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Beowulf 1563a and Blissian Metrics

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A. J. Bliss, in his authoritative and influential monograph on *The Metre of Beowulf* (1967), analysed l. 1563a, *hē ġefēng þā fetelhilt*, as a member of his group (4) of verses beginning with finite verbs. In verses of that group, in which the verb is the last particle before the first stressed element, alliterating finite verbs are thought to be an integral part of the alliterative scheme of the line and hence to be metrically stressed. This means that, according to Bliss, l. 1563a is a Type 1A2a with *hē* and *ġe-* in anacrusis. This analysis is compatible with Bliss's definition of anacrusis, according to which any two unstressed syllables can be in the extrametrical prelude to a verse. As this essay shows, however, personal pronouns are not normally found in anacrustic positions in the poem, and so it appears reasonable to believe that seemingly anacrustic *hē* is not part of the authorial reading, but a result of scribal misapprehension of the text in the exemplar. After considering several possibilities and solutions, this article proposes cancellation of *hē* on the grounds that the scribe found the absence of a pronominal subject at that point confusing, and so decided to supply one to make the syntax of the passage closer to the syntax of late Old English verse. Emendation to *ġefēng þā fetelhilt* does not change Bliss's analysis of l. 1563a as a Type 1A2a, but it does mean that that verse should be considered a member not of group (4), but of group (3): the verb is the only particle before the first stressed element. The essay concludes by reminding readers of Bliss's monograph that his definition of anacrusis can be accepted as long as pronouns and linguistic elements other than verbal prefixes and proclitic *ne* are excluded from the definition.
Keywords: *Beowulf*, Old English poetry, metre, syntax, textual criticism

First published in 1958, *The Metre of Beowulf* by A. J. Bliss remains an authoritative and influential work, and an essential reference for anyone with a serious interest in Old English poetry. This is justly so. The book is packed with statistical information about the incidence and distribution of half-lines in the poem, and nearly every claim there made has a firm empirical basis. As C. L. Wrenn said, 'The statistical tables alone, which document the whole, would in themselves make the book rewarding and permanently valuable' (1960, 414). And as E. G. Stanley put it: 'There are far more new facts in the book than anyone could have thought possible at this stage. The statistical analysis is of the greatest importance, and its application almost always convincing' (1963, 53). Nothing, therefore, in Bliss's monograph ought to be taken lightly, and doubts about the validity of his analysis should always be raised with due caution and respect.[1]

One of the most interesting parts of the book is Chapter Two, on '"Light", "Normal" and "Heavy" Verses'. In it, Bliss endeavoured to ascertain whether an alliterating finite verb not preceded by a stressed element within the verse receives a metrical stress. The metrical behaviour of such verbs is ambiguous because their alliteration seems to suggest that they are stressed, but they ought to be unstressed by virtue of their position at the head of the verse clause (as mandated by Kuhn's Law of Sentence Particles).[2] To find a solution to this

1 Some of Bliss's conclusions had of course been anticipated in German scholarship, as he himself acknowledges in the preface to his book (1967, v). A work of relevance is Erich Neuner's doctoral dissertation (1920). For a biographical account of Bliss, see Lucas (2022).

2 Words in Old English poetry are normally classified into three categories: stressed words, proclitics, and particles. Stressed words, which comprise nouns and adjectives (including infinitives and participles), always receive stress regardless of their position within the clause. Proclitics include prepositions, demonstratives, possessives, and other words that depend upon the following word. They are normally unstressed except when postponed from their position before the word on which they are dependent. Finally, particles, which comprise finite verbs, personal and demonstrative pronouns, and many adverbs, are independent words which do not carry as much meaning as stressed words. Whether particles are stressed or not will depend on their position within the verse clause. According to Kuhn's Law of Sentence Particles, or *Satzpartikelgesetz*, particles which are placed in the verse's clause-initial drop are unstressed, while those displaced from that position will normally receive a metrical stress. In the verse clause in ll. 4–5, *Oft Scyld Scēfing | sceaþena þrēatum, | monegum mæġþum | meodosetla oftēah* (which contains two particles, *oft* and *oftēah*), for example, the monosyllabic adverb *oft* is in the initial drop of the clause and is therefore unstressed (l. 4a is a Sieversian Type C: x / / x); the finite verb *oftēah* appears outside that drop and so it receives

problem, he analysed all the verses in *Beowulf* that begin with an independent finite verb, regardless of whether it alliterates, and divided them into nine groups depending on the verb's position in the clause. Group (4), of which there are 75 examples, according to Bliss's count, comprises all those verses in the poem in which the verb is the last particle before the first stressed element. Here are a couple of unambiguous examples:

Hī hyne þā ætbǣron tō brimes faroðe (28)
Ne sorga, snotor guma (1384a)

The first stressed element of the clause that starts at 28a is *brimes*, and the finite verb, *ætbǣron*, is the last particle in a series of four. L. 1384a contains a whole clause, of which the first stressed element is *snotor*, and the finite verb *sorga* is the last particle of two before it. In all but two of the verses within this group in *Beowulf*, the finite verb alliterates, and so it is reasonable to conclude with Bliss 'that when a finite is the last of a number of particles before the first stressed element it is normally assimilated to the stressed elements and treated as such' (1967, 14).

This essay is not concerned with the validity of Bliss's conclusions about metrical stress in this group (which it does not question) or with the two exceptional verses in which the verb fails to alliterate.[3] The focus of the piece is rather on l. 1563a, a member of the group in which the verb regularly alliterates, as expected:

Hē ġefēng þā fetelhilt

a metrical stress (l. 5b is a Sieversian Type E: / \ xx /). For the original formulation of the law, see Kuhn (1933). For summaries of Kuhn's Law of Sentence Particles, see Campbell (1970, 94); Lucas (1990, 294); Kendall (1991, 17–18); Hutcheson (1992, 129); Momma (1997, 56–64); Orton (1999, 289 n. 11). On the law's empirical validity, see Donoghue (1997). Terasawa (2011) furnishes a good introduction to the principles of Old English versification. A glossary of metrical terms can be found in Pascual (2022). Unless otherwise stated, *Beowulf* is cited from Klaeber's fourth edition (henceforward referred to as *Klaeber IV*: see Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008).

3 The two exceptional verses are 1600a, *Đā cōm nōn dæġes*, and 1727b, *hē āh ealra ġeweald*. Finite verbs of motion are often used like auxiliaries in conjunction with uninflected infinitives (see, for example, Pascual, 2021). There is in the context of 1600a no uninflected infinitive, but auxiliary use for *cōm* on an analogical basis is not inconceivable. In 1727b, the vowel of the pronoun was perhaps elided before the vowel of the verb, which might have prevented the alliteration (see Pascual, 2015, 178, n. 34).

As can be seen, the finite verb *ġefēng* is preceded by pronominal *hē* (an obvious particle) and followed by *þā*, a particle only if construed as an adverb meaning 'then'. Bliss's inclusion of l. 1563a in group (4) must therefore mean that he understood *þā* as the accusative form of the demonstrative, and hence as proclitic to feminine *fetelhilt*,[4] since only thus can *ġefēng* be the last rather than the last particle but one before the stressed element. Moreover, because the extremely frequent alliteration of the verbs in this group shows them to be stressed, Bliss naturally assigns stress to *-fēng*, and so he analyses the half-line as 1A2a (or Type A2b in Sievers's system), with *hē* and *ġe-* necessarily in anacrusis.

Bliss's scansion of 1563a as Type 1A2a with a disyllabic extrametrical prelude is of course compatible with his definition of anacrusis:

> The types of verse which begin with a stressed syllable (Types A and D; it is doubtful whether Type E should be included here) may occasionally be preceded by one, or exceptionally two unstressed syllables; this extrametrical prelude to the verse is known as anacrusis or *Auftakt* (1967, 40).

The analysis of pronominal *hē* as an anacrustic syllable, however, is problematic. There are, according to my count, 47 unambiguous instances of normal on-verses with anacrusis in *Beowulf*.[5] In all but three of these verses, the syllables in anacrusis are either verbal prefixes or the negative proclitic *ne*. Here are a few representative examples:

ġesette siġehrēþiġ (94a)
Ārīs, rīċes weard (1390a)
forsiteð ond forsworceð (1767a)
ne sōhte searonīðas (2738a)

The two exceptional verses are worth considering:

ġē æt hām ġē on herġe (1248a)
wið ord ond wið ecge (1549a)

4 The noun *hilt* belongs etymologically to the class of *-es*, *-os*-stems, but it is normally declined analogically like a neuter *a*-stem. Its gender can fluctuate between feminine (as here) and neuter. See Campbell (1959, §636). On change of class and gender in nouns, see Mitchell (1985, 62).

5 94a, 141a, 409a, 501a, 505a, 772a, 827a, 1108a, 1150a, 1151a, 1169a, 1248a, 1274a, 1304a, 1384a, 1390a, 1451a, 1453a, 1460a, 1485a, 1549a, 1554a, 1610a, 1616a, 1622a, 1667a, 1724a, 1751a, 1767a, 1837a, 2252a, 2284a, 2455a, 2525a, 2591a, 2629a, 2659a, 2681a, 2703a, 2705a, 2717a, 2738a, 2769a, 2878a, 2930a, 3062a, 3121a.

Here we can see a conjunction plus a preposition (1248a) and just a preposition (1549a) in anacrusis. What these two exceptions have in common is that the elements in anacrusis take part in correlative structures (*ġē … ġē*, *wið … wið*). Correlative constructions are syntactically cumbersome and hence difficult to handle, and so it makes sense for them to receive special treatment.

Here are the three on-verses excluded from my count of instances of anacrusis as they are edited in *Klaeber IV*:

in mæġþa ġehwære (25a)
in Cāines cynne (107a)
Tō lang is tō reċċenne (2093a)

These are doubtful for various reasons. L. 107a has double alliteration, as one would expect from a verse featuring anacrusis. The first breath-group, however, is as long as the second, but in verses with anacrusis the first breath-group is systematically shorter.[6] Moreover, *caines* in the manuscript is a scribal alteration of older *cames*, and so this seems to be originally intended as a reference to Cham, not Cain (two characters that were often conflated in early medieval texts).[7] The verse would then be a regular Type C with resolution of the first lift (*in Cames cynne*), not a Type A with prepositional anacrusis. In 25a, a scribe appears to have substituted the analogical Late West Saxon feminine form *ġehwære* for the older and genderless *ġehwæm* to make it agree in gender with *mæġþa* (cf. 1365a, *Þær mæġ nihta ġehwæm*, in which feminine *nihta* depends on *ġehwæm*, not *ġehwære*).[8] Restoration of *ġehwæm* gives a regular verse of Type B with no anacrusis. It is more difficult to see what lies behind the reading at 2093a, but the absence of double alliteration suggests that it has somehow been tampered with.[9] None of these was accepted by Bliss as a genuine instance of anacrusis.[10]

6 For a definition of the breath group and its bearing on anacrusis, see Bliss, (1967, 36–43).

7 For discussion, see the note on ll. 106–108 in the commentary of *Klaeber IV* (123) and Neidorf (2017, 93–96).

8 See the note on l. 25 in the commentary of *Klaeber IV* and Pascual (2019, 209).

9 Alternatively, the construction with *tō lang* might have been treated exceptionally (cf. *The Battle of Maldon* 66b, in which *tō* before *lang* also seems to be anacrustic).

10 Bliss also rejected two other verses edited as containing anacrusis in the third of edition of Klaeber's *Beowulf* (the one that he used): 414a, *under heofenes hādor*; and 1068a, [*be*] *Finnes eaferum*. In 414a, substitution of metrically monosyllabic *haðor* ('confinement') for disyllabic *hādor* ('brightness') improves both sense and metre. Anacrustic *be* in 1068a is an editorial addition, and so it can hardly be considered authentic. The editors of *Klaeber IV* read *Finnes eaferan*, i.e. they emend the dative form in the manuscript to accusative *eaferan* (the abbreviations

Anacrusis is rarer in the off-verse. Here are the seven unambiguous instances that occur in the poem:[11]

swā wæter bebūgeð (93b)
swā guman ġefrungon (666b)
swā sǣ bebūgeð (1223b)
ðurhfōn ne mihte (1504b)
ġesacan ne tealde (1773b)
forberan ne mehte (1877b)
nū hæleð ne m(ō)stan (2247b)

As can be seen, only three appear to have prefixes in anacrusis. The seemingly anacrustic position in the other four is occupied by particles (conjunctive *swā* and the adverb *nū*). The situation is obviously very different from that in the on-verse, where the extrametrical position at the beginning is almost always occupied by prefixes or the negative proclitic *ne*.[12] Double alliteration, moreover, is naturally absent from all these verses, being as they are in the second half of the line. The observation of this imbalance led Daniel Donoghue to redefine the Blissian notion of anacrusis in an important essay published less than two years after Bliss's death:

> The extrametrical syllable is an unstressed prefix or a proclitic, each dependent on the following stress-word. In the a-verse anacrusis is limited to the first foot of metrical Types 1A, 1A*, 1D and 1D*, where the second breath-group is longer than the first, and alliteration is mandatory. An altogether different set of rules obtains in the b-verse, where double alliteration is impossible. Anacrusis is limited to Type C verses and the extrametrical syllable comes between the two stressed syllables. (1987, 4)

-ā and *-ū* for respectively *-an* and *-um* are often confused). For details, see the editors' note for that verse in their commentary.

11 I have excluded ll. 9b, *þāra ymbsittendra*, and ll. 2592b, *hȳ eft ġemētton*, from consideration. Demonstrative *þāra* is cancelled in the third edition of Klaeber's *Beowulf*, not only because its metre is anomalous, but also because the syntactic context is not one that demands definite usage, and unnecessary demonstratives are as a rule avoided by the poet. The editors of *Klaeber IV* have *þāra* underdotted. The pronoun *hȳ* in 2592b ought to be stressed because it is displaced from the clausal onset, which is in l. 2592a (*þæt ðā*), but stress on *hȳ* would yield an aberrant metrical pattern. It is likely a scribal addition motivated by reciprocal use of *ġemētan*, which is frequent (see the note on the line in *Klaeber IV*).

12 The only exceptions are the two on-verses with correlative constructions (1248a and 1549a).

Thus, according to Donoghue's redefinition, only unstressed prefixes and proclitic *ne* can really be involved in extrametricality (which in the second half of the line is to be found in the middle of the verse, not at its beginning).[13]

It should be clear, then, that Bliss's analysis of l. 1563a, *hē ġefēng þā fetelhilt*, as a verse featuring disyllabic anacrusis is to be corrected, since personal pronouns like *hē* are not normally found in the extrametrical prelude of the on-verse. If *þā* is construed adverbially, then *ġefēng* would be the last particle but one before the first stressed element, and so l. 1563a would belong to group (5) instead of group (4). There are in *Beowulf* 105 instances of group (5), of which the finite verb alliterates in only 57. This made Bliss conclude that, unless absolutely demanded by the metre, finite verbs in verses of group (5) are metrically unstressed (and the alliteration, when it happens, is non-functional or ornamental). This means that, if l. 1563a is reclassified as a member of group (5), *ġefēng*, though alliterating, would be unstressed, and anacrusis would therefore be out of the question. The verse would then have to be scanned not as a Type 1A2a, but as an a2d Type (or Type A3b in Sieversian notation).[14]

I believe, however, that *þā* is here likelier to be a demonstrative than an adverb. L. 1563a occurs right after a passage of six lines (1557–1562) which the poet has devoted to describing the gigantic sword found by the hero in the Grendels' underwater hall. The context, therefore, seems to be one of definiteness: Beowulf took the hilt not of any sword, but of the one just described.[15] If l. 1563a is not a member of group (5), but what, then, are we to make of initial *hē*? There are two possibilities. One is to consider that it was originally placed after *ġefēng* in the exemplar, and that the scribe copied it in the wrong place. This is suggested by verses like the following, in which a pronominal subject follows a clause-initial finite verb:

> Habbað wē tō þǣm mǣran (270a)
> cūþe hē duguðe þēaw (359b)
> Wuna(ð) hē on wiste (1735a)
> wisse hē ġearwe (2339b, 2725b)
> Ġebīde ġē on beorge (2529a)

13 On the limitation of anacrusis to verbal prefixes and *ne* see Kuhn (1933, 16), Cable (1974, Chapter 3), and Hutcheson (1995, 102–104).

14 Interestingly, A3 is the scansion assigned to this verse by Calvin B. Kendall (1991, 272), though he does not mention the inadequacy of Bliss's classification of the half-line as a member of group (5).

15 On this point, see Quirk and Wrenn (1955, §117). Definiteness in *Beowulf*, of course, does not necessarily require the demonstrative, but it seems to me that use of the demonstrative at this point is natural.

None of these, however, is particularly close to l. 1563a. In 359b, 2339b, and 2725b, *hē* follows the verb, but the syntax of the off-verse is different from that of the on-verse.[16] The other three are on-verses, but the finite verbs are not in the preterite and two of the pronouns (*wē* and *ġē*) are not third person.[17] Inversion of subject and verb seems to be more common with the first-person singular pronoun, as in the following examples:

Wēn' iċ þæt ġē for wlenċo (338a)
sende iċ Wylfingum (471a)
Secge iċ þē tō sōðe (590a)
Wēne iċ þæt hē mid gōde (1184a)
Hȳrde iċ þæt þām frætwum (2163a)
Hȳrde iċ þæt hē ðone healsbēah (2172a)

Both present and preterite forms are found in this group. What they have in common is that they all end in vowels, and of the six nominative personal pronouns available in the language, only one, *iċ*, begins with a vowel. A study of elision in Old English poetry is beyond the scope of this essay, but the evidence here presented seems to suggest that the verb's vocalic ending was elided and *iċ* subsequently became absorbed into the preceding finite verb through enclisis.[18] This analysis seems to receive support from l. 1997b, *Gode iċ þanc secge*, in which postponed *iċ* is metrically attached to the preceding word.[19] Thus, it is the possibility of enclisis that appears to have favoured the postposition of *iċ* against that of all the other nominative pronouns.

16 Bliss (1967, 45) thinks that there is elision of verb-final *-e* before *hē* in 2339b and 2725b. If so, *hē* would be enclitic to stressed *wisse* and the verse's internal caesura would fall right before *ġearwe*. Bliss did not consider elision of verb-final *-e* in 359b because *cūþe* is unstressed and so postverbal *hē* poses no metrical problems, but it might well be the case that *hē* in this half-line was likewise enclitic to the immediately preceding finite verb (hence the postposition of the pronoun). This point is discussed next in the essay. See also Lucas (1987, 150–152).

17 2529a is imperative, and so inversion of subject and verb is of course to be expected.

18 Other verses from *Beowulf* in which *iċ* is postverbal: 344a, 408b, 433a, 442a, 487b, 525a, 960b. In all of these, the verbs end in a vowel. There are instances in which postverbal *iċ* is preceded by a finite verb that ends in a consonant (1011a, 1027a, 2014b, 2141b, 2145a, 2432a, 2801b), but these are all negative constructions, and so the normal order is verb-subject (this is discussed next in the essay).

19 The sequence *Gode iċ* undergoes resolution (the alliteration is on *g*). The noun *þanc* is prosodically subordinate to the preceding word, and so it receives secondary stress. The verse is a Type A2a in Sieversian terms (or a Type 2A3a according to Blissian metrics).

Pronominal subjects are frequently found after the verb in negative constructions, where a verb-subject order is of course to be expected. Here are some examples:

ne ġefeah hē þǣre fæhþe (109a)
Nāt hē þāra gōda (681a)
Ne ġefrægn iċ þā mǣġþe (1011a)
Ne nōm hē in þǣm wīcum (1612a)
ne ġewēox hē him tō willan (1711a)
Ne hēdde hē þæs heafolan (2697a)

L. 1563a has a clause-initial finite verb in the preterite, a third-person singular pronominal subject, and is not a negative construction, and so inversion of pronoun and subject does not appear the best course of action.

A preferable solution will present itself upon consideration of on-verses like the following, all of which begin with clause-initial third-person singular finite verbs in the preterite:

Ġewāt ðā nēosian (115a)
Forġeaf þā Bēowulfe (1020a)
Ġefēng þā be [f]eax[e] (1537a)[20]
stonc ðā æfter stāne (2288a)
Ārās ðā bī ronde (2538a)

As can be seen, none of them starts with a pronominal subject, but they are otherwise very close to l. 1563a (note especially l. 1537a). They all occur after a strong pause (i.e. a colon or a semicolon in *Klaeber IV*), and all of them contain stressed words, none of which is in the nominative (if the verse contained a nominal subject, then use of a personal pronoun in the nominative would not be a possibility). Like *ġefēng* in 1563a, moreover, each of the verbs in these examples has a subject that is not the same as the subject of the immediately preceding clause. The subject of *ġefēng* in 1563a (in addition to *hē*, of course) is *freca Scyldinga* (1563b), in reference to Beowulf. In the preceding sentence, there are two subjects, none of which is Beowulf: one is *hit* (1560a), in reference to the

20 This verse is cited from George Jack's edition (1994), since the editors of *Klaeber IV* retain manuscript *eaxle*. The manuscript reading is very likely scribal rather than authorial, and it is emended to *feaxe* by a large number of editors (see the critical apparatus in *Klaeber IV*). Even if the manuscript reading is retained, however, the verse remains equally valid for the purposes of my argumentation.

gigantic sword, and the other is *ānigė mon ōðer* (1560b). The implied subjects of *ġewāt* (115a), *forġeaf* (1020a), and *stonc* (2288a) are Grendel, Hrothgar, and the dragon, while the subjects of the preceding clauses are, respectively, pronominal *hē* (in reference to God), *Þēod-Scyldingas*, and *wrōht*. The subjects of *ġefēng* in 1537a and *ārās* in 2538a are *Gūð-Ġēata lēod* (1538a) and *rōf ōretta* (2538b), whereas the subjects of the preceding clauses are, respectively, *hē* in 1535a (in reference to the generic *man* of 1534b) and *gūð* in 2536b. Both *Gūð-Ġēata lēod* and *rōf ōretta* are therefore explicit subjects (each appears in the same clause as its verb), but they are in different verses. This means that the finite verbs could have conceivably been accompanied by proleptic pronominal subjects, of which the phrases in 1538a and 2538b would then be appositive nominal expansions (as can in fact be observed in different syntactic contexts, such as ll. 28–29, 618b–19, 2089–90, and 2385–86).

In all the examples above, then, a third-person singular pronominal subject was omitted, even though the omitted subject was not the same as the subject of the immediately preceding clause. Many more examples of similar omissions can easily be found if the condition that the verse must appear after a strong pause and/or the condition that the subject of the finite verb must be different from the subject of the preceding clause are ignored. Here are a few:

Hwearf þā hrædlīċe (356a)
onband beadurūne (501a)
Ġehwearf þā in Francna fæþm (1210a)
Ēode þā tō setle (1232a)
Ofsæt þā þone seleġyst (1545a)
sælde tō sande (1917a)
Oferswam ðā sioleða bigong (2367a)
ġeald þone gūðræs (2991a)
hēold on hēahġesceap (3084a)

These are all on-verses, and the verbs are third-person singular finite forms in the preterite. But regardless of tense, number, and location within the line, omission of the pronominal subject appears to be the norm with clause-initial preterite finite verbs in verses that also contain at least one stressed word.[21]

21 Excluding of course the few pronominal inversions discussed above. One obvious exception to the tendency is l. 1727b, *hē āh ealra ġeweald*. Pronominal *hē* refers to God, who is the subject of the preceding clause. The verse is in the second half-line, however, and there might be elision between *hē* and *āh*. Regardless of what motivated use of the pronoun in this example, the tendency for pronominal subjects to be omitted before clause-initial finite verbs in verses that also contain at least one stressed word is obvious. I have likewise

The situation with verses that do not contain stressed words (also known as particle verses) is different. In particle verses, finite verbs are stressed and tend not to appear at the beginning of the half-line.[22] Think, for example, of 28a, *Hī hyne þā æthbǣron* (a Sieversian Type A3 with stress on *-bǣ-*), and 417b, *þæt iċ þē sōhte* (a Type C1 with stress on *þē*). The movement of the finite verb towards the middle or, more commonly, the end of the particle verse means that an empty space is made at the verse's beginning, and this space is often occupied, quite naturally, by pronominal subjects. Thus, verses like 740a, *ac hē ġefēng hraðe*, and 748b, *hē onfēng hraðe*, are, despite their superficial resemblance to *hē ġefēng þā fetelhilt*, metrically and syntactically different from it. In 740a and 748b, the displacement of the verb to a position of stress in the right part of the verse meant that prefixes like *ġe-* and *on-* could easily be confused with anacrusis.[23] Inclusion of pronominal *hē* ensured that the onset of the verse was correctly construed as a non-anacrustic drop. On the other hand, in verses consisting of a clause-initial finite verb followed by a stressed word, there was little room for more particles at the beginning. Pronominal subjects would have made the beginning of the verse too heavy, and so they tended to be omitted.

In the light of these considerations, it is reasonable to assume that *hē* in 1563a is scribal, not authorial. If *hē* is deleted, this is how the verse clause would look like:

> Ġefēng þā fetelhilt freca Scyldinga,
> hrēoh ond heorogrim

The nominal phrase *freca Scyldinga* would then be the only subject of *ġefēng* rather than an expansion of *hē*, and the clause would thus closely resemble other clauses in the poem like the following (mentioned above):

> Ārās ðā bī ronde rōf ōretta,
> heard under helme (2538–2539a)

excluded auxiliaries from analysis, as they are metrically different from independent verbs (see Bliss, 1967, 21–23).

22 For my discussion of particle verses I am indebted to R. D. Fulk's excellent analysis (2016).

23 Fulk (2016, 25). On the tendency of Old English poets to avoid structural ambiguity in verse, see Russom (1987, passim). Both 740a and 748b are Sieversian Type C3 verses, in which resolution of *hraðe* is suspended on account of the presence of an immediately preceding non-resolved lift (*-fēng*). Bliss analyses them as 2C2c and 2C2b. The difference between them is non-structural (740a has three unstressed syllables before the first lift while 748b has only two).

Here, the nominal phrase *rōf ōretta* is the subject of the finite verb at the head of the preceding verse, which lacks a pronominal subject, and as in 1563–1564a, the following half-line varies the subject of the verb.

Editors of the poem will be likelier to accept the emendation here proposed if a rationale is given for the scribal insertion of *hē* at 1563a, and I think that one can easily be found. Omission of pronominal subjects before clause-initial finite verbs in verses that contain stressed words appears to have been the norm only in classically composed poetry like *Beowulf*. In late poems like *The Battle of Maldon*, however, the situation was different, as the following verses will demonstrate:[24]

he let him þa of handon (7a, with *l* alliteration)
he lihte þa mid leodon (23a)
he sceaf þa mid ðam scylde (136a)
he wolde þæs beornes (160a)
He gehleop þone eoh (189a)
He bræc þone bordweall (277a)

These are all comparable to *hē ġefēng þā fetelhilt*, especially l. 277a, in which a transitive finite verb in the preterite is followed by an accusative noun phrase consisting of a demonstrative and a compound. These verses suggest that the *Beowulf* scribe, for whom the versification style of a work like *The Battle of Maldon* was probably more familiar than that of the earlier epic, was confused by the lack of a pronominal subject in 1563a (perhaps because he found the change of subject between 1562 and 1563 too abrupt), and decided to supply one, thereby generating an anomalous instance of anacrusis.[25] There is evidence

24 *The Battle of Maldon* is cited from Mark Griffith's forthcoming edition of the poem (which contains a discussion of the syntax and metrical grammar of verses like the ones listed above).

25 An early date of composition for *Beowulf* is here assumed. For discussion, see, for example, Fulk (1992), Neidorf (2013–2014 and 2017), and Neidorf and Pascual (2019). A different possibility, suggested to me by Mark Griffith, is that the verse originally read *hē ġefēng þā fetel*, i.e. 'he then seized the strap', a light verse whose only lift, *fetel*, is a noun possibly of masculine gender (there are only three examples in the language, according to the *Dictionary of Old English*, and these do not allow gender to be assigned, but the Old High German and Old Norse cognates are masculine). This means that *þā* would then unambiguously be an adverb. A scribe confused by the rare word *fetel* would have attempted clarifying it by adding *hilt*, thereby giving rise to irregular anacrusis. This analysis solves the semantic problem posed by the compound *fetelhilt* (on which see the note on this verse in the commentary of *Klaeber IV*). The hypothetical *hē ġefēng þā fetel* would then be a Type e (or Sieversian B3), a verse pattern whose existence is debated. Bliss counted seven examples in the poem (262a, 459a, 779a, 1514a, 1728a, 2048a, and 3027a), but

elsewhere in the poem for scribal insertion of personal pronouns. In line 2592b, for example, *hȳ* was interpolated, even though it spoiled the metre, because the scribe misconstrued *ġemētton* as reciprocal (as discussed in footnote 11 above). In 274b, failure to take *nāthwylċ* as a negative indefinite pronoun resulted in scribal insertion of *iċ*, which strains the metre.[26]

It is therefore reasonable for future editors of *Beowulf* to consider cancelling *hē* in l. 1563a (to the best of my knowledge, the only edition in which *hē* has been removed from the text is the one forthcoming from Andy Orchard).[27] Deletion of *hē* does not alter Bliss's scansion of the verse as 1A2a,[28] but it does mean that 1563a should be transferred from group (4) to group (3), in which the finite verb is the only particle before the first stressed word. There are, then, 84 instances in group (3) and 74 in group (4). An anomaly is also thus removed: the particle *hē* was deemed significant for the purposes of the verse's classification in group (4) while it was simultaneously regarded as outside the metrical scheme of that same verse. And, to conclude, users of Bliss's monograph should bear in mind that his definition of anacrusis in *Beowulf* can be accepted with the proviso that it involves only prefixes and proclitic *ne* (a conclusion of which, I hope, Bliss himself would approve were he alive today).

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he simultaneously doubted its existence (1967, 61, and see Pope 2001, 145). The pattern seems to occur only in the on-verse, and it is particularly frequent in *The Metrical Psalms* and *The Metres of Boethius*: for discussion of Type e in the latter work, see Griffith's chapter on the composition of the metres in Godden and Irvine (2009, 120–121). If the type is authentic in *Beowulf*, then Griffith's proposed solution is indeed very appealing, and the narrative sequence would then make a lot of sense: the hero first took the strap, then drew the sword (l. 1564b, *hringmǣl ġebræġd*). I would like to express my gratitude to Mark for his useful and insightful comments on an initial draft of this essay.

26 The interpolation here proposed is compatible with the behaviour of both *Beowulf* scribes, on which see Neidorf (2017). See also Pascual (2013–2014 and 2017). Addition of *wē* before finite *sculon* in *Cædmon's Hymn* 1a is also very close to the proposed interpolation of *hē* before *ġefēng*.

27 A possibility to which I gave serious thought only after finishing the first draft of this piece is that the scribe's exemplar contained both the adverb and the feminine demonstrative in the accusative singular (cf. *Beowulf* 2606a, *Ġemunde ðā ðā āre*). The scribe might then have failed to copy one of the two identical forms. Both *hē ġefēng þā þā fetelhilt* and *ġefēng þā þā fetelhilt* would belong to Bliss's group (5) and would scan as light verses (a2e and a2d, respectively). Regardless of whether the scribe failed to copy one of two consecutive *þā*-forms, preverbal *hē* in a verse beginning with a clause-initial finite verb and containing a stressed word remains syntactically anomalous.

28 If *þā* is construed adverbially, however, then the scansion of the verse changes to Sieversian A3 or Blissian a2c. Pronominal subjects are often omitted before clause-initial finite verbs at the beginning of verses that also contain stressed words, as discussed above, and so cancellation of *hē* seems advisable even if *þā* is considered an adverb. L. 1563a would then belong to Blissian group (5): the verb is the last particle but one before the first stressed element.

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Characterization of a multiple-identity Vampire. Matthew Clairmont in *A Discovery of Witches* by Deborah Harkness

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The combination of historical and fantastic literature featured with romance, conflict and supernatural characters seem to be the ingredients of the new bestseller sagas focused on creatures such as vampires. An example is the *All Souls Trilogy* by Deborah Harkness. This author uses different characteristics to report a current shift in traditional style, traits, and behaviour that the vampire figure seems to have experienced. This study has been set out with the objective of examining the character of the vampire Clairmont aimed at exploring the complexity of his multiple identities and demonstrating a shift in his role and traits regarding the traditional vampire. This has been done through a corpus study utilizing a thematic qualitative textual analysis. The study has revealed seven distinct themes related to new vampire characters and their potential to create a hook effect in the aforementioned readers.

Keywords: Corpus linguistics; New Vampire fiction; Literature; characterization; thematic qualitative textual analysis.

1. Introduction

Stories about vampires are coming out every year in literature, cinema, and TV series in the present century. As Martin (2021) argues, "contemporary authors keep finding new ways to reinvent vampire tropes to keep the concept fresh." This unceasing reinvention of the traits of the character vampire either in literary works or on the screen is what seems to be keeping this genre alive. As Auerbach (1995, 145) puts it, "Every age creates the vampire it needs". In other words, vampires have suffered a transformation and adaptation to more modern times, including changes in appearance and behaviour that have them got adapted to the times in which they were created. In turn, Miquel-Baldellou argues that vampires

> have shifted significantly from focusing on parasitic personifications of wickedness and alterity that mostly threatened the establishment to the portrayal of heroic antagonists who no longer bear a hideous appearance but rather present a complex personality and a particularly acute sensibility that render them specially appealing to younger generations. (2014, 130)

The characterization of the figure of the vampire has been the subject of many studies throughout history. Authors such as Carter (2001, 5) have pointed out that "fictional reinterpretations of Dracula as a character have thus evolved over the past century from Stoker's original characterization of the Count as satanic through various stages corresponding to the overall evolution of the literary vampire.". In vampire fiction created by twenty-first-century writers, there seems to be a more humanized approach that has allowed the proliferation of good, attractive, and cultivated vampires. This is the case of Matthew de Clairmont, the main character of the *All Souls Trilogy* by Deborah Harkness.

This article is focused on the characterization of Matthew de Clairmont, an example of what I label "a new kind of vampire". The research question underlying the present work is: what makes Matthew de Clairmont a non-traditional vampire? This study examines the character of the vampire Clairmont and explores the complexity of his multiple identities while proving that his personality differs from those of a traditional vampire. That is, it is aimed at studying how this character reverts typical traditional vampire features and how these build on multiple identities. The main reason for the choice of the All Souls Trilogy is gleaned from the fact that was a bestseller and a worldwide success upon release which made me read it and get interested in a more in-depth study. Moreover, Harkness received the Goodreads Choice Awards Favourite Books (for A Discovery of Witches, 2011), Goodreads Choice Awards Best Debut (2011) and Goodreads Best Fantasy, 2014 (Millán Scheiding, 2021).

First, a brief historical-literary study on some of the most famous traditional and new vampire novels was carried out to do so. The main motivation that underpinned this stage was to provide the characterization of vampire Matthew de Clairmont, one of the main characters of All Souls Trilogy by Harkness, with a historical context. Secondly, I analysed vampire Matthew Clairmont's traits in the first novel of the trilogy, *A Discovery of Witches* (2011) (*DW* from hereon in), which composes my corpus, to explore the complexity of the new vampire in his multiple identities. So, I analysed the book in-depth to construct meaning with thematic qualitative text analysis, prior knowledge, context, and semantic clues. Prior knowledge is particularly helpful in historical fiction since it provides us with the groundwork to build upon. This is so because it helps us to make connections with what we already know, such as other works of literature, clothing or food and drink brands, history and historical fiction, existing characters and events or geographical data, for instance.

2. A brief historical revision of the male vampire character

The mainstay of this brief historical overview involves the study of vampire literature, focusing mainly on the figure of the male vampire character. The myth of the vampire is as old as history, but it is said that since Vlad Tepes' death in 1476/1477 (the Romanian prince of Wallachia who provided a historical basis for Stoker's *Dracula*), the role of vampires in literary texts has been more present across cultures. However, even though there are many real terror stories about this character, "there is nothing in his historical character to connect him to vampire mythology" (Carlson 1977, 29)

The modern literary vampire was a product of Romanticism and its interest in folklore since "through German Romanticism, the vampire made his way from folklore into the realm of literature, where he soon became comfortable in certain character types already existing in the literature of the day" (Carlson 1977, 26). From Phillip Rohr's *Dissertatio historico-philosophica de masticatione mortuorum* (1679), one of the first texts on vampires written in German, or John William Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), the first vampire story in English, to Harkness' *Time's Convert* (2019)—the last novel on vampires published before this study was finished in the series—many centuries have provided thousands of works focused on vampire characters. Throughout this time, the character of the vampire has been continuously evolving and developing in literature. Up to the end of the twentieth century, when listening to the word "vampire," the traditional literary vampire canon had made the general reader infer the image of a frightening and monstrous dominantly male being who represented the threat

of the unknown. This picture has been reinforced by the images projected in films such as *Interview with the Vampire* (1994) and Dracula (1992). The general traces of the myth in popular culture, as often depicted in the media and so, remote from the literary counterparts, make the general public think of vampires as demonic creatures, dark and weird. Also, as beings that were never able to control their bloodlust, they needed to feed either on human beings or animals (whom they often drained to death). Stories disclosed encounters with crucifixes, holy water, and garlic as their weak spots, apart from the fact that they showed fragile against sunlight and that they slept in a coffin.

In the history of vampire literature, Gothic and Romanticism, foreign and mysterious backgrounds and their local unusual traditions have been thought of as key factors for the birth of the figure of the "blood-sucker." As Matthew Clairmont, the main vampire character in *DW* explains to the witch, Diana:

> Most of what you know about me—about vampires—was dreamed up by humans. These legends made it possible for humans to live around us. Creatures frighten them. And I'm not talking solely about vampires." "Black hats, bats, brooms." It was the unholy trinity of witchcraft lore, which burst into spectacular, ridiculous life every year on Halloween. "Exactly." Matthew nodded. "Somewhere in each of these stories, there's a nugget of truth, something that frightened humans and helped them deny we were real. The strongest distinguishing characteristic of humans is their power of denial." (Harkness 2011, 169)

All this mixed with the different interpretations and versions that oral tradition and folklore have provided, and the reaction of listeners and readers set the foundations for works such as Bürger's *Lenore* (1774), Goethe's *The Bride of Corinth* (1797) and Coleridge's *Christabel* (1797, 1802) according to Olivares-Merino (2010a). The publication of the German ballad *Lenore* was a remarkable success being translated into numerous languages, such as English and French among others[1].

Early vampire fiction in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, particularly by British Gothic poets, was influenced by *Lenore* (Zarieva 2018, 2340). Some other examples were Robert Southey's epic poem *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), a work that might be said to feature the first vampire in English literature, and Lord Byron's vampire poem *The Giaour* (1813). In turn, John Keats contributed "two poems to early British vampire poetry" (Crawford 2016,

1 A case in point was the translation into English by Sir Walter Scott, one of his major works, Häntzschel and Häntzschel in 1796, (Crawford 2016, 31).

30): *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* (Keats 1819) and *Lamia* (1820). All of them, as Crawford (2016, 31) explains, "contributed significantly to turning the vampire into a literary phenomenon that has persisted and even increased in popularity ever since".

These works marked the end of the folkloric vampire. Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819) was the first aristocratic vampire in the history of literature: "the primitive and brutal medieval bloodsucker, the folk vampire, was deprived of its atavistic attires and dressed up as a gentleman to seduce the twentieth century" (Olivares-Merino 2010b: 23). Lord Ruthven, Polidori's main vampire was the "first notable representation of an aristocratic, sensual, but ruthless vampire" (Hărşan 2018, 40), a character inspired by Lord Byron himself, with whom Polidori was acquainted since he was his personal physician. He is a high-society seducer, and "the women Ruthven kills do not become vampires, but […] sexual monsters" (Macdonald 1991, 201). He is also a cold-blooded slaughterer who drinks his victims' blood. For the first time, even though vampires were primarily creatures of the night, and by extension, feared and were destroyed by sunlight, the sun's rays do not debilitate them, what is more, they could be regenerated by moonlight (Senf 1988, 9; Torres Medina and Olivares-Merino 2017, 20). In 1892, Jules Verne published his only Gothic novel *Le Château des Carpathes* belonging to his *Voyages Extraordinaires* series. As Hărşan explains, with "Verne's baron Rodolphe de Gortz, the image of a dark (obscurantist/occult) Transylvania emerges and gets to be associated with the already shaped stereotype of the aristocratic vampire" (2018, 40).

When Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) came onto the stage, it gave rise to more modern and cultivated vampires, integrated into society somehow. They can have human-like traits such as being able to have feelings, fall in love and control their bloodlust. Dracula, embedded in such a Gothic aesthetic as *The Vampyre*, is "selfish, instinct-driven and humanly immoral" (Grabias 2017, 115). He kills his victims mercilessly and cold-bloodedly. It is not solely taking their blood to get fed, but the fact of killing that motivates him. Dracula was a milestone in the history of the character archetype, as it has gone through a noteworthy evolution since then.

From *Dracula* to the Twilight series or the All Souls Trilogy, the literary trend of a more and more integrated-into-society vampire evolving from monster to hero seems to be here to stay, featuring the Gothic literature of the twenty-first century (Smith and Moruzi 2018). In this context, Anne Rice started her saga The Vampire Chronicles and in 1976 published her first novel *Interview with the Vampire*. This would later become the well-known film of the same name starring Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and Antonio Banderas (Neil Jordan 1994).

Vampire fiction seemed to have brought these fanged beings back onto the teens' public stage after the supposed death of interest in the mid-1980s as Melton

states (2011, 749). This absence seemed uncanny to everyone since 1997, the year of the first centennial of Stoker's 1897 *Dracula* was at hand. Nevertheless, 1985 seemed to be the starting point of a new wave of interest in vampire literature. This was the year of the second novel by Rice, *The Vampire Lestat*. For the first time in vampire literature history, the vampire had become the main character in novels of this genre. From that moment on, in the eyes of the reader, vampires started to be sympathetic and romantic characters. Thus, Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* set the standard at this point as it was shortly followed by more humanistic takes, e.g., Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's Count St. Germain Cycle. As a result of this "re-birth," by the end of that decade, "everywhere one looked books, comics, movies, trading cards and games, vampires had come to life" (Melton 2011, xv). At that time, vampire fiction had become more centred on young adults identities with the novel saga and their corresponding TV series, *True Blood* based on the Southern Vampire Mysteries series by Charlaine Harris (Forde, 2018), as well as *The Vampire Diaries* (2009–2017), a TV series based on L.J. Smith's Vampire Diaries (1991–1992) and Night World (1996–1998) novels. *The Vampire Diaries* paved the way for the worldwide successful young adult vampire horror TV series led by two vampire brothers, Stefan and Damon Salvatore, in the author's opinion, the incarnation of good and evil, the old and the new vampire and thus, the representation of the transition towards the modern male vampire character. They opened the way for the Twilight saga and their film adaptation. All these vampires have some common traits: their community-integrated living rather than solitary existences and they have romantic inter-species bonds, mainly vampire-human, as argued by Leavenworth and Isaksson (2013, 11). Romance was one of the keys to the success of what I propose to call the "new vampire canon." Time passed by and Rice extended her works to a series of about twelve novels. Then, she was joined by Yarbro (Hotel Transylvania 1978) and her Le Comte de Saint-Germain, a cultivated, well-travelled, sensual, and mysterious vampire. In her own words, Yarbro "was the first writer to revise the stereotype so completely and mesh it so fully with romance"[2] (2017). Additionally, her works gave rise to historical fiction vampire novels, the precursors of such works as those by Harkness. In addition, Saberhagen published his eleven-volume Dracula series starting in 1975 with *The Dracula Tape*. It is the story of Stoker's Dracula told from the vampire's point of view. Saberhagen's work alters the horizon of expectation in such a way that "Stoker's Dracula now serves as a synthesis of romantic, Victorian, and Christian values, ideals and fears, allowing us to take it apart and create informing structures for our vampire stories" (Day 2002, 17).

2 https://www.chelseaquinnyarbro.net/saint-germain.html#:~:text=Yarbro%20was%20the%20first%20writer,were%20of%20equal%20erotic%20potency

From the twenty-first century, the combination of historical and fantastic literature featured with romance, conflict, and supernatural characters – mainly vampires, wizards, and witches – has made a fan phenomenon arise with the most outstanding examples of the previous, that is, Stephanie Meyers' *Twilight Saga*, and Harkness' *All Souls Trilogy*, the main object of the present article. The four volumes of the Twilight series: *Twilight*, *New Moon*, *Eclipse* and *Breaking Dawn* released between 2005 and 2008, gave rise to the conception of a young vampire fan phenomenon. This saga broke "records not just in the vampire world but the whole realm of popular literature" (Melton 2011, xvi). From their birth, vampires could be seen in every shape and place; in every literary format: cartoons, comics, films, TV series, and so on. For the researchers, this is the milestone in what I have termed "the new literary vampire canon."

3. New literature on vampires?

The traditional literary canon can be defined as "a recognized body of literature which constitutes the classics or 'must-read' major works" (Battenburg 2018, 16). In turn, from Fowler's (1979, 98) point of view, the official canon is a synthesised list of authors and texts in anthologies and syllabi. The definitions of the canon are "inextricably bound to our understanding of literacy" (Fowler,1979, 17), mainly socio-cultural multiliteracy. This kind of literacy is explained as the fact that some texts could be "read and understood by all members of a group to produce shared experiences and points of reference. This allows students/readers to develop a common body of knowledge and traditions" (Battenburg 2018, 17). Taking this into account, the authors are known as "new" to the canon or group of readings composed of those works on vampires from *The Vampire Diaries* onwards. The reason for this is that these works by Rice, Meyer or Harkness might be constructing knowledge in readers who are sharing not only their books but their TV series, films, merchandising, and video games.

This vampire literature should also become, evolve, and suit current issues such as equality, or peace. This new vampire literature seems to be enriched with inclusivity also, counting not only on vampires, but also on witches, werewolves, and demons. As Michelle Smith puts it, this kind of reading has "proved to be the ideal genre for exploring the grotesque and frightening aspects of coming of age, and metaphorically representing pressing social issues such as racism and gender inequality" (2014). Elements such as romance, sex, creature-girls living in equality with creature-boys in a non-patriarchal society, super-powers such as huge strength and immortality, and lives in-between (human-vampire,

for example) matching the transitory period that adolescence means seem to be appealing enough to get readers hooked on vampires.

Hence, the author hypothesises that the heir to the new vampire literary canon success of The Vampire Diaries or the Twilight Saga is the All Souls Trilogy by University of Southern California professor, Deborah Harkness, a historian of science. *A Discovery of Witches* (2011) (New York Times Best Seller upon its release), *The Shadow of Night* (2012) and *The Book of Life* (2014), the three novels that make up this work, together with a book in another series set in the same universe featuring secondary characters: *Time's Convert* (2018), tell the story of an American witch, Diana Bishop, that rejects her uncanny lineage and becomes a historian at an American university, and Matthew Clairmont, a British-French Oxford University geneticist who is a 1,500-year-old vampire. Both are linked somehow to a magical alchemical book, *Ashmole 782*. Harkness' saga goes one step forward in the "modernization" of this new vampire canon. The reason for this is that it combines supernatural facts with contemporary discussions on genetics, university research and history. What led Harkness to lay the foundations of her works of vampires was the fact that:

> People believed that the supernatural and the natural existed, intermingled. We think of ourselves as having very little in common with people in 1558. And yet there were walls of this stuff. What if the 16th-century people were right, and the supernatural and natural coexisted? How would that play out? It started out almost like a kind of logic problem. (Timberg 2011)

The first book of this work, *DW*, was released in a TV series adaptation of the same name on Sky One on September 14, 2018. Regarding literacy or literary education, the author of the novel has created some educational pages containing reading guides.

4. Analysing the vampire Matthew Clairmont

To analyse the character Matthew Clairmont, this study has been done through thematic qualitative text analysis following the analysis model outlined in Kuckartz (2014, 69) since it is used to set the principal meanings of content included in a text. Kuckartz's qualitative method is focused on both, a profile matrix, referred also as a thematic matrix, and categories. Concerning the matrix, it "includes topics (themes) as structuring elements in the columns" (Kuckartz 2014, 3), but can include characteristics, places, dates and so

on. This is the reason for the choice of this method of analysis, namely, that it is a powerful tool for learning more about Clairmont's characteristics and the context in which he is embedded. Qualitative analysis through this profile matrix is aimed at creating a clear and understandable interpretation of the data and information included in it. Each cell of the matrix contains a piece of text which is accessible throughout the analysis process. Hence, "it is possible to select, separate, and abstract without losing sight of the context" (Kuckartz 2014, 3). Regarding categories, the second element of this qualitative method of text analysis, they are the most important tools of the analysis and are derived in this investigation from the research question underlying this article, that is: What characteristics make Matthew Clairmont a non-traditional vampire? Categories in this analysis will help in the coding of the entire data material.

Thus, the present analysis involved a profile matrix to build a clear and coherent interpretation of the information provided by the study of *DW* regarding the research question at stake. Hence, the aim of the present investigation was to construct the categories related to the character inductively using the data provided by the novel. The steps followed in the analysis involved first, a careful reading of the book and a selection of particularly important text passages that were relevant in terms of vampire traits to identify and highlight. I selected 173 excerpts from the novel (from 13 to 269 words long) and included written notes regarding the potential categories in the margins of the text to help in the following stage. The excerpts were quoted by a number after the *DW* abbreviation. In the second stage, the thematic categories were determined with the aim of starting the coding process. Seven thematic categories were established, they were derived directly from the research question which explains their choice. As seen in Table 1, these categories, inferred from the corpus after analysing it and extracting all the excerpts containing some kind of vampire (traditional or modern) trait, were coded as: V1) Featuring 21st-century vampires overall, V2) Matthew and his becoming a vampire, V3) Matthew's physical and personal traits, V4) Matthew's emotional and personality traits, V5) Matthew his multiple roles and his academic profile, V6) Matthew's description according to the five senses, and V7) Matthew and his families. In the third stage, the relevant passages were thematically compiled and coded according to a thematic matrix (see Table 1 below), which served as the starting point for the analytical work carried out in the last stage of this procedure.
The third stage involved the coding process by assigning text passages to categories followed by the compilation of all the text excerpts that belonged to the same category. In the last stage, a category-based analysis was carried out.

Table 1. Thematic matrix: main thematic categories related to Matthew Clairmont and their definition.

Code	Main Thematic categories	Definition
V1	Featuring 21st-century vampires overall	Characteristics of vampires broadly speaking usual works for vampires¸ stereotypes on vampires and vocabulary on vampires
V2	Matthew and his becoming a vampire	Matthew as a child & Matthew becoming a vampire
V3	Matthew's physical and personal traits	Face: eyes, mouth, lips, hair & skin General: age Body: physical appearance accent/origin Feeding, abilities, clothes wealth
V4	Matthew's emotional and personality traits.	Emotions, changing personalities
V5	Matthew his multiple roles and his academic profile	Degrees, memberships & Reputation
V6	Relationship with history	Historical acquaintances and friends, historical facts and events lived
V7	Matthew and his families	Before being a vampire After being a vampire

5. Results and Analysis

V1) Vampires in general (21st century)

This category aims at featuring 21st-century vampires overall, that is, the works vampires used to carry out, the stereotypes humans constructed about them and some vocabulary including the semantic field "vampires." This category was introduced since the characters of the book mentioned them and serves as a contrast between what the main characters in *DW* mention about traditional vampires and the characterization of a more modern one such as Matthew Clairmont. Broadly speaking, vampires are breathtaking (*DW*, 20–21); "ancient and beautiful, who feed on blood and will charm you utterly if they don't kill you first" (*DW*, 19). Another example follows (*DW*, 20–21):

> Their bone structures are so well-honed that they seem chiselled by an expert sculptor. Then they move or speak, and your mind can't begin to absorb what you're seeing. Every movement is graceful; every word is musical. And their

> eyes are arresting, which is precisely how they catch their prey. One long look, a few quiet words, a touch: once you're caught in a vampire's snare you don't stand a chance.

So, they are predators. Vampire bodies do not age as humans do since they are supposed to live forever. In the twentieth century, this fact was seen as some sort of a curse for them, as in Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*. In turn, in Stoker's *Dracula*, the vampire lord is immortal but can also inverse this ageing process. Another interesting trait is that vampires work in different fields of science since it "rewards long study and patience" (*DW*, 20).

In contrast to stereotypes of vampires, their reflection can be seen in the mirror, they do not sleep too much, certainly not in a coffin, but when they do, they look like the dead. Crucifixes and holy things have no power over the vampire, and a stake through their heart is also useless. Concerning their reaction to the sunlight, Diana, the main witch character says: "Vampires didn't burn at the touch of sunlight, nor did they have fangs. These were human myths" (*DW*, 39). They cannot fly "but we're strong and fast. Vampires can run and jump, which makes humans think we can fly" (*DW*, 172). Vampires are also efficient since their bodies do not waste much energy: they do not breathe much; their hearts do not beat very often and they barely eat. They "run cold, which slows down most bodily processes and helps explain why we live so long" (*DW*, 172). There is some vocabulary on vampires that the novel teaches us such as pack behaviour, possessive rituals, preternatural senses, dining habits and the way to slay a vampire: "No, not even slicing our necks open is fool proof, […] You want to cause as much blood loss as possible. Go for the groin as well" (*DW*, 578). Overall, the fact of being strong, fast, beautiful, charming, immortal, well-built, not having the need to sleep too much, and even working in science fields, to mention a few, can be pointed out in this category as traits that might compel young adults (YA). And it is that in my opinion, this is a trilogy that could engage YA in the same way that the saga *Twilight* has done, even though it is not concretely addressed to them. The reason for this is that there are sexual excerpts, yes, but it is not a trait that takes over the book and the descriptions are not graphic. Young adults are currently hooked on books and TV series with more explicit scenes related to sex, violence, addictions, and others this makes *All Souls Trilogy* appropriate for them.

V2) Matthew and his becoming a vampire.

This category shows the human traits Matthew had, portrayed by Ysabeau, his vampire mother, when describing him as a child, before becoming a vampire. He was bright, curious, and gifted, "by the time he could hold a hatchet without injuring himself, he was put to work" (*DW*, 352). He became a skilled builder, got

married and had, after many miscarriages, a son. Unfortunately, he lost his family after a pandemic. This made him try to take his life. It was then that Ysabeau made him a vampire. Then, after his turning into a vampire, there was no hint of humanity in him. "He was always full of hunger and almost out of control" (*DW*, 352). This double profile is shown throughout the novel. Matthew, as will be seen in the further text, is some kind of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. He passes from being a renowned scientist or a charming and attentive suitor to the most feared murderer in the whole book. YA might as well be described as curious and always full of hunger and nearly out of control if we extrapolate these concepts to their social contexts. Thus, they could see themselves reflected in this depiction.

V3) Matthew's physical and personal traits

He has the appearance of a thirty-seven-year-old man, but he is a more than fifteen-hundred-year-old "with a face that would make an angel envious" (*DW*, 341). Clairmont, as shown in the following example (*DW*, 21):

> was tall-well over six feet […]. And he definitely was not slight. Broad shoulders narrowed into slender hips, which flowed into lean, muscular legs. His hands were strikingly long and agile, a mark of physiological delicacy that made your eyes drift back to them to figure out how they could belong to such a large man.

In the case of Clairmont, as it is with the Cullen family (*Twilight Saga*), being vampires is as if they had reached a stage of perfection in terms of both their bodies and their characters, not like Dracula seems to have. They have some physical particularities such as the fact that their eyes change like mood or bloodlust indicator rings. Matthew's unnatural, odd, and strange eyes portray an ancient look. Additionally, they range from dark or "black as night" (*DW*, 21) to the fact that Matthew's pupils and irises "were dots in a sea of grey-green" (*DW*, 23). His eyes are either described as having a "moonlike pull," as "grey-rimmed black eyes" or "cool grey eyes." (*DW*, 8) depending on his mood. Concerning his skin, unlike the Cullens in the *Twilight Saga*, which glitters under the sunlight like diamonds, Matthew's body is a palimpsest, like the book he and Diana are looking for in the novel. His smooth, perfect skin was all covered up with odd marks located deep within him, dozens of scars that talked about hundreds of battles, some of them having left deep scars in his soul too making him carry a heavy burden full of guilt for all the years of his existence. As Matthew puts it: "I said vampires were difficult to kill. Creatures try their best to do so anyway" (*DW*, 428). Additionally, vampires move at a prodigious speed and have superhuman strength since their abilities are preternatural—but not supernatural, like mind

reading or precognition would be. He has a "feral combination of strength, agility, and keen intelligence" (*DW*, 20– 21). Extrapolating these traits to YA, we can pay attention to the time adolescents devote to their fitness to become aware of how Matthew's physical traits might call their attention. This could have a deeper reading, that might be a topic for further research, and is the influence of these characters: astonishing vampires like Cullen, Clairmont or Damon and Stefan (*The Vampire Diaries* by L. J. Smith), other characters like Hardin (the saga *After* by Anna Todd), but also YouTubers, Instagrammers and others that dazzle YA who try to emulate them in every possible way, being it mentally and physically healthy or not. I am aware that some of these works are not addressed particularly to YA, but the truth is that they are available to them either in book or TV series format, include all kinds of scenes including sex, violence, addictions, and toxic relationships and they are accessing them, as a popular idiom says, one cannot stem the tide.

