The Thought-Fox"

A lot has been written on this most famous of Hughes's poems and I won't pretend to say anything particularly new, unless to the extent that I will use it for a reading that, in the environment of a literary propaedeutics class, aims at illustrating the concepts of literary production and reception together with the relevance of language for both.

One of the most striking features of this text is the fact that while it stages the poet in the act of writing the poem it also invites a perfor-

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the poet has to pursue, another type of "hunt." This is the case with Portuguese poet Manuel Alegre in poems like the 9th in his book *Com que pena: Vinte poemas para Camões*, 25. The same had already occured in his poem "As Palavras" in the earlier *O canto e as armas*, 122.

mative reading[6] of it that highlights the essence of the reading process as essentially creative and shows how reading is the symmetrical counterpart of writing. In other words, it calls attention to reading as a sort of "mimetic practice," as Geoffrey Galt Harpham has recently put it, whereby through an imaginative effort the reader tries "to grasp the process by which this particular text came to be." (Harpham 9) If indeed Hughes's poem can be experienced as, to use Derek Attridge's words: "an act, an event, of reading, never entirely separable from the act-event (…) of writing that brought it into being," (Attridge 59) then what confronts us in this text is a staging of the singularity of the literary work as it has been described by Prof. Attridge in his latest book, *The Singularity of Literature*. This is precisely what I will try to illustrate through my reading of "The Thought-Fox."

The first line of the poem clearly states its starting point, by emphasizing the originating imaginative act that creates it. The opening words, "I imagine," are the unequivocal statement of a deliberate creative act. The rest of the line: "this midnight moment's forest" – being the object of the initial verbal clause, already curiously fuses the realistic setting of creation, "this midnight moment," with the created setting where the imagined action will take place, the "forest." Moreover, by insisting on a certain inescapable alliterative pattern: "i**m**agi**n**e…**m**id**n**ight **m**o**m**e**n**t's" interlocked with: "midnigh**t** momen**t**'s fores**t**", the language reinforces the sense that we are both witnessing the author's act of writing and co-creating its product, by immediately visualizing a forest, thus figuring ourselves as actively contributing to the emergence of the text as an imagined other. Therefore when we reach the second line: "Something else is alive," we are willing to receive and host this unknown presence that, by its liveliness, seems to compensate for the environmental conditions of the creative act, aptly characterised by an overall sense of absence or loss: "the clock's loneliness," the "blank page," "the window" with "no star." Yet, at this stage, the poet's presence is still there to be reckoned with by the reader: actively, in the movement of his fingers ("this blank page where *my* fingers move"

[6] I here take the notion of performative reading in the sense developed by Derek Attridge in *The Singularity of Literature*. See especially Attridge 95-106.

– my emphasis), a sign of liveliness that is significantly aligned with the aliveness of "something else," but also, in a more passive way, in the expectant attitude of looking through the window ("through the window *I* see no star" – my emphasis),[7] as though waiting for the arrival of some external entity. Noticeable also is how the blankness of the page is echoed in the starless window, thus mixing the space of the text with that of its context, in still another fusion of planes.

But when we reach the sixth line of the poem: "Something more near," we lose sight of the author's presence and confidently accept the verbal and imaginative game that invites us to mentally rehearse the gradual approach of a newcomer. The apparent paradox in "more near / though deeper within darkness" is still a reminder that we are invited to inhabit two planes simultaneously: that of the external darkness of the night which has been described as the immediate context of the poetic subject and that of "the deeper and more intimate darkness of the poet's imagination in whose depths an idea is mysteriously stirring." (Webster 2)

But by the third stanza it is not only the figment of the author's and our imagination that "is entering the loneliness," we as readers have been caught up in the verbal and imaginative game that the text has led us to endorse: we are also decidedly "entering the loneliness" as well, and fully prepared for an encounter. At first the reader is denied full visual contact with the other being. The adjective, followed by an adverb, plus simile (whose first term is still missing) – "Cold, delicately as the dark snow," all tend to postpone the moment of recognition, and when the subject is finally revealed it is still elusive, only "a fox's nose." But its reality is nevertheless strongly suggested by the gentle, cautious movement of its cold nose as it twitches against "twig" and "leaf." As Richard Webster has aptly noticed: "by inverting the natural order of the simile, and withholding the subject of the sentence, the poet succeeds in blurring its distinctness so that the fox emerges only slowly out of formlessness, leading the shadowy movement of its body as it comes closer." (Webster 2) After the nose, come the eyes but again these are not presences in

[7] According to Attridge, there is an element of passivity in the creation of the other. Cf. Attridge 23ss.

themselves, nor do they define the animal's form but rather, like the nose, they are subsidiary to underlining the body movement, still cautious and rhythmically slow though sure: "**T**wo eyes serve a movemen**t**, tha**t** now / And again now, and now, and now // Se**t**s nea**t** prin**t**s in**t**o the snow /Be**t**ween **t**rees,…". The decisive alliteration of "t" combined with "n" (also reinforced by assonances), contributes towards defining and stressing the broken cadence that characterises the clear imprinting of the animal's paws on the snow, one after the other, a movement and a rhythm also supported by the punctuation and the line-endings.[8]

These lines are also intimately linked by the rhyme, but the rhyme-scheme suddenly collapses thus miming an abrupt change in the progression of the animal: "…and wari**l**y a **l**ame / Shadow **l**ags by stump and in ho**ll**ow / Of a body…" It is as if the fox, hesitantly, has suddenly slowed down its course – and here the adverb "warily" together with the alliterated "l" in significant words as "**l**ame" and "**l**ags" decisively check the onward progressive rhythm of the previous lines. The suspicion inherent in this new retarded rhythm is also suggested by the clandestine connotation of the word "shadow". The fox, or what we sense of it, has stopped to check the terrain before boldly darting forward through a clearing: "… a **bod**y that is **bo**l**d** to come // Acr**o**ss clearings, …" – the rhythm has suddenly accelerated again, the quick recurrence of alliterated sounds stamping the rapid cadence of a deliberate run. It is as though we've glimpsed the lightning appearance of the fox's body, suddenly shooting across a clearing in the forest, the gap between the stanzas being itself the prosodic equivalent of the clearing which the fox, after a wary hesitation, will then quickly cross.[9]

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[8] Curiously, in one of his two "Myth and Education" papers, Hughes compares his own method for writing poetry to that of musical composition:" The way I do this, as I believe, is by using something like the method of a musical composer. I might say that I turn every combatant into a bit of music, then resolve the whole uproar into as formal and balanced a figure of melody and rhythm as I can. When all the words are hearing each other clearly, and every stress is feeling every other stress, and all are contented – the poem is finished." (Ekbert 163)

[9] I found this idea of the correspondence between the stanza-break and the clearing in the imagined forest in Webster's article already mentioned. Cf. Webster 3.

But already the length of a word like “clearings” anticipates a new step in the poem, marked by a sequence of words longer than before: “…an eye, / A widening, deepening greenness, / Brilliantly, concentratedly, / Coming about its own business”. Our eye is now zooming in and as the words become longer the targeted eye becomes larger, more vivid and seems to advance towards us, in a movement that is surer than ever.

This expansive highly visual, chromatic movement almost threatens to engulf us, but again the last stanza introduces a sequence of brief, incisive words marked by sharp alliterative effects and a staccato rhythm: “Till, with a **s**udden **s**harp hot **s**tink of fo**x** / It enter**s** the dark hole of the head.” There’s no escape, the fox’s unmistakable smell is upon us. It was too quick for us: we’re caught! As though mesmerized by the vivid, shining greenness of the fox’s eyes, we’ve inadvertently slackened alertness and were off our guard, at the mercy of this unexpected onslaught. The last two lines, however, break the spell, calling us back to reality, reintroducing the familiar images of the beginning: “The window is starless still; the clock ticks, / The page is printed.” We’re back at the poet’s room, where the clock is still ticking, and outside everything is also the same: the window remains “starless still.” “The page”, however, “is printed.” The prints in the snow have become the printed page, the fox is ensnared in the lair (or is it the trap?) of the poem. “The fox is the poem, and the poem is the fox.” (Webster 3)

3. The reader as prey and rescuer

In performing the text in this way, I hope to have shown how the reader here has been prey to a linguistic game that to a certain extent renders him powerless against the final onslaught of the fox/poem, but also how, without the specific act of imaginative cooperation triggered in him by the language of the text which he feels compelled to endorse and whose effects he undergoes, the poem/fox would never come into being. The act of reading is then defined simultaneously as the passive perception of the work and its creation. Again, Sartre calls our attention to this double edge of reading:

> La lecture, en effet, semble la synthèse de la perception et de la création; elle pose à la fois l'essentialité du sujet et celle de l'objet; l'objet est essentiel parce qu'il est rigoureusement transcendant, qu'il impose ses structures propres et qu'on doit l'attendre et l'observer; mais le sujet est essentiel aussi parce qu'il est requis non seulement pour dévoiler (c'est-à-dire faire qu'*il y ait* un objet) mais encore pour ce que cet objet *soit* absolument (c'est-à-dire pour le produire). En un mot, le lecteur a conscience de dévoiler et de créer à la fois, de dévoiler en créant, de créer par dévoilement. (Sartre 55)

The interesting thing about this is how both movements are inextricably interrelated, how, by my act of endorsing the words of the text, by my act of disinterested generosity or genuine hospitality to this other's language, by my readiness to undergo its effects, I become the subject of its creation as I perform it. It is precisely this double movement of turning the reader into both passive spectator and active creator that Hughes's poem sets into motion, so much so that by the end of it, the pertinent question which comes to mind is: Who is it that was caught, then, the reader or the fox, or both?

"The Thought-Fox" stages the emergence of the other in a literary work, in this case, metaphorically represented by the fox, as the product of an act of creation performed at the same time by both writer and reader. Both have their allotted roles to play and they play them in close interdependence in Hughes's poem. The writer's skilful handling of words unavoidably engages the reader in a linguistic experience, a progressive experience that demands cognitive, emotional, and physical responses, thus implicating him fully in the creative process described by the poem from the start. The other that is gradually created along the lines of the poem is the product of the creative act the poet has launched. For his part, by vividly concentrating in or reliving his past experience with foxes, the author is both faithfully responding to memories and previous experienced sensations[10] and, at the same time, by using newly found words,

[10] Cf. Ted Hughes's essay "Capturing Animals" in his *Poetry in the Making*, 15-35. Keith Sagar, a specialist on Hughes's work who was also a friend of the poet, argued

images, rhythms, alliterative effects, etc, he is creating it anew, thus giving rise to an unprecedented image of the fox and, therefore, to an entirely new or inventive text.[11]

In *Poetry in the Making*, a collection of essays published in 1967, Ted Hughes significantly alludes to his poetry writing in terms explicitly identified with hunting:

> The special kind of excitment, the slightly mesmerized and quite involuntary concentration with which you make out the stirrings of a new poem in your mind, then the outline, the mass and colour and clear final form of it, the unique living reality of it in the midst of the general lifelessness, all that is too familiar to mistake. This is hunting and the poem is a new species of creature, a new specimen of the life outside your own. (Hughes, *Poetry Making* 17)

Himself a hunter in his youth, he further explains how he started writing poetry when his enthusiasm for capturing animals started to abate, and how he became convinced that the two activities were somehow similar:

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that the origin of the poem was a real life episode that took place during the poet's childhood: "When Hughes was a schoolboy in Mexborough he would often set off at dawn and walk along a stretch of the river where the soft soil between the tree roots had been scooped out by the river in spate, leaving a series of humps and hollows. He found that if he crept up the side of one of the humps very quietly and peeped over, he might 'catch' some wildlife in the next hollow. One time, unknown to him, as he crept up one side of a hump, a fox was creeping up the other side. They arrived at the top simultaneously, and gazed into each other's eyes from a distance of about nine inches. After a split second, which could have been an eternity, the fox fled. But for that second it felt as though the intense being of the fox had entered his head, displacing, shouldering out, his own weaker, provisional, sense of selfhood." (Quoted from private correspondence between Keith Sagar and myself).

[11] Attridge's notion of verbal creation should be invoked here: "[I]t is a handling of language whereby something we might call 'otherness' or 'alterity', or 'the other', is made, or allowed, to impact upon the existing configurations of an individual's mental world." (Cf. Attridge 19).

> You might not think that these two interests, capturing animals and writing poems, have much in common. But the more I think back the more sure I am that with me the two interests have been one interest (…) In a way, I suppose, I think of poems as a sort of animal. They have their own life, like animals, by which I mean they seem quite separate from any person, even from their author, and nothing can be added to them or taken away without maiming and perhaps even killing them. (Hughes, *Poetry Making* 15)

This vulnerability of animals and poems is precisely what becomes apparent in our reading of the text, where the precarious though vivid emergence of the sketchy fox is one of the things the reader registers: reduced to the dimension of merely "something", a "nose", "two eyes", a "lame shadow", "a body", "an eye" and finally "a sudden sharp hot stink", the fox is from the start in serious danger of becoming no more than prints on a page, forever imprisoned in the mere sounds and shapes of printed words – no more than the sign of an absence.[12] It is here that the role of the reader becomes crucial. For, as Derek Attridge has recognised, the pertinent obligation the reader has towards the text is not to look for its immanent meaning but the challenge is rather: "how best to perform a text's engagement with linguistic power."(Attridge 98)

This performative or performing character of the reading process which involves awareness and an individual's experience of the specific sequence of words found in the poem is what constitutes for Attridge the essence of literary reading as an inherently creative act that responds and corresponds to the act-event of literary writing. An act that occurs each

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[12] Attridge calls attention to this formal side inherent in literature but at the same time to the way in which it should be viewed primarily not so much as a static entity ("empirical structure") but rather as a dialogical one ("performed mobility"): "Clearly, the literary work involves a great deal more than form but it is as written form – which is to say as the encrypted image of an act-event of invention, waiting to be re-enacted in a reading – that it identifies itself as literature." Cf. Attridge 111. Without readers and the reading process, the fox risks being simply "encrypted image" or prints on a page.

time a reader, any proficient reader, takes up a text and by performing its language creates it anew and is him/herself somehow affected by this experience. And here lies the ethical dimension of reading in general and of criticism in particular, since it presupposes an ability to attend and respond to the demands made upon the reader by the text as other. The reader then becomes responsible for it, in the sense of being obliged to fully respond, accommodate and nurture that which is not familiar and welcome it as such, without trying to translate it into totally known terms, but rather registering its resistance and irreducibility. The recalcitrant otherness of the fox is exactly what the reader of the poem is made to experience through his/her performing of the text's language. And this is the reason why, by the end of it, s/he no longer knows whether his/her is an active or a passive role, whether s/he is the hunter or the prey. For in reading both dimensions are simultaneously present: you have to succumb, to let-go, *and* to create, to let-go *in order to* create.[13]

The fox as other, created by Hughes's poem and by its readers' performance of it, is at once challenging and vulnerable – its power, like literature's power, lies in its frailty, since without readers the fox will for ever remain in captivity.[14] This was exactly what Ted Hughes had in mind in this other passage taken from *Poetry in the Making*: "And I suppose that long after I am gone, as long as a copy of the poem exists, every time anyone reads it the fox will get up somewhere out of the darkness and come walking towards them." (Hughes, *Poetry Making* 20)

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[13] As Harpham has argued: "… every critical act includes an experience of creative freedom, the experience of 'moving forward in unanticipated ways'. It is the distinctive combination of its obligations – to accuracy, fidelity, and veritable truth on the one hand, and speculation, imagination, interpretive freedom, and creation on the other – that produces the character of criticism." Harpham 9.

[14] Contrary to Webster's argument, I do not believe that Hughes's fox is characterised by "deadness", as opposed, for instance, to the alleged aliveness of D. H. Lawrence's creatures in his animal poetry (Cf. Webster 4). Rather it is Hughes's specific achievement (a step ahead of Lawrence) to realize in this extraordinary poem the peculiar nature of literary creation and literary reading, by giving us an unforgettable vivid portrait of a fox that comes alive every time we take up the poem and read it.

The reader here is seen implicitly as indispensable for responding to and accommodating the otherness of the fox and thereby granting it its wildness and preventing its domestication.[15] By realizing and sustaining the fox's otherness, the reader is thus seen as the instance that enables the fox to be released from captivity and given back to freedom, to the teeming wilderness of the poet's and the reader's imagination because: "(…) it is in this apprehension of otherness and in the demands it makes that the peculiar pleasure of the literary response (…) is to be experienced"; "[l]iterature for all the force which it is capable of exercising can achieve nothing without readers – responsible readers (…)." (Attridge 131)

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[15] Attridge defines "otherness" precisely as that which defies or "prohibit[s] appropriation and domestication". Cf. Attridge 125.

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A Kiss is just a Kiss: An MI approach to different art forms

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A Kiss is just a Kiss: An MI approach to different art forms

I – Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory

In 1983, Howard Gardner published *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. In this book he challenged the commonly accepted idea that intelligence could be measured. Since 1905, when French psychologist Alfred Binet and one of his collaborators, Theodore Simon, published the first IQ tests to identify children who needed special help in coping with the school curriculum in France, IQ tests have generally been associated with classification and selection based on school performance. (Arends 2007:48).

In *Frames of Mind* Gardner defined intelligence as "the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings", and challenged the common assumption that "intelligence would be evident and appreciated anywhere, regardless of what was (and was not) valued in particular cultures at particular times" (1999: 33-34).

In 1999, Gardner redefined intelligence as "a bio-psychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture" (1999: 35). He states that "intelligences" are better described as abilities, talents, or mental skills which cannot be seen or counted (1999:33). Gardner further argues that IQ testing is not reliable as a good indicator of an individual's intellectual abilities as it values fields in which only literacy and mathematical ability are decisive.

According to Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory, there is not just one but several types of intelligence blended in a way that is unique to each human being (1999:45). Inevitably, the degree of influence played by genetic and environmental factors in shaping human intelligence varies but one fact remains unchallenged: intelligences "are potentials (…)

that will or will not be activated, depending upon the value of a particular culture, the opportunities available in that culture, and the personal decisions made by individuals and/or their families, school teachers, and others" (1999:34).

II – The eight intelligences: brief definition

When Howard Gardner first formulated a list of seven kinds of separate intelligences, he defined them in the following way (1999: 41-43; 48):

- the logical-mathematical intelligence fosters one's capacity to deal with issues logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically;
- the verbal-linguistic intelligence entails a marked sensitivity to learn and use language effectively;
- the visual-spatial intelligence enhances the ability to recognise and manipulate patterns creatively;
- the musical-rhythmic intelligence facilitates the appreciation and performance of musical patterns;
- the bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence denotes the potential to use one's body to solve problems and fashion products;
- the interpersonal intelligence involves a person's capacity to understand other people's intentions, motivations, and desires thus facilitating team work;
- the intrapersonal intelligence is related to the capacity to understand one's own desires, fears, and capacities, and to use such information effectively.

Gardner later added the naturalist intelligence, which

- helps individuals to recognize and organize patterns in a natural environment.

These intelligences translate into eight corresponding types of learners which should be taken into account by those who wish to make the teaching-learning process more effective. Questionnaires like the ones devised by Smith (1997: 60-61) and Wingate (2000: 34-35) are useful tools

to find out each learner's preferred ways of learning. Another useful reference, running along the same lines, is the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, published by the Council of Europe in 2000 as it can also be used to help learners deal with and improve their individual learning styles. Teachers are now given added support to provide *an individually configured education*, which in Gardner's words amounts to "an education that takes individual differences seriously and, insofar as possible, crafts practices that serve different kinds of minds equally well" (Gardner 1999: 151).

By taking into account the different learning styles, the multi-intelligence approach to teaching becomes highly motivating for learners and facilitates their deeper understanding of the subject material. It would be, of course, advisable to complement this teaching practice with an MI task-based assessment more comprehensive than the standardized testing methods which privilege mainly the literacy and mathematical ability (1993:161-183).

III – A multidisciplinary approach to "The Kiss" by Angela Carter using the MI theory as a framework

We will now attempt to show how a hands-on approach based on the MI theory can be used in an EFL class to diversify the discussion of the short story by Angela Carter.

Way into "The Kiss" by Angela Carter

We have devised four steps as a way into the short story in which different intelligences and types of learners have been tackled.

- Step 1 – dealing with different works of art
- Step 2 – taking a 'mental walk' around Klimt's 'The Kiss'
- Step 3 – discussing a short story on Klimt's painting
- Step 4 – writing on Paton's 'Hesperus'

In step 1, the works of six different artists (Auguste Rodin, Constantin Brancusi, Gustav Klimt, Pablo Picasso, Robert Doisneau and Roy Lichtenstein) are displayed around the classroom. In groups, learners

have to match each artist up with his work of art and decide what is common to all (a kiss).

They then choose **one** of the works and imagine a story prompted by it, paying special attention to **when** and **where** (the two people were), **how** (they met), **why** (they kissed), etc. Learners tell the story they *see* in the painting and let the others guess which couple they are referring to (Bodily Kinaesthetic, Visual Spacial, Verbal-Linguistic).

In Step 2, learners are shown Klimt's "The Kiss" and invited to take a 'mental walk' around the painting. They describe the man, the woman, their cloaks, their attitude, and the general mood the painting evokes. They then briefly tell the story they think is embedded in the painting (Visual-Spatial, Verbal-Linguistic, Interpersonal and Intrapersonal)

In Step 3, learners read Lawrence Ferlinghetti's work:

"Short story on a painting of Gustav Klimt"

They are kneeling upright on a flowered bed
He
has just caught her there
and holds her still
Her gown
has slipped down
off her shoulder
He has an **urgent** hunger
His dark head
bends to hers
hungrily
And **the woman the woman**
turns her tangerine lips from his
one hand like the head of a dead swan
draped down over
his heavy neck
the fingers
strangely crimped
tightly together
her other arm doubled up
against her tight breast
her hand a **languid** claw
clutching his hand

which **would turn** her mouth
to his
her long dress made
of multicolored blossoms
quilted on gold
her **Titian** hair
with blue stars in it
And his **gold**
harlequin robe
checkered with
dark squares
Gold garlands
stream down over
her bare calves &
tensed feet
Nearby there **must** be
a jeweled tree
with glass leaves aglitter
in the gold air
It **must** be
morning
in a faraway place somewhere
They
are **silent** together
as in a flowered field
upon the summer couch
which **must** be hers

And he holds her still
so **passionately**
holds her head to his
so **gently** so **insistently**
to make her turn
her lips to his
Her eyes are **closed**
like folded petals
She
will not open
He
is not the One

After reading the short story they compare and contrast it with their own versions. They discuss the intriguing way in which Ferlinghetti perceives the key elements in the painting. All the elements in his short story converge to a startling revelation: his "dark head bends to hers hungrily" but she "turns her tangerine lips from his". "They are silent together... "her eyes are closed"... Indeed, the artist's guiding hand unveils a hidden truth: "She will not open. *He is not the one*." (Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Interpersonal)

Linguistic items (in bold) such as adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and modality play a crucial role in this short story. Anaphoric and cataphoric references to the woman and the man enhance their roles under the new light the writer shed on the painting: the woman is referred to as "she", "her" and "the woman" whereas the man is always "he", "his" but never "the man" – it is the woman who, after all, assumes the leading role when she refuses to yield to him. With this new reading in mind, learners reassemble as a class and discuss how their different approaches justify (or not) this interpretation of the painting summarised in the closing lines (Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Interpersonal, Bodily-Kinaesthetic).

In Step 4, learners use Ferlinghetti's model and write their own story on 'Hesperus' by Sir Joseph Noel Paton (1821-1901) (Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Intrapersonal, Naturalist)

So far the activities were devised as a way into Angela Carter's short story 'The Kiss'.

Reading and discussing "The Kiss" by Angela Carter

This is an extremely interesting but highly complex story, both culturally and linguistically. A blend of realistic and magical elements makes it a circular story partly told in flashback, which provides the key to decode the somewhat puzzling open ending. With this in mind, we have divided the story into five parts and given them a task or asked a question at the end of each part. The idea is to play a guessing game: learners cannot have access to the next section before they solve the enigma contained in the task/question. The five parts are:

1. the setting
2. the wife
3. the architect
4. Tamburlaine
5. back to the beginning

1. The setting

Before reading the story, in pairs, learners are given the following five extracts, which they have to complete by referring to one of the five senses given within brackets.

(a) The winters in Central Asia are….. [sight]
(b) We are in Samarkand…[hearing]
(c) The peasant women's clothes are made of… [touch]
(d) In the market….[smell]
(f) A local speciality of Samarkand is…[taste]

All the sentences are put up under their respective headings (sight, hearing, etc.). Learners vote for the sentences that would create the most imaginative setting. Only then do they read the first part of the short story and compare their versions to the original one (Bodily-Kinaesthetic, Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Interpersonal)

2. The wife

Learners read part 2 of the story, which introduces Tamburlaine and his beautiful wife.

The story of Tamburlaine's wife is told in flashback. There's a mysterious old woman selling arum lilies in the market. Tamburlaine, the

scourge of Asia, is away at war but his impending return prompts his wife to urge the architect to finish the mosque she started to build for her husband. The architect promises to complete the work in time but she must give him a kiss, one single kiss, in return.

She is a virtuous and clever woman and she decides to put the architect to the test. She buys a basket of eggs, boils and stains them in different colours. She then tells the architect he must choose one egg and eat it.

The reading of part 2 of the short story stops here but as this is a guessing game, learners have to guess the answer to the first question: "Why does Tamburlaine's wife tell the architect to choose one of the eggs and eat it?"

The different answers provided by the learners are discussed before they read about the wife's cunning stratagem: "There you are! she said. Each of these eggs looks different to the rest but they all taste the same. So you may kiss any one of my serving women… But you must leave me alone." (Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Interpersonal)

3. The architect

Learners read part 3 of the story which tells them that the architect comes back carrying a tray with three bowls apparently full of water and asks Tamburlaine's wife to drink from each of the bowls. She "took a drink from the first, (…) the second (…) but coughed and spluttered when she took a mouthful from the third bowl because (...)"

Learners now have to guess the answer to the second question: "What was in that bowl and why did she cough and splutter?". Again the different answers provided are discussed before they read on to find out that she had coughed and spluttered because the third bowl "…contained not water, but vodka(...) This vodka and that water both look alike but each tastes quite different (...) And it is the same with love." (Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Interpersonal).

4. Tamburlaine

This part of the story is about Tamburlaine. Learners find out that his wife kissed the architect on the mouth and that he finished the arch in time for Tamburlaine's return. But now Tamburlaine's wife turns away from him because…

The third question is: "Why does Tamburlaine's wife turn away from her husband?"

Once again the different answers are discussed in class. The story reveals that she turns away from her husband because… "no woman will return to the harem after she has tasted vodka."

A fourth question is then asked:" What happens to the architect?" The story tells us that Tamburlaine sent his executioners after him and… "he grew wings and flew away to Persia" which brings learners back to where it all started (Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Interpersonal).

5. Back to the Beginning

Learners are encouraged to explore the last paragraph of the short story

> This is a story in simple, geometric shapes and the bold colours of a child's box of crayons. This Tamburlaine's wife of the story would have painted a black stripe laterally across her forehead and done up her hair in a dozen, tiny plaits, like any other Uzbek woman. She would have bought red and white radishes from her husband's dinner. After she ran away from him perhaps she made her living in the market. Perhaps she sold lilies there.

by answering the last two questions: "What does this paragraph suggest happened to Tamburlaine's wife?" and "How does it make this a circular story?"

By now learners are expected to realise that the clues scattered throughout the story lend it the magical touch that makes the reader suspend disbelief and fully enjoy its puzzling ending: the architect grows wings and flies away, and Tamburlaine's wife is none other than the old woman selling arum lilies in the market.

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ESTUDOS

De Harry Coomer a Hari Kumar: A *raj nostalgia* e o tradutor de Macaulay numa personagem de Paul Scott

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De Harry Coomer a Hari Kumar: A *raj nostalgia* e o tradutor de Macaulay numa personagem de Paul Scott

I

Se, ao ver *The Jewel in the Crow*n, a atenção do espectador se centra em Harry Coomer/Hari Kumar, um inglês de pele escura e pronúncia *oxbridg*e, será não só pela excelente interpretação do actor que dá vida ao papel[1], mas pela surpresa que reserva. Coomer/Kumar não corresponde ao indiano comum que nasce e vive na Índia, a jóia da coroa do Império Britânico. É a ficcionação, no pequeno ecrã, do «tradutor» idealizado por Thomas B. Macaulay, alguém dotado do perfil adequado para ensinar a língua inglesa às crianças indianas. E, com a língua, veicular a cultura, como o estadista explicitou, no seu discurso ao Parlamento, em 1835, *Minute on Educatio*n:

> It is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. (Macaulay, *Minute*: 430).

Num momento inicial, este ensaio leva-nos à relação entre o Eu e o Outro, com sustentação teórica em *Orientalismo*, de Edward Said, por se revelar a mais adequada ao contexto do colonialismo. Said considera que o Oriente (o Outro, na figura do colonizado) consiste numa cons-

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[1] Art Malik (1952–) nasceu no Paquistão, estudou em Inglaterra e tem feito toda a carreira, dividida pelo teatro, cinema e televisão, na Grã-Bretanha. Com um percurso que tem aproveitado as suas características étnicas, destacou-se em *A Passage to India* e *The Jewel in the Crown*.

trução do Ocidente (o Eu, na figura do colonizador): «The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.» (Said 87).

Na representação do Oriente, o que nos chega, quer pela literatura, quer pela imagem, consiste numa construção cultural da Europa e dos Europeus:

> The Orient (...) is one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilization and culture. (Said 87).

Os temas históricos têm ocupado enorme espaço no cinema. Para citar apenas dois títulos, recordaremos *The Birth of a Nation* (EUA, 1915), o mais famoso épico do cinema de sempre, em que D. W. Griffith retrata duas famílias americanas, uma do Norte, outra do Sul, apanhadas nas malhas da guerra civil.

