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## PLENARY LECTURES



**Belén Martín-Lucas**

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**Decolonial love as critical pedagogy:  
Learning response-ability from Indigenous  
authors**

Through a close reading of Nishnaabeg author Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's multimedia poem "smallpox, anyone" – included in her collection *Islands of Decolonial Love. Stories & Songs* (2015) – my contribution will foreground decolonial love as a core methodological tool for overcoming epistemic injustice. Simpson's intricate interweaving of history, visual art, music and postcolonial theory, interspersed with the humour and pain of the quotidian and the incidental in everyday life, addresses important ethical questions on ongoing colonialism; among them, that of the response-ability of non-Indigenous readers to mobilize beyond the paralysis of colonial guilt or plain indifference, and to actively intervene in the project of decolonization.

Simpson's poem exhibits what Marie Battiste has described as "ambidextrous epistemologies," which require the unlearning of the constant Eurocentric denigration of Indigenous knowledges, and the revalorization of Indigenous "intelligence systems" (Simpson 2017). Simpson's scholarship theorizes extensively, in several academic volumes, articles and lectures, her Radical Resurgence Project; her poetry offers a creative rendering of those complex theories. My discussion of Simpson's "smallpox, anyone" intends to inspire reflection on the need to unlearn our "epistemic arrogance" (José Medina 2013) and is offered as an invitation to study Indigenous-centered methodologies and epistemologies as a crucial step towards effective decolonization. I thus wish to contribute to the conversation initiated in the Spanish context by the anthology of essays *Indigenizing the Classroom* (Brígido-Corachán 2021), on ethical methodological practices for the reading of Indigenous texts in our classrooms.

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Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2017. *As We Have Always Done. Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*. University of Minnesota Press.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2015. *Islands of Decolonial Love. Stories & Songs*. ARP Books.

Brígido-Corachán, Anna, ed. 2021. *Indigenizing the Classroom. Engaging Native American/First Nations Literature and Culture in Non-Native Settings*. Publicacions de la Universitat de València.

Medina, José. 2013. *The Epistemology of Resistance. Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations*. Oxford University Press.

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## Isabel de la Cruz Cabanillas

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### Recipes in English overtime

Medicine in old times is a wide area that comprises diverse disciplines and genres. In order to classify medical writings several criteria have been considered: mainly the purpose and the audience. Medical treatises could be used to prognosticate the disease, to diagnose it or to treat it (Robins, 1970: 395 ff.). However, some tracts will cover the prognosis, diagnosis and treatment in one single text. This is the reason why another classification of medieval medical material based also on the intended audience was put forward by Voigts (1982 and 1984) and followed by Pahta and Taavitsainen (2004). This taxonomy finally establishes three main groups: a) academic treatises, b) surgical texts, and c) *materia medica* and remedybooks. The three-part division has become generally accepted for medieval and later periods and serves as a frame of analysis in this talk. We concentrate on the third category, particularly on remedybooks, which include recipe collections and proliferated in English especially from the fourteenth century onwards. Nonetheless, even if recipes form the major contents of remedybooks, they are also found within the learned tradition of medical writing and very often intermingled with other types of recipes, such as cooking recipes, since there was no clear-cut division between food and medicine in medieval times (Francia, 2014: 119).

Research questions covered in this talk concern (a) the rationale behind the recipe compilations, (b) formal and functional aspects of the medical recipes as well as (c) aspects related to textual transmission. Following earlier studies on the recipe genre, a sample of medical manuscript recipes compiled from several British and overseas libraries from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries will be characterised from a linguistic standpoint (De la Cruz Cabanillas, 2017: 81-85; Görlach 2004: 131; Taavitsainen 2001: 98-106). Recipes are instructional texts on how to prepare a medicine for diverse ailments and they follow a given structure, whereby a title is followed by the ingredients. Other optional constituents are the preparation and application stages that can end with a sentence stating the efficacy of the treatment.

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**Ramón Martí Solano**

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### **English phraseology and its influence on other languages**

After a brief definition and an introduction to the historical evolution of the linguistic discipline of phraseology, I will speak about the four types of phraseological units (collocations, idioms and other fixed expressions, conversational routines, and proverbs) and their main features, i.e. polylexicity, fixedness, non-compositionality and idiomatization. Special attention will be given to the different phenomena of variation and idiom modification as well as the role that corpus linguistics has had in phraseological research. Then I will focus on the phraseology of the English language and particularly on Gläser's *Phraseologie der englischen Sprache* (1986) and Moon's *Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English: A Corpus-based Approach* (1998). Both are detailed descriptions of the phraseology of English, proposing different types of classification (morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic), describing the role of phraseologisms in various textual genres, and stressing the variability and creativity (especially in Moon's work) of multi-word units. The enormous contribution of British and American linguists (notably Firth, Sinclair, Halliday, Cowie, Stubbs, Moon, Wray, Gibbs, Langacker, Lakoff, Johnson, Fillmore and Nunberg) in this field and the influence they have had on the evolution of theoretical and methodological approaches among phraseologists worldwide is undeniable. The work of Firth, Sinclair and Halliday has been decisive for the development of the discipline, especially with regard to the concept of collocation and the theorization and modelling of the notion of lexical co-occurrence.

The second part will discuss the role and influence of English phraseology on other languages, mainly in Spanish and French and, to a lesser extent, in other European languages. A significant number of phraseological units specific to English phraseology have been loan-translated into multiple languages and are now part of the common idiomatic repertoire of many European and non-European languages. *Give the green light* is a perfect example of this phenomenon—it is one of the most widespread idioms and it is found in a total of 59 European languages, except for Italian and some regional languages of Italy such as Friulian or Venetian (Pirainen 2016: 169). According to several scholars, the English *give the green light* has been calqued, for instance, in Spanish (Lorenzo 1996: 633), French (Martí Solano 2012: 204), German (Görlach 2003: 62) and Latvian (Veisbergs 2012: 16). A selection of other phraseological loan translations and related linguistic phenomena will be presented and discussed.

The third and last part will take me back to what is specifically English in English phraseology through the presentation of the international collaborative research project entitled “The Peculiarities of the Phraseology of English from a Contrastive Perspective”. This project, launched in May 2021, aims to identify idioms and other fixed expressions which are peculiar to English and therefore not shared by other languages. Some potential candidates are *to push the boat out*, *to work your fingers to the bone*, *the bare bones*, *in high dudgeon*, *to high heaven*, *the bee’s knees*, *to take the biscuit*, *to beat somebody to a jelly*, *to have kittens*, etc. The linguistic contrastive approach will pinpoint the image component, the specific metaphors and the culture-bound constituents of the idioms that will be classified as particular to the English language.

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**Paul Prescott**

University of California, Merced, United States

**Adapting *Othello* in the 21st century. Some notes  
from the operating theatre**

From his own era onwards, Shakespeare's plays have survived and thrived thanks to the process of adaptation. Each age rewrites, edits, expurgates and expands the original texts according to its own political, aesthetic and hedonistic tastes. In our own age of a global pandemic, racial inequalities and climate collapse, how can Shakespeare's plays be repurposed to address our most urgent anxieties and crises? This talk will draw on recent examples of stage performance – the operating theatre – to think about how a practice of “deep adaptation” might inform and inspire the reproduction and teaching of not only Shakespeare, but of literature in general.

## COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

### El Quijote Transnacional -- (Round table)

Alfredo Moro Martín  
Universidad de Cantabria

Pedro Javier Pardo García  
Universidad de Salamanca

María Luisa Losada Friend  
Universidad Pablo de Olavide

#### Abstract

Esta mesa redonda tiene como propósito presentar el proyecto de investigación *El Quijote transnacional*, financiado por el Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación (PGC2018-093792-B-C21), centrado en la traducción, edición y estudio de obras de la tradición cervantina mundial. Su objetivo último es mejorar el conocimiento y accesibilidad de dicha tradición mediante la conformación de una biblioteca de imitaciones, reescrituras y todo tipo de derivaciones del *Quijote* en diferentes lenguas, tanto en versión original como en traducción al español, todas ellas editadas y anotadas, así como de estudios en torno a las mismas, publicada tanto en línea como en papel. En esta mesa se explicará la idea nuclear del proyecto, la de *transnacionalidad*, para a continuación ilustrarla mediante tres títulos de tal biblioteca que guardan relación con la literatura inglesa.

#### Presentation

El relato de las andanzas de don Quijote más allá de nuestras fronteras se ha basado tradicionalmente en un esquema binario centrado en la noción de influencia y consistente en estudiar a un autor o grupo de autores de una determinada literatura nacional en su relación con Cervantes. Este planteamiento, necesario para acometer un estudio de la recepción de *Don Quijote* en un determinado territorio o dominio lingüístico, por ejemplo, el inglés del que se ocupará esta mesa redonda, ha sido muy fructífero y ha dado lugar, además de a un sinnúmero de artículos sobre el tema, a un buen puñado de libros que aparecen listados en las referencias (Barrio, Fernández y Hanke, Fuchs, Garrido, Gordon, Ivana, Martínez, Motooka, Paulson, Randall y Boswell, Welsh, Ziolkowski). Pero no lo es tanto a la hora de abordar la cuestión de la reescritura del mito de don Quijote en la novela occidental, ya que tal reescritura no tiene como objeto

exclusivo el texto fundador cervantino, sino también las subsiguientes versiones del mismo en diferentes lenguas. En consecuencia, si quiere estudiarse el proceso de reescritura y difusión del mito, no podemos ceñirnos a la influencia binaria, sino que se requiere de una intertextualidad ampliada a otras obras además de la de Cervantes y tales obras rara vez pertenecen a un solo dominio lingüístico, cultural o nacional.

El proceso de reescritura del mito quijotesco es, por tanto, no tanto internacional como *transnacional*, un calificativo que simplemente intenta llamar la atención sobre esa mediación doble porque es tanto textual como lingüística, es decir, trabaja sobre otros textos, además del *Quijote*, escritos en otras lenguas, además del español. En consecuencia, el estudio de tal proceso debe tomar en consideración no solo el ejemplo y el impacto del modelo español, sino también el de sus imitadores y emuladores extranjeros, tal y como Pardo ha intentado demostrar en un reciente artículo que rastrea el tipo del Quijote erudito en su periplo por obras inglesas, francesas, españolas y, lo que es más importante, las interacciones entre ellas (2019). Por eso es necesaria la traducción de estas obras, pues, a la hora de acometer este tipo de estudio, los investigadores difícilmente podrán conocer todas las lenguas implicadas en el proceso de transmisión del mito (como mínimo español, inglés, francés y alemán).

Este proceso de reescritura o transmisión transnacional puede ilustrarse atendiendo a la participación en el mismo de autores ingleses, pero a obras escritas en tres lenguas diferentes, a saber:

1. William Winstanley, *The Essex Champion* [El paladín de Essex] (c. 1694)
2. Wilhelm Ehrenfried Neugebauer, *Der teutsche Don Quichotte* [El don Quijote alemán] (1753)
3. Charlotte Lennox/Bernardo María de la Calzada, *Don Quijote con faldas* (1752/1808)

Winstanley escribe la primera imitación narrativa inglesa en prosa del *Quijote*, prácticamente desconocida hasta ahora y de la que no existe edición moderna. En ella se deja sentir la huella de las reescrituras francesas del siglo XVII, traducidas al inglés antes de la aparición de la imitación de Winstanley, y anticipa la temática de la lectura quijotesca que dominará en el siglo XVIII europeo. La segunda es la primera imitación narrativa alemana, en la que esta temática, así como la huella de Fielding, el autor inglés cervantino por excelencia (también la del francés Marivaux), es muy notoria. La tercera es la traducción española de principios del siglo XIX de *The Female Quixote* (1752) de Charlotte Lennox, obra de Bernardo María de la Calzada, que pone de manifiesto la emergencia de la literatura inglesa como mediadora en las reescrituras dieciochescas no solo españolas sino europeas del *Quijote*, sobre todo en lo que podemos denominar domesticación y reevaluación del sujeto quijotesco. Cada una de estas obras y sus autores será presentada y analizada por investigadores del proyecto.

## 1) *The Essex Champion*

*The Essex Champion; or, The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay, and his Squire Ricardo* (c. 1694) es una obra prácticamente desconocida en los estudios de la recepción cervantina inglesa. Solo el trabajo de Pardo (2018) la ha contextualizado entre los libros de caballerías hispánicos traducidos en Inglaterra, ha decodificado la huella cervantina en esta imitación que pone las aventuras del *Quijote* en el contexto del Essex del siglo XVII y ha demostrando su importancia en la recepción del *Quijote* en suelo inglés como la primera narrativa inglesa quijotesca en prosa. Esta propuesta propone una reflexión surgida a raíz del trabajo de traducción y anotación (Losada y Pardo, 2022) en dos aspectos fundamentales.

En primer lugar, la traducción de la novela busca volcar al español la representación crítica del lector y de la lectura que se hace de los libros de caballería. Winstanley es el eslabón para conocer el proceso de asimilación del *Quijote* en la literatura inglesa del XVII. El modelo del hidalgo español se transfiere al hijo de un granjero de Essex transtornado por la lectura de libros de caballería. Los elementos transformados del original de Cervantes muestran el comentario crítico a la tradición de la lectura desmesurada de los libros de caballería y obligan a identificar y anotar la abundancia de referencias al género (fórmulas, versos, comparaciones, rastros de ficción romántica pastoril, etc.) que el narrador maneja con soltura.

En segundo lugar, traducir con precisión los detalles referidos al contexto social del XVII revela la carga crítica con la que se representan las pautas de la vida inglesa. Se repasa un amplio colectivo humano (granjeros, mozos de cuadra, mesoneras, clérigos, timadores, tramposos, nicromantes), el espacio rural de mansiones, granjas o posadas, y el marco de instituciones como el poder judicial (jueces, alguaciles) o el poder intelectual (scholars) cuyas representaciones tienen una importante carga satírica. Esta crítica carnavalesca de personajes individuales o en grupo puede leerse incluso como precursora de obras posteriores, como *Tom Jones* de Fielding, que a su vez tendrá una amplia difusión por Europa.

Las reflexiones en torno al proceso de traducción permitirán así demostrar la “indigenización” de la que habla Pardo (2018), es decir, la adaptación del *Quijote* a la cultura inglesa de finales del XVII y su transformación posterior en un patrón narrativo cuya huella se dejará sentir en textos posteriores de la misma tradición cervantina en otras lenguas, como revelan las novelas objeto de las siguientes intervenciones.

## 2) *Der teutsche Don Quichotte*

El redescubrimiento y edición de la primera y única novela de Wilhelm Ehrenfried Neugebauer, *Der teutsche Don Quichotte* (1753), llevado a cabo por Lieselotte Kurth-Voigt (1965, 1969), supuso un punto de inflexión en los estudios sobre la historia de la



novela en Alemania, pues obligaba a revisar la tesis dominante entonces que situaba el “nacimiento” del género en Alemania en la primera novela del ilustrado C. M. Wieland, *Don Sylvio von Rosalva* (1764). Además, la obra de Neugebauer suponía también la necesaria revisión de las ideas asociadas al nacimiento del *Bildungsroman* o novela de formación, cuyo origen se suele situar también en la novelística de Wieland, ya que, por vez primera en la historia de la literatura alemana, nos encontramos con un joven e inexperto aprendiz de comerciante que debe dejar de lado sus ensimismamientos literarios para convertirse en un miembro útil de la sociedad, senda posteriormente transitada por autores de la talla de Goethe, Keller o el propio Walter Scott.

La novela de Neugebauer, por hallarse perdida y sin editar, había pasado muy de puntillas por los estudios sobre la recepción internacional de Cervantes. Los primeros estudiosos del tema como Berger incluyen la obra en sus panoramas generales de la recepción cervantina en el país teutón, si bien apenas la comentan, mientras que estudios más recientes como el de Rivero incluyen la obra en el corpus de obras de raigambre cervantina del XVIII alemán, pero no abordan su estudio en profundidad, al verse constreñidos por su naturaleza panorámica. Más recientemente, Hernández (2017, 2019) y Moro (2010, 2011) han reivindicado la obra para la tradición cervantina y del *Bildungsroman*, si bien únicamente este último ha destacado el importante juego de influencias que se produce en la obra al calor de la recepción del *Quijote* cervantino. En este sentido, la traducción del texto al español (García Albero y Moro Martín, 2022), la primera a cualquier lengua, supone un importante avance en la comprensión de una novela que cuenta con una gran relevancia para el estudio del desarrollo histórico no sólo de la novela alemana, sino también europea.

Precisamente este aspecto centrará el contenido de la presentación de la obra de Neugebauer, en el que se tratará de destacar cómo la obra del autor silesio, pese a su clara y reconocible influencia cervantina, cuenta con una destacadísima presencia de la tradición cervantina inglesa de la primera mitad del siglo XVIII, particularmente de Henry Fielding, que moldea el tipo de narrador y de héroe de la novela. Para concluir, se analizará la obra de Neugebauer como inicio de una senda que lleva de vuelta a las letras británicas y a la obra de uno de sus grandes novelistas del XIX: Sir Walter Scott.

### 3) *Don Quijote con faldas*

La obra de Lennox constituye una obra de referencia en la historia de las reescrituras del texto cervantino, pues es la primera novela inglesa que utiliza de manera exhaustiva la fórmula quijotesca con una protagonista femenina (Borham), lo que implica una distancia respecto de aquel, al entender el quijotismo no como una transformación de la realidad, sino como error y accidente: su personaje principal, una joven, hermosa e inexperta heroína romántica, simplemente proyecta a la realidad que la circunda situaciones y personajes procedentes de los *romances* que ha leído (Pardo

2004, 2010). Esta transformación será decisiva en el proceso de conversión del *Quijote* en un texto clásico como consecuencia del fenómeno de reconocimiento y prestigio de los textos cervantinos que se produce tanto en Inglaterra como en España en el siglo XVIII. Por tanto, dicho proceso, pese a producirse en el mismo lugar de origen del *Quijote*, es inconcebible sin la influencia inglesa, como atestigua esta traducción dieciochesca y otras reescrituras en español del momento.

Pero lo que da un interés añadido a esta traducción es que no se realiza directamente del inglés, sino que vierte al castellano la traducción previa al francés de Isaac-Mathieu Crommelin publicada en París por primera vez en 1773 y luego de nuevo en 1801. De hecho, los numerosos cambios respecto del texto original de Lennox que pueden detectarse en la traducción española de Bernardo María de la Calzada (Jaffe 2005 y 2019, Lorenzo Modia), proceden de la transformación efectuada por Crommelin. Este doble proceso de mediación del texto original de Lennox en la literatura española es sintomático de la hegemonía que el francés como lengua de prestigio cultural ejerce todavía sobre el inglés en España; pero apunta también a la emergencia de Inglaterra como nuevo centro de irradiación de nuevas lecturas y reescrituras del *Quijote* para el resto de Europa, como sugiere también el caso de la novela alemana estudiada.

A la conclusión de esta intervención, se plantearán las siguientes cuestiones al público asistente: la literatura comparada como superación de los límites del concepto de literatura nacional; la presencia de Cervantes en las letras inglesas; la función mediadora de los dominios francés e inglés en la difusión europea del *Quijote*; el papel de la traducción en los procesos de reescritura y su estudio; los conceptos de mito o tradición cervantina y su relevancia para la construcción de una literatura europea comparada.

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**Keywords:** comparatismo; mito; reescritura; transnacionalidad; traducción.

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<b>Katabatic imagination in William Faulkner's <i>Sanctuary</i></b>
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**Abstract**

In her influential work, *Hell in Contemporary Literature: Western Descent Narratives since 1945*, Rachel Falconer claims that, in the writerly imagination of selfhood, “we are still very much governed by a ‘katabatic imagination’ that is a world-view which conceives of selfhood as the narrative construct of an infernal journey and return” (2005, 2). Significantly, Falconer recruits Charles Taylor’s seminal insights on literary modernism in order to bring into attention the prominence of katabases pervading modernist imagination. She signals that: “It is striking how many [...] quintessentially modern writers” such as T.S. Eliot, Joyce, Mann and Proust “narrate the quest for selfhood as descent to Hell and return” (27). My claim is that William Faulkner (1897-1962) is yet another author whose modernist work is pervaded by katabatic motifs. Specifically, this work forwards the argumentation that Faulkner mobilizes the myth of descent in order to thwart its meanings on an individual and societal level. The title chosen to substantiate this claim is Faulkner’s controversial novel *Sanctuary* (1931) where, I argue, the convoluted narrative of descent is reworked in its personal and collective dimensions. Thus, on the one hand, I aim to discuss the argument that the hero’s descent and return, seen as a symbolic, and salvific quest for selfhood, is at the core of *Sanctuary*, yet re-presented in stark distortion. Particularly, in the first part of my presentation I endeavor to show how the protagonist’s ordeal, her sequestering and subsequent captivity in a derelict plantation house and a brothel, signifies a material descent in the world of bootlegging and sexual exploitation. This descent replicates yet frustrates the process of selfhood (de)creation conceptualized by Falconer, as the anti-heroine’s ordeal is marked by an accented identity loss. Moreover, I argue that the katabatic chronotope is mobilized in *Sanctuary*, to further complicate its hellish – topographic – dimensions.

Thus, this work will also explore Miss Reba’s brothel, whose “gate[s]” (141) Temple crosses, as possessing a potential emancipatory nature given the protagonist’s

effective coming of age, and sexual awakening taking place there. On the other hand, the second claim my work makes is that Faulkner's *Sanctuary* rewrites descent narratives through the blurring of the cultural and social borders between marginal-hellish –, and so-called respectable figures. With this in mind, in the second part of my presentation I will look into how underworld characters mix with *aboveworld* ones as a means of signaling the porous frontiers between one dimension and another. In other words, in the novel, societal arrangements display respectable individuals as *fallen* characters holding respectable positions; while bootleggers are the ones who call for a *de facto* law enforcement. It thus appears that the tables are turned and mayhem is intrinsic to the functioning of respectable institutions such as family and law. Finally, this work will conclude by emphasizing that, albeit it is always flanked by a social dimension, Faulkner's narrative of descent is significantly articulated in individualistic terms.

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**Keywords:** Katabatic narrative; Narratives of descent; William Faulkner; Modernism.