Regarding Clairmont's personal traits, he is a blood drinker but does not necessarily take blood directly from his victims against their will. He might have willing donors, get it bottled, acquire it from a blood bank or drink it in a cup. Apart from blood, Matthew needs water to survive, and he very often drinks wine. He has his own cellar in the All Souls College basement, where he resides, and he uses some wines such as Château d'Yquem and Dom Perignon to try to seduce Diana. He is omnivorous, so, he "can eat food—preferably uncooked food, or food that's cold, so that it doesn't smell" (*DW*, 168). He likes nuts, seeds, berries (like grey wolves), plain broth and no vegetables.

Regarding his clothes, he is upper-class. He wears jerseys made of cashmere, and his shoes are exclusive (*DW*, 38):

> Clairmont looked immaculate and rested, his pale skin startling against his dark hair. This time his open-necked grey sweater had flecks of green, and his collar stood up slightly in the back. A peek under the table revealed charcoal grey trousers, matching socks, and black shoes that surely cost more than the average academic's entire wardrobe.

This exclusive purchasing power is shown with an in-depth description of his personal belongings such as his Montblanc Meisterstück mechanical pencil (*DW*, 41), his low-slung black Jaguar (*DW*, 78); his Range Rover the size of Connecticut (*DW*, 485); his jet that "was outfitted like a luxury yacht, with chairs that folded down flat to make beds, areas of upholstered seating and tables, and a small galley where a uniformed attendant waited with a bottle of red wine and some chilled mineral water" (*DW*, 482). He also has a helicopter (*DW*, 664), a two-story Tudor manor house, the Old Lodge and (*DW*, 92-93) "He's funded up to

his eyeballs" (*DW*, 58) in terms of his research. In this case, vampires Clairmont and Cullen are along the same wealth and academic lines and thus, in this sense, we could extrapolate YA's interest in the *Twilight Saga* to *A Discovery of Witches*.

V4) Matthew's emotional and personality traits.

A noteworthy evolution of the vampire figure "includes the acquisition of strictly human emotions as well as the recognition of moral rules and values, thus altering the hitherto nature of the vampire character" (Grabias 2017, 110). All these vampires have some sort of love interest, or there is some sort of love story that is embedded in the main storyline. So, it seems that these more contemporary vampires can have feelings and be able to love another or be loved. An example is "Matthew feels deeply" (*DW*, 357). In Matthew's words, "I'm experiencing emotions I've never" (*DW*, 211). Apart from love, he appears to feel sorrow, rage, pleasure, or pain. Besides, there is a heavy burden he carries, the guilt that he feels throughout his entire existence which is one of the seminal emotions for the character and has been previously mentioned. The guilt for his lost family, for the people he has murdered (including his father and former lovers, friends and even enemies). In turn, his eyes were also able to show emotions since they could either be weary, guileless, or cold; they glinted, were full of barely controlled rage or concern and even showed grudging admiration.

In terms of Clairmont's personality, there are twenty-first-century vampires with perfect self-control. Just like Carlisle and Edward from the *Twilight Saga*, Matthew controls his vampire instincts either to cure or to "work as a doctor, saving human lives rather than taking them" (Guanio-Uluru 2016, 211). Matthew is a peculiar case of a dual-personality vampire, just like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, or as shown in *DW*: "some diabolical combination of Lancelot and Superman" (374), able to have the finest qualities: compassion, conscience, and patience with those he loved. But he can also be flooded by such destructive anger and rage that (*DW*, 237) "once the poison was out of his system, he disappeared for months or even years to come to terms with what he'd done" (*DW*, 237). His duality takes him to either have a wicked sense of humour or "enjoy romping in the woods like an oversize puppy" (*DW*, 585); to do yoga (*DW*, 88) and play chess (*DW*, 125) or billiards while talking all night long (*DW*, 115) and to fight like a warrior in the Crusades (*DW*, 429). He can either sing in his rich baritone voice (*DW*, 314) and dance like Astaire and Rogers (*DW*, 307-308) or hunt the fastest member of the animal kingdom as if it were easy prey, as in "the rabbits and owls knew they couldn't escape him. 'King of the beasts,' I whispered" (*DW*, 512). He is also respectful, secretive, and wolfishly protective, a killer and a lover, possessive, and old-fashioned at

times, particularly when it comes to courtship and sex. This duality shared also with YA readers, is shown in the next category which gathers many metaphors regarding Clairmont's multiple personalities.

V5) Matthew his multiple roles and his academic profile

Matthew shows many different sides: the warrior, the scientist, the father, the bodyguard, the assassin, the lover etc. He has lived so many lives, for such a long time that the multiple personalities he had are all within himself: "'I'm a warrior.' 'No you're not,' I said fiercely. 'You're a scientist.' 'I've been a warrior longer'" (*DW*, 429). From the warrior to the knight, Matthew "looked like a medieval knight lying atop a tomb in Westminster Abbey: long legs, long torso, long arms, and a remarkably strong face" (*DW*, 97). But Clairmont is a loving father, too, as he shows when dealing with children visiting their house on Halloween night, or when saying his farewell to his son Marcus as in "'No speeding,' Matthew said firmly, sounding like a father. 'Call us when you get home'" (*DW*, 660). He has been a father all his life since the son he had as a human is always present in his thoughts. Also, in this excerpt (*DW*, 666): "Between father and son there was a long look, the clasp of hand to elbow, the press of a hand on the back—a pattern of leave-taking based on hundreds of similar farewells. For me there was a gentle kiss, a murmured 'Be well,' and then Marcus, too, was gone."

The seductive and charming creature that had entered Diana's life, the Matthew who had swung Diana into his arms and kissed her passionately, the scientist "absorbed in his work and preoccupied with the question of why he was here" (*DW*, 330), were kept at bay by a cold and impassive vampire depending on the moment and circumstances. This multiple-personalities being, ranging from seductive to monstrous, as mentioned in previous categories, might well be easier to identify with by YA readers than the previous vampires, whose personalities range was more limited.

In turn, vampires in these texts are emotionally and intellectually mature. Most of them have more than one university degree. Matthew Clairmont, "the elusive, reclusive Professor Clairmont" (*DW*, 57), whom people are calling "the next Attenborough" (*DW*, 57), is a professor of biochemistry affiliated with Oxford Neuroscience at the John Radcliffe Hospital. He is also a physician interested in the brain and has a medical degree. His visiting card shows an Oxford University logo. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society, a member of Merton, Magdalen, and University colleges, a member of New College and Oriel twice each and a Fellow member of All Souls (*DW*, 22, 203). He might be any YA's teacher, someone easily recognizable, someone to emulate, a referent.

V6) Matthew's relationship with history

This multi-personality creature, reborn as a vampire in 537 (CE), was a puzzle composed of all the pieces that his fifteen hundred years of existence have given to him. Pieces that his historical acquaintances and friends such as Catherine of Aragon, Giordano Bruno, Darwin, Cornelius Drebbel, William Harvey, Thomas Jefferson, Edward Jenner, Marquis de Lafayette, Andreas Libavius, Marlowe, Jacques de Molay, Newton, Machiavelli or Shakespeare have imbued him. Matthew has lived through many of the most important events in history and has not remained just shut away in a castle, like Dracula. Thus, "he had drunk chocolate in Paris in 1615 and received a building permit from Henry VIII in 1536 – of course, he was buying wine in 1811" (*DW*, 175). This lifetime experience could raise the natural curiosity YA have and enhance their experiential cross-curricular knowledge and development. In my opinion, the inclusion of real, well-known historical events makes Clairmont a closer character and his, a more real, closer story.

V7) Matthew and his families

The last category is related to Clairmont's families. Prior to his becoming, Matthew was born within a modest family. His father was a carpenter, as he would become later on. Then he met Blanca, his former wife, who gave him his beloved son, Lucas. Both would die some years later. Once Ysabeau, his vampire mother, made him a vampire, Matthew lived in a perfect and diverse family (he had a homosexual brother). The vampire is no longer a lonely being from the 1980s, but "lives within a social structure of vampires (which can be family or gang-like) who are not just his concubines as in Dracula with no further plot relevance is another important feature of the 'new' vampire of the second half of the 20th century." (Zanger 1997, 18).

This trait was seen first in Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976). In this novel, three vampires live together as some kind of family. Matthew had three older brothers: Hugh, the negotiator, Godfrey, the conscience, teasing out the ethical effects of every decision, and Baldwin, the strategist in battle. Matthew also had a sister, with the role of bait and a spy. Philippe, his vampire father "had always been the leader of men, a charismatic figure who could convince vampires and humans and sometimes even daemons to fight for a common cause" (*DW*, 456). In contrast, Ysabeau "missed nothing and had a longer memory than Mnemosyne" (*DW*, 457). This category has identified the sense of being part of a "pack" as the trait YA could be keen on. They belong to their groups, gangs, teams, and friends.

6. Conclusion

This study has been set out with the aim of examining the character of the vampire Clairmont aimed at exploring the complexity of his multiple identities and demonstrating a shift in his role and traits regarding the traditional vampire. The research question intended to answer through the investigation was: what is it about the characterization of Matthew de Clairmont from the *All Souls Trilogy* that has made him a multiple-personalities character that has shifted towards a non-traditional vampire?

In light of Harkness' use of Clairmont's personal traits, it can be concluded that these semantic units fulfil a function in terms of characterisation. The traditional vampire showcasing scary and wickedly monstrous vampires seems to have given rise to a more modern, gentle, and human-like vampire, integrated into society, able to have feelings and fall in love. Matthew Clairmont still has some of those traditional vampire traits and is portrayed sometimes as the assassin, the predator on top of the food chain and the warrior, but at the same time, he is a considerate lover, a cultured scholar, a scientist, and a protective couple. This new multi-identities vampire seems to have a wide-ranging combination of fiction and realism, that is, of the fictional figure of the vampire and the real character of the scholar and husband. After the gathering and discussion of the results, I agree with Melton on some of the reasons why this kind of new vampire literature is engaging to the point of becoming a bestseller:

> overwhelmingly, people who are vampire fans in later life began their attachment to vampires as teenagers. They go through a period of enthusiasm as only teens can have and then settle down to a lifetime of being entertained by the vampire and using their favourite fanged monster as an entity to assist them in thinking about real-life issues such as the nature of sexuality, exerting personal power in social situations and the possibilities of life after death. (Melton 2011, xvii)

Nevertheless, due to this first stage in our research study, it has only been possible to retrieve 273 excerpts related to Clairmont's traits. For this reason, further research involving a study of the other works included in *All Souls Trilogy* would be necessary to open new avenues to this study. Additionally, a complementary study concerning a computational corpus stylistic analysis following Ruano San Segundo (2016, 117-119) and its related issues in corpus design based on the novel *A Discovery of Witches* would be needed to complement this characterization. The reason for this is that it would be interesting to notice patterns in form and function that have been impossible to identify in the present study. This is so because this kind of study could provide more information regarding how this

novel reflects culture and ideas and shows topics and characters' patterns in the work that has taken it to be a bestseller.

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Revisiting Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* as a feminist response to McCarthyism

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The present article introduces a feminist and political analysis of Sylvia Plath's novel *The Bell Jar,* considering it a cultural response to McCarthyism. In order to do that, the article focuses on the importance Plath gives to the Rosenberg's case in the novel and particularly in the relevance Ethel Rosenberg's death sentence had to awaken a female consciousness for the women of the 1950s in America. The female body turns fundamental for a feminist struggle that Plath creates in the novel to deconstruct the imposed female roles that helped McCarthy control the private lives of the Americans. Sixty years after Plath's death and its publication, *The Bell Jar* becomes a fundamental text for understanding contemporary feminist literature.

Keywords: Women's literature; Feminist theory; Gender Studies, McCarthyism; Sylvia Plath

Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* (1963) became, at the controversial time of its publication, a key text to understand her life as a woman writer. Since then, the novel has been object of interpretation from several and distinct critical perspectives, especially in its contribution to the feminism of the 1950s and its response to Betty Friedan's remarkable work *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). Among the many critical interpretations given to the novel, *The Bell Jar* is considered a "classic Cold War text for which a denunciation of suburban, white, middle-class female constraint might seem to be the appropriate frame" (Baldwin 2004, 23). From this political perspective, the critic Kate A. Baldwin also asserts that "*The Bell Jar* shows us how the fiction of an integrated American female selfhood (and its inadequate achievement) was correlated with those of designated Cold War others, such as Russians and African Americans." (Baldwin 2016, 55). However, and in the context of Cold War literature, *The Bell Jar* can also be analyzed as a feminist response to the earliest period of the Cold War times and concretely to the communist hunt initiated by Senator Joseph McCarthy, a period later known as McCarthyism. Plath starts the novel by mentioning the Rosenberg's case and, with it, contextualizes her novel in a concrete historical and social period of the United States, emphasizing throughout the novel the relevance Ethel Rosenberg had for the women of the 1950s and for the protagonist in particular. The intention of this article is to contribute to the wide literary critical corpus of Plath's novel *The Bell Jar* by analyzing the importance and impact the Rosenberg's case has on the protagonist of the novel, Esther Greenwood, and how Plath responds to that effect with a feminist discourse that considerably influenced on the reconfiguration of female consciousness and the construction of a modern and postmodern female subjectivity. In this context, Plath's novel popularity and relevance 60 years after its publication and 60 years after her death indicates its contemporaneity in feminist and ideological terms.

1. Sylvia Plath and McCarthyism

The suffocating atmosphere created by McCarthyism and Cold War times is present in most of Plath's writings produced since 1950. As biographer Heather Clark explains, Plath was very aware of the oppression for "subversive artistic expression– especially from women" (2022, 62) –created in McCarthy's times, something that motivated her artistic exile to England. Clark points at Plath's first direct experience with McCarthyism through her writing teacher Robert Gorham Davis, investigated by the HUAC "for his communist affiliation in the 1930s" (2022, 191). Together with Davis, other professors were investigated and, as Clark accounts, they openly talked about the hearings in their classes (191). Plath, as a result of this experience that summer, wrote her short story "Initiation" (1935) in which she narrates the

difficult and complex experience a college girl goes through to pass the "trial" to become a sorority member. In the winter of 1950, her first winter at Smith College, Plath already manifests her concern about the dark times the United States and her generation were going through:

> People live in war time, they always have. There was terror down through history […] But though they live and died in fear, I am here; we have built again. And so I will belong to a dark age, and historians will say "We have a few documents to show how the common people lived at this time. Records lead us to believe that a majority were killed. But there were glorious men." And school children will sigh and learn the names of Truman and Senator McCarthy. Oh, it is hard for me to reconcile myself to this. (Plath 2000, 32)

Plath explicitly shows her discontent with both Truman and McCarthy and their legacy in American history. On the 19th of June of 1953, the day the Rosenbergs were executed, Plath dedicates one of her journal entries to express her feelings in relation to the case:

> All right, so the headlines blare the two of them [the Rosenbergs] are going to be killed at eleven o'clock tonight. So I am sick at the stomach. I remember the journalist's report, sickeningly factual, of the electrocution of a condemned man, of the unconcealed fascination of the faces of the onlookers, of the details, the shocking physical facts about the death, the scream, the smoke, the bare honest unemotional reporting that gripped the guts because of the things it didn't say. (Plath 1991, 80)

This fragment of her journal reverberates at the beginning of Plath's novel and explains the asphyxiating atmosphere she depicts throughout the whole text. Also, by dedicating one of her journal entries to the Rosenbergs not only does Plath manifest the great influence this case had in her life and her emotional state, she also describes very well the fear and paranoia installed in American society that culminates with the death of the Jewish couple. In this same journal entry, Plath expresses her feelings of rejection towards the execution:

> There is no yelling, no horror, no great rebellion. That is the appalling thing. The execution will take place tonight; it is too bad that it could not be televised…so much more realistic and beneficial than the run-of-the-mill crime program. Two real people being executed. No matter. The largest emotional reaction over the United States will be a rather large, democratic, infinitely bored and casual and complacent yawn (1991, 81).

Here, Plath puts the attention on the passivity American population shows with such a serious incident and, moreover, refers to the risks and dangers these political actions could have for everyone. According to Clark, "the 1953 electrocution of the Rosenberg's symbolized, for Plath, other victims of repression–radicals, Jews, homosexuals, dissidents, artists" (2022, 549) and, of course, women. Plath deconstructs the gendered morality of the cold war politics, and concretely of McCarthyism, in *The Bell Jar* through the character of Esther Greenwood, who "must re-solve gender itself. She must reconcile herself as both moral subject (heroine and narrator of her own story) and amoral object (her femininity is defined by her body). To be whole, she must re-solve […] the nature of femininity (Is it amoral?)" (MacPherson 1991, 37). In this sense, the deconstruction of the McCarthyist gendered morality is reaffirmed with the parallelism established between Esther and Ethel Rosenberg, whose execution was mainly based on her wrong performance as a woman of the 1950s.

2. Esther Greenwood and Ethel Rosenberg

From the beginning of the novel, Plath creates an asphyxiating and dreadful atmosphere introducing the Rosenberg's case:

> It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York. I'm stupid about executions. The idea of being electrocuted makes me sick, and that's all there was to read about in the papers–goggle-eyed headlines staring up at me on every street corner and at the fusty, peanut-smelling mouth of every subway. It had nothing to do with me, but I couldn't help wondering what it would be like, being burned alive all along your nerves. (2001, 1)

Through it, the reader knows the novel takes place in June 1953 and concretely before and after the 19th of June, the day Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed. The presence of the Rosenbergs, specifically of Ethel Rosenberg, becomes permanent throughout the whole novel from a historical and political describing perspective but also from a metaphorical perspective. Plath introduces the figure of Ethel Rosenberg and her death sentence by electrocution as a way to explain Esther's gender roles' deconstruction and consequent mental breakdown. Moreover, the presence of Ethel in Esther's narration explains the importance of her feminine mystique and the role of women for Cold War America, concretely, the relevance women had for McCarthyism.

The beginning of the Cold War period is marked by the presence and practices of the Wisconsin Senator at the time, Joseph McCarthy, who served

from 1947 to 1957. He became popular in 1950 when, in a famous speech to the Republican Women's Club at Wheeling, West Virginia, he claimed he possessed a list with the names of 205 communist people who were working for the State Department. From then on, he started a communist hunt against any kind of activity that could be considered anti-American and of course against any kind of communist espionage. Essentially, communism became an excuse to control and manipulate most stratums of society and mainly American's private lives. By controlling the private lives of the Americans, McCarthy saw the way to control public life and, in that sense, preserve the most conservative values of American society intact. McCarthy's exercise of power can be explained through Foucault's words as he created a "total structure of action brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely" (1982, 789). In relation to this, Richard Hofstadter points at McCarthy's unclear political methods the basis of its strong powerful structure induced to control the population:

> To McCarthy's true believers what was really appealing about him were his methods, since his goals were always utterly nebulous. To them, his proliferating multiple accusations were a positive good, because they widened the net of suspicion and enabled it to catch many victims who were no longer, had never been, Communists. (1963, 41)

McCarthy's communist hunt became, as many historians have pointed out, a red scare that immersed American society in a fearful and paranoic atmosphere aggravated by McCarthy's creative talent in relation to distortion and reinterpretation of possible communist un-American activities (Reeves 1973, 30). This takes us back to the beginning of the novel and to Esther's words when she states that the Rosenberg's case "had nothing to do with me, but I couldn't help wondering what it would be like, being burned alive all along your nerves" (2001, 1). Indeed, throughout the novel, Esther experiences different situations as a woman that connect her with Ethel Rosenberg's experience to such an extent that she will suffer how it feels like to be "burned alive all along your nerves" in her ETC treatment.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were a Jewish-American couple who lived in New York and who were accused of "conspiracy to spy for the Soviet Union in violation of the Espionage Act of 1917" (Kobrick 2013, 3). Judge Irving Robert Kaufman sentenced the couple to death and accused them of "trying to destroy the United States, characterizing their crime as "worse than murder" (Kobrick 2013, 6). He also assigned them at least partial blame for the outbreak of the Korean War, "with the resultant casualties exceeding 50,000 and who knows

but that millions more of innocent people may pay the price of your treason" (Kobrick 2013, 6). According to Kobrick, the testimony of David Greenglass, Ethel's brother, became fundamental for the couple's death sentence. In his testimony, prepared by McCarthy's assistant Roy Cohn, he accused Julius Rosenberg of sending information about the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union and Ethel of typing all that information. As Jonathan Michaels asserts, "the arrest, conviction and ultimate execution of Julius Rosenberg for passing classified information to the Soviet Union bolstered the credibility of McCarthy's charges against the State Department" (2017, 163). Bearing in mind that Roy Cohn's "most significant contribution to the trial was his direct examination of key witness David Greenglass, which produced testimony devastating to Julius and Ethel Rosenberg" (Kobrick 2013, 35) and became chief counsel of McCarthy's Senate investigations subcommittee, it could be argued that the distortion and manipulation of David Greenglass testimony was definitively to benefit McCarthy and McCarthyism. Especially in 1995, when declassified documents from Soviet archives were published and revealed that "a soviet cable from 1944 stated that Ethel was "sufficiently well developed politically" and that she knew about her husband's espionage activities, but noted, "in view of delicate health [she] does not work" (Kobrick 2013, 10). In 2001, David Greenglass, the most important witness for the Rosenberg's execution, confessed that he lied in relation to the implication of his sister Ethel in communist espionage and especially in her collaboration typing the information about the atomic bomb. Even though Julius' collaboration with the Soviet Union was confirmed in the declassified documents published in 1995, neither of them sent information about the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union, the reason why they were sentenced to death.

From the beginning of the case, the implication of Ethel in communist espionage was not easy to prove. At the beginning, the government used Ethel as a way to extort Julius and make him confess about his implications with communist espionage. However, as Mary Ashe explains, "Ethel Rosenberg's maternal status, and an interpretation of her performance as failing to satisfy 1950s models of motherhood, worked to justify the imposition of the death penalty" (1995, 217). Judge Irving Kauffman insisted in his sentence that Ethel's love for the communist party was greater than her love for her children (Ashe 1995, 217), basing his decision on Ethel's supposedly inappropriate behavior with her children. Ethel's construction as a bad mother was not limited to Judge Kauffman. In fact, President Eisenhower denied presidential clemency to the Rosenbergs putting the focus on Ethel as the leader of the two and supporting his argument on the fact that she was particularly evil: "it is the woman who is the strong and recalcitrant character, the man who is the weak one. She has obviously been the leader in everything they did in the spy ring" (Ashe 1995,

218). As a communist, she had deprived her children of a good home in order to provide the world with a "good home" (Ashe 1995, 218). In this sense, Ethel was judged for her performance as a mother and as a wife and sentenced for not accomplishing the female roles of a 1950s American woman. This shows the importance of women and their domestic roles for the control of the private lives of Americans and, hence, for McCarthyism. In relation to this, Deborah Nelson asserts that "Women and especially mothers in cold war culture often functioned as metaphors of a highly unstable border between public and private, a possibly treacherous incapacity to defend the boundaries of home and nation" (2002, 114). Unable to demonstrate she was a good mother, Ethel Rosenberg transgressed the limits of her home and, accordingly, of her nation and was sentenced to death. This evidently takes suspicion, fear and paranoia, recurrent themes of McCarthyist literature, to a different social level. Practicing un-American activities, such as not being a good mother according to the standards of 1950s America, could be considered the justification for a future crime. McCarthyism's success with this case was not only proving its communist hunt, it installed fear and a powerful control in American society. The death sentence became a lesson for American population and in particular, for those women who were nonconformists to the gender norms of the time.

In this context, the parallelism between Esther and Ethel becomes fundamental in terms of understanding how Esther deconstructs the conservative gender roles imposed on her and how society punishes her for rejecting them as Ethel did. Ethel Rosenberg was partly judged for her female performance and this is why many women writers of the time responded with their literature to the Rosenberg's case and concretely to Ethel's situation. Women writers such as Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich talked openly about the influence the Rosenberg's case had for them and their works. Lorde, as Plath, expresses the fear and paranoia the execution ingrained in American society and how that affected to her gender identity and her condition as a lesbian woman and writer:

> Meetings where frightened people tried to keep some speck of hope alive, despite political disagreement, while all around us was the possible threat of dying like the Rosenbergs, or at least the threat of losing jobs or being fingered for life. Downtown at political meetings and uptown at the Harlem Writers Guild, friends, acquaintances, and simple people were terrorized at the thought of having to answer, 'Are you or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?' The Rosenberg's struggle became synonymous for me with being able to live in this country at all, with being able to survive in hostile surroundings […] one day asking me accusingly, 'Are you or have you ever been a member of a homosexual relationship? (2018, 173-74)

As Carol Hurd Green points out, "For Sylvia Plath and Adrienne Rich, young women in the 1950s, the death of Ethel Rosenberg became a piece of their emerging female consciousness" (1995, 191). In her poem "For Ethel Rosenberg" (1981), Adrienne Rich creates a poetic voice that identifies with Ethel Rosenberg's fate in relation to marriage and motherhood. She talks about marriage as a question of loyalty or punishment, she describes her as a bad mother and daughter and declares how society needed Ethel to be a female monster (2020, 541) but "she, actually wishing to be an artist/ wanting out of poverty/possibly also really wanting revolution" (2020, 541). Ethel Rosenberg awakened a revolutionary spirit in some women who started to question the 1950s American female values.

3. Abject Doubles

The relevance of Ethel Rosenberg's presence in Plath's novel relies on her metaphorical effect in the construction of Esther Greenwood as a character in order to express her transgression of gender roles and, specifically, how she deconstructs motherhood, marriage and housewifery. As Mary Ashe explains, the name Plath chooses for her protagonist, Esther Greenwood, can be analyzed as a reconfiguration of Ethel Rosenberg's former name, Esther Ethel Greenglass. By changing Greenglass to Greenwood, Plath erases any connection of her character with Julius Rosenberg and Ethel's brother David Greenglass (whose false testimony sent her to the electric chair) and, consequently, with her roles of wife and mother: "the "Greenwood" variation of "Greenglass" can be read as preserving only those features of Ethel Rosenberg that are most purely "private"" (1995, 216). However, Robin Peel points at Plath's grandmother, Victoria Lucas Schober, as the source of inspiration to name the protagonist of the novel. Indeed, he explains that "Plath changed the name of her protagonist Victoria Lucas to Esther Greenwood quite late in the publication negotiations" (2019, 206). Even though Esther Greenwood was not Plath's first choice to name her protagonist, the truth is that she finally does, establishing another link with Ethel Rosenberg.

In Plath's project to deconstruct gender roles, motherhood becomes a fundamental topic of her novel. One of the most famous and remarkable passages of the novel takes place in chapter six, when Esther goes with her boyfriend Buddy Willard to witness the dissection of a corpse. It is there where Plath shows the opposite emotion to what a baby, and motherhood, should provoke in the reader. If a baby means tenderness and the right beginning of life, she describes how the hospital keeps dead babies of different sizes in bottles:

> Buddy took me out into a hall where they had some big glass bottles full of babies that had died before they were born. The baby in the first bottle had a large white head bent over a tiny curled-up body the size of a frog. The baby in the next bottle was bigger and the baby next to that one was bigger still and the baby in the last bottle was the size of a normal baby and he seemed to be looking at me and smiling a little piggy smile. (2001, 59)

Right after this, Esther witnesses a labor that Buddy warns her not to as "You oughtn't to see this'[…] 'You'll never want to have a baby if you do. They oughtn't to let women watch. It'll be the end of the human race' (61). When asked about this experience, Esther answers "Wonderful" "I could see something like that every day" (63). Plath approaches motherhood from an abject perspective, from the dead, from a life that is not accomplished and also from the perspective of a mother and a motherhood that will never occur. Undoubtedly, this idea connects again with Ethel Rosenberg and how her execution prevented her from being a mother. Some pages after this, Esther relates motherhood with Eisenhower: "On a low coffee-table, with circular and semi-circular stains bitten into the dark veneer, lay a few wilted numbers of *Time* and *Life*. I flipped to the middle of the nearest magazine. The face of Eisenhower beamed up at me, bald and blank as the face of a foetus in a bottle" (85). The association of Eisenhower with the bottled dead babies refers back to Ethel and Eisenhower's statement about her culpability in the case.

Later in the novel, Plath again links Eisenhower with maternity. In the waiting room of a clinic, she reflects on motherhood and her obvious rejection towards it:

> I leafed nervously through an issue of *Baby Talk*. The fat, bright faces of babies beamed up at me, page after page–bald babies, chocolate-coloured babies, Eisenhower-faced babies, babies rolling over for the first time, babies reaching for rattles, babies eating their first spoonful of solid food, babies doing all the little tricky things it takes to grow up, step by step, into an anxious and unsettling world. (2001, 212)

Esther's perception of "Eisenhower-faced babies" refers to Eisenhower's statements about Ethel abandoning her children for communism. As Jo Gill affirms, "Esther's repeated disavowal of any maternal instincts and her obvious distaste for children suggests a replication of Ethel's perceived position" by Einsehower and also Judge Kauffman. This reminds us that Ethel's and Esther's crime lies in their "interpretation (or misinterpretation) of femininity which is perceived to be a fault" (Gill 2008, 80). This idea explains Esther's impressions of the waiting room:

> I smelt a mingling of Pabulum and sour milk and salt-cod-stinky diapers and felt sorrowful and tender. How easy having babies seemed to the women around me! Why was I so unmaternal and apart? Why couldn't I dream of devoting myself to a baby after fat puling baby like Dodo Conway? (2001, 212-13)

Dodo Conway, Mrs. Greenwood's neighbor, represents the perfect mother and the baby boom after the second world war. Esther shows her difficulties to adapt to this kind of life throughout the whole novel as part of her intentions to develop her career as an artist. Motherhood would be the main factor that would limit her artistic career (2001, 81), an aspect she recurrently mentions in the novel: "And when I had told the poet I might well get married and have a pack of children some day, she stared at me in horror. But what about your *career*? she had cried" (2001, 211).

Marriage becomes another crusade in Esther's deconstruction of conservative gender roles and reinterpretation of 1950s femininity. She openly talks about her rejection towards marriage and how the pressure society and, concretely, her mother put on her contribute to her final mental breakdown. In one of the passages, Esther's mother gives her a Reader's Digest's article titled "In Defense of Chastity" that "gave all the reasons why a girl shouldn't sleep with anybody but her husband and then only after they were married" (2001, 76):

> The main point of the article was that a man's world is different from a woman's world and a man's emotions are different from a woman's emotions and only marriage can bring the two worlds and the two different sets of emotions together properly. My mother said this was something a girl didn't know about till it was too late, so she had to take the advice of people who were already experts, like a married woman. (2001, 77)

In this fragment, Plath shows very explicitly the heteropatriarchal centered ideology that imposed women adjust their lives to the men's needs. Esther's rejection towards marriage increases the possibilities of letting her mother and American society down: "That's one of the reasons I never wanted to get married. The last thing I wanted was infinite security and to be the place an arrow shoots off from. I wanted change and excitement and to shoot off in all directions myself, like the coloured arrows from a Fourth of July rocket" (2001, 79). Esther's desire for autonomy places her in a very difficult position of total incomprehension and mental instability. In fact, when she informs Buddy Willard that "I'm never going to get married" (2001, 89), his immediate answer is "You're crazy', Buddy brightened, you'll change your mind' (89) but Esther replies "No. My mind's made up" (89). Certainly, Esther's rejection towards the imposed gender roles

and her eagerness to live a different life take her to a mental breakdown and ETC treatment, a therapy that resembles Ethel's way of dying. This takes Esther back to the beginning as her feeling of the Rosenberg's case "had nothing to do with me" suddenly does in metaphorical terms. Through this, Plath shows McCarthyism's punishing methods to women, victims also of strong controlling medical presence and constant public surveillance and judgement (MacPherson 1991, 3).

4. Ethel, Dead Woman Muse

Elisabeth Bronfen in her book *Over her Dead Body* (1992) discusses the importance of death in female texts and how dead women became, for some women writers, "the rhetorical figure of the muse" (1992, 398). In the case of Sylvia Plath, she argues that as a twentieth-century woman writer, she "resort [s] to the topos of the dead woman as a muse" (401). Certainly, she emphasizes the importance death and suicide have in Plath's works and, especially, in *The Bell Jar*, "death increasingly emerges as the solution to her dilemmas. Suicide, she believes, will foreclose the need to make a decision and appears as the sought for the release from conflicts" (408). However, she points out to the fact that Plath's dead woman muse is herself. Understanding Ethel Rosenberg as Esther's double and the importance Ethel's death has for Esther's female consciousness, it could be argued that from this perspective, Ethel Rosenberg becomes a dead woman muse in terms of "feminine death as the creative resurrection of the represented woman" (Bronfen 1992, 401). Ethel's death and the way she was killed is intimately related to Esther's suicidal attempt and her consequent ETC treatment. So, from a feminist perspective, Ethel represents the "dead, absent woman" who is "simultaneously addressed to a community of women listeners who are implicitly present and whose function is precisely to actualise the absent but potential feminine voice" (398). Plath's use of death is aesthetic and feminist and, in this context, the introduction of Ethel's death as a metaphor "serves to articulate another meaning, namely feminine power, buried beneath woman's social deformation by cultural representations" (412).

In chapter 9 Plath mentions again the Rosenbergs, after Esther already knows she was not accepted in the summer course, a situation that provokes a profound depression in her. One of the girls at the Amazon, Hilda, celebrates the Rosenbergs' execution: "I'm so glad they are going to die" (2001, 95). This incident is a recreation of a real experience lived by Plath with one of the editors at *Mlle* magazine written in one of her journals: "The tall beautiful catlike girl who wore an original hat to work every day rose to one elbow from where she had been napping on the divan in the conference room, yawned, and said with

beautiful bored nastiness: "I'm so glad they are going to die"" (1991, 80). As Ashe explains, "Hilda's naming the execution as good is experienced by Greenwood as a horrifying enunciation" since "it emerges from a place of darkness that is particularly disturbing because of its defiance of gender categorization" (1995, 219). This sentence resonates in Esther's head and makes her establish a parallelism between Ethel's dead walk and punishment with hers: "My penalty was the long, dead walk from the frosted glass doors of the Amazon to the strawberry-marble slab of our entry on Madison Avenue" (2001, 95). Esther already feels sick and trapped in this fake world in which it is more important her role as a woman than her poetic work. Almost on the verge of a mental collapse, Esther narrates all her perceptions of the world with a constant presence of death that, from this part of the novel onwards, culminates in a suicidal attempt. In fact, she introduces the figure of the dybbuk to describe her friend Hilda, who, in Esther's eyes, "moved like a mannequin the whole way" (2001, 95). Some lines after, Esther talks about the figure of the dybbuk she saw the previous night on a play and believes "Hilda's voice sounded just like the voice of that dybbuk" (96). The presence of death in Esther's description comes not only from Hilda's automatism and explicit desire for the Rosenberg's execution, it is also present in Esther's comparison with the dybbuk, a bad ghost according to Jewish mythology that possesses the bodies of the living. Esther insists on the Rosenberg's case in order to find some empathy from Hilda:

> So I said, 'Isn't it awful about the Rosenbergs?'
> The Rosenbergs were to be electrocuted late that night.
> 'Yes!' Hilda said, and at last I felt I had touched a human string in the cat's cradle of her heart. It was only as the two of us waited for the others in the tomb-like morning gloom of the conference room that Hilda amplified that Yes of hers (2001, 96)

As shown in the fragment above, Esther's narration turns uncanny in the sense that it "refers to moments where the question whether something is animate (alive) or inanimate (dead), whether something is real or imagined, unique, original or a repetition, a copy, cannot be decided" (Bronfen 1992, 113). The constant presence of death turns the narration uncanny, Hilda's automatism (moved like a mannequin) and Esther's sense of invisibility ("She stared at her reflection in the glossed shop windows as if to make sure, moment by moment, that she continued to exist" (96)) blur the limits between reality and fantasy, related to Esther's mental instability. But, more importantly, the limits between the dead and the living. The asphyxiating atmosphere of the first lines of the novel

is transformed into a "tomb-like morning gloom", both due to the Rosenberg's imminent execution and Esther's anguished existence. The conversation with Hilda continues in relation to the Rosenbergs:

> 'It's awful such people should be alive.'
> She yawned then, and her pale orange mouth opened on a large darkness. Fascinated, I stared at the blind cave behind her face until the two lips met and moved and the dybbuk spoke out of its hiding place, 'I'm so glad they are going to die.' (2001, 96)

As Nóra Séllei argues, "at this moment, Hilda appears dwarfed in her humanity since she becomes the mouthpiece of the dominant discourse of power, of cold war ideology" (2003, 137). Again, Esther's automatized and dehumanized description of Hilda creates a distance in Esther's perception of reality. Hilda's final statement in favor of the Rosenberg's execution leaves her even more detached from reality but closer to the world of the dead and to Ethel. Considering Ethel Esther's uncanny double, "this doubling, dividing and exchanging can, furthermore, involve the subject in his relation to others as he either identifies with another, as he substitutes the alterior self for his own, or as he finds himself incapable of deciding which of the two his self is" (Bronfen 1992, 113). It is at this point of the novel in the very day Ethel will be electrocuted that Esther feels closer to her and to her ETC treatment.

According to Hurd Green, Ethel Rosenberg's body "was tortured in a particularly modern way: by negation, by sexual deprivation, by refusal of the sensate and of connectedness–with her husband, her children, and with her voice, which fell silent many months before it was silenced" (1995, 187). For some women writers such as Adrienne Rich and Plath herself, the image of Ethel's burned body became the punishment some women had to suffer for their "refusal to act as she might have been expected to" (Hurd Green 1995, 188). One of the details that became known in relation to Ethel's execution was the fact that she needed more electricity to die than her husband, something that makes the execution even more tragic. As Hurd Green explains, "Ethel Rosenberg died twice, terribly. Subjected in death to further indignity, her body became an ironic collaborator in her condemnation. Its unwilled resistance to the multiple volts of electricity sent through it by the executioners has provided evidence to those who sought it of her unseemly will" (1995, 186). Ethel's punishment is above all a corporeal torture symbolized in her female body and her physical resistance to end her feminist fight. Hurd Green narrates Ethel's last moments before arriving at the death chamber and how she asked for bodily contact:

> Ethel Rosenberg's last two willed acts, a letter and an embrace, had been acts of love and connection. In her final gesture, she reached out for comfort to another woman. […] As she entered the death chamber, she turned, stopped, and embraces the matron who had accompanied her there, expressing a final connectedness, body to body (1995, 186-87)

A similar situation takes place right before Esther receives her first ETC treatment:

> The nurse started swabbing my temples with a smelly grease.
> As she leaned over to reach the side of my head nearest the wall, her fat breast muffled my face like a cloud or a pillow. A vague, medicinal stench emanated from her flesh.
> 'Don't worry,' the nurse grinned down at me. 'Their first time everybody's scared to death.' (2001, 138).

The physical contact with the nurse creates a fake atmosphere of comfort and care that contrasts with Esther's fearful bodily response to the situation. Ironically, the image implies certain maternal and nursing tone right on the verge of electroshock as if, like Ethel, asking for "comfort to another woman" (Green Hurd 1995, 186). As Sara Ahmed explains in her work *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) "in fear, the world presses against the body; the body shrinks back from the world in the desire to avoid the object of fear. Fear involves shrinking the body; *it restricts the body's mobility precisely insofar as it seems to prepare the body for flight*" (2004, 69). The transformation fear provokes in the surface of Esther's body "my skin had gone stiff, like parchment" (Plath 2001, 138), explains how the object of fear "impresses upon us in the present, as an anticipated pain in the future" (Ahmed 2004, 65). Also, certain objects contribute to Esther's bodily response to fear and transformation of her body as "bodies take the shape of the very contact they have with objects and others" (Ahmed 2004, 1): "Doctor Gordon was fitting two metal plates on either side of my head. He buckled them into place with a strap that dented my forehead, and gave me a wire to bite" (Plath 2001, 138). Unavoidably, this description reminds the reader of the preparation of the bodies of both Ethel and Julius Rosenberg for their execution (Ashe 1995, 226). In relation to this, fear is one of the literary elements that Plath uses as a way to respond to McCarthyism. If both fear and paranoia were instruments addressed to control society and the Americans' behavior, in the text they become literary elements to construct Esther's character. Doctor Gordon, as a representative of a mental institution, also stands for how the system could manipulate and act against Esther's integrity. The metal plates, the buckles, straps and wires materialize their action in Esther's body and anticipate pain.

Esther's stiff skin and the contact of her body with the ETC treatment objects prepare her body for the pain:

> I shut my eyes.
> There was a brief silence, like an indrawn breath.
> Then something bent down and took hold of me and shook me like the end of the world. Whee-ee-ee-ee-ee, it shrilled, through an air crackling with blue light, and with each flash a great jolt drubbed me till I thought my bones would break and the sap fly out of me like a splint plant.
> I wondered what terrible thing it was that I had done. (2001, 138)

Esther uses the metaphor of a plant to describe the feeling of something breaking inside her, the bodily transformation that Esther suffers provoked by the therapy and pain implies also a cultural transformation. The treatment reshapes her identity and miscarried behavior since "pain involves the violation or transgression of the border between inside and outside, and it is through this transgression that I feel the border in the first place" (Ahmed 2004, 31). Esther's still and manipulated body becomes a "passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed" (Butler 1992, 12) and, therefore, "the body is figured as a mere *instrument* or *medium* for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related" (Butler 1992, 12). Thus, Esther's treatment and bodily pain work to reconfigure her social and cultural interaction with herself and others. If pain is "bound up with how we inhabit the world, how we live in relationship with the surfaces, bodies and objects that make up our dwelling places" (Ahmed 1992, 31), then the pain in Esther's body becomes a punishment that pushes her to reconfigure her space in society.

As a result of this painful experience, she wonders "what a terrible thing it was that I had done" (2001, 138), a reaction that makes her understand the whole ETC treatment not as a cure but as a punishment. This statement introduces in the text the idea of betrayal essential in McCarthyist literature. Part of *The Bell Jar*'s plot is structured on the theme of betrayal. Although Jo Gill understands that "the Rosenberg analogy also throws up the theme of betrayal, a theme which reemerges in Esther's eyes in the actions of her second psychiatrist, Dr. Nolan" (2008, 80), from a McCarthyist perspective, Esther is not only the betrayed one but the betrayer. Gill explains how Esther feels betrayed by her second psychiatrist when he does not let Esther know about this first ETC treatment in advance, as he promised (Plath 2001, 138). Even though Esther's reflection could be understood as her disappointment with Dr. Nolan for not keeping his promise, Esther not understanding "what a terrible thing it was I had done"

(138) has an explanation in terms of how she had betrayed her role as a woman of the 1950s. Esther, as Ethel, betrays American society and American values in her transgression of gender roles. Like Ethel, she is punished and treated to cure her deviant behavior.

The ETC treatment does not work for Esther and she finally tries to commit suicide, "I unscrewed the bottle of pills and started taking them swiftly, between gulps of water, one by one by one. At first nothing happened, but as I approached the bottom of the bottle, red and blue lights began to flash before my eyes" (2001, 163). Esther's choice to die brings her closer to Ethel's destiny and to the acceptance of her punishment. Indeed, Luke Ferretter concludes that "Esther's suicide attempt which most closely expresses her sense of identification with the Jewish couple, in that she comes to see herself as she sees them, people whose true thoughts and feelings simply have no place in American society. Esther's sees in the Rosenbergs her own fate–pretend to be someone else or die" (2010, 105). However, Esther comes back from the dead and her grotesque body shows the materialization of death:

> You couldn't tell whether the person in the picture was a man or a woman, because their hair was shaved off and sprouted in bristly chicken-feather tufts all over their head. One side of the person's face was purple, and bulged out in a shapeless way, shading to green along the edges, and then to a sallow yellow. The person's mouth was pale brown, with a rose-colored sore at either corner.
> The most startling thing about the face was its supernatural conglomeration of bright colors.
> I smiled
> The mouth in the mirror cracked into a grin. (2001, 168)

These lines, reminiscent of her poem *Lady Lazarus* (1965), show the physical appearance of a resurrected genderless Esther. She comes back from the dead with a body deprived from any gender construction. According to Bronfen, "a colloquial understanding of the corpse is that it is not gendered, that it is an anonymous, inanimate body, pure materiality without soul or personality" (1992, 63-64). This abject Esther shows how "the construction of gender operates through *exclusionary* means, such that the human is not only produced over and against the inhuman, but through a set of foreclosures, radical erasures, that are, strictly speaking, refused the possibility of cultural articulation" (Butler 1996, xvii) and how through death she has put an end to gender differentiation (Bronfen 1992, 64). Esther's cadaverous resemblance erases all female traces from her body and, therefore, all the gender socially and culturally constructed impositions. Bronfen explains that "because the corpse is a figure without any distinguishing facial

traits of its own, one could say that semiotically it serves as an arbitrary, empty, interchangeable sign, an interminable surface for projections" (1992, 64) which reflects in Esther's colorful face and inhuman features in the "supernatural conglomeration of bright colors" (Plath 2001, 168). Esther's inability to recognize herself in the mirror symbolizes a process of deconstruction and erasure of her former self that firstly works as a revenge to the system. As Séllei affirms, "this disintegrated body and these body images could be considered as the location to resist and subvert the dominant discourses" (2003, 144). Esther attempts to destroy that part of herself that condemns her to be the woman she does not want to be and materializes that destruction in her featureless and genderless abjected body. Esther uses her tortured and manipulated body to fight against patriarchy but also McCarthy's power structure. As Foucault explains, "every power relationship implies, at least *in potential*, a strategy of struggle, in which the two forces are not superimposed, do not lose their specific nature, or do not finally become confused. Each constitute for the other a kind of permanent limit, a point of possible reversal" (1982, 794). Thus, Esther attempts to commit suicide and transforms her abjected ungendered body in a feminist resistance and as an escape from this McCarthyist power relations structure.

However, as Ashe concludes, "Plath makes clear very early in the novel that Esther Greenwood's experience will record a successful navigation through constraints and challenges, culminating in a "recovery," a restoration to well-being, that involves the assumption of marriage and motherhood" (1995, 218-19).In this sence, Esther's resurrection immerses her again in the system she wanted to escape from so eagerly. Even though her abjected and genderless body can be understood as a direct attack on the heteropatriarchal system, there is no other alternative for her but to remain in the system that punished her for rebelling against the imposed female roles: "wherever I sat–on the deck of a ship or at a street café in Paris or Bangkok–I would be sitting under the same glass bell jar, stewing in my own sour air" (2001, 178). Esther's resignation shows the impossibility to free from the asphyxiating patriarchal impositions, the same that sentenced Ethel Rosenberg to the electric chair.

To conclude, Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* can be read as a cultural and feminist response to McCarthyism in terms of how women became the pillars of the American society of the 1950s and, particularly, of the family and the domestic space. Great part of McCarthy's communist hunt was also based on anti-American activities and behaviors that could put in danger the essential values of American society. Marriage, motherhood and housewifery became the destiny of the women of the 1950s who, at the same time, in these conservative gender roles, sustained American consumerism and capitalism. Plath introduces in her novel the figure of Ethel Rosenberg as a fundamental influence for the protagonist of

the novel, Esther Greenwood, as a way to contest the gender constraints suffered by the women of her generation and future ones. Ethel Rosenberg's fight and death sentence awakened a feminist conscience in the women of the 1950s like Plath and her protagonist, which pushed them to question their roles in society and rewrite their female identities. Ethel's and Esther's betrayal to American society in their rejection to accomplish the imposed female roles contributes to their anti-American behavior and the conspiracy plots so common in the literature related to the McCarthy era. Sixty years after Plath's death, *The Bell Jar* is still contemporary as a feminist response to the conservative gender roles rooted in society and a visionary text in terms of how women and their inflicted patriarchal roles in society sustain contemporary capitalism. In this sense, Plath contributed with this novel not only with a cultural perception of feminism but, more importantly, with a political one understanding gender as a subject category that intersects with other social aspects. Plath's *The Bell Jar* stands as a literary text representative of McCarthy's times and a basic feminist novel to understand contemporary feminist literature.

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Spanish Women in British Literary Annuals (1823-1830)[1]

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This paper explores the representations of Spain, and particularly Spanish women, in five British literary annuals of the late Romantic period (1823-1830): *Forget Me Not*, *The Literary Souvenir*, *Friendship's Offering*, *The Keepsake* and *The Amulet*. Literary annuals were illustrated anthologies of poems, short stories and travelogues which started to be published in Britain in the 1820s and were sold annually as presents for Christmas and New Year. Mostly aimed at a female audience, these annuals were imbued with a spirit of cosmopolitanism, featuring texts about countries and regions from all over the world. Spanish themes were constantly present in the selected literary annuals, where with a few notable exceptions, most female Spanish characters are countermodels of femininity that deviate from the traditional feminine values fostered by these publications and defy the idealised depictions of (British) women appearing in their texts and engravings. These representations of Spanish women, which underline the ethnic and cultural differences between Spain and Britain, are in tune with the romantic image of the country promoted by British writers at the time.

Keywords: Anglo-Spanish relations; British Romanticism; Imagology; literary annuals; models of femininity; Romantic Spain; Peninsular War; Spanish Orientalism.

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1. Introduction

Spain undeniably became a source of inspiration for British Romantics. They wrote about Spanish patriots and freedom-fighters, recreated scenes from its past and described its picturesque landscapes and manners, providing their own figurations of Spain and its people. The Peninsular War (1808-1814) acted as a catalyst for the reassessment of Spanish culture, history and society, which led British authors to make "a substantial imaginative investment in Spain's past and present identity… forg[ing] a powerful and enduring image of the country" (Saglia and Haywood 2018, 2). This Romantic image of Spain in British literature and, more generally, the cultural contacts and transfers between Britain and the Hispanic world have received significant attention since the turn of the century: Saglia (2000), Almeida (2010), Valladares (2015), Saglia and Haywood (2018), and Beatty and Laspra Rodríguez (2019), among others, have examined the representations of Spain in British Romantic prose, drama and poetry; Coletes Blanco and Laspra Rodríguez (2013, 2019) have studied and edited the English poetry of the Peninsular War and the Liberal Triennium; and, more recently, Perojo Arronte and Flores Moreno (2022) have explored the reception and dissemination of Spanish literature in British periodicals. However, although the presence of Spain in Romantic print culture has been extensively analysed in recent decades, certain primary sources still require further examination. This is the case of the literary annual.

Literary annuals are illustrated anthologies of prose and verse texts that were sold annually, usually during the Christmas season, and were given as tokens of friendship and affection. These small-sized books had embellished boards and were lavishly decorated with engraved illustrations, which were privileged over the texts since authors usually had to write their contributions in response to the images that the editors had previously chosen. Some of these authors were second-rate men and women writers who have entirely fallen into oblivion, but the annuals also featured texts by renowned and reputed figures. Female authors like Felicia Hemans and Letitia Elizabeth Landon (L.E.L.) were regular contributors, and even male canonical poets like William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who had certain reservations about the reputation of these anthologies, eventually accepted lucrative offers to collaborate on them (Harris 2015, 3).

British literary annuals are a product of the late Romantic period whose history starts in November 1822, when the German London-based publisher Rudolph Ackermann brought out *Forget Me Not: A Christmas and New Year Present for 1823*. This was the first volume of the successful *Forget Me Not*

series, edited by Frederic Shoberl, which served as model for the numerous annuals that started to be published in the mid-1820s, such as *Friendship's Offering* (1824–1844), *The Literary Souvenir* (1825–1837), and *The Keepsake* (1828–1857). The popularity of these publications peaked in the 1830s, but it gradually declined in the following decades (Harris 2015, 3).

Texts and engravings depicting Spain and its people were not uncommon in British literary annuals. These portrayals, which have been neglected in previous studies, are of notable relevance for the study of the representations of Spain in Britain since the annuals achieved an enormous success and circulation that surpassed that of the poetry by reputed literati—for instance, the most successful annuals could sell between 6,000 and 15,000 copies, whereas *The Collected Works of S. T. Coleridge* (1828) was issued in only 300 sets (Sonoda 2005, 60). Given the spread and potential readership of these annuals, they could play an important role in the creation, consolidation and dissemination of romantic images of Spain among the British public. In addition, the emergence of the literary annual took place at a time in which Spain was again in the limelight due to the collapse of the Spanish liberal regime in 1823 and a renewed interest in Spanish literature and culture (Medina Calzada 2022, 43-44). With the purpose of examining how that interest manifested in British literary annuals, I surveyed the volumes of *Forget Me Not* (1823-1847, 1856), *Friendship's Offering* (1824-1844), *The Literary Souvenir* (1825-1835), *The Amulet* (1826-1836) and *The Keepsake* (1828-1861) that were published until 1830. The selection of these five annuals is motivated by their success and continuity, apart from the fact that all of them started to be published in the 1820s. Although I identified and examined all the references to Spain and its culture in the selected annuals, this paper centres on the representation of Spanish women in these volumes. Since the annuals have been traditionally considered a feminine genre targeted principally at the female public and with a moralising function, the ways in which Spanish female characters are depicted in these publications is of interest to shed new light on both the figurations of Spain and female representations in the British print culture of the late Romantic era. In the light of the principles of Imagology, the branch of comparative literature that analyses national characters and stereotypes in literature (Beller and Leersen, 2007), this paper thus demonstrates that, despite a few exceptions, most of the fictional Spanish women portrayed in the texts and engravings of the selected annuals serve as countermodels of femininity that deviate from—and even oppose—some of the ideals promoted in these publications. These Spanish women represent a female Other that underlines the cultural, social and ethnic differences between Spain and Britain.

2. Spain in British Literary Annuals

Over the last two decades, Romantic scholars have persistently undermined the myth of British insularity by uncovering and exploring the multiplicity of cultural contacts established between Britain and the Continent in the Romantic period (Mortensen 2004; Clark and Connolly 2015; Wohlgemut 2009; Saglia 2019). Britain's growing Empire and their involvement in foreign affairs together with the increasing circulation of people and cultural products in the early nineteenth century boosted the interest of British authors and readers in other parts of the world (Esterhammer 2018, 82). Romantic cosmopolitanism is displayed in the literary annuals, which include numerous poems, short stories, travelogues and engravings portraying a wide variety of regions and peoples. Texts and images of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Russia, the Ottoman Empire, India, China, the Americas, and Africa were not uncommon in these literary annuals, which ironically also show some commitment to the nationalist agenda consolidated in Britain in the 1820s.

The presence of Spanish themes in the British literary annuals of the late Romantic period is not overwhelming, but it reveals a continuous and constant interest in Spain as a source of literary inspiration. With the crisis and collapse of the Spanish constitutional regime in 1823 and the arrival of Spanish liberal exiles in London, Spain was in the spotlight for a couple of years, but attention gradually decreased as the hopes for a liberal uprising that would put an end to the absolutist rule of Ferdinand VII faded away. This tendency is reflected in the periodical press but not in literary annuals. Considering the volumes of *Forget Me Not* published between 1823 and 1830, all of them contain at least one text connected with Spain and its culture or including Spanish characters, and there is an increase in the number of those texts from 1825 onwards, with an average of three texts per issue. In the rest of the annuals analysed for this study, some of which started to be published in the second half of the 1820s, poems and short stories somehow related to Spain can be found in the vast majority of the volumes in similar or slightly lower proportions to those of *Forget Me Not*.

Before examining the representations of Spanish women, it is necessary to provide a general overview of the main themes and motifs in the texts about Spain included in British literary annuals to know the discourses, images and attitudes towards Spain and the Spanish people present in this type of publications. Considering this, I identified all the significant references to Spain and Spaniards contained in the volumes, whether they appear in texts that are evidently connected with aspects of Spanish history, culture and society or not. Obviously, the stories set in Spain and the poems about Spanish characters are central to the analysis, but apparently casual references in other texts can be meaningful too. In

addition, the engravings decorating the annuals were also considered, although only a few of the texts connected with Spain are illustrated. These engravings are mostly restricted to portrayals of Spanish women and are thus examined in the following section. Once the texts under analysis were selected, the next step was to identify any common themes or elements in their representations of Spain and the Spanish people. Although they engage with different generic conventions and explore a wide variety of topics, they can be classified into three main categories: Islamic Iberia, the Peninsular War and Spanish backwardness.

The appeal of Moorish-Spanish themes, a transnational phenomenon that can be traced back to the long eighteenth century, became more intense in Britain in the late Romantic period. The attempts to reconstruct Spain's Islamic past include scholarly studies, translations of Spanish ballads and more imaginative reinterpretations in literature and other popular forms of entertainment (Saglia 2000, 261-262). Unsurprisingly, British literary annuals contain some poems and short stories that reconstruct or evoke Al-Andalus and the struggles between the Christian and Muslim Iberian kingdoms in the Middle Ages. However, at least before 1830, this is not the dominant trend in the annuals as there are only four texts dealing with different aspects of Spain's Islamic past in the selected volumes.