A televisão (pelo menos a europeia, a que conhecemos) herdou esta tradição, graças a uma parte importante dos seus horários consagrados ao cinema; na produção original deve muitos dos seus créditos à realização de séries históricas, de que recordaremos igualmente dois títulos. *I, Claudius* (1976), visão do Império Romano pelo olhar de um imperador ou, num registo de comédia, *The Black Adder* (1986), sátira à luta pelo poder na corte inglesa do século XIV.

Por outro lado, a produção televisiva na Grã-Bretanha tem assentado em grande parte nas adaptações literárias. Decorrente dessa orientação, integrada num objectivo mais geral destinado a 'educar, informar e entreter', foram produzido títulos que se tornaram referências, de que é exemplo a versão do romance de Evelyn Waugh *Brideshead Revisisted* (ITV, 1981), considerada por Sergio Angelini um acontecimento televisivo único. Este crítico salienta que a série consistiu num progresso no género: «*Brideshead Revisisted* (...) combined typically slow TV pacing with the glossy sheen of a cinema production, helping oversees sales» (Angelini 2005). O êxito desta produção abriu caminho a outra, ainda mais extensa e dispendiosa, *The Jewel in the Crown* (ITV, 1984), adaptação da tetralogia de Paul Scott sobre o império e, em particular, a Índia.

Chega-se, com este título, cerca de 30 anos depois do advento da televisão comercial na Grã-Bretanha, à representação do colonialismo na Índia, integrada numa tradição segura do tratamento televisivo dos temas históricos. Esta actividade revelava-se um caso ímpar na Europa e no mundo. A conquista do mercado internacional, é, aliás, algo já assinalado por Angelini. O arrojo e a aproximação às características do cinema de *Brideshead Revisited* permitiu vendas internacionais e o retorno do investimento à produtora ITV, encorajando a produção futura, circunstâncias em que surge *The Jewel in the Crown* (Angelini 2005).

A análise sobre televisão acompanhou o desenvolvimento da actividade. Com os Estudos Culturais, abrem-se-lhe as portas da Universidade. Fotografia, cinema e televisão vêm impor-se no âmbito da academia, quando até meados do século passado apenas às artes eruditas era assegurada atenção.

Os Estudos Culturais (EC) começaram há mais de duas décadas a prestar atenção à televisão, encarada simultaneamente como uma representação da cultura das sociedades e uma aliança poderosa entre o entretenimento e a capacidade de passar mensagens ideológicas e, logo, despertar consciências. Estudos de cinema e televisão, aliás, têm progredido a par. Em *Film Theory. An Introduction*, Robert Stam assinala os esforços no sentido da definição de cinema desde o seu aparecimento, tendentes à fundação de uma teoria. Cita Metz, ao comparar cinema e televisão (Stam 122) afirmando que os dois *media* constituem virtualmente a mesma linguagem. Na sequência disto, atribui importância ao surgimento dos EC e à forma como os investigadores filiados neste método encaram o cinema: «(...) the movement which came to be known as cultural studies was more interested in embedding media like the cinema in a larger cultural and historial context.» (Stam 223).

Stam recorda a fundação dos Estudos Culturais, nos anos 60, em Inglaterra, com Richard Hoggart, um teórico de esquerda, e a importância de autores igualmente fundadores, como E. P. Thompson, Raymond Williams e, mais tarde, Stuart Hall. Destaca, no processo de institucionalização dos EC, o seu epicentro no Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, entretanto encerrado, pelo que se lê no *Aknowledgement* do livro de Ann Gray, imediatamente após a escrita da obra (Gray 1). Stam

recorda de seguida as circunstâncias em que surgiu esta área de estudos:

> Conscious of the opressive aspects of British class system, the members of the Birmingham Centre, many of whom were associated with adult education projects, looked for aspects of ideological domination and for new agents of social change. (Stam 223).

Salienta também a filiação intelectual dos EC, inicialmente no Marxismo e na Semiótica e, numa fase posterior, no feminismo e na *critical race theory*. Entre as referências que contribuem para o entendimento dos Estudos Culturais, destacam-se o conceito de *whole way of life* de Raymond Williams, a noção de cultura de Clifford Geertz como *narratological ensemble* e as reflexões de Foucault sobre conhecimento e poder (Stam 224). O autor acentua, no entanto, a dificuldade de definição dos EC, por se tratar de um método deliberadamente eclético e aberto.

Sobre a forma como o método encara os seus objectos de estudo, pode ler-se: «(...) cultural studies is less interested in 'media specificity' and 'film language' than it is in culture as spread out over a broad discursive continuum, where texts are embedded in a social matrix and where they have consequences in the world.» (Stam 225). Mais adiante, na mesma linha de raciocínio: «Transformalist, cultural studies calls attention to the social and institutional conditions under which meaning is produced and received» (Stam 225).

Esta alusão às condições institucionais em que se dá a produção de sentido remete-nos para o poderoso papel da televisão em países de elevados índices de iliteracia, ao levar a informação, o debate e o entretenimento a vastas camadas da população, impacte esse ainda mais poderoso quando se trata de destinatários isolados física ou socialmente.

A abordagem de uma série de televisão no âmbito dos EC parece defendida se atentarmos à característica invocada por este autor de que os EC se assumem como um método ecléctico e aberto, «omnívoro» em termos disciplinares: «Cultural Studies is thus committed to the study of the entire range of society's arts, beliefs, institutions and practices.» (Stam 225), salientando, por outro lado, que se interessam pelo uso dos textos, mais do que pelos textos em si. (Stam 226).

Graeme Turner corrobora a posição deste autor ao estabelecer uma relação entre os EC e uma *film theory* que inclui não só o cinema como a

televisão. Assinala a consagração dos Estudos de Cinema, só recentemente a nível académico (*film scholarship*) mas, antes disso, nos anos 60, em publicações generalistas que nada tinham a ver com o cinema, quando se tornam motivo de interesse para análise:

> Film, tv, and advertising thus became prime targets for research and 'textual' analysis. Within this research, culture is seen to be composed of interconnected systems of meaning. (Turner 41).

Salientando que a investigação sobre televisão tem ocupado um grande espaço, Turner salienta a prática dos EC neste campo: «Research on TV became a major item on the cultural studies agenda.» (Turner 41). Sobre a metodologia e, à semelhança da comparação anterior realizada por Stam, recorda: «TV analysis had borrowed some of its assumptions from film theory in the first place» (Turner 41). Pode ler-se ainda: «Film was examined as a cultural product and as a social practice, valuable both for itself and for what it could tell us of the systems and processes of culture.» (Turner 41). Trata-se de uma alusão ao facto de o cinema, como a televisão, consistir num conjunto de práticas sociais distintas num contexto mais amplo, conjunto de linguagens e também indústria, depois do que assinala a colaboração entre a Open University e o British Film Institute (BFI), na publicação de textos sobre cinema e televisão.

Robert Stam não deixa de abordar nesta obra o pós-modernismo no cinema, apesar da dificuldade de definição do conceito, de que filmes como *A Passage to India* seriam exemplo: algo que este autor designa como uma *raj nostalgia*, sensação de perda em relação a um passado grandioso. Porém, para Stam, o tema do pós-modernismo não pode ser abordado sem se ter em conta a discussão das implicações políticas das culturas popular e de massas, desafiando o discurso marxista que valoriza a cultura popular (definida como cultura do povo e sinal de transformação social) e a cultura de massas (esta, ao contrário, apontando para o consumismo capitalista e a manipulação dos consumidores). Este autor encara a televisão como um meio suficientemente complexo para, hoje em dia, não caber numa avaliação tão redutora:

> The mass media form a complex network of ideological signs situated within multiple environments – the generating mass-media environment, the broader generating ideological

> environment, and the generating socio-economic environment – each with its own specificities. Television, in this sense, constitutes an electronic microcosm which reflects and relays, distorts and amplifies, the ambient heteroglossia. Television's heteroglossia is of course in some ways severely compromised, truncated; many social voices are never heard or severely distorted. But as a matrix in which centripetal-dominant and centrifugal-oppositional discourses do battle, the mass media can never completely reduce the antagonistic dialogue of class voices (…) (Stam 311).

Estando disponíveis filmes e séries sobre o colonialismo britânico, entre os mais proeminentes dos quais *A Passage to India*, a escolha recaíu sobre *The Jewel in the Crown* pelas razões que passamos a enumerar:

– Tratando-se de uma série de televisão, por se enquadrar no âmbito dos Estudos Culturais, que tem prestado atenção a este sub-género do audiovisual;
– Por permitir avaliar a margem de intervenção de que dispõe o autor da adaptação do texto literário para televisão e analisar as suas opções nesse âmbito, por comparação com o texto original;
– Por a acção desta série decorrer no período que antecede a retirada da administração britânica da Índia, caracterizado por agudizada conflitualidade e por um confronto mais dramático entre colonizador e colonizado;
– Por a série permitir, graças ao som e imagem, entender dados importantes para os conceitos em causa, em particular o de identidade;
– Por as características da série, dado o seu impacte no país de origem e no mercado internacional, atestado pelos prémios obtidos[2], permitirem:

a) subverter o preconceito existente nos Estudos de Cultura

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[2] *The Jewel in The Crown* foi premiada com um Emmy na categoria de Excelente Série Limitada, com o Globo de Ouro para a melhor mini-série e com os BAFTA Awards (Prémios da Academia Britânica de TV e Cinema) nas categorias de Melhor Série Dramática, Melhor Actor (Tim Piggot-Smith) e Melhor Actriz (Peggy Ashcroft).

contra a produção televisiva, ao considerá-la um género menor em confronto com outras expressões do audio-visual, em particular o cinema;

b) reforçar a atitude dos Estudos Culturais, no abolir da dicotomia cultura de elites/cultura de massas;

c) superar as limitações técnicas do género, tornando-se uma referência.

II

The Jewel in the Crown consiste na adaptação da obra de Paul Scott (1920-1978) *The Raj Quartet*, cuja acção decorre entre Agosto de 1942 e o mesmo mês de 1947, no declínio do domínio colonial britânico na Índia. Tem como pano de fundo o ambiente social e político em que se enquadrou a campanha do Congresso, *Quit India*. Centra-se numa relação com desenlace trágico entre um indiano educado em Inglaterra e uma inglesa na localidade fictícia de Mayapore e tem por ponto mais dramático a violação da protagonista por um grupo de Indianos.

Tendo este ensaio por objectivo analisar a forma de representar – no sentido entendido por Stuart Hall – da relação colonizador-colonizado, a série em apreço será encarada no âmbito dos Estudos Culturais e dos Estudos Pós-Coloniais. Teorizados por Edward Said, Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha e Gayatry Spivak, entre outros, os Estudos Pós-coloniais desenvolvem-se a partir da década de 80, a par dos Estudos Culturais e dos *Women's Studies*, no âmbito das novas Humanidades, que se propõem recuperar saberes marginais.

No Prefácio de *Postcolonial Theory. A Critical Introduction*, Leela Gandhi chama a atenção para a consagração do Pós-Colonialismo como discurso crítico de grande importância, com uso diverso e interdisciplinar, dotado de corpo crítico responsável por uma vastíssima produção teórica especializada (Gandhi viii). O objectivo destes estudos, que abriram novas áreas de conhecimento, consistem em:

> (…) first**,** to foreground the exclusions and elisions which confirm the privileges and authority of canonical knowledge systems, and second to recover those marginalised knowledges which have been occluded and silenced by the entrenched humanist curriculum. (Gandhi 42).

Gandhi recorre a Foucault na sua definição, relacionada com o que se lê acima, de «saberes menores» e «conhecimentos subjugados» (Gandhi 43).

A convicção de que o colonialismo não termina com o fim da ocupação colonial (Gandhi 17) prende-se com o conceito de «tradutor» de Macaulay: esta entidade, treinada pela Grã-Bretanha no domínio do Inglês, destina-se a dar a conhecer a língua e cultura daquele país na Índia, junto da nova geração. Logo, trata-se de uma acção que não se prende directamente com a colonização, mas que se pretende tenha implicações além dela. Daqui decorrem as ideias de que a língua consiste num veículo de cultura, ao permitir o acesso aos textos canónicos em língua inglesa e de que, numa hierarquia de culturas, a britânica é superior às outras, pelo que os povos (Indianos, neste caso) têm vantagem em familiarizar-se com ela. Esta argumentação, ideia principal de *Minute on Education* (Macaulay 428-430) ilustra a forma como a língua pode ser tanto instrumento de cultura, como de poder.

A escolha de uma série de televisão para objecto de análise leva-nos à importância da cultura visual no nosso tempo, recorrentemente salientada. Mirzoeff, por exemplo, sintetiza a situação na afirmação: «Modern life takes place onscreen.» (Mirzoeff 1). Sturken e Cartwright fazem-no de outra forma: «Over the course of the last two centuries, Western culture has come to be dominated by visual rather than oral or textual media.» (Sturken, Cartwright 1). No que se refere à televisão, a influência deste meio é igualmente destacada na seguinte passagem: «(...) television, a visual and sound-based medium, has come to play the central role in daily life once occupied by the strictly aural medium of radio.» (Sturken, Cartwright 1). Aludem mais adiante a essa influência da seguinte forma:

> Hearing and touching are important means of experience and communication, but our values, opinions, and beliefs have increasingly become to be shaped in powerful ways by the many forms of visual culture that we encounter in our day-to-day lives.» (Sturken, Cartwright 1).

Dado relevante neste contexto consiste na *scopophilia* (prazer de olhar), algo próximo do voyeurismo (o prazer de olhar sem ser visto) a ponto de a câmara já ter sido encarada como um mecanismo que torna o espectador um *voyeur* (Sturken, Cartwright 76). O mesmo tema é abordado por Laura Mulvey, que destaca a importância do cinema para a

scopophilia, ao afirmar: «The cinema satisfies a primordial wish for pleasure looking, but it also goes further, developing scopophilia in its narcissistic aspect.» (Mulvey 382). A autora chama a atenção para o papel que a forma humana desempenha no cinema e, embora desenvolva a ideia de que existem elementos contraditórios na *scopophilia*, na relação entre fantasia e realidade e o prazer de olhar se centre na observação da mulher, discussão que nos afastaria do tema deste ensaio, encontram-se neste texto respostas para os mecanismos de satisfação pessoal que o cinema (e neste caso também a televisão) proporciona (Mulvey 382).

No caso de *The Jewel in the Crown*, e se é do prazer de olhar que falamos, ele pode ser compensado com uma paisagem natural, arquitectónica e humana diferente da ocidental. Estes dados consistem num dos efeitos de sedução da série, que se revelou eficaz. Outro é a credibilidade, encontrada num registo misto de drama-documento, ao mostrar da Índia uma certa decadência, que não deixa de ser atraente. Trata-se de mais um dado na opção de representação «realista[3]», um discurso de «verdade» que convém à narrativa, um drama particular e credível, inserido no contexto mais geral do momento histórico escolhido.

No âmbito do desenvolvimento dos conceitos relevantes para o caso em apreço, começaremos por prestar atenção ao de representação, pela sua importância na cultura visual. Segundo Stuart Hall, a linguagem é essencial à produção de sentido, porque funciona como um sistema de representação. E adianta que consiste num dos meios através do qual pensamentos, ideias e sentimentos são representados numa cultura (Hall, *Representation:* 1).

Para desenvolver o seu conceito de representação, Hall salienta o de cultura, não como um conjunto de «coisas», mas como processo e conjunto

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[3] O facto de termos incluído o termo realista entre aspas tem a sua explicação. De facto, sendo a série abordada como uma representação de acordo com a abordagem construcionista, não se trata de uma imitação da realidade. Mesmo assim, deixamos aqui a definição de Stam de realismo no cinema, lembrando a sua origem no conceito grego de *mimesis* (imitação) e na preocupação de fornecer uma representação fiel do mundo contemporâneo (Stam 15).

de «práticas» e o facto de a cultura depender de os seus participantes poderem interpretar algo de forma a encontrar sentido do mundo de maneira semelhante (Hall, *Representation:* 2). Por isso, as «coisas» raramente têm um sentido único e fixo. Passa-se antes o seguinte: «It is by our use of things, and what we say, think and feel about them – how we represent them – *that we give them a meaning*.» (Hall, *Representation*: 3). Segundo Hall, a produção de sentido, na cultura, faz-se através de dois sistemas de representação. Um deles permite estabelecer uma correspondência ou uma cadeia de equivalências entre coisas (pessoas, objectos ou ideias abstractas) e os nossos mapas conceptuais; o outro depende da construção de um conjunto de correspondências entre os nossos mapas conceptuais e um conjunto de signos, organizados em várias linguagens que representam esses conceitos. A relação entre as «coisas», conceitos e signos está no cerne da produção de sentido na linguagem. À ligação entre estes elementos chama-se representação (Hall, *Representation:* 19). Assim, o que Hall afirma é que, de acordo com o modelo construcionista de representação, encontramos sentido no mundo material através de contextos culturais específicos.

A representação do encontro colonizador-colonizado em *The Jewel in the Crown* assenta no confronto Merrick–Coomer/Kumar, entre outros. O primeiro, superintendente da Polícia indiana, inglês de origem modesta que aspira ascender socialmente pelo casamento e na hierarquia daquela instituição; mas, se a identidade de Merrick (pelo menos na vertente social, profissional e étnica, que não a sexual) é linear, a definição de Coomer/ /Kumar levanta muito mais problemas.

A ideia de que a identidade consiste numa construção – mais do que um percurso linear feito de contributos harmoniosos, ao longo do tempo – e, possivelmente, de dados contraditórios, é encontrada em autores e autoras que se dedicam aos contextos de emigração e imigração, desde a descolonização ou desde o fim da II Guerra Mundial. As identidades já não são construídas pela ligação a um território único e a uma língua materna, mas com outros contributos. Nem são construídas em condições da escolha dos indivíduos (Alcoff, Mendieta 3). Assim, as quatro vertentes tradicionais de identidade (raça, classe, nacionalidade, sexualidade) deixam de ser estáveis e têm de ser tidas em conta num contexto de erosão das grandes metanarrativas de progresso universal e de instabilidade graças à globalização. As pessoas deixam de se identificar com um espaço, tendo-se em

conta o hibridismo e as identidades diaspóricas, num presente crescentemente complexo, dotado de culturas dispersas e fragmentadas (Alcoff, Mendieta 3).

Em «New Ethnicities», Stuart Hall chama a atenção para o facto de, a partir dos anos 80, na Grã-Bretanha, o conceito de *black* ter passado a categoria cultural, construída, não se fixando na racial e passando a cruzar-se com outras, como classe, género e etnicidade (Hall, *The post colonial* 223). O contributo de Stuart Hall é eloquente, embora não seja o único, para desvendar a personagem Coomer/Kumar. Nascido na Índia, numa família tradicional, emigra para a Grã-Bretanha muito novo. Vive em Inglaterra como qualquer outro jovem da classe média alta, frequentando uma escola de referência, Chillinborough[4], a melhor do país. Aprende Inglês como língua materna e considera-se cidadão britânico. O seu mundo desmorona-se quando o pai, falido, se suicida. O jovem Harry Coomer (como era conhecido em Inglaterra), sem dinheiro nem laços familiares, é obrigado a desistir de uma carreira no Direito e viaja para a Índia, onde é acolhido por uma tia. Passa por uma difícil fase de adaptação a um local onde tudo lhe é estranho, incluindo a língua (ou as línguas), acabando por encontrar trabalho, graças às suas competências linguísticas, num jornal local, o *Mayapore Gazette*[5]. É no decorrer deste processo, em que as suas convicções são abaladas, que Coomer passa a Kumar, como que por falta de alternativa. A cena do Santuário (1.º episódio, *Crossing the River*) é esclarecedora a esse respeito:

MERRICK – *Is that your name, Kumar?*

COOMER/KUMAR – *No, but it will do*.

A diferença entre os dois nomes (Coomer e Kumar) também intriga *Sister* Ludmilla, que perguntara a De Souza, momentos antes, quando o médico lhe faz um breve relato da situação de Kumar:

LUDMILLA – *Why then do you say Coomer, if it is Kumar?*

Esta dualidade persiste ainda na cena da War Week Exhibition

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[4] A escola é uma criação de Paul Scott já existente no romance em que a série se baseia.

[5] Mayapore, onde decorre parte da acção da série, é uma localidade imaginária.

(1.º episódio), quando Daphne pergunta:

> DAPHNE – *It's Mr. Coomer, isn't it?*
> COOMER/KUMAR – *Actually, it's Kumar. Hari Kumar. Coomer was in England.*

Kumar não é aceite como Inglês pela comunidade inglesa. Logo, não lhe resta alternativa senão assumir-se como Indiano. Ao longo desse processo deixa gradualmente de se vestir como um ocidental, passando a envergar as calças e túnicas locais; passa a fumar cigarros indianos, que inicialmente diz detestar. Acaba por habituar-se ao clima e até mostra abertura à religião, atestada pela visita ao templo, para fazer *puja*[6] (1.º episódio).

Esta identidade cultural construída entre dois países consiste na *in-betweenness* (entre espaços) que define as situações de diáspora: a ausência, na narrativa pessoal, de ligação a um espaço único e a uma só língua materna, o estar *entre* duas culturas, eventualmente não harmónicas. O diálogo nos jardins de Bibighar (1.º episódio) elucida-nos quanto a esta *in-betweenness*, e ao desconforto que ela acarreta:

> COOMER/KUMAR – *And I hate it.*
> DAPHNE – *What?*
> COOMER/KUMAR – *India. I hate all the beggars, and the crowds, and the heat, and the bugs. And most of all myself, for being black and English.*

Porém, é no primeiro confronto com Merrick, no Santuário, que começa a revelar-se a complexidade da identidade de Kumar. O primeiro, no seu zelo, aprendeu *hindustani* e resolve interpelar nessa língua o desconhecido. Kumar que, apesar de «parecer» Indiano, é Inglês, surpreende-se, porque não o entende.

Não é só a relação de poder polícia-cidadão num contexto de colonização que opõe Kumar a Merrick. Neste caso, Kumar é vítima do poder colonial. Mas há outros dados em causa. Na hierarquia social, Kumar, embora numa situação fragilizada, está acima de Merrick. Não só fala um exímio Inglês que só pode ser adquirido numa boa escola, algo a que

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[6] Ritual da religião hindu que consiste no acto de adoração do divino pela oração e cânticos.

Merrick não teve acesso («I was a grammar school boy» – afirma no 1.º episódio), como é oriundo de uma família abastada. Assim, Kumar, apesar de sujeito colonizado, continua a ter ascendente sobre Merrick. Quando é detido pela primeira vez, graças aos seus conhecimentos de Direito, protesta por não ser informado do motivo (1.º episódio).

Sabendo-se que os Estudos Pós-Coloniais atribuem grande importância aos conceitos de raça e etnicidade, de que trataremos a seguir, há que ter em conta, antes disso, o conceito de classe, já tratado em profundidade por Raymond Williams em *Keywords* e, mais recentemente, por Ashcroft *et al*. e Robert Young. Segundo este último, raça, género e classe intersectam-se e coexistem: «An analysis of class has a crucial, if complex, role to play in emphasizing the link between representation and material practice in post-colonial discourse.» (Young 40). Igualmente Ashcrof *et al.*, em *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*, corroboram esta ideia: «Like gender and race, the concept of class intersects in important ways with the cultural implications of colonial domination.» (Ashcroft *et al.* 37).

Com efeito, para Kumar, todos os dados acima estão em jogo. Perante Merrick, Kumar é um sujeito colonizado, logo, um subalterno. No entanto, é mais culto e instruído do que o primeiro e oriundo de uma classe mais elevada na hierarquia social; perante Daphne, sobrinha de *Sir* Henry Manners, ex-governador, situa-se ao mesmo nível social e cultural, como fica patente na cena do jantar na MacGregor House, quando ambos dançam ao som da música ocidental da moda (1.º episódio). Já para Colin Linsey, o colega e amigo de escola em Inglaterra, ele torna-se invisível, característica comum aos sujeitos colonizados, quando em confronto com os Ingleses, como Kumar, ressentido, recorda:

> COOMER/KUMAR – *Colin!*
> O ex-colega passa por ele, sem pestanejar.
>
> COOMER/KUMAR – *Then he saw me and didn't see. In my babu clothes, under my topee, he didn't realize I was just one black face he should remember. Didn't you know, we all look alike. I've become invisible, even to him.*

Porém, se a geração, um passado e vivência de classe média, em Inglaterra, contribuem para unir Daphne e Kumar, no momento em que decorre a acção da série encontram-se de lados opostos da sociedade local, que separa claramente Britânicos e Indianos. Esta sociedade distingue,

ainda, entre várias castas de Indianos, um dado de que Kumar está ciente, ao afirmar, referindo-se à forma como o rio que atravessa a cidade separa as duas comunidades: a dele, a zona pobre de Chillianwallah Bagh, habitada por Indianos e a zona onde está instalada a MacGregor House, residência de Lady Chatterjee, a aristocrata indiana que acolhe Daphne.

O *Mayapore Gazette* e a falta de perspectiva de carreira de Kumar na Índia, não condicente com as suas expectativas iniciais, são o pretexto para Daphne e Kumar falarem desse fosso social (1.º episódio):

> COOMER/KUMAR – *It's all right* [refere-se ao jornal]. *It's one way to cross the river.*
>
> DAPHNE – *Cross the river?*
>
> COOMER/KUMAR – *From my side to yours.*
>
> DAPHNE – *Is it difficult, then, crossing the river?*
>
> COOMER/KUMAR – *Not difficult, just that you become invisible.*

Os conceitos de raça e etnicidade, teorizados por Hall e Young, são essenciais para se entender o colonialismo e o pós-colonialismo, no sentido em que definem espaços de vivência estanques e barreiras sociais. Comentando a amizade de Daphne e Kumar, Merrick, despeitado, depois de ver o seu pedido de casamento rejeitado por Daphne, afirma (1.º episódio):

> MERRICK – *People have started talking. It's always tricky to go out and about with Indians, especially at times like these*.

Daphne mostra-se indignada com a atitude do interlocutor, porque o argumento implícito é cor da pele:

> DAPHNE – (...) *especially if the only trouble is the colour of their skin!*
>
> MERRICK – *It's the oldest trick in the game. Pretending colour doesn't matter. It does matter. It basically matters like hell!*

Se o conceito de raça é pertinente por ser legitimador do colonialismo – ao considerar-se que os Europeus se propõem levar a cabo uma missão civilizadora junto das populações de outros continentes, nomeadamente África e Ásia, considerados carentes desta acção por se encontrarem num

estádio mais atrasado num processo de aperfeiçoamento, tal como os Europeus o entendem – tem sido, crescentemente, desde aos anos 60, como assinalam Ashcroft *et al*., substituído pelo de etnicidade. Com efeito, afirmam: «Race is a term for the classification of human beings into physically, biologically and genetically distinct groups.» (Ashcroft *et al*. 108).

A desadequação desta forma de classificação dos seres humanos após as descobertas científicas sobre a monogénese, segundo a qual não existem diferenças significativas entre os grupos de seres humanos, sendo estas atribuíveis mais ao ambiente do que à carga genética, tornou-se evidente. Já o termo etnicidade permite definir os seres humanos em termos de cultura, tradição, linguagem, padrões sociais e património (Ashcroft *et al*. 81). A diferença entre raça e etnicidade é, aliás, abordada por Stuart Hall, em «New Ethnicities». Segundo Hall, as vicissitudes por que passaram os negros na Grã-Bretanha na era Thatcher levou a que tenham assumido uma atitude afirmativa e política das suas características étnicas, para fazer frente à marginalização e subalternização de que eram vítimas na sociedade britânica. Esta estratégia de afirmação cultural (através do cinema, por exemplo), conferiu visibilidade a diferentes comunidades criativas entre os negros e permitiu a sua individualização. Assim, pretenderam, na década de 80, deixar de ser encarados como uma massa anónima e marginalizada para passar a ser conhecidos como interlocutores válidos da sua cultura (Hall, *The post colonial*: 90-95).

E, muito embora a acção de *The Jewel in the Crown* não trate de uma comunidade indiana na Europa, mas sim de duas comunidades, uma inglesa, outra indiana, na Índia, onde conseguimos distinguir indivíduos e comportamentos distintos em cada uma delas, o ensaio de Hall pode ajudar-nos a entender Kumar e a forma como se relaciona com os outros. Com efeito, não se trata de mais um Indiano que se opõe à colonização britânica, como Pandit Baba, *guru* e professor de *Hindi*. A determinada altura, até se antagonizam. Baba, depois de Kumar ter desistido das suas aulas de *Hindi*, recrimina-o por ele só falar Inglês (1.º episódio):

> PANDIT BABA – *You should be feeling shame to be always speaking the language of a foreign power.*

O tom de recriminação de Baba pode ser entendido como uma censura a Kumar pela expressão em língua inglesa, já que a encara como

instrumento de colonização. Esta atitude do *guru* consiste num eco da posição assumida pelo *Mahatma* Gandhi (1869-1948) a respeito do ensino do Inglês. Porém, a língua inglesa não é só um instrumento de colonização, sendo também veículo de divulgação da cultura inglesa, o que nos leva de novo a Macaulay. O argumento do historiador é frágil, ao partir do princípio de que não existem grandes textos da literatura indiana, simplesmente porque não se conhecem (Macaulay 428). Aliás, a ideia deste autor acerca do ensino do Inglês não é original. Já em 1819, como salienta Homi Bhabha, um missionário tinha afirmado o mesmo, definindo a preparação dos tradutores da seguinte forma: «(…) to form a corp of translators and be employed in different departments of Labour» (Bhabha 87). Assim, este tradutor não é mais do que um «mimic man raised through our English school» (Bhabha 87).