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<p><b>Re-Imagining the Aging Self through Dramaturgies of Memory Loss and Love: A Comparative Study of Tristan Bernays' <i>Old Fools</i> and Nick Payne's <i>Elegy</i></b></p>
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### Abstract

At the epicentre of the so-called "longevity revolution" (Butler 2008), ageing has become one of the most salient topics for discussion within socioeconomic, health, political and cultural debates. Yet, the theatre has scarcely reflected the diversity and

richness of old age through which the experience of growing older can be conceptualized. Rather, older individuals have commonly been represented on the stage in an ageist, that is, in stereotyped and highly reductive way (Mangan 2013). Such representation clearly mirrors the “narrative of decline” (Gullette 2004) whereby ageing has typically been associated with loss, decay, and ultimately, death. However, the growing importance of the theme of ageing (closely related, at the same time, with social anxieties around dementia) has started to generate a more complex dramaturgy of old age, including new theatrical approaches to memory as a constitutive component of one’s identity construction (Basting 1998; Lipscomb 2016; Mangan 2013). While ongoing debates around ‘the self’ are not conclusive, there is a general agreement among scholars of various research fields that it is definitely a relational concept which is linked to time and memory (Bowman 2016; Seth 2016) and, therefore, to the experiences of living and ageing (Baars 2012). Love relationships are amongst the most essential to those experiences. Nevertheless, their role in the re/construction of the (ageing) self has also been significantly neglected in theatrical representations of later life.

This paper offers a comparative study of Tristan Bernays’ *Old Fools* (2018) and Nick Payne’s *Elegy* (2016), two contemporary plays in which love, especially as manifested in middle-aged and older adulthood, is a determinant factor in the reconceptualization of the ageing self, especially when afflicted by memory loss or cognitive failure. Positioned within the framework of theatre and ageing studies, and drawing from their intersection with gender studies and disability theories, this paper demonstrates that the narrative arc that both texts recreate is not exempt of declinist overtones. However, the manipulation of chronological time in both plays through different techniques, as well as the importance of the love story they recreate (between a man and a woman, in *Old Fools*, and two women in *Elegy*), helps disrupt the binary young-old perpetuated by ageist cultures, underlines the complexities of love when conditioned by ageing and, ultimately, questions the very idea of (old) age as a rigid identity marker. The study consequently concludes that, despite the persistence of the declinist tradition in contemporary drama, new theatrical representations of complex experiences of ageing not only open the door to richer debates on the role of memory and love in the construction of the self, but ultimately contribute to an all-inclusive stage and, with it, to the education of an age-friendly society.

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**Keywords:** theatre; ageing; memory; identity; love in old age.

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<p><b>Re-visioning Masculinity: Comparing Philip K. Dick's Short Stories and the Television Series <i>Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

The television anthology, *Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams* (Channel 4/Sony Pictures Television), comprises ten, inventive adaptations of the renowned author's early short stories that were published during the 1950s. First broadcast in 2017 on the UK's free-to-air network, Channel 4, the series has received widespread critical acclaim, with *The Guardian* describing it as "beautifully moving". In this paper, I explore the benefits of a comparative reading by discussing *Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams* in relation to the original texts on which its episodes are based. Using the concept of a 're-vision', that is the means by which an existing story is reinterpreted through seeing it with 'fresh eyes', I contend that the anthology series literally makes visible the politics of masculinity with which Dick's work is critically engaged. By focusing my analysis on several changes to the urtexts that are made in two specific episodes – "Human Is" (Francesca Gregorini and Jessica Mecklenburg) and "The Commuter" (Tom Harper and Jack Thorne) – I illustrate that a comparative reading effectively reveals how



Dick's ideas are refracted for a twenty-first century television audience. In the former episode, the marriage between Vera (Essie Davis) and Silas Herrick (Bryan Cranston) becomes a means to reflect upon broader social themes. One of only two episodes in the series to be written and directed by women, "Human Is" exploits the visual nature of television to provide a visceral exploration of how male toxicity can be transformed into a more positive (though alien) form of masculinity. In "The Commuter", which Louisa Mellor describes as one of the "strongest and emotionally satisfying" of the adaptations in the series, Dick's story about the changing dynamics of 1950's society becomes a sombre contemplation of the nature of fatherhood. Relocating its diegesis from the US to the UK, the episode explores the difficult relationship that Ed (Timothy Spall) has with his emotionally troubled, teenage son (Anthony Boyle) – a narrative strand that is absent from Dick's original story. While both "Human Is" and "The Commuter" significantly overhaul the short stories that inspired them, a comparative reading of *Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams* reveals how television is an important medium through which we can trace our changing understanding of masculinities in the third millennium.

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**Keywords:** Philip K. Dick; comparative literature; television; adaptation; masculinity.

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**Current Monsters: an Exploration of Motherhood in Lisa Evans' *Frankenstein***

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**Abstract**

The perennial presence of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's masterpiece *Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus* (1818) in literature and popular culture is, indisputably, indebted primarily to its numerous adaptations into different mediums, to the point of acquiring the status of myth. Greatly popular and inspirational among film-makers and graphic novelists among others, the fact that it owes its adaptation history to theatre should not be forgotten. Adapted for the stage for the first time in 1823 by Brinsley Peake under the title of *Presumption; or, The Fate of Frankenstein* (Forry 1990, 3), Mary Shelley's novel has enjoyed of a vastly healthy theatrical life.

One of its latest and most well-known drama adaptations is Nick Dear's eponymous play, which was directed by Danny Boyle, and staged at the National Theatre in 2011, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller. In their approach to the novel, both adapter and director worked on the most prominent topics of the novel, namely the doppelgänger motive and parenthood. Although, magnificent in their treatment of the doppelgänger, their approach on the theme of parenthood cannot be said to be particularly groundbreaking.

Such is not the case, though, of Lisa Evans' adaptation of the myth, which occupies this communication. Lisa Evans' *Frankenstein* was commissioned for the winter season 2008 by The Royal & Derngate Theatre in Northampton. Combining fictional past with a very real present, Evans points at a new kind of monster that inhabits the twenty-first century, and the role society plays in its making, by unearthing the (often ignored) character of the Mother. Being her focus primarily on motherhood – rather than fatherhood – Evans addresses the connections already made by scholars, such as Hoeveler and Mellor, between Mary Shelley's fears about motherhood and the novel.

However, in her exploration of the theme, the playwright addresses, more importantly, what expectations lie nowadays in being a woman and mother, and what means being a mother. Thus, it is the aim of this communication to exhaustively analyse Evans' approach on parenthood – specifically focusing on motherhood – and its significance within and without the play. In order to do so, I will concentrate on the richness of the female characters in the play, while drawing on existing research on parenthood in Shelley's work, primarily Hoeveler and Mellor's research.

By doing so, the depth in which the topic of motherhood is worked on will be exposed, while addressing the issue of the monster making through her use of the double motive.

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**Keywords:** Theatre; adaptation; *Frankenstein*; neo-Victorianism; motherhood.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Only Wit or None at All: the Use of Farce in Edward Ravenscroft's <i>The Citizen Turned Gentleman</i> (1672)</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Restoration drama has suffered a significant lack of attention since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, save for a few exceptions that have been largely subjected to the bias and agenda of their time. In the last few decades, however, an exponential growth in publications and studies concerning Restoration theatre (and comedies in particular) have given a second wind to the genre. In a way, this historical lack of attention has bestowed it with an unexpected versatility, and Robert Markley's words still hold true today: "no true consensus exists about either the drama or the critical reactions it has engendered. The Restoration theatre remains a kind of Rorschach test for its students" (91).

These new trends have, inadvertently or not, categorized and hierarchized the dramatic production of the period: the sex comedies of the 1670s or the sentimental comedies of the 1690s appear to have taken precedence in the interest of academics and critics, and much energy has been dedicated to a rather limited number of authors considered to be the most representative, the most relevant, or the most qualified for their pertinent context.

Edward Ravenscroft is one of those authors left out of the Restoration canon, and mostly for reasons beyond his quality as playwright. Most of his notoriety stemmed

from one of two places: his *London Cuckolds* (1681), one of the most famous and long-lasting bawdy farces of the late Restoration; and, more notably, his quarrel with John Dryden over the nature of good authorship and effective comedy. The subject of this study, his debut play, *The Citizen Turned Gentleman* (1672), combined three of Molière's most successful comedies, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670), *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1669), and *L'Avare* (1668), and brought them into the English stage with such a resounding success that he became a household name overnight. The 1675 revision, *Mamamouchi, or The Citizen Turned Gentleman*, was as much a hit with London audiences as the original and drawing even courtly attention. But it was this use of "plain low farce" (Hume, 373) in the times of Shadwell and the comedy of humours (or of wit, as it was termed at the time) that became one of the more frequent attacks directed at this author. He was accused of lacking both wit and originality, "a Leech, that lives upon the Blood of Men" (Langbaine 418) that abased not only himself, but the omnipotent, omnipresent Molière by dimming his wit into farce as sole means of entertainment.

This study uses *The Citizen Turned Gentleman* to form a wider perspective by challenging two major ideas that have contributed to Ravenscroft's literary ostracism: that there is no farce in Molière, and that there is nothing but in Ravenscroft. It explores the latter's interaction with his source material as well as with contemporary reactions to his work in order to present a comedy that is more than an unoriginal collection of stolen wits and an author whose skill in adaptation has been unjustly overlooked.

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**Keywords:** Restoration; drama; comedy; Ravenscroft; farce.

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## CRITICAL THEORY

### Agency and Interactivity in the Narrative Video Game 'What Remains of Edith Finch'; Exploring Rita Felski's "Actor Network Theory-ish" Methodology

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#### Abstract

In *Hooked: Art and Attachment* (2020), Rita Felski argues for the addition of Actor Network Theory methods to analysis rooted in the Humanities in order to explore the relational aspects of works of art. She identifies three fields of action for ANT depending on the scholar's scope of analysis: small, mid and large scale. "Small scale" would ponder on agency by focusing on the work itself and the cooperating human and non-human actors that make it up. "Mid scale" analysis would study the work in relation to the reader and other actors that influence how the book is apprehended, including questions of attachment and identification. Finally, "large scale" analysis would take into account broader historical and social considerations. Felski applies her methodology to literature, music and films to demonstrate its versatility and, although they are not explicitly mentioned, video games can also benefit from this theoretical framework. Therefore, my aim is to explore the narrative techniques in the video game *What Remains of Edith Finch* (Dallas 2017) through the mid and specially small scale modes of analysis as put forward by Felski. As other narrative games or "walking simulators" in the market, *What Remains* invites the player to explore a space, in this case the family house, while discovering the story of its inhabitants. However, while similar video games such as *Gone Home* (Gaynor 2013) or *The Suicide of Rachel Foster* (Azara 2020) have very limited sets of actions allowed to the player and information is mostly conveyed through a combination of written documents or voice recordings, *What Remains* makes use of short playable episodes to convey most of the story. The greater interaction and variety of gameplay allowed in *What Remains* makes an appreciable difference that lends itself to Felski's style of "ANT-ish" analysis. At small scale, ATN allows us to see how these narrative strategies echo the theme of the game. As the game relates the untimely deaths of a family saga, the gameplay emphasizes the distributed agency in such deaths to reflect on life and death as largely out of one's control. At mid scale, ATN together with affect theory allows us to account for players' attachment as well as for the significance of such attachment, as game reviews and informal interviews reveal how the game has stuck with many users for a long period

after playing it. We shall see how Felski's approach regarding attachment, identification and ANT sheds a light over the question of why this game has resulted so captivating to so many players.

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**Keywords:** video games; narrative techniques; agency; attachment; interactivity.

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<b>Landscaping <i>Ophelia</i>: The Environmental Crisis in Visual</b>
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## Abstract

A broadening of interest in Shakespeare's *Ophelia* has occurred in the visual field during the last decades. The development of new media has expanded a phenomenon that started at the end of the 18th century and was consolidated in the 19th century by painting. As pointed out by Alan R. Young, *Ophelia* provided artists with 'a ready-made' trough which they could express certain views on the female body. Eventually, *Ophelia* became a ubiquitous figure that offered multiple perspectives and readings, and resulted in what Elaine Showalter called 'a cubist *Ophelia*.' The Shakespearean character is still a recurrent source of inspiration for contemporary artists at present: in the hands of painters, photographers and graphic designers, *Ophelia's* body has undergone -and is undergoing- many transformations. The aim of this paper is to examine one of the many possibilities of the *Ophelia* iconography today; specifically, it focuses on the relationship between *Ophelia*, seen as a body, and *Ophelia* seen as landscape. The hypothesis underlying this study is that some of the changes related to the perception and representation of the *Ophelia* character throughout time are related to our understanding of Nature and, more specifically, to the current global environmental crisis. In this sense, this paper discusses this body-landscape liminal relationship in a selection of visual representations of *Ophelia*, and pays attention to how it works within the framework provided by environmental criticism. The

methodology followed in this paper is based on a thorough compilation of (mostly visual) materials that adapt, appropriate or “quote” *Ophelia* (paintings, photographs, films, gifs, and even memes). The analysis of these materials has been possible thanks to the reading of the existent studies that approach the connections between William Shakespeare and the visual media, in general, and the history of the representation of *Ophelia*, in particular. Likewise, it has been extremely useful to resort to critical theories from different fields: visual studies, literary daptation and appropriation, as well as gender and environmental studies. Of special interest in this context is the discussion of the concept of “topophilia” in relation to *Ophelia*.

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**Keywords:** Shakespeare; Ophelia; environmental crisis; visual culture.

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***Frankissstein; or, the Postmodern Prometheus: The Role of the Mythic Method  
in Jeanette Winterson's Frankissstein: A Love Story***

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**Abstract**

“(U)sing the myth, [...] manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity [...] is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history” (Eliot 1923, 483). With a renewed interest in classical stories, including myths, fairy tales and legends, the turn of the century has witnessed the retelling of many of these narratives. This postmodern tendency to the rewriting of stories has been associated with the desire not of copying the original texts, but rather of “attaching new meanings to the source works according to the author’s intention and, by extension, to the context” (Haneş 2018, 55).

In keeping with this, the quasi-mythological narrative of *Frankenstein* – accurately subtitled as “the Modern Prometheus” – could be no exception. Indeed, the final decades of the twentieth century and our thus far lived twenty-first century have been accompanied by an undeterred interest in Mary Shelley’s account of Victor’s far-reaching attempt to accomplish the creation of a human being, as well as of the terrible consequences of his unethical purpose. These have ranged from versions retold from the perspective of Victor’s fiancée – Elizabeth Lavenza – such as Theodore Roszak’s *The Memoirs of Elizabeth Frankenstein* (1995); narrations from the point of view of the Creature, like Susan Heyboer O’Keefe’s *Frankenstein’s Monster* (2010); or even those based on the assumed outcomes of Victor’s hypothetical creation of a female companion for the Creature, as in Hilary Bailey’s *Frankenstein’s Bride* (2007).

According to John Campbell, one of the main purposes of a mythological order is to validate and maintain a certain social system – a shared set of rights and wrongs, proprieties or improprieties, on which a particular social formation depends for its existence (Campbell 1959, 9-10). Re-narrating myths has represented for feminists a means of subverting the order imposed upon women through these mythical tales. Hence, Julia Kristeva insists on the necessity inscribing plural, unpredictable meanings into these rewritings as a means of relying on the unconscious for inspiration represents an act of insurrection against the predictability of the prescribed system of values (Kristeva 1986, 26).

In this line, Winterson's retelling of the story through the twenty-first century experience of Ry Shelley, a transexual scientist who meets Victor Stein, involved in dark experiments leading to the creation of a human being, as well as Ron Lord, a manufacturer of sexbots with a nearly human status, directly engages with some of the most relevant ethical issues at debate nowadays, especially those regarding questions such as identity, the nature of gender, or the boundaries of scientific creation and experimentation. Accordingly, my contention is that in *Frankissstein*, Jeanette Winterson retrieves the use of the mythic method as a means of assessing present debates on the moral convenience of AI when it breaks into the ground of interpersonal relationships. In this sense, her rewriting of Mary Shelley's novel particularly alerts against the dangers of perpetuating a form of gender politics based on patriarchal superiority and in which "the doll-world reinforces the gender at its most oppressive and unimaginative" (Winterson 2021, 159).

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**Keywords:** Jeanette Winterson; *Frankissstein*; myth; gender; technology.

<b>Cyborg plasticities: on techno-cerebrality</b>
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**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the posthuman interaction with technology and technological supplements specifically related to memory, knowledge and ‘externalised’ or distributed cognition. It will analyse key incidents from Anne McCaffrey’s *Brain Ship* stories. *The Ship who Sang* (McCaffrey 1980; orig. 1969) is generally regarded as an important early text in posthumanism (Hayles 1999; Balsamo 2000; Haraway 2010; Stein and Demerjian 2018). However, *Ship’s* treatment is usually fairly perfunctory, and the sequels have received scant attention. What is valuable about both the original mash-up novel and the later shell-people stories, however, is that they provide thought experiments to consider the interaction between originary technicity (Bradley 2011; Stiegler 1998), mnemotechnics and neuronal plasticity (James 2013; Malabou 2000; 2004; 2007).

Arthur Bradley explains that for Derrida originary technicity is the impossibility of defining the human ‘because our “nature” is constituted by a relation to technological prostheses’ (Bradley 2006, 78). This interpretation of the history of technology has been developed by subsequent thinkers, including Bernard Steigler (*ibid*) and provides the backdrop for the theoretical concerns of this paper.

In an article that stages an encounter between Stiegler’s interpretation of technicity and Catherine Malabou’s ‘cerebrality’ in addition to her development of the concept of (neuronal) plasticity, Ian James asserts that ‘both brains and hands, technics and cerebrality’ must be thought together ‘in an ontological register’ in order to develop ‘a “bodily” account of world disclosure’ (James 2013, 82). Malabou coins ‘cerebrality’ (2012, 2) as the name for the capacity of neuronal accidents to alter ‘the course of psychic life’. I would argue that the brainship stories’ particular structuring of biotechnic integration provides a way to address the aporia that James identifies. (It should however be noted that James’s definition considerably broadens Malabou’s ‘cerebrality’ to put it on par with technics.)

In McCaffrey’s fictional universe, shell-people are severely disabled newborns encased in titanium shells, connected – via electronic implants – to sensors to observe the world outside and to mechanical tools to interact with it. For shell people, tools are hands and cameras, eyes – Brain Computer Interfaces (BCIs) that are truly a ‘prosthesis

at the origin' (Serruya 2015; Derrida 1998). These beings have 'artificial' memory banks exterior to their inert bodies but with direct neuronal connections, adding an extra category to what Stiegler calls 'grammatisation... the history of the exteriorisation of memory in all its forms' including various forms of biological memory in addition to 'mnemotechnical organs' such as 'machine tools' and other artefacts involved in *hypomnēsis* (2006, 20–21).

Consequently, this paper will draw on these stories to think the interrelation of originary technicity, mnemotechnics and neuronal plasticity by extending her definition of cerebrality and neuronal accidents to include the loss or destruction of *hypomnemata* (Howells and Moore 2013; Stiegler 2009), quasi-external supplements whose destruction or modification, I argue, represents a 'specific historicity whereby the cerebral event coincides with the psychic event' (Malabou 2012, 2).

McCaffrey's fictional beings show us that posthuman technicity is integrated with both neuronal networks and *hypomnemata* via cerebrality, and that these approaches cannot be thought in isolation. To conclude, the paper links this analysis to contemporary developments in Brain Computer Interfaces to further deconstruct classical distinctions between *technē* and *bios*, *hypomnēsis* and *anamnēsis*.

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**Keywords:** Posthumanism; cerebrality; Catherine Malabou; technicity.

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<b>A Posthumanist Reading of Kate Zambreno's <i>Drifts</i></b>
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**Abstract**

This paper proposes a posthumanist reading as understood by Stefan Herbrechter and Ivan Callus, i.e., one that identifies the “opposition between the human and the nonhuman at work in a text”, effectively troubling the purity of these categories (2008, 97). Unlike increasingly common posthumanist approaches to science fiction, fantasy, utopian and dystopian fiction, in my paper this type of reading is applied to a text not written in the mode of speculative fiction. Although it does not challenge the limits of the human in any obvious way, Kate Zambreno’s *Drifts* (2020) allows for a posthumanist reading in at least three ways, which are in turn the three main discussion points in this analysis.

First, I address the representation of nonhuman animals in the text. Drawing on Donna Haraway’s ‘companion species’ (2003), I pay particular attention to the symbiotic relationship between the female narrator and Genet, her little black terrier. The emotional and physical bonds between woman and dog hint at the possibility of a “human-dog entity” (Lestel et al. 2006, 170), which destabilizes the distinction between human and nonhuman in fundamental ways, even more so as the narrator gives over to an “animal state” on the late stages of her pregnancy (Zambreno 2020, 309).

It is this narrative of pregnancy that represents the second phase of my posthumanist reading, for which I rely on Rosi Braidotti’s ‘placenta politics’ and Rodante van der Waal’s ‘pregnant posthuman’ (2018). In *Drifts*, the pregnant body is presented, at the same time, as a site of collaborative growth that generates potency, lucidity, and productivity, but also as monstrous, sick, and overconnected to the point that the pregnant woman feels “weirdly interconnected with everyone who has ever had a child or has been born or died” (Zambreno 2020, 204).

The final element of analysis is the fragmentary disposition of *Drifts* as a result of its self-referential problematization of the artistic struggle to write the present tense, record time and capture the energy of thought and the distracted nature of the internet. The attraction and danger of social media affects the constitution of the text while the narrative voice finds herself “scattered [...] in fragments online” (Zambreno 2020, 20), in a movement that echoes the gradual indistinguishability between cyberspace and meatspace reconceptualized by Luciano Floridi as the “onlife” of our “hyperconnected era” (2015).

The exploration of these three key elements is based on both the textual and paratextual—epigraphs, photographs—material of the book, the resulting image of which is one of perplexity, vulnerability, and complexity. Ultimately, the proposed reading of *Drifts* aims to participate in the discussion whether posthumanism can be a “meaningful analytical [tool] for literary analysis” (Guesse 2020, 23).

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**Keywords:** companion species; Kate Zambreno; onlife; Posthumanism; pregnancy.