The most relevant of these texts is Joseph Blanco White's short story "The Alcazar of Seville," published in *Forget Me Not* in 1825. Blanco, who had self-exiled in London in 1810, recalls the legends associated with the Alcazar that his mother used to tell him when he was a child and portrays this Sevillian landmark as an "enchanted place" inhabited by "the shades of both Moors and Spaniards who had dwelt there in the ages of love and romance" (*Forget Me Not* 1825, 32). The Alcazar represents the vestige of a long-gone era and, as Muñoz Sempere indicates, it connects the past and the present, Al-Andalus and the Romantic period (2021, 123). Blanco seems to feel a sense of nostalgia for his hometown, but he does not yearn for a return to the "ages of love and romance" to which he alludes. This yearning and glorification of the chivalric spirit displayed by medieval knights is more conspicuous in William Harrison Ainsworth's "The Fortress of Saguntum" (*Literary Souvenir* 1825, 259-282), a short story set in the times of the so-called *reconquista*. The wars and conflicts between Christian and Muslim forces for the control of the Iberian Peninsula are also the setting of Lord John Russell's "The Captive of Alhama" (*Literary Souvenir* 1829, 261-265), a retelling in verse of the story of El Abencerraje.[2] Finally, the

2 Different versions of the anonymous *Historia del Abencerraje y la hermosa Jarifa*, the story of a Muslim man captured by the Christian army on his wedding day, appeared in the 1560s, including the ones contained in Jorge de Montemayor's *Los siete libros de Diana* (1562)

fourth text about Muslim Iberia is "Abdoulrahman III. An Historical Sketch" (*The Amulet* 1829, 306-308), a poem by Charles Swain that evokes the luxury and grandeur of the palace of Abd al-Rahman III (890-961), the first Caliph of Córdoba. Swain imagines an Oriental and exotic setting that is not explicitly connected with Spain since the poem contains no allusions to Al-Andalus or any place in the Iberian Peninsula, although it is implicitly related to it since British and European Romantics considered Spain part of the Orient (Saglia 2005, 481; Grieve 2009, 214).

Texts about the Peninsular War, however, are more abundant than those about Muslim Iberia, showing that the conflict had a notable impact on British society which lasted still in the 1820s. The annuals feature poems about British heroism, such as Charles Maturin's "Wellington" (*Friendship's Offering* 1826, 48-49) or Allan Cunningham's "The British Sword" (*Literary Souvenir* 1827, 117-118), as well as elegies to British soldiers, including Robert Southey's "Lines to the Memory of a Young Officer, Who Was Mortally Wounded in the Battle of Coruña" (*Literary Souvenir* 1826, 341-344). They also contain some short stories set in Spain during the 1808-1814 conflict that abound in descriptions of cruel crimes to illustrate the horrors of war. Examples of this are "The Halt on the Mountain. A Tale of the Spanish War" by Emma Roberts (*Forget Me Not* 1828, 362-378) and "The Attacked Escort. A Spanish Scene" (*Forget Me Not* 1827, 333-343), which has been attributed to Mary Shelley (Crook 2019, 364-367). Despite their different attitudes towards the Peninsular War, these texts have something in common: Spain and Spaniards generally play a minor role. This contrasts with the early literary responses to the Peninsular War, in which British authors usually celebrated the Spaniards' heroic resistance against Napoleon and contributed to the reappraisal of Spanish culture and the spread of the romantic image of the country (Saglia 2000, 65-143; Coletes Blanco and Laspra Rodríguez 2013). Nevertheless, as observed by Saglia (2000, 23-24), gradually "Spain was edited out of the histories of a war that was increasingly turned into a British affair," and when the conflict ended, the Peninsular War became "part of a mythology of British heroism." This is perfectly reflected in some texts included in these literary annuals, such as Southey's "A Soldier's Epitaph" (*Literary Souvenir* 1827, 89-90), in which Spain and Spaniards are not even mentioned.

The third category is a jumble of different stereotypical traits or elements that somehow show and reinforce the image of Spain as a backward country. They range from the superstition and fanaticism promoted by the Catholic Church in

and Antonio de Villegas's *Inventario* (1565). Russell's source, however, is José Antonio Conde's *Historia de la dominación de los árabes en España* (1821, III: 262-265), as Russell indicates at the beginning of the poem (*Literary Souvenir* 1829, 261).

Spain—with allusions to the Inquisition—to references to the pride, indolence, festive mood and passionate nature of the Spanish people. Echoes of the Black Legend are present in several texts, including Thomas Frognall Dibdin's "The Two Pilgrims in Grey" (*Forget Me Not* 1825, 73-88), a short story set in the seventeenth century in which two friends were unfairly accused of crimes that they had not committed but managed to run away and retreated to a monastery. Monastic life sparked the interest of several contributors since there are other texts in which some of the characters enter a religious order, such as George Croly's poem "Maria de Torquemada Taking the Veil" (*Forget Me Not* 1827, 87-88) and John Bird's short story "The Convent of St. Ursula" (*Forget Me Not* 1830, 361-379). In Bird's tale, the villains are a proud abbess and a treacherous priest, and the Inquisition seems a constant threat, although in the end it does interfere in the course of events. Other stories also contain passing references to the Inquisition, even when the Holy Office is totally unrelated to the plot. This is the case of the anonymous "Double or Quits; or, The Inconstant" (*Keepsake* 1828, 247-265), a comic story about a man engaged with two different women in which the author mentions an *auto de fe* as if to provide local colour to his narrative (260).

In these texts, stereotypical references to the Inquisition and the Black Legend act just as theatrical props to set the scene since the authors hardly ever show a clear intention of criticising or denouncing Spaniards' intolerance and bigotry as British writers had done in the preceding centuries. In the Romantic period, these old stereotypes are reassessed, and, although they do not disappear, they have to make room for the new stereotypes that depict Spain as a land of romance inhabited by reckless patriots and alluring dark-eyed women who are still imbued with the spirit of chivalry. As Venegas (2018, 15) notes, both the old and the new stereotypes "function as a barrier between Spain and northern Europe" as well as between the past and the present. The Romantic image of Spain does not present a total rupture with preceding representations but a shift in the observers' outlook and interpretation of Spain and its culture. Like Protestant reformers and eighteenth-century French philosophers, Romantic writers regarded Spain as "a non-European Europe, a non-Western West" (Iarocci 2006, 15), but they were attracted by the non-modernity that their predecessors had despised (Andreu Miralles 2016, 64).

Texts about Spain published in British literary annuals underline the Spanish difference, establishing an often implicit—and occasionally explicit—contrast between Spain and Britain. Whether the focus is on Spain's Oriental roots, Spaniards' exalted passions or the fanaticism of the Catholic Church, the imagery about Spain in these texts usually places it in a pre-modern stage. This is also reflected in the portrayals of Spanish women that can be found in these annuals, which the following section explores.

3. Spanish Women: Countermodels of Femininity

The literary annual has traditionally been considered a feminine genre in which women played a key role as readers, authors and subjects. In the words of Harris (2005, 573), the annuals "exuded a feminine delicacy that attracted primarily a female readership" fascinated by these books' embellished boards, lavish illustrations, and sentimental stories. Certainly, the annuals were mainly targeted at a female consumer, although they were not exclusively read and possessed by women. Through the analysis of the handwritten inscriptions of a sample of 354 annuals, Feldman demonstrates that more than a quarter of the owners of the books that she could identify were men (2006, 57). Her study also challenges the traditionally assumed idea that these works were presents that women of marriageable age received from their suitors since givers were often family members or other women. Nonetheless, her findings still confirm that the majority of the recipients that could be identified were women (57-58).

Women were also among the contributors of literary annuals. Even if writers dominated the annuals until 1830 (Harris 2005, 612) and the editors of the volumes analysed here were all men, the annuals published in the 1820s also feature numerous texts by women authors, some of whom hid under male pseudonyms. These female contributors include not only Felicia Hemans and Laetitia Elizabeth Landon, two women writers frequently associated with literary annuals, but also Mary Shelley, Maria Jane Jewsbury, Mary Russell Mitford, Maria Edgeworth, Mary Howitt, Mary Diana Dods, and Susannah Strickland, among others. In the 1830s and 1840s, the feminisation of the literary annual became more prominent and the number of female contributors and editors increased significantly (Hootman 2004, 8-9).

Nonetheless, the feminisation of the contents of the annuals took place at an earlier date. In the *Forget Me Not* of 1823, the first literary annual published in Britain, the final part of the volume—around 120 pages—provides factual information on diverse issues: a genealogy of European sovereigns, a historical chronicle of 1822, and lists of diplomatic agents and the most populated cities in Britain and the rest of the world. Frederick Shoberl and Rudolph Ackermann, the editor and the publisher of *Forget Me Not*, must have considered that this information was useful or relevant to their readers, which probably also implies that they did not have an exclusively female audience in mind. This type of contents, however, soon disappeared from their annual. In the *Forget Me Not* of 1824, useful information is limited to an article about the post office in Great Britain (*Forget Me Not* 1824, 374-390), and this class of informative pieces cannot be found in subsequent volumes. In fact, although literary annuals include a wide variety of texts, those dealing with topics traditionally associated with the domestic and feminine sphere (e.g. love, marriage, family) generally prevail.

Female presence is even more conspicuous in the engravings, which frequently portray idealised women undertaking activities that were supposed to be appropriate for their sex (Cruz 2012, 10). Even if, as Hootman (2004, 58) suggests, idealised depictions of women became more common after 1840, early literary annuals uphold an ideal of femininity that confines them to the domestic sphere and expects them to be virtuous, self-sacrificing and delicate (González-Moreno 2020, 53; Harris 2005). For instance, the engravings in the *Forget Me Not* of 1826 depict women in passive contemplation ("Contemplation"), tenderly looking at a sleeping infant ("The Child's Dream"), in love ("Woman's Love"), scared of a man dressed up as a ghost ("The Regretted Ghost"), and praying ("Evening Prayers" and "Sir Everhard"). These engravings had a didactic function as they presented women with "models of physical and moral beauty" (Cruz 2012, 13) and illustrated the ideals of femininity also promoted in the texts. Harris (2005, 592) contends that although female authors like Hemans challenged patriarchal femininity, the poetry contained in the annuals usually defines women as passive, uneducated, domestic, impotent or simple. Furthermore, fiction sometimes has a clear moralising function that is best reflected in the sentimental stories warning young women that passionate and irrational love may destroy their lives. The annuals could definitely be used to educate female readers, an idea also supported by González-Moreno (2020, 53), who argues that literary annuals were evolved forms of conduct books where women could find role models to imitate.

Most of the representations of Spanish women that can be found in the British literary annuals of the 1820s do not exactly correspond with these ideals of femininity—and sometimes, they totally oppose them. This is the case of the Spanish lady that appears in the anonymous short story "The Stauntons. A Fact" (*Literary Souvenir* 1828, 262-279), who is vilified as "a Phryne—a Circe—a Calypso" (273) in allusion to her cunning nature and active sexual life. This lady, called Countess Maria, is depicted as a *femme fatale* who seduces one of his husband's friends. She is said to possess "the talent of a man, with all the softness of her sex" (273) or, in other words, she has the beauty and gentleness that attract men together with some masculine attributes that are undesirable in a woman, such as vigour and intelligence. She lacks feminine virtues like modesty, decency and virtuousness and is portrayed as both dissolute and evil (274).

Countess Maria was not the only Spanish woman challenging ideals of femininity fostered in British annuals. Emma Roberts's tale "The Halt on the Mountain. A Tale of the Spanish War" (*Forget Me Not* 1828, 362-378) tells the story of Estela and Magdalena, two sisters whose friends and family had been murdered by the French during the Peninsular War. They managed to escape

and, in revenge, Estela killed dozens of French soldiers while pretending to assist them. After Magdalena's death, Estela joined the Spanish guerrillas posing as a man. Estela not only undertakes a role usually assigned to men but also ends up adopting a male identity to continue fighting for the Spanish cause. Despite her motivations, her actions are morally questionable, as her sister admits (374), but Roberts's intention is to denounce the evils of war in general—not Estela's behaviour. In fact, her story underlines female heroism and evokes the accounts of Spanish women fighters that spread since the outbreak of the Peninsular War in 1808. The most notable of these female heroines is Agustina de Aragón, celebrated by Byron as the Maid of Saragossa in the first Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and transformed into a legendary figure by the reports and literary representations of the Siege of Zaragoza (Saglia 2000, 194-196). The active role that Agustina and other women played in the resistance against the French offered "new models of female agency" exploited in the literature about the conflict (Valladares 2008, 110). As Saglia (2000, 148-149) argues, these models can be linked to traditional figurations of women who disguise as male soldiers and sailors that can be found in ballads and popular forms of literature. For Dugaw (1996, xi), female warriors in these ballads took up arms for love or for glory, but Estela and the female patriots and freedom-fighters of the Peninsular War fought to defend their home and nation against foreign aggression. In the case of Estela, by the end of the narrative she was completely alone and her domestic sphere had been destroyed, so the nation—the *homeland*—became her only home, and she was still determined to fight for it.

A female Spanish patriot is also represented in the anonymous poem "On the Portrait of a Spanish Princess," published in *Forget Me Not* (1830, 417-418). The poem is illustrated by "The Spanish Princess," an engraving by Robert Graves based on David Wilkie's *The Spanish Girl*, which he painted while in Spain in 1828. In the same year, Wilkie produced other Spanish paintings in tune with the Romantic image of the country, such as *The Spanish Posada: A Guerilla Council of War* and *The Defence of Saragossa*, both of which are preserved in the Royal Collection. In *The Spanish Girl* he depicts a girl with dark hair, dark skin and big dark eyes. She is dressed in typical and recognisable Spanish garments: she is wearing the traditional *peineta* and *mantilla* and is holding a fan. The anonymous poem, "On the Portrait of a Spanish Princess," is not addressed to a child but to an unidentified young woman. The poet does not refer to any real Spanish princess, but alludes to the contemporary political scene in Spain in the second stanza. The lady's eyes were not as bright as they used to be because she had been crying for what had happened "when the sword / Did reap her country's corn-fields, and the hoof / Of the proud war-horse press'd her grapes" and "the blood of patriot martyrs was pour'd forth / Upon the earth like water"

(417). Although the author could be alluding to the Peninsular War, the reference to "patriot martyrs" is more likely connected with the martyrs of the liberal cause and the restoration of absolutism in Spain in 1823, when the country was again invaded by French troops to put an end to the Spanish constitutional regime established in 1820. Liberals were persecuted and thousands of them exiled to France and England; others could not escape and were imprisoned or sentenced to death, such as the ill-fated leader of the Spanish Revolution of 1820, Rafael de Riego, who was hanged for treason in November 1823.

The poet of "On the Portrait of a Spanish Princess," however, seems more interested in celebrating women's beauty than discussing recent events in the Iberian Peninsula. Beauty, he argues, is a divine quality attributed to women, and female beauty possesses "an all-surpassing magic" (418). For the author, no man should look a woman "with eyes unholy of her loveliness" because "she is a temple which th' Eternal One / Hath built him to inhabit" (418). Nonetheless, the attitude of the Spanish Princess seems to defy the poet's ideas about female beauty and men's right to "inhabit" women. He considers her beautiful, but he is somehow dissatisfied with the girl's pensive and proud expression. He remarks that he does not fear the frown and "dangerous smile" of this woman, who was destined to be queen, but he does not explain what makes her smile dangerous. It could be her intelligence, to which he also alludes, or it can be that despite her beauty, the poet does not find her pleasing. He dares to contemplate her image, but he does not interact with her in any way and, certainly, he seems unable to understand her—even less to subdue her.

William Kennedy, the author of "The Spanish Flower Girl" (*The Amulet* 1829, 367-368), is even more displeased with the lady to whom his poem is devoted. The engraving illustrating it is based on Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's *Muchacha con flores* (c. 1665-1670), where we see a young girl with a turban and flowers in her hair.[3] The girl's smile is elusive and also poses a threat to the poet, who is hurt by her indifference and mocking attitude. A feeling of resentment towards the Spanish flower girl pervades the poem since the author feels tricked by her and claims that, despite loving her, he would not tolerate such behaviour. "I would not be a woman's toy / For all the gold in Spain" (368), he affirms. Yet he does not renounce her and, adopting a rather condescending attitude, he makes harsh reproaches about her appearance. He dislikes the flowers she wears in her hair, which are typical of Andalusian women, because they were taken from Pérez's garden, and instead he wants to crown her with a garland made of his "poor

3 By the time the poem and engraving were published, *Muchacha con flores* was part of the collection of the Dulwich Picture Gallery, so it was well known in Britain, where Murillo's paintings were in vogue in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Kent 2020).

flowerets in the field" (368). For him, wild flowers suited her better than the ones cultivated by Pérez, her "purse-proud" Spanish lover, which may imply that her hair ornaments should be in tune with her lack of refinement. On the other hand, it may also imply that in the same way that the poet is attracted by a rustic girl, he also prefers the rural countryside to Pérez's Spanish garden, implicitly comparing his frankness and unaffectedness with the Spaniard's artificiality and pretension. It should be noted that in garden design Spanish gardens show clear patterns and are more artificial than the irregular and presumably more natural English gardens. Considering this, by telling the girl how she should arrange her hair, he is trying not only to make her conform with his own taste but also to erase the Spanish difference imposing on her a model of femininity more appropriate to British readers. Apart from being jealous, the poet seems molested by the girl's Spanishness, understood here as playfulness, frivolity, sensuality and pretension.

Kennedy's poem and the engraving of *Muchacha con flores* attracted the attention of the reviewer of *The Amulet* in *The Paisley Magazine* (1828).[4] Besides praising "the simple, artless, and delicious lines" written by Kennedy, the anonymous reviewer expresses his fascination with Murillo's painting and, in particular, with the girl it portrays. He refers to her as a "little gipsey [sic]" with a "dainty smile" (543). The fact that he regards her as a gypsy woman deserves consideration since Kennedy does not even mention that term in his poem. In fact, there are no references to *gitanos* or *gitanas* in the texts about Spain contained in the literary annuals. As noted by Charnon-Deutsch (2004, 58), Spanish Calés "became an object of intense international curiosity" in the Romantic period, but such interest was more prominent in French literature and after 1830. Certainly, it is not present in the annuals. In fact, although references to Spanish gypsies may appear in travel narratives and other literary texts, this is not a central theme in the representations of Spain in the Romantic period.

The girl's turban in Murillo's *Muchacha con flores* is reminiscent of Spain's Oriental past, which is more intensely evoked in "A Spanish Lady," the engraving by J. H. Robinson after a picture by G. S. Newton that illustrates Felicia Hemans' poem "A Spanish Lady. From a Picture by G. S. Newton, Esq." (*Literary Souvenir* 1827, 119). The poem and, especially, the image show stereotypical features of Spanish women and national character. The Spanish lady, with remarkably dark hair and skin, almond-shaped eyes, and big lips, is dressed lavishly and covered with jewels and reminds us of the Romantic representations of Oriental luxury.

4 There is a logical explanation why *The Amulet* of 1829 was reviewed in *The Paisley Magazine* in 1828: it was a common practice that literary annuals were published in autumn, before the Christmas season, but their date was that of the following year.

She is playing a guitar, but for Hemans this is not a sign of her cheerful and joyful character. On the contrary, the lady is singing a sad love song and is totally absorbed in her feelings. The poem exemplifies what Hoagwood and Ledbetter (2005, 37-38) call "aestheticized objectification" in relation to Hemans's poems in the annuals. They argue that her poems are secondary to the engravings illustrating them—a circumstance that applies to other texts in the annuals and certainly to the ones discussed above—and, as a consequence, the imaginary characters of the poems are less important than their pictorial representation and become mere ornaments. Moreover, through this objectification Hemans detaches her female characters "from the world of action," making them prisoners of their "own supposed feeling-states" (37). This is clearly seen in Hemans's "A Spanish Lady" as the woman is incarcerated within her sorrow and shows no desire to escape from it. She is deprived of agency and rationality and reduced to her emotions alone. This emphasis on the lady's feelings also connects her with the more passionate character usually attributed to southern Europeans. Hemans's poem, in fact, alludes to the "sweet south," a phrase borrowed from Byron's *Beppo* that implicitly invites comparison with the colder and more rational north, although she fails to comment on it further.

There are more examples of Spanish women trapped within their feelings in British literary annuals. One of them is Mary Howitt's "Queen Catharine's [sic] Sorrow" (*Friendship's Offering* 1830, 145-148), a poem about the sadness and loneliness experienced by Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536) after Henry VIII married Anne Boleyn. Secluded in her chamber and in a state of inertia, Queen Catherine could not stand listening to her maid's melancholic song, which caused even more distress to her. Howitt describes her as a faithful and loyal wife—a saint in Henry VIII's words (148)—whose only ambition was to be loved by her husband, not to be queen.

Another queen reduced to her role of loving wife—or rather grief-stricken widow—can be found in Samuel Carter Hall's poem "Juana, of Torquemada" (*The Amulet* 1828, 403-406), which alludes to a passage from Southey's *History of the Peninsular War* (1823, I: 352) where he explains that while mourning his husband in the small town of Torquemada, Queen Juana I of Castile (1479-1555), Catherine of Aragon's sister, was told of another dead king who resurrected. A totally devastated Juana wanted to believe that the story was true, and she remained by his husband's corpse side because she wanted to be the first one to see him restored to life. An even more passive queen of Iberian origin appears in Bernard Barton's poem "The Coronation of Ines de Castro" (*The Amulet* 1830, 310-312). Ines de Castro (c. 1320-1355) was a noblewoman from Galicia and the lover of Prince Peter, heir to the Portuguese crown. Peter's father, Afonso IV, ordered to kill her, but then when the Prince became Peter I, he claimed

that they had been secretly married, and therefore he recognised her as his wife and queen.[5] The legend claims that Ines de Castro was crowned posthumously and Portuguese noblemen were forced to swear allegiance before her remains. Barton's poem reconstructs this episode in which the corpse of the lady is placed upon a throne while Peter I contemplates how she receives the homage that noblemen could not grant her when she was alive. Her objectification is complete: her lifeless female body, adorned by embroidered robes and a golden crown, is revered by a group of men who render homage to her now that the influence of Castile that she represented is no longer a threat to the Portuguese monarchy.

Catherine, Juana and Ines are depicted as victims of love and passive characters whose lives are determined by other peoples' actions. Their apparent disregard for political intrigues, their inaction and the emphasis on their role as loving wives make them conform with idealised models of femininity promoted in the annuals. At the same time, they are different from most of the Spanish female characters analysed above, which should make us wonder whether social class is a determining factor in the depictions of these women. It is tempting to argue that the higher their status, the greater their compliance with traditional feminine values, a thesis that is partially but not totally confirmed. Definitely, the three most passive and unresisting female characters are these three queens; two of them, Catherine and Juana, are even presented as models of piety. Hemans's Spanish lady, in sumptuous Oriental dress in the engraving illustrating the poem, is also a rather passive character trapped in her feelings. Suffering is also present in the portrayal of "The Spanish Princess," although her attitude is different. She is not a real princess—actually, she wears a *peineta* not a crown—and her "dangerous smile" suggests that she is not willing to accept the current situation in Spain and the fate of its people with resignation. Even more menacing are "The Spanish Flower Girl," a character clearly belonging to the lower classes, and the avenging patriot Estela, whom the war had reduced to poverty. Countess Maria, the cunning and lustful Spanish noblewoman in "The Stauntons. A Fact" is by no means a model of behaviour, but the British middle class generally

5 The story of Ines de Castro, retold by Luís de Camões in *Os Lusíadas* (1572) and Aphra Behn in *Agnes de Castro* (1688), among other, captivated the imagination of some British Romantic writers. Barton may have been written his poem in response to Felicia Hemans's "The Coronation of Inez de Castro," which appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1828. Walter Savage London also authored two brief plays on episodes of her life: "Ines de Castro at Coimbra" and "Ines de Castro at Cintra," both included in *Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems* (1831). Furthermore, the *Literary Souvenir* of 1829 also includes a poem by Alaric. A. Watts entitled "King Pedro's Revenge" preceded by a historical note explaining the events after Ines de Castro's murder (159-170).

regarded the aristocracy with some contempt for their ostensible corruption and vices. Consequently, class is important in the characterisation of these Spanish women, in which the behaviour codes, expectations, preconceived ideas about the different social classes also play a part.

The three queens of Iberian origin are also the only ones in which the Spanish difference is completely erased. In other words, they lack any specific features or traits that would *make* them Spanish. By contrast, the other female characters are constructed upon difference: they look differently as their skin and eyes are darker; they are dressed differently as they wear exotic turbans, *mantillas* and *peinetas*; they are more passionate, more sensual, more courageous and also more dangerous than the (British) women who are presented as models of femininity in the annuals. The portrayals of the three queens, however, seem immune to national stereotypes. They are also the only ones based on real historical characters, a circumstance that may explain why they do not possess traits connected with the idea of Spanishness that the annuals promote. In fact, the characterisation of these queens is not original since it is based on well-known historical or pseudo-historical accounts. On the contrary, authors enjoyed more freedom when creating the other female characters and provided them with features and elements that they associated with Spain and its people. Those features and elements were not necessarily real because they do not aim to describe how Spanish women were but how they imagined them to be.

4. Concluding remarks

Whether they are feminine models conforming with the passive roles and domestic values promoted in literary annuals or countermodels deviating from them, the representations of all the female Spanish characters analysed in this paper comply with patriarchal constructions of femininity. What is particularly interesting about the countermodels is that they underline their Spanishness, understood as those distinguishing features that make them different from British women and the potential female readers of the annual. The Spanish woman is thus imagined as a female Other, an exotic, intriguing, or menacing figure who is sometimes difficult to understand and subdue for the narrators and poetic voices that we find in the texts. The representations of these Spanish women, however, are perfectly consistent with the figurations of Spain in Romantic Britain and offer a relatively wide variety of female characters connected with diverse stereotypes or preconceived ideas about the country, complementing the cliché of the dark-haired black-eyed beauty.

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Inner-witnessing as a spatial everyday practice in Ann Petry's *The Street*

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Some scholars approach Ann Petry's portrayal of Lutie Johnson's fate in the hostile background of *The Street* (1946) through a naturalistic and deterministic lens: the protagonist, a single black mother, dreams of improving her lifestyle by reproducing a white upper-middle class model. Given Lutie's gender and race her dreams are, following this critical method, condemned as impossible. This approach to Petry's novel does not take into account the deep geographical analysis that the author provides of Lutie's struggle. Employing a spatial paradigm, this essay aims to offer an interpretation of Petry's novel that challenges traditional geographic patterns evident in the street's urban description. Such opposition reflects Katherine McKittrick's approach to the definition of 'Black women's geographies' as sites of struggle. Analyzing the novel's employment of everyday practices, such as communicative expressions, and Kelly Oliver's notion of inner-witnessing as one of them, proves how Lutie Johnson's subjective mapping constitutes an everyday practice within the novel. As such, Petry's portrayal of Lutie's creation of space through these everyday practices illustrates how in her interactions with the street's dynamics Lutie provides a witnessing cartography of struggle that opposes traditional geographic interpretations.

Keywords: *subjectivity, witnessing, everyday activities, space, architecture, sociology*

When Ann Petry writes about Lutie Johnson's life on Harlem's 116th St., she writes the street. Such spatial addressing makes visible the protagonist's perception of the urban landscape, defining it as a contradictory experience. This opposing reality illustrates what McKittrick (2006,7) identifies as Black geographies, a "subaltern or alternative geographic pattern that work alongside and beyond traditional geographies and a site of terrain struggle". These alternative structures centralize a Black vantage point, one that speaks about the ways in which the body in its production of space through everyday practices becomes a spatial signifier. McKittrick's (2006,3) perception raises the awareness of how Black bodies modify space and place from a "perspective of a terrain of struggle where the black body meets the white world".

The opening of the novel depicts this struggle through the wind, a force that transforms the environment around 116th Street in Harlem into an inhospitable one. It tries to impede Lutie from signing a contract to rent an apartment and be independent. For the protagonist changing her living arrangement opens up the possibility of moving up on the social scale. Lutie's identification of a spatial location, an apartment, with the fulfilment of her dreams illustrates the central role that space plays in the protagonist's psyche. As such, it reveals the mapping of the protagonist's subjectivity. This mental structure clashes with the challenge posed by the urban (external) spatial circumstances. Despite the windy interference, Lutie Johnson arrives at 116th St. in Harlem, faces the wind, which blows her "eyelashes away from the eyes" (Petry,1946, 2) and meets up with Jones, the Super, to visit the vacant apartment located on the building's fourth floor. The opening of the novel designates two key elements to interpret Lutie's deed: movement and the spatial narrative it engages. The protagonist challenges the wintry blast, as if confronting an evil force that leaves her eyesight unprotected but does not prevent her from witnessing the prying gazes of both Jones and Mrs. Hedges, the lady who lives on the buildings' first floor and who continuously looks through the window like a snake charmer. Lutie's insight about the nature of the apartment's setting does not prevent her signing the apartment's lease. In this first scene, Petry pictures Lutie as a determined and strong-willed protagonist and the setting as a mirror of gazes. It also illustrates the protagonist's choice of ignoring the threatening nature of the location. The novel's opening clashes the idealistic nature of Lutie's pursuit with the threatening nature of the environment she chooses. Being a black woman within the urban background evidences how race and gender influence how the Black female subject makes use and relates to space. Petry's emphasis on Lutie's determination signals her position or 'practice' against the windy force and the inquisitive gazes of the apartment's spectators: Super (Jones) and Mrs. Hedges.

Through the metaphors- wind and gazes- Petry challenges what traditional

geography determines to be transparent space, one that McKittrick (2006,5) defines as the idea that "space just is and the illusion that the external world is readily knowable and not in need of evaluation". I argue that Petry employs the notion of witnessing, through the characters, as an everyday practice to destabilize this transparency. This practice of observation relies deeply on subjectivity, and the individual's observation of the external world. To theoretically frame this notion of witnessing, this paper employs Kelly Oliver's (2004, 81) notion, one that departs from "a tension between finite historical contexts that constitute subject position on one hand and the structure of addressability and response-ability of subjectivity on the other". In this way, Oliver's (2004,81) idea connects the historically localizable subject position with the response-ability that enables subjectivity . Oliver describes witnessing as a tension, or struggle. One that, in my analysis, substitutes Oliver's historical context for a geographical one. Such positioning enables the individual's subjective dialogical relationship with their surroundings. It provides relational and subjective agency. Giving voice to characters' subjectivity in the novel not only transforms them into subjects, but enables an interpretation of observation/ subjectivity (witnessing) as an everyday practice that conveys a specific making of space. Through witnessing Oliver (2004,81) argues that one "has both the juridical connotations of seeing with one's own eyes and the religious or now political connotations of testifying to that which cannot be seen, or bearing witness". Given McKittrick's (2006,15) analysis of the challenges behind transparent space, witnessing in Petry's novel, I argue, pictures the street as a deep space, one that inscribes the production of space through "ideological and political shifts that impact upon and organize the everyday". Furthermore, as McKittrick clarifies (2006,15), "spatial expressions are wrapped up in everyday struggles".

To contextualize the notion of everyday practice, this essay employs Bourdie's notion of space and positionality in its relation to Oliver's witnessing, Michel de Certeau's creative interpretation of everyday practices and McKittrick's approach to practices as expressive forms. Social space, argues Bourdie (1995), finds its manifestation in spatial oppositions. It is a relational terrain, one defined by inclusions and exclusions that find in physical space a structure of juxtaposition of social positionings. Moreover, Bourdie notes that social space is inscribed in the objectivity of spatial structures and in the subjectivity of the mental ones. As Bourdie points out, space structures itself outside an individual (social world), and in the subjective structures within their mind. In this way, from a sociological point of view, the subject's relationship to space is simultaneous. Within this definition, the act of witnessing represents this dialogical tension between mental space (structures, perceptions), and the social world as deep space. More specifically as Oliver describes, this mental structure lies at the base of

what she defines as 'inner witnessing', the meeting point of subject position and subjectivity. I propose to interrogate Oliver's notion of subject position employing Bourdie's (1995,11) definition of physical space as "the site where an agent or a thing is situated, 'takes place', exists, in short as a location". The social space in its relational nature, moves the subject to establish a dialogical relationship with the surroundings, one based on addressability. De Certeau's (1984, xiv) notion of everyday practice illustrates the subject's relationship with the creation of space as the means through which users "appropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural productions". His emphasis on the polemological nature of everyday practices illustrates how they modify culture by articulating conflicts that "alternately legitimizes, displaces or controls the superior forces" (Certeau, 1984,xvii). In this way, through these daily mechanisms the "weak make use of the strong, thus lending a political dimension to everyday practices" (Certeau, 1984, xvii). Similarly, McKittrick (2006,1389 interrogates Black expressive cultures within the empowering framework designed by Certeau's; for her, these procedures act as new and contestatory geographic acts. Employing witnessing as an everyday practice this essay aims to interrogate how space becomes a site of contestations in *The Street* (1946).

Petry's illustration of Lutie's and the rest of the novels' characters' subjectivity incorporates Oliver's inner-witnessing as an everyday practice that metaphorically inscribes deep space as defined by McKittrick. This mapping finds its echo in the visibility that Petry provides to the characters' subjective relationship with space. The intersection between subjectivity, inner-witnessing and everyday practices pictures what McKittrick (2006,17) identifies as Édouard Glissant's notion of the poetics of landscape: "A geographic struggle that brings together the everyday, the invisible, and the discursive/metaphorical- a political articulation of three-dimensionality and expressive cultures". This essay examines different everyday practices that depart from inner-witnessing and provide a three- dimensional reading of *The Street*'s geography.

1. the everyday practice of dreaming

During the second chapter of the novel Lutie has already moved to 116th Street and while she travels by train she reflects about personal space. She observes both the crowd and the world of dreams that each individual creates in order to design an illusion of privacy. Lutie witnesses how:

> As the train gathered speed for the long run to 125th Street, the passengers settled down into small private worlds, thus creating the illusion of space between them and their fellow passengers. The worlds were built up behind newspapers and

> magazines, behind closed eyes or while staring at the varicolored show cards that bordered the coaches. (Petry, 1946,27)

It is key to highlight the private nature of each passenger's dream, one created to isolate themselves (generating mental space) to escape the multitude around them. As William Scott (2006, 96) notices private space is not available on 116th Street and by recalling a domestic space like that of the Chandler's, Lutie spatially frames her dreams:

> Like some of the other passengers, she was staring at the advertisement directly in front of her and as she stared at it she became absorbed in her own thoughts. So that she, too, entered a small private world which shut out the people tightly packed around her. For the advertisement she was looking at pictured a girl with incredible blond hair. The girl leaned close to a dark-haired, smiling man in a navy uniform. They were standing in front of a kitchen sink… (Petry, 1946,28)

What continues is a deeply detailed description of the kitchen that reflects what Meg Wesling (2006, 125) interprets as Lutie's quest for freedom and autonomy: a desire for both public mobility and domestic security that generates a distinction between public and private spheres .

From Chapter Two's opening scene, it becomes clear that Lutie's pursuit separates and isolates her from the rest of the community at 116th Street. As Wesling (2006,129) further elaborates, her mission and later failure demonstrates "the violent effects of the contradiction between a national mythology of democratic inclusion and the material reality of segregation and exclusion- and the extraordinary costs of Lutie's fidelity to the individual narrative of the American dream". Wesling's observations concur with McKittrick's denouncement of the homogenous and traditional character of geographic transparent space which dictates how Lutie's dream follows a spatial paradigm that ostracizes Black subjects. The Chandlers instill in Lutie the democratic myth inspired by Benjamin Franklin about the potential that everybody has to become rich if they "worked hard enough and figured out carefully enough" (Petry,1946, 43). Marjorie Pryse (1986, 118) further clarifies that what Lutie does not take into account is that this myth's narrative spatially excludes black women and black men.

Lutie's subjective mapping of the 'ideal space' responds to an individualistic and social model that displaces different responses or experiences of it, since struggle threatens its 'ideal' homogeneity. Her perception departs from the way in which the Chandler's are able to cover up a suicide: "but she was interested in the way in which money transformed a suicide she had seen committed from start to finish in front of her very eyes into 'an accident with a gun'" (Petry,1946,41). The

protagonist's appreciation of optimal space stems not only from the Chandlers' spatial model based on privacy and separateness, but also on the material possibilities inscribed in it, ones that can disguise the implications of an autolytic act. These elements are alien to her current living situation at 116th Street, where living: "is like living in a structure that has a roof, but no partitions, so that privacy is destroyed, and even the sound of one's breathing becomes a known, familiar thing to each and every tenant" (Petry, 1946,267). Such reflection opposes the material creation of space and narrative found at the Chandlers' residence.

Given the individualistic nature of her spatial aspirations, Lutie isolates herself and her son, Bub, and makes it impossible to create a communal synergy. Furthermore, I argue that her impossibility of relating to others, concretely to women, endangers her, since she does not establish what Patricia Hill Collins (1991, 100) defines as a safe space: "social spaces where Black women speak freely. The first safe site that Collins identifies is women's relationship to other women, a cooperation that generates empowerment by promoting the transmission of everyday knowledge essential to survival as African-American women (Hill Collins, 1991,102). Likewise, Pryse (1986,20) emphasizes that Lutie's lack of connection to other women makes her powerless .

Contrary to Lutie's dreams, Jones' dreams emphasize how his ideal notion of space has partnership at its base. His sense of companionship opposes Lutie's idealization of individual space. Moreover, as Petry (1946,86) narrates, for Super the concept of alliance is interchangeable with that of ownership because it lies on his subjective mapping of identity, one related to space and materiality:

> After he left the sea, he had a succession of jobs as a night watchman. And he was alone again…Until finally he couldn't stand it anymore and got a job as super in a building in Harlem because that way there would be people around him all the time. He had been on 116th Street for five years. He knew the cellars and the basements in this street better than he knew the outside of streets just a few blocks away…But know that he had an apartment of his own, he had grown so much older he found it more and more difficult to get a woman to stay with him…He had thought he would see more people as super of a building, but he was still surrounded by silence.

Lutie escapes her reality on the train by looking at the advertisement that describes a domestic space like that of the Chandlers', and the Super looks at inaccessible women, despite his partnership with Min to escape his own reality. Lutie's youth and beauty become Jones' obsession. After looking at Lutie leaving the building for the Junto, Jones decides to get rid of Min, a shapeless, unattractive woman in Jones's eyes. The Super's practice of dreaming shows how it departs from a notion

of ownership, concretely, one that "is often wrapped up in a legacy of race/racism bolstered by compelling hierarchical categories". (McKittrick,2006, 5). Petry's description of Min shows how she is a woman that does not fulfill Jones dreamlike perspectives, but unlike him and Lutie, her actions are oriented to transform her reality. Her agency departs from her acknowledgement of Lutie's taking over her space- the Super's apartment and his mental space- and immediately takes action.

2. Conjuring as an everyday feminist practice

When Min witnesses a shift in Jones' behavior towards her, she rapidly identifies in Lutie its direct cause. Min's interpretation of Jones follows a spatial predicament, one centered in his mental structure: "He thinks I don't what's on his mind'´, she said to herself…Not that there was anything wrong with Jones; it was just that he had lived in basements such a long time he was kind of queer, got notions in his head about things" (Petry, 1946,96-97). Contrary to both Lutie's and Jones' tendencies to escape from reality through dreams, Min instantly reacts to avoid Jones' abandonment by visiting a root doctor that Mrs. Hedges had recommended her: "it was the first defiant gesture she had ever made. Up to now she had always accepted whatever happened to her without making any effort to avoid a situation or to change one" (Petry, 1946, 125). She addresses her approach to conjure as 'defiant'. This particular adjective confers a specific connotation to her agency, one that intersects with McKittrick's interrogation of Black expressive cultures as everyday practices that disrupt geographic acts. Min's deviant gesture through her interaction with Mrs. Hedges inscribes a new space within the novel, concretely Collins' notion of safe space. By showing how Mrs. Hedges, who has gotten the information from her girls, gives Min this empowering information, she gives her access to a crucial space for black cultural geography. Once Min visits the Prophet, she acknowledges that "for in coming here like this, in trying to prevent Jones from putting her out, she was actually making an effort to change a situation" (Petry, 1946,126). It is Min's appropriation of space in the Super's apartment by hanging a cross on the wall, which prevents Jones from kicking her out. Thus, this employment of space marks a transparent geographic plane, the wall, with the complexity of the deep spatial narrative inscribed in the cross.

Following Kinitra Brooks, Kameelah L Martin and LaKishsa Simmons's (2021,452) definition of conjuring feminism, as black women's liberatory epistemology transmitted from woman to woman through everyday practices such as cooking, root work, and spirit work , one can argue that Min's interaction with Mrs. Hedges falls within this epistemic construct. What the Prophet suggests that she do is to follow a routine that will transform her current situation:

> 'Now listen carefully. Every morning put one drop of this red liquid in his coffee. Just one drop. No more.' When Min indicated that she understood he went on: 'Every night at ten O'clock burn these candles for five minutes. You must clean the apartment every day. Clean it until there isn't a speck of dirt anywhere. In the corners. On the cupboard shelves. The windows sills…He pointed at the cross with one of his long fingers. 'This', he said, 'will keep you safe at night. Hang it right over your bed. As for the powder'…it is very powerful. (Petry, 1946,114)

The prophet with his spiritual rituals directs Min's everyday actions to achieve her objective. In this way, these ordinary rites convey a spiritual meaning to reality that empowers Min. Furthermore, Pryse (1986, 125) identifies in the Prophet figure an alternative source of power within the novel, since his knowledge of 'folk' ways is the strongest evidence of cultural cohesion with the Black community. In this way, Ann Petry offers, "black folk wisdom as a corrective to white values in a world where black women can choose between individualism or women's community" (Pryse, 1986, 21). Min's inner- witness motivates her approach to the root doctor's whose interference works to culturally and personally enable Min. Jones's reaction towards the hanging of the cross is one of backing away from Min, since for Jones:

> a cross was an alarming and unpleasant object, for it was a symbol of power. It was mixed up in his mind with the evil spirits and the powers of darkness it could invoke against those who outraged the laws of the church…For it seemed to him the great gold-colored cross was hanging directly in front of him instead of over the headboard of the bed where he had last seen it. (Petry, 1946,119)

After Min finally leaves Jones and his apartment, the cross fills up the space left vacant, as a metaphor of her marked spatial absence:

> The cross was gone, but while it hung there, the walls had darkened with grime and dust, so when it was removed its outline was left clear and sharp on the wall- an outline the exact size and shape of the cross itself…It was everywhere in the room. He saw it again and again plain before his eyes. She had conjured him with it- conjured him and the apartment and gone. (Pryse, 324-325)

Min's compliance with the Prophet's instructions transforms everyday activities into a routine that prevents a specific outcome. She leaves just before Jones' violence explodes. The fact that Min gets her information from Mrs. Hedges illustrates the notion of inner-witnessing that Oliver elaborates when emphasizing the need for addressability and response- ability at the base of subjectivity's structure. For Lutie, self-perception departs from an external address, that of the Chandlers, who

reproduce a racist prejudice that transforms her into a wench. The Chandlers' jezebel stereotyping of Lutie finds a replica in Junto, who wants to claim her as his trophy, Mrs. Hedges who offers her a job in her whorehouse, or Jones who perceives in Lutie the fulfilment of his dreams. Contrary to what Prophet David offers to Min, these characters aim to exploit Lutie. Petry's exhaustive description of the different body reads of Min's and Lutie's physiques reproduces how black women's bodies are territorialized through an external objectification of their sexuality that sets their femininity between socially constructed categories and material realities.

3. Beauty as capital- an everyday practice of visibility

Essential to understand Lutie's struggle and her self-image and self-appreciation against the predatory gazes of those around her- within the urban space- it is necessary to analyze how Petry articulates the protagonist's sense of womanhood, as well ashow society (personalized in the street) interprets it. What unfolds is a discursive exchange that has visibility and its implications at its core. As Heather Hicks (2003,21) observes, Petry's depiction of surveillance and spectatorship articulates the racist social formation of Harlem and works to depict "the dynamics of 1940s Harlem in terms of visibility and, more particularly, in terms of looking and watching" (Hicks, 2003,22). As Hicks further states Petry's depiction of spectatorship and surveillance is a distinctive one, since the first is a mode of watching that has sexual desire as motivation and the second has as the underlying cause an unescapable will to power (22). Hicks also elaborates on the particular role that gender plays in each of these actions. She refers to the male gaze as the one that enables spectatorship, a fact illustrated through Jones's obsession with Lutie, as well as, Boots's and Junto´s fascination with her. I concur with Hicks's observations applying them to the geographic and relational paradigms operating under what McKittrick (2006,47) identifies as the 'spatialization of black femininity': "black women's sense of place and those who see/ consume the black body can be ensnared by the racial workings of sex and sexuality". Additionally, the logic of visualization embedded in this spatiality sets blackness and black womanhood amid socially created groups and material realities. Such picture is representative of deep space.

Junto's character embodies the power characteristic of surveillance's structure. He even destroys Lutie's money dreams regarding her singing job at the club when he asks Boots to pay her with presents rather than a salary. Lutie then understands the power dynamic that permeates the urban grid: "Slowly she began to reach for some conclusion, some philosophy with which to rebuild her shattered hopes. The world hadn't collapsed about her. She hadn't been buried under brick and rubble, falling plaster and caved-in sidewalks. Yet that was how she had felt listening to Boots" (Petry, 1946,262). In Lutie's mind, having a singing career at the Junto

would be the means through which she could get out of the street with her son. In an act of self-reflectivity, she blames herself for having dreams without a solid foundation. Furthermore, Petry describes Junto as a man who cannot see race, a fact that according to Hicks can be afforded "as long as the racial hierarchy remains so naturalized that his power is unquestionable" (Hicks, 2003,29). He controls the Street's economy; even what Lutie gets in exchange for singing with Boots. Junto's perception of Lutie emphasizes the logic of visualization in its material expression. By preventing her access to material independence, he controls Lutie's dynamics and mediates her accessibility to social space.

Lutie's continuous struggle to escape the objectification that she perceives in Jones' eyes describes her agency. Her awareness of the dangers that a single black woman faces when trying to make it on her own is equally articulated in Min's justification for her need to have a safe living arrangement, one based on a partnership with a man: "No, a woman living alone really didn't stand much a chance. Landlords took advantage and wouldn't fix things and landladies became demanding about the rent, waxing sarcastic if it was even so much as a day behind" (Petry, 1946,318). For Min, the safe way is to find a man who can secure her spatial position and protect her. Min's articulation is an economic and spatial one. Lutie's experience with Jones as a supervisor elaborates on the danger that Min speaks about in terms of a spatial invasion. First, without Lutie's permission, he paints the apartment in bright colors to make the place more comfortable for her. Such invasion marks the transparency of the flat with the Super's presence, thus implicating a sense of ownership within it. When Lutie is away at the Junto he enters with Bub's permission into the apartment and spies all the rooms while imagining Lutie's everyday activities in them: from cooking, bathing, dressing and even when she is bathing "The room would be hot from the steam of the water and sweet with the smell of soap. He would just be able to see through the steaminess" (Petry, 1946,92). Jones ability of 'seeing' Lutie despite the steaminess articulates his objectifying gaze. Jones invasive enterprise leads him to try to rape Lutie. Mrs. Hedges prevents it from happening.

Mrs. Hedges' character is a more complicated one. With her depiction of invisibility and spectatorship within Hedges' character, Petry enables a contradictory axiom. On one hand, Mrs. Hedges' physique disfigured after a fire and her great height making her want to be invisible, on the other hand, such hiddenness gives her spatial control:

> And she frequently wished that she had never left the small town in Georgia where she was born. But she was so huge that the people there never really got used to the sight of her. She had thought that in a big city she would be inconspicuous and had hoped she would find a man who would fall in love with her. (Petry, 1946,206-207)

Mrs. Hedges' play on invisibility defies the bodily geography attributed to black women's bodies. Furthermore, it challenges the traditional ways in which the black female body has been geographically inscribed. Petry's careful construction of this character continues to challenge transparent space because it defies its clarity by juxtaposing it. Mrs. Hedges' vulnerable position enabled her to establish a partnership with Junto. She is the one who contributes to his economic development by giving him ideas:

> She told Junto people had to dance, drink, and make love in order to forget their troubles and that bars and dance halls and whorehouses were the best possible investments. Slowly and cautiously Mr. Junto had become the owner of all three, though he still controlled quite a bit of real estate…Looking at the window was good for her business, too. There were always lonesome, sad-looking girls just up from the South, or little girls who were tired of going to high school, and who had seen too many movies and didn't have the money to buy all the things they wanted. (Petry, 1946,215)

For Mrs. Hedges, physical invisibility has increased her knowledge of the city as a social construct. Her constant viewing of the street is the source of her information. She acts like a sociologist and psychologist who infers not only people's needs, but also their dreams. Mrs. Hedges' inner witnessing informs her agency. She utilizes this information to make an economic profit. She incites Junto to build places that could provide the dreamlike illusions that the pedestrians need in order to escape their crowded and oppressive reality. Mrs. Hedges' everyday practice of observing echoes De Certeau's interrogation of walking as a spatial practice in the city, but in Mrs. Hedges' case, rather than walking she oversees the street and "can read in it a universe that is constantly exploding" (De Certeau, 1984,91). As he further reflects:

> The ordinary practitioners of the city live "down below", below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk- an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, whose bodies follow the thick and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other's' arms…It is as though the practice of organizing a bustling city were characterized by their blindness. (De Certeau, 1984,93)

Mrs. Hedges' constant observation of the street allows her to recognize the blindness that De Certeau describes and works with Junto to generate spaces that provide the illusion of a hastened dream. Mrs. Hedges, like Junto, makes

an economic profit from an everyday practice. She even offers Lutie a job at her whorehouse, manifesting how Lutie's appearance reproduces the dreams of her customers. Hicks (2003,27) argues that Mrs. Hedges embodies a mode of controlling surveillance that "exists in a dynamic tension with the fascinated looking the Super exemplifies". What Petry illustrates through Lutie's position is the dangers that a single black mother faces in the urban paradigm.

4. Silence and sound in everyday practices

Petry's novel finishes after Lutie kills Boots when he tries to rape her. Lutie goes to meet him in order to ask for the two hundred dollars she needs to pay the lawyer who has to get her son out of Reform School. Bub has fallen victim to Jones's plan of getting back at Lutie, after his failed rape attempt. When Lutie enters the Shelter to visit her son after the police caught him, she notices how its atmosphere, compared to that of the street, is a silent one: "The room absorbed sound. She couldn't hear even a faint murmur of traffic or voices from the street outside" (Petry, 1946,351). The fact that silence is the predominant feature of this institution contrasts with the street's polyphonic nature. The social practice of not hearing, in this case, counteracts what Varguese Yeldho (2020,69) identifies as Harlem's everyday sounding practices- sound, music, noise- that are part of the racially informed "everyday".When the practice of not sounding, silence, breaks in, it highlights how sound is part of the habitual. Lutie's inner awareness of this disruption reinforces this understanding and exemplifies the novel's aural quality.

Through the relationship between silence and the urban sound, Petry highlights how women like Lutie go to bars like the Junto in order to momentarily escape "creeping silence that could be heard under the blaring radios, under the drunken quarrels in the hall bedrooms, was no longer bearable" (Petry, 1946,124). Lutie's inner-witness reflects how the Junto fulfills its goal of providing the illusion of company through its polyphonic nature. As the author further describes: "Lutie Johnson was one of these. For she wasn't going to the Junto to pick a man or to quench a consuming, constant thirst. She was going there so she could for a moment capture the illusion of having some of the things she lacked" (Petry, 1946,124). Lutie goes to the Junto to escape the silence imbued in her residence and coincidently, that same night, she begins singing. Her performance adds to Junto's soundscape. Through her signing and with the economic profit she aims to get from it, Lutie articulates and defines the role she envisions to have within the street's dynamic. Petry designs space by showing how musical expressions are geographic because they alter the landscape. As such they make space available through which "blackness can be read as an integral and meaningful part of landscape" (McKittrick, 2006,139)

Aware of the implications that asking Boots for money may have, Lutie goes to a beauty parlor to increase her self-confidence and the chances of getting the money from him. She projects the dreamlike expectations that he may have, thus signifying her awareness of others' subjectivity. Lutie's inner witnessing influences her decision and makes her capitalize her beauty through everyday practices that make her more desirable. It is necessary to highlight how silence frames this geographic setting, disrupting the chatty nature of the scenery. I argue that Petry employs silence to describe the beauty parlor as a transparent space and that Lutie's inner witness disrupts it:

> It was quiet in the beauty shop except for the noise that the manicurist made. She was sitting in the front window chewing gum, and the gum made a sharp, cracking sound. It was the only sound in the place. The hairdresser, normally talkative, was for some reason in an uncommunicative mood…It was so quiet that the awful stillness Lutie had found in the Shelter settled in the shop…And even under the words Lutie heard the stillness (Petry, 1946,354)

This visit to the beautician leaves her feeling empowered. Petry (1946, 357) employs sound to geographically inscribe the protagonist's agency: "As Lutie climbed the stairs, she deliberately accentuated the clicking of the heels of her shoes on the treads because the sharp sound helped relieve the hard resentment she felt; it gave expression to the anger flooding around her". Lutie enters the building marking her steps with a feminine sound, that of the heels clicking. She emphasizes her determination through sound, thus defeating the institutional silence that had previously paralyzed her.

What later unfolds, Lutie's killing of Boots, is the result of the exploitative white paradigm that continuously permeates the street's structure. The lawyer who assists Lutie when she asks for advice takes advantage of her:

> He stared at her, trying to estimate the fee he could charge, trying to guess her reason for coming. A divorce, he decided. All good-looking women invariably wanted divorces. He was a little chagrined when he discovered he was wrong. She had such a good figure it was difficult to tell whether her clothes were cheap ones or expensive ones. And then, as the case unfolded, he began to wonder why she didn't need a lawyer for a case like this one. (Petry, 1946,335)

The lawyer's thoughts reveal how he also pays attention to Lutie's appearance and how he is aware of her ignorance about judicial matters. He decides to exploit her obliviousness and asks for two hundred dollars. He employs Lutie's fear of the street to convince her:

> 'I'll paint a picture of you working hard, the kid left alone…And then, of course, the street'. ´What do you mean? She asked. 'What Street?' 'Any street…'Any place where there's slums and dirt and poverty you find crime…Now why in the hell doesn't she know she doesn't need a lawyer?... It was like picking two hundred bucks up in the street. (Petry, 1946,335).

When Lutie meets Boots, he tells her that Junto is the answer she needs and that in order to get the money, she just has to be nice to him. When Lutie sees Junto, she recognizes how he was the one who decided not to pay her for singing at the bar and how such orders were sexually motivated. Similarly, Junto's whiteness provides Lutie with another reading of Boot's unwillingness to pay her. When Lutie rejects the proposition, Junto leaves the apartment and marks his actions through sound: "There was the sound of a door closing, and then silence" (Petry, 1946,363). Boots tries to convince her to be with Junto, but decides to take advantage of her: "he was going to trick him and Junto would never know the difference…Yeah, he can have the leavings. After all, he's white and this time a white man can have a black man's leavings…This would be his revenge" (Petry, 1946,362).

Boot's thirst for revenge leads him to try to rape Lutie, who ends up killing him. She is able to take the two hundred dollars from Boot's wallet and decides to leave New York City and her son, Bub, behind. She takes a train to Chicago and as the train starts to move, "she began to trace a design in the window. It was a series of circles that flowed into each other" (Petry, 1946,373). These circular patterns counteract the Street's linear designs that Petry employs when syntactically scheming the building in 116th Street in Harlem. The window is a transparent space, materially and metaphorically, and Lutie's circles are her signature.

5. Organizing space: architectural (subjective) designs in Petry's Street

Petry's awareness of the complexities behind the street's human geography also incorporates an architectural framework that draws a more complicated map of deep space in the novel. The careful description of the building at Harlem's 116th St. engages a deeper analysis of the author's spatial design of the novel. Bill Hiller and Julienne Hanson's (1989, 2) reflection about architecture's social logic of space emphasizes how it "creates the special relation between function and social meaning in buildings. The ordering of space in buildings is really about the ordering of relations between people". This arrangement creates a ladder of boundaries. These borders are a constant reference in Petry's novel. Overcoming them is Lutie's aspirations. For Lutie what defines success and spatial capital are limits that secure a person's privacy and emulate the Chandlers' model. A model that departs from the intrinsic

individuality that characterizes the myth of the American dream. Lutie lives in the fourth floor, a location that isolates her and that increases her vulnerability.