Na cena atrás citada é possível reconhecer as diferenças culturais entre Kumar e os outros Indianos representados na série, havendo que ter em conta, como alertam Alcoff e Mendieta, outras categorias, como a classe, a etnicidade e a sexualidade (Alcoff, Mendieta 1). Um dos antagonistas de Kumar é justamente Pandit Baba, defensor da auto-determinação da Índia, o que não acontece com Kumar, que não manifesta qualquer envolvimento nas causas que mobilizam os Indianos, algo a confirmar o seu isolamento e que ele explicita no primeiro interrogatório policial.

Esta acusação de Pandit Baba, figura de referência para os Indianos, tal como é representada na série, é mais um dado a interpretar. Na atitude singular de Kumar – que se comporta como um Inglês – pode ser visto um aval ao colonialismo. Porém, como nos é permitido conhecer o percurso da personagem, a identificação de Kumar com a língua inglesa é compreensível. Afinal, ele é Inglês, apenas não nascido mas criado em Inglaterra que, pela origem familiar, é Indiano. Assim, o facto de esta personagem caber no perfil traçado por Macaulay para os «tradutores», graças à sua educação inglesa exímia, não se deve ao facto de Kumar avalizar o colonialismo inglês. Pelo contrário, nunca se pronuncia a este respeito, distanciando-se quer do poder britânico, quer da população indiana. Limita-se a viver uma aventura de contornos dramáticos, desde o suicídio do pai, e a partir da chegada à Índia, com a acusação de ser um dos autores da violação de Daphne, e consequente prisão.

Robert Young desenvolve a ideia da característica não fixa da *Englishness* na literatura, que vem ao encontro do perfil de Kumar:

> It is striking that many novelists not only of today but also of the past write almost obsessively about the uncertain crossing and invasion of identities: whether of class and gender – the Brontës, Hardy or Lawrence – or culture and race – the Brontës again (…) Haggard, Conrad (not only *The Secret Agent*, but also of course in *Heart of Darkness*, the imbrication of the two cultures within each other, the fascination with the 'magnificent' African woman, and among many other novels, his first, *Almayer's Folly*, the story of an inter-racial marriage), James, Forster, Cary, Lawrence, Joyce, Greene, Rhys. (Young 3).

A esta enumeração acrescentaríamos Scott, autor da obra na origem da série em apreço. Young continua a discorrer sobre este encontro com o Outro na literatura: «Many novels of the past (...) are concerned with incorporating the culture of the other, whether of class, ethnicity or sexuality.» (Young 3). A incorporação a que Young alude contribui para explicar a integração de Kumar (nessa altura Coomer) em Inglaterra. De novo Young:

> For the past few centuries Englishness has often been constructed as a heterogeneous, conflictual composite of contrary elements, an identity which is not identical with itself. The whole problem (…) is that it has never been successfully characterized by an essential, core identity from which the other is excluded. (Young 3).

A ambivalência e a imitação (*mimicry*) contidas no discurso[7] colonial, sobre o que Homi K. Bhabha teoriza, também podem ser ilustrados por diversas situações em torno de Kumar. Bhabha chama a atenção para as novas identidades, de que Stuart Hall também fala em «New Ethnicities». Trata-se de algo que contrasta com o que acontecia anteriormente, em

[7] O conceito é aqui utilizado na acepção de Foucault, como uma construção de linguagem e conhecimento que define e limita o que pode ser afirmado acerca de uma questão.

particular antes dos grandes movimentos migratórios e da descolonização, e em particular – que é o que nos interessa – nas temáticas de escrita, do que podemos extrapolar para outras áreas, como o cinema ou a televisão:

> Where, once, the transmission of national traditions was the major theme of world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonized, or political refugees – these border and frontier conditions – may be the terrains of world literature. (Bhabha 12).

Hari Kumar é um destes deslocados de que falam os Estudos Pós-Coloniais. Primeiro, um emigrante[8] indiano na Grã-Bretanha, mais tarde um emigrante Inglês na Índia, certamente mais desenraizado nesta condição (sem recursos embora com ligações sociais influentes), do que na anterior, quando se move na classe média alta. Esta personagem, pela sua complexidade, também ilustra os conceitos de ambivalência e imitação tratados por Bhabha. Segundo este autor,

> mimicry is a desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (Bhabha 86).

O autor explica mais adiante que *mimicry* reside na representação de uma diferença que consiste no repúdio da autoridade colonial (Bhabha, *Location*: 86). E, tal como vemos ao longo dos episódios, Kumar é simultaneamente agente e alvo de imitação. Ao viver em Inglaterra (passado que visualizamos nas fotografias da escola, ao lado de Colin Linsey, e da tradicional casa inglesa da família Kumar – 1.º episódio), comportando-se como um verdadeiro Inglês, não estará ele a fazer *mimicry* dos Ingleses? Esse passado é algo que o tornará parecido com um Inglês, mas nunca um

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[8] Utilizamos neste passo do texto o termo *emigrante* e não *imigrante*, quando nos referimos à situação de Kumar em Inglaterra, por não assumirmos a perspectiva do país anfitrião.

verdadeiro Inglês, devido às suas características étnicas, na perspectiva tanto de Ingleses, como de Indianos. Quando, no primeiro episódio, Daphne e Kumar passam um serão na MacGregor House, Daphne conta a Lady Chatterjee que estiveram a conversar sobre algo comum a ambos: *home*. Ou seja, Inglaterra. Não será um exemplo de *mimicry* Kumar (mesmo sendo Daphne a fazer a formulação) considerar a Inglaterra como *home*? Essa *mimicry* prossegue, quando se instala em Mayapore, ao continuar a usar as roupas ocidentais e a falar Inglês, pelo menos numa primeira fase. Um pormenor, o chapéu colonial, que Kumar usa num evento social, torna-o alvo de troça dos amigos, liderados por Vidyasagar. Este rouba o chapéu a Kumar e imita-o numa expressão muito comum dos Ingleses:

> VIDYASAGAR – *I say, I say!* (1.º episódio).

Ao recordar a cena, Kumar conta como todos os amigos se riram dele:

> COOMER/KUMAR – *They all laughed at me. And, in truth, I was ridiculous. An Indian, incapable of being anything except an Indian, something totally alien to me.*

O acto de queimar o chapéu colonial, por iniciativa de Vidyasagar, pode ser considerado simbólico e a ruptura de Kumar com o passado. Mas a *in-betweenness* desta personagem e a sua não inclusão nas duas comunidades, inglesa e indiana, é bem explícita na seguinte linha do diálogo, proferida durante o interrogatório a que Merrick o submete após a detenção no Santuário (1.º episódio):

> COOMER/KUMAR – *I hate this damned stinking country. The people who live in it, and the people who run it, and that goes for you to, Merrick.*

O exemplo supremo de *mimicry* por esta personagem é a atitude que assume quando é acusado de ter participado na violação de Daphne. Kumar opta pelo silêncio, não se defendendo, sequer. Confrontada com esta atitude, Daphne considera-a a de um verdadeiro *gentleman* pois, afinal, Kumar é «um Inglês». (2.º episódio, *The Bibighar Gardens*). A afirmação é feita a Connie White, mulher do comissário-adjunto.

Ainda em Bhabha, o texto de Macaulay *Minute on Education* é chamado à discussão. A alusão permite articular o conceito de tradutor, a figura de Kumar e a *mimicry*: «[Macaulay] makes a mokery of Oriental

learning until faced with the challenge of conceiving of a 'reformed' colonial subject.» (Bhabha 87).

Detemo-nos mais uma vez em Bhabha e no conceito de *mimicry*:

> What I have called mimicry is not the familiar exercise of *dependent* colonial relations through narcissistic identification so that, as Fanon has observed, the black man stops being an actional person for only the white man can represent his self-esteem. (Bhabha 88).

E, como a cena atrás citada ilustra, quando Vidysagar rouba o chapéu colonial a Kumar, Bhabha prossegue, desta vez referindo-se à ambivalência:

> The *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority. And it is a double vision that is a result of what I've described as a partial representation/recognition of the colonial subject. (Bhabha 88).

Assim, este autor encontra nas figuras do «tradutor» de Macaulay e do «colonial politician as play actor», de Naipaul, entre outros, exemplos do que chama «authorized versions of otherness» (Bhabha 88). Além disso, distingue entre o ser Inglês e anglicizado, algo que se aplica na perfeição a Kumar que, não sendo Inglês, é completamente anglicizado. Bhabha considera o «tradutor» de Macaulay, que vemos concretizado em Kumar, como o exemplo acabado de *mimic man*, alguém que interioriza a cultura inglesa para deter a autoridade intelectual necessária a transmitir.

A análise da relação entre Kumar e Daphne, porém, exige o recurso a outros conceitos, além dos abordados. Robert Young aborda a relação entre colonizador e colonizado, no sentido em que esta aproxima indivíduos dos dois géneros, o masculino e o feminino. Sobre a importância da sexualidade no encontro colonial, salienta, citando Hyam: «Sexuality was the spearhead of racial contact» (Young 5). Por outro lado e associado ao conceito de *colonial desire*, Young considera o hibridismo central para o debate cultural e destaca a forma como o primeiro e o segundo conceitos estão relacionados:

> Anxiety about hybridity reflected the desire to keep races separate, which meant that attention was immediately

> focussed on the mixed race offspring that resulted from inter-racial sexual intercourse (…) (Young 25).

Este relato condiz com a forma como a relação entre Kumar e Daphne é criticada pela sociedade de Mayapore. Quer por Ingleses, quer por Indianos. O conceito de *hybridity*, tal como Young o apresenta nas linhas abaixo, é ilustrado, na série, com o nascimento de Parvati, filha de Daphne (fruto da relação com Kumar ou da violação? Impossível saber):

> Hybridity makes difference into sameness, and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the different no longer simply different (Young 26).

Por fim e embora não tenha sido considerado como axial, o conceito de subalterno é igualmente útil para compreender as relações sociais entre as personagens de *The Jewel in the Crown*. É conhecida a interrogação de Gayatry Spivak, que teorizou o conceito, a respeito da ausência de canais de expressão de determinados grupos e indivíduos, que a seguir reproduzimos, antes de partir para a sua articulação com a série:

> On the other side of the international division of labour from socialized capital, inside *and* outside the circuit of the epistemic violence of imperialist law and education supplementing an earlier economic text, *can the subaltern speak*? (Spivak 25).

A possibilidade de articular o conceito de subalterno ao tema em análise pode encontrar-se no projecto do grupo que desenvolveu os Subaltern Studies, que se propôs reflectir sobre a historiografia colonial da Índia, a partir das revoltas camponesas. Este foi o pretexto para os autores se interrogarem sobre o problema da «autorização para narrar» já levantado por Said. (Spivak 25). O subalterno consiste em alguém que não tem voz, nem canais institucionais para se fazer ouvir. Porém, a subalternidade é algo relativo, como se conclui da afirmação de Guha, citado por Spivak:

> The same class or element which was dominant in one area (...) could be among the dominated in another. This could and did create ambiguities and contradictions in attitudes and alliances, especially among the lowest strata of the rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper middle class peasants all of whom belonged, *ideally speaking*,

> to the category of people of the subaltern classes (Spivak 26, *apud* Guha 1982: 8).

Esta afirmação explica a complexidade da relação entre Kumar e Lady Chatterjee, por exemplo, ou entre Kumar e Merrick, havendo momentos em que o primeiro é subalternizado pelo outro e momentos em que se passa o contrário. A cena no Santuário exemplifica as duas situações: Kumar é detido por Merrick, ficando sob a alçada policial; porém, ao ser interpelado, responde com sobranceria em Inglês e acaba por protestar por ser agredido e detido sem motivo explícito. Mais eloquente ainda é o resultado se analisarmos as relações dos Indianos entre si, consoante o contexto em que se encontram. Kumar, oriundo de uma família abastada, pode recordar um passado na classe média alta, encontrando-se porém na ruína. O facto altera não só as suas relações com os Ingleses na Índia, como com os seus compatriotas. Quanto a Lady Chatterjee, o seu ascendente na sociedade local é evidente, comprovado pelo seu estatuto social e económico e círculo de relações. Convida Kumar para uma festa, assim como Mrs. Sen Gupta, sua tia, que não comparece (por não se sentir confortável em casa de Lady Chatterjee?), no 1.º episódio. Porém, à anfitriã, que recebe individualidades de ambas as comunidades em casa, é vedado o acesso ao clube inglês. E, embora o motivo não seja inteiramente explícito, possa compreender-se pelo contexto que existe uma quase total separação social entre Ingleses e Indianos em Mayapore.

Estando o estatuto de subalterno ligado à invisibilidade, Spivak dá a seguinte resposta à questão *Can the subaltern speak?*: «(...) in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak (...). (Spivak 28).

III

Como já se disse e não é de estranhar, a adaptação introduziu na série características que o original não continha, tornando-o um produto mais convencional, como afirma o crítico já anteriormente citado. Isso deve-se, por exemplo, ao facto de uma série televisiva ter exigências de produção, como a necessidade de retorno do investimento, produto de consumo que é.

No entanto, há dados comuns à obra literária e à série. Numa pro-

dução dos anos 80, o colonialismo inglês e a relação colonizador-colonizado surgem representados com diversas *nuances*, tanto na obra literária como na série, o que permite adivinhar uma postura politicamente correcta do autor da adaptação. Assim, se podemos interpretar *The Jewel in the Crown* como uma condenação do colonialismo, ao vermos representada a autoridade britânica de uma forma que suscita a imediata rejeição do espectador (se tomarmos como certo que o espectador comum não só condenará o colonialismo em abstracto, como atitudes de subjugação de um povo por outro pela força, prisão sem culpa formada ou mesmo tortura), também podemos encontrar indícios da presença colonial britânica bem-intencionada, generosa e abnegada. Entre Ronald Merrick (o Inglês prepotente e arrogante), alvo da censura da autoridade colonial, que embaraçou dada a sua condução do «caso Kumar», até Edwina Crane e Barbara Batchelor, as professoras com acção marcada pelo altruísmo, coragem e espírito de missão, desde a sua chegada à Índia até à morte de ambas, encontramos uma paleta que inclui os funcionários civis, judiciais ou militares e as respectivas famílias, até um historiador de conduta irrepreensível num quadro de Direitos Humanos. A representação desta relação, com todos estes cambiantes, contem um enorme impacte potencial junto da recepção, parte dela podendo rever-se nalguma daquelas personagens e confrontá-la com experiência anterior.

Porém, o que parece ser o dado mais notável proporcionado pela série, de uma forma eloquente graças ao poder da imagem – não terá a transgressão de uma relação interracial, como é o caso de Kumar e Daphne, muito mais impacte se a visualizarmos do que narrada numa obra literária? – é a articulação da atenção dada ao colonialismo, no caso da Índia no geral e a atribuída ao caso particular de Kumar e o seu percurso pessoal.

Este surge quer no seu envolvimento cívico com a Grã-Bretanha e a Índia, quer no seu enquadramento familiar, com a família nuclear (o pai) e depois com a família alargada (a tia), profissional (no *Mayapore Gazette*, como jornalista ou, mais tarde, como professor de Inglês) ou afectivo (com Daphne) ou na prisão, alguém sobre quem o olhar do espectador vai certamente fixar-se.

Esta articulação permite não só uma reflexão sobre o colonialismo e o passado recente que liga a Grã-Bretanha e a Índia, mas também sobre o pós-colonialismo e não apenas naqueles dois países. Como se afirmou

anteriormente, a série em análise pode levantar questões junto de públicos vastos sobre outras formas de colonialismo, nomeadamente em Portugal, onde pode igualmente proporcionar o debate sobre a diáspora, tanto de Portugueses no mundo, como das comunidades asiática e africana residentes no País.

Por outro lado, não sendo um documentário nem um panfleto, mas uma obra de ficção, *The Jewel in the Crown* acrescenta, à já referida oportunidade de reflexão, a vertente do entretenimento. E, se uma corrente na opinião pública considera que a televisão não proporciona a fruição estética em toda a sua potencialidade como acontece no cinema, as modernas tecnologias, como o *home cinema* e os mais recentes formatos de ecrãs de televisão, visam melhorar a qualidade da recepção e superar as limitações do pequeno formato, retirando assim força aos referidos argumentos, que insistem em separar a cultura de elite e a cultura de massas. Como se sabe, a «sobrevivência» de séries de culto – entre as quais gostaria de incluir *The Jewel in the Crown* – além da temporada inicial de estreia, pela sua inclusão nos catálogos dos novos suportes, como o DVD, permite a constante renovação do seu público, duas décadas após a estreia.

Pormenores centrais para a compreensão da personagem Coomer//Kumar, como a sua aparência, toda a sua *allure* e as *nuances* entre as pronúncias do Inglês de todas as outras personagens, nomeadamente as indianas, só podem ser proporcionadas pela série da televisão. Na obra literária, estes pormenores não têm impacte nenhum. Outro dado a relevar na série consiste na introdução, na abertura de cada episódio, de imagens de arquivo, a preto e branco, da Índia no auge do colonialismo britânico, a anteceder o início de cada episódio, a cores, com a indicação da data da acção e do local onde decorre, o que permite ao espectador situar-se num contexto histórico e, ao mesmo tempo, aperceber-se da subjectividade das estórias que vão desenvolver-se a partir daí.

Uma vertente não explorada é a importância atribuída à língua inglesa na Índia, que apenas abordámos superficialmente. Tal como Macaulay anteviu, o Inglês teve e continua a ter um papel preponderante na Índia, quer no quotidiano das populações, quer no ensino[9]. Sobre a

[9] De acordo o site do Ministério de Recursos Humanos da Índia e considerando que as línguas, como importante meio de comunicação e educação, assumem um lugar de

aprendizagem do Inglês na actualidade ficámos a saber que é obrigatório, apesar de ser ministrado em modalidades diferentes, em todos os estados, à excepção de Bihar. Aliás, segundo o *site ethnologue.com*, as línguas nacionais ou oficiais da Índia são o *Hindi* e o Inglês, no contexto das 22 línguas «cadastradas» naquele país. Por outro lado, a informação contida no perfil da Índia do *site* da CIA também corroboram os dados anteriores[10].

De acordo com estes, é possível considerar que a visão de Macaulay, visando ensinar o Inglês às novas gerações na Índia, se confirmou mesmo após a descolonização. Com efeito, é de notar o reaparecimento de Kumar, no penúltimo episódio (*Pandora's Box*), quando já sabemos que se dedica a ensinar crianças, dirigindo-se à recém-inaugurada filial do Colégio Governamental de Rampur, ainda vazio, sem equipamento nem alunos. A visita serve de pretexto para evocar o passado e a escola em Inglaterra e referir-se a «sonhos nunca realizados». Ou seja, trata-se de um momento da narrativa em que Kumar lida ao mesmo tempo com as perspectivas de futuro, indissociáveis da educação e com a perda, irreparável, da possibilidade de felicidade pessoal. Esta ligação leva-nos de novo aos «tradutores» de Macaulay que ensinarão Inglês às crianças da Índia.

A reflexão proporcionada consiste na confrontação entre o projecto político geral (no âmbito do qual inserimos a ideia de educação para as crianças indianas) e a sua concretização particular. Será que Macaulay teve algum eco das repercussões da sua ideia? É uma interrogação para a qual

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destaque no programa de educação e desenvolvimento, pode ler-se: «(...) promotion and development of Hindi and other 17 languages listed in the Schedule VIII of the Constitution including Sanskrit and Urdu on the one hand and English as well as the foreign languages on the other hand have received due attention». URL: <http://education.nic.in/prolan.asp>. Consultado em 18.10.2007.

[10] «English enjoys associate status but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication; Hindi is the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people; there are 14 other official languages: Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Sanskrit; Hindustani is a popular variant of Hindi/Urdu spoken widely throughout northern India but is not an official language». URL: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>. Consultado em 18.10.2007.

não encontrámos resposta, apesar da legislação que a consagrou. Mas em *The Jewel in the Crown*, a resposta é evidente: os grandes projectos políticos não existem sem uma aplicação individual, que consiste no grande teste à sua exequibilidade. No caso da formação de «tradutores» para o ensino do Inglês, o projecto deixa muito a desejar, como se prova pela fractura cultural que implica, pois o «tradutor» que, a determinada fase do processo, se transformou em alguém «Inglês no gosto», muito provavelmente deixará de se sentir ambientado na comunidade de origem, ficando votado a uma terra de ninguém na qual é doloroso viver. Poderá ser entendido com um apelo à ética dos políticos, frequentemente não conscientes das repercussões das suas decisões.

Essa convocação do espectador quer para o geral, quer para o particular, por um lado para o 'real', o momento histórico (com a apresentação de noticiários de actualidades da II Guerra Mundial) que as imagens de arquivo captaram, quer para a ficção (a estória de Hari Kumar) consiste no que de mais atraente *The Jewel in the Crown* proporciona. Tal como outros textos, filmes, séries de televisão, experiências do dia-a-dia que mobilizam a opinião pública, esta série tem o dom de influenciar profundamente quem a viu com atenção, não deixando o espectador indiferente. Permite-lhe reflectir sobre a condição humana. Não será isso a verdadeira marca da cultura?

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Garrett e *Ossian*

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Garrett e *Ossian*

A Crítica Literária e *Ossian*

Após a reapreciação do complexo fenómeno 'Ossian' nos anos 80 do século passado, intimamente ligado ao nome de Howard Gaskill[1], ficou também comprovado[2] que os cantos ossiânicos tiveram uma influência maior nos movimentos literários pré-românticos e românticos portugueses e brasileiros[3] que a crítica do século XIX e XX tinha assumido.

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[1] Gaskill, Howard. "'Ossian' Macpherson: Towards a Rehabilitation," *Comparative Criticism* 8 (1986), pp. 113-46. –. "'Ossian' at Home and Abroad," *Strathclyde Modern Language Studies* 8 (1988), pp. 5-26. –. "German Ossianism: A Reappraisal?," *German Life and Letters* 42 (1989), pp. 329-341. –. "What did James Macpherson really leave on Display at his Publisher's Shop in 1762?", *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 16 (1990), pp. 67-89. –. (ed.) *Ossian Revisited*. Edinburgh: EUP, 1991. –. "Hölderlin und Ossian," *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* 27 (1990/91), pp. 100-130. –. "Hölderlin and Ossian," *London German Studies* IV (1992), pp. 147-165. –. "Ossian in Europe", *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, 21 (1994), pp. 643-78.

[2] Cf.: Buescu, Maria Gabriela Carvalhão (2001), *Macpherson e o Ossian em Portugal. Estudo comparativo translatológico*, Lisboa: Edições Colibri; BÄR, Gerald, "Ossian in Portugal", in: Gaskill, Howard, (ed.) (2004), *The Reception of Ossian in Europe*, London, New York, NY: Thoemmes Continuum, pp. 351-374; Buescu, Maria Gabriela, "A Poesia Ossiânica em Portugal: Estudo da sua Recepção Translatológica", in: Avelar, Mário (org.) (2005), *Viagens pela Palavra: Livro de Homenagem à Professora Maria Laura Bettencourt Pires*, Lisboa: Universidade Aberta, pp. 227-240, BÄR, Gerald, "A Citação na Tradução: O Caso de *Werther* e *Ossian*", em: Miguel, M.A.C., Moreira Da Silva, E.J., *et al*. (org.) (2006), *Actas do I Colóquio de Tradução e Cultura* (*Arquipélago – Línguas e Literaturas Anexo III*), Ponta Delgada: Universidade dos Açores, pp. 52-66.

[3] Aguiar, Ofir Bergemann de (1999), *Ossian no Brasil*, Goiânia: Editora da UFG.

Entretanto, 'Ossian' tornou-se um assunto multi-disciplinar, devido à sua influência nas literaturas, na filosofia, na história e mitologia, nas belas artes e na música. Consequentemente, o debate estigmatizante e, por vezes, sufocante sobre a autenticidade dos textos atribuídos a Ossian, finalmente abriu para aspectos de recepção e de análise de discursos[4].

Logo após a primeira publicação de textos atribuídos ao mítico bardo por Macpherson, *Fragments of ancient poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Galic or Erse language*. Edinburgh: Hamilton and Balfour [Junho] 1760, surgiram inúmeras traduções e edições em quase todas as línguas, como por exemplo: 1760 em francês; 1762 em holandês e alemão; 1763 em italiano; 1765 em sueco; 1769 em latim; 1773 em finlandês; 1788 em dinamarquês, húngaro, russo e espanhol; … A primeira publicação de um fragmento ossiânico em tradução portuguesa – os 41 versos iniciais de *Fingal* – só apareceu em 1812 no quarto volume das *Obras Poéticas* de Bocage.

O primeiro impulso para a apresentação de um trabalho sobre a recepção das obras atribuídas a Ossian em Portugal deve ter vindo de Paul van Tieghem[5], amigo declarado de Fidelino de Figueiredo[6] que na sua *Historia da Litteratura Romantica Portuguesa* (1913) só menciona "Ossian, ou melhor Mac-pherson" de passagem[7], não relacionando, por

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[4] Neste contexto Schmidt distingue entre várias formas de recepção: a produtiva, a receptiva (analytico, analytico-productiva, reproductiva) e a passiva e aplica a análise de discurso: "Der philologisch-historische Diskurs", "Der ästhetisch-poetische Diskurs", "Der ethisch-praktische Diskurs", "Der politisch-kulturelle Diskurs", "Der philosophisch-transzendentale Diskurs", Schmidt, Wolf Gerhard (2003), *'Homer des Nordens' und 'Mutter der Romantik'. James Macphersons Ossian und seine Rezeption in der deutschsprachigen Literatur*. Vol. I., Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pp. X-XI.

[5] Cf. Tieghem, Paul van (1918) *Ossian en France*, 2 vols, Paris: F. Rieder & Cie.

[6] No seu ensaio "Shakespeare e Garrett" (1949) Figueiredo refere-se ao "meu falecido amigo Van Tieghem", que tinha publicado *Ossian en France* em 1917 (in: *Boletins da Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras*, CXXII, Letras – nº 7, São Paolo, 1951, p. 54).

[7] Figueiredo, Fidelino de (1913), *Historia da Litteratura Romantica Portuguesa (1825-1870)*, Lisboa: Livraria Classica Editora, p. 164.

exemplo, "a melancholia da nuvem" (1913: 158) com o Bardo. Quando fala do "falso Ossian" no 3º volume da sua *Historia da Litteratura Classica*[8], já tinha apresentado o breve relatório "Ossian em Portugal" nos volumes 10º, 11º, 12º e 13º da *Revista de Historia*[9]. Nesta série de notas bibliográficas, publicadas entre 1921 e 1924 em turnos com H. de C. Ferreira Lima, Figueiredo lista vários poetas portugueses que traduziram textos ossiânicos, mencionando também o libreto do drama lírico *Fingal* (música: Pedro Antonio Coppola; texto: Caetano Solito), que foi representado no teatro São Carlos em 1851 e 1864. Existem duas edições bilingues (italiano/português) do libreto dos mesmos anos, o último com o retrato do actor principal Pietro Mongini.

O interesse de Figueiredo surgiu após um discurso do crítico e historiador castelhano D. Narciso Alonso Cortés em 1919, no qual afirmou, que a "primeira tentativa de traducção para língua peninsular foi feita pelo frade mexicano, P.e Augustin de Castro". Contrário à tradução de Ortiz (1788) esta tentativa ficou incompleta e não se baseava no texto inglês. No seu discurso Cortés menciona as traduções portuguesas de Bocage e Soares de Passos, autores que fizeram Figueiredo recordar as poesias polémicas de Ossian[10] e como a "influencia directa do supposto bardo gaélico exerceu-se em Portugal pelo romantismo, principalmente sobre Herculano e sobre Soares de Passos": "*Ossianico* entrou na adjectivação litteraria". (Figueiredo, 1921: X, 74)

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[8] Figueiredo, Fidelino de (1924) *Historia da Litteratura Classica. 2ª Epocha: 1580--1756 (Continuação) 3ª Epocha: 1756-1825*, (Bibliotheca de Estudos Historicos Nacionaes – VIII), Lisboa: Portugália, p. 198.

[9] Figueiredo, Fidelino de (1921-23) (ed.) *Revista de Historia. Publicação Trimestral*, Anno X, vol. X, Nºs 37-40, 1921; Anno XI, vol. XI, Nºs 41-44, 1922, Lisboa: Livraria Classica Editora; Anno XII, vol. XII, Nºs 45-48, 1923, Lisboa: Livraria Universal e Anno XIII, vol. XIII, Nºs 49-52, 1924, Lisboa: Empresa Literária Fluminense, Lda.

[10] "Como é geralmente sabido, os falsos poemas de Ossian, plangentes e lugubres, fóra de toda a disciplina classica, eram devidos a falsificação habilidosa de James Macpherson (1736-1796) e quando se divulgaram tiveram uma repercussão immensa por toda a Europa, cujos melhores poetas, sem se precatarem da falsificação, encontraram nessa poesia elegiaca a cabal expressão da sensibilidade do romantismo." (Figueiredo, 1921: X, 74)

Além de Figueiredo vários críticos literários, como Teófilo Braga[11] e, mais tarde, Hernâni Cidade[12] escreveram sobre *Ossian*. Principalmente Braga já tinha admitido o grande impacto que "essa vaga melancholia do genio céltico" teve na Europa. Na sua opinião "esse novo lyrismo" revelou um novo ideal poético e até o debate sobre a autenticidade dos poemas levou a consequências positivas:

> N'este tempo os poemas gaelicos do bardo Ossian, repassados do anceio pela liberdade e d'essa vaga melancholia do genio celtico, vem descobrir ao mundo um novo ideal de poesia; Goethe apaixona-se por esse novo lyrismo, e Napoleão prefere essas narrativas ossianicas às epopêas de Homero. A discussão da authenticidade dos poemas publicados por Mac-Pherson leva a descobrir o problema da concepção da poesia nacional, e influe no lyrismo inglez da escola dos *lakistas*. (Braga, 1880: 76)

Todavia, é importante observar as revisões significativas da sua posição relativamente à figura do autor e ao novo ideal poético. As alterações feitas na sua avaliação em 1903, nomeadamente a inclusão das expressões "pretendido bardo" e "seduzir as imaginações", caracterizam as obras ossiânicas num juízo de valores menos favoráveis:

> N'este tempo os poemas gaélicos do pretendido bardo do século VI Ossian, repassados do anceio pela liberdade e de uma vaga melancholia do genio celtico, vem seduzir as imaginações com um novo ideal poetico. (Braga, 1903: 28)

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[11] Braga, Teófilo (1875) *Manual de História da Literatura Portuguesa desde as suas origens até ao presente*, Porto: Magalhães & Moniz; (1880) *História do Romantismo em Portugal*, Lisboa: Nova Livraria Internacional e (1903) *Historia da Litteratura Portuguesa: Garrett e o Romantismo*, vol. 24, Porto: Livraria Chardron.