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<p><b>Is it Poetic Justice or Perpetuating the Stigma? "Trash" in Delia Owens's <i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

It has been almost forty years since writers born within poverty started to voice their concern about the situation of poor whites in the U.S.A. For the most part and with few

exceptions, white trash writers' mission has been geared towards exposing, demystifying, and disproving social stigmas about the poor whites. Scholars from a multiplicity of academic disciplines have also agreed on the fact that poor white classes have been targets of social prejudice and injustice throughout U.S. history. A case in point is Wayne Flynt's research on southern poor whites which evinces the popular belief, already in colonial times, of poor whites as lacking ambition, being violent, and displaying highly promiscuous behavior (34). More recently, Nancy Isenberg's research has revealed that white trash were "simply freaks of nature on the fringe of society [...] congenitally delinquent, a withered branch of the American family tree" (180). Well into the twenty first century, however, and in spite of the efforts of poor white writers in exposing the social injustice committed against the "white trash" type, a new novel has reached the bookshelves to call into question the nature of their social stigmatizing. This paper examines Kya Clark's life trajectory, the feral child-protagonist of Owens's novel, who manages to become a successful member of the community despite having been abandoned by everyone and left to her own devices. In doing so, the protagonist's own position as "marsh trash," her determination to overcome social prejudice and, above all, her resourcefulness to ultimately gain social respectability are explored from a "whiteness studies" perspective, while leaning on previously-written white trash works of fiction. Considered a thriller or detective story, *Where the Crawdads Sing* (2018) is thought-provoking, for this piece seems to debase premises, built by both white trash writers and academicians in defence of the poor white trash class. Beautifully written, *Crawdads*, takes the reader on an unforgettable journey in and around the marshlands of North Carolina, the backdrop of a story about social blame, abandonment, guilt, and "vengeance." Though clear-cut at the beginning, the story of Kya Clark turns dubious to, in the end, reveal a most surprising twist. In the fictional reality of the novel, social prejudice and ostracism may not be unfounded after all.

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**Keywords:** white trash; popular belief; stigmatizing; prejudice; poetic justice.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Defective identity construal: A Fanonian reading of William Faulkner's Joe Christmas</b></p>
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**Abstract**

By virtue of placing cultural and societal variables as key elements exerting psychic strain on subjectivity, Frantz Fanon (1952/1966) conceives of identity formation as an intersubjective process. In so doing, the author fills two gaps in Western mainstream psychoanalytic endeavors. First, the Antillais psychiatrist articulates what psychologist Janice Gump sees as an obviated dimension of psychoanalytic accounts of (racialized) identity formation, namely, the social dimensions that Fanon places at the core of his sociogenesis (2010, 43). Second, Fanon contributes to illuminating the interiority of the nonhegemonic other (Fuss, 1995, 143). The aim of this presentation is to use Frantz Fanon in order to examine William Faulkner's Joe Christmas, and his process of biracial identity construal; a process which not only casts him as a disenfranchised individual, but enacts psychological damage on the character's subjectivity. Specifically, aided by Fanon, I seek to go beyond an often-deployed Freudian reading of the "dietitian scene" at the heart of Faulkner's *Light in August* (1931), prompting instead further interrogation concerning the double bind, psychological and interrelational, this scene has in terms of (pathologic) identity construal. Thus, I seek to renew critical engagement with this title by reading Fanon's episode "Look, a N-!" depicted in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952/2008) as a counterpoint to Faulkner's "dietitian scene". The oft-discussed scene depicts the interpellation of five-years-old Joe Christmas by the dietitian at his orphanage with the invective: "You little rat!" [...] Spying on me! *You little n- bastard!*" (90, my emphasis).

With this in mind, in the first, more psychoanalytically-oriented part of the presentation, I discuss Joe Christmas's condition as a child, and thus a highly permeable entity exposed to an early process of epidermalization. In reading the child

as the site of the installation of “racialization”, I follow Erica Burman and her Fanon-cum-Lacan analysis of ego formation as a socio-contextual process (2015, 3-21). Specifically, Burman argues that the Lacanian mirror stage is deployed in Fanon as an interrelational process wherein the visual - specular - construal of the self is markedly intersubjective as Joe Christmas’ “dietician scene” attests. Alternatively, in the second part of my presentation, I recruit Fanon as a psychiatrist, as I aim to bring into discussion the clinical and intersubjective dimension of the character’s psychological trauma, accrued since his infancy to his adulthood. More precisely, I briefly explore how the introjection of Blackness as a noxious entity gives rise to a Black-antiblack individual (Maldonado-Torres, 2021, 245); and how, in turn, this condition is manifested in clinical aspects such as emotional dysregulation and chronic rage, thwarting basic processes of relationality. Finally, my discussion will emphasize the way in which superposing Fanonian insights to Faulkner is not only circumscribed to the notion of race. Rather, Fanon’s annotations illuminate the determining role that social elements have in the process of early identity (de)formation – a concern at the heart of Faulknerian fiction.

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**Keywords:** Intersubjectivity; Frantz Fanon; William Faulkner; Race trauma; Psychoanalytic criticism.

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<p><b>Critical Perspectives in English Studies Today: From the Classroom to the World -- (Round Table)</b></p>
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Remedios Perni

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Sara Prieto García-Cañedo

Universidad de Alicante

Macarena García-Avello

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### **Abstract**

This round-table discussion is based on the idea that there is a connection between between the classroom and what takes place beyond the academic wall; between teaching and activism. Throughout time, theoreticians and academics have approached the problems and contradictions of modernity through the study of aesthetics (literature, and other art forms), in the hope that such analysis, together with the publication of research findings and the student involvement in critical projects, can bring about social change. Of course, the ongoing connections between real world issues and academia are complex, heterogeneous, circular, multi-faceted and, sometimes, even contradictory. From May 68 to the *Occupy* movement, the *#MeToo* campaign and the feminist demonstrations in 2017, or the *Black Lives Matter* movement, the student protests and the participation of (part of the) academia in the advance of a new political agenda have constituted a phenomenon that is worth analysing. At present, diverse forms of activism and protest continue to inspire the fight against the oppressive and alienating structures of modernity. The purpose of this round table is to engage in conversation about a variety of aspects related to activism and academia, focusing on the challenges of teaching Language and Literature in such context. Some of the questions to reflect upon will be:

- (How) should university teaching be affected by political events at present?
- Should we reconsider the way language acquisition and literature are being taught?
- To what extent can the communication between the academic sphere and the street movements be considered fluent and effective?
- What are the relations between ---and how can we relate--- theory and practice, the classroom and the world?

- Can the field of Language Acquisition and Literary Studies, specifically, provide new perspectives?
- How should scholars approach their lectures in times of social turmoil?
- What were the effects of the implementation of remote teaching during the pandemic? In the aftermath of the pandemic, has the academic wall been demolished or reinforced?

These questions are in consonance with the ideas generated in previous AEDEAN round tables; for instance, the 2017 presentation of *Teaching Literature in the 21st Century: The Challenges Ahead*. This was an enriching experience that this 2022 round table will seek to update. One of the main topics discussed in 2017 were how the Internet, the increasing technological advances, and the apparition of massive open coursewares, among other innovations, had caused a series of changes in the way we taught. This was also a paramount question when the coronavirus pandemic disrupted not only the academic year but people's way of life. On this occasion, our aim is to reflect collectively on these methodological issues again, but in relation to the political changes occurred during the last decade (the LGTBIQA+ movement, the development of intersectional Feminism, the raise of awareness of the environmental crisis, etc.)

The round-table participants will examine alternative teaching methods, with a special emphasis on collaborative and creative learning. **Speaker 1** will discuss a selection of initiatives designed within the context of English Literary Studies to promote critical thinking in the university classroom and beyond. They will provide a theoretical and experiential framework that argues for the usefulness of teaching Literature from an activist perspective, and will explain the political implications of current projects related to social justice at different English Departments around the world. **Speaker 2** will discuss the benefits of stimulating creativity in the classroom to promote students' interest in the study of Literature as well as to raise social awareness among them. They will present a series of practical activities carried out in Years 3 and 4 of the BA in English Studies that have demonstrated to increase students' engagement in awareness of contemporary issues such as racial or gender issues. **Speaker 3** will present a discussion carried out in a course on Second Language Acquisition in Year 2 of the BA in Education. After a series of theoretical and practical sessions, students were asked to participate in a discussion on how language shaped gender stereotypes, along with the role played by the media, education, and the hidden curriculum of gender stereotypes. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the three speakers of this round table collaborated in previous research projects related to this topic, so this presentation will also address their research findings within this framework.

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**Keywords:** teaching literature; teaching language; academic activism; social movements.

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## CULTURAL STUDIES

### Crises and Criticism – (Round Table)

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Guillermo Iglesias Díaz

María Grau Perejoan

Katarzyna Paszkiewicz

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#### Abstract

Brexit, the global rise of populism, COVID-19, lockdown, Russia's war in Ukraine, the Cold War comeback, inflation... What do they have in common? All these events have taken place under the "new normality", a term "which first appeared during the 2008 financial crisis to refer to the dramatic economic, cultural and social transformations that caused precariousness and social unrest, impacting collective perceptions and individual lifestyles" (Corpuz 2021, 344). In the period 2008-2022, these sweeping transformations have sparked a global crisis, a crisis of crises even, characterized by dramatic societal changes, the rise of authoritarianism, as well as isolation and fear, triggering economic inequality and mental health conditions.

If, as de Man states, "the notion of crisis and that of criticism are very closely linked, so much so that one could state that all true criticism occurs in the mode of crisis" (1967, 44), then it is our civic (and academic) responsibility to find critical models fit for these challenges. As a result, each speaker will tackle timely topics from different but complementary perspectives: Earth habitability, exclusion, death, breathing, vulnerability, *communitas*, intersectionality, affect or weathering, to name a few.

Wider questions to be addressed and discussed with the members of the public may be: the efficiency of new critical models that could challenge this so-called new normality, the importance of intersectional perspectives to tackle social inequality effectively, and the extent of our responsibility as citizens and scholars.

## 1) On Breath(ing) and Aliveness: Intersectional Politics and Poetics

Contrary to popular claims that COVID-19 “knows no differences” or “makes us all equal”, this pandemic has instead evinced, confirmed, and also accentuated deep-seated inequalities. Uneven social, economic, and political relations were already at the heart of how death is a looming presence and crude reality for too many individuals and communities whose lives are deemed not worthy of being protected, and so they have been persistently annulled, negated and sacrificed. Previous pandemics such as the HIV one, or most blatantly “racism’s recurring pandemic” (Quashie 2021, 12), as well as that of violence against women and the LGTBQ+ community, or the relentless violence of poverty, powerfully attest to it. This omnipresence of death has also become very much part of how these subjects and communities have been culturally configured and critically “looked at” (4), and of what and how their othered bodies have been made to signify culturally, disfigured by a hegemonic sexist, homophobic, racist, classist, and ableist gaze. In this way, death has somehow become, as Kevin Quashie writes in his study of Black aliveness, their “everywhere and everyway” (1). However, Quashie contends, “the black one’s ontological dilemma is not in regard to not-being or being-against; the ontological dilemma, as such exists, is *being*” (11; emphasis added), and so “if we want to try to conceptualize *aliveness*, we have to begin somewhere else” (1; emphasis added). And this alternative starting point is for him a radical imagination; one that is not articulated as a reply towards violence and those who exert it, but as a vision (or a multiplicity of visions) that enables and “recognizes the capaciousness of being” (4) and allows for its “expansive relationality” (7). Radical imagination is similarly called upon by Achille Mbembe in his reflection piece on the COVID-19 pandemic, a brief but powerful text where he conceptualizes breath(ing) as a fundamental right to existence that has been for too long taken away for too many and so, he argues, for a day after to come, the monumental task ahead is that of “reconstructing a habitable Earth to give all of us the breath of life” (2021, 562).

In my contribution to this round table, I will situate Mbembe’s call for a breathable future within the context of the still scarce but growing literature on breath and breathing in the field of the Humanities (Berardi 2018; Górska 2016, 2021; Houdek and Ore 2021; Quinlivan 2012; Rose 2019), which I will also read alongside Quashie’s “poetics of being” to ultimately argue for the potentiality of an intersectional politics and poetics of breath(ing) and aliveness. Without ignoring or obscuring the situatedness and specificity of Quashie’s theorization of black aliveness, my attempt will be to explore its potential to embrace the aliveness of all those bodies and lives that have been systematically tied to death, attending to their stories and how they envisage and conceive of more just and ethical forms of worldmaking.

## 2) Hidden Realities in the *Communitas*: *Bad Day for the Cut* (2017), between the Sovereign and the Vulnerable Gendered Bodies

If the myth of the sovereign subject is related to classic conceptions of hegemonic masculinities and sovereign mastery, the concept of vulnerability has been traditionally associated to women and opposed to agency, a binarism that has been recently challenged by feminist theorists who affirm that vulnerability is one of our conditions as human beings. The *communitas*, to use Roberto Esposito's term (2005), of Northern Ireland is where filmmaker Chris Baugh sets the scene for his first feature film and, just as the Italian philosopher, Baugh places right at the centre of his narrative the *cum-munus*, understood as a duty (*munus*) which is shared (*cum*), an obligation towards the Other (Esposito 2005, 14–15). It is in this context where Baugh locates both the sovereign and the vulnerable subjects, fluctuating and problematizing permanently with each other.

My proposal will focus on the analysis of Donal and Bartosz, two characters that move between hegemonic and alternative masculinities in *Bad Day for the Cut* (Chris Baugh 2017) and who have to deal with their own silenced pasts. The film is set in Belfast and its main protagonist, Donal, is suddenly trapped in a violent turmoil by a reality concerning his mother which was totally unknown to him. He could be described as a mild-mannered, middle-aged farmer whose masculinity seems far from hegemonic models, in part for his portrayal as a vulnerable, loving man who takes care of his ageing mother. However, he becomes some sort of lone avenger when he gets on a quest to find who has murdered his mother and the reasons why. On the other hand, Bartosz is a young Polish immigrant who tries to rescue his sister from a band of women traffickers and, meaningfully, it is this character the one who gives in just one line the leitmotiv in the film: "You don't know the full story; no one seems to know the full story: that's the problem with this country". Baugh's narrative and visual style plays constantly with our expectations and those of the characters', in a film in which nothing is what it seems and the hidden realities of the past haunt the present of the *communitas*.

### 3) Queer Spaces and New Visions for the Caribbean Region

In my part, I will analyse the Bahamian film *Rain* (2008) as a corrective visual narrative that debunks persisting neo-colonial representations of the region and offers a rooted, diverse and complex portrayal of Caribbean identities. Written, directed and produced by Bahamian independent filmmaker Maria Govan, this Bahamian cinematic production challenges the myth that queer life is impossible and rejects homogenizing paradise-like mainstream constructions for the region. In *Rain* women who desire women are not invisible and non-heteronormative and non-nuclear family structures are depicted nonchalantly and thus normalized. In order to offer a nuanced understanding of same-sex desire and alternative family structures, I will draw from Caribbean Queer theorizing. I will argue that the film challenges the contemporary claims of outsized homophobia whose roots are actually to be found on "the historical



logic of African and black peoples as savage and atavistic" (Walcott 2020, 236). I see the film as a creative response to this racist imperial representation, one that offers alternative futures or visions and allows for, as Trinidadian writer-activist Colin Robinson poses, "our young people's ability to imagine future" (2020, 231).

Importantly, the film resists the pervasiveness of the colonial construction of Caribbean island spaces as tourist havens. Instead, *Rain* offers a diverse and non-idealized portrayal of the archipelagic state that includes life in the city slums of the capital of the island of New Providence, Nassau, as well as rural life in Ragged Island, the smaller island where the protagonist has grown up until the death of her grandmother. In this sense, I will explore the tropes of the sea, island mobility and cruise ships as central to proposing new directions for the region beyond the monoculture of tourism. The trope of the cruise ship is particularly productive in my analysis as it is intersected by the two myths deconstructed in the film. Although it is in no way central to the story, it is mentioned once (and shown once more in a very metaphoric subsequent shot) by a male Christian pastor, rumoured to be gay, who voices his strong opposition to gay cruise liners docking on the island. Thus, through the trope of the cruise ship *Rain* denounces the hypocrisy of those who focus on vilifying non-conforming groups "to distract the public from issues such as poverty and corruption, which actually pose a greater and more immediate threat to the well-being of the region's people" (King 2014, 8).

My argument is that this visual narrative opens up new visions that contribute to rebuilding more egalitarian societies by presenting alternative contemporary Caribbean spaces dominated by women in non-nuclear and non-heteronormative family structures alongside complex and diverse portrayals of the island.

#### **4) Fearing the Anthropocene: Affect, Weathering and the US Cli-Fi Film**

In the last two decades, we have witnessed an increased proliferation of "natural disaster" films that dramatize the possibility of the annihilation of the planet. Among many threats, climate change is perhaps what saturates most the contemporary cinematic imaginary, as attested by the burgeoning scholarship on cli-fi. Claire Colebrook argues in reference to this growing popularity of post-apocalyptic cinema that we seem to suffer from a "hyper-hypo-affective disorder": while "there is a passion for affective consumption" of such fictions, this passion is devoid of intensity, in the sense that it does not lead to any realization that this "near-post-human world" is "utterly plausible". As she further explains, "there is neither panic nor any apparent affective comportment that would indicate that anyone really feels or fears the sense of the end" (2011, 53).

In this paper, which is part of a larger research project concerned with how cinematic forms respond to the Anthropocene, I will look at several examples of the cli-fi film produced in the last decade in the US context to analyse their “affective ecologies” (Weik von Mossner 2017). Such films tend to reinforce the dichotomies that underpin the anthropocentric discourse (Braidotti 2013; Haraway 2016), often promoting neoliberal progress narratives of controlling the future. Yet, I argue that they also offer moments of “affective intensity” that open up a different sort of temporal (and ethical) orientation and that can attune us to the “now” of the climate emergency. Bringing together the scholarship on cli-fi (Leikam and Leyda 2017; Weik von Mossner 2017) and affect in its new materialist strands (Alaimo 2016; Barad 2007; Bennett 2010; Neimanis and Walker 2014), I argue that cli-fi can be fruitfully thought of as what Anna Tsing dubs “the arts of noticing” (Tsing 2015). This framework opens up space for unpacking the cinematic “end-of-the-world” scenarios in new ways. In particular, in dialogue with Rob Nixon’s (2011) consideration of slow violence, and new materialist concept of “weathering” (Neimanis and Walker 2014), I contend that such a framework allows us to displace the focus from the immediate disasters to the process of noticing the unseen: the complex entanglements of humans and more-than-human realm of the weather.

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**Keywords:** breathing; vulnerability; affect; climate change; alternative futures.

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**Beyond the "lure of Italy": reading the meanings of Rome in three statues by nineteenth century U.S. women sculptors**

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**Abstract**

The group of US women sculptors that gathered in Rome in the middle of the nineteenth century were drawn to the city not only by what Theodore E. Stebbins referred to as "the lure of Italy" for artists in general, but by a series of specific conditions that made Rome an ideal, although unlikely, site for the development of a life marked by a personal and sexual freedom and an almost euphoric productivity and fulfilment that would have been impossible in their native land. Their position as members of a closed élite of foreigners, and of the even closer circle that Dabakis has called "a sisterhood of sculptors," marked their vision of Rome and their relation with the city, even when they were drawing deeply from the physical, intellectual and spiritual advantages provided by it. To provide a deeper and more specific understanding of this relation with Rome, I propose a cultural reading of three Rome-related sculptures created by two members of this "sisterhood": Harriet Hosmer's *Beatrice Cenci* (1857), Anne Whitney's *Roma* (1869-71), and Hosmer's tomb to Judith Falconnet in the church of Sant'Andrea delle Fratte (1856). *Beatrice Cenci* shows

Hosmer's reworking of the artistic influence of the Roman baroque, as well as her engagement with the victimization of the rebellious female subject, punished by the corrupt powers of Rome, both religious and secular. Whitney's personification of Rome in the figure of an old beggar woman, following models from realistic Classical Roman statuary, is a harsh criticism of the contemporary evils of the city, including poverty, conformity, and the tyranny of Catholic power, as well as evoking the trope of the overwhelming weight of the historical past in Rome reflected by writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne. Finally, Hosmer's monument for the tomb of a young Englishwoman who died in Rome, commissioned by her mother and inspired in this case by British funerary art, can be read as a reflection of the ambivalent position of the community of U.S. and British visitors, exiles and artists in the city. The only sculpture, to my knowledge, by any member of this group of U.S. female sculptors to remain in Italy, its emplacement in a very Baroque chapel evokes the precarious integration in Rome, as well as the isolation within the city, not only of Hosmer's subject but of the sculptors themselves. By the 1870s, both Whitney and Hosmer will have left the city, Whitney in search of artistic innovation in Germany, Hosmer with a certain nostalgia for the Rome previous to Italian independence.

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**Keywords:** U.S. women sculptors; nineteenth century artists in Rome; Harriet Hosmer; Anne Whitney.

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<b>New Perspectives on Indian Diaspora Studies</b>
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## Abstract

Cultural studies, as posited by David Oswell, is an interdisciplinary field that revolves around topics on identity but also the experience of ethnicity, sexuality or gender, especially in the context of modern cultural life (Oswell, 2006: 110). In the experience of living, but particularly of transnationalism, this paper focuses its attention on bringing to light the most recent perspectives on Indian diaspora studies in the particular field of sociology. Considering that sociology is the discipline that approaches society dynamics or changes in migration, and because of the increasing studies that entangle sociology and diaspora studies, we deem it appropriate for a paper to centre on the new tendencies in Indian diaspora studies from a sociological perspective

This article aims twofold; on the one hand, to identify three core elements that remain highly distinctive of what constitutes a diaspora: 'dispersion', 'homeland orientation', and 'boundary-maintenance'. On the other hand, to address new perspectives concerning Indian diaspora studies. For both objectives, three recent publications that hinge on new developments in the intersection of diaspora and sociology are explored. These publications are "The 'diaspora' diaspora" by Rogers Brubaker (2005), Claire Alexander's "Beyond the "The 'diaspora' diaspora": a response to Rogers Brubaker", published in 2017, and Ruben Gowricharn's criticism in the introduction of the book *New Perspectives on the Indian Diaspora* (2022).

Regarding methodology, it is organised following an introduction, setting the ground for understanding how crucial Indian diaspora studies are and their development, as transnational communities are not static, nor should be the studies around them. Besides, the paper is divided into three sections: 'dispersion', 'homeland orientation' and 'boundary-maintenance'. The last section, and because this paper focuses on Indian diaspora studies, is centred around new perspectives in this discipline of studies, to realize how the core elements of diaspora and these new perspectives are intertwined.