When interrogating the nature of the building in Harlem's 116th St. from a social point of view, it is necessary to highlight Petry's careful depiction of its structure and order. Buildings are not simply architectural objects, but transformations of space into objects (Hill & Hanson,1989. 1). Such functionality involves a specific spatial syntax that establishes spatial outlines. This functional narrative from an architectural point of view engages in the novel what Joe Varguese Yeldo (2020, 70) identifies as an isovist perspective, one determined by the characters' visual fields and vantage points from where they observe and interact with the environment. Petry's complex character portrayal incorporates this vantage point; the isovist perspective enables observation, response-ability and the visibility paradigm that engages the spectators' commentary. Hill and Hanson (1989, 20) propose a reflection on the architectural syntax model that engages a reading of space determined by two kinds of relations: those between the building's tenants and those between occupants and outsiders. This spatial interpretation transforms the front parlor's usage from a "space that traditionally was unimportant in everyday life but of considerable importance as a social category of space" (Hill and Hanson, 1989,19). Regarding the building's interior, it defines a more ideological space, because it represents a controlled transaction (Hill and Hanson, 1989, 20). Engaging in an interrogation of space from this dichotomy between the outside and inside of buildings, Hill and Hanson elaborate a spatial analysis from a local to a global phenomenon. They point out how the exterior space constitutes an immutable category and the internal one generates a space of negotiation between people whose social identities form part of the global system and others whose identities do not (Hill and Hanson, 1989,21). As such and as exemplified by Petry's ordering of 116th Street in Harlem, the building also has an important role in the articulation of space. Through her characters' subjectivities Petry illustrates a three-dimensional spatial perspective from the broader context (the street), to habitable spaces (apartments), to domestic spaces (one's apartment), to mental spaces (internalized spatial structures) and the relational synergy between these positionings

6. Conclusion: agency and the creation of space through everyday practices

Petry's careful writing of the street and of its buildings finds a parallel in the characters' internal cartographies of subjectivity and struggle. Lutie's approach to space is a relational one, a dialogue between her aspirations (internalized alien models) and her struggle. Her quest for meaning generates a polyphonic ensemble of individual cartographies through her dialectical exchanges with the rest of the characters. Ann Petry's construction of *The Street* as a novel and as a spatial narrative

gives space for the characters' to defy transparent, or 'normative', geography and provides them with the everyday tools to create their own spatial meanings. The aim of this article was to overcome the deterministic lens that did not give agency to Lutie, by showing how through her inner-witnessing she defies the meanings imposed on her. Spaces are not transparent, their narrativity is not a simple one. The everyday and the ordinary are spaces for resistance and creativity.

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From *Bildungsroman to Bildungsromance:* Physical and Affective War in Chinelo Okparanta's Under the Udala Trees[1]

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The bildungsroman has dominated the Nigerian literary landscape since the 1990s with novels such as Chimamanda N. Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2004), Unoma Azuah's *Sky-High Flames* (2005), Chika Unigwe's *Night Dancer* (2012), and Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* (2015). These coming-of-age stories place a special emphasis on the national evolution of Nigeria. Thus, by delving into such interrelation of the national and personal domains, I propose to theorize *Under the Udala Trees* as a "bildungsromance," or novel of affective and romantic development. I use the term "bildungsromance" to describe the growth of Okparanta's protagonist, Ijeoma, as intrinsically associated with the experiences gathered from her affective attachments both in the public and the private spheres. I will analyze Ijeoma's sentimental relationships as she discovers and naturalizes her queer identity. For this, I will delve into the negative affects − in the form of fear, shame and guilt (Braidotti 2009, 50) − that influence Ijeoma's experience as a result of her non-conforming to the dictums of Nigerian customary laws. Ironically, such negative affects will be introduced as tightly associated with "the promise of happiness" (Ahmed 2010, 14). In turn, I shall underline the role of Ijeoma's intimate and romantic relationships in prompting positive forms of affect such as self-love and pride. These affective experiences allow Ijeoma to acquire a critical perspective towards Nigerian customary laws and their impact on identity formation and on what has been referred to as

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the "democratisation of the private sphere" (Giddens 1992, 184). Ultimately, I will hinge upon Ijeoma's awareness of her own affective advancements as a key element in her bildungsromance.
Keywords: Nigeria; affect; queer; bildungsromance; Biafra

1. Introduction

The bildungsroman, or novel of growth, denouncing abuses committed against children and adolescents has dominated the Nigerian literary landscape since the 1990s (Okuyade 2011, 141). Focusing on Nigerian women writing bildungsroman, Cédric Courtois claims that authors such as Chimamanda N. Adichie and Sefi Atta "show they are willing to destabilize the characteristics of this literary genre, by re-using it in a postcolonial milieu first, furthering this destabilization of borders, deploying the question of gender, and featuring strong-willed female characters" (2015, 110). In this line, Courtois sustains that the contemporary Nigerian bildungsroman places a fundamental focus on how "female transgression is needed, both for their own sake in the private sphere, but also for the common lot in the public sphere" (2015, 109). Arguably, such an association between the public and the private, the personal and the political, has led to a cross-generational interest in the recalling and reimaging of the Biafran War and its role in creating the Nigerian nation (Dalley 2013; Hawley 2008; Okuyade 2011). The concern on this particular episode of the creation of the Nigerian nation is present in novels either set during the Biafran war or recalling its aftermath such as Dulue Mbachu's *War Games* (2005), Chris Abani's *Graceland* (2004), Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation* (2005), Chimamanda N. Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), Helon Habila's *Measuring Time* (2007), and Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* (2015). These narratives share stories of loss and war trauma linked to personal development in which the Biafran conflict shapes the individual experience of the bildungsroman which takes the center of the story. A feature that unites Nigerian novels about the Biafran period is that their young protagonists are forced to "acquire self-knowledge [and] comprehend the true nature of the Nigerian socio-cultural order in which they have to live as individuals and develop a *modus vivendi* in the 'war' in which they have been implicated as citizens, actors and victims" (Okuyade 2011, 142; italics in the original). In this vein, it will prove fruitful to clarify on the use of the word "war" in this context, which acts as an umbrella term to encompass injurious situations the protagonists have to endure ranging from physical abuse to labor exploitation and/or emotional neglect due to their sexual inclinations, ethnicity and gender.

Adults frequently become violent agents that dictate and perpetuate the disgraceful future of young victims who must endure social violence, political fraudulence, and family burdens associated with so-called traditions such as the continuation of ethnic legacy or the imposition of the heteronormative precept. Such critical view can be read as affective, as it prompts rage, shame, suffering, or even hope in a better future for the nation. My use of the term "affect" follows Eric Shouse's postulate that affect is "what makes feelings feel" (2005, n.p.). In other words, affect is what defines and determines "the intensity (quantity) of a feeling (quality)" (n.p.). In this sense, affects can be read as social (Brennan 2004, 65), inasmuch as they are intensified forms of feelings and emotions "attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things, including other affects" (Sedgwick 2002, 19). Hence, affect theory can be deployed to trace personal growth both in the public and private domains.

Under the Udala Trees narrates Ijeoma's life from 1967, at the onset of the Biafran civil war, when Ijeoma relocates to a grammar-school teacher's house and meets Amina, a Hausa girl working there as house girl. with whom Ijeoma will explore her (homo)sexuality. Both as an adolescent and as an adult, Ijeoma will have to cope with her wish to make her mother happy by finding a husband. The narrative moves forward until 2014, when President Goodluck Jonathan passed the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act, which legitimized the demonization, persecution, and violence against LGBTQIA+ subjects in present-day Nigeria (UNHCR 2020). The novel places Ijeoma's adult approach to her sexuality and the assaults endured by her LGBTQIA+ friends against the backdrop of a post-war Nigeria. In doing so, Okparanta traces a parallel between the belligerent attacks suffered by Biafrans and the hostile assaults towards queer individuals nowadays. Ijeoma's affective and emotion evolution against such background shall constitute my focus of analysis in what I will describe as her "bildungsromance."

Departing from the conceptual implications of the bildungsroman, I propose to read *Under the Udala Trees* as a "bildungsromance": a story which traces the intimate and romantic life of a female protagonist from childhood to adulthood, and her emotional frustrations before her inability to reach the affective goals envisaged by the Nigerian family as a national institution. The premise of a "bildungsromance" is that, as a novel of development, it specifically traces the emotional journey of a female protagonist as dependent upon her affective experiences and romantic encounters. A "bildungsromance" follows such evolution and reflects how, as a consequence of her affective attachments, the protagonist nurtures critical thinking. In *Under the Udala Trees*, Ijeoma's experiences allow her to acquire a critical perspective both towards the idealization or romanticization of Nigerian customary laws and towards their

ruling of the public and private domains. In this sense, a "bildungsromance" does not merely focus on romance but on the de-romanticization or de-idealization of traditional practices and customary laws oppressing women. Departing from this, in the first section of this paper I will focus on the interval encompassing the Nigerian civil war and the immediate post-war years, from 1968 up until 1975. This period, which covers Ijeoma's childhood and adolescence, coincides with General Gowon's rule in Nigeria. I will examine Okparanta's portrayal of the warfare situation and the feelings it prompts in Ijeoma, who intertwines her personal story with the retelling of the war. Since Ijeoma has her first romantic relationship with Amina during this period, I will sketch the initial steps of her "bildungsromance." The focus will be on the impact of tradition being lessened during the war as a result of the socio-political state of emergency. The second section will deal with Ijeoma's adult life from the mid-1970s, coinciding with the moment Gowon is ceased from power after Murtala Muhammed's 1975 coup. This historical moment coincides with Ijeoma's meeting her second love interest, Ndidi. Focusing on the progress of this "bildungsromance," I will unfold how traditional practices and socio-cultural dictums re-gain power in a post-war context. As a result, I will discuss the affective and political tactics deployed to encourage queer assimilation into the Nigerian heteronormative reality.

2. Intimacy in Biafra: A Curse and a Blessing

Following the steps of authors such as Sefi Atta, Chika Unigwe, and Chimamanda N. Adichie, in *Under the Udala Trees* Chinelo Okparanta inscribes "women into the nation in complex ways that contrast with the tendency in nationalist rhetoric to invoke women primarily in simplistically symbolic (usually maternal) roles" (Gagiano 2013, 48). *Under the Udala Trees* offers a unique perspective among novels set in Biafra, as it is the first to introduce a self-identified lesbian protagonist. Okparanta thus joins other contemporary female authors such as Lola Shoneyin, Unoma Azuah, Temilola Bioye and Promise Okekwe as pioneers in portraying outspoken and visible lesbian characters (Azuah 2005, 130). Albeit following their steps, Okparanta is innovative in introducing explicit sexual encounters. This trait contrasts with novels published in the early 2000s such as Unoma Azuah's *Sky-High Flames*, which also tackles lesbianism during Biafra, but does not explicitly refer to physical encounters between the protagonist and other women. In this line, Dotrova Pucherova analyzes Lola Shoneyin's short story "Woman in her Season" (1997) as featuring a lesbian character whose fantasizing with is but "a substitute passion" or "the symptom of a loveless marriage and remains a fantasy" (2019, 109). Pucherova inscribes these instances as part of a writing tendency in which, before the 2000s, female to female desire was

"expressed as platonic desire, intimate friendship, or nurturing mother-daughter relationships" (109). Unlike Shoneyin's and Azuah's works, Okparanta offers a new way of narrating female desire and has her female protagonist openly discussing, describing, and reflecting about her emotions and sexual practices as she discovers her attraction towards women. This is precisely what marks this novel as a "bildungsromance," since the open discussion of affects becomes an essential part of the novel. This section shall underline the relevance of affects in a "bildungsromance." For this, I will analyze the impact of positive and negative forms of affect upon Ijeoma's experiences during the war and its immediate aftermath. In particular, I will emphasize the role of customary law in exerting "negative affect" (Braidotti 2009, 50) upon Ijeoma's relationship with Amina.

After a brief First Republic between 1963 to 1966, a coup, a counter-coup, and the Biafran secession, *Under the Udala Trees* starts with the first-person voice of a young Ijeoma who recalls the anxiety experienced by Biafrans in 1968, the second year of the war, as Biafra was losing ground before Nigeria. In the midst of this confusion, Ijeoma deftly links her personal destiny to Biafra when she explains that the very act of Nigerians bombing her village, Ojoto, has affected her own fate (*UUT,* 4). The young protagonist underscores that connection by stating that she might have never met Amina, her first love, if her mother, Adaora, had not sent her away in 1968:

> there is no way to tell the story of what happened with Amina without first telling the story of Mama's sending me off. Likewise, there is no way to tell the story of Mama's sending me off without also telling of Papa's [suicidal] refusal to go to the bunker. Without his refusal, the sending away might never have occurred, and if the sending away had not occurred, then I might never have met Amina. If I had not met Amina, who knows, there might be no story to tell. (*UUT*, 4)

Ijeoma's reference to Amina highlights the relevance of affect as a drawing force in her personal development. As a result of the war, Adaora sends her off to be taken care by an acquaintance (*UUT*, 33). In underlining that only as a consequence of the war does she have the chance to meet Amina, Ijeoma hints at a positive side-effect of the conflict and the confusion stemming from it.

When it comes to the relevance of affect in African coming-of-age narratives, it has been claimed that such works portray a "variety of forces that inhibit or prevent the protagonist from achieving self-realization. These forces include exile or dislocation, problems of transcultural interaction, poverty, and the difficulties of preserving personal, familial, and cultural memories" (Kurtz 2012, 12). In my definition of a "bildungsromance," I refer to the forces preventing self-realization

as influenced by "negative affects" (Braidotti 2009, 50) such as shame, anger, anxiety, or suffering. Rosi Braidotti underlines the pervasive impact of negative affects upon self-perception, describing them as "an act of violence, betrayal, [and] trauma" (53), which counter positive forms of affect such as love, pride, or empathy. In the context of Nigeria, Kurtz's reference to personal, familial and cultural memories hints at the negative impact of social conventions and so-called traditional practices such as arranged marriages, polygyny, or heterosexuality. I thus refer to such customs as the source of negative affects against women's exercise of their rights. In this line, Fatai A. Olasupo describes customary laws as tyrannical practices which "combine in different ways to suppress and repress women" (2013, 177). Olasupo specifically enumerates the acts of patriarchal tyranny as follows: "monopolization of traditional rule, despotism, [and] abuses of the institution of polygyny, religion, custom, tradition" (177). In this sense, I read Okparanta's narrative as a "bildungsromance" which intertwines Ijeoma's evolution with the gaining of knowledge on how to juggle with positive and negative affects. This does not entail that Ijeoma's growth will be merely the result of her relationship with Amina, or other subsequent relationships she shall have. Instead, I use the term "bildungsromance" to describe the growth of the female protagonist as intrinsically associated with affect as a force of change which prompts the deconstruction of the social dictums behind Nigerian traditions. At this stage, Ijeoma's progress will be the result of the power of the Biafran war in the formation of the self, and of her emotional attachment to Amina. Those events, illustrated through affinity, passion, commitment, and even pain and agony, prompt Ijeoma to discover traits of her character such as critical thinking and self-determination, crucial to evolve towards a free self.

It is in the analysis of Ijeoma's affective and emotional flourishing where a duality between the war as pain but also as freedom emerges as a middle ground for individual experimentation away from the expectations and surveillance stemming from tradition. In the middle of the belligerent horror, Ijeoma narrates Yakubu Gowon's blockade of the Red Cross food cargo sent to Biafra in 1968 (Mudge 1970, 258). This real episode is used to describe Ijeoma's reflections on the changes taking place in her body and her realization that she is more interested in staring at the chests and skin of two girls waiting for the relief lorry than in the food itself: "beyond their skin there was something else that made me think: their chests. […] Maybe it was a side effect of envy, or maybe it was a side effect of the awe I felt for them. Or maybe it was something else" (*UUT*, 35). At this point, Ijeoma has not fully realized her sexual orientation, in the same manner in which she is not yet fully aware of the hunger that will strike Biafrans in months to come. In this respect, it is no coincidence that her first experience of sexual arousal is set against the background of Gowon's Red Cross blockade.

It is in this horrid war-time moment when paradoxically she is free enough to go alone to fetch food, to look at the girls and to ponder upon desire without being patronized nor controlled by her mother.

The first example of Ijeoma's experiencing a negative form of affect occurs when she is sent to Nnewi, where she spends a year and a half working as a house girl for a teacher and his wife until she is thirteen (*UUT*, 46). When her friend Chibundu goes to see her off, the boy causes a situation of uncomfortable heterosexual closeness. Ijeoma describes Chibundu's farewell scene as "pitiful", perhaps due to "the effect the war was having on him" (*UUT*, 43). As a gesture of charity, Ijeoma kisses the boy "giv[ing] him the kiss I knew he sought" (*UUT*, 46), and in turn provoking a sense of "awkwardness" in herself (*UUT*, 46). This non-desired act of sentimental and physical proximity gives pleasure to Chibundu but creates discomfort in Ijeoma. Significantly, the kiss episode is followed by horrid descriptions of the war as Ijeoma observes death and devastation from the back of the lorry taking her to Nnewi:

> Decapitated bodies. Bodies with missing limbs. All around was the persistent smell of decaying flesh. Even if I was no stranger to these sights and smells […], still I felt a lurching in my stomach. […] For the rest of the trip, it was more of the same thing: more corpses, more soldiers marching, more chanting, all of the typical sights and sounds of a nation in war. (*UUT*, 48-49)

Her fragmented description loaded with affect in the form of loss and disgust is a response both towards the situation with Chibundu and to the dismembered bodies she is forced to look at. Soon enough, Ijeoma learns to assimilate fear, loss, and misplacement, negative affects which can indeed also be attached to the queer communities in African countries. The kiss and the lorry scenes can be read as a double violation, since an eleven-year-old Ijeoma is forced to accept the tragic consequences of the war while facing social expectations about her sexual behavior conceived in heterosexual terms at a very young age.

Okparanta further intertwines personal and public turmoil when Ijeoma arrives in Nnewi, where the war and national confusion set in motion Ijeoma's sexual and emotional awakening. Once again, the chaos of the war plays in her favor and allows her to explore her sexuality without maternal surveillance. The grammar-school teacher and his wife relegate Amina and Ijeoma to an independent hut, where they are not exposed to the same degree of surveillance that Adaora imposed on her daughter. The war propitiates Ijeoma's first encounter with Amina under an udala tree when Ijeoma goes to fetch kerosene because there is no electricity after a bombing near the teacher's house (*UUT*, 104). Described as "a shadow" that does not fade away (*UUT*, 104), which is there to stay, Amina

attracts Ijeoma up to the extent that "the moment [their] eyes locked" she knows she will not leave without her (*UUT*, 105). To further connect Ijeoma's destiny with that of Nigeria, it is not until January 1970, the very same night on which Gowon declares that the Biafran war is over, that the first physical encounter between the girls takes place. As Ijeoma and Amina work together in the kitchen, the radio announces that Gowon is to make a statement (*UUT*, 116). Okparanta employs the actual words deployed by Gowon to declare the end of the war and the re-incorporation of Biafran territories to Nigeria: "citizens of Nigeria, […] the so-called Rising Sun of Biafra is set forever. […]. The tragic chapter of violence is just ended. We are at the dawn of national reconciliation. Once again, we have the opportunity to build a new nation" (*UUT*, 116). Gowon's offer to build a new nation, unpolluted by the offenses of the past, aimed to present Nigeria as a newly-born territory in need of protection and loyalty. His encouragement that citizens contribute to building the nation out of their common efforts hints at the power which social conventions and non-written norms are to re-gain in a new Nigeria. By the same token, those not contributing to the building of such a collective fantasy are to be punished. The very same night of Gowon's discourse Amina and Ijeoma have their first sexual encounter (*UUT*, 117). Ijeoma describes how, without even thinking what was happening, "towels fell to the floor [and their] lips met" (*UUT*, 117). Unfortunately, their emotional entanglement threatens Gowon's intentions as it threatens traditional and oppressive notions of Nigerian womanhood.

While Azuah has analyzed the scarce corpus of novels featuring lesbian characters and argued that those characters confront their homosexuality once they have undergone "rejection or humiliation" (2005, 138), Okparanta adopts an entirely different approach. Ijeoma's acceptance of her of love and physical attraction to Amina comes as something natural. This hints at the initial steps of Ijeoma's "bildungsromance" as marked by self-acceptance. The background of the war has created the circumstances for customary practices not to interfere in their free will. The embracement of such affect towards Amina is normalized and described with the same spontaneity, and passion as heterosexual love. After kissing for the first time, they start exploring their sexuality without censoring their mutual desire. Proof of this is that they joke about marrying:

> "we might as well be married," Amina said one day. […] I mean that it would be nice to be married to you. […] "Have you kissed anyone before?" I asked. She shook her head. "No. Not at all. Where would I ever have kissed anyone before?" […] "What about you? […] All this time it had been troubling me, feeling a little like a betrayal. Perhaps she would hate me for it, for having done this thing we did, this thing that was supposed to be special and only between

> us, with somebody else. But I owed her the truth. I said "Someone kissed me once before." […] "I promise it didn't feel as good as with you." (*UUT*, 119)

This conversation evinces not only the innocence of two adolescents experimenting with their bodies but also the fact that Ijeoma's only preoccupation is telling Amina that she once let Chibundu kiss her. Ijeoma's lack of knowledge about censorship and customary laws allows her not to be troubled about whether it was a boy or a girl that she had kissed.

That Ijeoma and Amina's first physical encounters take place the very first night that the war ends could be interpreted as the sentimental and affective union of both Hausa and Igbo, first through the intimacy of friendship and then through passion and love. The union of these two characters could have stood for a new beginning, an unprejudiced onset both in ethnicity, customary, and sexual terms. Such an inter-ethnic union, born in Biafra and consolidated with the alleged birth of a new Nigeria, could have signified true national reconciliation, just as Gowon promised. Yet, the girls are discovered after a few months into Biafra's aftermath, when the teacher finds them having sex:

> the whole incident was startling […], and must have been startling to Amina as well, not only for our having to endure the discomfort of his looking at us in this way, but also for our having to endure the misfortune of being forced to see ourselves through his eyes. […] Pointing to [the Bible], he cried, "An Abomination!" The word reverberated in my head. […] Amina and I began to cry, deep cries that made out shoulders heave. […] We were naked, and we felt out nakedness as Adam and Eve must have felt in the garden, at the time of that evening breeze. Our eyes had become open, and we too sought to hide ourselves. (*UUT*, 125)

This becomes a turning point in the "bildungsromance," as customary laws abruptly interfere in their unprejudiced affective development. Referring to the Original sin, the teacher's heteropatriarchal perspective casts a shadow on Amina and Ijeoma's unpolluted affective growth. The reprimand he gives them can be traced to what Ahmed refers to as "the production of the ordinary" (2014, 43), as Ijeoma and Amina become "others whose proximity becomes a crime" (43) against the ordinary heterosexual subject. Here homophobia is disguised as a defense of traditions and the Nigerian family, and the girls' intimacy becomes a threat to the ordinary, the normalized. The teacher turns into an agent of fear as the girls are pressured to see things through his eyes. His words aim to pass a hetero-national discourse of condemnation towards the girls, to socialize the youngsters, for creating a nation requires socializing citizens into conforming

to expectations which determine "the bases of inclusion and exclusion in the body politic" (Obadare 2015, 65). The judgment experienced by the girls, clearly portrayed as mesmerized before the accusations they receive, situates Okparanta in tune with other Nigerian contemporary female writers such as Shoneyin, Adichie, and Azuah, whose narratives of women desiring women urge readers to identify with characters who symbolize "human vulnerability, resilience, and complexity" (Munro 2016, 2). Thus, homosexuality is portrayed in a positive and sympathetic light that seeks identification and, very possibly, empathy on the part of the reader.

The characters are penalized for emancipating from Nigerian patriarchal dictums, in the same manner in which Biafrans were punished for emancipating from Nigeria. Their free exercise of sexual choice is a double-folded threat for the development of a new Nigeria. For their intimate choice does not suit Nigeria's needs for complete emotional and ideological submission of Biafran citizens, who are meant to leave their hopes and dreams of a nation behind and collaborate with the Nigerian nation-building project. This is worsened by the fact that they are two women using their bodies for non-normative private and intimate pleasure, without experimenting guilt until instructed to do so. That they are interrupted and reprimanded by the teacher signifies that Gowon's speech is but a charade, that good-old national values and constraints are to be reinforced and new beginnings are to be punished, shut down for pre-Biafran cultural and social practices to prevail.

As part of the national acculturation and "the production of the ordinary" (Ahmed 2017, 43) which takes place after the two adolescents are discovered, Ijeoma's mother starts teaching her Bible lessons in 1970. The indoctrination resulting from those lessons provokes that Ijeoma finally decides "to ask forgiveness" while continuing to crave intimate moments with Amina, which in turn generates a "sense of guilt" (*UUT*, 71-72). Yet, Ijeoma quickly learns to question such a guilt. Adaora draws a direct interrelation between the contents of the Bible and what she considers Ijeoma's duty towards Nigeria (*UUT*, 76). This is evinced in the lesson: "Leviticus 19: '*Thou shall not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind*'" (*UUT*, 76; italics in the original). However, Ijeoma is unable to ascertain why and how this applies to her and Amina. Without even making an effort, Ijeoma's incapacity to understand the lesson challenges not only the master narrative encapsulated in the Bible but the colonial interpretation of love and gender. The criticism Okparanta raises towards religion as a mechanism to oppress divergent groups is evident in Ijeoma's asking herself whether "the entire thing was just a history of a certain culture, specific to that particular time and place" (*UUT*, 83). This background inscribes to the common the trope of contemporary narratives dealing with LGBTQIA+ subjects in which families are

introduced as a "source of suffering [and] a site of oppression and hurt feelings" (Munro 2016, 11). In turn, Adaora's teachings echoes those of Nigerian religious leaders who "construct a narrative in which moral decadence in the country, ostensibly epitomised by homosexuality and other forms of 'sexual deviancy,' is used as a scapegoat for the country's economic and social problems" (Obadare 2015, 64).

As part of her "bildungsromance" Ijeoma learns to hide her positive affect towards Amina as a defense mechanism. Similarly, she learns to pretend that her mother's negative affect has exerted an impact on her. Evidence of this is her answering "no" when asked whether she intimately thinks of Amina as she used to. In this aspect *Under the Udala Trees* introduces a well-recognized trope in contemporary fiction: the female protagonist's self-knowledge is parallel to her understanding of "the true nature of the Nigerian socio-cultural order in which [she has] to live" (Okuyade 2011, 142). Ogaga Okuyade compares the true nature of the Nigerian socio-cultural order to a "'war' in which Nigerians have been implicated as citizens, actors and victims" (142). It can thus be inferred that any divergent, or non-conforming citizen, either woman, queer, or Biafran supporter, is to live in a permanent war against the customary laws they cannot or do not want to abide by. The trope of socio-cultural war becomes of double relevance in the novel, for it can be contended that Ijeoma's experience of the Biafran war is later on substituted by the endurance of a metaphorical war against homosexuals. Arguably, the weapons of such a social war are negative affects encouraging assimilation and conformity or compliance with Nigerian so-called customary practices.

Ijeoma goes to boarding school between 1971 and 1975. Adaora knows that Amina will be there but she cannot afford to send Ijeoma to another school, thus the war plays again in their favor, as its aftermath becomes less of a burden and more of a stroke of luck. Even with the Bible lessons in her head, Ijeoma confesses: "I could not help myself. […] We were in love, or at least I believed myself completely to be" (*UUT*, 150). Although love wins terrain in the war against hegemonic forces, its affective power only lasts for a year. Eventually, Amina confesses that she feels like the "fallen children, the sinful ones without the strength to continue in the path of righteousness" (*UUT*, 155). Amina's change of mind is the consequence of the influence which negative affects have exerted upon her. As processes developing "below the threshold of conscious awareness and meaning" (Leys 2011, 437), affects should be conceived as acute and profound enough to be involuntary and uncontrollable. The impact of affect upon the body is such that it entails the "augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act" (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, xvi). Tragically, the scars of indoctrination are too deep for Amina. By 1974, the girls do not even speak to

each other anymore (*UUT*, 167), and, soon enough, Ijeoma learns that Amina is about to marry a Hausa boy (*UUT*, 170). This is traumatic for Ijeoma, as she feels rejected by her beloved, who lets herself be guided by Nigerian patriarchal and Muslim customs.

Nevertheless, this sentimental disappointment does not negatively influence her self-acceptance, for she does not share Amina's guilt. Although Amina stops reciprocating her, Ijeoma takes a step forward in her evolution towards self-completeness, a step which is put in motion after meeting Amina but which nonetheless does not depend upon Amina's will. Hence, Ijeoma's development is linked to affect but not dependent upon romantic stability. The protagonist's determination to stick to her beliefs and wishes allows me to read her personal progression not merely as typical of a bildungsroman novel but as exemplifying the notion of "bildungsromance," for affect towards another person is paradoxically a driving force of self-empowerment. Letting her incommensurable love towards Amina be her guide and principal opposition against institutional oppression, Ijeoma digests Adaora's Bible lessons without absorbing much. The intensified emotions stemming from her relationship with Amina lead Ijeoma towards self-acceptance and to develop resistance towards indoctrination. As a result of the pain, Ijeoma also learns that social forces will seek to oppress her desires.

3. "A Questionable Sense of Guilt": Democratizing the Private Sphere

After graduating in 1975, Ijeoma starts working in her mother's corner store in Aba. At that particular moment, the political landscape of the post-war was marked by Murtala Muhammed's coup (1975), which overthrew Gowon's rule. In turn, Muhammed's death in 1976 precipitated Olusegun Obasanjo's rule. This unstable political period coincides with Ijeoma's reframing her emotional and romantic landscape and thus with a new stage in her "bildungsromance." In my analysis of this stage, I will focus on the effects that negative affect exerts upon an adult Ijeoma, and on how positive affects such as love and passion neutralize the effects of shame and guilt. In this context, I will refer to what Anthony Giddens calls the "democratisation of the private sphere" (1992, 184) and to its being countered by the attacks against queer Nigerians. In turn, I shall argue that Ijeoma's individual evolution depends upon the establishment of personal affective boundaries.

Nigerian non-written norms dictate that a person is simply not considered Nigerian if they are regarded as sexually deviant, to the extent that in the early 2000s the then president Olusegun Obasanjo declared that homosexuals did not exist in Nigeria (Sogunro 2014, 58). In the post-war context of the novel, Nigeria could not afford further rebellions, and homosexuals were punished as

heterosexuality was delineated as the path conducive to procreation, the banner of true Nigerianness. As a result, in spite of Ijeoma's rejection of Adaora's biblical doctrines, her mother does not cease in her attempts to impose heterosexuality upon her. Adora's message echoes Christian and traditional religions in Nigeria which subscribe that "traditional ways should always be upheld" (Ehiemua 2020, 98). Non-coincidentally, it is precisely through repetition that social forms—the family, heterosexuality, and the nation—have become legitimized traditional institutions (Ahmed 2014, 12).

Ijeoma experiences guilt, rejection and shame as she is forced to idealize Nigerian beliefs and practices stemming from what Ahmed refers to as "the promise of happiness" (2010, 14). This promise stands for affective hope and follows a very basic principle: "if you have this or have that, or if you do this or do that, then happiness is what follows" (40). This is how heterosexual romance has come to function as a social glue which is to give instant gratification and social approval (Antwi et al. 2013, 6). The promise of happiness becomes a menace to Ijeoma's self-acceptance, as it comes hand in hand with fear of being discovered. The situation escalates when Ijeoma meets Ndidi (*UUT*, 184), a client in Adaora's store the protagonist feels instantly attracted to.

Interestingly, Ijeoma meets Ndidi when she is being supervised by Adaora. Ijeoma must then juggle her queer identity and her façade as a normative Nigerian citizen when she flirts with Ndidi before Adaora, who approves of their friendship as long as Ndidi helps her daughter to socialize her way into a husband. Ijeoma has already learned that silence is her best asset, and half-jokingly reasons that "going out with Ndidi seemed a good middle ground between what [she] wanted and what Mama wanted" (*UUT*, 185). This situation evinces that "the overlap of the public and the private realms have an immense impact on the redefinition of the concept of citizenship" (Oleksy 2009, 5). Soon enough, Ijeoma's connection with Ndidi defeats Adaora's imposed traditions:

> I found myself overcome by emotion – warm feelings, feelings of affection, of happiness, of something like love; feeling of elation at being able to connect so intimately with her, at being able to elicit such an intense reaction from her. It was as if her pleasure was in that moment my own, ours, a shared fulfillment. (*UUT*, 200)

Love and passion shackle Ijeoma's guilt as part of the effect through which affects agitate one's emotions, senses, and even one's body (Brinkema 2014, xii). In spite of the conscious risk that being a homosexual in Nigeria entails, Ndidi and her unorthodox group of friends instill in Ijeoma a "sense of liberation that [she] had not until then known" (*UUT*, 193). Ijeoma's a "sense of liberation" in finding

new allies is in tune with Pucherova's description of twenty-first century African lesbian fiction as redefining the ideas of family, society and femininity in favor of fostering individual "freedom [as] a prerequisite for personal responsibility and social transformation" (2019, 111).

The power that passion and freedom exert on Ijeoma testifies to Giddens' claim that "the possibility of intimacy means the promise of democracy" (1992, 188). Thanks to Ndidi, and the intimacy they reach together, Ijeoma experiences support and gratification which accelerate her social emancipation. The possibility of rebellion arises out of the confrontation between shame and intimate comfort. Only when the latter is present, freedom can triumph through affective self-government. That possibility of choice is what Giddens refers to as the "democratisation of the private sphere" (184) in which democracy stands as a synonym of emancipated discussion (186). Intimacy thus allows Ijeoma to set personal boundaries and engage in dialogue with other queer fellows. This becomes central in this "bildungsromance," since dialogue leads to honest interchange of emotions, convictions, and beliefs not only with Ndidi but with other LGBTQIA+ citizens of Aba.

The democratization of the private sphere stands as a counter-narrative of the promise of happiness and the heterosexual traditional values it promotes. For this reason, as months go by Ijeoma is overcome by the emotions stemming from living with Adaora and having an affair with Ndidi. Aware of her contradictory thoughts and sensations, Ijeoma refers to her experiencing a "questionable form of guilt" (*UUT*, 201). This self-questioning, together with the coexistent negative and positive affects taking turns dominating Ijeoma's thoughts, can be read in terms of how feelings, affects, and sensations operate beyond the logical level, or rather the coercive heteronormative logics forced onto her. Ijeoma then starts what she calls a "witch-hunt" against herself in search of "self-purification" (*UUT*, 196). Two events accelerate her decision: Aba awakes to find a gay couple beaten to death and left naked behind some bushes (*UUT*, 205); and Adanna, a lesbian friend of Ijeoma and Ndidi, is burned alive (*UUT*, 207). When the incident concerning the gay couple is reported to the police, officers bark: "let them rot like the faggots they are" (*UUT*, 205). Likewise, when the neighbors discover that Adanna has been brutally murdered, they "seem to agree that all of it was necessary, [since] an example needed to be set" (*UUT*, 210). In this manner the persecution of the members of the LGBTQAI+ community takes its toll on Ijeoma, as anxiety and panic hinder the positive affective growth which had until now characterized her "bildungsromance." Ijeoma's dread is the result of her being subjected to "bodily regulations" exerted by Nigeria (Obadare 2015, 72), which stands for the homogenization of the body of the nation. In this sense, Giddens argues that a complete democratization of the private sphere and

the autonomy stemming from it "could not be developed while political rights and obligations were closely tied to tradition and fixed prerogatives of property" (1992, 185). This goes in detriment of what otherwise would be Ijeoma's personal emancipation. In a different context, her development would stand as self-govern not only in her romance with Ndidi but in the public sphere, which Giddens suggests is a driving force for the democratization of the public domain (195). The process would run counter to the exercise of democratic practices of respect, equality, and individuality within affective relationships (195). Indeed, these democratic practices at the level of relationships can have implications in a larger community (195) if counter-discourses promulgated by customary laws do not hinder their development.

Right after such violent attacks, Ijeoma and Chibundu are reunited as he moves to Aba. Ijeoma soon realizes that her friend "still hold[s] a romantic feeling" for her (*UUT*, 211). This recalls the episode when Ijeoma witnesses death and decay after kissing Chibundu as a boy. Soon enough, Adaora entices Chibundu to propose to Ijeoma (*UUT*, 213). When Ijeoma tells Ndidi, she is shocked by Ndidi's suggestion that she should consider marrying Chibundu. Interestingly, Ndidi's relinquishing to the democratization of her intimate sphere echoes Biafrans' surrendering before Nigerians' incessant offensives. The attack against the queer community, together with Ndidi's apparent surrender, constitutes a downside in Ijeoma's "bildungsromance," which is now dominated by frustration, fear and pain. Ironically enough, it is when Ijeoma feels stronger, supported by the community, and finally emotionally stable, that the brutal manifestation of conventional social norms prompts Ndidi to suggest a change in detriment of their relationship.

In 1979 Ijeoma starts having second thoughts and seeks stability in accepting Chibundu's proposal (*UUT*, 221). Her desire of being at ease and happy are directly linked with discourses which bind the "reproduction of life" with "the reproduction of culture" (Ahmed 2014, 144), with the traditional family as a necessary agent in this arrangement. In the same manner in which customary laws are presented as constantly under attack in order to encourage their protection, the family is presented as threatened, vulnerable, in need "to be defended against others who violate the conditions of its reproduction" (144). Even in present-day Nigeria, Daniel Jordan Smith points out "the projects of marriage and childrearing continue to be a social effort, strongly embedded in the relationships and values of the extended family system" (2016, 47).

I read Ijeoma's relationship with Chibundu as a self-imposed form of affective control that a homosexual character forces herself to undergo. Her decision resembles that of other lesbian characters in contemporary Nigerian novels by Abioye, Azuah, Okekwe, or Shoneyin, who live a double life as they marry and keep

their homosexual desires hidden (Azuah 2005, 131). Similarly, her self-sacrificing act is still a common practice in a country in which lesbian citizens engage in

> self-censoring behavior [in] significantly and consciously altering their gender presentation to avoid detection or suspicion by members of the public and to avoid arrest and extortion. […] Increasingly, they find themselves compelled to marry an opposite-sex partner, have children, and conform to socially prescribed gender norms. (Human Rights Watch 2016)

Ijeoma agrees to eventually accept Chibundu's proposal, not without pondering that "sometimes we get confused about what happiness really means. Sometimes we get confused about what path to take to get to happiness" (*UUT*, 221). This statement proves her awareness that the promise of happiness has pressured her into a heterosexual life. Her self-awareness becomes the banner of a "bildungsromance" to the extent that Ijeoma directly addresses the reader to underline the disastrous consequences of surrendering to the pressures of negative affects. Both the protagonist and her now ex-lover Ndidi have given up their hopes of democratizing their private sphere and have surrendered to the dictatorship of tradition. Unlike Amina, they are not brainwashed into following customary laws but scared into them. To Ijeoma, leaving Ndidi behind becomes the hardest sacrifice, and thus the one she must undo in an emancipatory act.

Eventually, Ijeoma manages to abandon her abusive husband in the late 1980s, only after realizing the life-threatening toxicity of their marriage. Ijeoma specifically refers to Chibundu as someone "trying to fulfill the dream despite the unpromising circumstances" (*UUT*, 231). Although Ijeoma suspects that Chibundu knows about her being what she now defines as "an abomination" (*UUT*, 231), he is unable to have the affective interchange that an honest conversation would entail. After having a baby daughter, Chidinma, Ijeoma insists on establishing personal, intimate, and physical boundaries and confronts her husband. Unable to cope with the disenchanting news, Chibundu's idealization of marriage turns into aggressive delusion when, referring to Ndidi, he exclaims: "before there was her, there was me. I just know that we will make it work. […] You haven't tried enough. […] And if all else fails, I really do want my son" (*UUT*, 285). Arguably, his anger and desperation are the result of not obtaining the promised happiness or reward of a wife and a son, even after following all the prescribed masculine, cultural, and social steps he perceives as actual laws. The promise of happiness is full of an "emptiness that haunts the subject in the very restlessness of its desire" (Ahmed 2010, 16). His inability to deal with affective disappointment stems from customary law not teaching him that Ijeoma could want to establish personal boundaries.

Before abandoning Chibundu, Ijeoma endures marital rape, which has been normalized in Nigeria to the extent that, even today, it is "commonly considered an oxymoron" (Smith 2016, 42). Unable to detach herself from the burden or tradition, Ijeoma ponders on the affective and ideological obstacles which hinder her emancipation. She sustains that both she and Chidinma are "choking under the weight of something larger than [them], something heavy and weighty of tradition and superstition and of all [their] legends" (*UUT*, 312). Thus, Ijeoma specifically voices that customary make-belief practices are the very cause of her disgrace. It is only when she has taken the resolution to leave Chibundu that she asks herself "why had it taken this long for [her] to act?" (*UUT*, 313). This statement shows a new stage in her "bildungsromance," as she has now re-gained her critical thinking and the emotional strength to fight social expectations.

Okparanta's narrative moves from Ijeoma's abandonment of Chibundu to her life in Aba with Ndidi in 2008. Skillfully interconnecting the present and the past of queer oppression in Nigeria, Okparanta chooses 2008 to continue with the narration of Ijeoma's journey, for it was in 2008 when President Yar'Adua proposed the Same Gender Marriage (Prohibition) Bill. Although Amnesty International denounced the bill's flagrant violation of Nigeria's constitution (2009), in 2013 the Jonathan's administration passed the "Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act."[2] With this act, customary laws turn into actual laws in order to prevent the democratization of the personal sphere of queer Nigerians. The law validates and endorses negative affects such as hate and shame, aiming to portray homosexuality as a moral degeneracy that threatens traditional African familial structures and African identity as well (Obadare 2015, 64). Okparanta denounces the effects of legalized violence by introducing a reference to two Lagos University lesbian students being stripped of their clothes and beaten "until they were black and blue" while the perpetrators shouted "666" (*UUT*, 317-318). This incident is used to introduce Chidinma, Ijeoma's daughter, a professor at Lagos University, described by her mother as belonging to a "new generation of Nigerians with a stronger bent toward love than fear" (*UUT*, 317). Ijeoma explains that if Chidinma had been there, she would have stopped the aggression (*UUT*, 317), which suggests a hope in younger Nigerians. That Ijeoma is able to raise an activist daughter in such a context demonstrates that the protagonist is

2 Section 5.1 illustrates how customary laws actually become legalized practices with the passing of the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act: "A person who enters into a same-sex marriage or contract or civil union commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of 14 years' imprisonment" (UNHCR 2020). For additional information regarding this draconian law and the homophobia and transphobia that it legitimizes read the report: "'Not dancing to their music': The Effects of Homophobia, Biphobia and. Transphobia on the lives of LGBT people in Nigeria" (Bisi Alimi Foundation 2017).

capable of developing and passing affective strategies to overcome surveillance and the burden of traditions. This brings a positive note to the ending of this "bildungsromance," as Ijeoma has transmitted positives forms of affect such as pride and empathy to a new generation.

The socio-political oppression that the Nigerian state exerts upon the LGBTQIA+ collective prevents Ijeoma from coming out as a lesbian in the public sphere, as this act would automatically put her life at risk. Yet, that Ijeoma does not specifically out herself in the Nigerian public sphere does not affect the positive outcome of her "bildungsromance." That this act is not performed does not prevent her progressive self-emancipation. Rather, this particular trait of the narrative reinforces the need to change oppressive customary practices that dominate the Nigerian public domain. In the same line, the absence of a coming out act is present in Uzodinma Iweala's *Speak No Evil* (2018). This has been read as the novel being "interested in modes of privacy and publicness that are more complex than 'out' or 'closeted,' but that are unavailable to these characters" (Green-Simms and Munro 2023). This very same reading could be attributed to *Under the Udala Trees*, as Chinelo Okparanta choose to set her protagonist against the background of the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act.

Curiously enough, it can be argued that the drastic attempts at imposing customary-law practices through law enforcement hint at a change in customs in which sexual freedom is becoming normalized by progressive sectors of the population. *Under the Udala Trees* ends on an evident promising note with regards to the democratization of the personal sphere. The message is introduced through the story that Ndidi tells Ijeoma every night before going to sleep. Ndidi whispers a tale about "a town where love is allowed to be love, between men and women, and men and men, and women and women, just as between Yoruba and Igbo and Hausa and Fulani" (*UUT*, 321). When Ijeoma asks about the name of such a place, Ndidi tells her it is Aba, then Ojoto, Nnewi, Nsukka, Port Harcourt, Lagos, Kaduna, Oba, Sokoto, and Onitsha, so that it becomes a different Nigerian city every day. In this manner, Ndidi's bedtime story recalls Enaruna Edosa's postulate that for Nigerians to feel a sense of belonging, the nation needs to foster "cooperation, understanding and unanimity" based on "difference in behavior becom[ing] less important" (2017, 184). Hence, Chidinma's progressiveness, together with Ndidi's bedtime story, delineate a hopeful future for Nigeria and the democratization of citizens' personal spheres.

4. Conclusion

This article has explored Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* as a "bildungsromance" which depicts Ijeoma's journey towards self-emancipation

as a constant battle against societal expectations, traditions and the pressure to conform in a Nigerian nation which rejects her queer identity. The novel deviates from earlier representations of female-to-female desire as platonic, thus introducing a shift towards more explicit discussions of lesbian sexuality. Such discussions are profoundly intertwined with notions of nationalism, emotions and affect. Okparanta denounces customary laws and religious teachings as sources of cultural indoctrination and negative affect exerting a negative impact on the evolution of Ijeoma, as she is forced to conform to social expectations not only to be accepted but to merely survive. When it comes to the relation between personal and political, the notion of democratizing the personal sphere becomes fundamental, as Ijeoma's self-emancipation is ultimately dependent upon the development of critical thinking towards the Nigerian public sphere and the establishment of personal boundaries in the private domain and against the public intrusions of social dictums shaming her lesbian identity. In this respect, it is not a coincidence that the novel was published in 2015, a year after the Same-sex Marriage Prohibition Act was passed. Okparanta explicitly refers to this when she states that *Under the Udala Trees* "attempts to give Nigeria's marginalized LGBTQ citizens a more powerful voice, and a place in our nation's history" (*UUT*, Author's Note). This, together with the hopeful ending of the novel, can read as Okparanta encouraging queer Nigerians to fight for the democratization of their personal sphere.

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Frances Burney's *A Busy Day; or, an Arrival from India* (1800-1802) and the Family Business

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Frances Burney (1752-1840) became one of the most famous eighteenth-century English novelists after the publication of her first work *Evelina* (1778), which was followed by other successful novels that made her a household name in Britain. Though Burney was always very attracted by the stage and there is a close relationship between her narrative and dramatic production, her comedies and tragedies have been considerably less explored and celebrated by eighteenth-century scholars and feminism. This article examines Burney's comedy *A Busy Day; or, an Arrival from India* (1800-1802), which was never performed on stage during her lifetime and was one of the author's last compositions paving the way for her harsh social criticism in *The Wanderer* (1814). Like all of Burney's works, *A Busy Day* contains a good deal of satire and a provoking view of the domestic ideology, colonialism and the economic interests of the family at the turn of the nineteenth century. Burney introduces an insightful analysis of vulgarity and prejudice against the middle class. By drawing on the work of several Burney scholars, gender and theatre studies, I show how gender and colonialism are interrelated in *A Busy Day*, which showcases an evolution from Burney's first heroine in *Evelina* to a more mature woman that would continue up to *The Wanderer* and it turns out to be Burney's fiercest dramatic criticism against bias based on class, race and sex.

Keywords: Frances Burney; eighteenth-century; theatre studies; gender studies; English literature.

1. Introduction

Most studies about Frances Burney (1752-1840) focus on her role as the founder of the domestic novel written by women. Despite the already existing long tradition of women novelists before her, Burney stood out for her awareness of being a female novelist and her use of the genre to denounce the position of women in eighteenth-century society, as the prefaces to both *Evelina* and *The Wanderer* show. In fact, Burney created a literary tradition that would be followed by Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen or Elizabeth Inchbald, among others, and she was admired by twentieth-century feminist scholars.

If we had to choose among Burney's main topics, legitimization and the family, good and bad manners and woman's place in society would definitely be on the list. Scholars have traced Burney's evolution through the years and it is assumed that *Evelina* (1778) was a fresh start opposing the moralism in *The Wanderer* (1814). Similarly, it is possible to more originally associate Burney's comedies with her novels, which is one of the main goals of this article: to revisit *A Busy Day* as a play about speculation and gender and to analyze Eliza as a disenchanted heroine coming from India that reencounters her family but without experiencing any *Bildung*, just facing disappointment and embarrassment.

Scholarship has already highlighted some ways that *A Busy Day* satirizes class relations and gender norms. After Tara Goshal Wallace's edition, a doctoral dissertation by Barbara Darby was read and a volume offering close readings of each of Burney's plays followed. Darby examines them alongside writings by other late eighteenth-century female dramatists and employs performance and feminist theory. This is the most comprehensive study on Burney's play's so far, though mention should be made to Francesca Saggini's book (2012) on the mediation of theatrical elements in Burney's fiction that emphasize the performative element, a growing subfield in Burney studies. Specific studies on *A Busy Day* are few and they focus either on classism or racism. Gillian Skinner states that Burney's plays investigate the social and behavioural aspects of inheritance. Both the protagonist and her father feel socially uncomfortable since aping gentility is very difficult and neither the upper not the middle classes are favourably portrayed (2010, 241-2). In 2005 Alexander Pitofsky pinpointed that Burney's satire on the racial politics of her time has not received the recognition it deserves. According to this scholar, *A Busy Day* Burney mixes conventional novel of manners with a sustained satirical attack on racism and contains familiar attitudes of both the British working classes and the wealthy at that time, taking prejudice to an extreme: if in *Evelina* Macartney was rejected for being a Scot, now Mungo is invisible in *A Busy Day* for the very fact of being black. For Noel Chevalier, *A Busy Day* is a literary response to India: Burney builds a fanciful British India embedded with the values endorsed by

Warren Hastings to underpin a satire on British society itself. Thus, London is characterized by disorder and savagery while Burney's India exists as a unrealized ideal which "offered the much maligned nabob the opportunity to be redeemed from the stereotype of the ruthless, greedy, parasitical merchant —not exactly foreign, but never quite English" (Chevalier 1999, 35).

My purpose is to take Pitofsky's and Chevalier's work as a point of departure and deal with the intersection of gender relations and colonialism in *A Busy Day*, bearing in mind that the theatre gave the novelist much more freedom than the blank page, as female playwrights knew. Following Noemi Tadmor, I focus on the private realm of the family, where Eliza is simultaneously seen as a member by birth but an alien by her education and a space that turns out to be a mixture of affectation and bad manners, and the public or social space, where Eliza becomes an exotic economic pawn in the hands of men:

> [i]n family and kinship relationships, interest and emotions were often closely bound, and in many cases the nearer the relationship, the greater was its instrumentality. As parents and children, husbands and wives, sibling groups and other kin pulled forces together, their interests and emotions were often closely intermixed (Tadmor 2010, 26)

The confrontation between the urban middle classes and the old elite's right to rule is familiar in Burney's novels. By focusing on Burney's portrayal of gender relations, Barbara Zonitch (1997) defines new forms of familiar violence: legal changes strengthening the position of younger sons as well as daughters within the primogeniture system; economic changes such as the emulative consumerism and the credit system; and the new middle-class emphasis on affective individualism and the empowerment of women as guardians of morality and social harmony in the domestic sphere. I approach *A Busy Day* as a satire of such a system: the author portraits a money-obsessed society in which women are placed at the same level as ridiculed patriarchy. *A Busy Day* is a definitely a play about vulgarity and hypocrisy, but I add identity and speculation to show that in this piece neither class, race nor sex prove to be the best way to judge people.

2. *A Busy Day* and the eighteenth-century stage

Eighteenth-century British drama comprised a variety of forms. Together with the acclaimed sentimental comedy, there were adaptations of Shakespeare, pantomimes and tragedies. Joanna Baillie (*Arnold* 1790) or Inchbald (*Every One has His Fault* 1793) were some acclaimed female playwrights; and there

had been remarkable authors before, like Susana Centlivre (*A Bold Stroke For a Wife* 1718), Eliza Haywood (*Frederick* 1729), or Frances Sheridan (*The Discovery* 1763). While the stage was particularly appealing, this space was also easily associated with prostitution due to the actresses' exposition to the male gaze. As for female authors, the close proximity to theatre managers, actors and the fact of writing for the public detached them from serious writers. Burney loved drama, but she was cautioned by her father, Dr. Charles Burney, and Samuel Crisp not to become a playwright (Fernández 2020; Burney 2017, 69-70). In her lifetime she composed up to eight dramatic pieces, including comedies (*The Witlings* 1779, *The Woman Hater* 1802, *Love and Fashion* 1798 and *A Busy Day*) and tragedies (*Edwy and Elgiva* 1788-9, *Hubert de Vere, The Siege of Pevensey* and *Elberta* 1790-3). Critics, like Tracy Daugherty, even argue that Burney's narrative technique with frozen frames or the reaction of many characters in catalogue scenes resembles the theatre and many situations and characters in her novels migrated to her comedies as Burney initially planned them for the stage.

Burney's *oeuvre* was diverse and complex. After her best-selling *Evelina*, she wrote three novels (*Cecilia or Memoirs of an Heiress* [1782], *Camilla or a Picture of Youth* [1786] and *The Wanderer or Female Difficulties*) and the pamphlet *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy* [1793]), defending the French clergy who ran away from revolutionary France. *A Busy Day* is special for two reasons: Burney had triumphed as a writer for the third time with *Camilla*, which allowed the family to buy Camilla Cottage, and she had already recovered from the dark period that she spent at Court as Queen Charlotte's Keeper of Robes. It seems that she started composing the piece at the end of the century, when she faced the heavy blow of her sister Susanna Elizabeth Burney's death. *A Busy Day* was also Frances's last piece; she had carefully planned the cast so the play was to be staged at Covent Garden and included William Thomas Lewis, Joseph Shepherd Munden and Mary Anne Davenport among the actors (Sabor 1995, 290). Unfortunately, Burney had to leave for France in April 1802 to join her husband General D'Arblay in Paris, where she would spend ten years. It was not until the 20th century that *A Busy Day* came to life by the Show of Strength Company at the Hen and Chicken Theatre, Bedminster, England, for four weeks from 29 September to 23 October 1993 (Sabor 1994, 153). According to critics, it is a brilliant play that most approaches Jane Austen for its attack against bad manners. Interestingly, and in comparison with Burney's novels, *A Busy Day* has not attracted much critical attention. Quite the contrary, it has just been examined with the rest of Burney's dramas in articles and monographs. After Tara Ghoshal Wallace's 1984 edition, it was rediscovered by Peter Sabor in 1995 and recently translated into Spanish and Galician together with *The Witlings* (Sanz 2019; Miguez 2020; Tomé 2018; Burney 2022; Fernández 2023).

3. The private realms in *A Busy Day*.

Briefly summarized, the plot of *A Busy Day* hinges on Eliza Watts, a London-born girl who comes back home after being raised in India by a guardian, Mr. Alderson. In the capital she reencounters her family, the Watts, who are City merchants despised by the West End aristocrats, and her fiancé, Cleveland, to whom she is engaged since they left India. The couple has to struggle until Sir Marmaduke Tylney and his wife Lady Wilhelmina accept Eliza in the family and there are some comic misunderstandings revolving on Eliza's fortune and her family's manners.

Composed of five acts and with considerably fewer characters if we compare it with other plays by Burney, *A Busy Day* is inspired by William Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. Like most comedies of its time, it does not respect the dramatic principles of the unity of action, unity of place, and unity of time dating back from Aristotle. In fact, act one starts in an apartment in a hotel, then we move on to a drawing room at the Tylneys' and act three is in Kensington Gardens. In act four scenes take place again at the Tylneys' and finally act five is set at Miss Percival's.

A Busy Day exemplifies what the English family was like at the end of the eighteenth century, as described by classic historians, like Lawrence Stone (1977) or Rundolph Trumbach (1978), among others: the nuclear family stretched; men married more than once; women had a subservient role; and the number of children from different unions increased. According to Lisa O'Connell in the second half of the eighteenth century marriage moved to the centre of the English novel which reflected familial contentions, alliances and tensions in the context of the landed estate and the parish (2019, 4). For this scholar, Burney had the merit to bring the urban lower-middle classes into focus in her novels and she also invented a number of damaged, unjustly treated people (2019, 210). The intricacies of the extended family in *A Busy Day* are comparatively less complicated than *Evelina*, where Sir John Belmont had another illegitimate child (Macartney) after Evelina was born and the girl was changed at birth with Miss Polly Green, a usurper with a forged identity who has passed for Sir John's heiress all the time. On the contrary, *A Busy Day* is structured on the contrast between the highborn Tylneys and the recently enriched Watts: Cleveland, Frank and Jemina (also called Miss Cleveland) are Sir Marmaduke Tylney and Lady Wilhelmina Tylney's nephews while the Watts have two daughters, Miss Watts and Eliza, and are unexpectedly visited by Joel Tibbs, Mr. Watt's nephew. This situation is a good source of laughs since Eliza thinks Jemina is Cleveland's lover and Cleveland is curious about the mysterious Cit that Frank has to get married to. Therefore, instead of an aristocrat by birth, like Evelina, Burney shifts to an urban middle-class heroine.

A Busy Day represents the subversion of Burney's heroines in more aspects. To start with, Eliza is not a delegitimized orphan but doubly fathered by Mr. Alderson —who is dead— and Mr. Watts, and she has not been brought up in secluded Berry Hill. In both works, the beloved venerable figures are not parents, but kind and venerable Reverend Villars and Mr. Alderson. Eliza remembers the latter and is respectful to her biological family, but she does not overact before her parents. Instead, she would rather seek their sanction and respect: "A Father, — A Mother — my dear Cleveland! what sacred ties! Even though any memory scarcely retains their figures, my heart acknowledges their rights, and palpitates with impatience to shew its instinctive duty" (Burney 1995, 297-8). Any Burney reader knows that parents are of major significance in *Evelina*, even though they are absent or inactive most of the time. In *Evelina,* two scenes mark the protagonist's fate: the appearance of Mrs. Belmont's poignant letter —which is later reproduced in the novel— and Sir John Belmont's meeting his daughter in a highly dramatic scene:

> "Oh, dear resemblance of thy murdered mother! — Oh, all that remains of the most injured of women! behold thy father at thy feet! — bending thus lowly to implore you would not hate him. — Oh, then, thou representative of my departed wife, speak to me in her name, and say that the remorse which tears my soul tortures me not in vain!" (Burney 1994, 428).