[12] Cidade, Hernâni (org.) (1930) *A Obra Poética do Dr. José Anastácio Da Cunha com um Estudo sobre o Anglo-Germanismo nos Proto-Românticos Portugueses*, Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade.

A opinião de Braga determinou durante muito tempo o tom dos escassos comentários sobre Ossian na crítica literária portuguesa. Só no século XXI foi publicado o primeiro estudo comparativo translatológico sobre 'Macpherson e o Ossian em Portugal' (Buescu, 2001), seguido de um ensaio dedicado à recepção da obra neste país (Bär: 2004).

Garrett e *Ossian*

Uma das obras poéticas mais importantes de Almeida Garrett, *Flores sem Fructo* (1845), inclui um poema épico em versos e estrofes: "Oscar (Imitação de Ossian)", presumivelmente escrito nos princípios dos anos vinte do século XIX. Enquanto Braga o considera "uma tradução"[13] (Braga, 1880: 153) Machado mantém a designação "imitação de Ossian" (Machado, 1986: 33). O poema é, de facto, baseado num texto originalmente chamado "Fragment VII"[14] que posteriormente foi incorporado numa nota de rodapé de *Temora* (Cf.: Gaskill, 1996: 156-7).

Tal como muitos jovens autores europeus antes (Goethe, Lenz, Hölderlin, Wordsworth, Byron, Chateaubriand, Lamartine) Garrett numa nota admite a sua fascinação pela poesia "sublime" de Ossian. Tenta justificar e desculpar este entusiasmo com a sua juventude, intimando outras autoridades famosas que tinham expressado o seu encantamento com *Ossian*:

> A especie de introducção que chega até estes versos não é de MacPherson, ou de quem quer que foi o verdadeiro auctor das "Poesias de Ossian": fi-la eu para me exercitar n'um genero que nos meus primeiros annos, me parecia o sublime dos

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[13] "... a melancholia romantica facilmente se apossava de Garrett, valetudinario e timido; quando Goëthe, ao escrever o *Werther*, essa concepção de uma forte individualidade, não se póde eximir á fascinação dos poemas de Ossian, como é que Garrett deixaria de ser impressionado, e para sempre, das aventuras de Fingal e das festas de Selma? Nas *Flôres sem fructo* vem uma tradução de uns trechos do poema *Oscar*, com uma introdução em verso calcado sobre o mesmo estylo." (Braga, T. (1880), *História do Romantismo em Portugal*, Lisboa: Nova Livraria Internacional, p. 153.

[14] Gaskill, Howard (1996) (ed.), *The Poems of Ossian and related Works*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 16-17.

> sublimes – como elle ja pareceu a Napoleão e a Cesarotti. O epilogo, que se contèm nos ultimos oito versos do poemeto, tambem é da mesma lavra. (Garrett, 1845: 226, Nota F.)

Posteriormente, e com o conhecimento do veredicto da história literária, Garrett tenta minimizar a relevância desta imitação, declarando-a um exercício poético num género que parecia sublime, e entalhando o poema com alguma coisa dele próprio. Esta 'moldura' pode ter sido acrescentada antes da publicação para justificar o seu gosto ilícito. O poema apresenta Oscar como filho de Caruth, que mata o seu amigo Dermid numa luta pelo amor da filha de Dargo. Com a sua honra perdida, desta forma, Oscar, simula ser ele próprio um inimigo para a adorada o matar. Esta, após tomado consciência do seu erro fatal, não hesita em cometer suicídio. Garrett termina o poema com o seguinte comentário irónico, que reduz o mundo ossiânico a uma ilusão comparável aos artefactos feitiços, cujo encanto formava a tentação para muitos heróis nas epopeias de Homero e da Renascença:

> Assim cantava o caledonio vate;
> E de seu canto as derradeiras notas
> Ainda em meu ouvido resoavam
> Quando um raio de sol de luz criadora
> No apposento me entrou, e a névoa toda
> D'Escocia dissipou, – libertou-me alma
> De não sei que oppressão, e me devolve
> Aos doces climas da risonha Elysia.
> (Garrett, 1845: 68)

Esta sugerida imunidade à influência ossiânica e às modas literárias não era tão forte quanto o poeta desejava. Na sua relevante obra *A Formação de Almeida Garrett* (1971) Ofélia Paiva Monteiro já tinha apontado que uma versão do excerto acima citado foi incluído nas "*lições de poesia* contidas no *Lyceu das Damas*" (escrito 1822-1823), nomeadamente na lição 25.ª, para documentar a poesia de Ossian. Após "uma composição onde imita o seu estilo", esta confissão de "Alceu" a Lília esclarece "a inaptidão do jovem Garrett para as paisagens sombrias, os temas gravemente melancólicos, as imagens agrestes de Macpherson": "a melancolia que os repassa tem seus encantos, mas fora «mui grande transtorno, se todas as nuvens e cerrações da Escócia e dos seus bardos nos viessem ofuscar os lindos quadros de nossa amável e risonha poesia»" (Monteiro, 1971: I, 335)

É preciso recapitular e reavaliar esta relação literária algo semelhante à 'ambiguidade' [15] com que Goethe (cf. *Ossian* / Friederike Brion / *Werther* / distanciamento) e outros autores abordaram o fenómeno.

Só o recurso a um manuscrito do Espólio Literário de Garrett[16] que agora está na posse da Biblioteca da Universidade de Coimbra, permite esclarecer alguns aspectos da recepção produtiva em geral e da génese do poema no volume *Flores sem Fructos*. (Cf. Monteiro, 1971: I, 334-335)

Estes "Poesias de J.-B.L.S.A. Garrett" permitem estabelecer a fase quando a atenção do poeta pelo Bardo foi mais intensa: apresentando uma versão anterior ao poema "Oscar (Imitação de Ossian)", o manuscrito é datado de 1821. Isto significa que o autor se interessava por *Ossian* muito antes da sua primeira viagem a Inglaterra. Os seus conhecimentos sobre o caso Macpherson eram profundos, como comprovam as suas notas:

> Não o prefiro (como Buonaparte fazia) a todos os poetas; não o julgo (como seu traductor Cesaroti) supperior a Homero; mas não o desprezo, como Chateaubriand (que o despreza imitando-o), gósto, e francamente confesso, que gósto. Se as poesias, que correm com o nome de Ossian, são, ou não delle comeffeito, é para mim de bem pouca monta. Que me faz a mim que Homero seja, ou não o author da Iliada, Virgilio da Eneida? São bons poemas; isso só me importa. Mackpherson, e Ossian são nomes; quer sejão bons, ou antigos, quer não; é a mesmissima cousa: os Dargos, Dermids, Irminsulfs &&&,

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[15] Cf: Buescu, Maria Gabriela Carvalhão, *Macpherson e o Ossian em Portugal*, p. 173.

[16] Na *Revista de Historia*, vol. XIII, 1924, p. 235-236, H.C.F. Lima afirmou: "Possue o nosso amigo o sr. Delfim Guimarães, illustre director da interessante revista *Arquivo literario*, dois volumes com poesias ineditas de Garrett: No *Livro II* incluem-se duas traduções de Ossian: *A morte de Oscar* e *Caruth*, a pag. 223-230. Ainda neste livro há notas inéditas acerca de Ossian, a pag. 251-254." Cf.: D.[elfim] G.[uimarães], "Manuscritos de Garrett", in: *Arquivo Literário*, Tomo XVI, Jan. – Jun. 1928, Lisboa: Livraria Editora Guimarães & C.ª 1929, pp. 320-322. Cf. Monteiro, 1971: I, XVII, 309, 334, 335, 360 e 401, onde a autora menciona e transcreve parte do manuscrito, confirmando a importância de Ossian: "De entre os bardos, é naturalmente Ossian o autor escolhido, no *Lyceu das Damas*, para mostrar a Lília o teor dessa velha poesia do Norte que Garrett, sem encarecimentos excessivos, considerava todavia elemento imprescindível da poesia moderna." (Monteiro, 1971: I, 360)

desses gósto eu, e só desses me importa. O resto são pedantices dignas do século XVII. (Garrett, ms. 1821: II, 253-254)

Nesta altura Garrett estava consciente do debate sobre a autenticidade de *Ossian*, de juízos de valor do tradutor italiano (na época, uma autoridade de crítica literária reconhecida) e da censurável abordagem 'ambigua' de Chateaubriand "que o despreza imitando-o". Sobretudo confessa francamente o seu gosto pessoal pelos textos ossiânicos, porque "são bons poemas".

Contrário à afirmação de Lima as "duas traduções de Ossian" é só uma: "A morte d'Oscar" e Garrett revela tanto a sua fonte como os seus limites linguísticos:

Este poemeto é traduzido de Ossian e com fidelidade, não do Ersa, que não pesco, mas do Francez. É monotono este estylo, mas agrada a sua melancholica sensibilidade. (Garrett, ms. 1821: II, 252-253)

(254)
pouca monta. Que me faz a
mim que Homero seja, ou não
o author da Iliada, Virgilio
da Eneida? São bons poemas; is-
so só me importa. Mackpherson,
e Ossian são nomes; quer sejão
bons, ou antigos, quer não; é
a mesmissima cousa: os Dar-
gos, Dermids, Irminsulfs &&&,
desses gósto eu, e só desses me
importa. O resto são pedantices
dignas do seculo XVII.

A fonte francesa é certamente a tradução de Letourneur que, na edição de 1810[17], inclui não só os textos teóricos de Blair e Macpherson, mas também muitas informações actualizadas relativo ao debate sobre a autenticidade dos Cantos. Ao leitor português o tom elegíaco de "A morte d'Oscar" faz lembrar as *Noites Jozephinas* (1790) de Rafael Soyé, obra classicista influenciada pelos *Night Thoughts* (1742) de Edward Young (três traduções portuguesas diferentes em várias edições entre 1783 e 1804). Comparado com o texto do manuscrito, na versão impressa de *Flores sem Fructos* alusões clássicas anacronísticas ("zephyros" / ms. p. 227, "manes" / ms. p. 230) são eliminadas, seguindo o conceito de um romantismo nacional que Garrett iria defender posteriormente.

O texto do poema no manuscrito é precedido por uma dedicatória a um amigo de Garrett – José Maria Grande[18], com quem (e com Manuel da Silva Passos) frequentou uma sociedade maçónica em Coimbra, instituída logo depois da revolução de 1820. Nos primeiros versos o autor reconhece a atenção e o apoio recebidos:

> Tu, que os viste nascer, recebe, amigo,
> Parco dom, mas sincero, estes meus versos.
> Debil parto da musa, a pouco, e pouco
> Adejou para ti, meigos socorros
> Tu lhe prestaste na mais tenra infancia;

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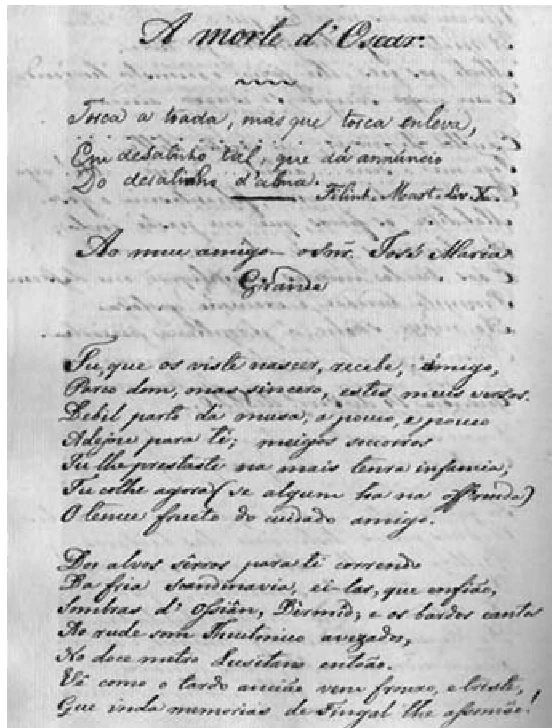
[17] *Ossian, Fils de Fingal, Barde du 3e Siècle; Poésies Galliques, Traduites sur L'anglais de Macpherson, Par Letourneur […] Et précédée d'une Notice sur l'état actuel de la question relative à l'authenticité des poëmes d'Ossian, par M. Ginguené, membre de l'Institut de France*, Paris: J.G. Dentu 1810. Vol. II, pp. 180-185: "La Mort D'Oscar, Fils de Caruth, et de Dermid, Fils de Diaran, Poëme". No Espólio Literário de Garrett (Cx. 13, Doc. 120, f.[183-225v]) encontra-se um manuscrito, autógrafo, com o título "Cathalogo de Livros", no qual não consta nenhuma edição de *Ossian*. A abreviatura 'Os' que também aparece com grafia semelhante numa lista de "Dramas portugueses" parece referir mais provavelmente à *Osmia* (peça de teatro, 1773) do que à *Ossian*.

[18] José Maria Grande foi botânico, médico e figura nacional do Liberalismo. Em 1824 tornou-se médico do hospital militar de infantaria e visitador dos hospitais militares do Alentejo. Durante o governo constitucional desempenhou cargos administrativos e de governador civil.

Tu colhe agora (se algum ha na off'renda)
O tenue fructo do cuidado amigo.
(Garrett, ms. 1821, II, pp. 223)

Como tinha frequentemente acontecido na época[19], Garrett mistura a mitologia de Escandinávia com a céltica e germânica, contrastando a expressão poética do norte com o "doce metro Lusitano":

Dos alvos serros para ti correndo
Da fria scandinavia, ei-las, que enfião,
Sombras d'Ossiân, Dèrmid; e os bardos cantos
Ao rude som Theutonico avezados,
No doce metro Lusitano entoão.
(Garrett, man. 1821, II, pp. 223)


A morte d'Oscar:

Troca a toada, mas que troca enleva,
Em desatinho tal, que dá annuncio
Do desatinho d'alma. Filint. Mart. liv. X.

Ao meu amigo o Snr. José Maria
Grande

Tu, que os viste nascer, recebe, amigo,
Pouco dom, mas sincero, estes meus versos.
Debil parte da musa, e pouco, e pouco
Adejou para ti; meigos soccorros
Tu lhe prestaste na mais tenra infancia;
Tu colhe agora (se algum ha na off'renda)
O tenue fructo do cuidado amigo.

Dos alvos serros para ti correndo
Da fria scandinavia, ei-las, que enfião,
Sombras d'Ossiân, Dèrmid; e os bardos cantos
Ao rude som Theutonico avezados,
No doce metro Lusitano entoão.
Vê como o tardo ancião vem fresco, e lesto,
Que inda memorias de Fingal lhe afirmão!

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[19] Cf.: Schmidt, Wolf Gerhard (2003), vol. I, pp. 435-463.

Segue a caracterização dos temas ossiânicos e a evocação de Ossian e:

E lê como o tardo ancião vem frouxo, e triste,
Que inda memorias de Fingal lhe assomão!
Mas lá no choupo o vento resoando
Lugubremente lamentoso n'harpa,
Inda lhe excita saudade, e amores,
Inda lhe accende resfriada gloria:
Derrete-se-lhe o gêlo do sepulchro,
E os sons divinos d'entre os lábios coão.
La vai tenteando as cordas desmontadas,
E os esquecidos, maviosos numeros
Ei-lo começa a repetir. Escuta;
Ouve o canto da dor gemer nas cordas,
Troar a gloria, suspirar amores,
E de entôrno carpir-se a natureza.
Da amizade, de amor aos doces golpes
Jazem Oscár, Dèrmid; chorar-lhe os fados;
(Garrett, ms. 1821, II, pp. 223-224)

Para Garrett o conceito do sublime e o "joy of grief" são qualidades inerentes desta poesia supostamente "selvagem" que foge das regras clássicas:

Admira o fausto da selvagem musa,
Ve gôsto amargo resurgir de horrores,
Dolorosa oppressão suavisar-se,
Dourar-se a morte, matizar-se o abysmo,
E, onde só reina a dor, gosar prazeres.
(Garrett, ms. 1821, II, pp. 224)

Convida o amigo José Maria Grande para distinguir e apreciar imparcialmente tanto a poesia regular grega e romana, como a "beleza inculta" da presumível expressão barbara, que, desde Rousseau, recebeu um estimo cultural e com *Ossian* também uma valorização estética:

Tu que es vate, e cantor, que as musas sabes
Classicas, puras distinguir das barbaras,
Belleza inculta extremarás sem custo
Do mago encanto symetria, e gosto
Da Attica, e Làcia regular beldade.
De Vénus, e Irminsulf templos, e altares
São diversos no culto, e nos incensos;

Mas se é mais bella a deusa dos amores,
Seu imperio não perde o numen bardo.
Conceito imparcial só forma o sabio,
Mofa das illusões do vulgo errado,
Ahi-ve das pretenções dos presumpçosos,
Que as coisas pelos nomes só decidem,
É que, sem se enfadar co' amago dellas,
Nos titulos do auctor julgão as obras.
O verdadeiro sabio assim não pensa,
E onde encantos achou, gosou prazeres,
Folga sem pejo, saborea-os, gosa.
(Garrett, ms. 1821, II, pp. 224-225)

Já na sua juventude Garrett teve contactos com "uma família verdadeiramente respeitavel e *ingleza*" do Porto (cf.: Garrett, *Camões*, 4ª ed., 1854, nota S., p. 225). Porém, em 1820 é notável a recepção produtiva da literatura britânica por parte de Garrett. No espólio literário do poeta e político encontra-se no lote 199 o seguinte: "Oração Universal do Deista, e Atheista por Pope. […] *Tradução de Thompson*; tradução de uns versos ingleses; 4 sonetos (soltos)."[20]

Em Dezembro de 1820 já se tinha referido à melancolia do Bardo cego e a sua nora Malvina no poema "Os Meus Desejos", mais tarde incluído na *Lírica de João Mínimo* (1853):

E a ti, britano bardo, não bastavam
As trevas e a cegueira?
Tu que da miseranda humanidade
Na harpa de Sião choraste
Primeira perda, tudo enfim perdeste:
Tudo! … Restou-te a filha,
Sobejou-te a razão: que importa ao sábio
O resto do Universo?
(Garrett, 1963: I, 1572)

[20] Lima, Henrique de Campos Ferreira (1948), *Inventário do Espólio Literário de Garrett*, Coimbra: Publicações da Biblioteca Geral da Universidade, p. 89.

Na opinião de Teófilo Braga, foi precisamente a "melancholia ossianica", que levou Garrett a passar as fronteiras impostas pela literatura clássica (grega, romana e também a francesa seguindo essa tradição) na sua descoberta de uma identidade colectiva na literatura nacional. Braga vê neste sentimento o ponto de partida do primeiro movimento romântico português. Podemos então imaginar o 'bardo' *Camões* com uma aura escocesa porque a sua imagem criada por Garrett teria como antepassado Ossian:

> Garrett conservou toda a sua vida essa melancholia ossianica; em todas as suas obras predomina o vago scismar de quem tira o ideal de um passado que não torna. Foi esta melancholia, que precisou empregar-se em uma saudade qualquer, que o levou a sentir o passado e a descobrir assim o sentimento nacional, que devia produzir o nosso primeiro movimento romantico. Se Garrett não saísse de Portugal, não teria em 1824 escripto o poema *Camões* … (Braga, 1880: 154)

Pelo menos durante a segunda década do século XIX o poeta português ocupa-se com o fenómeno escocês. Ainda no poema "A Tempestade" (1828), Garrett adapta tanto a pose bárdica, como a paisagem e a tristeza características de *Ossian*:

> Sobre um rochedo
> Que o mar batia,
> Triste gemia
> Um desgraçado,
> Terno amador.
> Já nem lhe caem
> Dos olhos lágrimas;
> Suspiros fervidos
> Apenas contam
> Seu triste amor.
> (Garrett, 1963: II, 1638)

Em *Garrett and the English Muse* (1983) Lia Correia Raitt detecta a influência literária de Addison, Byron, Scott, Sterne e Shakespeare no mais famoso de todos os poetas do Romantismo português. Só no final do seu estudo admite a sua admiração passageira por Ossian:

> Garrett did not escape the vogue for Ossian, and in 'Oscar (Imitação de Ossian)' (182 …?) and in 'A caverna de Viriato' (1824), both in *Flores sem fructo*, he attempts to write in the manner of the Nordic bard; yet the last stanza of 'Oscar' reveals that Ossian's nebulous world is not congenial to Garrett, who declares his relief at returning to the sweeter climes of his native Elísia. (Raitt 1983, 124)

Precedido por uma citação de Thomas Moore, "A caverna de Viriato" revela, de facto, a influência ossiânica no tom e na escolha do motivo, como, por exemplo, na descrição do fantasma do herói. No poema "A Lira Do Proscriro", escrito em Warwickshire (Novembro, 1823) e incluído na *Lírica de João Mínimo* (1853) a "madama Catalani" evoca imagens de Morven:

> … esse génio alvitrajado
> Da névoa das montanhas
> Que me tocou côa vara misteriosa,
> Me trouxe a harpa dos britanos bardos,
> E as desafeitas mãos me agita e rege
> Pela harmonia estranha.
> Foi teu poder, foi a tua voz divina
> Que os ecos acordou destas florestas
> E os reflecte em meu peito, ó Catalani.
> (Garrett, 1963: I, 1638)

Todavia, o seu encanto pelos Cantos tinha sido gradualmente substituído pela atitude de um autor com pretensões de crítico literário.[21] Não só na sua fase juvenil de "anti-britanismo radical"[22], Garrett distinguiu pouco entre as literaturas inglesas e escocesas, alheio das tensões políticas e culturais destas regiões que, obviamente, na altura de Walter Scott eram menos acentuadas que nos tempos de James Macpherson (Culloden, 1746). Embora a sua apreciação do 'Bardo de Stratford' oscilasse, durou mais

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[21] Cf.: Monteiro, Ofélia M. C. Paiva (1971), *A Formação de Almeida Garrett. Experiência e Criação*. 2 vols, Coimbra: Centro de Estudos Românicos da FLUC.

[22] Cf.: Flor, João Almeida (2002), "Para a imagem de Shakespeare em Garrett", in: *Garrett às Portas do Milénio* (Coord. Comissão Executiva dos "Seminários Garrett"), Lisboa: Edições Colibri 2002, p. 47.

tempo que a admiração por Ossian, acabando "por instituir e consolidar a posição de Shakespeare no cânone literário da cultura oitocentista".[23]

Já antes da partida para Inglaterra, Garrett lamenta que na Europa se preferisse Ossian a Homero e Schiller a Racine. Não concorda com a ruptura com os valores clássicos que o movimento alemão de *Sturm und Drang* tem iniciado e declara que as novas tendências são meramente uma moda. Em 1822 Garrett começa a escrever um esboço "no estylo das *Cartas a Emília*, de Demoustier, em prosa e verso"[24], intencionado para o seu projecto *O Lyceu das damas, lições de poesia a uma joven senhora*. As primeiras lições foram posteriormente publicadas no *Chronista. Semanário de politica, litteratura, sciencias e artes*, nº 1-26, 2 vols, Lisboa: Imprensa do Portuguez. (1827) (org. Garrett):

> Hoje é moda o romantico, é finura,
> E tom achar Ossian melhor que Homero,
> Gabar Shackespear, desdenhar Corneille.
> De Paris os modernos elegantes
> Deixam Racine para lêrem Schiller;
> Chamam vil servilismo ás regras d'arte,
> Antiquario a Boileau, pedante a Horacio.
> Só gostam de Irminsulf e de Teutates,
> Obscuros sonhos do Escocez sombrio.
> (*O Chronista*, 1827: I, 180)

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[23] "Com efeito, no decorrer dos anos, a valoração oscilante de Shakespeare por Garrett relaciona-se com o sentido da sua viagem interior, processada em sintonia com o itinerário mental da sua geração e também sobremaneira enriquecida pela dimensão cosmopolita do seu horizonte intelectual europeu e anglófilo." (Flor, 2002: 46)

[24] Amorim, Francisco Gomes de, Garrett. *Memorias Biographicas*, Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1881, I, p. 274. Só em 1839 foi anunciado num prospecto da casa Bertrand este projecto de Garrett: "*Lyceu das Damas* (inedito) no estylo e pela fórma das *Cartas a Emilia*, de Demoustier, com o fim de aperfeiçoar a educação litteraria do bello sexo." O livro nunca chegou a ser publicado, mas no inventário dos papeis de Garrett, encontrava-se uma lista com poetas e assuntos a tratar. *Ossian* já não fazia parte desta selecção, embora fosse traduzido na Alemanha expressamente para senhoras (cf. J.M.R., "Fingal, ein alt Gedicht von Ossian", in: *Iris*, Düsseldorf 1775).

Estes "Obscuros sonhos do Escocez sombrio" deixaram marcas visíveis, embora através de uma recepção indirecta, filtrada, na literatura e cultura portuguesas.

Quando em 1823 chegou a Londres e começou a conviver com uma família inglesa, Garrett constatou que ainda estava em moda a evocação da Idade Média, das ruínas góticas, do folclore. Junto com as obras em moda de Walter Scott, os Cantos de Ossian continuavam a ser editados e lidos.

Contudo, já no quarto canto de *Dona Branca* (Paris, 1826), presumivelmente escrito em 1824[25], Garrett tinha ridiculizado e minimizado a importância e a influência literárias do suposto Bardo, revogando, de forma categórica, a sua estimação que tinha confesso no manuscrito de 1821:

> Não gósto de Irminsulfs, nem de Theutates,
> Nem das outras theogonicas prosapias
> De runica ascendencia. As alvas barbas
> Do padre Ossian (Macpherson foi seu nome)
> Tam prezadas do douto Cesarotti,
> Tam favoritas do Alexandre corso,
> Não me incantam a mim, não me imbellecam,
> Como aos outros cantores alamoda
> Que a nossos doces climas transplantaram
> Esses gelos do norte, esses brilhantes
> Caramellos dos topes das montanhas…
> Do sol do meiodia aos raios vivos
> Parvos! se lhes derretem; a brancura
> Perdem co'a nitidez, e se convertem
> De lucidos christaes, em agua chilra.
> (Garrett, 1850: 60)

Na Nota C. no final de *Dona Branca*, Garrett sentiu a necessidade de explicar aos leitores portugueses o fenómeno dos poemas ossiânicos, "que tantos annos correram mundo" e que "foram de tanta moda aqui ha tempos". Atribui-los inteiramente a Macpherson, ironizando a autoridade

[25] Cf. Amorim, 1881, I, 375.

filológica do "erudito e profundo Cesarotti", que quase "dá preferencia ao imaginario bardo escocez sobre o proprio Homero; e elle, que ambos os traduziu, certo que os tinha estudado". Ridiculariza "a torrente dos trovadores" em França, apoiada por Napoleão Bonaparte que "foi grande prezador de Ossian" e "cuja imaginação gigantesca se apprazia em tudo o que era d'este genero". Aludindo a uma ode do "elegante Lebrun" que escarnece esta preferência real, Garrett não esconde a sua própria opinião marcada pela luta por uma literatura inconfundivelmente nacional:

> Quanto a mim, tenho que as artes filhas da natureza devem andar a par d'ella, e com ella. Essas phantasmagorias druidicas são bellas, são magníficas nas montanhas dos despenhadeiros da alta Escocia, nos gelos e neves das terras polares; mas nos nossos dulcissimos e risonhos climas, não podem ter mais valor do que a impressão extraordinaria do primeiro momento; e repitto que essas bellezas glaciaes
>
> Do sol do meio dia aos raios vividos
> Parvos! – se lhes derretem; a brancura
> Perdem co'a nitidez, e se convertem
> De lucidos christaes, em agua chilra.
> (Garrett, 1850: 254, Nota C. / Prim. ed.)

A distinção entre as literaturas do norte[26] e as meridionais é uma divisão que Mme de Staël fez no seu livro marcante para a definição do(s) Romantismo(s) *De l'Allemagne* (1810) e que Sismondi confirmou com a sua história literária *De la Littérature du Midi de L'Europe* (1813). Questionando e ridiculizando a adopção irreflectida e inapropriada de modelos poéticos estrangeiros que estavam na moda, o autor toma uma posição contra *Ossian*, não como possível falsificação, mas contra a imitação do seu estilo em Portugal.