As indicated previously, the theoretical framework rest on renowned sociologists whose research interests pertain to the field of diaspora studies. Therefore, some of the authors studied are Avtar Brah (1996), Paul Gilroy (1993) and Stuart Hall (1990); besides the three primary authors, this paper focuses on Rogers Brubaker (2005), Claire Alexander (2017) and Ruben Gowricharn (2022).

In conclusion, this paper seeks to dwell on the elements of diaspora in the views of sociology researchers, which enable later to approach the most recent perspectives on Indian diaspora studies. Findings suggest that Indian diaspora studies are still relevant as new connections keep forming between diaspora communities and the countries where these communities originate.

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**Keywords:** Indian diaspora studies; new perspectives; dispersion; homeland orientation; boundary-maintenance.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exploring Transcultural Identities in the Making: Personal Narratives, NGOs and Refugees in the UK</b></p>
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### Abstract

Transculturality assumes that "entanglement, exchange, porosity and hybridization have always been an instrumental part of the *ongoing* definition and development of cultures" (Abu-Er-Rub et al. 2021a, xxvi; italics added). Transculturality has accordingly been understood as a 'synthesis' to a great extent "result[ing] from the physical movement of peoples from one geographic location to another" (Lull 2000, 242), for example, as a result of migration. Transculturality has long been seen as "a constitutive feature of cultural transformations in Britain" (Schulze-Engler 2009, xi)—

fuelled by increased international migrations since the 1990s, the situation in the UK nowadays has come to be described as one of cultural ‘hyperdiversity’ (Koser 2016, 94), refugees being key actors whose transit and settlement goes hand in hand with NGOs (Davis 2021; Loeschler 2021). Personal stories in the form of narratives are a frequent section on the websites of NGOs specifically focused on refugees.

As cultural studies theorist Chris Barker underscores, “identity represents the processes by which discursively constructed subject positions are taken up (or otherwise) by concrete persons’ fantasy identifications and emotional ‘investments’” (2004, 93). In this sense, for cultural studies personal narratives “are always already a part of the wider cultural repertoire of narratives, discursive explanations, resources and maps of meaning available to members of cultures” (Barker 2004, 131), thereby proving fundamental in the articulation of identity-construction processes (de Fina, Schiffrrin and Bamberg 2006). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) explores “the use of discourse in relation to social and cultural issues such as [...] identity” (Paltridge 2006, 178). Drawing upon CDA (Fairclough, 2014) as a methodological instrument for cultural-studies-oriented research (Barker and Galasinski 2001), this paper will present a case study intending to examine the nexus between identity construction in the personal-story section of refugees NGOs’ websites and ongoing transculturality in Britain. With a focus on Refugee Council—a major NGO working with refugees in the UK—as a case in point, this piece will specifically interrogate the mechanisms whereby discourse is “infiltrated by culture” (Shi-xu 2005: 2) in the transcultural identity construction process (Nordin et al. 2015) articulated in such personal narratives.

The results of the analysis will highlight how, within a view of discourse as a form of socio-cultural practice where language features prominently (Fairclough 2014), language usage—alone or multimodally combined with image—evinces a ‘fusing of cultural forms’ (Lull 2000, 242) which—through the use of refugees NGOs’ websites as a significant genre—may be made sense of as part of wider circuits of culture, whose particularities will be disentangled in detail. In the context of the ‘Aesthetics, Ethics and Strategies of the New Migratory Cartographies and Transcultural Identities in Twenty-First-Century Literature(s) in English’ Research Project (PID2019-109582GB-I00, MICINN, Spain), the conclusions of the paper will finally delve into the implications of the case study for ‘capturing’ the dynamics of transcultural processes in the making via the snapshots provided by specific cultural products involving the use of personal narratives.

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**Keywords:** transculturality; personal narratives; refugees NGOs; identity; Britain.

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<p><b>"Canadian monsters": a Teratological Itinerary through Atwood's Works from the 1970s</b></p>
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**Abstract**

In a famous line of a poem titled "Can. Lit." the poet Earle Birney accused Canadian Literature of "lacking ghosts" (Moss & Sugars 2009, 117). However, as Monika Kosa reminds us, Atwood's interest in monsters dates back to 1977, when she wrote "Canadian Monsters: Some Aspects of the Supernatural in Canadian Fiction", which

establishes Canadian categories of monstrosities (2020, 125). Furthermore, monsters constantly emerge in Margaret Atwood's works from the decade of the seventies. Re-reading four of her emblematic works from the 1970s: the poetry collection *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970), the novel *Surfacing* (1971), the essay *Survival* (1972) and the novel *Life Before Man* (1979), while drawing on Jeffrey J. Cohen's theory on monsters (1996) and Mabel Moraña's understanding of the monster as a cognitive model (2017, 22), I am going to demonstrate that Canadian Literature is pervaded with monsters and ghosts since the moment of its foundation. I will also prove that, as Cohen observes, monsters embody the anxieties of a culture, in this case Canadian culture at the foundational moment of its literary tradition. Firstly, in *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, Atwood draws on monsters from different cultural traditions, such as the *loup-garou* ("werewolf") from Quebec. Susanna Moodie, the nineteenth century pioneer and writer who provides a leitmotif for the book, becomes a ghost who comes back to haunt Toronto at the end of the collection. As Anne W. Johnson points out, the ghost is a specter of the memory and the past; it is a sign of guilt, violence, deterritorialization, sudden or violent death, the memory of the loss but, also, it is the return of the repressed, a monstrous cartographer of modern suffering (2017,29). In *Surfacing*, which Atwood has defined as a ghost story (Gibson 1973, 11), the nameless protagonist faces the ghost of her father as she faces the sublime landscape of Northern Quebec which is monstrous but beautiful at the same time: "The lake is tricky, the weather shifts, the wind swells up quickly; people drown every year" (25). In the case of the protagonist's father, it makes sense to apply Francisco de Goya's famous maxim that "the sleep of reason produces monsters" because the father, a scientist, a defender of logic and rationalism, ends up facing –and eventually succumbing to– the monstrousness of the wilderness. Atwood's description of nature as a monster which she borrowed from the Canadian critic Northrop Frye, her teacher at the University of Toronto, is spelt out in chapter 2 ("Nature the Monster") of *Survival*, her introduction to Canadian Literature. Lastly, I will read *Life Before Man* as a novel which anticipates itself to the current interest in the Posthuman in its allusion to the sixth extinction and its presentation of the of the "ghostly interaction between animals and humans" (Braidotti 2015, 87) embodied by the dinosaurs of the Royal Ontario Museums which appear in the novel. In conclusion, it seems adequate to say that Margaret Atwood's monsters from the 1970s are embodiment of the tensions of historical time which, in some ways, anticipates the current one.

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**Keywords:** Margaret Atwood; Canadian literature; monster theory; ghosts; monsters.

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<p><b>The Monster Inside Us: Analysing Questions of Otherness and Race in Marjorie Liu's Graphic Novel <i>Monstress</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

From the late 20<sup>th</sup> century up to today, critics have argued the fact that the presence of monsters in western culture manifests itself as one of the most distinctive features of our society (Martín Alegre 2015). Moreover, although monsters embody liminality and a horrendous presence, they also are defined by their power, something that governmental institutions could try to manage in their own hands (Bloomfield and Vurdubakis 1999). Consequently, and while following Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* (1996), I will argue that Marjorie Liu's new graphic novel *Monstress* (2005) can be analysed through the lens of Cohen's monster theory in order to discuss and highlight questions of race, "otherness" and identity upon which Liu's novel is built. To do this, I will provide a deeper analysis of the novel's protagonist, Maika HalfWolf, as I apply to her character Cohen's theses, which serve to understand cultures through the monsters they hide, in an attempt to display the inner struggles of those who live in a post-war world.

Written by Marjorie Liu and illustrated by Sana Takeda, *Monstress* recounts the story of Maika HalfWolf's journey across an alternative post-war matriarchal 1900s' Asia where ghosts of ancient gods walk the earth. There, different racial communities haunt each other in an attempt to impose their powers on the rest and consequently become masters of a world that has been torn apart by war and oppression. In this context, we find that the Cumea, an order of witch nuns who believe in science and the purity of humanity, have installed a new established order in this magical world. The Cumea believe that Arcanics, known as a kind of mixed race "others", are demonic creatures who must be eradicated from the Earth (Tutton, 2015). Being an Arcanic herself, Maika becomes a threat to this community and starts to be depicted as a monster, as the 'Other' (Prince, 2021). In this graphic novel, Maika moves from being a war survivor to being a slave to being a prisoner, only to become something altogether different in the end. In *Monstress*, Maika struggles to control an insatiable power building up inside her – her inner Monstrum – at the same time she is trying to find answers in regard to both hers and her mother's past. Marjorie Liu's use of the fantasy genre to explore real life issues in a different, dystopian world in such a fascinating way is worth mentioning. Themes that deal with identity, war, loss, and revenge are meticulously explored, but especially those dealing with race and otherness, which bring about the questions of what it means for Maika to be mixed race, to stand on the borderlines of two different cultures, and to be depicted as a monster, something that is extremely well represented in the political and racial relationship existing between the Cumea and the rest of the communities, especially with the Arcanics, which shape Liu's world.

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**Keywords:** monster theory; comics; Cultural Studies; otherness; fantasy.

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**“Chug, crush, toss”: Depicting Psychiatric Surveillance and Performing Sanity in  
Rachel Lindsay’s *Rx***

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**Abstract**

Contemporary comics about disability and illness offer a rich ground for the exploration of bodily and mental matters, allowing cartoonist to address issues related to normative standards of health and ability. One of these works is *Rx: A Graphic Memoir* (2018), a graphic narrative where American cartoonist Rachel Lindsay portrays her experience with bipolar disorder as a young woman working at an advertising agency to secure healthcare benefits. The difficulties arise when she finds herself developing ads for antidepressant drugs, which destabilizes her condition. Followed by an enforced stay at a psychiatric ward, the story covers her struggles with her job, the symptoms of her cycling moods, and the difficulties to maintain her creativity after release. Previous scholarly work has analyzed graphic narratives that engage with mental illness and healthcare (Venkatesan and Saji 2019 and Mannon 2019), but there is still a lack of critical work that addresses such matters in *Rx*.

Drawing on the interdisciplinary fields of disability studies, mad studies, and comics theory, this paper will offer a critical examination of the representation of bipolar disorder in *Rx*. Specifically, I will explore the ways in which this text articulates the negative impact that neoliberal ideas of productivity have on mentally ill people, as Rachel is forced to keep a job that worsens her mental health in order to receive health insurance to treat her bipolar disorder. The well/unwell paradigm that permeates psychiatric discourses has been criticized by disability scholars such as Margaret Price (2011), who probes the problematic focus on “mental health” and its “its implication that a mad person needs to be ‘cured’ by some means” (12). In addition, I will employ Andrea Nicki’s notion of the “cultural demand of cheerfulness” (2001) to study how the current capitalist climate is especially harmful to mentally ill people, who are forced to deny their disorders (93). Similarly, Rachel Gorman’s work on mad identity and psychiatric surveillance (2013) is useful to investigate how Rachel is

simultaneously surveilled by her doctors and by her own self: as she is subjected to a medical scrutiny that measures her willingness to conform to societal norms, Rachel begins to deliberately mask her symptoms to be deemed “mentally healthy.” Thus, she performs the “sanity” demanded by ableist standards of normalcy as a means to return to her previous life.

Special focus will be given to the graphic depiction of the psychiatric hospital, as the author employs the formal elements of the medium to recreate the physicality of the space into the pages of her graphic narrative, therefore taking advantage of comics’ capacity “to be diagrammatic—representing objects in space and in time” and shedding “light on institutional spaces like hospitals” (Chute 2017, 241). Rachel’s artistic creativity is also curbed, as the institution demands her creativity to be exclusively oriented towards cure and rehabilitation. Ultimately, I will argue that by crafting a narrative that resists cure, Lindsay articulates an intricate counter-discourse that challenges the evidence-based objectivity of medical authorities and the lack of humanity of the US healthcare system.

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**Keywords:** Rachel Lindsay; *Rx*; graphic narrative; disability studies; mental illness.

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**The “Jokerfication” of Society: Hope (Not Batman) Will Save Us – (Round Table)**

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**Abstract**

Maybe more than ever before in the past forty years, the current moment of crisis calls on academics to reconsider the ways in which they approach scholarship. The economic meltdown that began in 2008 ushered in an era of massive inequality. One of the calamitous consequences of the recession was the progress made towards the reconfiguration of society in economic terms, and, as a corollary, the flight from any sense of social responsibility, the dismantling of the state, and the rise of totalitarianism. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these processes and, contrary to what might be expected, it has not served to ward off capital’s all-out attack on social values. We lurch from crisis to crisis while society gets increasingly unequal and collective values are being trampled upon. Add to this the militarization of society and the war fever that seems to have gripped Europe and the United States and that threaten to further undermine the fragile agreements on questions pertaining to social solidarity and climate change. It is not just that the future looks bleak; we may be nearing, as Chomsky put it only a few weeks ago “the most dangerous point in human history” (in Rozsa 2022).

Not surprisingly therefore, we are witnessing what David Sirota recently termed the “Jokerfication” of life. Faced with demoralization and disillusionment, many people seem to have chosen the hedonism and artificiality of Glary Glitter’s music and are now dancing down the stairways of Gotham. Without doubt, these are challenging and contradictory times. Many people live indulged in cynicism and nihilism; there is a widespread belief that nothing will change or, even worse, that nothing matters. Meanwhile they call for freedom and celebrate individualism and self-interest (oblivious to the forces that have caused this situation and that continue hurting them). This attitude has serious consequences, if only because it determines the possibilities

for and the acceptable limits of change—what can and what can't be done—and because it affects how we project ourselves into the future. So much so that despair appears to have become strategic and cynicism a tool of statecraft.

However, it is precisely this quasi-dystopian situation that may unleash forces that will forge a different political consciousness and bring about a shared commitment to explore other possibilities for the future. All this—the anxiety, the pessimism, the nihilism, the tribalism—has led to renewed interest in the concept of hope as a critical tool. The goal of this session is to discuss how we can approach this emergent structure of feeling and, more specifically, to facilitate an inclusive understanding of the potential of hope to change the ways we live our lives and how we envision our future. To this end, all four presenters seek to engage in a reassessment of the concept of hope and its potentialities for the study of culture. We will start off from the premises that popular culture reveals tensions between different visions of society, that they give us access to otherwise opaque historical and cultural processes, and that they enable us to discover the latent possibilities of the current conjuncture and to imagine other futures. Despair and nihilism lie, to some extent, in the failure to comprehend and navigate the complex assemblage of forces that make up the present moment of crisis and the failure to imagine alternatives. With this in mind, we want to emphasize that popular culture may help us identify the forces of change and reconstitute the relationality and the complexity of the present situation as a precondition to imagining new possibilities for the future. Here we take our cue from, among others, scholars like Mary Zournazi and Lawrence Grossberg. The former insists on the “need to re-envision and imagine hope as a convergence of new agendas, conversations and possibilities in everyday life and political activity” (2002, 17). In a similar vein, the latter encourages us to explore the possibilities that open up for humankind when we reconstruct the present context as a “context of hope” (2010, 318).

The main purpose of this round table is to engage the audience in a discussion of the different ways hope and hope-related concepts can be mobilized as analytical strategies for the study of culture. The session is meant to facilitate a more inclusive understanding of the potential of hope as a method of cultural criticism in the current conjuncture. “The present moment,” notes Lawrence Grossberg (2018, 92), “is being shaped by an organization of passive nihilism.” There seems to be a widespread belief that no matter what you do, nothing will change. All four panellists work on the assumption that this structure of feeling calls on scholars to reconsider the nature of the relationship between culture and society and to think more carefully about what issues need pursuing and how to proceed. To this end, we will combine Ernst Bloch's hermeneutics of hope with the interdisciplinary nature of cultural studies in an effort to advance a new perspective capable of fostering more critically satisfactory explanations of the ways in which popular culture in general and films and comics in



particular interact with society in the current situation. Thus, the main purpose of this round table is to engage the audience in a discussion about the shortcomings of the dominant forms of critique in the face of new challenges—like self-interest, the attack on social justice, the “precarization” of life, and environmental devastation—and the inability to project visions of a better life. Taking our cue from the work of the abovementioned Grossberg and Bloch, but also from Rebecca Solnit, Douglas Kellner, and Darren Ambrose among others, we seek to address questions pertaining the direction that a progressive approach to popular culture, one that offers a vision of hope, should take.

### **1) Keeping Hope Alive in an Age of Cynicism**

This presentation asks how the cultural critic can mobilize hope in a context marked by pessimism and, to a greater or lesser degree, by a flight from social responsibility and an assault on collective values. In *Under the Cover of Chaos*, Lawrence Grossberg alerts to what he calls “an organization of passive nihilism, which has been emerging and gaining strength since the turn of the millennium” (2018, 92). To the extent that this structure of feeling brings into the mainstream new possibilities to expand the potentialities of market values and reactionary politics, we are, Grossberg suggests (6), at a historical turning point. The COVID-19 pandemic has only made matters worse. There is a growing feeling among the people that nothing matters. Disenchantment, cynicism, and nihilism repeatedly stand out in conversation. And yet, at the same time, it is hard to believe that the lives of these same people who believe that nothing will change are not animated by dreams of a better life or that these nihilistic thoughts are not motivated by anxieties that are rooted in a sense of what social life should be like. In order to address these concerns, what I propose to do as part of this round table is, first, to draw together several ideas pertaining to the commonalities between Ernst Bloch’s hermeneutics of hope and theories of articulations and conjunctures as developed in the field of Cultural Studies (e.g. Hall et al. 2013) and, secondly, to examine how popular culture in general and film in particular reveal desires for change and transformation that will determine what we take to be acceptable and doable. Taking as my cue what Lawrence Grossberg termed “a practice of radical contextuality” (2015, 220), I will argue for the necessity of enhanced critical focus on films’ particular narrative and aesthetic characteristics as a prerequisite for identifying and activating tendencies that are present in history in ways that expose the potentialities of a given conjuncture. I will frame these issues by discussing how Roberto Minervini’s *The Passage* (2011) deals with questions of hopelessness and despair.

### **2) The Audacity of Kindness: Ryan Johnson’s *Knives Out* (2019) as a Narrative of Hope**

*Knives Out* is Ryan Johnson's densely plotted and politically vocal homage to classic whodunits. The film concerns the death of world-renowned crime novelist Harlan Thrombey (Christopher Plummer), who commits suicide on his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. Upon his demise, the members of the Thrombey family—a varied group of wealthy individuals living off Harlan's success—assume they will be receiving their share of the inheritance. To everyone's shock though, Harlan made her nurse Marta (Ana de Armas) the sole beneficiary of his inheritance. The film relies on a number of tropes from the whodunit genre to offer a portrait of class that casts accumulated wealth as toxic and morally degrading. The Thrombey family becomes a vehicle to articulate a blatant indictment of income inequality and the upper class. What is most noteworthy and worth exploring, however, is how the film articulates a very particular and nuanced narrative of hope through the characters of Marta and Harlan.

Hope is certainly a complicated notion to operationalize and mobilize for the reading of literary and filmic texts. In developing his seminal notion of hegemony, Antonio Gramsci shows how mapping out hegemony and its configuration entails identifying new ways to re-settle the existing social relations and political alliances, which opens up the possibility of delineating the contours of new hegemonies (Johnson 2013, 52). In the same vein, yet in more concrete fashion, Ernst Bloch famously wrote about art and its "anticipatory illumination", that is, the ability of art to capture not only the conditions and tendencies of its time but also those not-yet-taken avenues and unarticulated projects which can pave the way for a better, more humane world (Zipes 2019, 35). I view the relation between Harlan and Marta as channeling a sense of anticipatory illumination. Their friendship suggests how the existing social forces can be rearranged to pursue a more egalitarian polity.

Marta is a first-generation migrant from Latin America who suffers from a strange condition: she cannot lie without vomiting. The film's highly convoluted plot identifies Marta's condition and character—i.e. her inability to lie and her ethical convictions—as her only tools to defeat the Thrombeys. The film signals having values and a strong moral compass as the means to fight back the rent-seeking upper-class. Similarly, Harlan's view of his family is nothing but the acknowledgment that immense wealth concentrated in a few hands engenders morally despicable individuals. In keeping with Bloch's argument, their friendship illuminates an untapped avenue to overcome this era of inequality: a multiethnic and morally strong working-class—embodied by Marta—and an unambiguous rejection of inequality and inherited wealth—which would connect Harlan, politically and generationally, with the ethos of New Deal liberalism, deprived in this iteration of its original sins of racism and xenophobia.

### **3) Sequentiality in Pandemic Times: COVID-19 and the Graphic (Re)construction of Hope**

The uncanny, anxious times of the COVID-19 pandemic that paralyzed the world in 2020 have become an enthralling source of cultural production in the hybrid medium of comics. Composed of the verbal and the visual, comics is a powerful vehicle to contextualize not only the intricacies of health data and the impact of contagion (Callender et al. 2020, 1062), but also to visualize the lived realities of illness and trauma. Interestingly, comics that engage with diseases are not a new pandemic addition: according to comics scholar Hillary Chute, graphic narratives about illness and/or disability have multiplied in the last twenty years, owing to the capacity of the medium to “make visible both external features of a condition, and internal, cognitive, and emotional features that are hard to communicate otherwise” (2017, 241-243). In this manner, cartoonists find creative freedom in the formal aspects of this art form, and thus they play with layouts, panels, sequences, and word balloons in order to embed their particular experiences with healthcare, quarantines, or social distancing in the white space of the page.

One of the most recent works about the pandemic told in the medium of comics is *Covid Chronicles* (2021), an anthology composed of eighty-two short episodes that delves into the many different lives touched—and altered by—COVID-19. Written and drawn by patients, caregivers, and healthcare workers alike, these stories offer complex scientific and medical information about the virus, show the routines of essential workers and doctors working excruciating shifts in the front lines, and portray critiques of the lack of appropriate governmental responses across the globe. In fact, *Covid Chronicles* conveys the plethora of conflicting experiences of the pandemic, which is itself “fraught and intensely paradoxical, at once paving the way to a new (hopeful) normal or pushing humanity to vulnerability and helplessness on an unprecedented scale” (Saji et al. 2021, 137). It is precisely this ambivalence that allows some of these creators to recontextualize their graphic narratives in terms of community building, care, and solidarity, finding in the pandemic crisis an opportunity to conceive something new. Thus, the aim of my study is to critically examine the representations of the pandemic in these comics, focusing on the graphic portrayal of the disease and the ways in which some of these personal stories articulate the notion of hope within a pandemic context. Special attention will be given to how these comics construct—and subvert—the “new normal,” exploring the kind of (un)hopeful futures envisioned after months of enforced self-isolation, economic crises, and mass debilitation.