The latter is parodically transformed in *A Busy Day*, so the Watts remain unaltered and Eliza makes little impact in the family. No one expects a tear-jerking scene in a hotel that is actually a gambling house, a space where people risks money, and the reaction of the Watts is totally different and diverse. Eliza is kindly welcome only when introduced to her father:

> ELIZA (*rushing out*). O where? where? My Father! my dear Father!
> *She runs to MR. WATTS, takes his hand,*
> *and drops upon one knee to him.*
>
> MR. WATTS. How do do, my dear? you're welcome home again. Well! I should never have known you! But what have I been a'ter? I hope the waiter ha'n't been saucy? (Burney 1995, 307)

Because it is the father who legitimizes the daughter and has a closer relationship with her, the maternal side is not so pivotal in Burney. Instead of a motherless girl vindicated by Caroline Belmont —or a totally absent mother, like Juliet's—, what we

find is a heroine who has been brought up without a mother figure and reencounters an uneducated clothes-obsessed London mother too similar to vulgar Mme. Duval who is "at once uneducated and unprincipled; ungentle in temper, and unamiable [sic] in her manners" (Burney 1994, 13) according to Reverend Villars in *Evelina*. If Mme. Duval was a tavern girl, the other was a wash-woman, as Tibbs light-heartedly reminds to her husband: "has she forgot already how time was she used to scrub the floor upon her knees, before you married her?" (Burney 1995, 340).

Identity is slippery, as it usually happens in Burney's works, and names are very problematic. All the roles Eliza performs are summarized by Barbara Darby: "a Watts by birth, an heiress by adoption, and a fully refined lady because of her upbringing" (1997, 139). Instead of Evelina —who is initially called Anville (since Reverend Villars does not know how to call her)—, we face Eliza bearing a City name and marginalized for that reason because no Watts is accepted among the high classes. With the exception of Camilla, all the heroines have to regain or keep the family name and then their husbands' name in order to marry. In Eliza's case, first names are adapted to fashion and revised again and again within the family circle. Therefore, Mrs. Watts calls her sister "Elizeana", the Watts use "Elizinenny" and the rest of characters "Betsey". Outside the family, the protagonist is more formally called "Elizabeth" and the Watts keep correcting the patriarch. The same applies to Mrs. Watts ("Aylce") and Miss Watts ("Peggy", "Peggerelly", "Margerella", "Margarelly"):

> MISS WATTS (*whispering*). La, Ma', what do you call her Betsey for? You're as bad as Pa' ! You know I told you she's to be called Eliziana now.
> MRS. WATTS. Yes, Elizinneny I mean. I'm sure my dear. I'm very glad to see you again. You've been a long ways. (*kisses her*) Why you're grown quite a woman, my dear! (Burney 1995, 307-8)

In *A Busy Day* Eliza is not welcomed by her family; they are quite detached from her and, worse than that, from each other. The affective family described by sentimental literature does not exist and Eliza Watts experiences solitude. Only her servant Deborah and Jemina are kind to her in London and in both cases there are no blood ties between them. For Darby, both *A Busy Day* and *The Woman Hater* deal with the family seen as

> […] a 'natural' and biologically based entity … invested with emotional power and a sense of necessity and desirability. However, families are shown to be simultaneously, and with quiet effectiveness, the source of numerous social rules and evaluative standards that are especially forceful and negative for wives and daughters (1997, 131).

Gender —and all the cultural assumptions that are inherent to it, such as softness, passivity and beauty— does not only determine family role, but also how one is perceived by female relatives who feel free to manipulate the rest of the family. Instead of a source of happiness, in *A Busy Day* the family is mainly business and a speculative agent. Eliza is seen in economic terms, as a commodity, like Mungo, rather than a woman. Mrs. Watts, for instance, is not very affectionate to Eliza:

> ELIZA. Is that my Mother? — my dear Mother! —
>
> *Runs to MRS. WATTS with open arms*.
>
> MRS. WATTS. Take care, my dear, take a little care, or you'll squeeze my poor new Handkerchief till it won't be fit to be seen. And it cost me sich a sight of money — (Burney 1995, 307)

Regarding sisterhood, in *Evelina* there is one special sibling, Miss Belmont, who does not confront Evelina and is happily set aside in the novel, while Lord Orville's hysterical sister, Lady Louisa Larpent, looks down on the heroine, just as in *A Busy Day* Eliza faces the despise of her own sister Betsey. The latter is unable to realize that had Eliza been brought up in London and had she not come back from India as a prosperous heiress, both would be in exactly the same position:

> ELIZA (*running to embrace* MISS WATTS). My Sister!
> MISS WATTS. O dear, is is you, Sister Elizana? how you're grown! How do do, Sister? What a pretty Hat you've got on! I'll have just the fellow to it. Pray who are those two smart beaus you've got with you? (Burney 1995, 307).

The translation from a novel to the stage implies multiple transformations with it. The most obvious one is the disappearance of letter writers (*Evelina* is an epistolary novel), which is substituted by a dramatic polyphony representing different ideologies: liberal, conservative, young, old, urban or rural. For better or worse, Reverend Villars, Lady Howard and Mrs. Welwyn advise and supervise Evelina's movements, not to mention Cecilia's host of male mentors. However, in *A Busy Day* Eliza has to defend herself just as Juliet's thoughts will be expressed in direct or free indirect speech in *The Wanderer*. Unfortunately, there are not many monologues revealing Eliza's feelings. She puts herself in Cleveland's shoes and feels for his surprise in an intercourse so new to him: "all your shame, your confusion, your Blushes — tingling upon my own cheeks!" (Burney 1995, 341).

Furthermore, Eliza is aware of the prejudices against the Cits and feels ashamed of her family. Cleveland's reaction is difficult to predict and Eliza knows that she risks losing his heart:

> ELIZA. […] O Cleveland! with elegance like yours, founded on birth, education and intellectual endowments, can I wonder if your mind should involuntarily recoil from an alliance, in which shame must continually struggle against kindness, and Pride against Happiness? (Burney 1995, 350)

Shame and rejection is not only experienced by Eliza. The conservative ideology is represented by the aristocratic Tylneys, but also by the parodied patriarch. Like an eighteenth-century King Lear, Mr. Watts feels a defeated and frustrated *pater familias* instead of a self-made man cherished by his children:

> MR. WATTS. Ah, Joel, as long as business did but go on, all them things was a joy to me! For then I was somebody! And my wife and darter did not dare give themselves such airs. I used to speak as sharp as they. Here's a nice dinner, says I; but who kivered the table? And what smart new Gowns you've got on, says I; but who paid for 'em? And now let's all go, and take a ride in our own coach, says I; but which of us earned it? And when first I got on in the world, I used to give 'em a crown at a time; and then, at last 'twas a Guinea; and then, lauk! there was such kissing and joy! and there's a good Tommy! says one; and Thankee, dear Pa! says t'other: but now that once they've fooled me into giving 'em their pin money, as they call it, they take it without never a word, as if it was their own gaining! (Burney 1995, 340)

The father and daughter bond in the eighteenth century is summarized by Ruth Perry paraphrasing Lynda Boose: "As a member of a patrilinear family or tribe, her [the daughter`s] power derives from her father's backing. In other words, a daughter's connection to her father enhances her power insofar as she is his representative or the representative of his family" (2004, 89). As Tadmor explains, family ties were often marked by negative tension and disappointment: obligation was expected yet inadequately fulfilled (2010, 27). *A Busy Day* showcases the consequences of capitalism on human relationships and ostracized patriarchy: being a male does not mean to be respected in one's own family since people are valuable for what they represent, for the money they have or could bring, not for their personal worth and this connects the private sphere of gender with colonialism. A total lack of authority on Mr. Watts' part and a lack of authentic communication with his family lie behind familiar disaffection. Perhaps a biographical element can be traced here. Charles Burney

struggled painfully to make a name for himself among London's polite circles. A music teacher of humble middle-class background, he used to feel haunted by a feeling of insufficiency. In *A Busy Day* Frances might then be reflecting her father's anxiety to rise in the social ladder and relating it to the dawn of old family structures.

4. The polite world and cultural shock in *A Busy Day*

If closely examined, most of Burney's heroines find themselves in a new environment: Evelina enters high society in London and Eliza goes down into London vulgar society. The difference is that Eliza has not been raised in England, but in India, and the play is not an entrance into the world, but an arrival from the colonies, which makes Eliza have a very different view point, not naïve, but hybrid or colonial, bringing the Hindu culture to the metropolis.

Another element adds up to her female condition. Eliza is not only a token of exchange for men, but she is also a nabob, a derogatory term suggesting excessive wealth and influence in eighteenth-century England. Since the first trading settlements were created in India by a company called the East India Company, India was an influential part of the British Empire and some British made their fortune there since trade and political power required several thousand British men to live in India for extended periods. Most young men who gained nominations in Company India were middle- or upper-class —the sons of military officers, clergymen, merchants and the like. As Margaret Finn argues,

> [t]he political and commercial operations of the East India Company were notoriously corrupt, and hundreds of EIC employees accumulated vast fortunes in India, money that allowed them to purchase large landed estates, stand successfully for Parliament and gain lucrative positions in government at home.

Still, nabobs were British and when they returned home they were considered in terms of the material luxury they carried with them. Playwrights like Inchbald (*Mogul Tale; or, The Descent of the Balloon* 1784) or Mariana Starke (*The Sword of Peace* 1788 and *The Widow of Malabar* 1791) had already populated their works with nabobs, who were satirized by Samuel Foote in a homonymous comedy in 1722 and they brought "imported items that served as imperial souvenirs, private markers of time spent in India that could be saved and intermingled with British artifacts to narrate an Anglo-Indian life" (Nechtman 2010, 71). However, nabobs were seen as outsiders, a threat to the establishment. Because they were both envied and seen as dangerous or suspicious when they returned to Great

Britain, they revealed the tensions and contradictions inherent in British national identity as it happens in Burney's plays. Burney herself had witnessed the trial against one of the English governors in India, Warren Hastings (1732-1818). She wrote about it in her journals and supported Hastings against Burke (Clark; Bolton). It is not a coincidence that Eliza bears the same name as Hastings' daughter, Eliza de Feuillide (1761-1813), Jane Austen's sister-in-law and the inspiration for *Lady Susan* (written 1794).

One of the strengths of *A Busy Day* is the depiction of social reality and injustice overseas and in Britain and this topic will be further explored in *The Wanderer*. In Burney's first novel, the author reveals her humanitarianism by portraying the abuse of old women in a race and animals disguised as people. In these instances, Evelina is just a passive spectator; she never intervenes and just makes a comment to Villars with the exception of the moment when she grabs the gun from Macartney's hands to prevent his suicide:

> "Awaken you," I cried, with a courage I now wonder at, "to worthier thoughts, and rescue you from perdition."
> I then seized the pistols; he said not a word, — he made no effort to stop me; —I glided quick by him, and tottered down stairs ere he had recovered from the extremest [sic] amazement. (Burney 1994, 204)

As Burney grew older, she focuses on a heroine who is more independent and experienced in the prejudices of the world. The first instance of Eliza's assertiveness can be seen when she defends her never-seen-on-stage black servant Mungo just at the beginning of the play. The scene means an acceptance of the blacks and a frontal attack against the indifference of the English from an Englishwoman by birth:

> ELIZA. Yes; be so good as to see if he wants any help.
> 1ST WAITER. What, the Black?
> ELIZA.Yes. He is the best creature living. I shall be extremely concerned if he should meet with any accident. (Burney 1995, 295-6)

Only Jemina and Eliza support those in need, like Mungo, arising as many reactions as Juliet at the beginning of *The Wanderer* (Doody 1988, 299). For Betsy Bolton, "Burney here directs her spectators' attention to the margins of England's imperial drama—and draws attention to the absences enabling her own sentimental resolution of social disparity" (2005, 897). It seems that Burney got well informed about India through her family and acquaintance (Wallace 1984, 1-2). Critics, like Edwards Said, have noticed an anti-colonialist reading in Jane

Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814) and *Emma* (1815). Here Burney is anticipating Austen and similarly addressing the insensibility of the gentry in terms of race. Also, it is Eliza who stands up for herself and explains to the Watts that Cleveland and Mr. Alderson became good friends in India and she suggests Mr. Watts having an interview with Cleveland who will "candidly acquaint you with the state of his affairs. He entertains the most reasonable expectations of inheritance from Sir Marmaduke." (Burney 1995, 338). If closely analyzed, Eliza has three opponents in *A Busy Day*: her parents' impolite manners, the Tylneys' partiality for rank and birth and Cleveland's irresolution. Wallace accurately points out that in *A Busy Day* the comic scenes of confrontation with the family expose vulgarity and gives us laughter at the expense of the hero and the heroine (1984, 7). All through the play there is some unbalance between Eliza's assertiveness and Cleveland's lack of resolution. The hero unconsciously becomes Eliza's enemy by putting off an interview with Mr. Watts.

The prejudice against India is deeply rooted in the ignorant Watts sisters and race and gender meet here. *A Busy Day* is about economy, but also about physical appearance. Clothes, wigs and all those elements that build the social persona matter. They transform the individual in the social milieu by giving them a new value. Eliza is always seen as a wealthy girl coming from India that one can take advantage from, so the Watts ladies scrutinize and ask her about her muslin, a metaphor of herself: Eliza is a beautiful object for show, not a woman with a mind of her own and able to fight for a place in society. Though the Watts have not been to India and have never met people from this country, they do not stop hazarding a guess and voicing their prejudices: "La! can they make things there? I thought they'd been all savages" (Burney 1995, 309). They think people are wild and frightening there: "La, nasty black things! I can't abide the Indins. I'm sure I should do nothing but squeal if I was among 'em" (Burney 1995, 309). Behind her comedy, Burney hints that neither money nor class make people respectful to and respected by others. The piece portrays a group of characters who feel empowered for the very fact of being wealthy.

Eliza is othered in *A Busy Day* and the play is built on the parallelisms between social alienation and embarrassment at different levels. "Disgrace" is one of the most repeated words in the play and it is the patriarch Mr. Watts who voices discomfort, like Eliza when she mentions Mungo. Curiously, the Watts are also despised by aristocracy as "the vulgarest tribe" (Burney 1995, 319). Deborah exposes the background of the story regarding the Watts' origin: "He was nothing, but an errand boy, or such like, at this beginning. And as to she he married, she was no more than his master's house maid: a poor mean thing" (Burney 1995, 305). In *Evelina* this bias against the Branghtons is not as prominent as in Burney's comedy where Mr. Watts is not blind to their daughters'

pretensions: "It's a very troublesome thing the having darters" (Burney 1995, 350) and feels alienated while Joel Tibbs tries to console him:

> MR. WATTS. Ah, Joel, That's the very thing! I can't divert myself no way! Ever since I left off business, I've never known what to do. They've made me give up all my old acquaintance, because of their being so mean; as and to our new ones, it's as plain as ever you see they only despise me: for they never take off their hats if I meet them in the street; and they never get up off their chairs, if I ask them how they do in their own houses; and they never give me a word of answer I can make you, if I put a question to them (Burney 1995, 341)

As explained above, the patriarch is not respected by his own family and Miss Watts even feels ashamed of his father, as she describes to Eliza:

> MISS WATTS. […] you can't think how I'm ashamed of him. Do you know I was one day walking in the Park, with some young ladies I'd just made acquaintance with, quite the pelite sort, when all of a sudden I felt somebody twitch me by the elbow: so I scratched, and called out La, how impertinent! and when I turned round, saying Do pray, sir, be less free of your hands, who should I see but Pa'! (Burney 1995, 342).

Neither young men nor aristocrats care about women's name or virtue, as long as they are worthy in the family. Affective ties matter very little when it comes to take material advantage of women. In Burney's works, the aristocracy assumes not only having the right to abuse of others, but they also keep assuming the right to speculate with women's property, even in the high classes, as it happens in colonial politics. Therefore, Eliza will be as chased for her money as Miss Percival, the other rich heiress, as Sir Marmaduke explains to Cleveland ("you were hardly sailed, when her rich brother, Lord Percival, departed, and left her all he had at his own disposal" (Burney 1995, 322). The young lady does not conform to Cleveland's ideal ("she is vain and fantastic, and has won from me neither the esteem nor the confidence I wish to repose in my wife" (Burney 1995, 325), as he remarks to Jemina. Believing herself to be a manipulator, Miss Percival is manipulated by others and ends up married to Frank while she was to marry Cleveland as Sir Marmaduke explains: "I demanded ready money, in return, to buy off my mortgage. To this she consented; and therefore you have only now to take her fair hand" (Burney 1995, 322). Unable to accept Cleveland's rejection, bitchy Miss Percival orchestrates an encounter between the Watts, Lady Wilhelmina and Sir Marmaduke to lower Eliza's family down because she feels jealous:

> MISS PERCIVAL. What unspeakable pleasure it would give me to see that wretch torn by wild beast! And yet, were it not for the disgrace, the horrible disgrace, I should rejoice to have got rid of him, for he is grown so insipid, he made my head ache by his stupidity. But then — not to wait to be rejected! — A male creature, — destined for nothing but to die at one's feet. — (Burney 1995, 372)

Sexual harassment features in both works and appearances are very deceiving. In her novels Burney always includes a list of womanizers, who do not hesitate to use brutality if necessary. The repertoire includes Sir Clement Willoughby in *Evelina*, Sir Robert Floyer in *Cecilia*, Sir Lyell Sycamore and the abusive French Commissioner in *The Wanderer*. Frank Cleveland cannot meet Eliza in a better place, a hotel which is significantly a gambling house, and he sets his mind on her eighty thousand pounds, not on herself:

> LORD JOHN. O take her, then, take her! 'Tis better than the King's bench.
> FRANK. And she is really young and pretty. — 'Twould but a charity. I must positively think of it. A little rhodomontade is all she can require. Come, my Lord John, you can help me. You shall go and tell Sir Marmaduke and my Aunt Wilhemina that 'tis my fixt resolve to take this measure; and then, either they will draw their purse strings and pay my debts, ir I'll fairly put the eighty thousand pounds into my pocket. (Burney 1995, 313)

Frank's attitude is the same as the Tylneys, but a distinction should be made. Lady Wilhelmina approaches Eliza Mrs. Delville-like and proves to be wrong about the girl's connections: "There is a certain air of reserve, a certain modesty of respect, in young people who are born and bred to know what is due to certain distinctions in life, that immediately point them out to those who are conversant in discriminating the various classes of Society" (Burney 1995, 355). However, for Sir Marmaduke, class is irrelevant as long as the family can take advantage of individuals: "Well, what's that to us? Who cares about the genealogy of a younger Brother's wife? If it were my Nephew Cleveland, indeed, who may become the head of his house" (Burney 1995, 323), an opinion he reinforces later about Cleveland's marriage:

> SIR MARMADUKE. If she pays his debts, what's where she's born to us?
> JEMINA (*aside*). Unfortunate subject.
> LADY WILHELMINA. How any young person of that class can even think of coming among Us, often amazes me. What is it possible persons of that description, when once their fortunes are paid down, can expect from Us?

> ELIZA. Miss Cleveland — suffer me, I beg, to retire.
> JEMINA. No, no! (*holding her*.)
> SIR MARMADUKE. I don't mean to praise the wisdom of such Girls, Lady Wil., for I think them to the full as silly as you can do: but if they take our younger branches off our hands, and provide for our spendthrifts, what signifies their folly to us? (Burney 1995, 357)

One of the worst portraits in *A Busy Day* is the insensibility of the rich towards those around. Lady Wilhelmina Tylney and Lord Marmaduke are unaffected as people lose their homes and natural disasters impact the economy. They just think of themselves while Jemina is worried about Mrs. Summers's economy and Tomson's death. Lady Wilhelmina's justification for her selfishness is sheer hypocrisy: "a man of rank is peculiarly susceptible of evil, because not brought up to vulgar vicissitudes; but a low person has so little leisure to reflect of refine, that a few disagreable [sic] accidents can make but little impression on him" (Burney 1995, 317). Similarly, Sir Marmaduke complains about Lord Garman losing his hair and the loss of his own hay-rick and is also more concerned about his social persona rather than people:

> SIR MARMADUKE. Disturb me? Why look at my great Coat! See how the Cape's sprinkled with rain! I dare say you may count nine or ten large drops upon it. And yet that booby, John Midge, stood in the Hall, staring me full in the face as I got off my horse, and rubbing his hands with joy, because, forsooth, he says this cursed Shower will bring up peas and beans for his young family (Burney 1995, 357)

For Wallace, *A Busy Day* insists on Burney's moral positions: "class boundaries are not what separate the well-bred from the vulgar, and that essential delicacy springs from minds and hearts rather than from pedigrees" (1984, 24). The play insists that the rich are neither aware of the social role of each member of society nor of their own role since there is neither a sense of community nor any interest in building society together.

5. Conclusion

All Burney's comedies deal with controversial issues and uncomfortable truths. In *A Busy Day* introducing love as a liberating force and Cleveland and Eliza standing apart from selfishness does not suffice for the happy ending: the comedy shows England's darker face, so it is difficult to accept this play as light

comedy. *A Busy Day* was a kind of rehearsal or draft of *The Wanderer* and both works obsessively revolve on money, gender and race.

The private sphere and the wider social sphere go hand in hand in *A Busy Day*, just as gender and class differences are cleverly dissected by Burney, who deals with the cult of individualism and crises of the patriarchal family as Eliza is always seen in terms of the economic benefit she brings from abroad and her marginalization as a woman parallels the lack of respect for the patriarch, who is as mocked and frustrated as a woman. Gender matters in that no gentleman coming from India would have to endure so many embarrassing situations. Besides, there is no female community, but a good deal of disrespect towards women who are economic pawns, like men, in a more open and critical way than in Burney's novels. Eliza represents a fantasy because she is only valued for what she is/could be worth and her identity is unstable for being both a woman and a foreigner. This is definitely not the play to be expected from a pen like Burney's at that time, but Burney's criticism of gender connections and colonialism is precisely what makes *A Busy Day* so memorable for eighteenth-century studies and worth restoring within Burney's dramatic production.

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Re-thinking Eating Disorders as Cultural Pathologies in Contemporary Irish Poetry: A Case Study[1]

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Eating disorders—a generic term that includes anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating and many other subtypes of problematic relationships with food and eating—are situated at the interface of disciplines as varied as medicine, biology, history, cultural studies, gender studies and the social sciences. Although the reasons behind the development and experience of an eating disorder are individual as well as cultural, these pathologies tend to be analysed from either an exclusively biomedical perspective—which often excludes the cultural factor—or oversimplified as being the result of the stereotypes of beauty imposed on the female body in western cultural traditions. This essay, in contrast, looks at eating disorders as multi-layered metaphors of cultural dissidence within the social order and literary traditions of contemporary Ireland. It is divided into distinct, though interrelated, sections: a brief introduction to eating disorders; a consideration of the problems posed in the representation of emaciated corporealities; a taxonomical classification of the primary sources found in the course of my research; and the analysis of Mary O'Donnell's poem "Reading the Sunflowers in September" as a case study to illustrate the literal and metaphorical employment of anorexia in contemporary Irish poetry. Although the analysis is philological, the perspective adopted is that of the Medical Humanities, in that I will make use of literary, cultural and biomedical literature in order to provide a view that is complementary to the scientific discourse around anorexia nervosa. O'Donnell's poem will be

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considered in relation to European visual arts, particularly photography, in order to enhance the transnational dimension of eating disorders. At the same time, the close reading of the poem under analysis will be complemented by a comparative analysis with other Irish poems of the late 20th and early 21st centuries to underline the relevance of the national context in interpreting the representation of this disease. Ultimately, this essay aims to proffer new perspectives on the pathology and to contribute to the social understanding of those who experience it.
Keywords: anorexia nervosa; eating disorders; cultural pathologies; contemporary Irish women's poetry; Medical Humanities.

1. Introduction

Eating disorders is a generic term used to describe problematic relationships with food and includes anorexia nervosa, bulimia and binge eating, among other subtypes. Although these pathologies lie at the complex interface of biology, medicine and cultural and social components (Bartel 2021, 1)—to mention just some of the factors involved in their development—the biomedical sciences have traditionally overlooked, underestimated or oversimplified historical and sociocultural discourses in their diagnosis and treatment. In their introduction to "New Insights into Anorexia Nervosa" Philip Gorwood and his team offer an overview of the recent scientific literature around the condition under study, which they define as a "starvation addiction" (Gorwood et al. 2016, 2) of unknown aetiology (1). The authors acknowledge the difficulty of providing a comprehensive explanation for the development and progression of anorexia nervosa but contend that the pathology is "clearly influenced by biological, sociocultural and psychological factors" (2016, 1). However, their review article focuses mainly on the biomedical aspects and only obliquely touches upon the sociocultural as a determining element in the understanding and treatment of anorexia.

In line with this biomedical analysis, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) similarly defines anorexia nervosa as "self-starvation and weight loss resulting in low weight for height and age," which results in "the highest mortality of any psychiatric diagnosis other than opioid use disorder." It is considered "a very serious condition […] driven by an intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat" and the aim of treatment is to normalise the patient's "eating and weight control behavior and restore their weight," although, it is acknowledged that the risk of relapse is high "in the first year following program discharge" (American Psychiatric Association 2023). Writing for the Limerick Mental

Health Association, Felicity Byrne calls eating disorders "the hidden problem in Ireland" and contends that these pathologies "have been on the rise in recent years" in the country (2023). She uses surveys conducted by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to estimate the prevalence of anorexia and bulimia in Ireland, finding it to be "around 2-3% of the population, with young women being the most affected" (Byrne 2023). Although Byrne mentions genetic, psychological and environmental factors as being active drivers in the development of eating disorders, the latter are summarised as simply "social and cultural pressures to be thin" (Byrne 2023), no reference being made to the specific religious, political, cultural and historical context of Ireland and its impact on the relationship Irish women have traditionally had with their own bodies.

Given the high risk of relapse observed, the APA's single treatment aim in anorexia nervosa of restoring a patient's body weight alone is clearly no guarantee of the patient's recovery. This suggests that a deeper understanding of this pathology is required, and highlights the need for further research on its origins and treatments. The aim of this essay is to analyse anorexia nervosa, arguably the most life-threatening of all subtypes of eating disorders, as the result of, among other factors, the social, historical and religious pressures imposed on the female body in the specific context of Ireland since the 1980s. As mentioned above, the social narrative around eating disorders tends to blame the beauty models of a given time as being responsible for the disease. Interestingly enough, in the poetry studied for this essay, this factor is rarely explored. The emaciated body is instead inscribed as a site of profound cultural dissidence and as the metaphorical representation of gender asymmetries that go well beyond the beauty myth. This essay will present a taxonomical classification of primary sources, mainly taken from poetry, since the number of poems dealing with eating disorders exceeds those of any other genre in Ireland. Outside the scope of this essay is the representation of male emaciated corporealities. As Heike Bartel has contended in her ground-breaking study of men writing about eating disorders in German and English autobiographical narratives, public and medical perceptions of eating disorders as female maladies, together with the pressures imposed by stereotypes of normative masculinity, have rendered anorexia in patients identified as male somewhat invisible (Bartel 2021, 5). Although it is necessary, even urgent, to research this theme across cultures and historical periods, this essay focuses exclusively on the female body. Ultimately, the aim of this study is to provide complementary information to that proffered by the scientific literature on anorexia nervosa, with a view to improving the individual's experience of, and recovery from, this life-threatening illness.

2. Anorexia Nervosa: Problems of Representation

In her influential study on famine literature in Ireland, *The Feminization of Famine*, Margaret Kelleher reflects on the capacity of language to represent what John Banville termed "the inexpressible"—emaciated bodies in advanced states of decay—as well as on the ethical implications of such an enterprise (Kelleher 1997, 2-3). Although it can be argued that the sight of famine victims may disrupt the separation between self and other (Kelleher 1997, 7), arousing sympathetic as well as empathic responses on the part of the witness, the description of the physical dimension of starvation—bulging eyes, swollen bellies, out of proportion heads that resemble skulls—produces the opposite effect through its challenging of linguistic articulation, much the same way as other forms of severe illnesses do. And so, while naturalistic depictions of ill bodies abound in medical literature, approaching the same reality from an artistic perspective has proved more problematic[2] due to the "resistance to language," or unshareability, of physical distress (Scarry 1985, 4).

Elaine Scarry explains this absence of bodies in pain from the systems of representation by emphasising the radical split that a disturbed physicality triggers between the self in pain (for whom pain is the experience that rules absolutely over all other aspects of their life) and the rest of the community (which remains oblivious to this physical reality happening in someone else's body, turning illness into something to reject and fear). For Scarry, physical distress lies in a representational paradox: it is at the same time that which cannot be confirmed (by anyone in the community, except the sufferer) and that which cannot be denied (because of its centrality in the sufferer's life) (Scarry 1985, 4). Anorexic bodies are no exception in this regard. Although comparing self-inflicted starvation with a famine situation would result in unethical oversimplifications, the somatic consequences of both processes are similar. And so, if, as Kelleher contends, famine bodies prove at times difficult to render on the page or canvass, descriptions of anorexic embodiments (traditionally considered a female malady)[3] are principally present in naturalistic approaches

2 There are, of course, instances of bodies in pain in both world literature and the visual arts. In Ireland, novelist Lia Mills, poets Dorothy Molloy, Shirley McClure, Leanne O'Sullivan and Celia de Fréine, visual artist Mary Fitzgerald and film-maker Evan Barry are just a few examples of the recent inscription of different pathologies (cancer, COVID-19, hepatitis C, eating disorders, spine damage) into the artistic discourse of the island. However, the numbers are scant when compared with the amount of representations of emotional suffering.

3 Interestingly enough, famine bodies are also mainly associated with the female physicality. Kelleher argues that "where the individual spectacle of a hungry body is created, this

to the disorder. However, since the 1980s an important body of work on anorexia has been produced by Irish writers (mainly women, though not exclusively), who thus provide their audiences with corporal realities that deviate from the beautiful, compact, idealised—and inevitably healthy—female body of the Irish national muse.

The cultural discourse around eating disorders has fostered the idea that the connection between thinness and success is responsible for the rapid rise in anorexia nervosa, primarily in young women, in the western world. As Susie Orbach has pointed out, globalisation has contributed to the democratisation of beauty, which has ultimately translated into style icons of extreme thinness (and western appearance) which are not subject to aesthetic variation across the globe (Orbach 2009, 3). This tendency towards corporeal homogeneity has contributed to the consideration of anorexia as a "relatively unproblematic category of a medical taxonomy of diseases and disorders" (Malson 1998, x). However, Orbach insists that our bodies are a composite of what she calls the "familial body story" and the "cultural body story":

> Shot through the individual familial body story of how we have been physically treated and treat our children is the cultural body story which both parents and children live through. Everything in our early experience shapes our bodies. Every culture marks the bodies of its people in specific ways and we see the various external markers, from the rings which extend the necks of Burmese women to the hand gestures of the Italian speaker to the way we wear our clothes, are sequestered during menstruation, or do our ablutions. (Orbach 2009, 58)

As summarised in the introduction to this essay, recent research on anorexia nervosa combines the naturalistically-oriented medical work with sociological, psychological and cultural factors that ultimately account for anorexic embodiments as "fluid, contradictory and socially embedded" (Malson 1998, xii). The literary inscriptions of anorexia by contemporary Irish women writers work as artistic illustrations of these theoretical approaches. On the one hand, the texts shatter that inexpressibility that Kelleher pointed out in reference to famine victims and confront readers with the devastating physical consequences of the disease, at times sparing none of the details. These naturalistic descriptions present a challenge for both readers and writers schooled in a tradition of idealised female muses. In "Bulimic," for example, Leanne O'Sullivan describes the aftermath of an episode of purging: "Blood dries on the bathroom floor" after

occurs, predominantly, through images of women" (1997, 8).

the poetic persona has "raped [the body's chambers] with two blistering fingers," feeling "the caustic passion of juices from the gut" and "erupt[ing] maniacally / until blood makes her hole, barren, empty" (O'Sullivan 2004, 18-19); similarly, in Colette Bryce's "Form" the protagonist starves herself to achieve "depth to the shallows / of the temples, definition to the cheek, / contrast to the clavicle, the ankle bone, the rib, / the raised X-ray perception of my feet" (Bryce 2000, 17); the poetic persona in Catríona O'Reilly's "Thin" compares her emaciated body to a small room in which her "hip-bones / stick in the foam mattress" while her sister does not seem to notice "the skin / around my mouth or my ankle-bones" as the result of "[n]o dinner / for six weeks" (O'Reilly 2001, 20-21); and in Molly Twomey's "The Most Brutal Thing," the poetic persona describes the "slow collapse / of bones, sprained ankles to sunken cheeks" of Katerina Laktionova, a real patient of anorexia nervosa who had been "fastened and refastened to a gurney, / a gastric tube stuck to her face" before death (Twomey 2022, 17).[4]

On the other hand, the socio-political and historical specificities of the Irish context (or, in Orbach's phraseology, the "cultural body story" of Ireland) are also interwoven with the physical descriptions in the poetry, acting sometimes as subtexts, sometimes as mighty generators of women's somatic reactions. One of the earliest examples of self-inflicted starvation in the Irish literary—mainly poetic—scene is Eavan Boland's "Anorexic" (Boland 2005, 75-76), where an emaciated Eve has internalised the religious stigmatisation of female flesh as sinful and hence dreams of getting "angular and holy," of fitting back into Adam's rib and disappearing from the physical level.[5] In the first decade of the millennium interest in eating disorders as both biomedical and cultural pathologies has continued to grow and the publication in 2004 of Leanne O'Sullivan's debut collection, *Waiting for My Clothes*, a book almost entirely devoted to the experience of extreme anorexia and bulimia, constitutes a good example. More recently, the publication of Victoria Kennefick's *Eat or We Both Starve* (in 2021) and Molly Twomey's *Raised Among Vultures* (in 2022) indicates that anorexia is very relevant in the present of Ireland, not just as part of what Malson called "a relatively unproblematic category of a medical taxonomy of diseases" but as a cultural pathology that deserves more attention as well as a more accurate biomedical and social representation.

4 In her poem Twomey quotes the headline from BBC News about the death of Laktionova, whose body was put in a suitcase and thrown into the sea by her mother in an Italian port. For more on this case, see BBC News 2017.

5 "Anorexic" is included in Boland's 1980 volume *In Her Own Image*. For reasons of accessibility the reference is taken from her *New and Collected Poems* (2005). For a detailed analysis of this poem, see González-Arias 1996.

3. A Taxonomy of Starved Bodies in Irish Poetry

The presence of eating disorders, particularly anorexia nervosa, in Irish poetry published between the 1980s and today is frequent enough to merit attention. The questions posed by these emaciated presences are numerous: What are Irish women writers trying to say about the female body, Irish culture and international strictures imposed on women's identities across the globe? Is there any reason for the abundant presence of eating disorders in Irish poetry in the period mentioned above or does it respond to a mere aesthetic trend? What are the main metaphors employed to represent the emaciated women that inhabit those texts? Can these poems contribute to the social understanding, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of eating disorders?

It can be contended that in many of the poems published on this topic in Ireland to date, the emaciated, starved corporealities of women become the somatic surfaces for complex identitarian issues engraved in the Irish collective psyche and act as powerful sites of dissidence within a national context. On other occasions, the anorexic bodies of the protagonists can be read as signifiers of gender pressures that exist across cultures, meaning that any analysis would demand a transnational approach. In the course of my research so far, I have designed a taxonomical classification for these primary sources. However, it is not infrequent to find some overlapping in the thematic interests of a given text between two or more of the categories that follow. The titles provided in each category do not constitute an exhaustive list of Irish poems on eating disorders but are mentioned as representative examples.

(1) Self-inflicted starvation often works as a strategy of resistance against (as well as internalisation of) religious discourses on the female body as the locus of sin. In spite of the increasing secularisation of Ireland from the mid-90s on, and particularly after the unprecedented economic boom known as the Celtic-Tiger phenomenon, the power of Catholicism in the perception of women's bodies is still very strong, even among the youngest generations. Eavan Boland's "Anorexic" (2005, 75-76; originally published in 1980), Eithne Strong's *Flesh: The Greatest Sin* (1993 [1980][6]) and Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill's "Marvellous Grass / Féar Suaithinseach" (1993, 74-75) are among the earliest examples of the religious component in the development of anorexia nervosa. However, many of the poems in recent collections by

6 Strong's volume was originally published by The Runa Press in 1980, the same year as Eavan Boland's "Anorexic." Again, for reasons of accessibility, the reference is taken from the 1993 Attic edition.

the younger generation of Irish women poets—such as Leanne O'Sullivan's *Waiting for My Clothes* (2004) and Victoria Kennefick's *Eat or We Both Starve* (2021)—continue to pay witness to the strong influence of religion on the individual and collective constructions of the female body in the country.

(2) Sexual awakenings and sexual abuse constitute other important sources in the development of eating disorders in the texts analysed. As such, in Áine Ní Ghlinn's "Galar an Aisig" / "Vomiting Sickness" (1996, 14-15) the medical establishment fails to find the cause of the protagonist's bulimia as it would be unthinkable, in the cultural environment of the Ireland of the time, that a father could be molesting his own daughter.

(3) An emaciated female corporeality is also used to parallel the hunger strike initiated by Irish republican prisoners in Northern Ireland in 1981. The reaction against socio-political colonisation is here complemented by a critique of the gender asymmetries that exist in a national ethos characterised by its masculine bias. In Paula Meehan's "Hunger Strike" (1986, 9-10) the protagonist stops eating and thus clears some space for female agency in the context of The Troubles.

(4) The Irish Famine is also recovered in texts that compare the magnitude of this national trauma to that of the private traumas of women that live in a world saturated by visual images of extreme thinness and beauty paradigms. Leanne O'Sullivan's "Famine" (2004, 14), in which eating disorders are referred to as "the famine of the 90s," is one of the most explicit examples of this usage of anorexic embodiments.

(5) Mother-daughter relationships also abound in the poetry that deals with eating disorders in Ireland. In the biomedical literature on these pathologies, mothers are often blamed for the development of their daughters' pathological relationships with food, particularly if they themselves had shown "high weight and shape concerns" during the breast-feeding period (Gorwood et al. 2016, 12). However, far from this monolithic interpretation, in the poetry researched here mothers become complex, multi-layered characters, at times honoured by their daughters as the origin of life, at times worshipped for caring for them no matter how stubborn their daughters' eating habits, at times the triggers of conflict around their daughters' poor health.

(6) The connection between the shaping of a body and the shaping of a literary work also makes an appearance in some of the texts I have compiled, which then contribute to debates on gender and poetic creation in the Irish literary canon, traditionally perceived as the exclusive realm of men. As we will see in the next section, Mary O'Donnell's "Reading the Sunflowers in September" (2006, 8) constitutes a good example, together with Colette Bryce's "Form" (2000, 17) and Caitríona O'Reilly's "Thin" (2001, 20-21).

(7) Given the strong presence of elements of the natural world in many of the poems on eating disorders, the connection between the female body and nature invites a re-reading of these texts under the light of current debates on climate change and the Anthropocene. The degradation of the female body can be related in such poems to the systematic disappearance and/or transformation of natural habitats in the name of progress.

Poetry comes out of an economy of words that is particularly suited to inscribing the economy of flesh and fat pursued by patients with anorexia nervosa. However, in many novels and short stories by Irish women writers these same themes are also present. To this end, in Anna Burns' *No Bones* (2002) the conflict in Northern Ireland is a determining element in the development of the protagonist's eating disorder, and in Éilís Ní Dhuibhne's short story "Peacocks" (2003, 143-162), to mention just one of the stories the author has devoted to this topic, anorexia is presented as the result of family and cultural pressures imposed on the two protagonists (the mother-narrator and her starved daughter), who are both affected by the same cultural and social disease in spite of being one generation apart. In its turn, in Emma Donoghue's celebrated novel *The Wonder* (2016) a young girl rejects food on the basis of religious beliefs and with the approval of her family, becoming thus part of a long tradition of religious women who starved themselves in order to be closer to the sacred, transcendent and male-bodied God. In Leanne Waters' autobiographical text *My Secret Life: A Memoir of Bulimia* (2011) the author writes about perfectionism, being bullied at school, religion and the process of coming-of-age as the main triggers of her severe anorexia and bulimia. As in many of the poems researched, Waters' patient-narrator suffers from a body/mind, and body/spirit dissociation that protects her from the distorted self-perception of her own body during the hardest stages of her illness: "Mostly, it feels that though my bulimia was indeed a selected path, it was not I who made the decision. It was made by a determined alter-ego who had by this stage almost consumed me completely. I was at her mercy," Waters recalls (2011, 51-52).

4. Case Study: "Reading the Sunflowers in September," by Mary O'Donnell

"Reading the Sunflowers in September" (2006, 8) is the title poem of Mary O'Donnell's debut collection[7] and constitutes a thought-provoking reflection on eating disorders, religious stigmatisation of female flesh, human and non-

7 The reference is taken form *The Place of Miracles: New and Selected Poems*, more accessible to readers than her out-of-print 1990 volume *Reading the Sunflowers in September* (Galway: Salmon).

human interactions and gender stereotyping in artistic discourses. O'Donnell is part of a generation of women poets who set out to consciously diminish the idealised—abstract and asexual—muses of the Irish poetic tradition through an inscription of themes ranging from anorexia, menstruation, pregnancy and ageing to plastic surgery. Writing about female corporeality, the poet remembers, was not at first easy and involved challenging not only potential readers but also the limits of linguistic articulation itself. When asked to read from her poetry on a radio programme, O'Donnell chose "Excision" (2006, 6-7). One line in the poem, she said, "contains the word 'cuntless'—meaning 'to be without a cunt.' It was relevant to the subject of circumcision, obviously. It was not used as a term of offensive denigration, so much as a relevant, descriptive, vernacular word." However, the reporter immediately stopped her "by saying that this was a radio programme and could I please read a different extract," she laments (O'Donnell 2009, 161).

"Reading the Sunflowers in September" focuses on the non-normative corporeality of its poetic persona. It describes the slow movements of a female figure who visits the same field of sunflowers each day. The ordinary activity of walking turns into an energy-consuming one that is only achieved at the expense of great effort on the part of the starved protagonist: "You never know whether she'll make it, / her bones having grown in recent years." The reference to bone-growth identifies the poetic persona as a patient of anorexia nervosa, as this feature is found quite frequently in physical descriptions of the pathology. For instance, in Leanne Waters' memoir, *My Secret Self*, the author dwells on this same image to describe her physical appearance on developing the illness: "I grew bones I did not know were there. From my toes to my ankles, five solid strings attached themselves and resembled a spider's web up my foot" (2011, 73). The outset of O'Donnell's text also proffers what philosopher Havi Carel terms "a geography of illness" (2008, 14), in other words, it presents the world (and hence the individual's interaction with it) as a non-stable background that changes when one is in a disturbed physical state. In spite of the dialogic relationship that exists between the body and the space it occupies, it is the corporeal that takes centre-stage in the acquisition of subjectivity that the protagonist is immersed in. Carel argues that most of our daily activities and routine actions are pre-reflective, that is, "they are the product of habit rather than conscious reflection" (22), a point she illustrates using the example of walking, interestingly enough the same one O'Donnell picks up for her anorexic protagonist:

> [G]oing for a walk is such a dialogue of the body with the environment: the legs propel forwards, the labyrinth in our ears keeps us upright and balanced, the eyes provide visual information about the path ahead and any obstacles to be

> negotiated, and so on. This kind of dialogue with the environment requires the constant taking in of information and constant recalculation of route, speed and muscular effort. (Carel 2008, 22)

However, a subject alienated from their body through illness, that is, a body whose capacity to perform everyday routine activities has been altered by a weakened physical condition, immediately turns the pre-reflective, and apparently invisible, into a visible task requiring much planning. In the poem, O'Donnell's anorexic persona can never be sure of her capacity to bring to completion such a seemingly straightforward action as a walk to the fields due to the physical exhaustion—and probably physical pain—resulting from her lack of nourishment. The Cartesian body/mind split, whereby the body is conceptualised as a passive recipient awaiting instructions from the mind, is thus upset by the emaciated physicality, now paramount in the dialogue the subject establishes with her spatial context. The meaningful character of the corporeal is extended in the poem to the elements of the natural world, namely the sunflowers. Female corporeality and nature have a long history of associations in essentialist discourses, the main effect of which has been the perception of both as pre-linguistic, pre-discursive or, in Lacanian terminology, pre-Symbolic. However, the sunflowers are here pictured as bearers of signification that, as the titles intimates, will be read and decoded by the protagonist:

> Such starvation is an art:
> Admire her craft as she upbraids
> a summer gluttony, tears sheets from herself,
> inspired by shrinkage.
>
> She read sunflowers daily,
> the spindles of her fingers reach out,
> stroke yellow ellipses
> as if each petal were a sign.

Susie Orbach's *Bodies* stems from the belief that the natural body, the body "untainted by cultural practices," is a fallacy: "The very notion of a body," she contends, "has become a product we manufacture and create" (2009, 134-136). Although O'Donnell's poem pre-dates this theoretical approach to the corporeal, it does function as an illustration of it since it establishes a parallelism between the shaping of the body and the creation of a poem. O'Donnell's protagonist perceives her body as a piece of art she is working on daily. As if writing a poem, she is "inspired" by shrinkage, "tearing sheets from herself." This same idea recurs in

contemporary Irish poems on anorexia. In Colette Bryce's "Form," for example (2000, 17-18), the poetic persona describes her self-starvation in terms reminiscent of art-making—"I found I was gifted, good. / And full of my vocation, sat or stood // at the mirror just watching my work / take shape, conform to my critical eye" (17). Similarly, in Catríona O'Reilly's "Thin" (2001, 20-21) the protagonist compares her stomach to an empty room in what becomes a metaphor sustained throughout the text: her body becomes a house that is being fashioned into a "more habitable" and "more distinguished" shape (21) by starvation. And in her memoir of her bulimic years, Leanne Waters describes her excessive exercise to lose weight in terms of art-making—"I imagined someone peeling away my skin, slice by slice. This was making me a better person" (2011, 33)—and the "skinny bodies" she found on the internet in terms of "art" (2011, 42).

In "Reading the Sunflowers in September" the metaphor of art-making is also sustained throughout the text. In the same way a poet dispenses with superfluous material in order to make their piece as compact and complete as possible, the woman dispenses with her own flesh in what she considers a form of artistry. The semantic field of creation, manifest in the poem in a good number of terms (art, craft, sheets, inspiration, reading, sign, word, the telling of tales, critical reviews, conventions) also contributes to comparing her constructed corporeality to the sunflowers, coded with meaning as if they were linguistic signs. Far from being a passive context for the poetic persona's feelings, as in traditional landscape poetry, the marriage between signifier and signified that presides over the linguistic sign makes the sunflowers meaningful entities, thereby problematising views of the natural world as pre-Symbolic.

The conflation of starvation and art in the poem is ethically problematic, its main effect being the triggering of more hunger and the further sinking into illness on the part of the anorexic patient. However, O'Donnell skilfully bypasses this undesired consequence because the similarities between the female body and the signifying elements of the natural world go no further in the text. The seeds that "swell and separate" poignantly contrast with the extremely skinny embodiment of her starvation: "She reads sunflowers daily, / the spindles of her fingers reach out, / stroke yellow ellipses." The swelling movement of the seeds is inversely proportional to the shrinkage the woman has chosen as her particular form of self-expression. Moreover, the summer gluttony represented in the swollen seeds "enchant[s] her hunger / all the more." The sunflowers fully participate in the pleasurable excesses of the summer season[8] and their daily movement from east to west, following the sun, contrasts with the mobility difficulties of the poetic persona in her daily walk to the fields.

8 Sunflowers will be re-utilised by O'Donnell in the poem "French Fields" (O'Donnell 1998, 7) as an image of carnal desire and sexual fulfilment.

"Reading the Sunflowers in September" also invites a psychoanalytical reading for its references to the visual as a major part in the acquisition of subjectivity. For Lacan, the ego is formed through a process of identification with an illusionary image during the mirror stage, namely the individual's own specular image, which they perceive as themselves. Therefore, the ego is the result of a misunderstanding whereby the subject is alienated from their own body and identifies with an image which is at the same time themselves and an Other, that is, an illusion (Evans 1996, 114-116). This sense of alienation is in turn connected with the concept of the gaze and its role in the separation between Subject and Other. In Lacan's early theorisation, the gaze is "that which permits the subject to realise that the Other is also a subject" (Evans 1996, 72). This involves some degree of reciprocity between seeing the Other and being seen by him/her. In Lacan's later theories the gaze is completely located on the side of the Other. It is the subject that looks, but the gaze that gets back to him/her originates in alterity. However, the participation of O'Donnell's protagonist in this visual dynamics inscribes her voluntary starvation as a disturbing element in her process of becoming a full subject. Whereas she "reads" the flowers on a daily basis—the reading itself functioning as a metaphor for visual interaction—the plants do not work as radical alterities that send their gaze back to her to help her find her own individualism. Instead, they "gaze / like a thousand eyes at the sun's path." Moreover, the sunflowers prove unable to provide the young woman with the illusion of a mirror image against which she will construct her own subjectivity. Their healthy and bountiful aspect becomes a mirror that inspires further hunger in her. The visual is far from functional in this instance. The woman fears the sunflowers' plumpness could be hers and falls into more accentuated shrinkage.

Although not specifically centred on eating disorders, the work of Spanish photographer Soledad Córdoba provides an interesting illustration of the arguments above, while adding new interpretative layers for the poem. In her series of self-portraits *En el silencio* (*Into the Silence*, Córdoba 2009-2012), the artist puts the female body in contact with different elements of the natural world—trees, flowers, a river, fallen leaves, butterflies, birds, ants and sunflowers—to reflect on the relationship between the human and the non-human. As Córdoba indicates on her website in relation to this series, there is a "silent dialogue" and an "eternal communion" between the human body and nature. In this never-ending interaction the latter is at times a "container full of beauty" and, at others, a source of "unknown dangers," while humans observe, sometimes passively, sometimes with the capacity to hurt (Córdoba 2009-2012). One of the photographs in the series—"En el silencio II"—pictures a woman in the midst of a field of sunflowers (Figure 1[9]). Like O'Donnell's

9 Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

protagonist, Córdoba's is interacting with the flowers but her corporeality—thin, blurred and dressed in aseptic white—contrasts with the elements of the natural world—plump, colourful and oriented towards the light of day. Although Cordoba's figure tries to establish a deeper contact with the richness of nature by reaching out to the flowers, her gaze is not directed towards them, but orientated towards a bird that flies overhead and menaces her physical and emotional stability. The sunflowers, once more, do not reciprocate the woman's attempt at touch and do not even seem to notice her presence, oriented, as they are, towards the light of day. This photograph from *En el silencio* in this way underlines the difficulties of ever finding a complete, and unproblematic, connection with our environment, particularly when the body struggling to make such a link is female.

This transnational reading of the woman-nature connection acquires more nuances in the specific context of Ireland. Traditionally, the green landscapes of the island have been used—by nationalist ideologies first, by the tourist industry later—as the locus of a national identity untainted by colonial discourses. In the canonical marriage between Irish nationalism and Catholicism in the early stages of the Republic, the bodies of women became the asexual reproducers of the independent nation, but their real corporealities were excluded from the idealised landscapes of the island, associated instead with male heroism. Under the context of this national ethos, O'Donnell's protagonist develops a pathology that evidences the embodiment of symbolic exclusion, on the basis of gender, from the land of Ireland and the nation-formation narratives within its patriarchal social order.

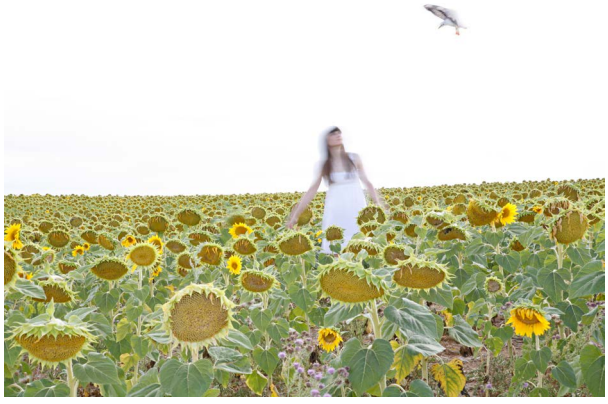

Figure 1. "En el silencio II," by Soledad Córdoba

In a previous study of "Reading the Sunflowers in September" (González-Arias 2010) I limited my analysis of the connection between woman and nature in the poem to the lack of reciprocity between the anorexic protagonist and the fleshy elements of the natural world. As described above, this disconnection is clearly symptomatic of the protagonist's illness, as the anorexic patient is moving along a path of self-starvation that radically differs from the movement towards light of the healthy-looking sunflowers. However, the relationship between the human and the non-human in O'Donnell's poem deserves further analysis within the current debates on climate change and environmental crisis, even though the poem does not explicitly connect the rejection of food on the part of the protagonist to the degradation of the natural spaces around her. As Daisy Hildyard contends in *The Second Body*, the human body is not understood as living "outside its own skin," but it is considered instead as "a whole and single individual." However, climate change has shown us that "every animal body is implicated in the whole world," thus blurring the boundaries around the human body, previously thought of as inviolable (Hildyard 2017, 13). According to Hildyard, every living entity has two bodies and, therefore, has the capacity to be in two places simultaneously: "You have an individual body in which you exist, eat, sleep and go about your day-to-day life," she argues, but you also have "a second body which has an impact on foreign countries and on whales" (19-20). The environmental crisis of our times calls for a re-connection between the human and the non-human in terms that respect and acknowledge the value of the latter in a dialogic fashion. Under this lens, "Reading the Sunflowers in September" can be said to underline the lack of connection between the body of the human animal and those other bodies of the natural world. The protagonist's first body, to use Hildyard's terminology, is undergoing the consequences of a life-threatening pathology, making it impossible for her second body to establish any dialogue with the sunflowers and their regenerative powers. As such her anorexia can be interpreted as both a personal illness and a cultural pathology of global dimensions.

The analysis of the visual in "Reading the Sunflowers in September" also calls for some reflection on the relationship anorexic patients have with mirrors.[10] Traditionally, sight and the visual have been privileged as means of apprehending the world—the metaphysics of presence contributing to the naturalisation of images that are in fact constructed (either individually or collectively). However, anorexia destabilises such notions by emphasising the highly subjective character of what is perceived through our eyes. When in front of a mirror,

10 For an interesting poetic articulation of perceptual distortions, see Leanne O'Sullivan's "Mirror" (O'Sullivan 2004, 16).

anorexic patients are unable to see a realistic reflection of their own physicality (if "realistic" can be used at all in this scenario) and systematically describe their bodies as excessive in flesh and form, no matter how skinny they are. Particularly relevant to this conversation is the work of Hungarian artist André Kertész, commissioned to produce a series of photographs on optical distortions (known as the "Distortions" series) in the 1930s. For this project, Kertész worked with two nude female models that he would place in front of carnival mirrors. The physicality of the models was so altered that often only some limb or feature was discernible in the reflection captured by the camera. In "Distortions No. 6" (Kertész 1933a), for instance, the ribcage of the model is exaggerated, as well as her long waist, hence highlighting the physical ideals for the women of the time. In "Distortion No. 49" (Kertész 1933b) the legs and left arm of the lying nude model are duplicated in the carnival mirror, an image that inspires both rejection and fascination because of its radical difference to the model's body. Similarly, O'Donnell's poetic persona has no access to an undistorted vision of her own body. As if reflected on one of Kertész' carnival surfaces, her bones have "grown in recent years" beyond recognition.

The last stanza in the poem opens up new grounds for debate on corporeality and gender-role stereotyping. The lack of reciprocity between the sunflowers' gaze, orientated towards the sun, and the woman's eyes, "bent on [her own path]," result, as has been argued, in a deficiency in the protagonist's process of acquiring subjectivity. The sustained metaphor that juxtaposed the shaping of the body with the creation of a work of art is maintained by O'Donnell as a means to compensate for the paralysed growth of the protagonist. However, once more the magnitude of the creation is threatened by hunger. Her attempts at shrinking have turned her body into an entity that "will have it all." The angular forms of the anorexic woman become the embodiment of the androgyne, characterised by the integration of male and female elements, and hence the archetypal image of the complete human being. The aspirations of the poetic persona acquire an extraordinary quality that is at odds with the negativity attached to the physical outcomes of eating disorders. However, the next line qualifies this process of integration in terms heavily loaded with religious connotations—"the Word made genderless" is the woman's goal in her "creative" endeavours. Although the new androgynous physicality should correspond to a lack of gender stereotyping, the Christian phraseology imbricated in the line brings to mind its biblical counterpart: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." In the Christian tradition—very relevant to the context of Ireland—the signifying quality of the flesh is the exclusive realm of the masculine body, created in the image of a God systematically pictured as male in the iconography. In contrast to that, female flesh became the locus of the corruptible and immanent. It is this

conceptual framework that can be found behind what Rudolph Bell has termed "holy anorexia" (1985), in other words, the voluntary starvation that numerous religious women, particularly during the Middle Ages, initiated as a means to get rid of their female forms and achieve the transcendent quality of the male body. The new Gospel imagined by O'Donnell's character is trapped in just such a discourse and as such requires the disappearance of her physicality, rather than an egalitarian integration of both the female and the male. In the final lines of the poem the emaciated body is once more related to the ripe sunflowers in order to underline the ambiguous character of the protagonist's creation: the seeds that drop and the petals that "shrink to skeletal" stand for the final death of the anorexic character. O'Donnell's skilful parallelism between body and nature closes the sustained metaphor and highlights the difficulties of stepping out of received systems of religious thought.