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[26] "Indagando a historia da poesia nos diversos tempos e Nações, vê-la-iamos depois da queda da bella literatura greco-latina, surgindo do Norte com um sublime de melancolia e mesmo ferocidade, próprio dos povos que a inventarão …" (*Repositório* 1834 [15 October], 1: 5)

Garrett insere-se e empreende neste movimento de renovação e redefinição da cultura nacional, a que não é alheio o gosto romântico do originário, do primitivo, do ingénuo. Mas a orientação artística e literária pelos ideais e regras clássicas foi a prática durante quase todo o século XVIII em quase todos os países europeus. Cansado destes estilos grego e romano, Garrett distancia-se dele na "Advertencia" de *Camões* e com *Dona Branca*[27], apresentando modelos diferentes no prefácio de *Adosinda* (1828).[28]

Aprecia abertamente "um estilo diferente, outra face de coisas, outro modo de ver, de sentir, de pintar, mais livre, mais excêntrico, mais de fantasia, mais irregular, porém em muitas coisas mais natural. O antiquado agradou por novo, o obsoleto entrou em moda: arte mais fina, gosto mais delicado e de engenhos mais cultos o soube empregar hàbilmente, 'decalcar noutra civilização'." (Garrett, 1963: I, 1748-1749)

No mesmo prefácio Garrett exige um ressuscitar da "poesia nacional das nações vivas", que faz lembrar o conceito de Herder, "the key figure in any examination of German Ossianism"[29]. O elogio da poesia primitiva e do sentimento romântico culmina numa definição quase programática dos componentes para a sua composição:

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[27] "N'esta composição seguiu-se visivelmente o exemplo de Wielland (*sic*) no Oberon; todo o seu maravilhoso é tirado das fabulas populares, crenças e preconceitos nacionaes." (Garrett, 1850: 240, Nota D. / Prim. ed.). Cf.: Garrett sobre o romantismo português: "Este poema (Camões), e mais ainda talvez o de *D. Branca* proclamaram e começaram a nossa regeneração litteraria; nacionalisaram e popularisaram a poesia que antes d'elles era, quasi se póde dizer, somente grega, romana, franceza ou italiana, tudo menos portugueza; …" (Amorim, 1881: I, 363)

[28] "Em geral a poesia da meia idade, singela, romanesca, apaixonada, de uma espécie lírica-romântica que não tem tipo nos poetas antigos, conquanto deixou seu cunho impresso no carácter das línguas e poesias modernas de todo sul e ocidente da Europa, não teve contudo imitadores nem se cultivou e aperfeiçoou nunca mais, quase desde o completo triunfo dos clássicos, senão agora recentemente depois que as baladas de Bürger, os romances poéticos de Sir W. Scott e alguns outros ensaios ingleses e alemães, mas principalmente os do famoso escocês, introduziram este gosto e o fizeram *da moda*." (Garrett, 1963: I, 1748)

[29] Gaskill, Howard, "German Ossianism. A reappraisal?" in: *German Life & Letters* 42 (1988-1989), nº 3, p. 332.

> É a mesma selvática, ingénua, caprichosa e aérea virgem das montanhas que se apraz nas solidões incultas, que vai pelos campos alumiados do pálido reflexo da lua, envolta em véus de transparente alvura, folga no vago e na incerteza das cores indistintas que nem oculta nem patenteia o astro da noite; – a mesma beldade misteriosa que frequenta as ruínas do castelo abandonado, da torre deserta, do claustro coberta de hera e musgo, e folga de cantar suas endechas desgarradas à boca de cavernas fadadas – por noite morta e horas aziagas. (Garrett, 1963: I, 1749)

Neste inventário de ingredientes românticos distinguem-se facilmente motivos e tópicos introduzidos por *Ossian*.[30] Tendo conhecimento da herança pré-romântica britânica (Young, Gray, Thomson, Hervey) Garrett atribui o mérito de sua divulgação sobretudo a Walter Scott, embora o impacto da poesia romântica de expressão inglesa (à excepção de Byron) em Portugal no século XIX não tenha sido tão considerável como, por exemplo, na Alemanha[31]:

> Muito antes do nomeado escocês já tinha havido tentativas para nacionalizar a poesia moderna e a libertar do jugo da teogonia de Hesíodo: – mas a própria e verdadeira restaura-

[30] Cf.: Bär, Gerald (2004) – "Ossian in Portugal", in: Gaskill, Howard, (ed.), *The Reception of Ossian in Europe*, London, (The Athlone Critical Traditions Series: The Reception of British Authors in Europe), New York, NY: Thoemmes Continuum, 351-374.

[31] Cf.: Pires, Maria Laura (1979) *Walter Scott e o Romantismo Português*, Lisboa: Universidade Nova; Flor, João de Almeida (1995), "Byron em Português: para o Estudo Histórico-Cultural da Tradução Literária", in: *Dedalus, Revista Portuguesa de Literatura Comparada*, nº 5, Lisboa: Universidade de Lisboa / Edições Colibri, pp. 175-84. Flor, João de Almeida, "Traduções de Inglaterra", in: Buescu, Helena Carvalhão (ed.) (1997), *Dicionário do Romantismo Literário Português*, Lisboa: Caminho, pp. 556-7. Silva, P. da, "Romantismo Inglês (Leituras e Contactos)", in: Buescu, Helena Carvalhão (ed.) (1997), *Dicionário do Romantismo Literário Português*, Lisboa: Caminho, p. 509: "Quando tentamos rastrear a projecção do Romantismo anglófono no Portugal oitocentista e, simultaneamente, avaliar a sua recepção criativa e valorativa, tornam-se claras as limitações derivadas do tema."

> ção da poesia dos trovadores e menestréis, sem questão nem disputa, só W. Scott a fez popular e geral na Europa. – Com ela se restauraram também os metros simples e curtos que mais naturais são ao estilo cantável, essencial às composições daquele género. (Garrett, 1963: I, 1749)

Na perspectiva de Augusto França, Garrett "preferia sem dúvida as aventuras imaginárias deste escocês real às "fantasmagorias druídicas" que Ossian-Macpherson propunha, num quadro romântico pouco conveniente aos "dulcíssimos e risonhos climas" de Portugal."[32]

Mesmo assim, o autor de *Adosinda* emprega conceitos de sublime[33] e, sobretudo, de "joy of grief" tão característicos de *Ossian*:

> Agreste, não feio é o sítio,
> Medonho, horrível de ver;
> Porém tem a Natureza
> Horrores que são beleza,
> Tristezas que dão prazer, …
> (Garrett, 1963: I, 1772)

Na sua recensão de *Frei Luíz de Sousa* (1844) Rebello da Silva põe *Ossian* lado ao lado com os *Nibelungs*, mais uma vez como paradigma da poesia nórdica:

> … a arte revê mais livre a sua idealidade, fica mais arte e mais poesia, afastada da imitação mediata e quasi sempre servil do que palpamos com os dedos, do que o habito tornou raso e prosaico. Tem-se feito, mas poucas vezes com felicidade. D'esta relação do tempo com a poesia nos dá Homero exemplo: o passado nos seus versos reve o presente palpitante e formoso, sem resvalar no commum da copia. – Em Ossian,

[32] França, José-Augusto (1974-75) O *Romantismo em Portugal: Estudo de factos socio-culturais*, Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, vol. I, p. 209.

[33] Até o conceito do sublime de Schiller foi influenciado por *Ossian*, como Schmidt consegue comprovar no seu capítulo "Naiv, sentimentalisch oder ideal? Zu Präsenz, Funktion und Klassifizierung der *Poems of Ossian* in Schillers Dichtung und Ästhetik", in: Schmidt, Wolf Gerhard (2003), vol. II, pp. 847-872.

> no Niebelungen, nas tradições poeticas do Norte apparece o mesmo, sempre o mesmo.[34]

Rebello da Silva alega que esta "altissima theoria d'arte, filha da meditação alleman", serviu como fonte de inspiração para a peça de Garrett.

Se Garrett imitou "Percy[35] no colleccionamento de cantares do povo", como afirma Luciano Cordeiro no seu primeiro *Livro de Critica* (1869), o leitor atento recordará logo a técnica compiladora de Macpherson, sobretudo quando o crítico admite que se tratava de uma abordagem

> … não como um philologo que busca materiaes para a interpretação das civilisações nos aliceres que se lhe perdem na alma popular e no tenebroso do tempo, mas como um verdadeiro artista, estremecido pelos encantos de magnifico panorama, após trivial e monótono viver. (Cordeiro, 1869: 184)

A seguinte justificação deste método de recuperar poesia de tradição oral ajuda tanto para explicar a abordagem de Garrett como para defender o trabalho editorial de Macpherson: "Extasia-se, harmonisa, amenisa, corrige, *amaneira*, – perigo constante e quasi constante consequência do *subjectivismo* artístico, …". (Cordeiro, 1869: 184)

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[34] Silva, L.A. Rebello da, "Fr. Luiz de Sousa", in: *Obras Completas de Luiz Augusto Rebello da Silva*, Lisboa: Empreza da Historia de Portugal 1909, vol. 32: *Apreciações Literárias*, p. 101 (da Revista Universal Lisbonense, 1843).

[35] Na sequência do sucesso das publicações de Macpherson Thomas Percy (1729-1811) editou em 1765 *Reliques of ancient English poetry*.

A primeira página de jornais portugueses à luz da análise multimodal

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A primeira página de jornais portugueses à luz da análise multimodal

1. Introdução

Nas últimas décadas, a apresentação visual dos meios de comunicação tem passado por mudanças significativas, especialmente no que diz respeito à configuração da primeira página de jornais impressos. Kress & van Leeuwen (28) explicam que, há cerca de trinta anos, o modo semiótico predominante nos jornais era o verbal, através do caracteres impressos na página. Com a consolidação e a concorrência da mídia audiovisual, muitos desses jornais passaram a utilizar uma profusão de imagens, cores e títulos chamativos, num espaço que outrora era monocromático e uniformemente ocupado por blocos de texto, na tentativa de atrair e estimular o interesse dos seus leitores. Segundo Ferreira Júnior (53), a apresentação visual assume um papel cada vez mais preponderante na mídia impressa, fato observado principalmente na primeira página de jornais – unidade de significação com a qual primeiro se depara o leitor.

No cenário internacional de pesquisa em análise textual de base sistêmica, Kress e van Leeuwen, em *Reading Images: the grammar of visual design*, propõem a análise do *layout* da primeira página de jornais, sob o viés da semiótica social e da "gramática do visual", método embasado na gramática sistêmico-funcional hallidayana. A semiótica social, por sua vez, concebe os textos a partir de uma perspectiva multimodal, incluindo os diferentes recursos semióticos através dos quais a linguagem é realizada.

Dada a referida proliferação de signos visuais nos jornais, Kress & van Leeuwen ressaltam a importância e a necessidade de se desenvolver um método de análise que possibilite verificar como recursos semióticos verbais (blocos de textos, estilo das fontes, etc.) e visuais (fotografias, cores, etc.) dispostos no *layout* da primeira página de jornal reproduzem e constroem estruturas de significados sociais.

Tendo em vista a importância do *layout* da primeira página de jornal na construção e reprodução de idéias e valores na sociedade, bem como a inexistência de trabalhos em Portugal que focalizem tal objeto a partir de uma perspectiva multimodal, este artigo mostra-se relevante por colaborar com a expansão dos estudos sobre a teoria da multimodalidade no cenário de pesquisa internacional, nomeadamente ao abordar questões relacionadas à construção de significados sociais a partir do *layout* da primeira página de jornais portugueses. Para o presente estudo, propõe-se o corpus de análise composto pela primeira página das edições dos jornais tidos como "imprensa de referência" em Portugal: *Diário de Notícias*, *Correio da Manhã* e *Público*, edições de 23 de fevereiro de 2008.

Para a análise da configuração visual do layout das primeiras páginas, será utilizado o instrumental oferecido pela gramática do visual, especificamente no que tange aos significados composicionais (Kress & van Leeuwen 181-223). Na seção seguinte, será apresentado com maior detalhamento o arcabouço teórico-metodológico por meio do qual a análise do corpus é realizada.

2. Estratégias Téorico-Metodológicas

O trabalho de Hodge & Kress, intitulado *Social Semiotics*, marca o início dos estudos em semiótica social aplicada a textos multimodais**.** Conforme assinalam Kress & van Leeuwen (6), as teorias semióticas tradicionais mostram-se inadequadas porque estão fundamentadas em uma concepção de linguagem baseada em apenas um modo semiótico, ignorando a multimodalidade dos textos, ou seja, a interrelação entre texto escrito, imagens e outros elementos gráficos que, juntos, engendram um *design* visual, o chamado *layout*.

Nestes termos, a teoria da multimodalidade visa analisar os principais modos de representação em função dos quais um determinado texto é produzido e realizado, bem como compreender o potencial de origem histórica e cultural utilizado para construir o significado de qualquer modo semiótico. Dessa maneira, busca-se abordar as particularidades de cada modo semiótico, as regularidades de suas combinações, e seus valores em cada cultura.

A semiótica social da comunicação visual é funcionalista por conceber que os recursos visuais são processados para realizar tipos específicos de trabalho semiótico (Jewitt & Oyama 140). Essa noção decorre da "gramática sistêmico-funcional" desenvolvida por Michael Halliday, que destaca três tipos específicos de trabalho semiótico – as chamadas "metafunções" –, sempre realizadas simultaneamente, a saber: a metafunção ideacional (relacionada com o tipo de atividade em curso), a metafunção interpessoal (o tipo de relação entre os participantes), e a metafunção textual (o modo com que o texto organiza as metafunções ideacional e interpessoal).

Em sua proposta de análise de textos multimodais, Kress & van Leeuwen adotam a referida noção teórica hallidayana de metafunções, fazendo, entretanto, algumas alterações para melhor adequá-las ao modo semiótico visual. Desta perspectiva, a comunicação visual não só representa o mundo, mas também estabelece uma interação social, com ou sem o acompanhamento do texto escrito, constituindo-se, assim, como um tipo de texto reconhecível e dotado de uma unidade significativa. Sob este viés, as metafunções ideacional, interpessoal e textual passam a ser denominadas por Kress & van Leeuwen (36) de significados "representacionais", "interativos" e "composicionais", respectivamente.

Segundo Kress & van Leeuwen (36), os significados representacionais são realizados (de modo concreto ou abstrato) pelos participantes (indivíduos, lugares ou coisas) descritos, e podem ser subdivididos em duas estruturas: a narrativa, relacionada a representações e eventos; e a conceitual, referente à representação da "essência" dos participantes, podendo ser de natureza classificacional, analítica ou simbólica.

Os significados interativos, de acordo com Kress & van Leeuwen (37), são expressados pelo tipo de interação estabelecida entre os participantes representados, os produtores da imagem e os espectadores destas mensagens visuais, através dos seguintes recursos: o sistema do olhar, o enquadramento, e a perspectiva.

Tendo em vista que o presente estudo visa analisar a construção de significados no *layout* da primeira página de jornais, o foco recai sobre a categoria relativa aos significados composicionais, descrita a seguir.

2.1 Os significados composicionais

A partir do instrumental de análise proposto pela gramática do visual, adoto a categoria relativa aos significados composicionais: a forma pela qual os elementos do *layout* são integrados a fim de conferir-lhes coerência e unidade de significação, a partir de três sistemas interrelacionados: "valor informacional", "saliência" e "moldura".

O valor informacional está relacionado com a significação atribuída aos elementos em função de sua localização na página, a partir do sistema Dado-Novo (informação apresentada como já conhecida e consensual *x* informação apresentada como novidade e passível de discussão); Ideal-Real (informação idealizada e de prestígio *x* informação de caráter realístico e prático); e Centro-Margem (informação de valor central *x* informação de valor periférico e subserviente).

A *saliência* diz respeito aos recursos empregados nos elementos da página para atrair a atenção do leitor, definindo também a trajetória de leitura, e podendo estabelecer relações hierárquicas entre as mensagens. A saliência se realiza por meio da disposição dos elementos em primeiro plano; tamanho relativo; perspectiva; contrastes de tonalidade ou cor; diferenças de brilho, entre outros.

Os recursos de *moldura* conferem diferentes graus de conexão ou desconexão entre os elementos ou grupos de elementos dispostos na página, através da ausência ou presença de linhas de moldura, espaços vazios entre os elementos, relações de contraste, descontinuidades de cor e brilho, continuidades ou similaridades de cor e formato visual, vetores formados pelos próprios componentes visuais, dentre outros.

A FIGURA 1, indicada abaixo, sintetiza a rede de sistemas através dos quais os significados composicionais são realizados:

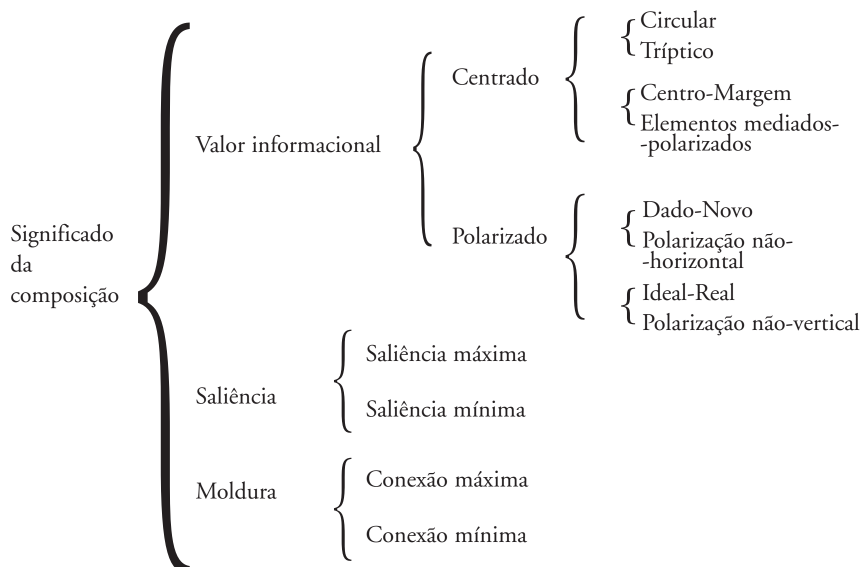

FIGURA 1: O sistema dos significados composicionais (Adaptado de Kress & van Leeuwen 223).

Uma vez apresentada a metodologia empregada no presente trabalho, passo agora para a análise do *layout* das primeiras páginas dos jornais em questão.

3. Os significados sociais (re) produzidos pela composição das capas dos jornais *Diário de Notícias*, *Correio da Manhã* e *Público*

Valor informacional

Dado

O domínio do Dado está associado ao lado esquerdo da página, apresentando as informações como já conhecidas pelo leitor. Em se tratando do *Diário de Notícias* (doravante *DN*), no que concerne ao domínio do Dado, aparecem as chamadas “Pilotos do avião que caiu eram filhos de madeirenses”, “Pinto da Costa acusa Maria José Morgado”, e “Mãe que matou filho fica em liberdade”. Ao dispor tais informações neste domínio, o jornal sugere os eventos de âmbito nacional como fami-

liares ao leitor; além disso, apresenta seu teor negativo e polêmico como dados, incontestáveis, e consensualmente aceitos pelos leitores.

Com relação à página analisada do *Correio da Manhã* (doravante *CM*), no domínio do Dado, figuram as chamadas "Processo de procuradora causa demissão de director da PJ Porto", esta acompanhada da foto do referido diretor da Polícia Judiciária do Porto, Vítor Guimarães, bem como a chamada "António Preto [deputado do PSD] julgado por fraude fiscal". Ao figurarem no domínio do Dado – o qual é geralmente associado a informações tidas como auto-evidentes e como ponto de partida para a leitura das mensagens – as notícias sobre denúncias e julgamentos relativos a atores sociais ligados ao poder público parecem ser apresentadas ao leitor como eventos indiscutíveis e dotados de veracidade.

Em se tratando do domínio do Dado no jornal *Público*, encontram-se as chamadas "Psicologia e Enfermagem entre os cursos com mais desempregados" e "Curdistão: Turquia lança incursão no Norte do Iraque contra o PKK", esta última acompanhada de sua respectiva imagem. Com base neste tipo de configuração, é possível sugerir que o jornal apresenta como ponto de partida para a leitura os eventos de âmbito nacional e internacional, ensejando-os como familiares ao leitor. Além disso, o jornal parece ensejar o teor e o impacto das chamadas "Psicologia e Enfermagem entre os cursos com mais desempregados" e "Curdistão: Turquia lança incursão no Norte do Iraque contra o PKK" como acontecimentos dados e incostestáveis.

Novo

O domínio do Novo refere-se ao lado direito da página, e apresenta as informações como ainda não conhecidas pelo leitor. Com relação ao domínio do Novo no *DN*, afiguram-se a chamada "Director da PJ do Porto forçado a demitir-se", bem como as publicidades referentes ao "totobola" e à revista *NS*' [Notícias Sábado], produzida pelo próprio jornal. A partir deste tipo de configuração, pode-se apontar que o *DN* apresenta como problemática e contestável a demissão do diretor da Polícia Judiciária do Porto. Paralelamente, o jornal elege como novidades a premiação oferecida pela "totoloto", e as informações divulgadas pela revista *NS*' – chamando, desse modo, a atenção do leitor para as publicidades anunciadas, inclusive as suas próprias.

Relativamente ao domínio do Novo no *CM*, encontra-se a chamada "Donos ignoram polémica das casas de Sócrates", acompanhada pela imagem de D. Maria José, uma idosa moradora de umas das casas licenciadas pelo atual primeiro-ministro. Tendo em vista que o domínio do Novo enseja informações como ainda não conhecidas e, por isso, sujeitas à discussão, o *CM* apresenta a referida chamada – concernente ao gênero reportagem e associada à notícia denunciva – como digna da atenção do leitor, em função do seu status de novidade e do seu caráter polêmico.

No domínio do Novo do *Público*, predominam os modos semióticos verbais, compostos pelas chamadas "Caso Joana: inspectores da PJ acusados de agressões", "Balcãs: UE avisa Sérvia, Rússia ameaça UE e NATO", e "Banco de Portugal: Há sinais de marcha-atrás na retoma". Ao situar tais chamadas neste domínio, o *Público* tende a chamar a atenção do leitor para o conteúdo e o caráter preocupante das informações reportadas, ao colocar sob discussão (e não apresentando como um evento dado e incontestável) a acusação feita aos inspetores da PJ, problematizar o conflito entre Rússia e Sérvia, e apontar para a possibilidade (e não para a certeza) de uma recessão na economia portuguesa, respectivamente.

Ideal

O domínio do Ideal está associado à seção superior da página e sugere os elementos representados como dotados de idealização, abstração, generalização ou emoção. Em se tratando do domínio do Ideal no *DN*, encontram-se as chamadas "Emigrantes à semana" (acompanhada de uma imagem, qual seja, carros atravessando a fronteira entre Portugal e Espanha) – associada, inclusive, ao logotipo do jornal –, e "PPR do Estado vão dar direito a pensão vitalícia". Ao associar tais informações a este domínio, o *DN* parece conferir destaque, respectivamente, ao gênero reportagem (como é o caso de "Emigrantes à semana"), além de enfatizar as ações positivas realizadas pelo Estado, conferindo-lhe maior poder. Ademais, é possível visualizar, em uma estrutura Ideal-Novo, a presença da publicidade "DVD Grátis", configuração esta que lhe atribui valor e prestígio e, ao mesmo tempo, atrai os olhos do leitor por conta do seu caráter de novidade.

Quanto ao domínio do Ideal no *CM*, encontram-se as chamadas "Função pública sem promoções", sugerida como uma das informações

mais relevantes da página, e "Doação de rim reforça união" (em que figura também a imagem do casal protagonista da notícia), disposta em uma estrutura Ideal-Novo, o que aponta para o ineditismo e para os eventuais efeitos positivos do acontecimento reportado. No topo máximo da página, afiguram-se as publicidades advindas do próprio jornal, como a coleção "Esqueleto Humano" e a entrega das medalhas "Imagens da Paixão", representadas, desse modo, como dotadas de valor e importância. Também é possível verificar, em uma estrutura Ideal-Dado, a publicização da revista *Vidas*, oferecida pelo próprio jornal, e representada, por um lado, como familiar e conhecida pelo leitor e, por outro, como portadora de relevância e prestígio.

No *Público*, o domínio do Ideal é ocupado pelas chamadas "Albino Aroso: o homem que receitava a pílula quando a contracepção era proibida", "Ciência: Visita guiada ao mundo fantástico da Aula da Esfera", "Dinheiro: bancos *peer-to-peer*, o futuro do crédito", e "Portfólio: fomos a um circo numa sala vazia do Porto". Nesse sentido, pode-se verificar que, na página analisada, o domínio do Ideal é predominantemente ocupado por notícias de âmbito nacional – nomeadamente pertencentes ao âmbito da saúde, economia, ciência e cultura – apresentadas como dotadas de valor e prestígio e associadas, inclusive, à identidade do jornal, que enseja-se como formador de opinião, tendo em vista a pluralidade e o impacto social das chamadas figuradas em tal domínio.

Em uma estrutura Ideal-Novo, observa-se, ainda, a presença de uma autopublicidade ("Livro Os Lobos: Hoje por mais 25 euros"), sugerida como importante e digna de atenção. No entanto, como será visto no item *Moldura*, a referida publicidade encontra-se dissociada da informação jornalística e do logotipo do jornal, diferentemente dos jornais *Diário de Notícias* e *Correio da Manhã*, que parecem mesclar tais gêneros.

Real

O domínio do Real refere-se à seção inferior da página, e geralmente sugere informações de aspecto prático, específico, ou mais realistas e concretas. Quanto ao domínio do Real no *DN*, figuram as chamadas "Rússia ameaça usar a força no Kosovo" (juntamente com a imagem de manifestantes trajados de preto e segurando a bandeira da Rússia), e "Governo divulga os cursos do desemprego". Esse tipo de configuração

pode sugerir que o jornal confere maior seriedade e realismo a estas chamadas, devido às suas implicações negativas e preocupantes, tais como a ameaça em Kosovo e o aumento do desemprego em Portugal. Para além disso, também pode-se notar a configuração da publicidade relativa ao banco BPN, estimulando o leitor à ação prática de afiliar-se ao banco.

Em relação ao domínio do Real no *CM*, parte inferior da página, afiguram-se as chamadas "Binya e Cardozo enfrentam-se no treino" (onde ambos aparecem retratados), "Veiga força Benfica a trocar de hotel", "Corrupção preocupa Cavaco", "Inspectores acusados de agressão", "Pinto da Costa ataca Maria José Morgado" (em que figura uma foto de Pinto da Costa). Ademais, aparecem, em estruturas Real-Dado e Real-Novo, as publicidades relativas à empresa "cofersan"e à "totoloto", respectivamente. Partindo do pressuposto de que o domínio do Real pode estar vinculado a significações de caráter mais prático e realista, é possível dizer que o *CM* associa a tal domínio informações de impacto mais negativo, a partir de um *mix* de eventos que se dividem entre assuntos relacionados à política, polícia e desporto. Além disso, a presença de publicidades neste domínio parece trazê-las para o cotidiano do leitor, impelindo-o a consumi-las. Com efeito, o excesso de eventos e gêneros (entrevista, coluna, publicidade) acaba por (re)produzir a realidade vivida pelo leitor, o qual é diariamente bombardeado pelo excesso de informações.

Já na capa analisada do *Público*, o domínio do Real é praticamente ocupado pela fotografia da chamada "Curdistão: Turquia lança incursão no Norte do Iraque contra o PKK", parecendo ressaltar o aspecto realista e as ações efetuadas pelo Exército turco sobre o Curdistão.

Saliência

A saliência refere-se aos recursos conferidos aos elementos informacionais a fim de atribuir-lhes destaque, poder e/ou importância, determinando, assim, a trajetória de leitura da página. Na capa da edição analisada, o *DN* parece atribuir maior saliência à fotografia referente à chamada da reportagem "Emigrantes à semana", em função da disposição de sua respectiva imagem no domínio do Ideal, da saturação das cores empregadas e do tamanho excessivo da imagem.

Paralelamente, é possível observar a saliência conferida à chamada "Rússia ameaça usar a força no Kosovo", por conta de sua localização no

centro da página, do tamanho significativo da imagem, da intensidade das cores, da precisão do foco, além da tonalidade vermelha empregada na fonte do título da chamada. Além disso, verifica-se um certo teor de saliência aplicado à chamada "PPR do Estado vão dar direito a pensão vitalícia", devido ao tamanho excessivo da fonte utilizada e a sua disposição no domínio do Ideal.

Também recebem destaque os produtos oferecidos pelo jornal, como a *newsmagazine NS'* [Notícias Sábado] e o "DVD Grátis", em decorrência das cores "quentes" figuradas nas chamadas (alaranjado, vermelho, amarelo), bem como a sobressalência de ambos na página[1]. As demais publicidades, referentes ao "BPN" [Banco Português de Negócios] e à "totoloto", embora em um teor mais baixo de saliência, também recebem destaque, dado o efeito de contraste e a coloração intensa nelas aplicada.

Com base na análise dos recursos de saliência configurados na primeira página do *DN*, é possível dizer que o referido jornal elege o gênero reportagem como mais importante, bem como as notícias de caráter político e internacional. Para além disso, nota-se uma certa tendência por parte do jornal de autopublicização, através da saliência atribuída à sua revista e à oferta de DVDs, ensejando-lhes, de certo modo, prestígio e idealização.

A edição analisada do *CM* atribui maior saliência à chamada "Donos ignoram polémica das casas de Sócrates", devido à cor vermelha empregada na fonte do título da chamada, bem como ao tamanho significativo e à sobressalência de sua respectiva imagem, à elevada carga de luminosidade, e ao foco preciso. Paralelamente, a chamada "Função pública sem promoções" aparece com acentuado destaque, em função das fontes garrafais empregadas em seu respectivo título, bem como da sua localização no domínio do Ideal e à sobreposição de uma informação verbal ("Governo trava carreiras") sob a forma de um carimbo, também em tonalidade vermelha, remetendo, inclusive, à uma idéia de repressão (construída e exercida no período de censura ditatorial ocorrido no país pelo governo salazarista).

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[1] Ver também item *Moldura.*

Produtos agregados ao jornal – tais como a revista *Vidas* (oferecida ao leitor juntamente com o jornal, aos sábados) e a coleção “Esqueleto Humano” (em que para obtê-la é necessário pagar mais 6,95 euros!) – recebem alta saliência, dada a sobressalência e a saturação de cores configuradas em seus anúncios, e a sua localização no domínio do Ideal. Em um teor menor de saliência, figuram os demais anúncios do jornal, saturados pela tonalidade azul.