#### **4) Not Playing Nero’s Fiddle. Finding Hope in Recent Ecocritical Films**

In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to locate instances of films dealing with environmental issues that project hope. As Lisa Garforth notes in *Environmental Utopias* (2018), dystopian films that deal with environmental issues are more than abundant, and that is the fact indeed. If we consider such films as *Deepwater Horizon* (Peter Berg, 2016) or *Don’t Look Up* (Adam McKay, 2021), one cannot but conclude that

the future that lays ahead of us is nothing but grim. While the first film points at corporate mismanagement and greed as the main causes for the infamous environmental disaster that took place in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, in the second film political incompetence and misguided beliefs in the unlimited power of technical solutions to the environmental crisis lead to our planet's total obliteration. As portrayed in these films, neoliberalism and the failure of self-interested political leaders to grab the bull by the horns have generated a state of affairs in which individualism is rampant and misinformation about the environmental crisis is all too easily disseminated. This grim state of affairs that is recurrently portrayed in popular film may, hopefully, stir an environmental conscience in some spectators but at the same time it can be described as highly pernicious as it may lead to hopelessness and despair (McKinley, 2008; Krezt, 2013). In other words, in the minds of some, all has been lost. It is far too late and there are no possible solutions to the environmental crisis. Therefore, since there nothing we can do, we might as well keep on enjoying life as we know it, i.e., consuming, leading high-carbon lives and, ultimately, digging our own grave. As Fiala (2010) has put it, "we are in the midst of a crisis of millennial proportions and yet we waste time and pursue our own self-interests, fiddling while Rome burns."

Yet, one may still locate a number of films which stubbornly refuse both to fit this pattern and give up to the general mood of gloominess. In this section of the round table, I will be referring to three such films, namely social realist drama *El Olivo* (2016, Icíar Bollain), scripted by Ken Loach's long-time collaborator Paul Laverty, documentary film *My Octopus Teacher* (2020, Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed) and cartoon fantasy *Wolfwalkers* (2020, Tomm Moore). As I will try to demonstrate, all three films, while operating from widely different aesthetic angles, insist on the possibility of a hopeful future through their novel portrayal of human relations to other elements of the biotic community, from trees to animals in the wild. My argument is that they represent "dreams and hopes for an alternative to the social arrangements that we currently have" that arise from "everyday experiences of dissatisfaction, inequality or lack" (Garforth, 2018: 3; 9). Though their inspiring, multifaceted portrayal of non-exploitative human-non human connections, these films insist that it is far from being too late and that our salvation lies in our own hands. It is only by reconfiguring our relationships to other living things, with which we have to respectfully coexist, and redefining our role in the ecosystems we inhabit that the environmental crisis might hopefully be mitigated, even if not altogether averted.

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**Keywords:** hope; crisis; Cultural Studies; nihilism; Ernest Bloch.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenging Representations of Girlhood: Identities in the Making in Contemporary Cultural Narratives – (Round Table)</b></p>
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**Abstract**

This roundtable proposes an open discussion to emerge from the analysis of depictions of girlhood in diverse fields of contemporary culture, particularly focusing on three case studies that offer ground-breaking counter-narratives: Ciara Smyth's YA literature, Margaret Atwood's novels and their TV adaptation in *The Handmaid's Tale* series, and Dee Ree's activist filmmaking. Recent scholarship (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2008) has studied girlhood, including the period of adolescence, as a crucial stage in terms of self-knowledge and identity formation, a transitional phase in which girls' identities "are tried on for size" (Jenkins 2003, ix). Especially since the 1990's, the dissemination of girls' stereotypes has followed a preconceived structure that polarizes their cultural representations "between 'Girl Power' and 'Reviving Ophelia'" (Gonick 2006, 1). These dichotomous modes spread paradoxical images of girls as innocent, obedient and fragile beings, as well as hyper sexualized post-feminist heroines, which perpetuates patriarchal norms and forms (Harris 2006; McRobie 2007). In a forced attempt to fit in the constraints of society, girls may internalise these degrading roles as naturally acceptable, while being pressured to leave other forms of self-awareness behind the masquerades of "normalcy".

Drawing on feminist theories and criticism, this proposal examines how the intersecting oppressions (Crenshaw 2022) of gender, sex, race, ethnicity and class entangle to fix girls and women adolescents within the "matrix of domination" (Collins 2000) that guarantees the maintenance of the heteronormative patriarchal order. The generation of diverse challenging images of girls as agents of resistance and change comes from contemporary interdisciplinary narratives that seek to promote critical standpoints and cultural transformation. The three different case studies examined in this roundtable share these common political goals. Firstly, to question the socio-political constraints of "girl-making" (Bloustien 2004) in Anglo-American literature and audiovisual narratives. These controlling images represent a net of obstacles that the protagonists have to confront to show their families and societies who they really think they are. Secondly, these narratives are understood as thought-provoking counter-discourses that offer alternative perspectives on girlhood. Through their non-

conforming protagonists, these literary and audiovisual narratives work as vehicles that depict modes of existence that defy canonical forms, thus promoting inclusion and diversity. Thirdly, in a more personal way, each protagonist strives to establish her own sense of self, generating critical reflections and providing transgressive modes to struggle against the socially fixed constructions of girlhood, forging difference as an empowering condition.

After having analyzed these three challenging depictions of girlhood, we will open the debate to the public on how these resistant images may enable an effective and affective generation of new forms of resilience, self-awareness and agency, in order to discern to what extent such cultural representations may constitute an important strategy in contemporary feminist activism.

### 1) **“Queering Irish Girlhood: Beyond the Coming Out Story in Ciara Smyth’s YA fiction”**

Early Irish LGBTQ+ Young Adult fiction was generally focused on coming out narratives. Main characters were often depicted learning to come to terms with their (non-hetero)sexuality and struggling over the dilemma whether to tell their family and friends for fear of being rejected. In contrast with those earlier works that were characterised by less celebratory outcomes and characters who often hoped that their same-sex attraction was a phase that would eventually pass, recent Irish YA fiction offers a more accepting approach. Coming out might indeed be a crucial moment in the life of LGBTQ+ people, and thus texts that portray different coming out stories are necessary; however, it is essential not to focus exclusively on this event and the stress that it might cause, in order to avoid the message that the life of LGBTQ+ people is entirely defined by this moment. In Ireland, the past few decades have seen an increase in LGBTQ+ YA novels that do go beyond the coming out story and depict characters who ‘just happen to be gay’. Yet, this concept of ‘just happen to be gay’ has been marked by controversy in recent years. Though there might be good intentions behind this notion, as it reflects the idea that being LGBTQ+ should not be the only trait to define a character, it should also be acknowledged that being LGBTQ+ does have an impact on the character’s life in that some of their experiences can be different from those of straight characters. Being LGBTQ+ can affect how characters may navigate different areas of their lives, such as family relations, friendships and relationships, among others. Therefore, while a story does not need to focus specifically on how characters – or their family or friends – learn to accept their queerness, this queerness and the effect it has on their lives should be acknowledged. An example of recent YA fiction novels that go beyond the coming out story are Ciara Smyth’s *The Falling in Love Montage* (2020) and *Not My Problem* (2021). The protagonists of these two texts, Saoirse and Aileen respectively, are two young lesbians who have already come out and thus this event does not develop throughout the story nor is it a catalyst in the plot.

Similarly, their sexuality does not appear as a burden or an obstacle they need to confront. In this intervention, I will explore how Saoirse and Aideen negotiate their position in a heteronormative – as well as Catholic – society, following queer and feminist frameworks. Particularly, I will focus on how they navigate school, family, friendships and relationships from their stance as Irish lesbian girls who have already come out and accepted their sexuality. This analysis will be carried out in order to demonstrate that there is a life for lesbian characters beyond coming out and to illustrate how they can negotiate their queerness in different spaces and with different people.

## 2) “Transcending the Containment of the Monstrous Body: Experiences of Girlhood in *The Handmaid’s Tale* Universe”

Following the success of the first season of Hulu’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (2017), Margaret Atwood’s universe continues to be expanded with new seasons of the series (at least five so far) and the recent novel *The Testaments* (2019), a sequel to *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985). These additions to the fictional universe include new characters and perspectives that broaden the scope of the original novel. Both productions have included representations of girlhood and how it is affected by the restrictive politics of Gilead, the fictional totalitarian nation. The first depiction of girlhood appears in the second season of the series (2018) through the character of Eden, a 15-year-old forcedly married to Nick, a collaborator of the regime. In addition, the sequel to the first novel, *The Testaments*, dives deep into the deconstruction of gender roles that shape the girls’ experiences by providing the testimony of two young girls that grow up in different sides of Gilead’s northern border: Agnes in Gilead and Daisy in Canada. This intervention will consider both these products as part of a transmedia production that inform one another. It will analyze the information on the girls’ upbringing in Gilead presented in *The Testaments* to provide a general overview of the features that characterize their experience. Girlhood is regulated through the continuous performance of the rigid gendered categories set by Gilead and the contention of the girls’ bodies, which must be covered and only recognizable through their class clothing. Following Elizabeth Grosz’s work on corporeal feminism, I argue that their bodies are seen as both revolting and dangerously enticing at the same time, leaking and flowing out of themselves. This double reading of the body can also be linked to thesis number six of Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s theory on monstrosity, as the girls are located in a liminal position that threatens to transcend the fixed gender roles. Cohen’s seven theses have already been used by Pilar Somacarrera Íñigo to analyze female monsters in Margaret Atwood’s fiction in her recent book *Poder y Monstruosidad en la Narrativa de Margaret Atwood* (2021). Gilead prescribes a grammar of self-containment and postfeminist self-responsibility as a device to avoid the dangers that their monstrous bodies may cause. However, every girl-character presented in both series



and sequel manages to subvert the imposition of the gender roles that aim to contain their bodies and experience through a reappropriation of the symbols of the regime. This presentation will focus on two characters from the series to analyze the representations of girlhood in *The Handmaid's Tale* universe: Eden, a 15-year-old, introduced in the second season of the series (2018); and Esther, a 14-year-old, introduced in the fourth and last available season (2021). From their liminal position as monstrous beings, both manage to escape the roles they were forced into through a reinterpretation of the ambivalent meanings of Gilead's discourse.

### **3) *Pariah*: Resistance, Agency and Self-Definition in African American Lesbian Cinema**

In her ground-breaking essay *Birth of a Notion* (1991), Michelle Parkerson openly denounced how the distorted images about the LGBTQ+ African American community disseminated through mainstream media were absolutely limiting and mostly reduced to stereotypes based on the threatening/parodic dichotomy. Since then, many African American lesbian filmmakers have created cinematic counter-narratives in response to canonical discourses (Welbon and Juhasz 2018), confronting those degrading depictions and offering new oppositional gazes (hooks 1992). An early highlighted case of triumphant African American lesbian filmmaking was Cheryl Dunye's *The Watermelon Woman* (1995), offering innovative and fresh approaches that successfully broke up with the misconstructions of young Black lesbians that had been generated and spread by the dominant culture. The then flourishing African American lesbian cinema provided the collective with disruptive depictions that publicly defended diversity and promoted sociocultural acceptance and transformation. However, most of them were centred on adulthood, leaving unattended other stages of life.

Lesbian girlhood did not obtain worth consideration and international distribution till Dee Rees' feature film *Pariah* was released in Sundance (2011). Based on her homonymous short film (2007), Rees focuses her critical gaze and politically-engaged discourse on African American lesbian adolescent girl Alike Freeman. Adolescence understood as a liminal space (Bailey 2019: 7) is at the core of many novels and plays by African American feminist authors like Toni Morrison or Ntozake Shange. Rees sharply tackles with this crucial period of transition by adding the underexplored topic of sexual identity and how the prejudices constructed upon it severely intersect with the oppressions of gender, race, religion and class in African American girls' lives. Furthermore, and very interestingly, *Pariah* is not specifically focused on Alike's personal doubts concerning her sexuality, since she demonstrates her assertiveness from the very beginning of the narrative. Her main difficulties reside in how to inform her family, particularly regarding her mother, with whom Alike maintains a tense relationship. Having at its base key concepts such as "[t]he culture of dissemblance and the politics of silence" (DeClue 234), *Pariah* introduces

different intersecting factors that heavily impact on this girl's sociocultural development. Through Alike's self-determination and courage, Rees also puts her focus on diverse matters that deeply affect African American lesbian girl adolescents such as intergenerational conflicts, the socio-political impact of religion, and the homophobia that still has severe effects on the Black community. Highly rated by film critics and multi-awarded, *Pariah* brilliantly brings to the forefront the story of an African American lesbian girl in transit to self-empowerment while tightly negotiating with family and friends in the complex road to self-definition.

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**Keywords:** Girlhood-studies; feminism; intersectionality; LGBTQ+-YA-fiction; Media-studies.

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**The Posthuman Turn in the Fashion Industry: On Human Animals & Cyborgs  
through Alexander McQueen's Fashion Shows**

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**Abstract**

The vindication of popular culture within academic research has enabled the proper theoretical examination of diverse cultural and artistic manifestations, including fashion, which is no longer associated necessarily with the frivolous, the trivial, or the banal. Being a system defined by continuous change and renewal, fashion is echoing current ontological debates that call into question the barrier between the human and the nonhuman, thus producing counter and subcultural (re)productions of the human body, which are conveyed in some fashion designers' performance-like runway shows. To conduct a qualitative analysis of such alternative figurations, fashion studies are used in this paper to examine dress as an embodied practice which adds cultural meaning to the body (Entwistle 2000). Fashion also aligns with Judith Butler's notion of performativity (1990; 1993), since dress, acting as our second skin, either enhances or deconstructs our socially constructed gender identity along different parameters. This sociological and philosophical examination of fashion and dress is combined with the posthumanist perspectives proposed by scholars such as Rosi Braidotti (2013; 2022), who defies the barrier between human and nonhuman by perceiving the body as an assemblage of biological, social, and technological infrastructures. In this manner, the present study draws from the posthuman turn in fashion recently pointed out by Anneke Smelik, who defines the posthuman subject in the field of fashion as a "hybrid figure who decenters human subjectivity, celebrating in-between-ness, by making alliances with all kinds of nonhumans" (2022, 58).

Drawing from this methodology that combines fashion studies and the discourses of posthumanism, the present study seeks to analyze the fashion shows of the British fashion designer Alexander McQueen, which rejected dominant figurations of the human body while raising awareness on some environmental issues, such as global warming and biodiversity loss (Villanueva 2013). By presenting models hybridized with nonhuman animals or with technological artefacts, McQueen produced scenarios where the human and nonhuman fused critically and creatively, thus destabilizing some dualistic notions deeply embedded in Western thought, such

as those of human animal/nonhuman animal, nature/culture, or biology/technology. This study sheds some light on three different tropes presented in his sartorial creations and which subverted said binary oppositions: the androgyne, which dismantles gender boundaries; the feral woman archetype, which challenges the barrier between human animal and nonhuman animal; and the (re)creation of the cyborg, which defies the divide between human and machine. Hence, as many other artistic and creative manifestations, and thanks to designers such as Alexander McQueen, the field of fashion is registering a posthuman and post-anthropocentric turn that decenters the dominance of Man/Anthropos on planet Earth.

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**Keywords:** Alexander McQueen; Posthumanism; fashion; dress; performativity.

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**“Me Contradigo / Yo me Transformo”: the Multiplicity of Selves and the Transgression of the Motomami Idiolect**

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### Abstract

It was Walt Whitman who, in his magnum opus *Song of Myself*, published in 1855, wrote “Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself, (I am large, I contain multitudes)”. In his train, the Spanish artist Rosalía defends in her latest work *Motomami* (2022) that she, indeed, contradicts herself and contains multitudes (“Me contradigo . . . soy to’a’ las cosa’” (“Saoko” 0:53). Met with critical acclaim, the album deals with themes that go from fame, solitude, the passage of time, love, or sex to the conceptualization of the self in the cultural and historical moment we are living in. The present paper will discuss how, by presenting a new paradigm in pop culture of transgression, poetic meditation and autobiographical writing that places the self at the core of the narrative, *Motomami* functions as an avant-garde reflection on the multiplicity of selves in a society that leans toward unification, thus orienting her work towards a literary tradition that goes back to Whitman, Nietzsche and Woolf, while also examining the history of the female body, and, as Ahmed would point out, of its comportment, horizons, historically-otherized nature and revindication (56). This paper will, thus, study the conceptualization of the self in *Motomami* and how the artist has been able to portray such conception by channeling disparate literary and musical influences and tendencies to create a distinctive idiolect and redefine today’s pop, once again foregrounding the importance of popular culture, and music in particular, in today’s understanding of literary tendencies and their cultural and social implications despite its relative neglect in academia.

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**Keywords:** Rosalía; body; self; space; music.

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**“What a blessing to be Earth loving Earth”: *The Anthropocene Reviewed* and  
John Green’s Search for Personal Meaning in an Unstable World**

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**Abstract**

The Anthropocene emerged as a geological concept (Crutzen and Stoermer), but it soon developed into what Yadvinder Malhi called “a scientific and cultural zeitgeist, a charismatic mega-category emerging from and encapsulating elements of the spirit of our age” (2). Instead of an epoch characterised by the appearance of the human footprint in geological strata, the Anthropocene has become synonymous with the current era, a time of concern for the uncertain effects of anthropogenic climate change. Though the philosophical stances towards the Anthropocene are multiple, from recognising the usefulness of the concept (Morton) to considering it harmful (Malm and Hornborg), it cannot be denied that it has become an alluring notion, a fertile ground for reconsidering humanity’s place in the universe and our connection to the natural systems in which we are embedded.

American author John Green set out to explore these ideas in a podcast later transformed into a book, *The Anthropocene Reviewed* (2021), a compendium of short texts which mix pop cultural analysis and memoir, a clear departure from his main body of work, comprised of YA fiction. The subtitle of the book, *Essays on a Human-Centered Planet*, neatly summarises Green’s views of the Anthropocene: an epoch which highlights the role of humanity in a changing Earth; thus, the Anthropocene is for him synonymous with contemporary human history instead of a concept primarily concerned with human modification of the environment. His approach is certainly anthropocentric, as he believes humans “are by far the most interesting thing that ever happened on Earth” (19), but he also acknowledges how harmful human intervention has been for the environment: “for many forms of life, humanity *is* the apocalypse” (17, emphasis in the original). Nevertheless, he also considers the dependency of humanity upon the environment: “there is ultimately no way out of the obligations and limitations of nature. We *are* nature” (76, emphasis on the original); in this way, he introduces his monistic view of the universe, the idea that everything is, after all, built from the same matter.

The main aim of this presentation will be to examine how the Anthropocene disrupts Green's notion of a stable personal identity and, at the same time, provides a framework within which he reconceptualises his relationship with the world. Making use of an ecocritical approach, I will analyse Green's views of the connections between nature and society and the diverse narrative strategies he employs throughout the book to make sense of the world in which he lives. In this manner, I will show how the notion of the Anthropocene has permeated the consciousness of this popular fiction author and how his non-academic views of the subject matter compare and relate to current ideas of the Anthropocene in literary criticism. Finally, I will briefly consider the reception of the book and how its popularity has contributed to the dissemination of the concept among non-specialised readers.

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**Keywords:** anthropocene; ecocriticism; popular non-fiction; *The Anthropocene Reviewed*; John Green.

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**Challenging the agenda of a self-proclaimed feminist, radical historian. The representation of Catherine of Aragon in Philippa Gregory's fiction**

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## Abstract

Historical fiction has often been used to revise official historical narratives and, in the case of women authors, to re-examine patriarchal historical discourse to vindicate the



role played by women (Wallace 2005, 4). This is exactly what Philippa Gregory, a self-proclaimed feminist, radical historian (Wallace 2005, 186; 190-1), and arguably Britain's bestselling historical novelist, claims to do in her fiction. More specifically, she has been noted to infuse her novels with elements taken from popular genres like romance to engage with history and portray female agency and power. In this light, the present paper inquires into the representation of Catherine of Aragon in a joint analysis of three novels by Philippa Gregory, namely *The Constant Princess* (2005), *The King's Curse* (2014) and *Three Sisters, Three Queens* (2016). The relevance of this research can be argued in three complementary ways. First, Catherine of Aragon has been relegated to the fringes of official historiography; secondly, her figure has not been given her due in earlier fictional accounts; thirdly, this paper focuses on popular literary manifestations which, although potentially influential, largely remain "beneath the critical radar" (Schneider-Mayerson 2010, 29).

This paper first places Gregory within Britain's remarkable historical novel tradition and, more specifically, within the subfield of Tudor fiction. Additionally, it argues for the convenience of a joint analysis of the three novels above. The analysis scrutinises aspects of characterisation and narrative technique in order to assess the extent to which Gregory's Catherine novels serve as a vehicle to portray a woman endowed with empowerment, capability and agency. The results (which provide evidence of an essentially unsolvable, contradictory portrayal that crucially hampers the reader's sympathy for the character) suggest that, at least on this occasion, Gregory's romance-infused literary formula does not seriously engage with history, only superficially empowering the figure of Catherine, while failing to represent her as a capable ruler with any major agency in history. It is therefore concluded that, rather than a re-examination of patriarchal historical discourse, Gregory's Catherine novels provide instead controversy-seeking entertainment that seems to replicate the apparently irresolvable contradictions that have been detected in the romance literature that clearly inspires Gregory's take on historical fiction, namely "a tendency to consolidate certain feminist agendas for women in the character of working, independent heroines even while disparaging the women's movement itself" (Radway 1991, 35). Consequently, doubts are raised as to the extent to which labelling Gregory's fiction as "feminist" successfully encapsulates the essence of her oeuvre, when "post-feminist" would probably be a far better fit.

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**Keywords:** agency; Catherine of Aragon; feminist history; Philippa Gregory; historical fiction.