5. Conclusions

"Reading the Sunflowers in September" is part of a growing body of Irish poetry addressing eating disorders as visible metaphors for identity conflicts. The same as Eavan Boland, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Eithne Strong, Leanne O'Sullivan and Victoria Kennefick, Mary O'Donnell moves beyond the mere aesthetic to assess the interference of various ideologies in the treatment of the corporeal. Far from dealing with anorexia from an exclusively medical perspective, the poem uses the striking visual character of a starved female body to denounce the facile perpetuation of traditional role models for the women of Ireland. In this essay, I have related O'Donnell's poem to recent Irish poems of female authorship that problematise the religious stigmatisation of women's corporealities in the nationalist discourses of the island. However, "Reading the Sunflowers in September" also participates in transnational conversations about body theory, environmental degradation and climate change. Although anorexia nervosa is inscribed in the poem as a form of artistic creation, all the unethical implications of such a proposition crumble with the final death of the protagonist. Hence, O'Donnell's poem becomes a profound critique of the different pressures imposed on the female body both in Ireland and beyond, exposing the deadly consequences of internalising canonical gender roles. As the poet herself stated, "starvation in a rich society [is] an anti-poetic action, in which a perverse kind of creativity takes root and must be fulfilled by the self-starver."[11] Poems such as "Reading the Sunflowers in September" reflect on art and representation and

11 Unpublished conversation with Mary O'Donnell.

denounce a variety of ideological interests the falsify the reality of women's bodies. Although shrunken and weakened, anorexic embodiments present themselves as sites of radical dissidence, as signifiers of a deep social critique.

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Casting Stones with Intent: Transnational Interventions towards Ethical and Reparative Memorialisation[1]

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In the summer of 2020, on the wave of the Black Lives Matter Movement, statues and public monuments became focal points of political struggle, perceived by many as symbolic reminders of pervading western imperial legacies. Yet, the debate over public memorialisation is far from new. Starting from the 2020 BLM protests in Britain and going back to previous campaigns, this article contextualises the toppling, effacing and removal of well-known statues of colonial agents in Britain, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand and examines artistic interventions which appropriate, challenge and shatter static historical interpretations of imperial figures and events. Our contention is that these interventions constitute diverse forms of performative and re-storied resistance reflecting transnational demands for redress and reparation.

Keywords: Black Lives Matter, Edward Colston, James Cook, Memorialisation, Imperial Amnesia, Artistic Interventions.

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1. Introduction

In his recent book *Empireland* (2021), Sathnam Sanghera ironically argues for the creation of an "Empire Awareness Day" (1) on the grounds that the knowledge that British people have about imperial history is, at best, limited, if not sugar-coated and imbued with a nostalgic colonial rhetoric. Sanghera concedes that many people in Britain learned more "about British imperialism in a few months of statuecide than we did during our entire schooling" (1), but also that the intense debate ensuing from these attacks and the controversies they generated are still insufficient to explain the long-lasting impact of imperialism in Britain. "[I]mperialism" –he concludes– "is not something that can be erased with a few statues being torn down or a few institutions facing up to their dark past; it exists as a legacy [that] explains nothing less than who we are as a nation" (14). The transnational upsurge of protests that swept through the world in 2020, on what could be considered the second wave of the Black Lives Matter movement,[1] targeted long-standing statues and colonial monuments demonstrating that protesters perceived them as potent symbolic reminders of the pervading western imperial legacies and, hence, as a focal point of political and ideological struggle.

Crowds rallied around iconic statues, decapitating, smashing, defacing and toppling them, spraying graffiti to re-signify them and expressing feelings of aggravation and anger, ultimately intended to denounce the legacy of racism and colonialism they stand for. In the UK, on June 7, the waters of Bristol Harbour were presented with the toppled 1895 bronze statue of slave-merchant Edward Colston. The event, which was mass-broadcast, reverberated across the country and throughout the world, generating a wave of iconoclasm and public protests of global proportions (Nasar 2020, 1222; von Tunzelmann 2021, 1). In the weeks that followed, statues of Columbus and Confederate "heroes" were graffitied over, toppled, or hurriedly removed from their plinths by the local authorities in the United States; statues of King Leopold II were vandalised or toppled, and subsequently removed from different Belgian cities; and various monuments celebrating Empire "heroes" were similarly targeted by protesters worldwide. In Aotearoa New Zealand, attacks were directed against statues of Sir George Grey, John Hamilton, and Captain James Cook, whose statue, located in Tūranga/

1 A social movement which originated in 2012 after George Zimmerman was acquitted for the shooting of Trayvon Martin in Florida (26th February) and which gained considerable national support in 2014 with the creation of the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter after the shootings of both Michael Brown in Ferguson Missouri (9th August) and Eric Garner in New York (17th July), eventually becoming a global movement in 2020 on what could be considered the second wave of the Black Lives Matter Movement ignited by the killing of George Floyd on 25th May after being pinned to the ground by Officer Derek Chauvin.

Gisborne near the area where he first set foot on the country, was graffitied over with the words "Black lives matter and so do Māori" (Ballantyne 2021). BLM protesters in Sydney also marched towards the statue of Cook in Hyde Park, heavily guarded by police forces to prevent its damage. Their chants "Black Lives Matter!" and "Too many coppers, not enough justice" worked as an ironic and bitter reminder of the police brutality which had not only killed George Floyd a few days earlier, but continues to raise the numbers of Indigenous Australians' deaths in custody (Edmonds 2021, 801-802).

The targeting of statues displayed in public spaces in territories formerly colonised by the British is a long established and well-known story. This is most evidently testified by the toppling of George III in New York on July 9, 1776 to mark the beginning of the American Revolution. This scene was famously immortalised in paintings by Johannes Oertel in 1853 and William Walcutt in 1854, both of which were turned into memes during the BLM protests. One of these memes responded ironically to the commonly held argument that equals the toppling of statues with the destruction of history, wittily remarking that the result of the toppling of George III's statue is that "no one knows who won the American Revolution" (quoted in von Tunzelmann, 2021, 27). Queen Victoria statues have also been repeatedly targeted in various parts of the world as far back as 1876 when in India "two Indian brothers who had been refused places in the army [vandalized it by] pouring tar over its head" (von Tunzelman 2021, 73) and later on in 1905 when other statues of said monarch "were tarred following the unpopular partition of Bengal" (73). In South Africa, the first example of a public intervention on a public monument dates back to 1497 when a stone cross of Vasco da Gama was toppled down by the Indigenous population, an event which shows that "the practice of toppling statues is as old as the practice of erecting them" (Goodrich and Bombardella 2016, 2).

Reinvigorated as it was by BLM protests, the debate over memorialisation is far from new. The 2020 events need to be understood as the continuation of previous discussions ignited, among others, by the Rhodes Must Fall Campaign which began on March 2015 in South Africa, and the Charlottesville controversy in the summer of 2017 over Robert E. Lee's statues. In Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, imperial "heroes", colonial rulers and the ever-present ANZAC memorials have long been in the limelight, although controversy over settler memorialisation resurged with strength in 2018, as both countries prepared to commemorate the 250th anniversary of James Cook's arrival on their coasts (in 1769 and 1770, respectively). Although the material consequences and strategies of the protests might seem the same –the physical interventions on memorials– in the context of settler cultures, the concept of imperial amnesia does not fully address the complexities of entitlement to the land. Drawing upon the notion

of Native Title, we propose the concept of "memory title" to encapsulate the ongoing conflicts between the already pervasive presence of white settler title and the historically obliterated vindications of Indigenous title to the land. This entails bringing settler narratives under scrutiny and opening new pathways for reconciliation. Thus, to restore and re-story the past.

The political, academic, and worldwide social responses that ensued from the global wave of iconoclasm were unsurprisingly polarized along the partisan lines of the culture-wars trenches. Strident voices notwithstanding, these events have shed light back on the roots and aims of imperial amnesia (Sanghera 2021, 73) and revived discussions about the ways to confront it worldwide. This conversation goes beyond aesthetic or formal choices, and must necessarily engage with the multi-faceted effects on those who not only see their experience and contribution obliterated from the official narrative, but also feel affronted by the material vestiges of imperialism. Penelope Edmonds argues that the global replication of the BLM protests has served to highlight the interconnected colonial legacies of slavery and Indigenous dispossession, revealing "how the grand historical narratives signalled by monuments are challenged, subverted and re-storied not only by national events but by mobile, recursive and transnational narratives of protest and memory that are locally inflected" (2021, 804). The 2020 events were thus particularly relevant because they contributed to the redraw and the reinterpretation of a long history of anti-colonial protests and resistance, reinforcing the links between the anti-imperial and the anti-racist agendas.

Starting from the 2020 BLM protests in Britain, and going back in time to previous waves of protest sweeping through former British colonies like Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, this article contextualises the toppling, effacing and destruction of well-known statues of colonial agents and "heroes" as part of a recursive and locally-inflected debate which is far from exhausted. The article frames these events as examples of the "politics of decolonial inquiry" (Mignolo 2021, 2) in practice. These events should thus be understood as part of long-standing and wider demands for decolonisation in public spaces and museums, a complex task which, among other things, "concerns the proactive identification, interrogation, deconstruction and replacement of hierarchies of power that replicate colonial structures" (Giblin et al 2019, 472). The panoply of interventions we explore illustrate attempts to redress imperial and settler amnesia and vindicate "memory title". These interventions include statue defacement, toppling, removal or disappearance from public view, dialogical reinterpretation through the installation of new plaques amending previous historical interpretations, or the relocation in museums, a decision which, in turn, has (re)opened the conversation about the celebratory or commemorative narratives bestowed on museum spaces. We also pay attention to various ethical memorialisation attempts by discussing

both individual artworks and communal initiatives responding to government-sponsored remodelling plans of iconic memorial sites. Collectively, these artistic responses demonstrate that monuments and sites can be "re-storied in theatrical and performative spaces of creative protest" (Edmonds 2021, 803). Performance is intrinsic to the establishment, public unveiling and veneration of monuments in ceremonies or anniversary celebrations (Antonello and Cushing 2021, 749); the artistic interventions we discuss appropriate and elaborate on this performative dimension to shatter static historical interpretations of figures and events and to imagine new forms of resistance in a context marked by transnational demands for redress and reparation.

2. Statues Matter

The toppling of iconic statues in the summer of 2020 conveyed, for many, an overwhelming sense of fury. Media coverage in major newspapers around the world evinced the polarized debate that ensued between those who demonized the toppling of and attacks on statues and those who vindicated the events as long overdue. The sense of saturation and rage that the media seemed to exploit came to displace and downplay the real issues at stake. The outburst was not new and it was anything but merely wanton vandalism. The anger that transpired was not exclusively against the values embodied by the historical figures or events that the targeted statues and monuments represented. What these actions came to stand for were enduring controversies over the legacies of colonialism and imperialism, deep-rooted structural racism and white supremacy, slavery and the exploitation of human beings and land resources, while they helped to rekindle claims for Indigenous sovereignty and ongoing demands for historical reparation and ethical memorialisation.

A case in point of such prior and long-standing debates over public memorialisation was the defacing of British imperialist and colonial politician Cecil Rhodes' statue at the campus of the University of Cape Town in 2015. This act of protest by student and activist Chumani Maxwele resonated globally and sparked the Rhodes Must Fall movement, which echoed in Britain with the demand of the removal of Cecil Rhodes statue from Oxford's Oriel College, as well as further calls to decolonise universities and their curriculum (Knudsen and Andersen 2019; Shilliam 2019). This initiative provoked fierce opposition, particularly in the right-wing media, based on the belief that the figure of Cecil Rhodes should be judged by the standards of his time, rather than by those of today. Yet, defending such a stance concealed the fact that Rhodes was "reviled by British politicians, thinkers, and writers at the time – even at Oxford itself" (Newsinger 2016, 70). The campaign to remove the statue from Oxford was

reignited after Colston's statue was toppled in Bristol. Nonetheless, in 2021 Oriel College abandoned previous plans to remove the Grade II listed statue memorial on the grounds of the financial costs and the complex planning processes involved (Race 2021). Instead, an explanatory plaque to contextualise the college's controversial benefactor has been placed with the following words as part of the larger inscription: "Rhodes, a committed British colonialist, obtained his fortune through exploitation of minerals, land, and peoples of southern Africa. Some of his activities led to great loss of life and attracted criticism in his day and ever since," together with a link to the College's website with further details on the statue and Rhode's background (Contextualisation of the Rhodes Legacy). Such contextualisation has been received by campaigners as an action which further "trivialises the pain and suffering Rhodes caused" (Cecil Rhodes Statue 2021) and continues to memorialise in the public space the legacy of an inveterate imperialist. Maxwele's intervention upon the statue at Cape Town University was indeed primarily directed at the ideological values it represented and he stated that "as black students we are disgusted by the fact that this statue still stands here today as it is a symbol of white supremacy" (Goodrich and Bombardella 2016, 7). In relation to the controversies generated around the Rhodes Must Fall movement, Procter argues that the excessive focus on statues and their destruction has prevented many people from seeing "that the endurance of the statues is merely a symptom, and not the underlying cause" of the racism on which our contemporary societies are built (2020, 217). "Removing a Statue," Procter continues, "is not an end point: it is the start of a bigger project of challenging the social and cultural views that put it there in the first place" (218).

In their symbolic power, statues undoubtedly matter. But as symbols, statues are not history (Carlson and Farrelly 2022, 5; Sanghera 2021, 207), nor do they convey historical truth because they do not represent history: they stand for "what people in the past choose to celebrate and memorialise" (Catterall 2020). Statues that commemorate historically significant figures are not "a record of history but of historical memory" (von Tunzelman 2021, 5). As von Tunzelman reminds us, "statues are not neutral, and do not exist in vacuums. Our reactions to them depend on who they commemorate, who put them up, who defends them, who pulls them down, and why" (4). Statues are thus not only firmly physically situated in public spaces but also ideologically in the dominant collective imagery and cannot be seen as objective, neutral or static representations of an immutable past. They are "contingent, temporally remote, and subject to contestation" (Nasar 2020, 1224), so the symbolic values commemorated through them and their suitability to be displayed in public spaces cannot remain unalterable and unquestionable through time. Statues "mediate a conversation between past and present" (Catterall 2020) and, for that

reason, they should be decoded as indicative of the ways in which contemporary societies see themselves reflected in history (von Tunzelman 2021, 5).

Statues matter, they have "substance," because they are usually created as political tools to reaffirm the values and ideals of the time of their creation, a time in which the moral values of the revered figure are aligned with the values of the establishment which chooses them as symbols. Statues are rarely representations from the historical period they stand for; on the contrary, they embody the principles, morals, and nature of the establishment at the time they were erected, in most cases, long after the historical event memorialised took place and the historical figures they depict passed away. Claire Baxter, in fact, sees them more as archaeology than history, because they tell us not about the subject they celebrate but about the society that chose them as symbols: "These statues are therefore a story of us. Who we venerated and celebrated, what stories we told, and what values we upheld" (quoted in Carlston and Farrelly 2022, 6). It is only logical then that statues have become crucial targets when it comes to the rebuttal of the apparently universal values they originally stood for.

Recognizing the contingency of their historical value paves the way for understanding statues and monuments as historical focal points for political debate in the public space, as "tools in a struggle over race, economy, socio -political formations and cultural affirmation" (Knudsen and Andersen 2019, 253). Thus, monuments or statues can no longer be seen as static depictions of a past literally set in stone. As Ballantyne puts it: "The durable materials that statues are fashioned from encourage us to see them as enduring, but in reality public memory is profoundly dependent on the shifting currents of political debate and cultural sentiment" (2021). More than as rigid versions of the past, statues should be seen as capable of "set[ting] into motion" interpretations of that past, so that we can collectively embark on a "journey towards removal and new beginnings" (Knudsen and Andersen 2019, 250). The act of attacking a statue sets it on a journey; from being an iconic and symbolic object to becoming an *abject* capable of mobilizing citizens (249).

3. Confronting and Redressing Imperial Amnesia

In Britain, several iconic public memorials had ignited debate prior to the surge of global interventions leading to Colston's over-exploited statuecide. Active calls to decolonise public statues of widely celebrated colonial "heroes" such as Henry Morton Stanley and Admiral Horatio Nelson, to name but two, had long been in the public debate. In the wave of the removal of confederate statues in the US in 2017, demands were made in the UK to pull down Nelson's Column, erected in 1813 in Trafalgar Square, central London, grounded on the fact that he was

"without hesitation, a white supremacist [and] used his seat in the House of Lords and his position of huge influence to perpetuate the tyranny, serial rape and exploitation organised by West Indian planters, some of whom he counted among his closest friends" (Hirsh 2017). For its part, Henry Morton Stanley's bronze memorial, at a cost of 31,000 pounds, has stirred contrary emotions since it was erected on March 18, 2011 in Denbigh, North Wales. A group of musicians and residents from Bangor and nearby villages have been protesting yearly against the imperial values the statue represents. Stanley's bronze artefact is, for them, a public acknowledgement of a merciless explorer who opened the African continent to exploitation by European powers. Protesters perceive in Stanley's statue a glorification of the nineteenth-century imperialist hero whose celebration inescapably conceals the darker side of his deeds. Interventions to shed light into Stanley's unaccountable past have included the covering of the statue with a rubber sheath made by local artist Wanda Zyborska which "ceremoniously fit[s] over the statue as part of the annual funeral procession to draw attention to the millions of African people who died or were mutilated as a result of Stanley's exploits in the Congo rubber industry" (Protestors to Cover 2018). In the same dialogical way, Jonathan Jones had earlier suggested that the statue's plinth should be remorsefully inscribed with "The horror! The horror" (2010), the final words of Coronel Kurtz, Conrad's imperialist anti-hero in *Heart of Darkness*, whose fictional account is often considered to have been inspired by Stanley's expedition in the Congo.

As sustained above activist responses to Rhodes', Nelson's and Stanley's statues should be read not as attempts to merely deface, destroy or erase the statues, but as efforts to set these static and self-complacent memorials into ethico-political motion in order to bring awareness of the enduring and transnational grievances that the glorification of imperial figures in public spaces entail. These antecedents help contribute to the understanding of the toppling of statues in the summer of 2020 not as new events, but as part of a continuum for ethical memorialisation, "a recognition that the White heroes of the past need to be put under erasure – a form of global reckoning" (Mendes 2021, 395). Yet, this process of erasure, whether in the form of the physical removal the statue or the contextualisation of its meaning through the installation of new plaques, does not entail "a material erasure of the statue, but instead a *sous rature* […] where the meaning of the statue is under erasure, crossed out, but legible" (394-395).

The 2020 controversy over Edward Colston's statue exemplifies its physical and symbolic journey from the public space to the waters of Bristol harbour and then from the museum to a participatory survey to decide its future. Since it was erected in 1895, nearly two centuries after his death, the memorial to Edward Colston sculpted by John Cassidy has been the focal point of socio-political and

ideological struggle. This was evident even before the statue was actually placed on its pedestal; James Arrowsmith, the businessman responsible for raising funds to pay for it, initially failed to gather the required amount (Sanghera 2021, 208). Eventually, Cassidy's work was "unveiled during an elaborate ceremony [and], the statue, according to one newspaper article published at the time, was "designed to encourage the citizens of today to emulate Colston's noble example and walk in his footsteps" (Nasar 2020, 1219). These words, which omit references to his colonial activities, show that Colston was memorialised at the time because of his status as a local philanthropist, and a founder of civic and charitable organisations, rather than because of the source of his income. From 1990, however, his colonial connections could no longer be ignored and campaigners first called for the removal of the statue due to his sombre legacy as a slave trader for the Royal Africa Company, purposefully omitted in the plaque that accompanied it, which described Colston as "one of the most virtuous and wise sons of [Bristol]," as well as in the unveiling ceremony, in which the Mayor of Bristol presented him as carrying "business […] with the West Indies" (von Tunzelmann 2021, 182).

Debates over Colston's role and historical legacy became more audible in the aftermath of the 1996 Festival of the Sea Event, which glossed over Colston's and Bristol's connection to transatlantic slavery by celebrating the city's maritime history with the launching of a replica of John Cabot's ship, the Mathew, used in his 1497 voyage. Bristolian artist Tony Forbes responded to this selective imperial amnesia with "Sold down the River" (1999), a painting in which he dialogically engages with Colston's statue and the lasting legacies of the hegemonic and triumphalist narratives of abolitionism dominant in British historiography. As Forbes wrote: "This festival, encouraged by the Council, funded by big business and hyped by our media, was a slap in the face to the black community and an insult to the intelligence and sensitivity of many Bristolians. It was the weekend that Bristol broke my heart" (Bristol and Transatlantic Slavery). The journey towards ethical memorialisation in relation to Colston's legacy was officially set into motion in 2018 when the Bristol City Council added a plaque to the original one, with an alternative decolonial message that properly contextualised Colston's figure:

> As a high official of the Royal African Company from 1680 to 1692, Edward Colston played an active role in the enslavement of over 84,000 Africans (including 12,000 children) of whom over 19,000 died en route to the Caribbean and America. Colston also invested in the Spanish slave trade and in slave-produced sugar. As Tory MP for Bristol (1710-1713), he defended the city's "right" to trade in enslaved Africans. Bristolians who did not subscribe to

> his religious and political beliefs were not permitted to benefit from his charities. (Edward Colston Plaque 2018)

A year later, in May 2018, activists modified the statue by shackling Colston's legs with a knitted blood-red ball and chain to remind pedestrians of his connections to the Royal African Company and plantation slavery. On October 18, 2018, a hundred clay effigies were laid in the shape of a slave ship's hull beneath Colston's plinth. The purpose of the installation was to draw attention to the ways in which contemporary forms of slavery are inextricably connected to asymmetrical power relations rooted in colonialism: "the bricks that formed the shape of the ship were decorated with jobs that are often at risk of exploitation. Job titles such as 'domestic workers' and 'farmworkers' reminded us of the deafening gap that we still need to bridge in the 21st century to extinguish racism" (Artist Action 2020)

These sustained-through-time initiatives demonstrate that the toppling of the statue, its subsequent throwing into the harbour waters and its placement on display in the M-Shed Museum marked an uncomfortable yet much needed journey "to start a city-wide conversation about its future" (Burch-Brown, Cole, et al.). As Saima Nasar has argued, the toppling of Colston's statue "shed light on the unfinished revolution of emancipation, that is the continued fight for social, cultural, and political equality" (2020, 1224). In an attempt to negotiate a collective reckoning of Bristol's imperial legacies, a temporary exhibition was opened from 4 June 2021 until 3 January 2022 and displayed the statue and the plinth laying down together with a timeline of events and a selection of placards from the protests, an unambiguous instance of *sous rature*, to go back to Mendes' point. Colston's journey resumed in the summer of 2021 when a public survey about the future of the statue was carried out by the Bristol History Commission in collaboration with Bristol City Council Consultation and Engagement and the M-Shed Museum. The results of the survey were published in the report *The Colston Statue. What Next*? (2022), which included a series of recommendations for both the statue and the plinth based on 13,984 participants' responses. Regarding the former, the first, second and third recommendations are that "the Colston statue enters the permanent collection of the Bristol City Council Museums service," that it is "preserved in its current state and the opportunity to reflect this in the listing description is explored with Historic England" and that in the museum's display ensures that history is presented "in a nuanced, contextualised and engaging way, including information on the broader history of the enslavement of people of African descent" (Burch-Brown et al. 2022, 17). As for the plinth's fate, the first recommendation is that a new plaque is installed, alongside the original one to explain "when and why the statue was put up and taken down" (18). The suggested wording reads as follows:

> On 13 November 1895, a statue of Edward Colston (1636-1721) was unveiled here celebrating him as a city benefactor. In the late twentieth an early twenty-first century, the celebration of Colston was increasingly challenged given his prominent role in the enslavement of African people. On June 2020, the statue was pulled down during Black Lives Matter protests and rolled into the harbour. Following consultation with the city in 2021, the statue entered the collections of Bristol City Council's museum. (18)

The recommended inscription not only provides concise and factual details about the original statue, it also acknowledges previous material and symbolic interventions and calls to decolonise the public memorial. In so doing, it contextualises the final defacing of the statue and prevents the passing of simple judgement of the toppling as mere vandalism, prompting instead a more nuanced understanding of the events. In other words, the inscription validates every distinctive leg in Colston's journey; a journey that Britain, as a nation, is prompted to navigate in earnest. Ultimately, Colston's performative removal from the public space can be interpreted as a metaphorical erasure in the country's epic narrative that historians have also been contesting. British plantation slavery not only reshaped the socio-economic life of the Empire's metropolitan centre, but also had a profound importance in the shaping of modern Britain and the lasting legacies of such involvement still have a prominent and tangible presence in the urban spaces of present-day Britain as it has been highlighted by the UCL research projects "Legacies of British Slave Ownership" (2009-2012) and "Structure and significance of British Caribbean slave-ownership 1763-1833" (2013-2015), led by Professor Catherine Hall, or by Corinne Fowler's recent project "Colonial Countryside: National Trust Houses Reinterpreted," which explores the links between colonialism and the National Trust properties and has been the target of fierce criticism. As Arifa Akbar has argued, "domestic history cannot be separated from the vast former empire building, […] which was inextricably bound to the economics of global slavery" (2016). The deeply emotional responses ensuing from the uncovering of this "forgotten" side of British history testify to the fact that there is still much to be acknowledged, explored and negotiated, and, as Sanghera argues, perhaps the starting point should be an "awareness" of these legacies in the urban and imaginative spaces of modern Britain.

4. Restoring and re-storying memory

Controversies over public memorials and attacks on statues of colonial figures in former settler colonies, like Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, go back a long

way and reveal a deep awareness of the links between settler memorialisation and the colonial legacy of destruction, violence and land dispossession against which the countries' Indigenous populations have struggled for decades. It is only logical that the 2020 worldwide BLM demonstrations resonated with Indigenous activists and protesters long engaged in the fight against police brutality, institutional racism or socioeconomic marginalisation, profoundly aware of "the entwined legacies of violence against Indigenous peoples and people of color" (Edmonds 2021, 803), although these links are not always officially recognized. Denying the connections between these forms of oppression, Australian PM Scott Morrison urged protesters to put their demands into perspective and remember that "there was no slavery in Australia" (Edmonds 2021, 803; Murphy 2020), thus ignoring the history of de facto slavery whose victims were the Indigenous peoples used as free labour in the pastoral industry (Murphy 2020) and the South Pacific Islanders who were "blackbirded" and forced to work on Queensland plantations (Doherty 2017). Recent attacks on statues and monuments in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand cannot be taken as mere replications of the 2020 global iconoclastic movement, but must be read as part of a sustained-through-time critique of colonial symbols and celebrations and a renewed collective effort at establishing more equitable forms of memorialisation in these countries.

Particularly intense were the debates surrounding the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of James Cook's arrival in Aotearoa New Zealand (1769) and Australia (1770). To mark this historical landmark, the Australian government announced a series of events, named Endeavour 250, including sending a replica of Cook's *HMB Endeavour* to circumnavigate the country from March 2020, a journey Cook himself never undertook, and which had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This was not the first re-enactment of Cook's arrival on Australian shores, nor the first time Indigenous Australians resisted the sanitised and offensive performance of this historical event as made-to-measure foundational narrative for white Australians (Darian-Smith and Schlunke 2020). During the bicentenary celebrations in 1970, Cook's landing was re-enacted in Kamai Botany Bay in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II, while a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gathered on the opposite side of the bay to lay funeral wreaths on the water as a symbol of mourning (2020). The 2020 commemorative acts were similarly contested with marches and calls to boycott the events (Sentance 2021, 825) on the grounds that they minimised, or plainly ignored, the violent nature and consequences of the encounter, and continued to present Cook as the discoverer of Australia, as proudly proclaimed in the plaques and inscriptions placed on the multiple monuments that honour him.

But these are not new arguments. The statue-war debate in Australia must be read as a continuation of the "history wars" of the 1990s. Some of the messages which in the last years have been repeatedly graffitied over statues of Queen Victoria, James Cook, James Stirling (founding Governor of Western Australia) or Lachlan Macquarie (fifth Governor of New South Wales) capture the most contested and controversial terms of the discussion. The words "Change the Date" or "No Pride in Genocide" sprayed over the plinth of James Cook's statue in Sydney's Hyde Park in 2017 verbalised the dangers of historical amnesia and asked for a reformulation of the narratives of discovery and peaceful settlement. This project must start by considering how the history of the country is narrated, remembered and commemorated in celebrations like Australia Day, which marks the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788, and thus continues to sanction the terra nullius fallacy, in turn minimising some of the key achievements of Indigenous activism, including the landmark 1992 Mabo decision which prompted the recognition of Native Title for Indigenous Australians. Celebrating Cook's arrival in 1770 or the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 as foundational moments reveals a failure to establish more inclusive national narratives and continues to put on hold the project of Reconciliation initiated in the 1990s.

Similar controversies surrounded the acts organised in Aotearoa New Zealand under the name Tuia 250-Encounters, emphatically presented not as a celebration but as a commemoration of a key date in the country's history. The Māori word "tuia" –to bind, to weave – was chosen to capture the dialogic spirit of the initiative, to highlight the country's dual heritage, and to redirect the celebratory narrative of European arrival towards a more fluid conversation about the history of two cultures coming together and experiencing both moments of conflict and understanding. The overall aim of the initiative was to strengthen connections between communities in order to construct a shared and more inclusive future, in the spirit of the Treaty of Waitangi. In the words of Kelvin Davis, Minister for Māori Crown Relations, Tuia 250 constituted "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for New Zealanders to have honest conversations about the past, the present and our future together" (*Tuia 250 Report* 2019, 4). Besides a large number of educational and cultural initiatives intended to revise the official narrative of Cook's "discovery," the Tuia 250 commemorations included a main voyaging event which took a flotilla of vessels around some of Cook's landing sites. This event differed substantially from the one announced by the Australian government because, together with the replica of Cook's *Endeavour* and two other European-style vessels, the flotilla was also formed by traditional Māori and Pacific wakas which stood as a physical reminder of their highly developed navigational skills. As indicated in the *Tuia 250 Report* issued by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, this voyage was "devised as a metaphor, a tangible

experience for New Zealanders [who] were encouraged to think about what is unique about our dual heritage, our voyaging traditions and what binds us together as a people" (2019, 8). The events were followed and celebrated by many local iwi, but also fiercely criticised by others who felt that, by reframing this historical events as mere "encounters" the organisers were euphemistically glossing over –and thus implicitly minimising– the violent effects ensuing from Cook's arrival in Aotearoa, which started with the killing of nine Māori men. The Ngāti Kahu iwi refused to allow the *Endeavour*, which Arama Rata deemed "the replica death ship" (Matthews 2019), to dock in Mangonui (Russell 2019), and other Māori protesters called for boycotting the events, stressing the importance of *not* celebrating Cook and his legacy.

For many others, however, the 250th anniversary celebrations demonstrated that it is possible to rethink the country's foundational narratives and to configure what New Zealand historian Tony Ballantyne calls a "changing landscape of memory" (2020). These changes included symbolic gestures, like the expression of regret offered to the Ngāti Oneone iwi on October 2, 2019 by British High Commissioner Laura Clarke on behalf of the British Government for the deaths of their ancestors, killed in their first meetings with Cook and his crew (Graham-McLay 2019). Clarke pronounced her expression of regret at the Ruatanuika lookout on Titirangi/Kaiti Hill in Tūranga/Gisborne, by a sculpture of Te Maro, a Ngāti Oneone ancestor, and one of the victims of these early encounters. The sculpture, created by Ngāti Oneone artist Nick Tupara, was erected in 2019 on the same spot where an older statue of Cook had stood since the 1969 bicentennial commemorations. Informally known as "Crook Cook" because of its inaccurate representation of its subject (Wallace 2019), the statue had been vandalised on several occasions and was finally removed in 2019. Te Maro's sculpture was part of a larger remodelling project of Cook's landing place, now renamed Puhi Kai Iti Cook Landing Site National Historic Reserve, which culminated in 2019 and constitutes an excellent example of how public places can be redefined in agreement with more inclusive and dialogical forms of memorialisation (Edmonds 2021, 811). The 1906 obelisk celebrating Cook's arrival has been maintained, but is now reframed by a new installation formed by several pieces which invites the viewer to question the triumphalist version of Cook's "discovery" and to contextualise his presence in the country as part of a longer and more complex history of navigational prowess which dates back to the Polynesian peoples who reached Aotearoa well before Cook. The site acknowledges the landing site of the ancestral waka or Māori canoe Te Ikaroa-a-Rauru, led by its main navigator Maia, who is represented in the central piece of the installation, as well as the victims of that first encounter in the form of nine tiki figures placed inside paddle-shaped forms (Ballantyne 2021).

As Carlson and Farrelly argue, protesters and defenders of the removal of statues like those of Cook "are not denying or contending the courage, determination, and tenacity of these men, nor the fact that they were explorers" (2022, 5), what they argue is the assumption that these statues celebrate the act of discovery, a problematic assumption that denies the evident fact that places like Australia and New Zealand had long being explored and settled by Indigenous peoples and had displayed the same "courage, determination, and tenacity prior to the arrival of any white explorers" (5).

In a more tepid articulation of the encounter metaphor, the Australian government announced in 2018 a $50-million investment redevelopment plan of Cook's landing place, now known as Meeting Place Precinct at Kurnell, in Botany Bay Kamai National Park. In a media announcement released by the New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, the remodelling of the site was presented as "the perfect opportunity to ensure we mark this important occasion and provide a legacy for future generations to reflect and hear the stories of this important place" (2018). In the spirit of reconciliation and dialogical memorialisation, the project chosen to redesign and re-signify the site was formed of a combination of pieces of art designed by two female artists, Julie Squires and Gweagal woman Theresa Adler. Placed on the shoreline are a bronze sculpture of a mother and a baby whale, one of the dreaming totems of the Gweagal people of the Eora nation, and two stringybark canoes, traditionally used by Gweagal women to fish. Further inland, visitors walk past a sculpture of a Gweagal family, showing a grandmother and three children. The remodelling is completed with the Yalabi Dayalung Bora ground, conceived as an outdoor learning space, which can be used "in the passing on of cultural knowledge, as well as the sharing of 'the view from the shore' oral history from the Gweagal people's experience" (ThinkOTS 4). The redevelopment of this site was completed with another piece, "Eyes of the Land and the Sea," by Walbanga and Wadi Wadi woman Alison Page and Nik Lachacjzak, a piece which, as Page explains,

> brings together different perspectives on our shared history - the bones of a whale and the ribs of a ship - and sits in the tidal zone between the ship and the shore where the identity of modern Australia lies. The first encounter between James Cook and the First Australians was a meeting of two very different knowledge systems, beliefs and cultures. The abstraction of the ribs of the *HMB Endeavour* and the bones of the Gweagal totem the whale speaks to the different perspectives of those first encounters, providing a conjoined narrative of two very different world-views. (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020)

The physical remodelling of these iconic locations has been accompanied by multimedia artistic forms of counter-memorialisation which have served to rethink the history of the encounter from less-known perspectives and to claim "memory title" over those sites and moments. The "songline" documentary *Looky Looky Here Comes Cooky* (McGregor 2020) invites all Australians to look at the Cook legend from a First Nation's perspective, similarly placing the emphasis on the view from the shore. Another documentary, *Tupaia´s Endeavour* (2020), directed by Fijian-born New Zealand director Lala Rolls, retells Cook's voyages around the Pacific by re-enacting the untold story of Tupaia, the Polynesian navigator and high-ranking priest from Ra'iātea (Tahiti) travelling with Cook during his first journey and whose multiple roles as translator, diplomat and artist were crucial for the success of the expedition. Tupaia was also the focus of a graphic novel, *The Adventures of Tupaia* (2019), published by writer Courtney Sina Meredith and illustrator Mat Tait coinciding with the Auckland Memorial War Museum exhibition *Voyage to Aotearoa: Tupaia and the Endeavour* (2019), which was created to highlight the multiple perspectives of the encounter rather than traditional monolithic accounts of Cook's achievements.

Aboriginal and Māori artists have also responded to the targeting of Cook's statues by imagining and re-enacting the processes of removal, toppling or destruction. Sometimes, the toppling has been virtual, as in the work of Gamilaroi artist Travis De Vries, who produced a digital drawing, *Cook Falling, Tear it Down* (2019), of a group of Aboriginal activists pulling down his statue in Hyde Park. On the very day Colston's statue was toppled in Bristol, multidisciplinary Kuku Yanaljni artist Tony Albert launched a project commissioned by Brisbane's Institute of Modern Art (IMA) entitled *You Wreck Me*. Drawing on the mythological figure of the trickster and using parody and humour, he knocks the head off Captain Cook's statues while swinging on a suspended exercise ball in ceremonial paint and singing Miley Cyrus's "Wrecking Ball". Virtual demolition does not compare to the Bristol toppling for media impact, but the subversive drive, the parodical admonition and the cathartic effect clearly serve as a thoughtful critical appraisal. A few years before the global statuecide, Michael Parekowhai, a Ngāti Whakarongo, Ngā Ariki Rotoawe artist from New Zealand, re-stories Cook by removing him from his pedestal in *The English Channel* (2015). Parekowhai's piece is no longer cast of iron or bronze but made of shiny steel, and although it maintains the impressive size of a real statue, it has been made to abandon his commandeering pose and sit on a sculptor's table, with dangling feet, unable to touch the ground, and in a position which suggests exhaustion and even defeat. Placed inside the museum space, Parekowhai's Cook projects the viewers' image as they move around the room, forcing them to consider his figure "not a full stop marking the end of a story but a question mark inviting reflection" (Art Gallery NSW), in the two senses of

the term. These are but three examples in a long list of artworks, installations and performances by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand –which include Gordon Bennett, Jason Wing, Christian Thompson, Daniel Boyd, Vincent Namatjira, Michel Tuffery, Lisa Reihana, Jonson Witehira, or Nigel Brown– who have variously re-storied Cook's statues, portraits and official depictions as well as his triumphant arrival on Australian or New Zealand shores. Collectively, these works demonstrate that the re-storying process should be seen "as a repeated act rather than a single transformation of meaning" (Antonello and Cushing 2021, 749).

A final example which encapsulates the transnational, multi-layered and self-transforming re-storying of Cook's figure is "Shadow on the Land, and Excavation and Bush Burial" (2020) by Alaska-based Tlingit Unangax artist Nicholas Galanin, created for the Biennale of Sydney. As suggested by its title, the work is an excavation of the shadow cast by the statue of Captain Cook in Hyde Park, whose perfectly delineated silhouette, as the artists explains, "represents a larger colonial shadow that is cast upon Indigenous and Aboriginal lands globally" (Craft in America). The title also responds to a classical Australian painting, *A Bush Burial* (1890) by Frederick McCubbin, which depicts a group of white settlers attending a funeral and idealistically presents the death of the white subject as part of his struggle to tame a land empty of Aboriginal presence. Galanin reverses this classical rendering of settler heroism by fantasizing about the prospective burial of Cook and his legacy. But the word "excavation" does not just refer to a wilful burial of the past realised by the literal digging of a grave for colonial statues and monuments; the work is presented as an archaeological excavation site from a prospective future "where the statues of veneration that mark our public landscape today have long been forgotten, buried beneath the earth. The work rests between a possible past or future burial" (Biennale of Sydney 2020). Galanin's erasure and *sous rature* intervention presents the land as multilayered; the process of excavating speaks of the need to dig into the unknown past, to uncover the lies that have been upheld as truths, and to reveal the many buried histories hidden underneath those layers. The work then "imagines a possible Indigenous future where the land begins to heal colonial wounds while still remembering" (2020). This intervention projects a utopic future which ultimately poses the paradox that for Australian Aboriginal communities "memory title" can only be fully fulfilled if Cook's shadow is indeed erased.

5. Conclusion

The emotional responses to public memorialisation of imperial figures such as Colston and Cook and the active artistic interventions that they have prompted demonstrate various ways of restoring and re-storying history both at an individual

and collective level. The result of these interventions is not a mere erasure of the past but "a way of *engaging* with [it], challenging and alter[ing] a system that is built on Black [and indigenous] oppression and exploitation" (Mendes 2021, 396). The resonance of the global BLM events and the importance of assessing the ways in which memory is dealt with in the public sphere has also been felt in a choir of voices advocating for the end of colonial forgetfulness in academia. Protests, interventions and campaigns such as the ones discussed in this essay avert imperial nostalgia and start genuine conversations about collective memorialisation; echoing the concluding remarks in *The Colston Statue: What next?* report: "a core principle of democracy is not simply tolerating but valuing differences in opinion. The world – and our city – would be all the poorer without differences in the ways we think about the past, present and future" (Burch-Brown et al. 2022, 26). The examples explored here point towards varied phases in the transnational process of memorialisation. Reading them as mere acts of vandalism or superficial artistic interventions minimises their ability to raise public awareness and ignite socio-political change. By contrast, these are dynamic, transformative, multi-layered and meaningful interventions whose potential to address injustices and prompt unwavering acknowledgment and long-overdue reparative apologies must not be underestimated.

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Narco-Capitalist Macbeths in TV Series: Shakespeare's Archive in *The Wire* (David Simon, 2002–2008) and *Breaking Bad* (Vince Gilligan, 2008–2013)

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I will tackle serial appropriations of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in *The Wire* (David Simon, 2002–2008) and *Breaking Bad* (Vince Gilligan, 2008–2013). Both complex TV series recast *Macbeth* in the context of narco-capitalism. Rather than constituting an alternative to mainstream capitalism, narco-capitalism maintains the American and global socioeconomic orders as depicted in both series. Paying attention to what will be defined as Shakespeare's archive, it will be shown that traces from *Macbeth* are reactivated in *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad*. Shakespeare's archive is formed by traces of Shakespeare's dramatic and narrative sources, quartos, folios, later editions and adaptations. This corpus displays verbal and non-verbal features of Shakespeare's oeuvre. Taken together, traces and reenactments of Shakespeare highlight the multifarious and competing ways in which Shakespearean appropriations sail through the depth and length of complex TV. To illustrate this, I will use archive theory, transmedia theory and narco-capitalism as lenses of analysis. This framework helps explain archival strategies employed for Shakespearean appropriation within the social context of both series. The results reveal that Shakespeare's archive in both works leads to an ambivalent ethical assessment of the potentialities of narco-capitalism.

Keywords: narco-capitalism; archive; transmedia; Macbeth; reenactment; trace; sources; source text; adaptation

1. Introduction

This article tackles the interplays between Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and two complex TV series: *The Wire*, written by David Simon–first aired on HBO June 2, 2002, last aired on March 9, 2008–, and *Breaking Bad*, written by Vince Gilligan–first aired on AMC March 20, 2008, last aired on September 29, 2013. While these series are not the first screen works that recast *Macbeth* in the war on drugs, I argue that they use Shakespeare's archive as a lens to explore narco-capitalism. Shakespeare's archive is formed by Shakespeare's authoritative texts, their narrative and dramatic sources, afterlives, adaptations, performances and all documents connected to Shakespeare's ouvre. Shakespeare's archive is used to explain Shakespearean critical and performance edition histories. It is also evolving as intermedial reenactment of past performances. My understanding of Shakespeare's archive combines these two models. Meanwhile, narco-capitalism is not represented here as counter to mainstream capitalism but as a part of the US's socioeconomic order, founded upon–and funded by–the drug business.

Shakespeare's oeuvre adds dramatic density to serial dramaturgies. Appreciation of these two series' interconnections with *Macbeth* increases if Shakespeare's authoritative text is not regarded as the only nor as the main point of reference for comparative analysis. As suggested, Shakespeare in these and other series is not just an authoritative corpus but a set of "traces"–i.e. "linguistic, cultural or thematic residues" (Iyengar, 2023, 184)–and "reenactments"–i.e. a "revised, revisited, reconceived, reconstituted" performance of the plays, "a discursive and performative space and condition of awareness […] of the performances" (Cartelli 2019, 11, 13)–. Shakespeare's archive agglutinates parts and sums of texts and performance histories, either for their collection or for their reactivation. Therefore, it provides an angle to combine logics of trace and reenactment that allows us to discern patterns of appropriation in series.

Shakespearean scholars interested in *The Wire* have centered on its indebtedness to Shakespeare's histories (Bronfen 2020; Pittman 2020). However, Roger Downey described Stringer Bell as someone who, "doggedly pursuing his version of the American Dream to its bitter end, [was a] brother beneath the skin to Macbeth" (2007, n.p.). Tom French regarded Bell as the series' equivalent to the Scottish warrior (2012, n.p.). The character's name, "Bell," replicates that of the object used in *Macbeth* to summon the Scottish thane for "regicidal action" (Kinney, 2006, 81). Analyzing D'Angelo Barksdale's explanation of the rules of chess, Elisabeth Bronfen affirms that "[t]he moves that individual players can make are highly codified and ritually predetermined, based on a shared memory of what schemes are possible" (2020, 61). Such rules explain Shakespeare's grafting onto *The Wire* by suggesting an archive of mechanisms of transmedia storytelling

that evoke theatrical memories. When D'Angelo reveals the Queen–i.e. Stringer Bell–as the player with the greatest flexibility for moving across the chessboard, Avon Barksdale's right-hand man is suggested as his usurper. From season one to three we follow Bell taking his friend and rival Barksdale's seat as kingpin on West Baltimore. This move towards usurpation narratively expands what happens in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, similarly, over the course of almost three acts.

The elusiveness of the connection of Shakespeare's authoritative texts with these series encourages viewers to look for performative interplays between them. D'Angelo's toying with the chess pieces suggests a microcosm that transposes the limited stock of moves allowed to characters who know themselves to be actors in a stage to the TV screen. Pawns and Queens are actor-characters who, in this small-scale play–a sort of *Table Top Shakespeare*–, may, like Macbeth, aspire to replace the piece which stands as monarch. However, *The Wire*'s interconnections with *Macbeth* also find explicit home in the play's screen history. Near the end of season one, Omar Little, Bell's Nemesis, returns to the streets of Baltimore to stir up future strife with Barksdale. This arrival playfully mimics the manner in which *Macbeth* often ends on screen: an usurper arrives in Scotland to threaten the recently crowned Malcom.

More explicitly than *The Wire*, *Breaking Bad* employed *Macbeth* as a guidebook for fans. Paul Cantor (2019) and Jeffrey Chisum (2019) pointed out the transpositions of the conventions of Shakespeare's tragedy to the narrative structure and generic context of Gilligan's series. More intensely than in *The Wire*, *Breaking Bad* used *Macbeth*'s katabatic sources. In "Crawl Space," Walter White, who has by this time amassed a fortune by selling his own brand of 99.1% pure meta-amphetamines, goes into his basement to put together $500,000 to pay for relocating his family to escape Gustavo Fring. Finding out that his wife Skyler has given part of the money to her lover, Walter laughs maniacally and lies crying on the floor of the basement. Anguish and laughter, mixing the tragic with the grotesque, renders this space theatrical. The combination brings *Breaking Bad* close to the Shakespearean stage, in which a trap door symbolically intercommunicated the earth and the Avernus. The Whites' basement dovetails TV drama's domesticity, reenactments of Shakespearean playacting and, by implication, traces of the Medieval plays which reproduced hell as a physical space that were sources to *Macbeth*. In Shakespeare, Macbeth descends to a non-defined space to find out from the Witches what the future has in store. Oftentimes, the world of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is shown on screen as one in which the lines between earth and hell are porous.

Shakespeare's archive in *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad* dramatically explores the narco-capitalist *zeitgeist* of the two series. In the pages that follow, I will define archive as a lens to explore Shakespearean traces in both works. I will support

this concept semiotically with terminology from transmedia theory. I will define narco-capitalism as a context wherein Shakespeare's archive may be understood in *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad*. Finally, I will explore archival reactivations of Shakespeare's sources, source text and adaptations of *Macbeth* in *The Wire* and in *Breaking Bad*.

2. Archive, transmedia and narco-capitalism

Research on Shakespeare's archive has focused on its uses for printed and digital editions (Galey 2014) and performance (Hodgdon 2016; Gutneratne 2016; Buchanan 2020). The fragmentary logic of the archive helps understand the increase of "fleeting citations of Shakespeare or [that] draw intermittently on character types and narratives from the plays" on TV (Greenhalgh, 2022, 257). These have contributed to disseminate the view that Shakespeare's playwriting was a template for contemporary screen fiction (Balló and Pérez, 2015, 12). But due to complex TV's "subtle and debatable" relationship with Shakespeare (Wald, 2020, 2), Shakespeare's works often resurface in series as "cross-mappings" (Bronfen 2020), as "slingshots" (Wilson 2021), or as "returns" (Wald 2020), i.e. as traces. A Shakespearean deposit is suggested to be underneath serial substrata. In fact, fandom practices such as "drilling" (Mittell [2009] 2015, 289) are recurrent strategies used to appeal to viewers. Following Sarah Clarke Stuart, literary works "help to expand the meaning of the show, which is sometimes a great relief when meaning within the text seems a little thin" (2011: 3).

Michael Foucault describes discursive traces which, all collected, are arranged serially.[1] The philosopher privileges documents rather than narratives, and advocates for the identification of "series" of documents, which are "juxtaposed to one another, [following] one another, overlap[ping] and intersect[ing]" each other, irreducible as they are, "to a linear schema" ([1969] 2002: 9). We should, he suggests, identify "discursive events," which allows us to discern principles regulating relations between the afore-mentioned series (Ibid: 30). This does not mean tracing past discursive events in a restorative fashion, but to discover which modes of existence characterize such statements "independently of their enunciation […], in which they [were] reactivated, and used" (Ibid: 139). The archive is not merely cumulative, but productive.

1 Uses of Foucault's theory for the purposes of extracting Shakespearean remains in series is precedented in Víctor Huertas-Martín, 2022, "Hamlet Goes Legit: Archaeology, Archive and Transformative Adaptation in *Sons of Anarchy* (FX 2008–2014)," *International Journal of English Studies*, 22(1), 41–61.

Foucault's archive interrelates well with transmedia theory, which helps explain serial Shakespeares. Lars Elleström describes transmedia storytelling as "narratives in different media types working together to form a larger whole" (2019, 6). As the previous theatrical examples show, this means that "media characteristics" are recognizable in other media (Ibid.). Integrating narratives in communicative processes means that verbal language is not the only means of communication (Ibid., 11). Narratives do not autonomously exist except as communicative processes through media products between communicative minds (Ibid., 21–22).

Parallels between Foucault's and Elleström's ideas are easy to discern by establishing equivalences between "mediation" and "representation" and the above-defined "trace" and "reenactment." "Mediation" is, following Elleström, the "display of sensory configurations that are perceived by human sense receptors." Such configurations are "presemiotic" and understood as "the physical realization of entities (with material, sensorial, and spatiotemporal qualities, and semiotic potential)" (Ibid., 23). The latter, "representation," is a "semiotic phenomenon," understood "as the heart of signification" when "a human agent makes sense of the mediated sensory configurations, [and] sign functions are activated and representation is at work" (23). Mediations share with traces their residual features. Shakespeare exists in series as traces, remains or mediations, not always explicitly expressed as Shakespearean. Reenactments are activated sign functions that the perceiver may more easily identify as Shakespearean. These two poles signification are neither mutually exclusive nor absolute.

Shakespeare's archive in these series develops within the context of narco-capitalism. Following Laurence de Sutter, narco-capitalism designates a psycho-political system sustained by the production of stimulants. Gaining strength beyond World War Two, narco-capitalism made progress as governments legalized and marketed addictive products. The politics of excitement which drives consumption confirm, as De Sutter suggests, the fact that contemporary modernity is "unimaginable without drugs" (2018: 45). He argues that the survival of banks during the subprime crisis of 2008 was possible only thanks to narco-capitalism. While traditional investors withdrew cash from banks, drug dealers pumped "liquidity into the system–which they needed to give their cash a legal appearance" (46). In the US post-industrial context, as Jamie J. Fader shows, whenever drug workers managed to keep "a foothold in the legal and illegal economies" (2019: 66), their quality of life increased due to the reduced risks of detection, the increase in clientele and the possibility of justifying increasing sums of money. Such is "the game" in which contemporary global TV series have been setting their dramaturgies–see *Narcos* (José Padilha, Chris Brancato, Eric Newman, 2015-2017), *El Chapo* (Daniel Posada, 2017–2018), *Hache* (Verónica

Fernández, 2019), *El Immortal* (José Manuel Lorenzo, Rafa Montesinos, David Ulloa, 2022), etc.–, many of them inspired in *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad*.

Cocaine exists, as De Sutter says, "in an economic system appropriate to its volatility, its illegality, its addictiveness […] an abstract nervous system that has become the perfect excitation" (50). This excitation is explained in terms of "efficiency." Such efficiency consists of consuming narcotics for the sole purpose of continuing to consume narcotics, an activity by way of which, arguably, the greyness of everyday life is subverted. For De Sutter, grey moments take place at times "with high levels of nervousness, within which accidents occur suggesting that things could be different" (94). This excitation enables the subject to cross material and conceptual borders which otherwise cannot be crossed. But these crossings produce increases of energy accompanied by the risk of losing control (104). Crossing borders defines the journeys of the likes of Stringer Bell or Walter White as Macbeth analogues. Likewise, it defines the spontaneous moves that subaltern characters in *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad* often individually or collectively make.

3. Reactivating *Macbeth in The Wire*

According to Monique L. Pittman, Shakespeare and David Simon bring into play "the shards" of unofficial history to disrupt "the uniformity of a narrated past" (379). This is achieved, she continues, by telling an alternative American history centered on the urban classes (Ibid.). Honing in on Baltimore's institutional corruption, apathy and sclerosis, Simon used his previous work, *Homicide: A Year on the Streets of Baltimore* (1991), as the basis for *The Wire*. Similarly, when writing *Macbeth*, Shakespeare handled historical material while keeping an eye on the political situation of his own time. It has been argued that to write *Macbeth* Shakespeare conflated chronicle sources to pay homage to the Scottish King James. For Geoffrey Bullough, "the play could be truly said to present a composite picture of the darkest side of Scottish medieval history as viewed from the happy present in James's benign reign of unity and concord" (1973, 448). Though Shakespeare's departures from Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Ireland* (1587), Hector Boece's *Historia Gentis Scotorum* (1527) and George Buchanan's *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* (1582) support this view, the complexity of the play's sources–including witch trial reports, the official account of the Gowrie Conspiracy, official discourses on the Gunpowder Plot–challenge one-dimensional readings of *Macbeth* as Stuart propaganda.

Simon, as Shakespeare before him, conflated documents that the creatives gathered for their scripts. It is tempting to think that Simon's sententiae, from his eye-witnessing of court cases, mediate lines from *Macbeth*. His conclusions, summarized as ten rules, shed light on the machinery of Baltimore's legal

system. Rule number one read: "A good man is hard to find, but twelve of them, gathered together in one place, is a miracle" (1,164). This skepticism on human morals might be described as a mediation of Young Macduff's words, for whom "there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men and hang up them" (4.3.55-57). Rule number two–"The victim is killed once, but a crime scene can be murdered a thousand times" (145)–resembles detective Bunk's address to a corpse: "Don't think about coming back a murder. Don't even think" (1, 2). In translating this sententia to the TV screen, Bunk's words might mediate Macbeth's address to Banquo's Ghost–"never shake / Thy gory locks at me" (3.4.57)–, indicating a human desire to not confront the haunting ghost of a victim. Bunk's directive comprises the terror produced by the Ghost in Shakespeare's text, and represents and reenacts Shakespearean performance memories.

Elusive as Shakespearean references seem, the series' pathos is intensified through them. Nightmare and war images turn Baltimore's streets into a sinister landscape. As Bubs asserts, there is a "thin line 'tween heaven and here" ("Old Cases"). Challenges–"You're gonna see me in your sleep" ("Duck and Cover"), "Y'all can tell Barksdale and them know who owns these towers" ("The Detail")–echo Scotland's intermediate state between a heavenly and a hellish space, how terrifying it is when ghosts visit Macbeth while he sleeps or his boasts when faced with the Anglo-Scottish approaching army. Cinematic mediations replace traditional TV naturalism with spine-chilling spectacle when The Towers' neighbors drop objects on Prezswelezsky's car ("The Detail"), a scene that approximates the frightening arrival of trees to Dunsinane. Inanimate objects, anonymously handled by animate beings, advance against an oppressor which they judge to be tyrannical. Cockeyed youngsters and ghost-like mangled warriors step, as Bubs puts it, "on dead soldiers" ("The Buys"). A theatrical enthusiasm drives those who enter this war zone. This qualifies the likes of Bubs to dismiss Sergeant Sydnor's inability to pass as one of Baltimore's "soldiers." The appropriateness of clothes, an issue also tackled in *Macbeth*, points in *The Wire* at characters' suitability for specific roles and at the mechanisms by which individuals put on the robes of others in cycles of emulation. By accepting to wear D'Angelo's clothes–as Macbeth accepts "borrowed robes" (1.3.110)–, Bell accepts to replace him as Donette's partner. Prophecy suggests routes to predict future breaches in loyalty. Brianna's declaration of loyalty to D'Angelo–"As long as those Towers stand to, I am Dee's mother" ("Stray Rounds")–predicts the collapse of The Towers and D'Angelo's downfall. This prediction is strengthened by association with the Third Apparition's prediction–"Macbeth shall never vanquished be, until / Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him" (4.1.91-93)–. The association of these two conditionals help viewers perceive mediations from *Macbeth*. As we guess, those Towers will not stand.