Em menor grau de saliência, aparecem as chamadas “Bynia e Cardozo enfrentam-se no treino”, devido à intensidade e à saturação das cores utilizadas na imagem. Vale destacar que a saliência provocada pela coloração vermelha permeia todas as chamadas da página, intercalada com as fontes de coloração preta. Em geral, esse tipo de recurso parece funcionar como um tipo de chamariz, atraindo a atenção do leitor para o restante do texto da chamada.

Por fim, também recebem certo grau de saliência as chamadas “Pinto da Costa ataca Maria José Morgado”, em função do contraste estabelecido entre a foto de Pinto da Costa e o segundo plano em tonalidade acinzentada no qual se encontra, “Processo de procuradora causa demissão de director da PJ Porto”, devido à precisão do foco e ao contraste da foto de Pinto Monteiro com o cenário de fundo branco, bem como a chamada “Doação de rim reforça união”, por conta da sobressalência, da localização no domínio do Ideal e do cenário de tonalidade azul no qual o casal José e Ana Cristina encontram-se retratados.

A partir da análise das chamadas mais salientes do jornal, pode-se verificar que o *CM* confere maior importância ao gênero reportagem de caráter preocupante e denunciativo, vinculada a questões ligadas ao dia-a-dia do cidadão comum. Com efeito, eventos referentes ao futebol também parecem ser representados como fatos associados ao cotidiano do leitor. Outro aspecto marcante é a autopublicização, reforçada através da saliência conferida à oferta de revistas, coleções e outros bens de consumo – dispostos em uma condição de prestígio, e sendo inculcados pouco a pouco no imaginário dos leitores como algo natural. O alto grau de saturação da página é engendrado pela quantidade excessiva de informações e modos semióticos, em que fontes, cores e imagens competem pela atenção do leitor.

A página analisada do *Público* parece atribuir maior saliência à chamada "Albino Aroso: o homem que receitava a pílula quando a contracepção era proibida", em função da presença da representação do médico português no domínio do Ideal, da precisão do foco, do tamanho significativo, do contraste de cor e brilho entre a imagem e o segundo plano e, até mesmo, da sua sobreposição à parte do logotipo do jornal, cuja coloração vermelha do "P" acaba por atrair os olhos do leitor.

Em um segundo nível, pode-se dizer que a chamada "Curdistão: Turquia lança incursão no Norte do Iraque contra o PKK" também recebe elevado teor de saliência, devido à alta carga de brilho e à elevada dimensão da fotografia referente ao soldado, que ocupa praticamente todo o domínio do Real.

Em um grau menor de saliência, figura a chamada "Ciência: visita guiada ao mundo fantástico da Aula da Esfera", em função da disposição no domínio do Ideal e do contraste de cores entre sua respectiva imagem (uma representação abstrata de um manuscrito) e do fundo acinzentado no qual está inserida. Por seu turno, a chamada "Psicologia e Enfermagem entre os cursos com mais desempregados" parece ganhar certa saliência, dada sua localização no domínio do Ideal e ao tamanho relativamente maior de sua fonte em comparação aos demais títulos afigurados na página.

Vale mencionar, ainda, a presença do vermelho (no início dos blocos de texto no domínio do Real e nos antetítulos no domínio do Ideal) e do amarelo (nos antetítulos do domínio do Real e nos títulos do domínio do Ideal) nas chamadas, cores quentes e estimulantes que parecem agir no sentido de chamar a atenção dos leitores para o conteúdo das informações reportadas pelo jornal.

Ademais, parte da capa do livro "Os lobos", autopublicidade promovida pelo jornal, também recebe significativa saliência, por se encontrar no domínio do Ideal e em uma relação de contraste com o fundo de tonalidade branca.

Com base nesse tipo de configuração, é possível inferir que o *Público* elege como informações mais importantes do jornal notícias pertencentes ao "caderno P2", nomeadamente de caráter político, educacional, cultural e científico, geralmente de âmbito nacional. Paralelamente, prioriza também as notícias de cariz internacional, precisamente os conflitos geo-

políticos instalados no continente europeu. A autopublicidade também é enfatizada, porém, em grau menor do que os demais elementos informacionais presentes na página e, além disso, parece ocupar um espaço delimitado (ver item M*oldura*) em relação às chamadas informativas.

Moldura

Os recursos de moldura servem para conectar ou desconectar os elementos informacionais representados na página. De modo geral, a primeira página do *DN* utiliza variados recursos de moldura, principalmente espaços vazios e espessas linhas pretas de moldura entre as chamadas, engendrando uma composição na qual predomina a desconexão entre as chamadas, apresentadas, assim, de forma independente e organizada.

Em contrapartida, observa-se a conexão entre as chamadas de notícias e as publicidades dos produtos distribuídos pelo próprio jornal. Isso fica sugerido em dois momentos. O primeiro ocorre devido à sobressalência da representação da revista *NS*‘, que acaba por configurar uma tênue conexão com o texto da chamada “PPR do Estado vão dar direito a pensão vitalícia”, através de um sutil vetor formado entre ambos – o que enseja também uma certa conexão entre um produto pertencente ao jornal e as informações positivas veiculadas [“Os últimos avanços médicos em Portugal”]. Tal conexão pode ser entendida, inclusive, como semântica, visto que ambas as chamadas conectadas são dotadas de impacto positivo. Quanto à revista *NS*‘, pode-se verificar uma conexão entre a representação da revista e a sua respectiva chamada (“Os últimos avanços médicos em Portugal”), dada a sobressalência da revista sobre o espaço em que se encontra a sua respectiva informação verbal. Essa configuração só vem a reforçar a idéia de que uma tendência crescente entre informação e autoplublicidade por meio da oferta de outros bens acoplados ao jornal.

Já o segundo momento se dá de maneira mais evidente, onde é possível verificar a conexão entre o logotipo do jornal, o texto e a imagem da chamada sobre a reportagem “Emigrantes à semana”, e a publicidade “DVD Grátis”, promovida pelo próprio jornal através da imersão dos recursos verbais e visuais de cada um na imagem referente à reportagem. Essa relação de conexão configurada entre tais elementos acaba por reforçar a unidade e a importância destinada à reportagem e à autopublicidade, associadas entre si e, inclusive, à própria identidade do jornal.

Na página analisada do *CM*, verifica-se a configuração de uma composição visual em que predomina a conexão entre os elementos da página, devido às sobreposições, à sobressalência e às rimas visuais estabelecidas entre as chamadas. A cor vermelha empregada em determinadas palavras do texto das chamadas parece expressar traços de saliência e conexão entre elas, talvez no sentido de chamar a atenção do leitor de maneira fragmentada, através da ênfase a determinadas palavras. Vale ressaltar o efeito de conexão operado entre as chamadas "Donos ignoram polémica das casas de Sócrates" e "Função pública sem promoções", em função do vetor formado entre parte da cabeça da senhora Maria José – uma das protagonistas da reportagem – e a referida chamada. Tal configuração sugere também um certo ar de sarcasmo e gozo por parte de Maria José com relação ao teor da chamada "Função pública sem promoções", uma vez que a conexão ali estabelecida engendra a impressão de que a senhora está olhando para a chamada situada acima. Ainda sobre a chamada "Donos ignoram polémica das casas de Sócrates", percebe-se a integração entre as unidades verbal e visual, devido à conexão estabelecida entre ambas por conta da imersão do texto na imagem. Com efeito, os vários recursos de moldura empregados na referida chamada (imersão do texto na imagem, formação de vetor, por exemplo) acabam por lhe acentuar a saliência, atraindo, assim, a atenção do leitor.

As chamadas de caráter polêmico – "Corrupção preocupa Cavaco", "Inspectores acusados de agressão" e "Pinto da Costa ataca Maria José Morgado" – aparecem em conexão no domínio do Real, através da rima visual configurada pela coloração acinzentada que perpassa por tais chamadas. Tal configuração acaba por distingui-las das chamadas relacionadas ao desporto, nomeadamente o futebol.

Pode-se apontar, também, um ligeiro efeito de conexão estabelecido entre as publicidades referentes à "totoloto" e à "cofersan", dada a rima visual estabelecida entre elas através das similaridades da cor azul na qual encontram-se imersas. Por fim, nota-se a conexão estabelecida entre os produtos (para além de informações jornalísticas) oferecidos pelo jornal, tais como a revista *Vidas*, a coleção "Esqueleto Humano" e as medalhas "Imagens da Paixão", em função da rima visual estabelecida entre as duas últimas e, paralelamente, da sobreposição da representação da revista nas duas publicidades. A sobreposição da revista reforça-lhe, inclusive, a

saliência; além disso, o excerto verbal "Revista Grátis" parece funcionar como elemento intermediador entre o logotipo do jornal e a chamada "Função pública sem promoções", estabelecendo, dessa maneira, um efeito de conexão entre ambos.

Na página analisada do *Público*, predomina a desconexão entre os elementos informacionais da página, em função das linhas pretas e acinzentadas de moldura empregadas entre as chamadas, apresentando-as, assim, de maneira independente, harmoniosa, e marcadamente delimitadas entre si. Desta perspectiva, nota-se uma clara separação entre os domínios Ideal e Real, Dado e Novo.

A autopublicidade promovida pelo jornal, aparece em desconexão com as demais informações jornalísticas da página, o que pode ser verificado através do uso de fontes com uma cor distinta das demais figuradas; além disso, encontra-se fora do espaço destinado às chamadas. Esse tipo de configuração parece sinalizar um certo cuidado por parte do *Público* em delimitar o espaço ocupado por uma publicidade e o espaço ocupado por uma informação jornalística, evitando, assim, a tendência geral de conectá-las e hibridizá-las, e reconhecendo a diferença no propósito comunicativo de cada um desses gêneros: informar e consumir, respectivamente

Em termos de conexão, é possível verificar uma rima visual configurada entre os "antetítulos" das chamadas no domínio do Real, através do uso da coloração amarela em suas fontes ("Caso Joana", "Balcãs", "Banco de Portugal", "Curdistão"), o que enseja uma conexão entre as chamadas expressadas apenas pelo modo semiótico verbal. O uso do amarelo, cor quente, talvez seja empregado no sentido de atrair o leitor para o conteúdo das informações veiculadas pelo jornal. A rima visual também pode ser observada na chamada "Curdistão: Turquia lança incursão no Norte do Iraque contra o PKK", devido à cor branca adotada na fonte do título e na sua respectiva fotografia, que se manifesta tanto no cenário, através da neve, como também no uniforme do soldado do exército turco – conferindo, portanto, unidade entre os elementos informacionais da chamada e, com isso, reforçando-lhe a importância e a identidade.

Já no domínio do Ideal, visualiza-se a conexão entre suas chamadas, visto que encontram-se submersas a um fundo acinzentado, bem como figuram numa relação de rima visual estabelecida entre os títulos (amarelo) e antetítulos (vermelho) das chamadas. Tais chamadas aparecem,

inclusive, associadas ao próprio logotipo do jornal, uma vez observada a sobreposição da imagem do médico português Albino Aroso à parte do logotipo do *Público*. Nesse sentido, pode-se dizer que o jornal associa à sua própria identidade a informações jornalísticas de cunho educacional, social ("Albino Aroso: o homem que receitava a pílula quando a contracepção era proibida"), científico ("Ciência: Visita guiada ao mundo fantástico da Aula da Esfera"), econômico ("Dinheiro: bancos *peer-to-peer*, o futuro do crédito"), e cultural ("Portfólio: fomos a um circo numa sala vazia do Porto") – sugerindo uma maior preocupação com a formação plural dos seus leitores.

4. Considerações Finais

Em linhas gerais, os jornais *DN* e *CM* tendem a apresentar como ponto de partida para a leitura das mensagens os eventos nacionais com certo impacto negativo, tais como fraudes, demissões, acidentes e mortes, ensejando suas causas e fins como informações dadas e inquestionáveis. Por seu turno, o jornal *Público* apresenta como ponto de partida para a leitura as notícias de âmbito nacional e internacional, sinalizando uma certa preferência pela pluralidade de informações de cunho social e crítico.

Ademais, as capas dos veículos analisados apontam para uma tendência em agregar outros produtos ao jornal, realizando a sua respectiva autopublicização, provavelmente para abarcar maior número de leitores-consumidores. Desta perspectiva, pode-se dizer que este tipo de configuração (re)produz tendências atuais de nossa sociedade, qual seja, a hibridização entre informação jornalística e publicidade. Se outrora cada um desses gêneros ocupavam espaços muito bem delimitados dentro do veículo, em que recorria-se à publicidade e aos anúncios de maneira explícita, com a finalidade de buscar subsídios para a produção e manutenção do jornal; atualmente é o próprio jornal que lança mão da publicização dos seus próprios produtos para manterem-se no mercado.

No *DN* e no *CM*, tais publicidades são dotadas de alto grau de saliência e encontram-se dispostas no domínio do Ideal, o que lhes confere poder e maior importância em relação às demais notícias apresentadas na primeira página. A publicização de produtos aparece, inclusive, em conexão

com as chamadas e com o logotipo do jornal, estabelecendo, assim, uma relação identitária entre informação e consumo. A reportagem também recebe alto teor de saliência, parecendo ser considerada um gênero jornalístico dotado de valor e prestígio por parte dos jornais. No *Público*, a autopublicidade também aparece no domínio do Ideal, porém recebe pouca saliência e é desconectada das demais chamadas, o que aponta para uma maior preocupação por parte do referido jornal em atribuir maior importância e prestígio às informações jornalísticas e de interesse público.

O domínio do Ideal no *Público* também constrói significados diferentes em relação aos outros jornais: no referido domínio, visualiza-se a conexão entre suas chamadas, que aparecem, inclusive, associadas ao próprio logotipo do jornal. Nesse sentido, pode-se dizer que o jornal associa a sua própria identidade às informações jornalísticas de cariz educacional, social, científico, econômico, e cultural – sugeridas como importantes e como a essência das informações apresentadas pelo jornal – e sinalizando, assim, uma maior preocupação com a formação crítica dos seus leitores.

Enquanto o *DN* apresenta no domínio do Real um número restrito de chamadas que oscilam entre a publicidade de determinadas empresas e as chamadas de impacto preocupante e/ou negativo, e o *Público* apenas uma chamada de âmbito internacional em seu domínio, o *CM* dispõe de uma quantidade excessiva de notícias e gêneros, tais como entrevista, coluna, publicidade, e chamadas sobre política, polícia e futebol. Tendo em vista que o domínio do Real é geralmente associado a informações mais concretas e de aspecto mais empírico e realista, pode-se sugerir que a configuração expressada em cada jornal remete, mais uma vez, ao perfil do público-alvo: de um lado, o *DN* e o *Público* optam pela clareza e pela harmonia na representação de seus elementos, de outro, o *CM* opta pelo excesso e pela saturação das informações apresentadas.

A partir da observação do uso da saliência pelos jornais, pode-se ensejar que o *DN* e o *Público* conferem destaque a eventos tanto nacionais como internacionais, sinalizando com isso tendências mais globalizantes; ao passo que o *CM* parece atribuir maior importância aos eventos nacionais, sugerindo tendências mais locais e ligadas ao cotidiano dos seus leitores.

No que tange aos recursos de moldura, verifica-se o predomínio da desconexão e da organização harmoniosa entre os elementos informa-

cionais disposto na página do *DN* e do *Público*, talvez (re)produzindo o perfil do seu público-alvo, cujo capital cultural permite-lhes ordenar e sistematizar a realidade em que vivem. Exceção disso no *DN* é a conexão entre reportagem, autopublicidade e o logotipo do jornal que, figurados no domínio do Ideal, acabam por sugerir a identidade e a essência do veículo, qual seja, a associação entre informação e entretenimento de qualidade. Já no *CM*, observa-se o predomínio da conexão entre os elementos informacionais, nomeadamente entre autopublicidades, entre estas e as chamadas noticiosas, bem como entre chamadas de caráter denunciativo, preocupante e polêmico.

Cumpre ressaltar que a autopublicidade promovida pelo jornal *Público*, distintamente dos outros jornais, aparece em desconexão com as demais informações jornalísticas da página, o que pode ser verificado através do uso de fontes com uma cor distinta das demais figuradas; além disso, encontra-se fora do espaço destinado às chamadas. Esse tipo de configuração parece sinalizar um cuidado maior por parte do *Público* em delimitar o espaço ocupado por uma publicidade e o espaço ocupado por uma informação jornalística, evitando, assim, a tendência geral de conectá-las e hibridizá-las, e reconhecendo a diferença no propósito comunicativo de cada um desses gêneros: informar e consumir, respectivamente.

Para fins de conclusão, torna-se pertinente enfatizar a eficácia do método proposto pela análise multimodal do *layout* da primeira página de jornais e, para além dos textos midiáticos, ressalta-se a importância de se expandir a sua aplicação em outros domínios do saber, como por exemplo, em materiais didáticos, livros infantis, encartes e rótulos de produtos, etc.

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DVD GRÁTIS

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VIA SACRA

CORREIO da manhã

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ENTREVISTA

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P2

Portfólio
Fomos a um circo numa sala vazia do Porto
P2

Dinheiro
Bancos *peer-to-peer*, o futuro do crédito
Digital

Psicologia e Enfermagem entre os cursos com mais desempregados

Havia quase 40 mil diplomados inscritos no ano passado em centros de emprego. Na sua maioria são jovens e há mais mulheres que homens

Caso Joana
Inspectores da PJ acusados de agressões

Curdistão Turquia lança incursão no Norte do Iraque contra o PKK

Balcãs
UE avisa Sérvia, Rússia ameaça UE e NATO

Banco de Portugal
Há sinais de marcha-atrás na retoma

Primeira página do jornal *Público*, edição de 23 de fevereiro de 2008.

Millicent Garrett Fawcett: Writing in the Defence of Women's Emancipation

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Millicent Garrett Fawcett: Writing in the Defence of Women's Emancipation

At the end of the nineteenth century, beginning of the twentieth century, the fight for a full feminine citizenship, represented by the right to vote, was, beyond doubt, one of the most controversial aspects of the political agenda in England. The prevailing legal system, and more precisely the liberal policy, denied women a political citizenship. In fact, the liberal ideology took as "natural" the sexual division of work. In like manner, the patriarchal character of the Victorian society, strengthened by the ideology of the separate spheres, was a strong obstacle between women and the public and political life of the country.

The right to vote was, thus, at the time, a symbol of citizenship, and that stressed even deeper the inferior status of women, and contributed to the maintenance of the exploitation and dependency situation which victimised the feminine population. In fact, in what concerned divorce and the rights of the mother over her children the law was still extremely unfair:

> ...if similar hardships had affected any represented class, they would long ago have been swept away. (Fawcett, *Women and Representative Government* 286)

Along with the law's injustice the Victorian society was living, at the time, under a double-faced moral standard, derived from the relation between the sexes, that allowed the most respectable men to molest, without punishment, young girls, and at the next moment to stand for parliament. It was, thus, against this whole situation of dependency and exploitation that the defenders of woman's emancipation fought, aiming to secure a full citizenship to the feminine population. This was, however, a long and hard task since one not only had to fight against a whole legal system, but it also implied the challenge of the Victorian mentality, so strongly patriarchal.

Among those who were deeply engaged in the feminine cause Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1847-1929) deserves to be detached as being an important contributor to the concession of the vote to the feminine population. Described by Brian Harrison (19) as possessing a moderate feminism, Millicent Fawcett has shown, since very young, her interest and concern in women's situation, being strongly influenced by John Stuart Mill, and by his ideals, after having heard him in a meeting, in 1865:

> This meeting kindled tenfold my enthusiasm for women's suffrage. (Fawcett in Strachey 19)

The feminine cause meant, in this way, the fight of Fawcett's whole life, in which she assumed a political action characterised by dialogue and constitutional methods, rejecting, therefore, any form of violence. So, she engaged herself in public attack through the organisation of public meetings, the elaboration of petitions to parliament, as well as in the writing of essays and articles to newspapers and magazines. Her involvement in meetings and public speeches was, initially, in the sixties and seventies, a great shock, since the female participation in this kind of events was not considered a proper feminine behaviour:

> This was regarded as a most terribly bold and dangerous thing in the 'sixties and seventies'. Women hardly ever spoke in public, and it was thought dreadfully "advanced" and likely to be "unsexing", besides, no one believed that a woman's voice could be heard. (Strachey 45)

But Millicent Fawcett managed not only to make herself heard but also to be a respected figure in the political arena of the time. According to her opinion, women's subjection derived both from the bad state of the law, of the public moral and also from the education given to the feminine population. However, the bad state of the law was, in its turn, influenced by women's situation:

> The evil state of the law, the evil state of the general tone of public opinion in regard to morals, is an outcome of the subjection of women, of the notion that women are possessions or chattels, with whom men are freely justified in dealing as they please. (Fawcett, *Speech or Silence* 330)

The concession of the right to vote was, thus, the ultimate goal of Millicent Fawcett, and of all of those who fought for women's emancipation, since the demand of such right was not only "one of the vital questions before the country"[1] but it stood for the end of the dependency, exploitation and inequality experienced by women. The vote was, in this way, both a symbol of emancipation, of improvement of woman's legal and social status, and the only self-protection against certain injustices. It meant, in short, women's participation in the public sphere and the inevitable change of this area, based, till then, in masculine stereotypes.

The efforts made by Fawcett in the defence of a full citizenship for women were, notwithstanding, beyond her participation in public speeches or in her support to political figures. In fact, to operate the changing of mentality, which Fawcett considered vital to the edification of a fair and more humane society, the essays she wrote had a significant importance.

"Serene, self-contained and thoughtful" as Ray Strachey (20) once characterised her, Millicent Fawcett transferred these qualities to her writing:

> ...she had a natural distaste for elaboration. She used the plainest words and the homeliest illustration. (Strachey 54)

Fawcett's essays and articles reflected, thus, much of her character, and her writing was not much emotive or with many rhetorical ornaments. Nevertheless, it was her simple, objective and rational style that fascinated every one who listened or read what she wrote:

> She was not eloquent, and made no appeal to the emotions, but she moved people none the less. ...there was no elaboration in her speeches, but no great simplification. Her argument was thoughtful, and sometimes difficult, but always fully worked out...(Strachey 131)

The essays written by Millicent Fawcett were the "most essayistic" form of an essay, since they presented themselves as an argument, an

[1] London Society for Women's Suffrage, *Circular Letter*, 1910.

explicit attempt to persuade[2], in which Fawcett addresses us directly. Being the persuasive essay the plainest literary form (Scholes and Klaus 8) it has as its main formal device the analogy, as well as other non literary strategies such as the author's testimony, or even the use of statistics.

Although Fawcett often used the analogy in her essays, her persuasive power was grounded in her argumentative ability, which enabled her to refute the strongest objections from the anti-suffrage faction:

> Her wit, detailed argument, youth and eloquence were compelling attractives to contemporary audiences. (Rubinstein 39)

The Future of Englishwomen: A Reply, written in 1878, is, perhaps, of all the essays produced by Fawcett the best example of a persuasive essay. In it, Millicent Fawcett rises against an article of Mrs. Sutherland Orr, named *The Future of Englishwomen*, and refutes one by one each objection to women's emancipation presented by Mrs. Orr. So, when Mrs. Orr feels certain that the women's movement will bring society's total degradation, Millicent Fawcett argues that, being that true, such decomposition has manifested itself benefic:

> The women brought under its influence will have a wider intellectual horizon;...they will have more dignity and more happiness in their lives...in a word, we shall see "the utmost expansion of which the female nature is capable". (Fawcett, *The Future* 347)

Nevertheless, Mrs. Orr continues her quest against the feminine emancipation movement defending that it should stay as it is or the whole society will degrade itself. Against such prediction Fawcett argues that the process of decomposition can not be considered good only till a certain moment. According to her, it is a harmful process from the beginning to the end. Notwithstanding, Fawcett points out that the feminine movement doesn't identify itself with the degradation foreseen by Mrs. Orr, and makes use of the analogy to prove her viewpoint:

[2] For this purpose see Scholes and Klaus, *Elements of the Essay* 4.

> The same process which in a fruit causes it to ripen, may if continued after a certain point, cause it to become rotten. So far, then, we may have the satisfaction of believing that from hour to hour "we ripe and ripe", and that the fatal "rot and rot", even if it comes at all, is still in the distant future. (Fawcett, *The Future* 348)

Mrs. Orr also charges the defenders of the feminine cause of considering marriage simply as a legal contract, where the emotional element has no place. This argument is, in fact, a very strong one if we bear in mind that the home and the family were the centre of the Victorian life, with still very strong patriarchal characteristics. Millicent Fawcett presents herself, thus, as evidence of the reverse, and stresses the importance she assigns to marriage, when contracted of one's free will:

> I represent the vast majority of women who have worked in this movement when I say that I believe that the emotional element in the marriage contract is of overwhelming importance;...I feel that no one, man or woman, ought to be forced into marriage by fear of social or legal penalties. That is one main reason why I should like to see honourable and honoured careers, other than marriage, open to women. (Fawcett, *The Future* 349-350)

Millicent Fawcett expresses also her disagreement about the disconcerting statement of Mrs. Orr that single women are not only numerous and superfluous, but they also have a mutilated existence. At this point Fawcett recalls names such as Florence Nightingale, Paulina Irby and Octavia Hill who, being single women, dedicated all their lives to the feminine cause, and developed an important and useful work both to women in general and to society as well:

> It seems to me that a woman is or is not "superfluous" in proportion as she finds and performs useful work which the world, or some little bit of the world, wants done. (Fawcett, *The Future* 350)

In what concerns the fact that single women are numerous, Fawcett presents an unquestionable fact – only in England there is half a million more women than men, so the number of single women has to be bigger.

But what Fawcett considers of the utmost importance is that only those women who think themselves apt to marry should choose to do so. Proper conditions should, on the other hand, be created so that the other women could take up a useful and noble carrier. Once again Fawcett makes use of the analogy in order to justify her point of view. In the same way that free-traders defend the removal of all restrictions to trade, so that each country may develop the type of industry for which is most apt, it is also urgent to eliminate the restrictions which debar women from getting a job, in the most different areas:

> In like manner, we say, remove the artificial restrictions which debar women from higher education and from remunerative employments...; and the play of natural forces will drive them into those occupations for which they have some natural advantage as individuals, or at least into those for which their natural disadvantages are the least overwhelming. (Fawcett, *The Future* 352)

Another prevalent fear, at the time, among those who opposed women's emancipation, was that women might usurp men's jobs. However, what Millicent Fawcett and the defenders of women's rights aimed at were equal opportunities in the access to work or to a profession, and not any privileges or exceptions:

> The one thing that has been asked, and the one thing that is in process of being granted, is a fair field and no favour. (Fawcett, *The Future* 352)

As regards the practice of medicine by women, Mrs. Orr considers this fact the "trigger" to social degradation, as soon as the female emancipation movement reaches its end. In Fawcett's viewpoint things are not as simple as that, but she believes that women's entry in medicine, as well as other victories already achieved, by emphasising the worth of the feminine action, will be a consistent basis to the demand of new rights and liberties:

> We have to show what good results we believe would accrue not only to women of this new privilege [the municipal franchise]; and we can point to the experience gained of the results of their admission to the other franchises as showing that women can vote for town councillors, and can both vote

> for, and sit on, school boards, without ceasing to love their children or throwing every vestige of feminine propriety to the winds. (Fawcett, *The Future* 354)

Millicent Fawcett considers, thus, that the main aim of the woman's emancipation movement is, not the degradation of society, but its strengthening and evolution. Therefore, Mrs. Orr's predictions are unreasonable, since that kind of prophecy has already proved erroneous:

> Those who write and speak against the extension of liberty of action and conscience to men and women have always said that the change they deprecate will undermine or decompose the foundations of society. A few years pass by, the change is accomplished, and it turns out that society is not undermined or decomposed at all, but is all the healthier and more vigorous, through being possessed of a larger proportion of free citizens. (Fawcett, *The Future* 356)

During the following decades, and almost till the end of her life, Millicent Fawcett revealed herself untiring in the defence of women's full citizenship, whether through her writings or through her speeches in order both to collect more adherents to the feminine cause and to refute any objection presented to women's emancipation. In fact, her writing reflected not only the female rationality but destroyed as well any reference to woman's inability based on biological differences. The essayistic she produced was, thus, a powerful means of persuasion, so that woman's conception, and her role in society could be altered, and it also proved, following Dawn Oliver and Derek Heater (113), that although the law has a great importance in the formation and concession of citizenship, it is not enough to produce a true status of it.

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More than a coincidence? The Pre-Raphaelites and the Sibyl Vane subplot of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

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More than a coincidence? The Pre-Raphaelites and the Sibyl Vane subplot of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*[1]

Wilde's youthful enthusiasm for the art of the Pre-Raphaelites is well documented by his biographers who record that Walter Pater commended their aesthetics to him while he was a student at Oxford University.[2] In Wilde's first lecture, given in 1882, he hailed the Pre-Raphaelite movement as a leading force of what he called the 'English Renaissance' and praised its 'passion for physical beauty, its exclusive attention to form, its seeking for new subjects for poetry, new forms of art, new intellectual and imaginative enjoyments'.[3] Although Wilde later lost interest with the Pre-Raphaelites, the formative role their aesthetics played at the beginning of his literary career is evident in the composition of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. He made his fictitious character Basil Hallward into the mouthpiece of Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics and had Hallward echo his lecture on the 'English Renaissance' when he explains that Dorian Gray represents 'an entirely new manner in art, an entirely new mode of style' (14) and claims that 'there is nothing Art

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[1] This article is a version of a paper presented at the international seminar *A Palavra e a Imagem* (*Word and Image*) organised by the Modern Difference Programme (University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies, ULICES), Faculty of Letters, Lisbon, December 2005.

[2] See especially Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* 1987. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1988), pp.31-33. On this particular point, see p. 47.