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## FEMINIST AND GENDER STUDIES

### Stigmatization Processes, Resistance and Waste – (Round table)

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#### Abstract

Drawing from the critique by feminist, queer, postcolonial and posthumanist theories to neoliberal capitalist societies and to the consumerism they generate, the current round table intends to delve into the multiple forms in which non-normative bodies become othered, and consequently, stigmatized and disposable. As a collateral damage of the “economic advancement” and the construction of a new global social order, there are whole communities that are turned into human waste and, hence, made redundant, as indicated by Zygmunt Bauman (2004). Among these there are refugees and migrants, but also sick, racialized, gendered and sexualized bodies. There are also other differences more visibly and materially inscribed on the body, and derived from wider processes of racialization, sexualization, dissident gender expressions, islamization, etc. All these groups are frequently turned into “disposable lives” (Brad Evans and Henry Giroux, 2015), commodified, controlled, dispossessed and treated with extreme violence, sometimes even murdered. Simultaneously, those politics and grammars of exclusion sustain stigmatization practices, which condition the way in which the people in those communities perceive themselves, internalizing the stigma (Imogen Tyler, 2020) until they see themselves as abject beings (Julia Kristeva, 1982), and therefore, as non-human or less-than-human.

In this light, the round table addresses four key areas: stigma, resistance, waste and value that will be tackled in two sessions. Session 1 will focus on stigmatization processes and resistance. Analyzing the different forms of stigmatization employed by power structures, and the effects of those practices to generate social exclusion, we will

also deal with the multiple resistances that excluded individuals may mobilize. Moreover, we will reflect on the plurality and diversity of human experience as related to gender, sexuality, disease and/or race, and how disposable individuals and communities resist commodification by claiming their embodied selves.

We will continue to dwell on these notions in session 2, but now highlighting the concepts of waste and value. Waste matters from the point of view of ethics (Gay Hawkins, 2006), as it can also be transformed in alternative forms of corporality. Considering the direct connection among bodies, habits, ethics and the importance of waste, we will investigate how we can change destructive practices and cultural representations, constructing instead an inclusive and holistic ethics. Besides, the concept of “value,” so relevant for the contemporary capitalist societies, will also be explored. We argue that it is necessary to reorganize social and cultural values so that new and more sustainable forms of inclusion can be created in order to make visible and ultimately promote new forms of interdependent relations that aim at recovering values and knowledges, either from non-Western epistemologies, legacies of the past or posthuman manifestations. Only in this case may human existence achieve higher levels of equality and social justice.

### **1) “The Unblinding”: Trans Embodiments in Akwaeke Emezi’s Writing and Visual Art**

The last two decades have witnessed an emergence of African queer and transgender representations in literature and the arts that have been framed as interventions in cultural politics and as expressions of dissent (Camminga 2019; Diesel 2011; Hoad 2007). This proposal focuses on Nigerian-born transgender writer and visual artist Akwaeke Emezi’s “The Unblinding” (2016 to the present), a collection of written material, video installations and portraits where they experiment with forms of embodiment for non-normative bodies, usually rendered disposable. I will pay particular attention to the essay “Transition” (2018), the novel *The Death of Vivek Oji* (2020) and *Dear Senthuran: A Black Spirit Memoir* (2021). The autobiographical essay recounts their own non-binary surgery procedures and challenges western notions of gender through an African lens. The novel portrays the invisibility of a gender non-conforming being in a Nigerian village and the violence subjected to. Lastly, the epistolary memoir includes short chapters of Emezi’s nomadic life, who claims is an embodied *ogbanje*, a spirit child found in the Yoruba, Igbo and Urhobo pre-colonial cultures that does not conform to western notions of gender. Thus, Emezi’s multifaceted work opens up the field of diaspora studies for new African epistemologies, frequently ignored or invisibilized. The series of images and experimental videos that also integrate “The Unblinding” singularly depict the personal progression from unawareness to clarity; a process Emezi connects with non-binary embodiment, African spirituality, as well as their own self-discovery and

acceptance. In this sense, I argue (2022) that their literary and visual art captures a relevant creative intervention in the field of black queer diaspora studies from the point of view of a Nigerian transgender artist that makes dissident bodies and sexualities visible. Emezi's shrewd combination of personal experience and art lays bare multiple African, diasporic, and gender identities in the black Atlantic. The use of the prefix "trans" in the title of this abstract not only signals Emezi's fluid gender embodiments, but also their geographic relocations and the resulting transcultural dialogues.

## 2) (Un)disposable Afro-Latinas' Sexualities in Amanda Alcántara's *Chula*

Drawing from John Márquez's "racial expendability" (2012), this presentation explores how neoliberal hyper-consumerist society renders women of color and their sexualities as disposable once they have been "depleted," and analyzes its devastating impact on female mental and emotional health from eating disorders to self-harm. The continuous sexual abuses and harassment, and the lack of care and affect by her lovers and those she resorts to for help (police, psychiatrist, family, etc.) that the protagonist experiences and narrates in this autobiographic bildungsroman, *Chula* (2019), leads her to internalize rejection, devaluation and self-blame.

Nevertheless, this presentation also addresses Amanda's process of resisting commodification, and combating the hyper-sexualizing stigmas associated to both her Afro-Latinx race and ethnic self. Cultivating a healthy relationality with her body and her Afro-ancestors—while at the same time breaking with familiar and cultural violence cycles, anti-Blackness notions, and female respectability politics (Brooks Higginbotham, 1993)—is essential to stop regarding herself as waste, and rather create what I call a "ciguapa consciousness."

Just like this mythical figure who walks forwards with their eyes backwards, Afro-Latinas negotiate the meanings and implications of tradition, acknowledging legacy and simultaneously giving up patriarchal and racist norms within it that make them disposable. Amanda's play on word refers to this figure, "sí-guapa," also speaks of notions of consent, and rewrites Caribbean folklore by pointing at how ciguapas do not fatally attract men, but rather they are the ones chased and abused, that is why they need to keep an eye on their backs and "andar armada que si pepper spray, que si clase de defensa propia" (Alcántara, 2019, p. 51).

Furthermore, just as Alcántara blames porn, rape culture and fashion industry as some of the causes underlying her "sexual and corporal expendability," she also presents media visibility and performance as a transformative means towards self-appreciation. In this vein, and although critically exploring its pros and cons, social

networks such as Instagram and Snapchat are portrayed as useful tools for agency and de-colonization of her body and sexuality. In her growing-up Amanda understands that the body is no longer a tabula rasa to be hated for the discourses that others pour on it, as she did in her adolescence, but an active entity that through on and offline performance is able of reclaiming itself.

### 3) Waste Bodies and Science Fiction TV Series and Movies

Taking as a starting point the idea that in our contemporary societies, biosciences and genetic engineering have eroded the boundaries of humanity by proposing posthuman bodies that require a remaking of the traditional concepts that have defined us, this contribution deals with the posthuman subject as enacted by the figure of the disposable body in contemporary TV series and cinema, and the spectators' engagement with this marginalized experience. As I will attempt to illustrate, the cinematic figuration of the disposable body has offered spectators the possibility of positioning on the side of the other, contributing to grasp difference and activate critical mechanisms to denounce certain discriminatory practices at work in our contemporary societies and to find more sustainable ways of understanding the world.

As a theoretical framework, this analysis of the disposable body on screen relies on critical posthumanism, specifically on material or embodied posthumanism, as it is advocated by feminist critical thinkers Rosi Braidotti, Francesca Ferrando, or Sherryl Vint, among others. Critical Posthumanism has offered engaging tools for the understanding of the challenging times humanity faces in the age of the Anthropocene, defined by Paul Crutzen as our current geological era dominated by human action through technological mediation (2002: 23).

For this analysis, I propose to work on a taxonomy for the disposable body as depicted in contemporary TV series and movies, considering the way this cinematic figure relates to technology, science and biology. My initial proposal is as follows:

- a. "The body as experiment": *Splice* (2009); *The Human Race* (2013); *Old* (2021); *Sweet Tooth* (2020)
- b. "The body as spectacle": *The Hunger Games* (2012-2015); *Westworld* (2016); *Ready Player 1* (2018), *The Wilds* (2020- )
- c. "The body as replacement": *The Island* (2005); *Surrogates* (2009); *Never Let me Go* (2010); *Orphan Black* (2013-2017); *World of Tomorrow* (2015, 2017, 2020); *Altered Carbon* (2018-2020)
- d. "The body as tool": *Ghost in the Shell* (2017); *Blade Runner* (2017); *Upgrade* (2018); *Alita* (2019); *Raised by Wolves* (2020)

The different representations of waste bodies in these texts enable viewers to develop strategies for questioning hegemonic discourses, by enacting a posthuman experience that, in some cases, manages to defy conventional ways of seeing the world. Ultimately, and by experiencing the posthuman, spectators may reflect upon our intricate relationship with science and technology and activate strategies to condemn certain practices such as the commodification of the other.

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**Keywords:** Non-normative bodies; stigmatization processes; resistance; waste.

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<p><b>Losing 'It': The Lost Baby and the Lurking Chimera in Tracy Fahey's "I Spit Myself Out"</b></p>
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**Abstract**

What does it mean for a woman to go through a miscarriage? What does it mean to lose an unborn twin sister? What if your phantom sister comes back and spits you out of your own body? These questions might sum up the main issues brought about in Irish author Tracy Fahey's short story "I Spit Myself Out", from her 2021 collection of the same title. A young woman who has just lost her unborn baby tries to cope with the trauma, first at home, and then in an unspecified medical institution for the recovery of people who have gone through some kind of traumatic experience. There her mother, in one of her visits, reveals to her that she had a "phantom twin" sister who seemingly was absorbed by her own body while she was still a foetus; this revelation provokes yet another trauma in her damaged psyche. The woman finally returns home, and little by little becomes obsessed with the idea that she is a monster (the legendary chimera), and that her unborn sister is growing inside of her, melting with the ghost of her lost baby, until both her body and her narrative voice expands into a collective "we" that bears witness to the birth of a new (monstruous) bodily entity out of her dying individual self.

With both a heartfelt and economical language Fahey explores a number of topics (miscarriage, mourning, loss, societal/institutional control of the female body, etc), and develops a narrative that never stays far from the body (the dead body, the body coming back to life, the decaying body and, eventually, the monstrous body) and an unmistakably female look on both mental and physical monstrosities. Backing up my arguments with a theoretical framework based on Kristeva's concept of the abject, as exposed in *Powers of Horror* (1982), Elizabeth Grosz's reflections on the female body (*Volatile Bodies*), and the interdisciplinary approach provided by the Medical Humanities and literary theory on horror fiction, I will attempt a dissection of Fahey's text in order to reveal her commitment with a new type of discourse around horror narratives, and how she manages to go beyond the usual tropes and stereotypes connected to the female body as either a source of horror (the monstrous) or a victim (the passive sexualized object), and writes the female body afresh; a body that can interrogate itself and its physical/mental nuances free from the medical or institutional coercive restraint, especially after the trauma of miscarriage and the crumbling down of identity. By so doing, I intend to shed some light on the importance of the female perspective in contemporary horror fiction: how a different type of horror can be unsettling and disturbing by exposing the abject, and yet can also be respectful of and thoughtful about intrinsically female physical and mental experiences around women's own bodies.

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**Keywords:** female body; horror; miscarriage; medicalisation; unreliable narrator.

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<p><b>"The story of women is the story of the world": Ecofeminist COVID Auto/biography in <i>Air Mail</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

During the spring of 2020, in a world on forced pause, creative responses to the COVID-19 pandemic were quick to appear. Poetry, essays and diaries proliferated, and artistic initiatives sprang in different countries, including the US (e.g. the collective volumes *Together in a Sudden Strangeness* and *Alone Together*, edited by Alice Quinn and Jennifer Haupt, respectively). In their writing, American authors struggled to explain their personal experience in relation to the context of the nation, which was immersed in a period of extreme tension rooted in the management of the disease, but also in systemic racism, in a deeply embedded misogyny, and in the profound domestic chasm that resulted from Donald Trump's *persona* and decision-making. The multifaceted crisis was read by some as an apocalypse, and by others as a possibility for change. The potential of the pandemic as a paradigm-shifting event was on the table (e.g. Outka 2020, Stanley Robinson 2020).

Sheltering in place on either side of the Continental Divide between the months of March and May, authors Pam Houston and Amy Irvine maintained an intense correspondence that was later published in book form under the title *Air Mail. Letters of Politics, Pandemics, and Place* (2020). Originally prompted by *Orion* magazine, it started

as a way to connect two writers who had never met in person but had several things in common (e.g. their love of nature). Throughout the weeks, it evolved into a rich epistolary dialogue about women living and creating in the wild, about coping with violence and recovering from trauma, and about the need for radical socio-political transformation in the United States.

Within the field of Literary Studies and with a feminist epistemological approach, this paper proposes a closed reading of the volume *Air Mail* as an instance of contemporary gendered auto/biographical praxis. The focus will be placed on the two thematic axes that articulate the series of letters between Houston and Irvine: 1) re-making and narrating the self in the early months of COVID-19, and 2) the urgent need for change in the twilight of the Trump administration. It will follow the authors' double-voiced journey from the self to the social and back, dissecting their (self)-narrative strategies within the framework of their shared ecofeminist stance. The ultimate aim is to illuminate the cultural work done by *Air Mail* as a form of fourth-wave life narrative that, in line with classical feminism, refuses to separate the personal from the political in its particular ways of exposing a structural inequality that the pandemic has exacerbated.

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**Keywords:** the personal is political; auto/biography; COVID-19; ecofeminism; Donald Trump.

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**Retellings of the Fairy-Tale Wicked Stepmother and the Ugly Stepsister in Gregory  
Maguire's *Confession of an Ugly Stepsister* (1999)**

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**Abstract**

From the stories of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm to Disney's animated adaptation in 1950, the wicked stepmother and the ugly stepsisters from "Cinderella" have been casted as agents of evil who persecute the young and meek heroine and thwart her chances to prosper in life by marrying the enchanted prince. An envy-based rivalry defines the relationship between Cinderella and her stepmother and stepsisters, which reveals a stereotypical representation of female competition that has been haunting women for centuries. In *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister* (1999), Gregory Maguire questions the nature of these relationships by retelling the traditional story from one of the stepsisters' point of view and subverting relationships from a gender perspective. On the basis of a feminist subversion of the female rivalry from traditional fairy tales as the central hypothesis of this study, the main objective is to prove how Maguire's novel celebrates a positive relationship between the heroine and her stepmother/stepsisters, devoid of patriarchal ideals of female rivalry and encouraging collaboration and mutual understanding between women.

While for many scholars "Cinderella" is a quintessential rags-to-riches story, from a gender perspective, the fairy tale deals with female martyrdom (Lieberman 1972) and rivalry (Ulanov & Ulanov 2012). Moreover, this conflict is based on the pattern of the beauty contest, which pits women against each other (Fernández Rodríguez 1997; Wolf 2002; Etcoff 2011). Instead of being supportive, women are taught to envy other women, which is a specific female emotion in the fairy-tale genre (Persaud 2015), and that they are always plotting their rival's destruction (Duncker 1992). Despite the stepmother's wickedness, this fairy-tale staple has been redeemed by showing that, first, editorial changes from canonical collectors have smeared her reputation and, second, from a sociohistorical perspective, they are mothers who wish to promote their children in a time of need (Warner 1995).

The relationship between Cinderella and her stepsisters will be analysed in Maguire's retelling by using Lieberman's ideas of the beauty contest in traditional fairy tales (1972) and Wolf's "beauty myth" (2002). Moreover, studies that redeem the stepmother's wicked reputation, like Warner's (1995), will be used to examine her relationship with the young heroine. Both analyses will prove how *Confessions* is a

novel which encourages healthy relationships between women from the same family (stepmother-stepdaughter, stepsister-stepsister).

Concerning the results, *Confessions's* most striking difference with the traditional fairy tale and Disney's adaptations in 1950 and 2015 is Maguire's feminist twist by not making the stepsisters rivals. While the physical appearance of the stepsisters is still plain in comparison with a normative Cinderella, Clara van der Meer, the relationship between stepsisters is corrected as they become each other's collaborator. Moreover, insights into the sociohistorical reality of stepmothers are offered in this retelling to portray a more sympathetic version of a woman stereotypically represented as vain and wicked. Although Margarethe Fisher is not a positive character, this retelling acknowledges her motives.

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**Keywords:** stepmother; stepsister; fairy tale; retelling; rivalry.

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**Gendered Subjectivities and the Fantastic in Brandon Sanderson's *The Stormlight Archive***

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**Abstract**

In recent years, speculative fiction and fantasy narratives have been explored as having a certain subversive potentiality, in that they seem to destabilize notions of normality, identity and power through speculative storytelling by “meditati[ng] on (im)probable (im)possibilities, in which new identities, the “heart” of human existence, can be explored” (Haslam 2015, 13). This transformative quality of speculative fiction has resulted in said genres being examined in relation to the radical possibilities they offer for studying marginalized and othered identities — including, albeit not limited to, gendered subjectivities (see Russ 1995; Robles and Jurado 2021). Given this academic context, this piece of research wishes to explore the potential of the fantastic to subvert and openly question binary, essentialist and cis-heteropatriarchal understandings of gender, as well as the ways in which they influence narrative constructions and gendered performances of the self.

To do so, this research paper will focus on a particular fantastical American novel that, while a clear success in the literary market and fan-driven environments, has been quite under researched in the context of academia — that is, Brandon Sanderson's *Words of Radiance* (2014). The second instalment of the *Stormlight Archive* saga, the novel follows the character of Shallan Davar in her quest of protecting both her loved ones and herself in a war in which magic, political connections and economic independence are essential to one's survival. In particular, the novel explores how Shallan constructs and performs different personas — such as Veil and Radiant — to navigate her lack of political influence and economic capital as a young woman whose family is in the verge of financial bankruptcy.

Again, this research paper is concerned with both the narrative characterization of Shallan Davar as a marginalized woman and the relationship between the fantastical affordances of the novel and its gendered subjectivities. Thus, I will be drawing from feminist and speculative scholars, such as Butler (2016), Carruthers (2018) and Kennon (2011) in order to explore the transformative potential of speculative stories in regards to gendered identities.

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**Keywords:** gender; feminism; fantasy; performativity; Brandon Sanderson.

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**"Your sisters are behind you": An Exploration of Queer Communities' as both Vulnerable and Hospitable Spaces in Tom Macrae's *Everybody's Talking about Jamie* (2017)**

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### **Abstract**

The theorization of the abject and its intertwinement to marginalized communities has been long discussed in academia. Defined as that which "disturbs identity, system and order and does not respect borders, positions and rules" (Kristeva 1982), this paper will depart from this understanding of the abject to explore the role it plays in the main character's -Jamie's- life in Tom Macrae's musical *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (2017). Adapted to the stage by Tom Macrae and Dan Gillespie Sells from Jenny Popplewell's documentary *Jamie: Drag Queen at 16* (Popplewell 2011), *ETAJ* narrates the story of Jamie New, a gay teenager who at the young age of 16 has the clear idea of becoming a drag performer. The play is set in the conservative town of Sheffield, and it begins at school during Jamie's birthday, when he declares his wish to become a drag performer. From that point on, the audience follows Jamie's journey as he navigates

the abjection some of the characters subject him to and yet at the same time the audience is witness to how he becomes more confident in his sexuality and drag queen identity despite any struggles he might encounter.

Considering the basic premise of this musical, and with the aim of showing that contemporary musical theatre predominantly aimed at young audiences can be subversive and offer crucial representation to the young spectator, the article will explore how abjection towards the drag queen community is shown through the characters of Dean and Jamie's father (both antagonists in the musical), thus analysing by proxy the intersections between abjection, gender and sexuality. Nonetheless, the present article will also consider how the abjection of drag queens is contested and subverted by certain survival strategies within the marginalized communities presented in the play. It will show how Jamie finds in the drag queen community a hospitable space where he is supported and guided by older drag queens who offer him a relatively safe space to be himself. Thus, the paper will also consider how Jamie's encounter and bonding with those with whom he shares a history and a place of belonging allows him to challenge the abjectification imposed on him and his community, showing the importance of intergenerational queer communities as survival strategies for young queer people.

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**Keywords:** abjection; drag performance; musical theatre; queer communities; gender.

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<p><b>Creativity as Monstrosity: Anaïs Nin on June Miller and the Persona of the Woman Writer</b></p>
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Irene Rodríguez Pintado

### **Abstract**

Literary women of the mid-twentieth century found themselves in a social and professional setting that had constructed the concepts of femininity and creativity as opposites and, therefore, greatly fragmented the identity of women writers. Furthermore, the literary world (which was still a male-dominated field) had greatly diffculted the reconciliation of creative work and femininity. This unique setting made it a necessity for the women writers of the time to justify their work and their existence. What's more, as the inheritors of the psychological explorations that had characterized literature due to the expansion of modernism and psychoanalysis, the works of female writers of this time became very interested in the topics of self-exploration and self-explanation, often dealing with the estrangement and isolation women experienced from their creative identities. Consequently, the analysis of autobiographical works written by female writers, such as *The Diary of Anaïs Nin* become sources of great interest to analyze the persona of the literary woman and the problematic cultural link that existed between female creativity and abnormality.

The main objective of this paper will be to determine the connections Anaïs Nin establishes between intellectual creativity and monstrosity in the persona of the creative woman throughout the first volume of her diary, *Henry and June*. To achieve this objective, *Henry and June* (2001) will be analyzed along with other theoretical works on the cultural opposition between female identity and literary creation (Gilbert and Gubar 1979; Gilbert and Gubar 1988; and Showalter 1985) as well as works on feminine monstrosity (Creed 1986; Kristeva 1982) and on the very concept of monstrosity itself (Casas and Roas 2018). By making use of her own persona, and that of June Miller's, Nin's writing will allow the exploration of the cultural connection between creativity and masculinity that her world took for granted and how this interrelation affected the status of female creativity to the point of villainization and demonization. To establish this relationship, the paper will first analyze the opposing relationship between the concepts of creativity and femininity. Secondly, June Miller's persona will serve as the portrait of a threatening muse and help exemplify the danger associated with female creative power. Finally, Nin's writing over her own creative identity will permit the characterization of the woman writer as a fragmented, estranged, and, therefore, monstrous personality. As far as results are concerned, this paper will illustrate how literary creativity was culturally associated with the concept of masculinity during the mid-twentieth century and, therefore, how this period condemned the female writer to an estranged identity.