For Paul Dean, Macbeth's imagery points "to an underlying pattern, an order waiting to emerge […] at once fragmented and discontinuous, and lucidly controlled" (1999, 220). Simon's series achieves this effect as reactivations of *Macbeth* grow more visible. This increases with selections and alterations on traces of *Macbeth*'s chronicles and adaptations. Wallace's exile from and return to Baltimore exemplifies this. As William C. Carroll says, in film and theatre productions of *Macbeth*, "in his return Fleance represents the revenging son of a murdered father, a Hamlet–or, rather, a Fortinbras–figure who has somehow entered the wrong play" (2013, 274). Wallace's return to "The Pits" is untimely since his persecutor Stringer Bell still rules, contrary to what occurs in *Macbeth*. Fleance's return, as told in Holinshed, is not part of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. *Chronicles*–in which Fleance is killed by the King of Wales–and the archive of Fleance's stage returns reconnect Shakespeare's play with his sources and expands on Shakespeare's performance practice. Meanwhile, Bell's engaging in developing mirrors Macbeth's eagerness to build up Dunsinane Castle, a venture narrated in Holinshed and Buchanan. While, for Russell M. Hiller, the building episode in *Chronicles* accentuates Macbeth's growing despotism and greed, Buchanan "underscores that the fortress symbolizes [Macbeth's] growing isolation, vulnerability, and despair" (2021, 107). Rather than conflating sources, as Shakespeare did, *The Wire* stresses something akin to Buchanan's view as Bell's alienation increases while his developing delusion grows.

Despite Macbeth's actions, spectators and readers continue to be sympathetic towards the character's suffering. This may be explained by Macbeth's capacity to split himself into two characters: an actor and a character inside a story. Macbeth "simultaneously [stages] the fictional character and the existentially present performer, and [undermines] illusion in order to heighten the affective response of the audience" (Fox, 2013, 208). This duplicity in *Macbeth* seems evident, as Fox's essay shows, in Macbeth's "Tomorrow" soliloquy. In *The Wire*, during one of their confrontations, Lester Freamon, believing that Jimmy McNulty's motives for his dedication to work are self-serving, diagnoses his "sick" colleague: "A life, Jimmy, you know what that is? It's the shit that happens when you're waiting for the things that never come" ("Slapstick"). Freamon's words attempt to calm down the narco-capitalist excitement of the workaholic and unstable McNulty and mediate Macbeth's realization of the futility of creeping "in [a] petty pace from day to day / To the last syllable of recorded time" (5.5.19-20). This *pharmakon* proves more effective with drug dealers who get to acquire a Macbeth-like distant, quiet, view of themselves. As Dennis Cutty Wise says in an interview with a priest, "I've just had this feelin' for a long time and it's like I'm standing outside myself, watching me do things I don't wanna do, you know? Jus' seein' me like I'm somebody else but never ever being able to stop the show. I'm tired"

("Back Burners"). Unlike Macbeth, Dennis chooses to end the performance by leaving "the game." While confessing, D'Angelo's dramatic reenactment of his intervention in the killing of Deidre is punctuated by his memory of the tapping sounds against the victim's window, a representation of the knocking on hell's gate invoked by the Porter in *Macbeth*. On receiving congratulations for his confession, seeing Rhonda Pearlman's reaction to the photos of Dreirde's corpse, he sympathetically realizes this brutality's impact on the attorney. This permits him to summarize his history: "Y'all don't understand, man. You don't get it. I grew up in this shit […] It's just what we do. You just live with this shit until *you can't breathe no more*. I swear to God, I was courtside for eight months and I was freer in jail than I was at home" ("Sentencing"; italics added). Echoing Macbeth's sleepless suffering–"Sleep *no more*" (2.2.36), "Sleep *no more*" (2.2.42; emphases mine), "'Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor / Shall sleep *no more*. Macbeth shall sleep *no more*" (2.2.43-44; italics added)–and Macbeth's anticipation of his certain downfall–"… struts and frets his hour upon the stage, / And then is heard *no more*" (5.5.24-25; emphasis mine), D'Angelo's words mediate Shakespeare's repetitions. By asking to "start over […] to go somewhere where [he] can breathe like regular folk" ("Sentencing"), D'Angelo mediates Macbeth's exposed desires to "… wash [that] blood / Clean from [his] hand" (2.2.61-62)–. *The Wire* evokes *Macbeth*'s archive by reenacting meditative journeys present in an American Shakespearean legacy developed in recent popular adaptations (see Albanese 2010). Such adaptations often present convicts who, as films like *Shakespeare Behind Bars* (Dir. Hank Rogerson, 2006) show, find through Shakespeare the way to unleash and alleviate what De Sutter describes as the "irritability and […] irrationality" that was born of the urbanization that accompanied the development of western capitalism (99). *Macbeth*'s archive in *The Wire* capitalizes on oscillations within politics of excitement. Rather than turning them into a politics of anesthetization–described by De Sutter as forms to control politics of excitement (19–20)–, they are turned into an emancipatory subjectivity. Nonetheless, the year *The Wire* ended, AMC started another serial *Macbeth* that pushed narco-capitalist politics of excitement to the limit.

4. Reactivating *Macbeth* in *Breaking Bad*

Following Van Der Werff, the Shakespearean skeleton of *Breaking Bad* permitted writers not to worry "about the big picture to sweat the small stuff" and enjoy "some of the most memorable TV moments ever" (2018). The afterlives of *Breaking Bad*, including Netflix's *El Camino: A* Breaking Bad *Movie* (dir. Vince Gilligan, 2020) and media adaptations including memes, Greg Mandel's faux Elizabethan poem *Macmeth: The Most Excellent Dark Comedie and Tragical*

Historie of Sir Walter Whyte (2013) and several amateur YouTube *Macmeth* films developed a cultural aftermath to *Breaking Bad* using narco-capitalist culture as a catalyst. This adaptation setting corresponds to Howard Marchitello's view on *Macbeth* in the contemporary global culture, in "a precarious, social, and cultural moment made increasingly–and with increasing rapidity–unstable by what might be called the globalization bubble" (Marchitello, 2013, 425).

Recurrently invoked in *Macbeth,* bubbles aestheticize Walter's obsession with increasing production and distribution of his crystal. Excited by the business, he becomes, like Macbeth, a demonized other, Heisenberg, for those inside the US and those across the Mexican border. Not only his person but his abandoned house becomes a hellish place in series five. When analyzing early performances of *Macbeth*, Jonathan Gil Harris points at the sulphureous brimstone, the coal, the saltpeter and other materials whose odors produced "a palimpsesting of diverse moments in time, as a result of which past and present coincided with each other" (2007, 467). Such smells "were by no means confined to recent political events [but] may have pointed further back in time, to earlier theatrical experiences" (Ibid.), such as medieval plays for the Corpus Christi.

Glynne Wickham regarded *The Harrowing of Hell* as a source for Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. As the story goes, before resurrecting, Christ descended into Hell to demand the release of the souls of the patriarchs and the prophets. The setting for these performances consisted, Wickham says, of the interior of a "gate-house" or the castle courtyard (1966, 68). Christ's arrival was indicated by a knocking at the gates and by a blast of trumpets. Hell's gates crumbled to give Christ passage to release the imprisoned souls. For Wickham, Macduff in *Macbeth* is the Christ-like figure breaking into Macbeth's castle twice as "savior-avenger accompanied by armed archangels" (74). But, as said, the lines dividing hell and heaven are blurred in *Macbeth*. *Breaking Bad* depicts a similar blurring of these divides in the series–home/outside, civilization/wilderness, legal/illegal, success/failure, upright/criminal, etc. Thus, *Breaking Bad* re-activates reenactments and representations of *Macbeth* which could be picked up by part of the Jacobean audiences. *Breaking Bad*'s spaces, such as the home, are stages to katabatic experiences formalized with *Macbeth*'s archive. Earl H. Rovit defines the values the American home as "those that motivate and profoundly inform the particular configuration of social and ideological patterns to which the group mind subscribes," fundamental "to the group's collective attempt to achieve a cohesive image of itself" (1960: 521-522). In *Macbeth*, one of the hero's arguments against the regicide is that, as Duncan's host, he "should against his murderer shut the door [of his house], / Not bear the knife [himself]" (1.7.15-16). Lady Macbeth's exclamation after hearing the news of Duncan's dead–"What, in our house?" (2.3.89)–indicates that the cruelty of the assassination is aggravated by having been carried out in

contravention of the rules of hospitality. Shakespeare's turning the home into a space for transgression of standard ideals is reactivated in *Breaking Bad*. This is evident, for instance, during Walter's descent into Jesse Pinkman's basement, where he confronts an Absolute Other: Krazy-8. His hesitation, his rehearsals with the kitchen knife and his procrastination reenact, as Roger Colby suggests (2012), Macbeth's delays in killing Duncan as well as his dagger vision.

As Wickham says, the medieval hell is shaped like a castle equipped with walls and gates (68–70). Viewed from outside, hell resembles a castle; viewed from inside, it is a sequence of dark dungeons and torture chambers (71). In *Breaking Bad*, individuals like Pinkman are expelled from their own homes. Hank Schroeder suffers at home the effects of his traumatic experience in El Paso. The Whites undergo alienation and deception within the walls of their houses, too. These tensions escalate, culminating in a split which manifests itself during Walter and Skyler's knife-fight near the end of season five.

If the exterior features of the house hint at a transformation of the hell-as-castle metaphor into a hell-as-house metaphor, Shakespeare's traces surface when the house is tainted with the stench of crime. During Walter's last visit to Hank in the Schroeders' garage, understatements and question patterns exchanged by the in-laws paraphrase the tense dialogues between Banquo and Macbeth in the scenes around Duncan's murder. After being crowned, Macbeth announces to Banquo that his presence is requested at "a solemn supper" (3.1.13). Similarly, Walter announces that Skyler would like to have a meal with the Schroeders to celebrate the DEA's recovery. Rather than having Hank keep his suspicions to himself–as Shakespeare does with Banquo–, the writers have Hank accuse Walter ("Blood Money"). After exchanging threats, the in-laws' separation is marked by the garage door's falling down like a castle's portcullis, a point-of-no-return signaling the division between the Schroeders and Walter and, by extension, Walter's upcoming alienation from law-abiding citizens.

The Whites' swimming-pool also evokes katabasis. Following Wickham, the "hell-castle" has a dungeon or a cesspit that provides access to hell-fires (68). In the Pilot, after finding out about his terminal disease, Walter throws burnt matches into the pool, a visual mediation or trace of Macbeth's address to an expiring "brief candle" (5.5.22). Signs, such as the nightmarish vision of the pink teddy bear floating in the pool or the lily of the valley revealed in close-up and confirming Walter's involvement in Brock's poisoning, suggest that the pool is a metaphor for the doom suffered by Walter's associates. Nonetheless, the pool achieves more ambivalent meanings when Skyler attempts suicide by drowning herself ("Fifty-One"), a dramatic turn of events whose outcome deviates from Shakespeare's dramatization of Lady Macbeth's suicide. Rachel Falconer similarly deviates from conceptualizing hell as a site of punishment and

proposes a dialogical approach to hell which suspends punitive judgement. For Falconer, the katabatic experience implies a return to the overworld granting the traveler new wisdom, love or power (2007, 4). While for Lady Macbeth, "hell is murky" (5.1.36), Skyler's immersion leads to an enlightening experience, an indicator of her future emancipation from Walter.

Breaking Bad's re-activations of Shakespeare's sources provide alternatives to Shakespeare's dramatic decisions. Knockings and trespasses into other people's castles, as occur during Skyler and Jesse's encounter ("Cat's in the Bag…"), or the Salamanca Brothers' tap-tapping on their axes waiting for Walter to come out of the shower room ("I.F.T.") reenact, mediate and represent the Porter's remembrance of Christ's knocking on hell's gates. But an orthodox reading of *Harrowing* presupposes the intervention of holy forces. Hardly anyone, including the Schroeders–who intend to "harrow" the Whites' home to rescue their nephews–is a saint in *Breaking Bad*. While Shakespeare permits Macduff to be "savior-avenger," the Schroeders' moral relativism is stressed. According to Kurt Schreyer, allusions to *Harrowing* in *Macbeth* were "a potentially subversive bit of stage business." By erasing affinities with Christ's battle with Satan–in the Porter's scene–, Shakespeare exposed the inadequacy of the Jacobean theology and invited audiences "to link commercial drama with its Catholic antecedents" (2010, 26). As Susanne Greenhalgh argues, works like *The Sopranos* and *Breaking Bad* "have been deemed 'Shakespearean' not for any overt references but rather as a signifier of their complex, powerful (predominantly white male) characters and intensive psychological exploration of actions, motives and moral choices" (2022, 258). While Walter's acts are punished, *Breaking Bad* critiques the white middle classes who, pretending to fight "the good fight," are morally flawed insofar as offenses like Hank's racial prejudice and brutality are overlooked. More generally, society's injustice is evident in *Breaking Bad* since the only way to prosper seems to be narco-capitalism. The cartels, the police, and corporations in one way or another depend on it.

Katabases and allusions to *Macbeth* shed light on the characters' learning experiences.

Hank's katabatic experience in El Paso exposes his vulnerability and racial prejudice while collaborating with his Mexican fellows. Hank's ethnic joke–"Are we just on *mañana* time?" ("Negro y Azul"), a mediation or a trace of Macbeth's "Tomorrow…"–precedes a reenactment or representation of *Macbeth*'s iconography. Tortuga's head on a tortoise's carapace–the severed head being an icon recurrent in *Macbeth*–horrifies him while one of his colleagues–called Vanco (an echo of Banquo)–teases him: "What's the matter, sweetheart. Looks like you've never seen a turtle with a severed head before this!" (Ibid.)–. This paraphrases Banquo's teasing of Macbeth as he hears the Witches' prophecies–

"Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear…" (1.3.51)–. Hank's journey reaffirms his Manichean convictions regarding his siding with "the good fight." Jesse's learning experience, a less straightforward one, needed a sequel, *El Camino*, to completely develop the character's journey. Yet this shift is also based on reenactments of *Macbeth* during Pinkman's encounter with the red-headed child in Pampas Street ("Peekabo"). Absorbed in binge-watching, partly illuminated by the light coming from a screen filled with knives–distinctive Macbethian icons–, the child's quietness in his miserable environment furnishes him with the otherworldly air of the two child apparitions Macbeth meets (4.1.75-102). These two children, like *Breaking Bad*'s child, are embedded in unsettling and otherworldly liminality. But the chord struck by the child in Jesse is explained by what Falconer calls the "*via negativa*," i.e. the katabatic traveler achieves a calm, meditative and transcendental state which sets in motion an inner process of enlightenment (21), not by Macbeth's horror when knowing about his future. The ambivalence with which children are treated in contemporary *Macbeths* serves to depict "a future where the boundaries between childhood and adulthood are being irreversibly erased" (Tehrani, 2021, 51). *Breaking Bad*'s take on childhood, as a force for spiritual change, adds up to the predominantly bleak visions of childhood presented in Tehrani's corpus.[2] Playing peak-a-boo with the silent child, the outcast Pinkman begins acquiring the moral stature which he carries on developing beyond *Breaking Bad*.

For Falconer, katabasis involves the crossing of thresholds, encounters with the unknown as well as educational, visionary and trial experiences (69–76). Though Walter admits that his reasons for getting into "the game" were self-serving, his journey is the reason for his popularity. He does business with, competes with and defeats the greatest kingpins, including members of the cartel. Before his first murder, Walter converses with Krazy-8, learns his real name, is open to the possibility of forgiving him before his discovery makes him decide otherwise ("… And the Bag's in the River"). His upward journey is meditative. There are moments of harsh self-judgement which acquire tragic pathos. Walter's Macbeth-like reflections after attempting to kill the fly ("Fly") zoom into the character's deep Macbethian psychology:

> Now [Walter's] conscience seems to finally have caught up with him, and his sleepless attempt to destroy the fly is akin to the insomnia brought about by the individual plagued by conscience. […] The fly–as a symbolic manifestation of guilt–may function as the equivalent of Banquo's ghost, but the episode itself

2 Tehrani analyzes Justin Kurzel's film adaptation of *Macbeth* (2015) as well as the three stage productions directed by Michael Boyd in 1985, 1993 and 2011.

> is (figuratively speaking) a Shakespearean soliloquy. It is a chance to step away from the plot and show us the inner workings of our tragic hero's mind. It reminds us that when we are unchained from our solipsistic experience and given an insight into the personal subjectivity of another […], even the most emotionally reserved characters like Walter White are shown to be plagued by mental torments which we cannot call anything but tragic, and cannot help but pity them for this. (u/FaerieStories)

Also, Walter's comical fall takes us back to the satirical medieval Chester play *The Fall of Lucifer*. In this play Lucifer "leapfrogs" trying to reach heaven (Schreyer 36). The interconnection of two sources–Shakespeare and an ancient comical predecessor–suggests archival oscillations in the episode.

Falconer compares katabasis with a "sea voyage," an experience pushing us to the furthest limits of our being (91), testing human adaptability, cunning, curiosity, capacity to enter the unknown, engage in collaboration with others and spread the knowledge acquired. As Salomon Kroonenberg asserts, "that underground world contains so much that is beautiful: sparkling ores and metals, magnificent yellow sulfur crusts, blue sapphires, red cinnabar, green malachite, razor-sharp, meters-long gypsum crystals, dripstone caves, subterranean rivers, fragile shells from the dawn of evolution, and the giant bones of extinct monsters" ([2011] 2013, 7–8). What Macbeth perceives with horror is perceived by Walter with scientific curiosity. His fascination with the transformative possibilities of chemistry invokes an impetus found, as Ewan Fernie proposes, in most of Shakespeare's characters: these figures struggle for freedom to be different, freedom to be what they might be, freedom to cast off what they have been (2017, 4). Macbeth himself prefers to move forward into his unhappy destiny than retreating and, Walter-like, chooses to explore in person what kind of man he has become. Elements from the periodic table, like carbon, are for Walter made of the same "stuff" as the woman bearing it ("Breakage"). If, following Prospero in *The Tempest*, "We are such stuff / As dreams are made on" (4.1.156-157), Walter accepts the dream logic of narco-capitalism, which makes a world without the narcotic experience of Coca-Cola, as he suggests, unimaginable. Following De Sautter, "cocaine"–a component of Coca-Cola–"is always to be found where modern capitalism is most susceptible to suspicions of corruption" (45). However, Sautter evokes Freudian descriptions of cocaine as "the brain's fuel […] a principle of subjective efficacy" (47-48). In this ambivalent world, Walter reaches efficiency by understanding of the potencies of drugs in modern capitalism and, in understanding them, gains boundless power. Unlike his Shakespearean counterpart, the condemned Walter ensures that his family is left well-provided for. Likewise, his skill and imagination to

turn his car into a machine gun allows him to "harrow" the warehouse where his putative son Jesse is in chains, enslaved, waiting to be free. This finale, a reenactment from *Harrowing* gives us reasons to keep our sympathies on Macbeth-like Walter's side.

5. Conclusions

Narco-capitalism provides a context to frame Shakespeare's archive in *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad*. In contemporary America, Shakespeare operates by resurfacing amidst the serial appropriations. Archival traces do not merely emerge as text but as reenactments–as evocations of performance–, mediations or representations. These point at Shakespeare's performance and screen history, or, more abstractedly, to Shakespeare's theatrical features. Traces, reenactments, medations and representations are not isolated from each other. In TV seriality, traces are reactivated meta-theatrically or by pointing at suggestions of standard source or its preceding sources, thus capitalizing on Shakespeare as a transmedia corpus and creatively juggling with archival documents on Shakespeare.
In *Adapting Macbeth: A Cultural History*, Carroll enumerates features that make

Macbeth attractive for modern creatives. These include the play's political nature, its handling of the supernatural, the dangers of ambition, its domestic focus and its language and characterization (2021, 4). Though he does not mention *The Wire* or *Breaking Bad*, their narco-capitalism is a magnet capable of attracting these themes, and more, underlying Shakespeare's tragedy, which may agglutinate around the narco-capitalist culture. As Carroll adds, "each of these features has also, at one time or another, been construed as a flaw or a mistake that requires correction and, often, re-writing" (Ibid.). In these series, segments of *Macbeth*'s archive are used for such emendations, a task for which a large transmedia corpus of *Macbeth* offers a repertoire of already-tested alternatives and suggestions of new possibilities.

This logic situates Serial Shakespeares in the politically redemptive context of contemporary America. Examples of recent performance history shows "a real and constructive act that is both real and performative, addressing real situations through the use of the creative and the theatrical, in an attempt to establish a field of play for an ongoing effort to make Shakespeare relevant and useful to the causes and contexts of social justice" (Ruiter, 2020, 2). These two-series' engagement with Shakespeare's reparative features is ambivalent, and it is the play of *Macbeth*–an intensely violent and nihilistic text–that perhaps most naturally leads to the series' harboring of narco-capitalist excess, particularly in male characters. Following Jorge Carrión, such characters are turned themselves into drugs which we, as tele-addicts, want to last long due to the sympathy that

they raise (2011, 15). This male-centered emphasis in complex series preceding #MeToo explain explains the predominance of traces of Shakespeare's tragedies and histories during the first decade of TV seriality, with examples such as *The Wire* (2002-2008), *Deadwood* (2004-2006), *Rome* (2005-2007), *Sons of Anarchy* (Kurt Sutter, 2008-2013), etc. Before Shakespeare-laden daring and shrewd characters like Gemma Teller, Cersei Lannister, Claire Underwood, Shioban or Kate Ashby came to share the complex TV screens with difficult men, Serial Shakespeares were a playground for the stamina, ambition and non-tractability of the likes of Stringer Bell, Jimmy McNulty, Lucius Vorenus, Walter White, Seth Bullock, Al Swearengern, Jax Teller, all of them, as Concepción Cascajosa-Virino says, being middle-aged men in crisis (2016, 172).[3] The choice of play accommodates the impetus of male protagonists, ready, as Shakespeare's Macbeth, to tread bloody paths to move beyond the very realms of the real. But TV's traditional feminine ethos encourages revisions of gender politics in the appropriated plays. Thus, women like Skyler White manage to outmaneuver violent male control and have a fresh start. *The Wire* and *Breaking Bad* examine possibilities for Shakespeare to be restorative, and, surprisingly, he often is so amidst hyperreal havoc, ruled by the politics of excitement of narco-capitalism, that goes hand in hand with what, at heart, still is TV family melodrama and police procedural.

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An Exploratory Study on the Derivation of Ironical Implicatures by English Foreign Language Learners: Could Culture Play a Role?

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Literature on cross-cultural communication has demonstrated that communication breakdowns are more likely to occur among speakers from different cultural backgrounds (Keenan 1976; Devine 1983). This kind of assumptions constituted the departing point of further studies, such as that of Bouton (1988), where he tested the communicative habits of non-native speakers of English and contrasted them with those of English native speakers. The results of these studies have proved that the derivation of implicatures by English non-native speakers differs if compared with that of English native speakers and that ironical implicatures are among the most difficult ones to grasp for English non-native speakers. What is more, culture has been regarded as a possible variable influencing the derivation of implicit meanings (Bouton 1988; Liddicoat 2009). In view of this literature and applying the approach on High Context and Low Context cultures (in accordance with Hall 1976; Würtz 2005; Min 2016; Hornikx and le Pair 2017), this exploratory study aims at analysing if culture plays a role in the derivation of ironical implicatures by English foreign language learners. For current purposes, the present study aims to analyse, first, whether a group of English foreign language learners derives pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures or not; and, secondly, if culture as a bidirectional factor has an impact on participants' interpretations. In order to do so, an exploratory sample of twelve English foreign language learners (all of them belonging to a High Context culture) filled a questionnaire, which was used to gather data. The questionnaire contained fifteen questions: ten multiple-choice questions and five open questions, each of them giving rise to an ironical implicature. The results suggest that participants show a high tendency to

derive pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures and that culture as a bidirectional variable has an impact on their interpretations. This leads to the conclusion that culture as a bidirectional variable seems to play a role in the derivation of ironical implicatures by the English foreign language learners in our sample.
Keywords: cross-cultural communication; High Context culture; Low Context culture; English foreign language learners; implicature; irony; cultural background; English-speaking culture

1. Introduction

In the process of acquiring a second language (L2) as a foreign language (FL), linguistic skills are given primary importance (Kim 2002). However, sometimes students face some difficulties which relate to extralinguistic knowledge. This is precisely the object of study of the present work, which aims at explaining if culture as a bidirectional factor influences English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' derivation of ironical implicatures. To do so, first, Section 2 exposes the theoretical framework, including Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and his account on irony in Sections 2.1 and 2.2, respectively. After this, Section 2.3 addresses how this theory applies to actual communication and highlights the relevance that choosing the adequate contextual assumptions has when it comes to avoiding communication breakdowns. Taking this latter point into account, Section 3 deals with cross-cultural communication and its relation to the derivation of ironical implicatures by English native speakers (ENS) and English non-native speakers (ENNS). After this, Section 3.1. provides a description of the notion of culture—following the approach on High Context and Low Context cultures—and then, throughout Section 4, the present study is exposed. Section 5 discusses the results obtained, in relation to the literature described in Sections 2-3. Finally, in Section 6, the main conclusions, the limitations and some proposals for further research are presented.

2. Theoretical framework

The gap between the grammatical encoded meaning and the meaning speakers actually intend to convey has been broadly acknowledged to exist within pragmatics (Ariel 2010). As a consequence, and with the purpose of filling this gap, some accounts, such as that of Grice (1975), were developed aiming to explain how hearers manage to interpret utterances and successfully infer the speaker's intended meaning.

2.1. Grice's Cooperative Principle

Grice's (1975) approach became revolutionary in the field of human communication, since it abandoned the idea of understanding communication as a coding-decoding process (Wharton 2003).

According to Grice (1975), people engaged in conversation do not make meaningless, irrational contributions, but rather cooperate. This idea is framed within the Cooperative Principle, a principle that speakers are supposed to follow when conversing. This principle is formulated as follows: "Make your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1975, 45). Grice expands on this principle and divides it into four categories, each of them constituting a maxim and some of them counting also with submaxims. The maxims and submaxims are the following:

(1) The Cooperative Principle

a. Maxim of Quantity: "Give the right amount of information."
   1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
   2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

b. Maxim of Quality: "Try to make your contribution one that is true."
   1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
   2. Do not say that for what you lack adequate evidence.

c. Maxim of Relation: "Be relevant."

d. Maxim of Manner: "Be perspicuous."
   1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
   2. Avoid ambiguity.
   3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
   4. Be orderly.

(Grice 1975, 45-46)

For Grice, this principle can bridge the gap between explicit and implicit meaning, because from these maxims and speakers' behaviour towards them, implicit meanings are generated in conversation. Speakers engaged in conversation may follow or may not follow these maxims. Whether they do or not, conversational implicatures are generated (Ariel 2010). Conversational implicatures are defined

as "any meaning or proposition expressed implicitly by a speaker in his or her utterance of a sentence which is meant without being part of what is said in the strict sense" (Huang 2016, 156). Grice (1975) suggests three different groups that give an account of how conversational implicatures are generated: Group A—examples where the speaker seems to be following the Cooperative Principle—; Group B—cases where speakers have to violate one maxim in order to obey another—; and, finally, Group C—instances where implicatures are generated by floutings of maxims, which are cases where speakers deliberately disobey a maxim—.

With this proposal, Grice is offering an answer to how speakers and hearers behave in conversation and to how implicit meanings are generated, which can also be applied to the case of irony.

2.2. Grice's Account on Irony

On Grice's account, irony is a figure of speech and, as such, it falls under Group C of his proposal. This is, its use by speakers constitutes a flouting, in this case, a flouting of the first submaxim of the Maxim of Quality, i.e., "Do not say what you believe to be false" (Grice, 1975, 46). From this perspective, when speakers flout this maxim, the resulting implicature is the opposite of what is said (Garmendia and Korta 2007). As a way of example, Grice exposes a situation in which there are two friends (X and A) and X has revealed a secret of A. Then A, in front of people who are aware of the fact that X has betrayed A, says (2a). Strictly speaking, at the level of what is said, A would not be cooperating, as saying something which you do not believe to be true involves a violation of the first submaxim of Quality. However, Grice understands this example as a decision that A has taken on purpose in order to violate the first submaxim of Quality but cooperate at the level of what is implicated by expressing implicitly a different proposition, which would constitute a conversational implicature; in this case, as (2a) is an ironical utterance, the conversational implicature would be the opposite of what A has said (Grice 1975), hence (2b).

(2) a. "X is a fine friend." (Grice, 1975, 53)
b. "X is not a fine friend."

2.3. Grice's Theory applied to Communication

The theoretical framework described in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 presents us with an approach that analyses how hearers manage to interpret implicit meanings and, more specifically, ironical utterances. In analysing the accuracy of this theory,

Clark (2013 as cited in Togame 2016) mentions that an appropriate account should provide an explanation on why misunderstandings that are related to the way in which hearers and listeners construct a context may arise when communication is taking place. In this sense, Bouton (1992 as cited in Togame 2016, 89) claims that "Grice himself had pointed out that […] people must have a common perception of at least four crucial factors related to the context in which the utterance occurs", all of them factors that require the existence of a robust common framework between speaker and hearer. As Togame (2016, 125) puts it, the construction of a shared context relies on previous text or discourse "but it can also be drawn from a subset of the hearer's beliefs and assumptions about the world including personal memories of particular things […], general cultural assumptions, religious beliefs, scientific knowledge."

The role that extralinguistic factors such as culture can play in the construction of a shared context and, hence, in communication and potential communication breakdowns, makes the study of cross-cultural communication particularly interesting.

3. Cross-cultural communication

The fact that the Gricean theory indicated that the sharing of contextual assumptions between hearers and speakers is necessary for successful communication, together with the idea that disparities between the assumptions held by speakers and those held by hearers tend to appear more often in intercultural communication (see Section 2.3), fostered the carrying out of experiments such as that of Keenan (1976). In this study, where Keenan examined the communicative habits of Malagasies, the results found came to prove that cultural aspects influenced each person's inferencing process in a specific way (Kavetska 2020).

Conclusions such as this one led others to test EFL learners' ability to interpret conversational implicatures. One of these experiments was that of Bouton (1988), in which he tested ENNS' and ENS' ability to interpret implicatures based on Grice's maxims. The objective was to analyse if someone's cultural background had an impact on the derivation of meanings from implicatures and to test if those meanings that were extracted from implicatures varied between ENNS and ENS. The implicatures Bouton included in his implicature test ranged from a wide variety of types, where irony was included. Indeed, irony proved to be one of the most challenging types of implicatures to process. As irony is to a great extent culture-specific, Bouton interpreted these results as a consequence of the cultural background of participants and, thus, regarded culture as an element which had an impact on ENNS' interpretations, considering that ENNS' interpretations were different from those of ENS.

3.1. High Context and Low Context cultures

Culture as a concept has been broadly defined in literature (Hall 1959; Hall 1976; Hofstede et al. 2010 [1991]; Minkov et al. 2013), but for present purposes, culture will be considered following Hall's (1976) proposal (in line with Würtz 2005; Min 2016; Hornikx and le Pair 2017, among others).

Hall (1959 as cited in Nishimura et al. 2008, 784) defined culture as "the way of life of people: the sum of their learned behavioural patterns, attitudes and material things. Culture is often subconscious; an invisible control mechanism operating in our thoughts." Apart from defining it, Hall (1976) developed further on the notion of culture and made a distinction between High Context (HC) and Low Context (LC) cultures. According to him, whether a country belongs to a HC or a LC culture will have an impact on the way its population communicates. Taking this idea as a base, Hall (1976, 91) defines HC communication as the "one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalised in the person, while very little in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message" and LC communication as "the opposite [to HC communication]; i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code."

In LC cultures, ties between people are weaker than in HC cultures, where close-knit groups predominate (Hall 1976; Würtz 2005). What is more, in HC cultures, society is clearly structured, and people are well aware of the established codes of behaviour (Kim et al. 1998 as cited in Nishimura et al. 2008; Würtz 2005). This explains why formulating direct questions about personal issues is deemed disrespectful in HC cultures. In fact, HC cultures, as opposed to LC cultures, tend to avoid direct confrontation and strive to keep up appearances (Rosenberg 2004; Würtz 2005). Moreover, HC cultures are fixed and stable societies which are featured for being reluctant to changes (Min 2016). These inherent characteristics of HC and LC cultures have a direct impact on the way people communicate: while LC communication is straightforward and people belonging to this group expect speakers to express what they mean clearly in their message, HC communication is less direct and listeners are expected to understand what is implicitly transmitted (Nishimura et al. 2008; Würtz 2005; Hornikx and le Pair 2017).

As this proposal gives an account of the patterns of behaviour underlying communication that different cultures show, its application to the derivation of implicatures by EFL learners could answer the question of whether the cultural background of a person influences this person's derivation of implicatures or not.

4. The present study

4.1. Research Questions

In view of the literature described in Sections 2-3, the present study aims to analyse if culture plays a role in the derivation of ironical implicatures by EFL learners.

Importantly, in this study, the culture variable is examined in a bidirectional way, this is: apart from investigating the possible influence of the participants' cultural background on the derivation of ironical implicatures, the level of acquaintance with the target language (TL) culture is also analysed. Thus, the research questions (RQs) are the following:

RQ1: do the EFL learners in our sample derive pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures?
RQ2: does culture as a bidirectional factor influence the derivation of ironical implicatures in our sample of EFL learners?

Based on the literature review, these are the predictions to the previously exposed RQs:

Prediction 1: our sample of EFL learners will derive pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures.
Prediction 2: culture as a bidirectional factor will influence the derivation of ironical implicatures in our sample of EFL learners.

4.2. Method

Considering the exploratory nature of the study, a pilot experiment was carried out, whereby participants were administered a questionnaire on site (see Appendix 1). Before they started to answer it, we clarified to them that their participation was voluntary and that their answers would be kept anonymous. In addition to this, we informed participants of the fact that there were neither correct nor incorrect answers, so that they did not feel under pressure when filling in the questionnaire. In any case, participants could find all this information at the top of the first page in the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). On average, participants answered the questionnaire in twenty minutes.

The results of the participants' answers were analysed with the IBM SPSS Statistics programme and, given that the sample's size was below twenty participants (see section 4.3), a set of nonparametric tests were carried out.

4.3. Participants

The participants of the present study were students of the third year of the English Studies degree at the Faculty of Arts of the University of the Basque Country. The data were gathered during the COVID-19 pandemic, when only a third part of students could attend classes (while the rest were online), in response to the health and safety measures imposed by the government. That situation restricted our sample, which was formed by twelve participants—ten women and two men, with a mean age of twenty-one years—. Out of the twelve participants, there were eleven whose country of origin was Spain and one whose country of origin was Morocco, thus, they were regarded as members of HC cultures, where HC communication predominates (Hall and Hall 1990 as cited in Nishimura et al. 2008).

All the participants were ENNS. They were attending the third year of the English Studies degree, where a C1-C2 English proficiency level is attained. Besides, they self-assessed their English proficiency level as good-excellent in the scale "very bad – bad – regular – good – excellent" (see Section 4.4).

4.4. Instrument

A questionnaire consisting of three different sections was created (based on Bester 2012): a Background Information Section, an Instructions Section and a Questionnaire Section (with the experimental items) (see Appendix 1). The Experimental Section consisted of fifteen questions, each of them giving rise to an ironical implicature. We included four questions from Bester (2012) and we designed the rest, given that not all of Bester's questions dealt with irony. The questions we extracted from Bester (2012) were Question (Q) 1, Q2, Q4, and Q7. Out of the fifteen questions, ten were multiple-choice questions and had five possible answers: a semantically correct or incorrect interpretation, a pragmatically felicitous or infelicitous interpretation, and one possible answer named "other" whose election meant that participants thought that the other answers were not adequate and that they interpreted the sentence differently (e.g., they provided a neutral interpretation). Apart from the multiple-choice questions, the questionnaire also counted with five open questions, in which participants had to explain how they interpreted the corresponding sentences.

In order not to bias participants, multiple-choice questions were mixed together with open questions, so that every two multiple-choice questions, an open question was placed.

Questions were designed so that the two RQs (see Section 4.1) could be examined. In this sense, all the questions were used to reach a conclusion on the

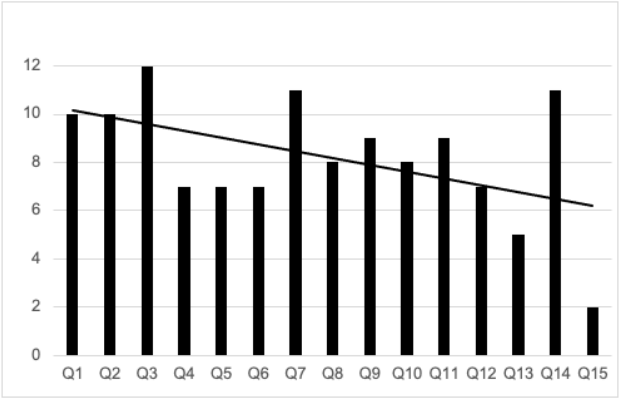
derivation of ironical implicatures (RQ1). Similarly, every question was analysed in order to answer if the cultural background of the participants influenced their interpretations, and Q8 and Q15 were the ones which were designed so as to know if acquaintance with the TL culture had an impact on the interpretation of ironical utterances (RQ2).

4.5. Results

4.5.1. Derivation of Ironical Implicatures (RQ1)

The data collected showed that the sample participating in the experiment derived pragmatically ironical implicatures. Figure 1 reveals the number of participants (y axis) that derived pragmatically felicitous interpretations for each question (x axis):

FIGURE 1. PRAGMATICALLY FELICITOUS IMPLICATURES

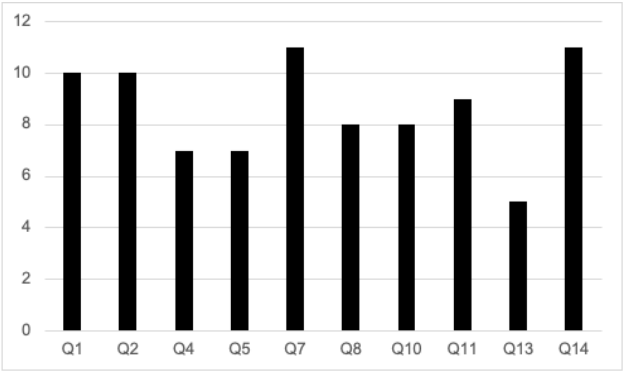


The trend line showed that the tendency of participants to derive pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures was situated between 6 and 10, being the mean 8,2 (72,5%). This tendency to derive pragmatically felicitous implicatures was higher if the questions were presented as multiple-choice questions, where the mean of pragmatically felicitous implicatures was 8,7; in contrast, the mean of open questions was 7,4.

As for multiple-choice questions, Figure 2 reveals that those questions for which participants derived less pragmatically felicitous interpretations were Q13, which was interpreted in a pragmatically felicitous way by five participants (41,6% of the sample), and Q4 and Q5, which counted with seven pragmatically felicitous interpretations (58,3% of the sample). In the opposite sense, the

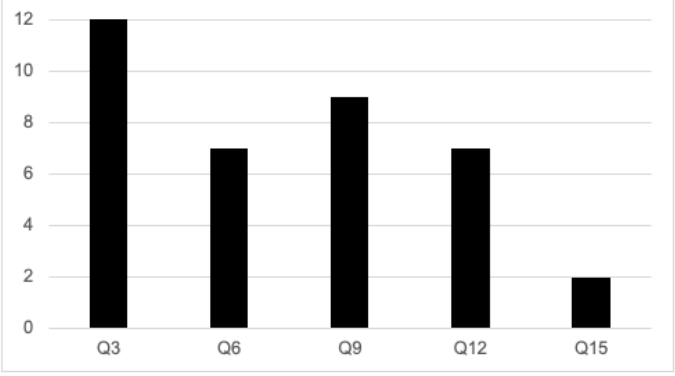
questions for which more participants chose the pragmatically felicitous option were Q8 and Q10 with eight participants (66,6% of the sample), Q11 with nine participants (75% of the sample), Q1 and Q2 with ten participants (83,3% of the sample), and Q7 and Q14 with eleven participants (91,6% of the sample).

Figure 2. Multiple-choice questions



In regards to open questions, Figure 3 displays the number of pragmatically felicitous interpretations that participants derived for each question. The one receiving less pragmatically felicitous interpretations was Q15, with two participants (16,6% of the sample). By contrast, Q3 obtained a pragmatically felicitous interpretation by the twelve participants (100% of the sample). On their part, Q6 and Q12 were interpreted in a pragmatically felicitous way by seven participants (58,3% of the sample), and Q9 by nine participants (75% of the sample).

Figure 3. Open questions



4.5.2. Culture (RQ2)

Data showed that both the participants' cultural background and that familiarity with the TL culture played a role in the derivation of ironical implicatures. The fact that some questions were interpreted in a pragmatically felicitous way by nearly all the participants—such as Q14 (eleven participants, 91,6% of the sample) and Q2 (ten participants, 83,33% of the sample)—or that other questions such as Q13 were interpreted in a pragmatically felicitous way by less than half of the sample (five participants, 41,6% of the sample) shows that there was some underlying factor—in this case that all participants belonged to a HC culture—which drove participants to almost coincide in their interpretations of some questions.

Regarding the questions designed to answer if acquaintance with the TL culture played a role in the interpretation of ironical implicatures, Figure 1 results for Q8 and Q15 revealed that the participants' familiarity or lack of familiarity with elements belonging to the TL culture either helped them to derive a pragmatically felicitous interpretation or hindered this interpretation. For instance, one of the answers provided for Q15 was: "I don't know what Brummie is" (Participant 11), a fact which prevented this participant from deriving a pragmatically felicitous interpretation. In the case of Q8, Participant 3 chose option (e) (other) and specified that he could not "tell if she's [Margaret] being sarcastic or not without hearing her say it", which proves that the participant would rely on other cues, i.e., the speaker's voice, rather than on 'Chelsea' which was supposed to be the cue for participants in Q8 to perceive the ironical nature of the utterance.

After carrying out the statistical analysis, Q1 ($p = 0{,}039$; binomial test for a sample), Q2 ($p = 0{,}039$; binomial test for a sample), Q7 ($p = 0{,}006$; binomial test for a sample), Q14 ($p = 0{,}006$; binomial test for a sample), and Q15 ($p = 0{,}039$; binomial test for a sample) were the questions which obtained a significant difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers.

5. Discussion

With the aim of knowing if participants would derive pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures (RQ1), data were obtained, which showed that the analysed sample presented a high tendency to derive pragmatically felicitous interpretations in the case of ironical utterances ($m = 8{,}2$). This tendency increased if questions were formulated as multiple-choice questions ($m = 8{,}7$) rather than as open questions ($m = 7{,}4$). This may respond to the fact that the possibilities a multiple-choice question offers may facilitate and act as a cue for

participants, who in the case of open questions had to interpret, without being given possibilities. Besides, as the participants of the sample were either from Spain or from Morocco, two countries where HC communication predominates, this high tendency to derive pragmatically felicitous interpretations could be understood as a consequence of Hall's (1976) definition (in line with Würtz 2005; Min 2016; Hornikx and le Pair 2017). As explained in Section 3.1, in HC cultures speakers and hearers are used to a mode of communication in which the message is implicitly transmitted and where hearers are supposed to understand those meanings which are not explicitly said (Nishimura et al. 2008; Würtz 2005; Hornikx and le Pair 2017). This is a plausible explanation as to why the participants of this pilot experiment were likely to derive pragmatically felicitous interpretations when it came to ironical utterances and confirms Prediction 1.

Additionally, in order to test whether culture as a bidirectional factor would influence the participants' derivation of ironical implicatures or not (RQ2), results were gathered and the sample's answers to some questions were in accordance with Hall's theory. For example, for Q14, the comparison between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers was significant (p= 0,006; binomial test for a sample). This question was interpreted in a pragmatically felicitous way by nearly all the participants (91,6% of the sample). If we consider that HC cultures are described as well-structured societies (Kim et al. 1998 as cited in Nishimura et al. 2008; Würtz 2005) where people are perfectly aware of both the social hierarchy and the politeness routines (e.g., not asking personal questions) (Tella 2005 as cited in Nishimura et al. 2008), the results are not surprising: the great majority of the sample interpreted Mr Lewis's father's words as ironical, because the fact that you should not ask the age to the person that is interviewing you for a potential job is a fact rooted in HC cultures (like Spain or Morocco) and known by the vast majority of their inhabitants.

Just as Q14, the answers provided for Q13 by some of the participants who did not choose the pragmatically felicitous interpretation may be understood as a consequence of the fact that they are part of a HC culture. This is so because four participants chose option (a), which constituted a pragmatically infelicitous interpretation involving a negative comment. As exposed in Section 3.1, HC cultures avoid direct conflict and tend to express themselves indirectly so that appearances are maintained (Rosenberg 2004; Würtz 2005). This may have led participants to understand Lucy's words as a way of implying that she does not want Amy to go to the hen party, rather than as an ironical comment she has made in order to encourage Amy to attend the hen party. In the case of this question, the nonparametric test revealed that there was not a significant difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers (p= 0,774; binomial test for a sample). This might be due to the

sample's size or even to the very nature of the question itself, since it may need reformulation, but further research should be conducted.

Notwithstanding, there was another question, Q1, for which the nonparametric test showed that the difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers was significant (p= 0, 039; binomial test for a sample) and which can also be explained following the HC cultures' characteristic of being societies that express themselves implicitly and which avoid direct confrontation (Rosenberg 2004; Würtz 2005). In Q1, almost all the participants (83,3% of the sample) interpreted John's words as an ironical comment he was making in order to imply that the meeting, in fact, had not gone well. Taken that participants belong to a HC culture, the fact that they had no problem in reaching the pragmatically felicitous interpretation can be read as a result of the fact that they are used to understanding those meanings which are implicitly transmitted, but especially if the comment they are to interpret involves a negative remark (i.e., the fact that the meeting was unsuccessful), because communication becomes even more implicit in these cases.

Similarly, the results obtained in the nonparametric test for Q7 demonstrated that the difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers was significant (p= 0,006; binomial test for a sample). In this question, eleven participants derived the pragmatically felicitous interpretation. As explained in Section 3.1, people belonging to HC cultures are familiar with the politeness routines (Tella 2005 as cited in Nishimura et al. 2008). The customer's behaviour, which constitutes a clearly identified impolite behaviour by the members of the sample, may have led them to interpret Gwen's comment as an ironical one, and thus, to derive the pragmatically felicitous interpretation for this question. This is so because the customer is behaving in such a way that only the fact that he is angry can make the participants, who are all members of a HC culture, understand his behaviour.

A further inherent characteristic of HC cultures which was perceived in the answers participants provide is the fact that these cultures are characterised for relying on history, for being fixed, and for being reluctant to changes (Nishimura et al. 2008; Würtz 2005). For instance, Q2 was interpreted as ironical by nearly all the participants (83,33% of the sample) and the results of the nonparametric test showed that there was a significant difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers (p= 0,039; binomial test for a sample). The idea that, because a man is dancing with a woman, this man is being disloyal to his friend (the woman's husband) is part of a mentality that is undergoing change. Nevertheless, the vast majority of participants interpreted that Bill was not acting as a good friend should with Peter and, thus, Peter's words were interpreted as ironical. This showed that the fact that a man dances

with a woman who is his friend's wife was still understood as a disloyal gesture towards a friend by the participants of the sample, who were all members of HC cultures. Although the majority of the sample regarded Peter's words as ironical, two participants selected different options: (b) and (c), which treated the situation described in Q2 as something usual. This could reveal that this vision is starting to change among some of the members of HC cultures.

As culture was regarded as a bidirectional factor, we also analysed if acquaintance or lack of acquaintance with the TL culture influenced the way participants interpreted ironical sentences. The results showed a tendency that appeared to confirm that it actually does. For example, the answers given for Q15 (with 16,6% of pragmatically felicitous interpretations) were consistent and the difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers was significant (p= 0,039; binomial test for a sample). This demonstrated that it was particularly challenging for participants to perceive the dissociation in Benjamin's words. The item 'Brummie' was included because Brummie is a widely despised variety by many people in the UK; even mass media and speakers of the variety themselves sometimes show a negative attitude towards it (Hurst 2015). However, participants in the sample were not clear about Benjamin's words, since some answered that "He [Benjamin] could be being sarcastic […] but maybe he means that her [Laura's] accent will reach the audience" (Participant 1); others derived a semantically correct interpretation of Benjamin's words and answered that "He [Benjamin] is proposing Laura to be the speaker" (Participant 3); others also pointed at the fact that "It depends on how he says it, on the tone. He could be serious or ironic" (Participant 7); and another participant answered that he did not know what Brummie was (Participant 11). All these answers showed that lack of familiarity with what 'Brummie' was made them disregard this item which was the one giving them the cue to realise that Benjamin was actually employing irony.

As opposed to Q15, probably because Q8 was designed as a multiple-choice question, the results of the nonparametric test for Q8 demonstrated that the difference between the pragmatically felicitous and the pragmatically infelicitous answers was not significant (p=0,774; binomial test for a sample). However, the answers provided by those speakers who did not derive a pragmatically felicitous interpretation seemed to signal that the lack of familiarity with what 'Chelsea' was hindered their interpretation of Q8 as an ironical one. Taken the popularity of this London neighbourhood, which is additionally among the most expensive ones to have a house in (Tarver 2020), the item was employed to act as a cue for participants and to help them perceive the dissociation of Margaret with her own words' content. However, out of the four participants that did not derive a pragmatically felicitous interpretation, two selected option (b) and one chose

option (a), both of which were choices that showed that the item 'Chelsea' did not act as a cue for them, as they did not perceive the dissociation. In addition, Participant 3 chose option (e) and explained that he needed to hear Margaret in order to be able to say whether she was being sarcastic or not. His answer revealed too that his lack of familiarity with the item 'Chelsea' was preventing him from reaching a conclusion on whether Margaret's words were ironical or not and, thus, that he needed some further cue, which in this case would be the tone.

These findings confirm Prediction 2, as the collected data provided evidence for the effect of the participants' HC cultural background on the answers of our sample and also validated the idea that familiarity with the TL culture influences these participants' derivation of ironical implicatures.

6. Conclusions and further research

The results and the discussion presented in Sections 4.5 and 5, respectively, show that the participants in our sample derived pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures. Additionally, the results found provide evidence on the influence that the participants' HC cultural background had when they were asked to derive ironical implicatures. Some of the results obtained in the nonparametric tests showed that there was some common behaviour underlying the derivation of ironical implicatures that was shared by nearly all the sample's participants. This seems to signal that at least some of the characteristics of HC cultures and of their way of communicating, such as preferring to convey information implicitly or trying to avoid direct criticism, have come into play when the participants were interpreting the ironical sentences. Concerning the bidirectional nature of the culture variable, the obtained results seem to provide evidence that reveals that lack of familiarity with items belonging to the TL culture could hinder a pragmatically felicitous interpretation. This is particularly exemplified by the results for Q15, which was an open question that was interpreted in a pragmatically felicitous way by only two participants (16,6% of the sample).

Notwithstanding, the results obtained in this exploratory study count with some limitations regarding, chiefly, the size of the sample, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This underscores the need not to regard the results of the present study *ex cathedra* while, at the same time, stresses the significance of further investigating irony comprehension. Limitations of the study can also be detected in the lack of variety as concerns the cultural background of participants and their age or even in the very nature of irony itself, since irony is an element for which prosodic cues such as tone constitute an important factor. In view of these limitations, broadening the sample would be interesting, so that more

participants from different age ranges and cultural backgrounds would be tested. Additionally, in order to provide participants with a more natural simulation of communication, the questions could be presented as audios instead of being written, so that participants are not biased by not hearing the speakers' voice. Finally, even if the main aim of this study was to examine whether culture as a variable played a role in the derivation of ironical implicatures by the EFL learners in our sample, considering distinct English proficiency levels would be of interest for future research, since EFL learners' language proficiency level in the TL might also have an impact when deriving ironical implicatures.

All in all, this research has managed to bridge the gap between what is said and what is meant and serves as a preliminary investigation on the derivation of pragmatically felicitous ironical implicatures by a sample of EFL learners. The primary contribution of this study lies in its exploratory nature, highlighting the significance of investigating irony comprehension in the context of English language learning, cultural backgrounds, and familiarity with the TL culture.

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Appendix 1
Questionnaire (adapted from Bester 2012)

(This explanation has been omitted, as it contains personal information).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1) How old are you?

2) Which is your gender?

3) Which is your country of origin?

4) Are you a native speaker of English? If not, answer question 5.

5) What is your English level on the following skills? Choose the option that suits you best.

   4.1) Speaking: Very bad – Bad – Regular – Good – Excellent
   4.2) Listening: Very bad – Bad – Regular – Good – Excellent
   4.3) Reading: Very bad – Bad – Regular – Good – Excellent
   4.4) Writing: Very bad – Bad – Regular – Good – Excellent

6) What language(s) do you speak with your family and friends?

7) How often do you do the following?

   7.1) Reading books in English

   7.2) Watching films/series in English

   7.3) Watching TV programmes from British/American televisions

   7.4) Any other activity in English (specify).

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the following excerpts and then choose one of the five possibilities (a-e) that are given to you for questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 14. In case you choose option (e) in any of those questions, explain why you have chosen that option. For questions 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15, a written answer explaining your interpretation of the speakers' utterances is needed.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. After a difficult meeting where clients did not like any of their ideas for a new advertising campaign, two colleagues leave the boardroom.

John: **That went well.**

John means:
a) The meeting went very well.
b) The meeting did not go well.
c) It could have been worse.
d) He is thankful that at least they didn't get fired.
e) Other

2. Bill and Peter work together in the same office. They are good friends. They often have lunch together and Peter has even invited Bill to have dinner with him and his wife at their home several times. Now Peter's friends have told him that they saw Bill out dancing with Peter's wife recently while Peter was out of town on a business trip.

Peter: **Bill certainly knows how to be a really good friend, doesn't he?**

Peter means:
a) Bill is not acting the way a good friend should.
b) Peter's wife and Bill are becoming really good friends.
c) Peter and Bill are good friends, so Peter can trust him.
d) Nothing should be allowed to interfere with the friendship.
e) Other

3. James, Olivia's brother, is complaining because he is in charge of washing the dishes. Olivia has arrived home from work and continues working from her laptop. James continues to complain and Olivia says:

Olivia: **As I have been the whole day doing nothing, I can do it for you.**

How do you interpret Olivia's words?

4. A few friends are at a house party. A fellow guest who is not looking where he is going bumps into Dadrian and spills his drink all over Dadrian's brand new leather jacket. Dadrian grabs the offender by the collar and throws him against the wall, yelling at him. Sam, one of Dadrian's friends, turns to one of his buddies:

Sam: **You think he's angry?**

Sam means:
a) He thinks Dadrian doesn't have reason to be so angry.
b) He is not sure whether Dadrian is as angry as he looks.
c) It is obvious Dadrian is very angry.
d) He wants to know why Dadrian is so angry.
e) Other

5. Marie must choose in a maximum of two weeks the university where she would like to study her Medicine degree. Her neighbour sees Marie's father and asks him how is Marie doing with the decision. Marie's father answers:

Marie's father: **She is sitting on the fence, you know, Marie is very good at making decisions.**

Marie's father means:
a) Marie is sitting on the fence because she has already taken the decision.
b) Marie has changed her mind and will now study a different degree.
c) Marie is not a good decision maker.
d) Marie is a good decision maker.
e) Other

6. John, Alex, and Mark had a group presentation and John did not prepare his part, so when it was his turn to speak, his mind went blank.

Mark: **Certainly, God gave him the gift of the gab.**

How do you interpret Mark's words?

7. A customer in a clothing store starts yelling loudly at a sales person, ranting and raving and waving his arms about. Another customer looking at shoes nearby says to her friend:

Gwen: **You can tell he's a little upset.**

Gwen means:
a) You can tell the customer is a little upset.
b) You can tell the customer is very upset.
c) It's not clear how upset the customer is.
d) The customer has nothing to be upset about.
e) Other

8. Tom and Margaret are preparing a surprise party in London for their friend Ryan. When talking about how they will pay the party, Tom tells Margaret that as she has just been promoted and works in one of the most prestigious law firms, she should pay for everything. To this, Margaret answers:

Margaret: **Of course I could bear the costs and also, if you wish, we could celebrate the party at my place in Chelsea.**

Margaret means:
a) Margaret will do anything that's needed from her in order to make her friend Ryan happy.
b) Margaret agrees with Tom's proposal.
c) Margaret thinks that as she has been promoted, it is fair enough that she pays.
d) Margaret has not liked Tom's proposal.
e) Other

9. Elizabeth has had an exam this morning for which she has not studied. When her friends ask her how it has gone, she answers:

Elizabeth: **The teacher will marvel with my wise, elaborated answers.**

How do you interpret Elizabeth's words?