[3] *The Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*. ed. Robert Ross, 15 vols. 1908. (reprinted by Routledge/Thoemmes Press 1993). Vol. 14, p. 243.

cannot express' (14).[4] Basil's portrait of Dorian can be identified as a work belonging to the Pre-Raphaelite school, thanks to the photographic precision with which it 'skilfully mirrored' the subject (6). The 'most wonderful frame, specially designed' by Basil for Dorian's portrait is another indication that he followed the practice of Pre-Raphaelites artists (63). If Basil's technique can be likened to the hard-edged paintings characterizing the first wave of Pre-Raphaelitism, his veneration of Dorian's physical appearance is suggestive of the aestheticism of the second wave of Pre-Raphaelite painters, although it transposes their love of female beauty into the homosexual sphere.

There is critical consensus that Basil Hallward belongs to the Pre-Raphaelite school,[5] but it has hitherto passed unnoticed that the main incidents of the Sibyl Vane subplot are all coincident with (in the sense of consonant with) various paintings by the Pre-Raphaelites. The object of this paper is to consider whether it is more than a mere coincidence that there is concordance between some Pre-Raphaelite works and the elements structuring the Sibyl Vane subplot – such as the Shakespeare plays in which she performs, Dorian's worshipful love of her beauty, her recognition that he has shown her what reality really is, and her death. That concordance suggests that the Pre-Raphaelite paintings form a pictorial intertext underlying the aesthetics at work in the Sibyl Vane subplot which in turn illuminates the aesthetics at work in the novel as a whole.

Wilde frames Dorian's romance with Sibyl with allusions to the aesthetic theories of Walter Pater, a leading exponent of Pre-Raphaelitism. Lord Henry Wotton's thoughts on learning that Dorian had fallen in love with an actress outline the Paterian and pictorial intertexts informing the Sibyl Vane episode:

> He was conscious […] that it was through certain words of his, musical words said with musical utterance, that

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[4] Oscar Wilde. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* 1891. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985). References to this edition by Peter Ackroyd are made in the body of the text (as page numbers indicated in parentheses).

[5] Christopher Nassaar. *Into the Demon Universe: A Literary Exploration of Oscar Wilde* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 62.

> Dorian Gray's soul had turned to this white girl and bowed
> in worship before her. (65)

Wotton's 'musical words' echo back to the influential speech he had addressed to Dorian when they first met, based on Walter Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* and advocating a life devoted to aestheticism and hedonism. Lord Henry's incitement to 'be always searching for new sensations' (28) clearly paraphrases Pater's precept in the 'Conclusion': 'What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions'.[6] Pater thus advocates aestheticism in the etymological sense of the word, meaning what is perceptible by the senses, which characterizes the sensuality of 'soft-edged' Pre-Raphaelite painting. Dorian practises the Paterian 'sermon' preached by Lord Henry,[7] when he indulges his 'passion for sensations' (55) in his love for the actress Sibyl Vane. The Shakespearean intertext and the Pre-Raphaelite backdrop of the romance intertwine eroticism and the arts in what reads like an epilogue to Pater's essays on *The Renaissance*, with a double focus on Elizabethan drama and the Victorian paintings belonging to what Wilde called the 'English Renaissance'.

Lord Henry hints that by 'bow[ing] in worship before [Sibyl]', Dorian partakes in the Pre-Raphaelites' cult of idealized love. Like the Pre-Raphaelites who view their lovers as works of art, Dorian falls in love with an actress who performs art and not a woman who lives life. Sibyl is portrayed as a Pre-Raphaelite 'stunner', as she embodies both art and beauty. Dorian marks his idealization of her by using the superlative form in his initial praise of her as 'the loveliest thing' (57). Her appearance is a combination of the classical ideal of perfection – denoted by her 'Greek head with plaited coils of dark-brown hair' – and the romantic ideal, as her face is 'flower-like' with its lips resembling the 'petals of a rose' and its eyes the 'violet wells of passion.' (57) Sibyl is as unreachable and intangible

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[6] Walter Pater. *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* [*Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1873]. (London: Macmillan, 1902), p. 237.

[7] This is the term Christopher Nassaar uses to qualify Lord Henry sermon's first as 'poisonous' and then as 'invidious'. See *Into the Demon Universe*, pp. 40 and 41.

as a woman depicted in a Pre-Raphaelite painting, whom she even resembles physically: 'The curves of her throat were the curves of a white lily. Her hands seemed to be made of ivory.' (93) Dorian's appreciation of those parts of her body could be applied to numerous works by the Pre-Raphaelites who excelled in painting tapered fingers and sensuous necks. In 'The Decay of Lying', Wilde enumerates the characteristics of the Pre-Raphaelite beauty type, some of which coincide explicitly with those possessed by Sibyl Vane, 'the mystic eyes of Rossetti's dream, the long ivory throat […], the blossom-like mouth and weary loveliness of the 'Laus Amoris', the passion-pale face of Andromeda, the thin hands and lithe beauty of the Vivian in 'Merlin's Dream.'[8]

Like many of Rossetti's works, his *Veronica Veronese* (1872) evokes music not only because the lady is plucking the strings of a violin, but also because the curves in her silhouette suggest musical notation in the way they seem to trace the treble clef. The frequent association between Pre-Raphaelite women and music might have inspired Wilde to endow the timbre of Sibyl Vane's voice with musical qualities that captivate Dorian:

> And her voice – I never heard such a voice. It was very low at first, with deep mellow notes that seemed to fall singly upon one's ear. Then it became a little louder, and sounded like a flute or a distant hautboy. […] There were moments later on, when it had the wild passion of violins. (57-8)

At the time of her death, Lord Henry refers to her as an instrument on which to play Shakespeare's music: 'she was […] a reed through which Shakespeare's music sounded richer and more full of joy.' (115) That metaphor suggests that when Sibyl recites her lines she is not so much voicing a semantic message as creating a mood or a tonality. She transforms Shakespeare's text into a musical score, thus performing the aesthetic ideal which Walter Pater formulated in his essay on 'The School of Giorgione'

[8] *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 8, p. 33. The last three paintings Wilde alludes to here are by Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones.

in *The Renaissance:* '[…] all art aspires constantly towards the condition of music.'[9]

Lord Henry makes another muted reference to the pictorial intertext underpinning the Sibyl Vane subplot when he refers to her as the 'white girl'. Dante Gabriel Rossetti claimed that *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (1849-50), namely his version of 'The Annunciation' depicting Mary and the angel Gabriel both clad in white shifts, inaugurated a series of white paintings: 'In point of time it is the ancestor of all the *white* pictures which have since become so numerous – but here there was an ideal motive for the whiteness.'[10] Wilde's specific reference to a 'white girl' has been identified as a possible allusion to Whistler's *Symphony in White, n° 2: The Little White Girl* (1864),[11] thus extending the pictorial framework of the subplot to span from Pre-Raphaelitism to the aestheticism of the 'art for art's sake' movement.

Dorian adopts the Pre-Raphaelites' practice of making the women they love into works of art by confusing Sibyl Vane's identity with that of the Shakespearean characters she enacts. Like Wilde, the Pre-Raphaelites looked back to Shakespeare as the epitome of the English Renaissance, awarding him three stars as a 'Great' in their 'List of Immortals' (putting him second in line to the four-starred Jesus Christ) and using his work as source for the emotion and moral messages they sought to convey while establishing a distinctively British art movement. Wilde uses the Shakespearean intertext to construct the Sibyl Vane subplot of his novel, introducing her as Miranda from *The Tempest* (91), employed by a 'hideous Jew' (55) cast in the role of Caliban, but who could be nicknamed the Merchant of London. Dorian falls in love with Sibyl when

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[9] Pater. *The Renaissance*, p. 135.

[10] Letter from Rossetti to F. G. Stephens, dated 25 April, 1874. Cited in Virginia Surtees. *The Paintings and Drawings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882). A Catalogue Raisonné.* 2 vols. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971). Catalogue number 44.

[11] See *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, ed. Donald L. Lawler. (New York: Norton, 1988) p. 49, note 6: 'A reference to Whistler's picture of that name, on which Swinburne based his poem 'Before the Mirror' in *Poems and Ballads* (1866).

she is performing the role of Juliet, hence his reaction when the theatre manager proposes to introduce him to the real Sibyl Vane:

> On the first night I was at the theatre, the horrid old Jew came round to the box after the performance was over and offered to take me behind the scenes and introduce me to her. I was furious with him, and told him that Juliet had been dead for hundreds of years and that her body was lying in a marble tomb in Verona. I think, from his blank look of amazement, that he was under the impression that I had taken too much champagne, or something. (59)

Dorian makes his love for Sibyl into a romance, constructed from literary sources. He proposes to 'take my love out of poetry and to find my wife in Shakespeare's plays' (86).

Sibyl's identity is subsumed by the Shakespearean character she plays, as can be seen when Dorian refers to her as Cymbeline's daughter: 'Imogen is waiting for me.' (64) Similarly, he makes a double reference to *As You Like It* and *Romeo and Juliet* when he comments that he has not yet seen Sibyl that day: 'I left her in the forest of Arden; I shall find her in an orchard in Verona.' (86) Dorian cites the same two plays in reference to their love-making: 'I have had the arms of Rosalind around me, and kissed Juliet on the mouth.' (86) Dorian's love for Sibyl transports the couple into an unreal world, where they assume the role of fictitious characters. Sibyl is never herself: she acts constantly, as Dorian indicates in this response to Harry's question: 'When is she Sibyl Vane?' – 'Never.' (62) In a complementary way, Dorian playacts with Sibyl, who never knows his true identity, as he explains: 'She regarded me merely as a person in a play. She knows nothing of life.' (61) She ceases to act when she experiences genuine love and can no longer mimic the emotion on stage. Her life – and her livelihood – are dependent on her art, and she is only alive when she is acting.

Just as the Pre-Raphaelites used the same model to represent a wide range of female figures from the Bible, mythology and literature, so Wilde portrays Sibyl as a protean figure who incarnates a series of Shakespearean characters. The fact that she possesses multiple identities in Dorian's eyes prompts his boast that he has seen her 'in every age and in every costume' (58). A similar statement could be made of a Pre-Raphaelite model like Jane Burden, who was represented in various guises ranging from her future

husband William Morris's depiction of her as Queen Guinevere from Arthurian legend (1858)[12] to her lover Dante Gabriel Rossetti's portrait of her as Proserpine (1877). The Pre-Raphaelites' use of the women in their intimate world as models in their art adds an autobiographical dimension to their work which blurs the distinction between art and reality. Morris's depiction of his wife as the unfaithful Queen Guinevere, in the bedroom where she has committed adultery with Launcelot ominously foreshadows Jane Burden's love affair with Morris's friend Rossetti. Similarly, Rossetti's portrayal of Jane as the queen of the underworld, where she was bound to a husband who only occasionally granted her the freedom to enjoy the light of the world above, reflects his view of her marriage to Morris.

There is suggestive shadow-play between art and reality in John Everett Millais's *Ophelia* (1851-2), which depicts her suicide by drowning, triggered by Hamlet's rejection of her. The painting is an eerie foreshadowing of Elizabeth Siddal's own death caused by the laudanum she took in the wake of Rossetti's forsaking her. The intertextual link between Ophelia's fate and Sibyl Vane's suicide following rejection by Dorian Gray contains a pictorial twist to it. Millais's painting of a woman committing suicide after she has been forsaken by her lover superimposes the image of Elizabeth Siddal as Rossetti's lover onto the portrait of Ophelia. Although the Pre-Raphaelites had the metaphoric equivalent of stereoscopic vision and viewed the model both as the woman they knew in everyday life and a Shakespearean character, Sibyl's tragedy is that Dorian has eyes only for the aesthetic trappings she wears on stage, and does not see the woman behind the theatrical mask.

Walter Deverell's *Twelfth Night* (1849-1850) exemplifies the overlapping between Pre-Raphaelitism and the subplot of Wilde's novel, making the painting relevant to the argument presented here, even if neither the Shakespeare play it illustrates nor the name of the artist is cited in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Deverell contributed to the Pre-Raphaelite movement by introducing Elizabeth Siddal to the brotherhood when he

[12] The title of the painting is *La Belle Iseult* but its inspiration was Thomas Malory's 'Morte d'Arthur', in which one of the central themes is Guinevere's adulterous love for Sir Lancelot.

first used her as a model in *Twelfth Night*. Beyond its biographical interest, Deverell's work deserves critical attention for its artistic merits, as it illustrates the aesthetic manifesto of the Pre-Raphaelite movement which pays tribute to early Italian Renaissance painting. The composition of *Twelfth Night* – in particular the way the architectural structures are used to construct space – replicates the composition of Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes in the Campo Santo in Pisa which had inspired the founding of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. The Pre-Raphaelites considered the engravings of Gozzoli's work as a model of early Renaissance art pre-dating Raphael. Just as Renaissance Italian artists used recognizable members of contemporary society in their depictions of Biblical scenes – notably prominent members of the Medici family who take the lead in the Procession of the Magi which Benozzo Gozzoli painted on the walls of the chapel in the Palazzo Medici Ricardi in Florence (1459-60) – so Deverell uses his contemporaries as models for his Shakespearean characters: he paints his self-portrait in the figure of Duke Orsino, casts Rossetti as the jester Feste and Elizabeth Siddal in the role of Viola disguised here as the page Cesario. The scene Deverell chose to depict (*Twelfth Night* II. iv) prefigures his own pre-mature death at the age of 27,[13] as it represents Feste singing a mournful verse from an 'old and antique song':

> Come away, come away, death,
> And in sad cypress let me be laid.
> Fly away, fly away, breath,
> I am slain by a fair cruel maid.

In an analogous way, the lines Sibyl Vane recites when she is acting Juliet or Ophelia have a performative value and foretell her own death.

Deverell's *Twelfth Night* constructs a complex artistic representation in which the pictorial composition frames the theatrical performance. The stone arched canopy delineates the space, functioning like the curtain in the theatre, and the very strong shadows in the painting evoke the presence of hidden footlights. Deverell creates another self-referential artistic representation in his depiction of a scene from *As You Like It*.

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[13] Walter Howell Deverell was born in 1827 and died in 1854.

Significantly, Wilde cites the same play to corroborate the point that Dorian considered Sibyl solely as an actress, who appeared more real to him when she was acting on stage than in her actions off stage. Dorian's view of Sibyl as 'a wonderful tragic figure sent on to the world's stage to show the supreme reality of love' (116-7) echoes the trope in Jaques's speech:

> All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players;
> They have their exits and their entrances;
> And one man in his time plays many parts,
> His acts being seven ages. (*As You Like It* II vii)

Dorian considers Sibyl as an actress who creates emotion through her performance, thus fulfilling the aesthetic precept formulated in the 'Preface' to Wilde's novel: 'From the point of view of feeling, the actor's craft is the type'. At the same time, by loving Sibyl the actress rather than Sibyl the woman, Dorian is enacting the paradox of Lord Henry's epigram: 'I love acting. It is so much more real than life.' (89) Even Sibyl's death is considered in terms of performance, as Lord Henry compares it to that of such Shakespearean heroines as Ophelia, Juliet and Desdemona (114-5). Ironically, Sibyl's death results from her final performance as Juliet in which she let her real emotions get the better of her art. Her acting is condemned as 'simply bad art' marked by its 'absurdly artificial' gestures, her 'absolutely false' voice and the way she 'overemphasized everything that she had to say' (93-94). Sibyl's theatricality is consonant with the histrionic pose of the couple in Ford Maddox Brown's portrayal of *Romeo and Juliet* (1868-71). The hyperbolic representation of Romeo and Juliet's emotions in Brown's painting can be seen as the visual equivalent of Sibyl's second-rate acting in another instance of the coincidence between the subplot of Wilde's novel and Pre-Raphaelite painting.

A comparison of some of the Pre-Raphaelites' illustrations of Shakespeare and Wilde's construction of the Sibyl Vane subplot thus reveals a common use of the meta-artistic.[14] Wilde also uses the Shakespearean

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[14] I am proposing this term to designate the pictorial equivalent of Gérard Genette's definition of the metadiegetic in *Figures III* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), pp. 241-3.

intertext not only to make a statement about artistic representation but also in his portrayal of homosexuality in the novel's subtext. Wilde links Shakespeare's name with same-sex love in a passage pointing to the works of Walter Pater which, as we have already seen, cast a shadow over the Sibyl Vane episode. In a passage referring unambiguously to homosexuality, Wilde alludes not only to the chapters in *The Renaissance* on 'The Sonnets of Michelangelo' and the art criticism of Wincklemann, but also to Pater's partially published novel *Gaston de Latour*, which names Montaigne and Ronsard in its depiction of male friendship. The passage suggestively confuses Dorian's love for Lord Henry with the painter Basil Hallward's love for him:

> The love that he bore him – for it was really love – had nothing in it that was not noble and intellectual. It was not that mere physical admiration of beauty that is born of the senses, and that dies when the senses tire. It was such a love as Michael Angelo had known, and Montaigne, and Wincklemann, and Shakespeare himself. (132)

Wilde's claim that 'the whole idea [of his novel] was borrowed from Shakespeare […] from Shakespeare's sonnets'[15] was tantamount to admitting that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was a covert representation of homosexuality. Indeed, Wilde had clearly laid the groundwork for his novel's homosexual subtext in his short story 'The Portrait of Mr. W. H.' In that text, published a year before *Dorian Gray*, Wilde read Shakespeare's sonnets as an ode to homosexual love and had one of the characters defend the thesis that Shakespeare was in love with a male actor named Willie Hughes for whom he wrote not only the cross-dressed role of Rosalind in *As You Like It* but also the role of Juliet. By casting Sibyl Vane as a Shakespearean actress, Wilde associates her with the homosexual connotations of his work. He thus uses the Shakespearean intertext as an indirect language allowing him to portray what his lover the poet Lord Alfred Douglas called 'the love that dare not say its name'.[16] As a comple-

[15] Cited by Ellmann, p. 422.

[16] See his two poems 'In Praise of Shame' and 'Two Loves' in *The Chameleon*, n° 1, 1894.

ment to Horst Breuer's enlightening article on the function of Shakespeare's sonnets in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*,[17] my focus here will be on how Wilde negotiated Victorian propriety in the construction of the novel's subplot by sheltering behind the respectability of Shakespearean texts – in particular *Romeo and Juliet* and *As You Like It* – which, coincidentally, were also illustrated by the Pre-Raphaelites.

Wilde's narrative of Dorian's love for Sibyl uses *Romeo and Juliet* as a structuring intertext, with Sibyl playing the lead female role both the first and the last times Dorian saw her on stage. Wilde subtly adds homosexual significance to Juliet's part in the significant choice of lines he cites in his text. They are extracted from a passage of the play which is composed as a sonnet, hence in a literary form which Wilde had explicitly associated with homosexual love in 'The Portrait of Mr. W. H.' Wilde has Sibyl recite Juliet's four line rejoinder to Romeo, who has placed his hand on hers, sanctifying it by calling it a 'holy shrine'. Romeo explains that the end he has in sight (his 'fine') befits a gentleman (reflected in the choice of the adjective 'gentle') as he proposes to kiss it:

> Romeo
> *[To Juliet]* If I profane with my unworthiest hand
> This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this:
> My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
> To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.
>
> Juliet
> Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
> Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
> For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
> And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.
>
> Romeo
> Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?
>
> Juliet
> Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

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[17] Horst Breuer. 'Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray and Shakespeare's Sonnets'. *English Language Notes (ELN)* vol. 42 n° 2 (December 2004), 59-68.

Romeo
O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

Juliet
Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

Romeo
Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.[18]

The last line quoted in Wilde's text – 'And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss' – plays on the polysemy of the word 'palm', meaning both the inside of the hand and the tree whose branches were carried by pilgrims, hence their name of 'palmer'. The sonnet concludes with another pun, this time on the word 'move': Juliet uses it to mean 'saints do not initiate action', whereas Romeo uses it as an injunction in the literal sense of 'stay still'. Wilde's citation from a text playing on the double meaning of its individual words points to the possible double meaning of the text as a whole. This sonnet operates on one level as a declaration of hetero-sexual love, but in the light of Wilde's theory that the Shakespearean sonnet is a coded form to refer to homosexuality, it can also be read as part of the homosexual subtext of the novel.

Wilde strengthens the link between the Sibyl Vane subplot and the homosexual subtext of his novel by playing on the sexual ambiguity related to the practice of cross-dressing on the Elizabethan stage. As the roles of both Romeo and Juliet were performed by male actors in the original performance, Wilde uses the play as a subterfuge for representing homosexual love in the ostensibly heterosexual subplot of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The narrative of that subplot focuses on scenes when Sibyl Vane is performing in a play whose plot involves cross-dressing, so that she appears on stage looking like an ephebic young male. The correspond-ing descriptions of her resonate with echoes back to the Pre-Raphaelite depictions of the same or similar scenes, for example in Deverell's *Twelfth Night*, where Viola is portrayed as an androgynous figure, with a woman's

[18] *Romeo and Juliet* I v. 91-104. Juliet's lines 95 –8 are cited in Wilde's novel.

face but masquerading in men's clothing. Like the Victorian depictions of Shakespeare which use a woman as model for the female character dressed as a man, Sibyl Vane's cross-dressing involves only one layer of disguise, whereas the Elizabethan performances requiring that the female part be played by a male actor resulted in double cross-dressing. The Pre-Raphaelites made scenes of Shakespearean cross-dressing into a recurrent motif exemplified not only in Deverell's works, but also in William Holman Hunt's *Valentine Rescuing Sylvia from Proteus* (1850-51) illustrating a passage from *Two Gentlemen of Verona* in which Julia is dressed as a page. However, in these paintings, cross-dressing is used simply as a means of emphasizing role-playing, in keeping with the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic of a self-consciously constructed art work. They are a complex representation of performance, illustrating a kind of play within the play or theatrical *mise en abyme*. In Wilde's novel, on the other hand, the references to crossing-dressing in Shakespeare are not only associated with self-reflexive art, they are also encoded with homosexual meaning.

The themes of play-acting and cross-dressing are inextricably intertwined in *As You Like It*. Rosalind and Celia flee from court to the Forest of Arden, under assumed identities: Celia adopts the name of 'Aliena' and wears the clothes of a woman of modest means, whereas Rosalind dresses up as a page and takes on the name of Ganymede, which in the Elizabethan period had acknowledged homosexual associations. Wilde used the sexually ambiguous connotations of *As You Like It* as a strategy for investing the Sibyl-Dorian love affair with homosexual meaning. Dorian accounts for his love of Sibyl, explaining that he was especially attracted to her in the scenes where Rosalind is cross-dressed as Ganymede: 'I have watched her wandering through the forest of Arden, disguised as a pretty boy in hose and doublet and dainty cap.' (58) He returns to that androgynous image of her when he informs Basil of his love for Sibyl:

> You should have seen her! When she came on in her boy's clothes, she was perfectly wonderful. She wore a moss-coloured velvet jerkin with cinnamon sleeves, slim, brown, cross-gartered hose, a dainty little green cap with a hawk's feather caught in a jewel, and a hooded cloak lined with dull red. She had never seemed to me more exquisite. She had all the delicate grace of that Tanagra figurine that you have in

> your studio, Basil. Her hair clustered round her face like dark leaves round a pale rose. As for her acting – well, you shall see her to-night. She is simply a born artist. I sat in the dingy box absolutely enthralled. I forgot that I was in London and in the nineteenth century. I was away with my love in a forest that no man had ever seen. (85)

As You Like It has a key function in the economy of the novel's homosexual subtext as it is Sibyl's appearance on stage, cross-dressed as a young man, which prompts Dorian to declare his love to her (60).

Coincidentally, Walter Deverell's *As You Like It* (1853) suggestively combines both performance and sexual ambiguity. Other titles for the painting are 'Rosalind Tutoring Orlando in the Ceremony of Marriage' and 'The Mock Marriage of Orlando and Rosalind', specifying that it depicts a marriage ceremony, although it looks like a wedding between two men because Rosalind, dressed as Ganymede, exhanges vows with Orlando. Celia officiates as substitute priest and expresses her reluctance to pronounce the lines corresponding to this transgressive marriage. She is prompted by Rosalind in the following rehearsal:

> ROSALIND. Come, sister, you shall be the priest, and marry us. Give me your hand, Orlando. What do you say, sister?
>
> ORLANDO. Pray thee, marry us.
>
> CELIA. I cannot say the words.
>
> ROSALIND. You must begin 'Will you, Orlando'-
>
> CELIA. Go to. Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?
>
> ORLANDO. I will.
>
> ROSALIND. Ay, but when?
>
> ORLANDO. Why, now; as fast as she can marry us.
>
> ROSALIND. Then you must say 'I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.'
>
> ORLANDO. I take thee, Rosalind, for wife. (As You Like It IV i.)

The epilogue of *As You Like It* confounds the blurred gender divide dramatized in Rosalind's part with an undefined boundary between the

world represented on stage and reality.[19] It is unclear whether the lines are spoken by the character in the play (Rosalind) or by the actor or actress playing the part. The speech confuses the issue because Rosalind – at this point wearing women's clothing – introduces the hypothesis 'If I were a woman', which reveals that the woman's part is in fact being played by a male actor (as was the case in the Elizabethan period). That revelation is immediately contradicted by the actor's gesture, because he takes leave by performing a feminine curtsy, thus stepping back into the world of the theatre:

> It is not the fashion to see the lady the epilogue. […] If I were a woman, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleas'd me, complexions that lik'd me, and breaths that I defied not; and, I am sure, as many as have good beards, or good faces,or sweet breaths, will, for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell. (*As You Like It* Epilogue)

Wilde's use of *As You Like It* as a key intertext in his novel tightens the entangled threads of reality and art, masculinity and femininity and ties them to late nineteenth century aestheticism. The play had served as a centripetal force in Théophile Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835), a novel which Wilde ranked alongside Pater's *The Renaissance*, qualifying them in turn as 'the golden book of spirit and sense, the holy writ of beauty"'.[20] This French text is clearly an important intertext in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, not only because Gautier's lenghty preface became the rallying manifesto of the 'art for art's sake' movement, but also because the narrative itself broaches the question of 'the love that dare not say its name'. In it, the eponymous heroine is a transvestite posing as a young gentleman named Théodore. The plot revolves around the rehearsals

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[21] The analysis on the epilogue here is endebted to Jean-Jacques Chardin's 'Androgyny, Anamorphosis and Double Vision: *Fin de Siècle* revisiting of the Shakespearean Canon'. *Recherches Anglaises et Nord-Américaines*, vol. 35 (2002), 107-17.

[20] *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 13, p. 539 for Pater; vol. 13 p. 32 for Gautier. Wilde is citing Swinburne's lines written in praise of Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin*.

for an amateur production of *As You Like It* in which 'Théodore' plays the role of Rosalind and betrays 'his' true identity in the scenes when 'he' puts on Rosalind's costume. In Gautier's novel, the cross-dressing thus results in several layers because a woman (Mademoiselle de Maupin) dressed as a man (Théodore) plays the part of a woman (Rosalind) who has to disguise herself as a man (Ganymede).

The suggestive sexual ambiguity of *As You Like It* was given a peculiar twist in Lord and Lady Archibald Campbell's 1884-5 open-air production of the play, performed in the woods near their home at Coombe. This production cast Lady Archibald Campbell in role of Orlando, thus producing a complex criss-crossing of gender culminating in the mock wedding scene. At that point, a woman acting a man's part (Lady Campbell as Orlando) exchanges wedding vows with an actress disguised as a young man. Wilde reviewed the performance in 1885, praising in particular the masculine suggestiveness of Lady Campbell's voice. His use of the terms 'strange', 'wonderful' and 'fascination' are resonant with homosexual overtones, as in his novel he makes them into code words denoting Dorian's seductive beauty:

> Lady Archibald Campbell's Orlando was a really remarkable performance. Too melancholy some seemed to think it. Yet is not Orlando lovesick? Too dreamy, I heard it said. Yet Orlando is a poet. […] in the low music of Lady Archibald Campbell's voice, and in the strange beauty of her movements and gestures, there was a wonderful fascination.[21]

Wilde praised the outdoor setting of the performance, which used the real woods near Coombe Hill Farm as backdrop. The production was unusual in the way it brought together the artistic space of the theatre and the natural space of the world around, set as it was on the indefinable interface between reality and art. James Abbott McNeill Whistler's *Note in Green and Brown: Orlando at Coombe*, a tiny oil painting (measuring only 5 7/8 by 3 ½ inches) now in the Hunterian Art Gallery in Glasgow,

[21] Wilde's article was published in the *Dramatic Review* on June 6, 1885. Cited here from *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. XIII. pp. 34-5.

provides a visual record of the production.[22] It depicts the layers of transvestism introduced in the performance, as it represents a slim figure in doublet and hose, with a gentle lady's face. Given the web of associations surrounding late Victorian artistic representations of *As You Like It*, we can conclude that it is more than just a coincidence that Wilde used it as an intertext encoded with sexual ambiguity.

If Dorian relates his love for Sibyl to Shakespearean plays mediated through Pre-Raphaelite illustrations, Sibyl for her part formulates her feelings by citing a poem which gave rise to another series of Pre-Raphaelite paintings: Tennyson's 'The Lady of Shalott' (1832). The poem recounts the legend of a woman who sole knowledge of the real world is what she sees reflected in a mirror positioned opposite a window opening out onto it. Her only interaction with that reflected reality is the art work she weaves as a representation of it, thus indicating that hers is a life of pure aesthetics. When she commits the fatal transgression of looking out of the window onto reality, the mirror cracks and her world of aestheticism is shattered. The legend thus outlines Sibyl Vane's own fate, as she breaks the spell of Dorian's love for her when she moves away from the 'magic' of the theatre in order to confront reality. Sibyl's references to the Shakespearean framework modulate to an allusion to Tennyson's poem in her long speech explaining that Dorian has helped her to see the artificiality of the theatrical world:

> I knew nothing but shadows, and I thought them real. You came – oh, my beautiful love! – and you freed my soul from prison. You taught me what reality really is. To-night, for the first time in my life, I saw through the hollowness, the sham, the silliness of the empty pageant in which I had always played. To-night, for the first time, I became conscious that the Romeo was hideous, and old, and painted, that the moonlight in the orchard was false, that the scenery was

[22] Whistler's painting is dated July 1884, in other words the year before Wilde's review, suggesting that the production ran for two summers. See Andrew McClaren Young, Margaret MacDonald, Robin Spencer, Hamish Miles. *The Paintings of James McNeill Whistler* 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), Catalogue entry 317.