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**Keywords:** women writers; identity; creativity; monstrosity; feminist literary criticism.

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<p><b>Bernardine Evaristo's <i>Girl, Woman, Other</i>: A Tableau of Contemporary British Black Women's Feminism</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to analyse Bernardine Evaristo's novel *Girl, Woman, Other*, through the perspective of Transnational Feminism and Transcultural Studies, following the work of Shely Grabbe and Nicole M. Else-Quest (2012), Vrushali Patil (2013), Arianna Dagnino (2015), and Daniel G. König and Katia Rakow (2016). For König and Rakow, transculturality involves the deconstruction of concepts such as "culture," "society," "civilization," "nation" and "class", leading to an analysis of these issues from multiple perspectives so that they become transformative agents. Moreover, Grabe and Else-Quest introduce gender as an element that intersects with all other issues in our current age of global mobility, one in which certain minorities, having moved, or been moved, to other locations centuries ago, are still perceived by some as non-natives.

Co-winner of the 2019 Man Booker Prize (with Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments*), Evaristo's text is a radical, experimental novel which uses a fluid narrative to explore the interconnected fight for life of twelve characters, 11 women and a non-binary person. Her previous work includes plays, poetry and essays, and indeed she is the current President of the Royal Society of Literature. Although not her first novel, this is the first work by a black female writer to be awarded the prestigious Booker Prize, albeit in transgression of the normal rules, which permit only one winner. Critical response to the novel indicates that it constitutes an advance in work by African-British female writers, who, unlike their African-American counterparts, had hitherto not achieved mainstream literary success, and it is undoubtedly the case that Evaristo has come to enjoy the status of an internationally recognised author through this book. Coinciding with the movement 'Black Lives Matter', this forthright, Anglo-Nigerian author has acknowledged, in interviews on both sides of the Atlantic, that her controversial victory at the Booker awards has brought her not only increased critical attention but a global profile and respectability that her previous writing had not achieved.

Evaristo is playwright herself, and *Girl, Woman, Other* opens with the description of preparations for a theatrical play written by one of the characters, and ends with its successful premiere at the National Theatre. The novel employs a kind of prose poetry that allows for the unfolding of the close-knit relationships of all the characters, who reappear in the final chapter to underline the resilience needed for success in any project in life, and particularly for black migrant women. Capital letters and punctuation marks are used sparingly, lending the text a characteristically fluid texture. Thus, the novel moves beyond the expected boundaries of various literary genres and explores, in an open-minded way, how art can be inclusive not only in formal terms but also from a social standpoint.

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**Keywords:** Bernardine Evaristo; *Girl, Woman, Other*; transnational feminism; transculturalism; Anglo-Nigerian.

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**The Uncaged Bird's Song: Olive Schreiner, Mary Elizabeth Barber, and the Reassertion of Women's Voices through Ornithological Science**

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**Abstract**

The by-now clichéd establishment of analogies between nineteenth-century women and birds has long been the subject of academic scrutiny. Ranging from Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) to contemporary representations of the Victorian past on screen, ornithological imagery has often been used to depict and denounce the female condition in nineteenth-century culture. Female characters in works like Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1849), Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879), or Neo-Victorian films such as Tim Burton's *Sweeney Todd* (2007) are attributed bird-like qualities which reflect their position in society, mirroring the confinement of the silenced 'angel in the house'. In particular, the caged bird in women's writing has become an emblem of this patriarchal domination, famously repudiated through Jane Eyre's "I am no bird" (Brontë 223).

However, far from being limited to similar rejections of avian identity, birds in women's writing were also a key element in the beginning of active female participation in natural science and animal protection campaigns at a time when urban expansion and the rise of industrial capitalism marked the beginning of the Anthropocene. Since the nineteenth century was a turning point in terms of ecological consciousness, women's ornithological writing was a crucial contribution to the first nature conservation movements, which revealed and challenged the origins of ongoing disasters such as institutionalized animal abuse and the massive loss of biodiversity. As this paper intends to prove, the involvement of women in ornithological science constituted a subversive immersion into the public sphere, allowing them to break away from the domestic ideal of Victorian femininity to intervene in essential debates on natural history, environmental education, Darwinism, legal reforms, and other controversial topics of the day.

More specifically, a closer examination of the ornithological works of two South African women, Olive Schreiner and Mary Elizabeth Barber, would shed light on the multifaceted meanings of birds in literary responses not only to the transformative impact of ecological destruction, but also to the period's shifting perception of the destabilized divide between human and animal life. Instead of simply recurring to the caged bird symbol to decry women's oppression, Schreiner and Barber point out further similarities between female and avian behaviour, emphasizing their shared oppression as victims of same androcentric system. Furthermore, in what may be understood as a form of ecofeminist Darwinism, these authors discuss sexual selection by focusing on the deconstruction of gender roles in the bird realm, unveiling cases of female leadership and thus inviting Victorian women to re-examine their own relationships and the definition of woman's 'natural' place in the world.

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**Keywords:** ecofeminism, science, ornithology, birds.

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<b>Jane Austen's <i>Persuasion</i> in the Anticipation of Psychoneuroimmunology</b>
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## Abstract

In this paper we will approach the relationship between literature, medicine and gender studies focusing on exposing how avant-garde Jane Austen's work *Persuasion* (1817) is in the context of the latest innovations in Psychoneuroimmunology, the field specializing in the study of the nervous system, the endocrine system, the immune system and the psychological factors that underlie their interactions. We will expose how Jane Austen would have anticipated to elucidate the relationship between mental health and physical appearance, and more specifically between depressive disorders, represented through the "sickness of love" of her protagonist, and having a worn physical appearance, which Austen captured in the representation of "loss of bloom" (Overman 2013) by Anne Elliot. We will be making use of a gender studies perspective inasmuch as we will show how Austen was also a pioneer when she chose a female lead role to articulate this relationship. In *Persuasion*, Austen displays a great sense of intuition about the gender-specific component of premature senescence, particularly in relation to accelerated aging as a consequence of psychosocial and psychobiological factors, namely caregiving and depression (Cho et al. 2019, 184), conditions where women are more "represented" than men.

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**Keywords:** Jane Austen; *Persuasion*; psychoneuroimmunology; body; mental health.

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**Mourning Revolution: Memorialising the Suffragette in Tracy Chevalier's *Falling Angels***

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**Abstract**

Tracy Chevalier's *Falling Angels* (2001) fictionalizes the origins of the suffragette movement in what can be defined as a "narrative of return" (Hemmings 2011,4), a novel which critically revisits the roots of feminism to acknowledge the relevance of women's suffrage for subsequent feminist periods. In this paper, I read *Falling Angels* in relation to Tasker and Negra's notion of postfeminism understood specifically as a mourning of the feminist past (2007, 1). In the context of the novel, Chevalier goes back to the 1900s, when the suffragette movement emerged, and has her protagonist, Kitty Coleman, transforming into a suffragette. Kitty starts by attending suffrage gatherings and listening to their speeches but then becomes more dedicated to the Cause, actively engaging in their militant tactics. Her participation in acts of militancy leads to her imprisonment and, finally, to her death in 1910. With the heroine's progression and tragic ending, Chevalier reconstructs the principles of equality those women fought for, the activism of their campaign, and their unconditional devotion to the Cause. She thus encourages her readers to reflect on the early sacrifices endured by first-wave feminists in order to achieve the fundamental rights enjoyed by contemporary women. In this sense, I analyse *Falling Angels* as a textual mourning of the feminist past, or more specifically as a fictional challenge to the postfeminist idea that the objectives of feminism have been accomplished and the movement is now dispensable.

My presentation will be devoted to delineate Chevalier's "politics of mourning" (Eng and Kazanjian 2003, 2) and how the author engages her readership in a process of "mourning revolution" (Brown 2003, 4), a term which I use in two different senses. On the one hand, *Falling Angels* mourns feminism's revolutionary essence by compensating the lack of (contemporary) narratives on the women's suffrage movement and vindicating the revolutionary spirit of the period and the need to continue the revolution in the present. On the other, Chevalier uses mourning as a form of revolution with the actual death and mourning of the suffragette protagonist recalling the insurgent nature of feminism. Chevalier deploys mourning literally and metaphorically and has both characters and readers experiencing "a certain dwelling in that state of mourning in which a seemingly unendurable loss is also the opening of possibility to live and think differently" (Brown 2003, 15). Mourning is positively presented in *Falling Angels* as its aim is to bring hopefulness to the present and with regards to the future both in fiction and in reality. Kitty's death is approached with optimism by her daughter and suffragette companions because they understand it as a transition to an improved future for women. Similarly, the purpose behind mourning the history of women's suffrage is not to instil nostalgia and hopelessness in her readers, but to recover the rebelliousness and compromise that defined the suffragettes. My conclusion is that Chevalier exploits mourning's "vital potentiality" (Lloyd 2003, 346) to memorialize the past, awaken the spirit of feminism in the present, and look forward to a brighter future.

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**Keywords:** women's suffrage; narrative of return; mourning revolution; feminism; postfeminism.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Gendered Spaces through a historical perspective in Doris Lessing's Short Stories</b> <b>"The Woman" and "Our Friend Judith"</b></p>
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### Abstract

"Gendered spaces are areas in which particular genders of people, and particular types of gender expression, are considered welcome or appropriate, and other types are unwelcome or inappropriate" (debitage, n.p.). The present paper consists of literary research on the treatment of gendered space in two short stories written by Lessing in the most fruitful decades of her career, the 1950s and 1960s, which evince the gendered attitudes of the times. The main objective of my contribution is to bring to the fore how masculinity and femininity are represented in her short fiction generating particular spaces. My research is approached from a humanistic perspective supported by academics such as Henri Lefebvre ([1974] 1991), Michel Foucault ([1967] 1984), Yi-Fu Tuan (1977), and Edward Soja (1996), among others, who have delved into the study of space from different perspectives. I have also consulted Doreen Massey (1994), who has devoted her research to gendered space, as well as Barbara Grüning and René Tuma (2017), from the sociological field, to illuminate the topic. I am using the stylistic analysis applied to the recognition of different spaces while the methodology involves the comparison and study of the chosen texts in light of the theoretical frame. The

scope of my analysis is limited to two short stories from Doris Lessing's book *Stories* published in 1978. The analysis is divided into two sections: masculinity and femininity to follow, on the one hand, the spirit of the 1950s regarding gender, and, on the other, to show not only the substantial advance achieved by women in the 1960s but also the ideological remnants from a recent past. My findings demonstrate how by foregrounding the gendered spatial marks present in her characters Doris Lessing gives another twist to the construction of her own Poetics of Space.

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**Keywords:** space; gender; history; masculinity; femininity.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Psychiatrization of Women through an Analysis of Female Characters in TV Series</b></p>
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### Abstract

Feminism in recent decades has boosted the presence of women in many different work environments, and at the same time, the representation of female characters in the workplace and the reflection on the social construction of women in public spaces have expanded.



However, the women's empowerment in positions of responsibility is often associated with a negative characterization of the character that is often reflected in a growing psychiatrization of female roles, usually as a consequence of the problems of reconciling family and professional positions.

The concept of psychiatrization of everyday life refers to our consideration of psychic discomfort as something pathological, as an illness that must be mitigated through consultation with a psychiatrist or through drugs.

In the 1970s and 1980s, works such as *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture* by Elaine Showalter (1987) and *Women and madness* by Phyllis Chesler (1972) showed how madness was feminized throughout human history, but more specifically in the West, in the 19th century, with the birth of psychiatry as a discipline: diseases such as hysteria were described with feminine attributes, most of the cases described were of women, generating and sharing a system of cultural symbols that are still socially valid today.

I propose to analyze the presence in TV series of a group of female characters whose work and social success is inevitably accompanied by mental disorders that, for the most part, find their main palliative in the consumption of psychotropic drugs, in the addiction to other types of substances or in a set of socially inappropriate practices. This is the case of police officers, detectives, lawyers, doctors, politicians and other professional women shown in series such as *Homeland*, *The Good Woman*, *The Good Fight*, *New Amsterdam*, *The Honourable Woman* or *Borgen*. This analysis aims to show how women are represented in the public sphere, a space that continues to punish women and in which, if they are admitted, it is insisted that they can only remain there at the risk of suffering a mental imbalance.

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**Keywords:** psychiatrization; female characters, Tv series; mental illness.

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### Reversals of Love and Women's Subjectivity in the Marriage Plot

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#### Abstract

Does the marriage plot, as it is commonly foreseen, concern love stories? Or has its tradition been built, in accordance with a phallogocentric schema, on the misogynistic dualism of the conquering man and the conquered woman, which continues to operate—in the fictional realm as in the real world—asserting the power of the former in subjugating the will of the latter? The theoretical complexity behind these questions will be explored through a contrastive analysis of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871) and Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach* (2007) that comparatively examines how the marriage plot conceptualises love and women's subjectivity in Victorian and contemporary literary realism.

Psychoanalysis, being a theory of the linguistic subject, permits to demonstrate that, on the one hand, McEwan's novella, despite its explicitness on sex, presents a discursive portrayal of women as vulnerably dependent on men through the sexual apathy depicted in the character of Florence. It will be illustrated how her lack of personal agency mirrors McEwan's unconscious authoritative position, through which the novelist, by exoticizing female sexuality, explores the marriage plot behind its happy ending. On the other hand, contrary to the latter, regardless of the Victorian discursive strictures on sex, and in order to transgress them, Eliot manages to develop a metaphorical writing through which she could imaginatively tackle Dorothea's sexual, human nature—thereby problematizing the axiomatic angel in the house

outlook on the nineteenth-century woman. In so doing, the subjectivity and agency of her female heroine, and her own creative authority as a novelist are affirmed.

A critical reading of the novels in the light of the Lacanian and Kristevan psychoanalytic lens will therefore serve to interrogate the texts' unconscious in an attempt to deconstruct the novelists' rhetoric on sexual politics. It is my contention that both are unconsciously conditioned and subject to patriarchal constraints that reverberate in the depiction of the characters. On this account, a psychoanalytic feminist perspective will be endorsed not only to pursue the deconstructive interpretation of the texts, but also to establish a connection between them, in an ultimate insightful inquiry into the tradition of the marriage plot in the English novel.

Worthy of mention, the historical realism through which the present rewrites the past, and upon which Eliot and McEwan build their storytelling, brings to the fore the novels' universalism. Their literary meditation on marriage, love and sex is indeed an ontological reflection that, central to both novels, concludes that marriage, albeit "the bourne of so many narratives," "is still the beginning of the home epic" (Eliot 2007, 882; italics added).

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**Keywords:** marriage plot; Victorian and contemporary novel; literary and historical realism; psychoanalytic reading; sexual politics.

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<b>W03ld W[ai]de C0c00n: SPAM-ing Net(I)Ana(S)</b>
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**Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and to question the very notion of womanhood and youth in relation to new paradigms that stimulates the proliferation of new gender identities and subjectivities at the very juncture of the material and virtual realities: the Internet. As a continuum of digital data that constantly crosses the boundaries in and out the world wide web, I would like to propose the manner in which contemporary writing and literary forms, in particular poetry, are redefined by the influence of mediated new technologies, such as social media, and how this also confluences with making visible new epistemologies for understanding identity and human nature.

Traditional notions about positioning oneself in space and time have been dramatically challenged by the emergence of virtual realities populate the online sphere. With the Internet, unreal and mediated fantasies are apparently closer to become our immediate reality.

Since time and space have been redefined by diverse and innovative technologies, we are still reconfiguring our notions of being, living and positioning oneself in the world, which are determined by hectic fast-pace developments and are also surpassing, somehow, our human abilities to cope with reality.

Therefore, the use of poetic metaphors will be analyzed in relation to Internet imagery in order to describe how this use of the virtual, as a limit of the material and the immaterial, is affecting our notions of identity, for which Zafra's concept of netianas will be employed in order to explore how the Internet subject problematizes not only fixed categories of being, such as gender, class and race, but also re-configures posthuman immateriality. Conceiving the screen as "an interface" that "liminally join(s) our bodies to online relations" (Zafra 2015), the ways in which mediation works will be presented as a key element in order to understand the Alt Lit poetry in the 'connected room(s)' that we all inhabit nowadays.

By using an interdisciplinary and comparative approach between the literary, the cultural, the visual and the sociological, the purpose of this paper will be to expose current trends in society and culture, in particular in the United States of America, and how this impacts the production of technological, artistic and literary artefacts which crosses the boundaries between the Cartesian dichotomies of the material and the virtual, the human and the artificial, the mind and the body, ... And at the same time, how these ones blur these apparently clear-cut limits, and question the very notion of difference and binary systems. The works of Alt [C]Lit poets such as Ana Carrete, Sarah Jean Alexander, and Mira Gonzalez will be employed in this paper in order to analyze, illustrate and problematize these topics.

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**Keywords:** interface; hybridity; ocularcentrism; cyberfeminism; poetry.

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**Beyond Victimhood: Vulnerability as Resistance in *Songs My Brothers Taught Me***

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**Abstract**

In the context of a growing academic interest on the meanings of childhood in cinema, this paper seeks to expand the discussion on the political potential of the cinematic child through an opening of the concept of vulnerability. The child, envisioned as an innocent and vulnerable being, is argued to foster a heightened identification on the part of the audience, an “intensity of recognition” resulting from our need to protect the child protagonist and/or project our remembered child selves into him or her (Hemelryk Donald, Wilson and Wright 2018, 3). While this idea permeates many of the approaches to the child as a cinematic figure, it only partially accounts for the political possibilities of the suffering child (cf. Wilson 2003; Powrie 2005; Lury 2010). Inasmuch as a restrictive view of vulnerability is assumed, one which identifies it with helplessness and victimhood, this argument ignores the recent scholarly discussion of vulnerability as inherent to humanity—although unequally distributed—and thus a potential force of resistance (Butler, Gambetti and Sabsay 2016).

This paper acknowledges the ambivalent nature of vulnerability, both shared and asymmetrical, as a framework to explore the cinematic representations of children on the margins. By bringing together film analysis, childhood studies and theorizations of vulnerability, it analyses Chloé Zhao’s *Songs My Brothers Taught Me* (2015) as a text that acknowledges the potential of vulnerability as a source of collective resistance. The film portrays the harsh conditions of life in South Dakota’s Pine Ridge Indian Reservation through the story of two Lakota siblings, 17-year-old Johnny and 11-year-old Jashaun. Beyond a straightforward association of childhood with helplessness, it deploys different aesthetic and narrative strategies to foreground children’s increased openness to the material and social relations around them, which turn them into perfect embodiments of the relational dimension of vulnerability. Through the path of its main child character, Jashaun, the film contends that vulnerability translates into possibilities for actual change only when approached as a collective condition. The paper is divided into two sections. It first addresses previous accounts of the vulnerability of cinematic children, engaging with the ethical controversies over using them as vehicles to raise awareness on certain social issues. It then moves on to the

analysis of the film, where it is argued that the potential of vulnerability, materialized only when approached as a collective condition, emerges as both a source of resistance for the child characters and a model of ethical coexistence for audiences.

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**Keywords:** childhood; vulnerability; resistance; openness; ethics.

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<b><i>Songbird</i> (Adam Mason, 2020) and the post-COVID-19 Virus Film Genre</b>
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### Abstract

Contagion narratives have been usually condemned for being an excessively formulaic genre. Its fixed narrative structure, visual imagery, and stock characters, based on the workings of the virus, and the generally B-quality of its products, make it a rather predictable and derided genre (Ostherr 2005; Wald 2008; Schweitzer 2018). Yet, infectious diseases offer a rich allegorical frame which cinema uses to articulate timely anxieties of growingly invisible and deterritorialized risks. One of the central predicaments of contagion narratives lies in the constant tension existing between free-floating phenomena and the impulse to control and resist such phenomena, ultimately epitomized by the trope of the border. Philosopher Roberto Esposito (2008) characterizes this tension as a struggle between *communitas*, the innate desire of peoples to stay in contact with the other, and *immunitas*, the stifling of that desire

through immunitary practices that aim at protecting communities against outside contaminating forces.

In the early 2000s, films about global viral outbreaks started to widely proliferate, starting with *28 Days Later* (Danny Boyle 2002) and the *Resident Evil* franchise and continuing with a long list of zombie and virus-ridden films which articulated cultural discourses on borders, global risks, biopolitics, digital networks, and social contagion. Contagion narratives tend to be inspired by periodic scares of emerging diseases like smallpox, AIDS, H1N1, or Ebola, which stir up humanity's ingrained fears of disease and death. Even though it is still soon to assess its long-term cultural impact, the COVID-19 pandemic has started to be incorporated into TV series, such as *This Is Us* (NBC 2016-2022) and medical television dramas, and has served as the backdrop of new films and shows like *Love in the Time of Corona* (Freeform 2020), *Connecting...* (NBC 2020), *Social Distance* (Netflix 2020), and *Host* (Rob Savage 2020), many of them shot during lockdown using the videochat format.

This paper intends to look into the epidemic film genre and its post-COVID-19 evolution by taking the recent film *Songbird* (Adam Mason 2020) as a case study. The film is set in the recent future and portrays a dystopic society ravaged by the COVID-23 virus, which has divided the Los Angeles population between "munies" (immune people) and vulnerable people who live secluded in a permanent state of lockdown. The film makes use of the tropes and formulas of the genre but incorporates new ingredients, especially through the narrative centrality given to digital technologies. *Songbird* typifies Esposito's *communitas/immunitas* paradigm by exposing the tensions existing between a normative and corrupted society which enforces segregation, isolation, and job precarity through an excessive surveillance, and the ordinary people's desire to break free from norms through disobedience and physical contact with the other. The film brings together these opposing meanings and uses the trope of contagion as a symptom of a growingly viral and virus-ridden context, both in its most literal and metaphorical sense.

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**Keywords:** virus films; contagion narratives; COVID-19 pandemic; borders; Esposito.