10. During a school meeting, parents are discussing which could be the new extracurricular activity that the school should add to the list of the already offered activities. Lucas, a father, suggests that the school should offer children the possibility to learn cooking. Martha, another mother, answers:

Martha: **I see eye to eye with Lucas, that's why I want to propose ballet as an alternative.**

Martha means:
a) Martha agrees with Lucas.
b) Martha does not like Lucas' proposal.
c) Children won't like Lucas' proposal.
d) Martha has not heard Lucas' proposal.
e) Other

11. Frans takes his girlfriend Magda out for a sundowner picnic. He goes to great trouble to make sure that everything is perfectly organized. But everything goes wrong: they get attacked by mosquitoes as the sun sets, the wine bottle breaks and spills over everything, and Magda twists her ankle in a hole as they walk to the top of the hill. In the meantime, dark clouds move closer and drops begin to fall.

Frans: **At least it's not raining.**

Frans means:
a) Well, at least it is not raining too hard yet.
b) And as if things couldn't possibly get worse, it is raining too.
c) The rain is the least of our problems right now.
d) The weather forecast said nothing about rain.
e) Other

12. The members of a company will meet with some potential investors in order to make a deal. The office manager asks the workers to clean the meeting room but they answer that that is a workspace and that as such, it can't be impeccable. When the boss of the company arrives at the meeting room and asks why that mess is not yet cleaned, the office manager answers:

Office Manager: **Cleaning? What for? It is a truth universally acknowledged that investors enjoy chaos.**

How do you interpret the office manager's words?

13. Lucy and Amy, two close friends, are discussing whether they should go to Jessica's hen party or not. Amy is not really into it and Lucy tells her:

Lucy: **Be careful, your parents may punish you if you go to the party.**

Lucy means:
a) Lucy does not want Amy to go to the hen party.
b) Lucy would like Amy to go to the party but is worried about the reaction Amy's parents will have if she goes.
c) Lucy is advising Amy not to go because Amy's parents will punish her if she goes.
d) Amy's parents are quite intransigent.
e) Other

14. During a job interview, Mrs Maseras, the interviewer, asks Mr Lewis, the interviewee, how old he is. Mr Lewis answers by asking Mrs Maseras the same question. After the interview, Mr Lewis is told that he will not be hired. During a phone call with his father, Mr Lewis' father tells him:

Mr Lewis' father: **In order to be hired, the next time you should ask the interviewer her age first.**

Mr Lewis' father means:
a) It has not been a good idea asking the interviewer her age.
b) The interviewee must always ask the age first.
c) One good option in order to be hired is asking the interviewee his/her age.
d) He wants his son to be hired so he is giving him the best advice he can give in order for him to be hired.
e) Other

15. A group of five mates will give a talk in front of an audience in a conference taking place at the University of Cambridge. When they are about to choose who the spokesperson will be, Benjamin, one of the members of the group, says:

Benjamin: **Laura's Brummie accent will win over the public without any doubt.**

How do you interpret Benjamin's words?

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Multimodal interpersonal strategies in the new digital genre of clinical pictures: Exploring discourse and pedagogical implications for ESP-EMI team teaching

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Science communication is undergoing a digital shift that results in the remediation and emergence of genres that help bring science to expert and semi-expert audiences (Luzón & Pérez-Llantada, 2019, 2022). One such genre is clinical pictures (CPs), which consist of a written and an audiovisual version of a brief to-the-point presentation of a medical case/condition. This genre, as detailed in this study, may have a clearly stated pedagogical purpose aimed to promote diagnostic expertise. This study explores the structure of CPs, the variety of strategies authors use throughout these CPs to express stance and promote engagement with the audience, and the multimodal configuration of this genre. For this purpose, we draw on a dataset consisting of 10 CPs samples provided by *The Lancet*. Methodologically, we first conduct a linguistic analysis centred on rhetorical steps and interpersonal strategies, and subsequently, a multimodal analysis to identify the configuration of CPs. Overall, results show the use of interpersonal strategies throughout the two versions/formats, the added value of adopting a multimodal approach to explore data, and the complementarity of the two versions to disseminate medical knowledge among doctors and doctors in training. Pedagogically, the outcomes of the study support the incorporation of this innovative genre in ESP and EMI classes to enhance students' multimodal literacy.

Keywords: digital genres, clinical pictures, interpersonal strategies, multimodality, ESP-EMI team teaching.

1. Introduction

The evolution of science communication in recent years, driven by digitalisation and a greater interest in engaging broader audiences, has led to the emergence and adaptation of a variety of genres (Luzón & Pérez-Llantada, 2019, 2022). The notion of genre is understood in Swales' (1990) view as a set of communicative events shared by the members of a discourse community who have a series of communicative purposes in common. The digitalisation of genres is highly motivated by the growing use of technology and audiovisual resources, which also drives an increasing number of science outreach platforms. The dissemination of research through digital platforms offers a wide range of new communicative possibilities and affordances – understood as "meaning potentialities" (Halliday, 1978) – that are notably shaping research dissemination (Pérez-Llantada, 2022). In this sense, the increased digitalisation of dissemination genres also makes more evident the need to pay attention to the use and combination of semiotic modes (Pérez-Llantada & Luzón, 2023). In turn, this also demonstrates how relevant the use of these resources can be to effectively convey content and connect with the audience (e.g., Edo-Marzá & Beltrán-Palanques, 2023). In this sense, the use of multimodal resources is at the hub of any successful communicative event (e.g., Beltrán-Palanques, 2023; Mehlanbacher, 2017; Riboni, 2020), which can lead to what is known as intersemiotic relations (Lim, 2021). This refers to the relations that are established among modes, such as image and text (Bateman, 2014), mathematics, language and image (O'Halloran, 2005), or speech and visuals (Xia, 2023).

Owing to the growing number of platforms for knowledge dissemination, more and more digital genres are coming to the fore, becoming incredibly valuable sources for experts, semi-experts and even non-experts to gain access to science. Changes in communicative practices attract the attention of linguists who are gradually becoming more interested in exploring the construction of discourse in emerging genres (e.g., Carter-Tomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2020; Hyland & Zou, 2021). In this study we focus on scientific dissemination practices in the field of health sciences, which can be of great interest to professionals and students, as well as to the general public. Health communication has possibly aroused even a major interest since the COVID outbreak (Luzón, 2022), and its dissemination is growing in popularity, for example, through social networks (Orpin, 2019; Luzón, 2023). As a result, reputable journals or academic platforms are also offering alternative ways of accessing science dissemination. This is the case of the prestigious *The Lancet Group*, widely known for its commitment to promoting scientific knowledge and addressing global issues. This group provides a space for sharing research in the form of journal articles, as well as through

other innovative visually-oriented genres on its YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/c/TheLancetTV).

From the palette of genres included in *The Lancet* platform, in this study, we focus on clinical pictures (CPs), which can be described as a complex genre that arises from high-quality images showing pathological or radiological signs. The genre is considered complex because it is constructed based on an image and combines both written and audiovisual discourse in the form of 1) an accurate written description (300-500 words) of the case/condition and 2) a short (2-3 minutes) video in which authors present the highlights of the written version. Both parts, written and audiovisual, are complementary to each other and acquire their full communicative potential when presented together. Unlike other genres that may recontextualise health science to reach a more general audience (e.g., Orpin, 2019), CPs seem to offer valuable medical information principally for professionals and scholars. CPs, as detailed in this study, are mainly characterised by their brevity and visual support. Somehow, this can enable potential health professionals to convey concise and visually enhanced information about medical conditions, including, for example, specific procedures and case studies. Thus, throughout this genre, professionals in healthcare can simplify or recontextualise medical content while maintaining the complexity of the topics.

In this study, we advocate for the introduction of CPs in the domain of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English-medium instruction (EMI), particularly in the healthcare fields. While ESP and EMI differ, there is also ample room for collaboration between specialists of each area (Dafouz, 2021). This may be articulated through, for example, the joint design of curricula (Lasagabaster, 2018), aiming to engage students in real-life tasks while promoting disciplinary literacies. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration between ESP and EMI lecturers from different fields may serve to enhance mutually beneficial common grounds and establish synergies between them. The collaboration between ESP and EMI lecturers is also justified and strengthened by the need to foster professional communication skills in EMI settings and by the need to promote the development of students' disciplinary content in ESP contexts. This collaboration is thus intended to maximise the effectiveness of the entire curriculum by establishing a more explicit and reciprocally beneficial connection between ESP and EMI courses (Arnó-Macià & Mancho-Barés, 2015).

Therefore, we consider it is necessary for ESP and EMI teachers to work collaboratively and from an interdisciplinary viewpoint to best understand what students require. While collaboration between both teachers is essential, the ESP teacher provides what could be described as a more supportive role, reflected in the adaptation of its curriculum to effectively address the academic requirements of the EMI course. This involves delving into the real academic and communicative

needs of the students to appropriately design and adapt the ESP syllabus. As the flow of times demands, ESP courses aimed at health professions must depart from such real needs and demands while adopting a professionalising prism. ESP in the medical field should aptly equip students for the communicative demands of their profession in the 21st century. This entails placing an emphasis on English interaction with fellow medical professionals, organisations, and patients. Additionally, it involves facilitating discussions and the dissemination of medical research by addressing the following: familiarising with various genres from the community of practice, refining reading skills to foster prospective doctors' comprehension of medical literature, honing writing skills tailored for medical purposes, acquiring precise terminology, and enhancing dissemination skills.

To craft learning experiences that involve students in familiarisation and production of genres, it is essential to discern their rhetorical structure and configuration. Particularly, in this study, we look at the organisation of rhetorical steps within the genre (Swales, 1990) of CPs. For this purpose, we draw on Swales's (2004) concept of steps understood as lower-level functional units that share a common communicative objective. Similar studies have been conducted applying this model to different sections of scientific journal research papers, for example, abstracts (Tseng, 2011), introductions (Joseph, Lim & Nor, 2014) or results and discussion (Amnuai & Wannaruk, 2012), among others. Then, we examine how authors' voice is represented through discourse strategies that allow them to show their position and engage the audience (Hyland, 2004, 2005). In this respect, both stance and engagement have been proven to be key in academic discourse as observed in the existing literature on research articles (Hyland, 2005), blogs (Luzón, 2023), and Three Minute Thesis (3MT) presentations (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2020). Finally, we adopt a multimodal lens to identify the variety of semiotic modes, other than speech, that are used in each version and how they contribute to the construction of meaning (Edo-Marzá and Beltrán-Palanques, 2023). For this purpose, we draw on a multimodal analysis following Systemic Functional Linguistics (SF-MDA) (O'Halloran, 2007), which attempts to understand and describe semiotic modes and their functions to analyse the meaning that arises from multimodal choices (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran., 2016). The results of the analyses will lend support to a pedagogical discussion on the implementation of CPs through an ESP and EMI team teaching proposal. Accordingly, the following research questions were posed:

RQ1. What rhetorical steps are used to construct CPs both in the written and audiovisual formats?

RQ2. What interpersonal strategies are used to show stance and promote engagement in CPs both in the written and audiovisual formats?

RQ3. How is the digital genre of CPs multimodally configured both in their written and audiovisual formats?

2. Methodology

2.1. Dataset

The dataset used to conduct the analysis of CPs consists of 10 samples of the genre, both with their written (text) and audiovisual (video) versions. All these samples have been obtained from the open research platform provided by the group *The Lancet*. As a medical journal, *The Lancet* was founded in 1823 with the purpose of promoting social and political change by furthering research and science. Today 24 journals are part of *The Lancet group*. Among the multimedia resources, the group offers infographics, podcasts, and videos. These innovative genres serve to disseminate cutting-edge research and global health issues to a broader audience.

Table 1 provides an overview of the samples that make up this dataset, their respective DOIs and links, their number of words (in the case of texts and video transcriptions), and their length in time (in the case of videos). The dataset thus involves three subsets: written CPs, audiovisual CPs and their corresponding transcripts.

Table 1. Dataset information.

Code	Written CPs	Words	Audiovisual CPs	Duration and words in the transcript
CP1	Muster, V. et al. (2019). Pulmonary embolism and thrombocytopenia following ChAdOx1 vaccination. *Lancet*, 397: 1842. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)00871-0	702	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdCbU0SKKBY	3'14" 626
CP2	Tzolos, E. et al. (2021). Typing a myocardial infarction using advanced scanning. *Lancet* 2021; 398: e9. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)01329-5	619	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKxhBylQ_K4	2'8" 447

CP3	Deshpande, A. A. et al. (2021). Tension pericardial abscess in a patient with tuberculosis: a rare cause of cardiac tamponade. *Lancet* 397: e15 https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)00711-X	616	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwe10ejngig	2' 10" 495
CP4	Tsampasian, V. et al. (2021). Mitral valve disease in sarcoidosis diagnosed by cardiovascular magnetic resonance. *Lancet* 398: 1358. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)01791-8	610	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxDtkmpBvlw&t=3s	2' 05" 359
CP5	Razeen H. et al. (2022). Extraskeletal Ewing sarcoma of the duodenum presenting as duodenojejunal intussusception. *Lancet* 399: 1265. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)00361-0	773	www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbM5fgjcdPk	1' 56" 336
CP6	Pogson, J.M. et al. (2022). Hearing but not understanding: word deafness from a brainstem lesion. *Lancet* 2022; 399: 756. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)00191-X	942	www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyIhT1m6iKw	2' 394
CP7	Dehghan, N. et al. (2021). Vacuoles, E1 enzyme, X-linked, autoinflammatory, somatic (VEXAS) syndrome: fevers, myalgia, arthralgia, auricular chondritis, and erythema nodosum. *Lancet*; 398: 621. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)01430-6	670	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySw7K43XFm0	2' 4" 391

CP8	Lodge, F. M. et al. (2021). Hydroxychloroquine-induced cardiomyopathy accelerated after gastric banding. *Lancet* 398: 1913. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)02177-2	759	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F154ilkw9Ao	2' 8" 432
CP9	Theng, E. H. et al. (2022). Calvarial hyperostosis in primary hyperparathyroidism and other settings of increased cAMP signalling. *Lancet* 399: 956. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)00149-0	770	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZE79aQGEBQ	2' 15" 422
CP10	Di Maida, F. et al. (2021). A high prostatic-specific antigen with a large pelvic mass indicates a prostatic cystadenocarcinoma. *Lancet* 398: 1726. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)02174-7	767	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUz-h1moo6I	1' 20" 234
	Total	7,228		21' 20" 4,136
	Mean	722.8		2' 8" 413.6

The CPs comprising the dataset for this study have been published between 2019 and 2022 and have either one or two researchers presenting the audiovisual version despite being authored by a larger number of researchers.

The small yet representative sample size is attributed to two primary factors. Firstly, the study employs a multimodal approach that requires a meticulous and comprehensive analysis of each element within the sample. Secondly, there is a deliberate choice to validate the methodological approach before extending the analysis to larger samples. This ensures the reliability and effectiveness of the chosen approach before extending the study's scope. Furthermore, the dataset is found to be representative enough to offer sound claims about the CPs structure, the expression of interpersonal meaning, and the configuration of visual support.

The criteria for the selection of the CPs in the dataset were the following: the written and video documents showed a particularly well-crafted interrelation and

covered a wide range of medical topics; and the terminology used by the authors could be considered intelligible for students despite its specificity, which may be seen as a key aspect when designing learning experiences.

The layout and organisation of the CPs selected for this study are the same in every case. In the case of the videos, the screen is divided into two parts: on the left-hand side of the screen, viewers can see authors presenting, either sitting down or standing up; on the right-hand side of the screen, the visuals of the presentation are shown. In the case of texts, the layout of CPs is recurrent and systematic: the main text is presented as a block and not subdivided into sections, but "contributors", "declaration of interests" and "acknowledgments" appear either at a side or the end of such text. In addition, at least one image (and its corresponding caption) is also systematically included in CPs written versions, and authors' affiliation data and contact details can also be found in them. Although these non-medical-content sections have been considered in the data counts of Table 1, they have not been so in our analysis since they have merely informative or bureaucratic purposes. In the description of the findings, we will use the number assigned to each CP, from 1 to 10.

2.2. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework proposed in this study aims to respond to the three research questions posed. To do so, the procedure adopted for the analysis of the dataset focuses on the following main aspects: 1) rhetorical steps (RQ1), 2) interpersonal meaning strategies (RQ2), and 3) multimodal configuration (RQ3).

Since the dataset has a double component (written and audiovisual) a two-part analysis was performed. On the one hand, the analysis of the written CPs started with a familiarisation with the genre that involved observing and reading all the written samples of the dataset. Afterwards, a coding scheme was developed considering previous literature on rhetorical steps organisation (Swales, 1990) and linguistic features to show stance and promote engagement (Hyland, 2004, 2005). Regarding stance, speakers or writers can make use of hedges and boosters to increase or reduce the force of statements (Hyland, 2004, 2005). Boosters are normally chosen to show information with different degrees of certainty, whereas hedges express a nuanced perspective on the statements and caution (Hyland, 2005). Also, self-mentions can be used to show the speakers' or writers' position, expressed through the use of self-reference *I* and exclusive *we* (Hyland, 2004). In addition, speakers and writers can resort to the use of hearer mentions, appeals to shared knowledge, personal asides, directives, or questions to promote engagement (Hyland, 2005).

The categories of this coding scheme elaborated for written and audiovisual CPs are shown in Table 2. These categories were agreed upon and chosen for the codification and subsequent analysis of the CPs. The software *Atlas.ti* supported the data analysis.

Table 2. Coding schemes elaborated for the analysis of written and audiovisual CPs.

Coding scheme for written CPs	Coding scheme for audiovisual CPs
Additional material	Booster
Booster	Common language
Common language	Exclusive we
Complementary material	External reference
Exclusive we	Hedges
External reference	Reference to visuals
Hedges	Referential you
Reference to visuals	Self-reference I

In addition, a SF-MDA (O'Halloran, 2007) was followed to identify the way authors use and combine semiotic resources in audiovisual CPs to convey meaning. The SF-MDA permitted the identification of meaning that results from the use and combination of varied modes of communication (O'Halloran, 2008). That is, by recognising the range of modes that conform the audiovisual data, we can gain knowledge regarding how the communicative event is shaped and transmitted. In this sense, the multimodal resources analysed were:

— facial expressions (frowning; smiling…)
— gaze (eye contact (camera); reading movements…)
— head movements (nodding, refusing…)
— gestures (pointing, beats…)
— posture (seated, standing…)
— visual support (images, graphs...)
— setting (indoors, outdoors)
— intonation ("reading intonation": eye-reading movement, flat intonation; emphasis)

These categories were established after visualising in detail all the audiovisual CPs in the dataset. Both individual observation and pair discussion of the observations (double check) were necessary to guarantee the accuracy of the annotations and thus to validate the conclusion-drawing process. The multimodal analysis enabled the understanding of how various forms of expression come together so as to construct potentially richer and more compelling and engaging messages.

3. Results and Discussion

3.3. Rhetorical Steps

RQ1 centred on the identification of the rhetorical steps normally used to construct CPs both in their written and audiovisual formats. Results suggest that the rhetorical steps identified in each format appear to be rather similar even though some variation can be found. Specifically, the dataset reveals that all the CPs analysed are divided into three main rhetorical steps: Step 1) brief description of the clinical case, Step 2) clinical examination, and Step 3) diagnosis and clinical management.

This structure corresponds to both the written and audiovisual versions of the CPs. Step 1 serves to introduce the theme and provide background information that is necessary for the reader to understand the medical case. It consists of a brief description of the clinical case including the patient's data, medical history, signs, and symptoms. Step 2 focuses on the description of the clinical examination by referring to the medical evidence gathered. Step 3 involves the diagnosis and the clinical procedures adopted to approach the medical condition. In the case of videos, the analysis showed that Step 3 may be, in some cases, further divided into two other steps: 3.1) a preview of diagnosis and 3.2) diagnosis re-stated and clinical management explained. The former is found to take place before step 1, while the latter happened to occur right after step 2. In so doing, the authors seem to provide a preview of the diagnosis before describing the clinical case and finally present the diagnosis and clinical treatment after step 2. In addition to this, in the case of the audiovisual CPs, two other steps are identified, Step 0) self-introduction and salutation and Step 4) closing. The former serves the presenters to open the CP by, for example, making use of salutation forms, either formal or informal. Also, some authors refer to their affiliation at this point. The latter permits the authors to close the video presentation. While these two steps are not observed in the written format due to the conventions of the genre, in the video version they perhaps serve an engaging function that allows approaching the audience more directly, something that the written version lacks. Table 3 summarises the structure that has just been explained as well as the number of instances (*N*) of each rhetorical step in the written and audiovisual CPs analysed (10 in total for each version).

As shown in Table 3, all the authors follow the same rhetorical structure (steps 1, 2, and 3) in their written CPs. In the case of the audiovisual CPs, these three basic main steps are also observed, even though some differences are identified, probably for the ease of authors (when orally presenting their research) and audiences (when processing the information provided).

Table 3. Overview of the rhetorical steps and the number of instances.

N	Written CPs	Video CPs	N
		Step 0_Self-introduction and salutation	4
		**Step 3_a preview of diagnosis*	4
10	Step 1_brief description of the clinical case	Step 1_brief description of the clinical case	9
10	Step 2_ clinical examination	Step 2_clinical examination	8
10	Step3_diagnosis and clinical management	Step 3_diagnosis and clinical management:	6
		**Step 3_diagnosis re-stated and clinical management explained*	4
		Step 4_Closing	4

All the authors except one (CP 10) presented the clinical case (step 1). This author (CP 10) organised the speech by moving from step 0 to step 3 directly, thereby without commenting on the clinical examination (step 2). This is so because no specific case (from no particular patient) is presented. This CP is the shortest one and it merely shows, from a general to a specific and descriptive perspective, a condition related to prostatic cystadenocarcinoma. A similar situation is found in CP 5, whose author moved from the introduction of the case to the diagnosis and clinical management. Some authors seem to have decided to make some adaptations such as the ones aforementioned in the case of some audiovisual versions by directly presenting the diagnosis and clinical treatment. Anticipating diagnostic information may be considered a strategy aimed to organise discourse for better comprehension or simply as a way to engage the audience from the very beginning. Due to their affordances, audiovisual formats offer authors more chances to make some modifications/adaptations in the organisation of steps than the more traditional written formats. In this sense, authors appear to feel less constrained when conveying content in audiovisual formats. These modifications may also be related to the process of mediation from one genre to another. Mediating between genres is understood here as the process of adapting them to other media. This adaptation implies making decisions about the nature and format of the target genre, the content to be transmitted and the enhancement of interpersonal meaning. This concept is similarly applicable in the case of video abstracts, where authors must undertake a mediation process from the written

version to the digital video (Edo-Marzá & Beltrán-Palanques, 2023). In line with this, it should be noted that the phenomenon of mediating is addressed in existing literature. Particularly, Bezemer and Kress (2008, 2017) refer to the notion of recontextualisation, which reinforces that idea of transferring meaning in different forms of communication (see Pérez-Llantada & Luzón, 2023).

As previously noted, the organisation of Step 3 varies across the audiovisual CPs analysed. This is true for the authors of 4 of the CPs analysed, who previewed the diagnosis before presenting a brief description of the case (Step 1) and then, referring to the diagnosis itself. Furthermore, the analysis of the audiovisual CPs also reveals that some authors (n=4) took advantage of the format to introduce themselves as professionals and close the presentation. What follows is a series of examples[1] to illustrate the way steps are constructed in each of the formats.

(1) Step 0_Self-introduction and salutation.

Hello, my name is XXX from the Medical University of Crowds, Austria. Together with my co-worker XXX […] [CP 1, video]

(2) Step 1_brief description of the clinical case.

We here present a case of a 66-year-old gentleman who presented with an ounce of hospital cardiac arrest. He was found by the ambulance crew to be in ventricular fibrillation and was successfully shocked out of it. […] [CP 2, video]

(3) Step 1_brief description of the clinical case.

A 25-year-old woman presented to our hospital with a 2-week history of persistent vomiting, abdominal distension, and weight loss. 4 months earlier, she had presented to the local district hospital because her work colleagues had thought she looked pale. […] [CP 5, text]

(4) Step 2_clinical examination.

[…] laboratory investigations revealed chronically elevated inflammatory markers and persistent mild cytopenias he was initially given a diagnosis of relapsing polychondritis and was treated with oral prednisone […] [CP 7, video]

1 Verbatim transcriptions (with no further modification) are provided for the examples of the video CPs.

(5) Step 2_clinical examination.

On examination we found him to have a pan-systolic murmur, fine bilateral basal crackles on chest auscultation, heart rate 73 beats per min, and respiratory rate 17 breaths per min. […] [CP 4, video]

(6) Step 3_diagnosis and clinical management: a preview of diagnosis (conveyed before Step 1)

[…] the diagnosis of micro infarction can frequently be difficult in particular we have to differentiate type 1 from type 2 infarcts […] [CP 2, video]

(7) Step 3_diagnosis and clinical management: diagnosis re-stated and clinical management explained (conveyed after Step 2)

[…] this changed the diagnosis from a type 1 to a type 2 myocardial infarction due to thromboe thromboembolism in the context of atrial fibrillation and importantly it changed his treatment he now required anticoagulation. [CP 2, video]

(8) Step 3_diagnosis and clinical management.

[…] Hydroxychloroquine-induce cardiomyopathy is rare— although the true prevalence is unknown—and related to perturbed lysosomal autophagy. Risk factors—relevant to our case—include older age, female sex, and a high cumulative dose of hydroxychloroquine […] [CP 1, text]

(9) Step 4_closing

[…] hope you find these pictures instructive. [CP 9, video]

A few authors incorporated two additional rhetorical steps in the audiovisual CPs to open and conclude the presentation, also found in other novel genres such as 3MT presentations (Hu & Liu, 2018) and elevator pitch presentations (Daly & Davi, 2016). Accordingly, presenters greet the audience or give a self-introduction, as well as close the oration by thanking the audience or expressing hopes or expectations. In the written format, these two rhetorical steps are not observed as they centre on the description of the clinical case, report on the clinical examination, and finally address the diagnosis and clinical treatment.

In addition to this, it should be noted that a key characteristic of CPs is their briefness in terms of length, that is their condensed format, a feature also observed in other emerging genres such as in 3MT presentations and elevator or product pitch presentations. In the case of CPs, authors must elaborate on a short written text and a short video to straightforwardly disseminate knowledge in two different but complementary formats. It can be suggested that there seems to be a growing tendency to involve professionals/academics in communicative practices that, due to format requirements, oblige them to convey highly specialised content in a short time and without digressions.

3.4. Linguistic Features to Establish Interpersonal Meaning

RQ2 focused on interpersonal features, particularly strategies to show stance and promote engagement throughout CPs. In the case of written CPs (Table 4), the use of boosters is highly significant, especially in step 2 (with 60 instances) probably to highlight and reinforce the reliability of the medical evidence presented. Hedges are also very frequent, mainly in steps 2 and 3, probably to soften the authors' stance, to offer a humbler professional image, and not to compromise the author so much in case flaws are detected. The responsibility acquired when publishing findings, especially if they directly affect human welfare, is probably the main reason why authors "cover their backs" in steps 2 and 3.

Reference to visuals is also significant in step 2, which seems coherent with the fact that this is the step in which medical evidence in the form of visual elements is also presented. Moreover, the use of exclusive *we* is also relevant in step 2, probably to strengthen the sense of community of practice, so important in the scientific community and, particularly, in the medical one, in which collaboration and knowledge-sharing are the basis for advancement.

Table 4. Results of linguistic traits analysis in written CPs to establish interpersonal meaning.

Steps	Boosters	Common language	Exclusive *we*	External reference	Hedges	Ref. to visuals	Addit. material	Compl. material
Step 1	2	1	8	2	3	0	2	0
Step 2	60	1	22	2	28	24	12	1
Step 3	7	1	11	2	28	0	2	6
Total	69	3	41	6	59	24	16	7

In the case of videos (Table 5), the use of boosters is also especially relevant, mainly in steps 2 and 3, with 32 instances in total. CPs are characterised by the profusion of the medical evidence provided despite their short length. Through the use of boosters, it seems the authors intend to further legitimise and reinforce the quality and reliability of the data provided. The high number of reinforcers can also be attributed to the fact that the authors reported on past clinical cases, which allows them to demonstrate more confidence in the data and results provided.

Notwithstanding these results concerning the use of boosters, the dataset also revealed a large number of hedges. Hedges are particularly relevant also in step 3, with 33 instances, where the diagnosis is established, and the clinical management adopted is explained. This is so probably because, as occurs in written formats, these are sensitive aspects —often even vital— prone to error or interpretation, and caution in their expression is thus recommendable. In the case of exclusive *we*, it is once again particularly relevant in steps 2 and 3, with 29 instances in total.

Table 5. Results of linguistic traits analysis in videos (transcriptions) to establish interpersonal meaning.

Steps	Boosters	Common language	Exclusive *we*	External reference	Hedges	Ref. to visuals	Ref. *you*	Self-ref.
Step 0	0	10	2	1	0	0	0	13
Step 1	0	0	4	0	2	2	2	1
Step 2	18	0	13	2	18	4	4	0
Step 3	14	3	16	0	33	0	1	1
Step 4	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	0
Total	33	14	37	3	53	6	9	15

Examples 10 and 11 below provide an in-text (written) and in-transcription (video) vision of these quantitative results. Example 10 corresponds to the written CP 8, where we find one instance of exclusive *we*, one example of a hedge, one reference to visuals (in this case to a figure), and four boosters. One of these boosters is the verb "*to show*", which is a highly significant and frequent verb used mainly in steps 2 and 3. This frequent and significant usage is probably due to the authors' intention to reflect a strong stance on their part, which is reinforced by the factual nature normally associated with this verb.

(10)

[...] *we* suspected hydroxychloroquine-induced cardiomyopathy and stopped this medication. Right heart catheterisation **confirmed** pulmonary hypertension due to left heart disease. Right ventricular biopsy **demonstrated** marked vacuolation— **shown** on electron microscopy to be an excess of lysosomes *(figure)* containing electron-dense, phospholipid-rich lamellar bodies [...] and negative genetic tests for abnormalities of the GLA gene **excluded** the former. [...] [CP 8, text, step 2]	Linguistic features: **Booster** Exclusive *we* Hedges *Reference to visuals*

Example 11 corresponds to CP 1 in its video format, more specifically to its verbatim transcription. In this fragment, we find four instances of exclusive *we* (fostering the image of a solid community of practice), two instances of boosters (both with the verb *show*), three references to visuals, two examples of hedges, and four instances of referential *you*, in which the author directly addresses his intended audience thus creating rapport and (indirect) interaction.

(11)

[...] **As you can see** here in the ct *scan* she was suffering a central pulmonary embolism which is detectable *with the two arrows **you see** what was the reason for this central pulmonary embolism it was a massive carbon range from poses *we* figured out in the mri the patient got an initial laboratory work up **as you can see** in this figure* we **show** *here* the results of the laboratory testing she **showed** initially a very severe thrombocytopenia with just 37000 of platelets [...] *we* had a certain concern of bleeding complications with these low platelets [...] and then **you see** here in the figure* the steady increase of the platelet counts together with the decrease of the d dimer levels [...] some also think that it might be linked to antibiotics [...] [CP 1, video, step 2]	Linguistic features: **Booster** Exclusive *we* Hedges *Reference to visuals* *Referential you*

Results suggest that a priority for authors is to show accuracy, reliability, and effective modulation of the responsibility attained (among other aspects) through

language. Authors seem to try to modulate and adjust the tone and force of their claims by the simultaneous use of boosters and hedges, which conveys both confidence when needed and caution when required. Medical professionals effectively mix these two seemingly "opposing" categories in a strategic and effective way in their CPs, and this seems to constitute a relevant feature of this genre in terms of language.

CPs intend to be highly informative, and terminological (conceptual) density greatly contributes to this informativeness and to the aforementioned accuracy. In general, the use of common language is occasional —although it is more frequent in audiovisual versions, as expected— and mostly employed to enhance audience comprehension and to foster a sense of proximity, and engagement that will presumably reinforce the relationship between the author and audience. The extensive use of the verb *show* transmits confidence and factuality. The verb *show* can be said to have been conventionalised and deeply assimilated by professionals due to its frequency of use, scope and potential when expressing evidence in health-related discourse. The use of exclusive *we* helps create a sense of community of practice (medical community). Finally, the frequent use of hedges serves to modulate the strength of the claims made, whereas the use of boosters helps reinforce the veracity and applicability of the medical evidence shown.

3.5. A Multimodal Vision of Clinical Pictures

RQ3 aimed to explore how the combined use of semiotic resources can contribute to the multimodal configuration of CPs. Each CP analysed follows the same layout: the author appears on the left-hand side of the screen while the slides are shown on the right. Content, visual support, and the physical presence of the author intertwine to provide full significance to the CPs and reinforce authorial expertise.

As regards the observed use of visual support, both static and animated images can be found in the CPs analysed. Among the static images, the most frequent ones are X-rays, CT scans, photographs, MRIs, electrocardiograms, and ultrasounds. Graphs/diagrams and tables are also used. Animated images are of great value in a digital genre such as CPs (see an example at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F154ilkw9Ao; minute 0:55 [CP 8]) as they contribute to best transmitting content to the audience. In fact, the possibility of including animated images in CP videos is probably one of the main affordances of the audiovisual format, making explanations and descriptions more explicit and illustrative.

Tables 6 and 7 show a quantitative overview of the use of visual support. Videos, obviously, allow for more diverse elements (some videos, like number 4,

including up to 10 static images, 1 animated image, and 2 graphs). Nevertheless, written CPs do also always incorporate at least two of these elements (of non-animated nature). Indeed, the very same name of the genre (Clinical Picture) indicates the importance of the visual component provided to illustrate content.

TABLE 6. Visual support in video CPs.

Visual support	**CPs – Videos**										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	**Total**
Static images	-	-	-	10	-	2	7	6	5		30
Animated images	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Graphs/diagrams	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	6
Tables	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

TABLE 7. Visual support in written CPs.

Visual support	**CPs – Texts**										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	**Total**
Static images	-	-	-	3	-	1	2	2	4	-	12
Animated images	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Graphs/diagrams	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tables	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

References to visual support are systematic in written CPs (see example 12 below, with a reference to a figure). Some examples of references to visual support can also be found in videos (see Example 13 below, with a reference to a figure). Along with this, the fact that most authors read what they want to explain —which can be perceived in factors such as tone, eye movement, and lack of hesitation— highlights the need to improve the mechanisms used to interact with the audiences.

(12)

A bone marrow aspirate and biopsy showed normal cellularity with mild morphological dysplasia —including prominent vacuolation of granulocytic and erythroid precursors (figure). [CP 7, text]

(13)

[…] and then you see, here in the figure, the steady increase of the platelet counts […] [CP 1, video]

Concerning embodied modes, our analysis has drawn on the observation of the multimodal resources listed in Section 2.2. Some instances of body language have been found, for instance, in the examples shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8. Instances of body language.

Link and minute to the video	Speech (transcription)	Body language explained
CP 6 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyIhT1m6iKw 0:40	What's the problem with my ears?	Frowning for questioning ("question-face"). Gesture: pointing at the ear (reinforcing the image).
CP 6 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyIhT1m6iKw 1:53	Remember that if a patient complains that he cannot hear, sometimes the problem is not in the ear.	Relaxed face expression for a final "informal" remark. Gesture: pointing at the ear (reinforcing the image).
CP 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdCbU0SKKBY 1:35	Then you see, here in the figure, the steady increase of the platelet counts…	Hands showing "increase" (iconic gesture).
CP 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdCbU0SKKBY 1:40	…together with the decrease of the…	Hands showing "decrease" (iconic gesture).

Overall, the results obtained lead us to conclude that, in general, the use of body language modes in CPs' videos is not fully exploited, regardless of the possibility authors have to transmit and reinforce information. A possible explanation would be related to the constraints imposed by the size of the screen, which could prevent authors from using their bodies more effectively as communicative resources. It is common in the majority of the audiovisual samples analysed (7 out of 10) that presenters remain in the same position all through the recording, with just some nearly unnoticeable head movement or eye movement showing they are reading what they are saying. Moreover, there is a tendency for flat intonation with no pitch or emphasis. It seems the authors may be more focused on the transmission of content, the organisation of ideas, and the expression of interpersonal meaning. Nevertheless, further research is needed to elucidate whether this is truly due to the aforementioned constraints of the medium.

In addition to this, we should also refer to the intersemiotic relation that is established among communicative modes throughout the CPs analysed. As

described, CP authors use visual support to construct and convey meaning through written and audiovisual formats. Due to the affordances that digital and audiovisual genres offer, new types of intersemiotic relations can be established. Focusing on the video CPs, a major affordance in the audiovisual format is the possibility of physically viewing and listening to the author using visual support and reinforcing meaning. This combination helps authors succeed in transmitting authorial expertise and sharing disciplinary knowledge within their communities of practice. CPs are thus configured by the interaction of embodied modes (e.g., speech, facial expressions, gestures) and audiovisual modes, in which the use of the latter comes to the fore as a key source to illustrate content. In this sense, it can be claimed that the increased use of technology allows for more multimodally-oriented dissemination of knowledge (Pérez-Llantada & Luzón, 2023), allowing researchers to, for example, better exploit visual aids. Nevertheless, this also poses new challenges for researchers, who are faced with the need to make decisions about the selection and combination of visual support.

It seems clear that the choices authors make to effectively construct multimodal discourse and interact with the audience are highly dependent on the digital affordances of each format. The use and combination of visual support in the video version may be more challenging as authors must wisely decide what aid would be best for them to transmit content. Moreover, the possibility and way of orchestrating varying modes within each of the CPs formats, especially in the video, may have an impact on the audience in terms of understanding, reception, and engagement (Edo-Marzá & Beltrán-Palanques, 2023). Establishing appropriate intersemiotic relations among modes can boost the audience's understanding of content (Mirović, Bogdanović & Bulatović, 2019) and increase engagement (Edo-Marzá & Beltrán-Palanques, 2023). Furthermore, co-occurring or reiterated information (e.g., having facts both visually presented and orally described) may ease the audience's understanding of content, despite its complexity.

In CPs, the same authors have to construct and negotiate meaning in two different formats: written (text) and audiovisual (video). In both cases, the authors are expected to meet the requirements of the genres as well as the guidelines of the journal. While most authors may be relatively familiar with producing and presenting a written version of a manuscript (e.g., a CP), producing a video can be more challenging. The authors themselves should undertake a process of reflection on how to mediate from an existing text (e.g., written CP) to an audiovisual text that offers specific affordances (e.g., visual prompt) and perhaps also some constraints. These constraints include, for instance, the screen layout above mentioned, as well as the fact that CPs, as shown in our dataset, are about

3 minutes. At the same time, the strict observation and compliance of these norms contribute to the correct definition, identification, and consolidation of genres, thus promoting genre awareness (Rowley-Jolivet & Carter-Thomas, 2005; Katsampoxaki-Hodgetts, 2022).

4. Pedagogical implications

The outcomes of the study lend support to exploring pedagogical implications for the field of ESP and EMI in health studies. ESP has much to offer to EMI programmes in terms of language support and literacy. Expanding new didactic horizons for ESP can be challenging as it requires a re-examination of what language for specific purposes can do for EMI. In this sense, we consider that ESP teachers should be called on to participate, for example, in co-teaching methodologies. Collaboration between ESP and EMI teachers (e.g., Aguilar, 2018) can be fundamental to supporting students to best meet the academic objectives in their multilingual programmes. Therefore, ESP teachers should go a step further to devise and adapt courses to the disciplinary needs of students (Arnó-Macià & Mancho-Barés, 2015). This can be done through the lens of ESP-EMI collaborative teaching (Lasagabaster, 2018; Querol-Julián & Crawford Camiciottoli, 2019), which can offer new opportunities for ESP teachers to be part of an interdisciplinary team (Stewart, 2018). By implementing a well-designed and planned ESP-EMI team teaching, it is possible to establish guidelines to work towards the promotion of, for example, students' academic and multimodal literacy (Liu, Lo & Lin, 2020; Querol-Julián and Beltrán-Palanques, 2021), and even confidence and involvement when undertaking specific projects in EMI settings.

What follows is a pedagogical approach that encourages team-teaching between ESP and EMI teachers. In this case, teachers collaborate by delivering subject-specific content within their respective courses, namely ESP and EMI. This entails the coordination of two distinct courses. Despite being focused on CPs, our teaching proposal can be extended and applied to other professional and academic genres. In the case of CPs, it is important not only to promote students' communicative competence but also their multimodal literacy. This has already been observed in previous research where there is a common claim to promote students' multimodal literacy to best prepare them for effective communicative practices (e.g., Lim, 2018).

We propose an ESP-EMI team teaching perspective to deal with the genre of CPs to aid students presenting a medical diagnosis. A central justification for emphasising the presentation of medical diagnoses is to nurture the growth of students' communication skills and critical thinking, enabling them to effectively communicate information that is essential in their field.

Each teacher should be responsible for addressing specific content to effectively prepare students for successful communication. The EMI teacher will set the guidelines in terms of content whereas the ESP teacher will present students with appropriate (adapted to their needs) learning scenarios to develop their communicative skills and multimodal literacy through the chosen genre. To implement the genre of CPs and promote students' multimodal literacy, we suggest drawing on a multimodal-centred genre-based pedagogy (Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez, 2019), shown to be effective for such purpose (e.g., Fortanet-Gómez & Edo-Marzá, 2022).

In the ESP class, we propose involving students in a genre-based pedagogy approach (Dreyfus et al., 2015) consisting of three well-known phases, 1) modelling and joint deconstruction; 2) joint construction; and 3) independent construction. The first two phases tend to be more teacher-supported (scaffolded) and the last one is more autonomous. The first phase serves to explore students' prior knowledge, and the main characteristics of the genre (e.g., content and structure), as well as to encourage students' reflection and sample analysis. The teacher presents students with a few samples to be explored in terms of content (e.g., diagnosis), structure (i.e., rhetorical steps), and enactment of interpersonal meaning (e.g., way of addressing the audience). A step further can be taken by asking students to identify semiotic modes (e.g., images, graphs, diagrams), other than speech, as well as their relevance in the meaning-making process. The second phase is aimed at promoting critical and creative thinking through the elaboration of the genre. At this point, the ESP teacher and students can collaborate in the design of some guidelines based on the sample analysis conducted in the previous phase (e.g., rhetorical steps, interpersonal resources, visual support). These guidelines will permit students to better understand how to organise discourse in rhetorical steps, design visuals, and orchestrate modes of communication to effectively convey content and interpersonal meaning. Teachers' provision of feedback and support will be key to best aiding students in the preparation of the first CPs versions. Finally, the third phase is intended to make students work independently to finalise their projects and present them, both in written and video formats. Both teachers are responsible for the assessment of students' performance, which can be done through a jointly developed rubric (Querol-Julián & Beltrán-Palanques, 2021). While the EMI teacher focuses primarily on content aspects, the ESP teacher addresses the way content is organised and expressed along with the expression of interpersonal meaning. A multimodal viewpoint should be adopted, thereby the rubric should account for a variety of communicative modes, including, for example, the visual representation of content and embodied actions.

Embracing a multimodal genre-based approach enables ESP teachers to enhance students' understanding of the organisation of rhetorical steps, the

use of language to establish interpersonal connections, and the diverse semiotic modes interacting to construct CPs in both written and spoken formats. Through the implementation of this negotiated curriculum design, we foster collaboration among faculty, promoting greater involvement and participation of all parties to effectively enhance academic and professional communication.

5. Conclusion

Clinical Pictures (CPs) represent a new genre for rapid medical knowledge dissemination that also shows great pedagogical potential, mainly when it comes to promoting diagnostic skills. This paper invites reflection on the way the digital genre of CPs, with both their written and audiovisual versions, is constructed. In this study, we have explored how authors organise written and audiovisual CPs in a variety of rhetorical steps, showing three main steps –1) brief description of the clinical case; 2) clinical examination; 3) diagnosis and clinical management– even though in the video version some variation was found. This study has also examined the variety of linguistic interpersonal strategies (e.g. exclusive *we*, boosters and hedges) that characterise this new digital genre to better understand the way authors express their ideas and establish rapport with their intended audience. Finally, this research study has shed some light on the way authors make use of visual support and embodied modes to elaborate on each of the CP formats to construct meaning. In this same line, we have explored the intersemiotic relations that serve the authors to effectively reach such a communicative purpose. Thus, results show the value of adopting a multimodal approach to explore data, and the complementarity of each of the formats —written and audiovisual— to effectively disseminate medical knowledge through CPs among doctors and doctors in training.

Overall, the findings highlight the potential and necessity of utilising and integrating diverse communicative modes to effectively convey specialised content. This is particularly observable in the video version of CPs, where the significance of both embodied and audiovisual modes becomes pronounced. Results also suggest that presenters should make more extensive and conscious use of multimodal and interactive resources to effectively express content and interpersonal meaning. In addition, the outcomes of the study lend support to exploring pedagogical implications, formulated in terms of EMI-ESP team teaching.

This study centres on the perspective of the ESP teacher, while also emphasising the role of the EMI teacher in cultivating students' multimodal communication skills and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. By focusing on the ESP teacher's perspective, the study aims to dissect the nuances of purposeful language teaching, ensuring a targeted and effective approach. At the same time, the

involvement of the EMI teacher is crucial, not as a mere complementary agent, but as an integral part of the pedagogical proposal. The intention is to create an educational environment in which collaboration between teachers acts as a catalyst for the holistic development of students. Particularly, throughout the proposed collaboration, the EMI teacher becomes a collaborator in the broader goal of equipping students with the ability to articulate complex ideas within the context of their academic disciplines. This study envisions a synergistic partnership between ESP and EMI teachers, in which their collaborative efforts serve as an avenue for students' overall holistic learning growth. This growth extends beyond their role as language users to encompass competence as effective communicators and expert knowledge builders within the domains of their specific fields of study.

In addition to this, it should be noted that while this proposal is intended to support students in EMI contexts, the same could be devised for L1 medium instruction programmes. Despite the absence of a tradition of specific language courses in the first language (L1), collaboration between the ESP teacher and the content teacher, who uses the L1, is feasible, provided that the language itself is not an obstacle to achieving the intended pedagogical objectives. That is, collaboration between teachers, irrespective of the language of instruction, can be encouraged and serve to promote students' knowledge. In doing so, this approach enables students to transfer the knowledge gained in the ESP course, or vice versa, to other subjects, regardless of the language chosen for instruction.

This study is not without limitations, many of them due to its preliminary nature. A major one is the limited number of CPs conforming to the dataset despite its representativeness. Further studies should expand the dataset to explore the tentative claims made in the present study. In addition, in future studies, it would also be important to explore the modal density of the slides.

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The Poetics of Ekphrasis: A Stylistic Approach Marie-Eirini Panagiotidou. West Chester: Springer International Publishing, 2022. 267pp. ISBN: 978-3-031-11312-3

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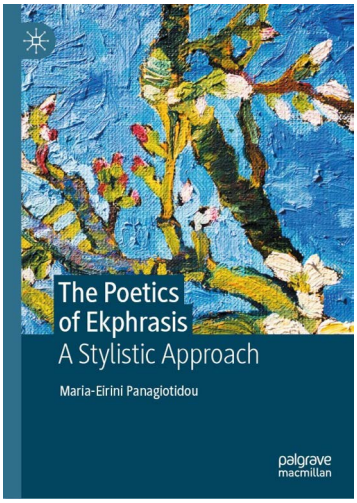

The Poetics of Ekphrasis: A Stylistic Approach is a collection of six chapters that seek to explore different modalities and the evolution of ekphrasis in different contexts. This concept, originally defined as "the literary representation of art", has gradually evolved throughout history and has led to the expansion of such a term in an outstanding range of scholarly interest. The term has been, and still is, used to refer to the interaction between the various arts. Nonetheless, in recent years, contemporary ekphrastic practices have subverted the traditional relation of the representational visual text to its verbal representation, to the point of discontinuity (Clüver 2017, 30).

This book offers a detailed analysis of the language processes involved in transforming works of art into literary objects. It provides a comprehensive understanding of ekphrastic poetry from both a stylistic and cognitive perspective. The author explores the mechanics of ekphrasis in written form, as well as the cognitive and psychological impact of reading ekphrastic poems. They establish an analytical framework based on four key principles of ekphrasis: representation, narrativization,

transposition, and collaboration. *The Poetics of Ekphrasis A Stylistic Approach* is a compilation of six chapters that dwell on ekphrasis from varios contextos. Those chapters are structured around six thematic parts: "Ekphrasis: Past and Present", "Ekphrastic Qualities and Ekphrastic Agents", "Representation and Narrativization in Ekphrasis", "Transposition: Cognitive Facets of Ekphrastic Experience" and "Collaborative Ekphrasis: Multimodal Interplay". Each section is connected theoretically and builds up on the others, fully exploring the different implications and intricacies of ekphrasis in a broad variety of contexts. Both the introduction and the conclusions are written each by the editor of this book, giving the rounded feeling of circular journey, as the reader accompanies the different authors in a comprehensive journey on the ekphrastic experience. The first section "Ekphrasis: Past and Present" describes the history of ekphrasis over the centuries, tracing its rich history.

The book provides the arguments of the greatest exponents of the aesthetic paragone, such as Leonardo Da Vinci, who claimed the elevation and superposition of painting to the level of poetry. The other side of the coin is embodied by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing who voiced his opposition to the *ut pictura poesis* view and accentuated the opposition between poetry. Lessing considered that these two mediums belonged to a different semiotic system and nature; in other words, poetry is a temporal art and painting is a spatial one (2005, 50). Consequently, the concept was reformulated by critics such as Ruth Webb and Leo Spitzer, and this latter was the first critic to define ekphrasis as a poetic genre and separated from the realm of rhetoric (Panagiotidou 2022, 24-25).

The first section, "Introduction," opens with Maria-Eirini Panagiotidou's reflection on the main motivations and aims that led her to write this volume. Panagiotidou argues that one of the main features of ekphrasis is its relationship between the visual and the verbal. Furthermore, she adds that ekphrasis is situated within the field of intermediality (2-3) and is in line with Ellëstrom and Rippl's arguments on intermediality and multimodality. Ekphrasis is related to intermediality in that it explores the interaction between various media and art forms. On the other hand, multimodality encompasses all forms of media and combines elements from various modes (Panagiotidou 2022, 7-8).

The second chapter of this volume aims to provide a historical overview of ekphrasis from both ancient and modern perspectives. Although the author is aware that the term originated in Ancient Greece, it has been gradually reformulated over the course of centuries. According to Panagiotidou, enargeia has the ability to engage and captivate an audience, transforming them from passive listeners to active observers. It is widely recognized as one of the most influential tools of persuasion. The skilful use of language in enargeia creates a vivid portrayal of life and constructs illusions that engage the audience,

making them feel as if they are actively participating in the described events. In modern scholarly discussions of ekphrasis, the primary focus is on the poetic representation of both real and fictional art.

The following chapter discusses the reconfiguration and new definition of ekphrasis. Panagiotidou establishes such reconceptualization across different fields of study and genres. The definition offered by Heffernan explains that ekphrasis is "the verbal representation of a visual representation" (Heffernan 1993, 3). Since taking this definition as a paradigm ekphrasis also includes different agents in the process of meaning-creation. This chapter also establishes a sense of connection with previous categorizations of ekphrasis. She starts with John Hollander's dichotomy between actual and notional ekphrasis based on whether the work of art is real and identifiable or fictional and imaginary. Consequently, the ekphrastic experience in relation to the medium will be different since the reader will be viewed as a spectator participant or an ekphrastic spectator (Benton 2000, 23)

On the other hand, Panagiotidou offers Robillard's typology of ekphrasis, which distinguishes between the "scalar model" and "differential model" (2022, 52). The "scalar model" contains six points that gauge the presence of ekphrasis in a text. These points include communicativeness, referentiality, structurality, selectivity, dialogicity, and autoreflexivity. Conversely, the "differential model" is used to quantify a text's ekphrastic nature using a rate fluctuating from explicitly marked ekphrastic texts to texts that contain only loose pictorial associations. Robillard identifies three categories: depictive, attributive, and associative. All of them share the similarity that they have to do with the degrees of ekphrasis and its source (Panagiotidou 2022, 53). The important section of this chapter is the one focused on Panagiotidou's typology concerning ekphrastic qualities. She distinguishes four qualities that lead to the emergence of ekphrastic responses: representation, narrativization, transposition, and collaboration (2022, 58). The quality of representations aims to recognize the inherent representational nature of ekphrastic texts. The quality of narrativization, on the other hand, acknowledges the strong ekphrastic impulse to situate the artwork within the context of a longer narrative. The concept of transposition refers to the methods used to engage readers in the ekphrastic experience and allow them to immerse themselves in the interconnected worlds of the verbal and the visual. The fourth and final quality, collaboration, emphasizes the intermedial and multimodal nature of ekphrastic poems and the symbiotic relationship between the verbal and visual mediums. It also acknowledges the collaborative relationship between the author, the text, the artwork, and the reader.

The fourth chapter offers a deeper insight into the first two qualities of ekphrasis, more specifically, narrativization and representation as well as how

stylistics, narratology, and cognitive poetics can provide useful tools for studying ekphrasistic effects. Ekphrastic representation and narrative are often viewed as in opposition, with some critics arguing that ekphrasis only provides ornamental details without advancing the plot. Taking representation and narrative into account as qualities allows us to explore them not as antagonistic forces but as different parameters of ekphrasis that manifest in different degrees inside a text. Panagiotidou argues that conceptualizing both terms as qualities allows the reader to explore them as different parameters of ekphrasis that manifest to different degrees within a text (2022, 85). Representations according to numerous critics, including Panagiotidou herself, associate the ekphrastic representation with mimesis. Nonetheless, emphasizing mimesis might lead to a narrower conceptualization of ekphrasis that focuses on resemblance (2022, 86).

Conversely, narrativization following Heffernan's arguments, ekphrasis should not be solely associated with either narration or description. This would allow us to consider ekphrasis as a hybrid form that may contain prototypical elements from each category. Panagiotidou proposes the concept of narrativization to refer to the construction and delivery of a story through ekphrasis. Therefore narrativization is not seen as opposed to representation, and both qualities can co-occur in a text to varying degrees. Some texts may have a stronger representational quality, while others may emphasize the construction of a narrative. Variation can be observed within a single text, with some sections privileging narrative and others prioritizing description.

Last, but no means least, the fifth part is called "Transposition: Cognitive Facets of the Ekphrastic Experience" and it explores the transpositional nature of ekphrastic poetry, which allows readers to fully immerse themselves in the world of the poem. The concept of transposition is defined in relation to ekphrasis and its connection to embodiment. The second part of the chapter focuses on iconicity as a means of entering the fictional world of the poem in an iconic manner. Examples of morphosyntactic, phonological, and graphological iconicity in ekphrastic poems are provided to demonstrate how the reader is invited to explore the connections between the visual and the verbal and to engage with a virtual gallery.

The sixth chapter of this study delves into the final aspect of ekphrasis, namely collaboration. The examination begins by exploring the interplay between word and image from the perspective of intermediality. Subsequently, the focus shifts to the quality of collaboration and its scalar characteristics. In the realm of ekphrastic poetry, the relationship between word and image exists on a continuum, ranging from mere allusions to complete integration. The chapter proceeds to investigate this complete integration in greater depth, employing an analysis of Jennifer Sperry Steinorth's graphic poem, "Her Read: A Graphic

Poem." Graphic poems deliberately merge images and words to create immersive, multimodal experiences that challenge the notion of a paragon relationship between words and images. Instead, these texts prioritize fruitful collaboration, as exemplified by Steinorth's work, which combines various semiotic modes to depict the journey of the female voice from oppression to liberation. Drawing on concepts from multimodal stylistics, cognitive poetics, and semiotics, the analysis examines how text, image, typography, and graphic elements intertwine to represent the woman's struggle and triumph, thereby reinforcing the dialogic and symbiotic relationship between words and images. This chapter aims to thoroughly explore these interrelations by introducing collaboration as the fourth property of ekphrasis. In this context, collaboration extends beyond the interactions between the author, text, artwork, and reader discussed in Chapter 2, to encompass the interconnectedness of ekphrastic poems and artworks, as well as other multimodal elements.

The final and closing chapter in this volume provides a summary of the primary findings of this study and suggests potential avenues for future research. By employing stylistic methodologies, Panagiotidou has identified and examined the key characteristics of ekphrasis, focusing not only on the textual expressions of this phenomenon but also on the reader's interaction with the literary text and the artwork it references. Furthermore, she has taken into consideration the intermedial and multimodal aspects of ekphrasis.

All in all, *The Poetics of Ekphrasis: A Stylistic Approach* offers a strong and complete study of different modalities of ekphrasis in a variety of approaches. It also includes a novel method for analyzing ekphrastic poetry by utilizing frameworks established in the field of stylistics. By employing stylistic methodologies, Panagioutidou identifies and examines the key characteristics of ekphrasis, focusing not only on the textual expressions of this phenomenon but also on the reader's interaction with the literary text and the artwork it references.

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