> vulgar, and that the words I had to speak were unreal, were not my words, were not what I wanted to say. You had brought me something higher, something of which all art is but a reflection. You had made me understand what love really is. My love! My love! Prince Charming! Prince of life! I have grown sick of shadows. (96-7)

Her concluding statement and the preceding suggestion that Dorian had helped her to dissipate the shadows of art are an allusion to 'The Lady of Shalott''s complaint in Tennyson's poem:

> But in her web she still delights
> To weave the mirror's magic sights,
> For often thro' the silent nights
> A funeral, with plumes and lights
> And music, went to Camelot:
> Or when the moon was overhead,
> Came two young lovers lately wed;
> 'I am half sick of shadows,' said
> The Lady of Shalott.

Sibyl borrows the Lady of Shalott's use of the word 'shadows' to mean art, which Dorian will echo on the following page when he retaliates that he had loved her precisely because she gave 'shape and substance to the shadows of art' (98). Sibyl reverses his values by placing reality higher than art which she dismisses as 'an empty pageant'. Dorian wants to preserve their romance in the realm of art, whereas Sibyl attempts to transpose their romance into the sphere of reality and thus transforms Dorian's nickname from Prince Charming into 'Prince of life' (97). The irony of that epithet becomes tragic, as Dorian's rejection of her as a living woman prompts her to take her life.

'The Lady of Shalott' was a recurrent theme in Pre-Raphaelite painting because it dramatized the breaking point between art and reality which paralleled the artists' own preoccupations with the relationship between artistic representation and the real world. William Holman Hunt's first version of the subject dating from 1850 was followed by his celebrated canvas of the same scene completed in 1886-1905 (and now in the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut). John Williams Waterhouse's illustrations of the poem include a canvas post-dating the

publication of Wilde's novel whose title is the same line of the poem cited by Sibyl: 'I'm half sick of shadows' (1915). Elizabeth Siddal, who was not only a model but became an artist in her own right, sketched a pencil drawing of the scene which is particularly relevant to this discussion of Sibyl's citation of Tennyson's poem. In both Siddal's drawing (1853) and Wilde's text, the poem functions as an instrument allowing the woman to make her voice heard. In Siddal's drawing, the Lady of Shalott is depicted as a repressed recluse, isolated in a world of asceticism devoted to the aesthetics of weaving. Sibyl Vane invokes the poem to imply that she has been constrained by the lines she has had to learn and smothered by the stale air of theatrical art. In this way, Sibyl uses Tennyson's poem to make a statement about her status as a woman and her desire for freedom, which thus coincides with the message of Siddal's drawing of the same scene.[23]

The aesthetics underwriting Wilde's novel and Pre-Raphaelite illustrations extend beyond the framework of the Sibyl Vane chapters, so that the dialectics of reality and artistic construction, identity and playacting function as a common axis for both the subplot and the bulk of the narrative. Like Sibyl, Dorian leads a 'double life' (192) and becomes a skilled actor, prompting the paradoxical statement: 'Perhaps one never seems so much at one's ease as when one has to play a part.' (192) Dorian constructs an aesthetic disguise to mask his true self, linking him not only to Sibyl the actress but also to Wilde himself, who famously proclaimed: 'My life is like a work of art.'[24] Wilde transposes that statement into the present perfect tense when he has Lord Henry pen Dorian's portrait in words: 'Life has been your art. You have set yourself to music. Your days are your sonnets.' (238) Here Lord Henry formulates the idea that Dorian is an aesthete embodying the theory of 'art for art's sake' drawing on both Pater's conception of music as the purest form of art and Wilde's own appropriation of the sonnet as a coded language for homosexuality. Dorian is thus made of the same stuff as Sibyl, and both are artificial creations who cannot survive in the real world.

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[23] In the conclusion to her article on 'Holman Hunt's Sage Reading of *The Lady of Shalott*', Maria Teresa de Ataíde Malafaia formulates what these women are saying. See *Anglo-Saxónica*, Series 2, n° 16/17 (2002), 295.

[24] Ellmann, p. 508.

The impetus of Wilde's narrative – how Dorian preserves his good looks while his portrait becomes the reflection of his tainted soul – introduces a temporal dimension to that pictorial representation which can be related to two paintings associated with the novel's subplot. Returning to Wilde's allusion to Whistler's *Symphony in White, n° 2: The Little White Girl* (1864), we can notice that the painting's musical title harmonizes with the novelist's aestheticism and coincides with the main plot of his work, in the sense that both are self-conscious aesthetic compositions. The painting represents a woman standing in front of a mirror, surrounded by Japanese decorations such as a painted fan, blue porcelain pots and an azalea. The artist has created the 'Japanese effect' which Wilde defines in 'The Decay of Lying' as a pure aesthetic construction, even going so far as to argue that 'the whole of Japan is a pure invention'[25] and that 'The Japanese people are the deliberate self-conscious creation of certain individual artists.'[26] The aesthetic construction of this painting can be related to the opening scene of Wilde's novel, where 'a kind of momentary Japanese effect' (5) is created by the shadows of the birds in flight behind the curtain stretched across the window of Basil's studio. Whistler's painting has further resonance with the novel's main plot, as the figure standing in front of an anamorphic mirror can be likened to Dorian's relationship with his painted image. As Jonathan Miller has so perceptively pointed out, the mirror in Whistler's painting does not reflect the 'little white girl' realistically, but gives a negative image of her as ill, aged or marked by a life of dissolution.[27] In an analogous way, the progressive corruption of Dorian's portrait functions like an anamorphic mirror reflecting his sinister second self.

The second work which provides a pictorial intertext for the portrait Wilde creates in his novel is a small drawing in pen and ink sketched by Walter Deverell at the time he painted his canvas entitled *Twelfth Night*. It depicts a scene from the same play in which a cross-dressed Viola delivers the duke's message of love to Olivia, though Viola's deceptive appearance

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[25] *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 8, p. 47.

[26] *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 8, p. 48.

[27] Jonathan Miller. *On Reflection* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1998), p. 202.

as a youth arouses Olivia's love for her. Using Elizabeth Siddal as a model, Deverell makes this go-between a sexual in-between, as she wears the costume of a page but has the face of a young woman. The scene Deverell chose to illustrate compounds the issue of sexual ambiguity with the meta-theatrical, as Olivia recognizes that the page has had to learn lines in order to perform the part and that the request to see her face is unscripted:

> Olivia
> Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain and show you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one I was this present: is't not well done? *Unveiling* [*Twelfth Night* I v.]

Olivia's speech here is built on a trope comparing her face to a portrait. Her words capture the temporal confusion characteristic of Dorian's portrait when she uses the past tense to refer to herself in the present: 'such a one I was this present'. The phrase 'this present' was a common way of dating letters in the Elizabethan period, and is used here to suggest the date juxtaposed beside the artist's signature. The sense of compound time illustrated by this Pre-Raphaelite drawing of a text which superimposes the act of artistic creation in the past and the moment the art work is viewed in the present is echoed in Wilde's novel, where it becomes the defining characteristic of Dorian's portrait.

The reflection in Whistler's mirror and the Shakespearean scene representing a criss-crossing of indirect declarations of love (the Duke's for Olivia and Olivia's for a woman posing as a man) are resonant with the aesthetics at work in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The concordance between word and image pinpoints the common aesthetics which provided the stuff for the Pre-Raphaelites's works and the novel by Wilde. To use the terms of the novel's subplot, we can conclude that the Pre-Raphaelites' illustrations from Shakespeare provide the background scenery to the Sibyl/Dorian romance. Considering the novel as a whole, it would be more appropriate to transpose the conclusion into musical terms, as the art works compose a kind of incidental music coincident with Wilde's own aesthetics.

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Mona Caird's gendered work: A go-between negotiating Past and Future

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Mona Caird's gendered work: A go-between negotiating Past and Future

"The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there" (*TGB*, 7). This opening sentence from L.P. Hartley's book (1953) presents us Leo, a learned old bachelor, who discovers the diary he kept as a boy of 12. Besides not wanting "to touch it (...)" he suddenly "took the combination lock and began to finger it" *(TGB*, 7). His decision awakes in his mind the events of a past time, too long forgotten, now being revived in the present. On doing it, Leo discloses the boy he was in 1900 and knows that what he experienced in that summer contributed to the kind of man he would be in the future/he is in the present. His role as a postman between Marian and Ted, made of him, firstly an innocent go-between, followed by a disillusioned boy, who doesn´t want to accept that task from Marian again now that he is a grown-up: "And why should I go on this preposterous errand? I hadn´t promised to and I wasn´t a child, to be ordered about" (*TGB*, 280).

Actually, the *Past* and the *Future* are quite different or, in other words, they are antipodal. That is the information we can get from Leo and after looking up both words in the dictionary. The noun *Past* refers to something that happened in time before the *Present* or to a period "before and until, but not including, the present time" (C*IDE*, 1033). The *Future*, on the other hand, is ahead because "it has not yet come", so "it is the time after the present" (*DELC*), 530). It can be "distant" or "near", as we know. Summing up, the *Past* and the *Future* never meet because their borders do not coexist with each other and they are not even next-door neighbours. Yet, something exists to approach the opposite extremes: the *Present* is standing there between them. According to the grammar rules, that is "the form of a verb that shows what exists or is happening now" (*DELC*, 1038). No doubt! Nevertheless, we should bear in mind

that there is a "historic/historical present", which is "used in many languages to describe events which happened in the past, when the teller wants to make them sound more real" (*DELC*, 628). So, the *Present* adopts several meanings and it can also transform itself into a go-between that delivers messages from one person to another or from one epoch to another. That is what Leo does when he says, "the past *is*" or "they *do* things differently there".

That was also the aptitude of Alice Mona Caird's discourse during her whole life. During the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, she put the *Past* and the *Future* in touch in matters of gender. After unfolding past stereotypes she considered out of age, Caird intended to leave them behind. Hers was an age of transformations and, as Walter E. Houghton says, "it has been said that while the eighteenth century was satisfied with what it was, the nineteenth century was satisfied with what it was becoming" (*TVFM*, 38). Mona Caird would certainly rectify this statement and instead of writing it that way she would probably add that the "Victorian advanced women"are satisfied not with what they had become, but with what they should have become. It means that the present time she is living in is not so distant from the past but it is still distant from "a better and higher view of the state and its responsabilities", as she said in her interview to the *Women's Penny Paper* (421) in 1890.

Leo's expectations for his near future were more optimistic till "the 26th, the eve of the fateful Friday" (*TGB*, 32). Until that day he believed humanity would be better immediately after the turning of the century. How could an innocent child imagine that some years later several countries were pointing towards a world war? How could he think that some days later his vision of the world would transform him into an adult, who would never again obey orders coming from Marian? After the 27th he was able to read "between lines" or, in other words, messages. But till that day his thoughts were quite normal for his age:

> The year 1900 had an almost mystical appeal for me; I could hardly wait for it: 'nineteen hundred, nineteen hundred,' I would chant to myself in rapture; and as the old century drew to its close, I began to wonder whether I should live to see its successor. I had an excuse for this: I had been ill and was

> acquainted with the idea of death; but much more it was the fear of missing something infinitely precious – the dawn of a Golden Age. For that was what I believed the coming century would be: the realization, on the part of the whole world, of the hopes that I was entertaining for myself.
> (*TGB*, 9-10)

On the contrary, Mona Caird's maturity makes her less enthusiastic. The main reason for such distance in points of view (childhood-adulthood/past-future) has to do with her longer experience in relation to social communities where masculine and feminine persons are considered to have different roles just because they were born boys or girls. According to her, while those obsolete minds are not eradicated, boys will continue to have great opportunities ahead, not girls. Victorian education still puts girls apart in several matters of public life. Adult boys do not have to submit themselves to the attachment to household chores as women do. This fact emerges from the limitations society imposes on them since time immemorial. Against this state of things, Caird uses her pulpit to denounce *Past* and *Present* social inequalities and reveals herself a New Woman writer trying to change public opinion. Besides being full aware that personal freedom and new social projects for women will not be implemented in a near future, she believes transformation will certainly be possible some day, in a distant future, as she states: "I do not advocate any startling change at present (...) but because my idea may not be practicable at present it does not follow it will always be so" (*WPP*, 421).

Caird's feminine characters that do not follow their mothers' footsteps or their "nature" are accused of neglecting the conventional rules for their sex. The lady of Ballochcoill (Mr Duncan's second wife), one of the characters of *The Stones of Sacrifice* (1915) is described as "a handsome, rather mysterious-looking woman, with observant eyes, black hair draw high above her brow, and a way of looking amused when there seemed nothing particular to be amused at" (*TSS*, 4). Mona Caird's irony here reflects how apart this woman is from the common views, how her smile is a step ahead in time. And the narrator explains the reason why: "At that date, about ten years before the end of the nineteenth century, a woman of ability and independent views was looked upon with suspicion and more or less resentment in country districts; and Mrs Duncan had not

escaped. There were rumours that her religious opinions were very "peculiar", and that she had proved a harsh step-mother to young Drummond, her husband's only son by his former marriage" (*TSS*, 4). But even this woman, "who was not afraid of ideas" (*TSS*, 40), condemns radical behaviour in girls such as Miss Kirkpatrick, whose masculine attitude in relation to dressing is described by the narrator, as follows: "In appearance, miss Kirkpatrick was precisely what, at that date, the New Woman was supposed to be: large and angular and masculine looking. A black skimpy coat and skirt, and a manly shirt and tie constituted her attire; and she had wrung her hair, by dint of virile force, into a tight button and pulled down on the top of the button a black bowler hat" (*TSS*, 39-40). This description reflects Caird's criticism to the ardent public opinion towards those women who deviated themselves from the Victorian standard of behaviour: the submissive woman/wife whose "whole excuse for being was to love, honor, obey – and amuse – her lord and master, and to manage his household and bring up his children. In that role her character and her life were completely distinct from his" (*TVFM*, 348).

Another character of the novel, Alpin McAlpin Dalrymple, is a boy whose emotions place him far from the common masculine ones, and because of that fact, he is easily criticised. His deviance from the conventional rules for men also attracts the others' attention: he is "rather a handful" (*TSS*, 3), someone who "has a queer way with the beasties" (*TSS*, 49). He was not interested in being "a future banker" because his imagination was "naturally vivid and inclined to melancholy" (*TSS*, 5). That was a characteristic of contemplative persons, not quite proper for masculine minds. To act as a woman/man means at first to gather information from the experts in such matters and to obey social construction or rules. Myra Jehlen in her article "Gender" (in *CTLS*, 268) refers to it and names those social imposed manners as "conventional femininity"/ [masculinity], which has standard parts"(268). But Alpin is more prone to observe nature and to "admire the beastly country" where he can feed animals out of his hand (*TSS*, 32; 4). When he was acquainted to the Welsh Professor Owen, who showed him the Standing Stones, he felt uncomfortable and disappointed with the past and with the world around. He will remember that place all along his life. It was a site of sacrifice and victims, whose blood flowing from them on the altar-stone would

propitiate the gods of the druids. As Professor Owen explains, "the idea appeared (...) in all religions: the belief that one could ward off from oneself the anger of the God by offering victims in one's place. So long there was a supply of victims, the Gods didn't seem to be particular as to who they were, provided they were of good quality. The best and fairest of the people were chosen for these Druid rites, as in Greece the fairest maiden was chained to the rock for the Minotaur to devour" (*TSS*, 6). This approach to the Darwinian theory also reveals the epoch in which Caird was living in. Science and medical experiments were being developed quickly. The theme of Vivisection and the suffering of animals for the sake of humanity is a recurrent theme in Alice Mona Caird's work: compulsive obedience of victims to the most powerful ones. Her "advanced ideas" became too polemical but as she said, "as a child I rebelled against current ideas" (*TWPP*, 421).

The above arguments of inequality and injustice all over the world at any time, are strongly reinforced by Professor Owen when he explains Alpin that they are timeless and have no limits: "sacrifice goes on age after age, though the Standing Stones are without their priests an flowing blood..." So, he adds: "whenever you hear anyone talk of sacrifice, no matter in what refined disguise, you will know that you are back at the very beginning of things" (*TSS*, 7).

The act of speaking offers people the opportunity to communicate ponts of view, as Professor owen did. The act of writing is quite useful too because it can present the other something said, done or thought not only in the past but also in the present. It can also spread its function to the future time making it possible for others to know or comment something that happened back in time, sometimes with wide implications in the future, as it happened in Leo's life. Barbara Johnson in her article "Writing" (*CTLS)* tells us that "writing can always pass into the hands of the "other" and it has a structure of authority" because "the possibility of reading materiality, silence, space, and conflict within texts has opened up extremely productive ways of studying the politics of language (...). [So], "reading" in its extended sense is deeply involved in questions of authority and power (...) [and] in this sense is the field of sexual politics" (48; 46). Mona Caird knows it and uses that same strategy that "goes beyond apparent intention or surface meanings" ("Writing", 47). To encode it, that

is the task of the reader. She is also acquainted with the idea that novels and their characters are timeless and because of that they can be read every time with a different aim in mind: analyse landscapes, characters, points of view, etc. It depends on the purpose of each reader.

Alpin is a good example of it. His meeting to Professor Owen was crucial to his inner development, as the 27th of a past summer was to Leo. Leo learned about love and sex and Alpin learned about injustice, obedience, authority and power: on the stones he viewed "his mother (...) and all the women of the long, terrible sacrificial past. The docile maiden seemed a symbol of them all" (*TSS*, 29). Caird's *fin-de-siècle* writing offers the reading public the possibility of hearing her acute voice defending past/present victims of suffering: women and animals. She gives thus her contemporary and future readers new insights into a society in transformation, which, as a consequence, was abounding in paradoxical ideas and attitudes. Conventional rules and "advanced" ideas both reflect the spirit of an epoch that was changing its mind in several areas. Regarding women's issues, Caird enlarges the row that spreads hostility towards those who do not help to remove the obstacle placed in front of the feminine gender. She is a "new woman" in revolt against the boredom of household chores and in favour of equal rights, including the vote, as she stated in 1890: "Of course I am ardently in favour of the vote for all women, irrespective of condition and circumstances. I am a Liberal in politics, and I would not shut women out from any profession or career in which it were possible for them to succeed. Men and women should have equal rights in every respect, and the same laws should apply equally to both. What is wrong in the woman is wrong in the man; there should be no fear or favour. Until this be recognised there can be no real progress" (*TWPP*, 421).

Because of her ideas, Caird is/was labelled as a feminist. However, because the history of women was long forgotten, some of the first pioneers who defended the reputation of women were absent of "history books" till recently, as Beatrice Gottlieb explains in her article entitled "The Problem of Feminism in the Fifteenth Century" (in *TSWCP*). But because feminism "is not easy to define in spite of its free use by its proponents and attackers" (...) it is dangerous to assume that words carried the same meaning in the sixteenth century as in the twentieth (...). As historians we

are prepared to find modes of thought in the fifteenth century that are no longer with us" (*TSWCP*, 278; 277). With this explanation Gottlieb is consciously aware that women's arguments in favour of themselves "have changed over the years": the nineteenth century radical feminists claimed for "equality of men and women and wanted to end what they regarded as the demeaning restriction of women to the domestic sphere" (*TSWCP*, 275). The visit of Alpin to the standing stones allowed him to understand how society has separated both sexes and how difficult it has been for women to accept their silenced sacrifice. He reveals himself proud of not being a woman, as he states all along the action of *The Stones of Sacrifice*. Expressions such as "By Jove, it must be beastly to be a girl" are reinforced with the connivance of the narrator when she also says "By Jove, it was hard luck to be born a woman" (*TSS*, 37; 89).

In *The Daughters of Danaus* (1894), Caird examines the authority of marriage contract which "controls women's lives, especially the lives of women with heart, talent and consciousness", as it is referred on the back page of The Feminist Press's edition of 1989. Hadria, one of the main characters of the novel, confirms the voices referred above, when she says: "Renuntiation is always preached to girls, you know (...) preached to them when as yet they have nothing more than a rattle and a rag-doll to renounce. And later, when they set about the business of their life, and resign their liberty, their talents, their health, their opportunity, their beauty (if they have it), then people gradually fall away from the despoiled and obedient being, and flock round the still unchastened creature who retains what the gods have given her, and asks for more" (*TDD*, 63).

Activists like Hadria do not all of them have the same objectives and expectations for their future ahead. According to Gottlieb, "less radical activist women spoke not of equality but of women's special qualities, qualities they believed could be recognized and used to benefit all of society. One curious feature of this history is that the demand for suffrage began as an extremely radical issue and gradually became absorbed into the program of the non-radicals" (*TSWCP*, 275-276).

But the defence of women by women did not see its movement start in the nineteenth century. In the fifteenth century Christine de Pizan struggles against misogyny. The subject matter of her book *The City of the Ladies* refutes slander and tries to demonstrate "the worth and talents of

women (...) and [their] capacity for learning as men [do] (*TSWCP*, 278), as it is referred by Gottlieb. After reading *The Lamentations of Maheolus* (1370s), De Pizan tries to answer the general accusations towards women and explains:

> (...) the sight of this book, although it was of no authority, made me think along new lines which made me wonder about the reasons why so many different men, learned and non-learned, have been and are so ready to say and write in their treatises so many evil and reproachful things about women and their behavior. And not just one or two, and not just Matheolus, who has no particular reputation and writes in a mocking manner, but more generally it seems that in all treatises philosophers, poets, and orators, whose names it would take too long to enumerate, all speak with the same mouth and all arrive at the same conclusion: that women's ways are inclined to and full of possible vices".
> (*TCL*, in *SWCP*, 119)

L.P. Hartley, Mona Caird and Christine de Pizan all have something in common: they all launched their own bridge to link *Past* and *Future*, in their *Present* time. All of them wrote about gender issues, however each one stressing what they thought was relevant for their own life or epoch. When L.P. Hartley wrote in the Prologue of the cited book that "Leo knew that the year must return to winter and begin again; but to [his] apprehensions the zodiacal company were subject to no such limitations: they soared in an ascending spiral towards infinity" (*TGB*, 9), he was walking side by side with the title of this paper.

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RELEITURAS

Fábio Lopes da Silva & Kanavillil Rajagopalan (orgs.)
A linguística que nos faz falhar – investigação crítica.
São Paulo: Parábola Editorial, 231 p. Col. 'lingua[gem]/8'.

É um hábito académico acompanhar a mais recente literatura da respectiva especialidade, mas receio que poucos sejam os linguistas portugueses, neste ano de 2006, cujas leituras passadas contenham este livro publicado em 2004. O título, uma das ideias nele mais extensamente debatidas, provocará algum incómodo num contexto em que a Linguística, menina prodígio das ciências contemporâneas, se alimenta sobretudo das doutrinas chomskianas.

A investigação crítica das falhas da Linguística está longe de ficar concluída. Contudo, parece haver um certo consenso quanto à sua origem – ou, pelo menos, assim o testemunha o presente volume. A construção da cientificidade da Linguística, decorrente, por seu turno, da procura do estatuto de ciência natural, terá massacrado a dimensão social do fenómeno linguístico. Daí que, dissecando a linguagem como que numa mesa de autópsias, o linguista moderno desenvolva teorias que pouco impacto e quase nenhuma utilidade vêm a ter nas práticas da vida real.

Kanavillil Rajagopalan (Rajan) é quem arrepia caminho com o artigo publicado em 2002 no *Journal of Language and Politics*. A sua preocupação é o 'chauvinismo linguístico' subjacente à proposta de lei com que o deputado brasileiro Aldo Rebelo visava limitar o uso de estrangeirismos. E Rajan toma como ponto de partida os conceitos de invasão linguística e defesa da língua para discutir o lugar do linguista no debate público, passando, pois, pela problematização da rejeição da natureza social e política da língua.

Fábio Lopes da Silva (que conhecera a versão preliminar do artigo de Rajan) interessa-se pelo assunto e, mais ainda, pela "divulgação e incitação ao debate", como o próprio afirma na introdução (p.9). Traduz o dito artigo, originalmente escrito em inglês, e dirige convites a linguistas vários, a gramáticos, activistas de movimentos de defesa da língua, a membros da Academia Brasileira de Letras, pós-graduandos em Linguística e ao próprio Aldo Rebelo.

Coligidas as respostas, eis que o debate é estendido ao público em geral, inaugurando um confronto entre opiniões diversas, "a fim de que o leitor possa chegar a suas próprias conclusões", desejo expresso por Rajan (p. 168). Infelizmente, se, por um lado, assim se materializa uma certa consideração pela opinião laica, revela-se, por outro, alguma irresponsabilidade no que toca à evidente dificuldade por parte de um leigo em acompanhar os vários lances.

A diversidade de elementos que cada artigo traz a lume, com o devido mérito de dificultar tentativas de simplificação do assunto, lança um turbilhão de dados e perspectivas. Scliar-Cabral, num dos extremos da contenda, defende que o sociolinguista é o único com legitimidade para falar sobre política linguística. Em contrapartida, Moita Lopes acusa a "megalomania da linguística" (cf. p. 115) e Pennycook fala mesmo de "miopia disciplinar" (p. 43). A par com a acusação à "forte tendência burocratizante, e ao mesmo tempo desestruturada, na governação das sociedades brasileira e portuguesa" expressa por Gouveia (p. 74), Giménez inverte a perspectiva e pergunta "até que ponto a sociedade está disposta a renunciar a suas opiniões estereotipadas, aceitando 'os especialistas em linguagem', ou seja, os linguistas?" (p. 76).

A brevidade dos textos (ditada pelo grande número de intervenientes) propicia a expressão concisa e a falta de rodeios. Nalguns casos isto traduz-se em asserções gritantemente provocatórias que poderão servir de apetitoso alimento para quem investiga, lecciona ou simplesmente aprende Linguística. Chilton garante que "há muito pouco a ser oferecido pelos linguistas, para além daquilo que os falantes comuns já são capazes de fazer sozinhos, desde que tenham liberdade e motivação política para tanto." (p. 132).

Numa síntese possível, Rebelo esclarece que "[q]uem quiser ficar na torre de marfim, confortado pelo autoengano de que por excesso de sabedoria não se mistura com os ignorantes, continuará a tratar a língua como mero objecto de estudo, sem intervir na realidade efervescente que borbulha lá fora." (p. 45). E Rajan, num remate igualmente possível, adverte que o linguista "[c]lama atenção incondicional e todos os holofotes, porém tem medo do palco e despreza e destrata a plateia." (p. 203).

Na peugada deste turbilhão verbal seguem esclarecimentos essenciais que fazem deste livro um importante contributo didáctico, quer para leigos quer para linguistas. Pennycook explica com clareza os limites cruciais da linguística. Signorini divisa a inexistência de diálogo real entre os especialistas e o resto da sociedade. E o bom senso de Milroy (cujo

texto carece da extensão da referência bibliográfica, única gralha do livro!) sugere conciliar a opinião do leigo e do linguista de forma justa: "ao nos dirigirmos ao público leigo em questões relacionadas à linguagem, devemos começar por apreciar e respeitar seu ponto de vista sobre a língua e levar suas afirmações em consideração nos nossos comentários" (p. 100).

Na medida em que, tanto quem ensina como quem aprende vive, como dilema ou não, o peso da linguística como instituição e o apelo da linguística como vocação, aqui está um precioso companheiro em todos esses contextos que nos aconselha a não sermos escravos dos dogmas da ciência.

Finalmente, o volume oferece ainda necessárias reflexões contextualizadas que ilustram a problemática da hegemonia do inglês, mote do texto de Rajan. Trazem-se mais dados sobre a realidade do Brasil (cf. Schmitz, Garcez). Descrevem-se outras realidades de rejeição a empréstimos (cf. Spolsky), o desafio do multilinguismo na União Europeia (cf. Wodak), a adopção do inglês como segunda língua na China (cf. Qiang e Wolff) e os fenómenos sociolinguísticos referentes ao inglês na Índia (cf. Sareen).

Falar em "recolonização", como o faz Rebelo, denunciar o "linguo-racismo" (cf. Dendrinos) e o imperialismo anglófono na comunidade científica (cf. Capucho) ou questionar a limitação dos estrangeirismos, invocando o direito linguístico de aprender outras línguas (cf. Celani) mostra como se levam a sério as implicações políticas do trabalho linguístico. Falta, porém, falar concretamente da diversidade de paradigmas científicos e de contributos específicos das respectivas áreas. Note-se, assim, a veleidade com que Rajan refere que "[a] linguística crítica ou a análise do discurso crítica *podem* mostrar-se um passo importante nessa direção" (p.35) e que vê "com bastante optimismo o surgimento da *corrente* chamada 'Linguística Crítica'" (p. 222) (itálicos meus). Na verdade, a Linguística Crítica e a Análise Crítica do Discurso são trabalhos científicos politicamente implicados. Enfim, mesmo num debate plural como este a hegemonia naturalista parece prevalecer.

Em certa medida, portanto, *A linguística que nos faz falhar* afigura-se como uma oportunidade de Rajan se colocar sobre o olhar da comunidade académica do seu país, combatendo o isolamento da vida de pesquisador. A economia do livro, aliás, é eloquente: quando se procurava um debate, 120 das 231 páginas são ocupadas pelas palavras de Rajan.

Mesmo assim, não é de Rajan a última palavra. Porque há da sua parte uma insegura e incerta tomada de posição, como, aliás, fazem notar

vários dos debatentes (e.g. Faraco, Fiorin, Garcez, Gouveia). E não deixa de ser flagrante (e, paradoxalmente, louvável) a inconclusividade e insustentável leveza com que muitos dos argumentos expostos ficam pairando no ar.

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