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<b>Cinema and the Real World: Film Space Revisited</b>
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**Abstract**

There is relatively little theoretical work on film space. Classical theories of space, such as they are, tend to concentrate on *mise en scène* as a category of film analysis, as a result of which space is always subordinated to narrative and representation (Bazin 1985, Bordwell and Thompson 1976, Burch 1969, Heath 1981). Following the “turn to space” in the humanities and the social sciences a few decades ago, more recent work in film studies has turned its attention to the real places and their traces in films (Shiel and Fitzmaurice, 2001 Shiel, 2012, Rhodes and Gorfinkel 2011, Deleyto 2016). In this paper I would like to meditate on “the place of place” in what we might call cinematic textuality. My focus will be on the interface between the real and the filmic that is created whenever real locations make it to the final cut of a film. I will take my inspiration from Geoffrey Nowell-Smith’s notion that when early filmmakers developed formal strategies to “control cinema” they did so to the detriment of the outside a world, a loss that he openly laments. Control, for him, curtailed the full potential of cinema and repressed that which makes the medium most distinctive (2011). Still, there remain a numerous group of films and even whole cycles, like the Italian neo-realist films of the post-war period, that continue to let place speak for itself within the harness of film narratives. There are, on the other hand, films which are not openly about real places but those places, through location shooting, creep up like Shakespeare’s tomorrows to the surface of the texts and harbour the potential to bring out unexpected meanings through the gates they open to the real world.

This paper locates itself within the turn to space mentioned before. I propose to complement Nowell-Smith’s insights with the theories of geographer Doreen Massey, for whom space is both intertwined with and inscribed in history and time, and with the recent theory of Antoine Gaudin according to which filmic space, apart from being represented space, is also real space, that is, the spectator experiences the space of films *as real*. In order to test my theoretical discussion, I will use one or two moments from

Richard Linklater's, Julie Delpy's and Ethan Hawke's *Before* trilogy (*Before Sunrise*, 1995, *Before Sunset*, 2004, and *Before Midnight* (2013), a series of films in which, I argue, the real space of Europe ends up becoming as central as the individual narratives of romantic love and the couple.

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**Keywords:** film space; place and space; space and history; representation and the real.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>From Barren Wastelands to Roads of Hope: The Case of Chloé Zhao's <i>Nomadland</i> (2020) -- (Workshop)</b></p>
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### Abstract

El siglo XXI se ha visto caracterizado por una serie de crisis que han incrementado las situaciones de vulnerabilidad y precariedad de gran parte de la población a nivel global. Este constante estado de crisis impide buscar salidas a los retos económicos y sociales que se plantean (Bauman y Bordoni, 2014), algo que Naomi Klein ha descrito como “doctrina del shock” (2007); lo que Klein también denomina como “capitalismo de desastres” permite introducir medidas que únicamente se pueden implementar presentándolas como la única alternativa a un inminente caos. El discurso neoliberal de “no hay alternativa” se ha visto reforzado por la Gran Recesión, diluyendo cualquier voz crítica que cuestione el sistema. Sin embargo, como ya apuntaba Bloch (1995), la historia está plagada de procesos de emancipación latentes, que se han silenciado por parecer imposibles, pero que en un momento dado han podido desarrollarse y hacerse viables.

Todos estos discursos hegemónicos y contraculturales tienen cabida en las producciones culturales del contexto histórico en el que se desarrollan. Nuestra percepción del cine como parte de dicha producción cultural nos hace llevar a cabo un análisis de los textos dentro de su contexto para hacer patente no sólo aquellos discursos que respaldan el *statu quo* sino también aquellos que lo cuestionan y que crean las condiciones de posibilidad de lo que Bloch denomina “todavía no” pero que pueden imaginarse como factibles en un futuro. En este taller proponemos analizar un texto cinematográfico a partir del estudio de aspectos formales y de representación del cine contemporáneo dentro de la coyuntura de crisis del nuevo milenio en la que también se pueden vislumbrar miradas esperanzadoras. Nuestro objetivo es debatir cómo y en qué medida el cine nos permite acceder a la opacidad de los procesos históricos, reconstruir la complejidad del contexto en el que estamos inmersos, explorar las tensiones entre lo que es posible y lo que puede ser posible (Bloch) e imaginar otros futuros. Para ello, analizaremos varios aspectos de la película *Nomadland* (C. Zhao, 2020) con el objetivo de proponer un debate sobre cómo y en qué medida los conceptos de crisis y esperanza se articulan en el filme.

En primer lugar, veremos cómo, dentro de la tradición estadounidense, los conceptos filosóficos de pragmatismo y esperanza se imbrican haciendo especial énfasis en su orientación y apertura hacia el futuro (Koopman, 2006). Nos centraremos en analizar el concepto de esperanza reflejado en la película *Nomadland* desde una perspectiva de género cinematográfico, examinando el potencial terapéutico y

regenerador del *roadscape* o paisaje de carretera y de la *road movie* o cine de carretera como género.

Finalmente, pondremos en el punto de mira los aspectos transnacionales de *Nomadland* como una película que se engloba dentro del cine de la precariedad y que representa la vulnerabilidad como resistencia (Butler), conteniendo semillas del cambio social hacia una vida mejor a la que puedan aspirar individuos y comunidades relegados a los márgenes de la sociedad.

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**Keywords:** crisis; esperanza; precariedad; cine transnacional; cine de carretera.

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<b>Cursed 80s' Nostalgia: Choose or Die and the Haunted Videogame</b>
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## Abstract

It is a popular occurrence in audiovisual horror to situate the screen as the source and/or threshold from where the uncanny and the feared enter our world. This type of horror film conveys technology-related anxieties that mirror the sociocultural/political concerns of the time and place where they were produced. Beyond the screen as a central horrific element in their narrative, videotapes, found footage, and computer

games, play an important role in this tradition. Stemming from the identification of these recurrent elements, this work aims to specifically explore how video games in contemporary horror movies are a very particular extension of the role that screens and found footage have in horror cinema (see Aldana and Blake, 2015).

Through the specific case study of *Choose or Die* (Meakins, 2022), this analysis focuses on the representation of video games in horror movies through the lenses of media effects theory, as well as through a close reading of visual and aural representations of technology, in order to elucidate the evolution of this type of movie but also to determine the primary anxieties they concern themselves with. A theoretical understanding of the fears of negative direct media effects media (Bryant and Oliver, 2009)—particularly about videogames being the cause of increased violent behavior—is at the center of how these movies and this trope are constructed. Although current research has often pointed out the lack of evidence for causality between violent media consumption and violent behavior (see Markey et al., 2015), the idea still prevails in the collective imagination.

*Choose or Die* styles its premise after urban legends, also characteristic of creepypastas, which draw “upon distinctive features of online communication” (Crawford, 2019, 73). An akin example is *Sequence Break* (Skipper, 2016), which largely takes inspiration from the urban legend “Polybius” (see Frechette and Luoto, 2017). Inspired in the American screen horror subgenre—which was at its peak during the 80s’ with movies such as *Videodrome* (Cronenberg, 1983) and *TerrorVision* (Nicolaou, 1986), *Choose or Die* reflects the contemporary Zeitgeist in regards to insecurities, fears, but also possibilities that new digital technologies offer in contrast with a fascination for analogue electronics.

In these stories, biomechanical mutations (heavily inspired by the body horror tradition) become ubiquitous, both through literal physical mingling and through characters throwing up media-related objects such as cables, tapes, or film. An important aspect of such transhumanism is the possibility to exist as part of the computer/game is that it stems from the aforementioned nostalgia for old analogical technology and mediums. On the one hand, this nostalgia thrives on the basis that young generations do not understand mechanical technologies and, on the other hand, it ironically relies on introducing visual imagery and tropes that the target audience is familiar with. In its explicit discussion between older and younger characters about the inferiority/superiority of contemporary technologies, *Choose or Die* takes advantage of this two-fold effect of the overreliance on nostalgia to build its horror narrative.

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*TerrorVision*, directed by Ted Nicolaou (Los Angeles, CA: Empire Pictures, 1986), Filmin. *Videodrome*, directed by David Cronenberg (Universal City, CA: Universal Pictures, 1983), Filmin.

**Keywords:** digital horror; nostalgia; haunted technology; found footage; horror cinema.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>From Yellow Walls to Yellow Butterflies: <i>Encanto</i> in the Context of the Narrative Tradition of the Haunted House</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The Disney promotional synopsis of *Encanto* (2021) describes the film as "the tale of an extraordinary family," who lives "in a magical house . . . in a wondrous, charmed place called an Encanto." According to this summary, "[t]he magic of the Encanto has

blessed every child in the family with a unique gift from super strength to the power to heal—every child except one, Mirabel”.

While this lighthearted account does largely summarise the main plot, *Encanto* also presents an unsettling string of echoes within the narrative tradition of the haunted house, and more in particular with narratives about absorbing and stifling rooms which study their occupants and act accordingly. As early as the opening credits begin, the choice of title already reveals an intentional use on the polysemic weight of the word *encanto* in Spanish, a term which can equally mean *charming*, *enchantment* and *haunting* (in the sense of supernatural phenomena in a physical place). From its onset, thus, the movie presents unequivocal references to the three uses of the word which intertwine along its storyline and complement each other until the ending of the narrative. In this three-way readings of the term, *haunting* and horror fiction play a key role, transporting characters who, far from feeling blessed with a magical gift, experience anxiety and an urge to escape what they feel more of a curse than a gift. The conflict underlying the story, the incapability of leaving, as well as significant information about the coming to be and destruction of the house are all deep-rooted within the parameters of the conventions of the haunted house formula (Bailey 1999).

In an attempt to trace specific previous haunted house texts informing the story, this presentation reviews both early literary referents and recent film productions. In this manner, short fiction by authors such as Elia Peattie, Virginia Woolf or Charlotte Perkins Gilman will be revised in connection with the 2021 Disney picture. Similarly, earlier audiovisual productions such as *Rose Red* (2002) or *Locke and Key* (2020) among others will be viewed as immediate referents of the organic, growing house that assimilates its inhabitants into its walls.

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**Keywords:** haunted house; *Encanto*; enchantment.

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*Promising her return, she mumbled her adoration: Attitudinal discourse presentation structures in the British sentimental novel*

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### Abstract

Discourse representation in the history of English has recently caught the attention of a number of studies (Grund and Walker 2020). The literature on the topic focuses on the mechanisms at work (D'Arcy 2020; Moore 2020), the different modes and categories of speech representation (Busse 2020), as well as on their socio-pragmatic motivations in Early and Late Modern English periods (Author(s) 2016, 2017). This paper aims to contribute to this area of research by exploring the Reaction Object Construction (henceforth, ROC) as an option used by narrators to frame and evaluate the speech / thought they represent in nineteenth century sentimental novels. The ROC, as in the off quoted example *She mumbled her adoration*, consists of an intransitive verb of manner of action (e.g. *mumble*), followed by a non-prototypical object that expresses a mental state of some kind (e.g. *adoration*). The result of this combination is a transitivizing construction whose overall meaning is to “express/communicate X by V-ing”, as in “she expressed her adoration by mumbling” in the example just given. As a discourse presentation strategy, this syntactic blend has been either ignored by the relevant literature (Leech and Short 1981/2007; Busse 2020) –perhaps due to its assumed overall low frequency– (Author(s) 2021a) or been only mentioned in passing by the articles that deal specifically with the pattern (Martínez-Vázquez 2015, Author(s) 2021a, 2021b). This paper aims to redress this lack of attention to the ROC as a reporting strategy and contribute to a better understanding of how reporters use and exploit the voices of others in historical texts and contexts.

On the basis of 25,826 tokens retrieved from a 21-million-word corpus of nineteenth-century British sentimental novels (BSNC; Author(s) 2019), it will be argued that the ROC constitutes at this point in time an emerging full-fledged subcategory

within Leech and Short's (1981/2007) model of discourse presentation constructions. More specifically, the ROC is claimed to fit in within their category Narrative Report of Speech/Thought Act (NRS/TA), which is crucially characterised by involving a 'speech report' verb (e.g. *promise*) followed by a noun phrase (NP) or a prepositional phrase indicating the topic of the speech presented, as in the NP *her return* in the NRS *She promised her return*. The difference between the ROC and a prototypical NRS/TA is that the ROC always conveys the illocutionary force (attitude) of the speaker's utterance, which makes it closer to the original act of communication that is being reported. The data extracted from the *BSNC* also attests to the tight connection between the ROC and the British sentimental novel, with more than 500 ROC examples distributed across 15 verbs characteristic of the construction (*growl, mutter, mumble, murmur, nod, roar, shout, shriek, sigh, smile, sob, thunder, wave, weep, and whisper*; Author(s) 2017). Last, in line with the scientific literature on the literary language of nineteenth-century fiction, the analysis of the data reveals an array of meaningful stylistic, socio-pragmatic motivations in the use of the ROC such as economy and conciseness, extravagance, characterization, and dramatization.

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**Keywords:** reaction object construction; narrative report of speech/thought act, discourse presentation; nineteenth-century British sentimental novel; style.

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<b>Premodification Complexity in Early Modern English Scientific Texts</b>
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**Abstract**

Remedy books and specialised treatises represent two different textual traditions within the scientific field which coexisted during the Middle and Early Modern English periods with some differences (Taavitsainen 2010). Remedy books tend to include recipe collections; while treatises contain texts related to specific diseases, theoretical information or surgical interventions, apart from the presence of some medical recipes as well, a fact which leads to differences in their audiences (Taavitsainen 2010). The nature of the topics, as well as some interpersonal strategies carried out by their authors, determine the intended readership, being remedy books aimed at lay audiences while treatises were usually written for learned audiences (Alonso-Almeida and Carroll 2004). The texts from these two traditions present linguistic features which contribute to distinguishing both traditions, especially concerning linguistic complexity, the different use of personal pronouns and the type of proper nouns mentioned (Berlage 2014; Sylwanowicz 2017). When dealing with the concept of "complexity", in particular, in relation to noun phrases (NPs), authors opt for an ambiguous definition since there seems to be a lack of clear-cut boundaries concerning the complexity of modifying structures, although they conclude that the use of adjectives and nouns as premodifiers are the most common patterns of premodification (Berlage 2014; Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad and Finegan 1999).

Thus, the present study focuses on the frequency, use and degree of complexity of the premodifying patterns within noun phrase structures since these present some degree of variation in order to adapt the texts to their intended audiences. Likewise, complexity is studied by making a comparison of two medical texts belonging to the different traditions. The texts chosen for this analysis are two early modern manuscripts: Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunter 303 (H303), a specialised treatise

which mainly concerns diseases of women; and London, Wellcome Library, MS 373 (W373), a remedy book composed of medical recipes, both belong to *The Málaga Corpus of English Modern English Scientific Prose* (Calle-Martín et al. 2016). The linguistic patterns considered are adjectives and nouns as the main premodifying elements of nouns. In addition, to know the established relationship between the author and his/her readers, we also analyse interpersonal strategies (the use of personal pronouns and the type of proper nouns mentioned).

The present study shows that the premodification of nouns is more frequent in H303, whose complexity is higher, although differences with W373 are not that outstanding. There are differences depending on the type of structure: complex adjective structures are more prone to occur in H303, whereas sequences of nouns are more frequent in W373. In addition, as regards the interpersonal strategies mentioned, H303 shows a higher use of the first personal pronoun (*I*) as well as references to classical and contemporary medical authorities due to the level of medical knowledge offered; whereas in W373, the preferred option is the second person pronoun (*you*), and proper nouns are related to saints and some ingredients. In short, both texts present different tendencies which bring to light the role of the author with his/her potential readers.

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**Keywords:** Early Modern English; remedy book; specialised treatise; Premodification; noun phrase complexity.

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**'I can, may, or must be being conquered': A Corpus-Based Study of the Progressive  
Passive in the Old Bailey Corpus**

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**Abstract**

The passive voice may be defined as a structural reorganization of the clause by “choosing a participant other than the agent as the starting-point for the message, without departing from the normal subject-initial word order” (Biber et al. 1999: 154; Hundt 2004; Anderwald 2014): *the politicians cancelled the meeting after the riots in the city centre* vs. *the meeting was cancelled (by politicians) after the riots in the city centre*. Regarding its form, passives can be long or short, depending on whether the *by*-phrase agent is expressed or not (Seoane 2012); finite or non-finite (Seoane 2000); and they may occur at different rates regarding text types (short passives being frequent in conversation and long passives being more widely witnessed in news and academic prose) (Biber et al. 1999: 937). Within this typology, the progressive passive constitutes a late Modern English innovation that was initially avoided because of the repetition of two forms of the verb *be* (*is/was* and *being*), speakers omitting either the explicit passive marking (*Our Garden is putting in order, by a Man who*, 1807, Austen, Letters 49 p. 178) or the explicit progressive marking (*he found that the coach had sunk greatly on one side, though it was still dragged forward by the horses*, 1838-9, Dickens, *Nickleby* v.52). Despite the negative attitude towards the construction in the eighteenth century, when it was labelled as ‘uncouth English’ or ‘clumsy and unidiomatic’ (Toyota 2008: 42), instances of it can be found in the language as early as 1772 (Denison 1998: 152):

I have received the speech and address of the House of Lords; probably, that of the House of Commons *was being debated* when the post went out. (1772, Mr. Harris, in *Sen Lett. 1st Earl Malmesbury* 1.264 (8 Dec.))

As far as I have been able to investigate, the literature is still in need of corpus-based approaches to the use and distribution of the first instances of the progressive passive in the history of English, especially considering sociolinguistic preferences.

Therefore, the present study pursues the following objectives: 1) to study the use and distribution of the progressive passive in late Modern English (1720-1913); 2) to assess the phenomenon in terms of the sociolinguistic preferences of the informants; and 3) to classify the instances according to a set of qualitative aspects (i.e. inflection, nature of the verb, typology of the subject, etc.). The source of evidence comes from the *Old Bailey Corpus* (OBC) since it allows for the retrieval of sociolinguistic information of the informants.

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**Keywords:** Late Modern English; Sociolinguistics; progressive passive voice; Old Bailey Corpus.

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**Etymological analysis of Norse loanwords in *The Canterbury Tales* and *Havelok the Dane*: Applying the Gersum Typology**

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### **Abstract**

The close relationship between Old English and Old Norse and the influence and impact of the latter on the native language has been widely acknowledged. The Danelaw, established in the north-east of England, gave rise to cohabitation between the neighbouring communities of Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians, which is evidenced by the significant amount of Norse loans that remain prevalent in the English language today. This led to dialectal differences in Middle English due to the higher use of Norse terms in the areas where the Danelaw had been established before the Norman Conquest.

My research focuses on the Norse-derived terms recorded during the Middle English period through the study of two texts belonging to different dialect areas. The first is *Havelok the Dane*, an anonymous work written in the dialect of Lincolnshire, which was one of the territories formerly part of the Danelaw; the second is Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (my project focuses exclusively on the first three tales) featuring a London dialect. The aim of my work is to provide a detailed assessment of the evidence, scant or strong, for the Norse origin of each word after a thorough analysis of its history and etymology. Given the obvious similarities between Old English and Old Norse, it is problematic to determine with certainty the origin of every word, so my work consists in detailing as clearly as possible the reasons for the Norse input of this lexicon.

After a brief introduction on the sociohistorical and linguistic context and the overall structure of the dissertation, this presentation will focus on the etymological analysis of some of the Norse-derived terms in my corpus. To do so, I will follow the typology for the etymological classification of possible Norse-derived terms put forward by the Gersum Project. The Gersum Project has made it possible to classify the Old Norse loans in English and study them with unprecedented systematicity. The Gersum typology aims to establish a possible Norse input after an exhaustive study of the word, in order to classify each term within levels of probability of Scandinavian derivation according to established parameters (see The Gersum Project online). I will first refer to the terms in my data that have already been analysed by the Gersum Project and will then briefly discuss some terms not included in the project's database so as to give an indication of the difficulties that one faces when trying to analyse and classify Norse-derived terms in English.

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**Keywords:** Middle English; Norse; Gersum; loanwords; Historical Linguistics.

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<p><b>The Secrets of Alexis of Piedmont and A Niewe Herball or Historie of Plants in Glasgow University Library MS Ferguson 7: A Codicological and Palaeographic Analysis</b></p>
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### Abstract

In 1476, after having spent most of his life on the continent, William Caxton returned to England and set up the first printing press in Westminster. Also fostered by the growing number of cultured readers, the introduction of such an invention meant a vast increase in the production of books of different genres and of numerous copies of these throughout the country in the succeeding years. According to Görlach, in the *Short Title Catalogue* of books printed between 1476 and 1640, “25,000 titles [were] listed, which [were] certainly more than all the titles produced in the preceding periods of the English language put together” (1991: 6; also Baugh and Cable 2002: 187; Nurmi 2012: 56). Among all the different types of writing genres in Early Modern English, scientific writing stands out as one of those genres benefiting the most from the advent of printing in the period, as it provides publishers with an advanced technology that



facilitates the production of numerous copies of a piece in a quicker and cheaper form than has ever been feasible with handwriting. This not only affects the more prestigious text types produced by well-educated people, but also those intended to supply basic medical knowledge to the lay readership, as it is the case of almanacs and small pocket-size handbooks (Taavitsainen et al. 2011: 9-10).

Nevertheless, rather than fully replacing handwritten texts as a vehicle for the spread of medical knowledge, printed books interacted with manuscripts to such an extent that scientific treatises could be partially copied from a printed text into a manuscript and linguistically personalised depending on the individual preferences of each scribe (Pahta 2001: 211; Taavitsainen et al. 2011: 10; de la Cruz-Cabanillas 2020: 31). Housed in the Archives and Special Collections Department of Glasgow University Library, MS Ferguson 7 (reference GB 247 MS Ferguson 7) stands as an example of this practice insofar as it contains a number of handwritten passages of a popular printed collection of medical recipes and a herbal, i.e. *The Secrets of Alexis of Piedmont* (1568) and *A Nieuwe Herball or Historie of Plants* (1578). The manuscript is in itself a unique specimen since it is, to our knowledge, the only handwritten volume containing a portion of these well-known pieces of the Early Modern English period.

This considered, the present paper seeks to provide an analysis of the physical characteristics of the hitherto unedited MS Ferguson 7, considering diverse codicological and palaeographic features to determine its likely date of composition. From a codicological viewpoint, attention is paid to the external aspects of the volume, including the material, dimension, ink, decoration, binding, ruling and foliation. Within palaeography, the analysis is based on the evidence provided by the scripts, numerals, marginalia and abbreviations. Overall, the examination reveals that the texts were written by two different hands with a legible cursive mixed script resulting from the combination of the *Elizabethan secretary* script with sporadic features of the *italic*, thus suggesting the early seventeenth century as the likely date of composition.

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**Keywords:** MS Ferguson 7; codicology; palaeography; Early Modern English.

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**On the interconnection between language and society: Exploring the role of extralinguistic factors in semantic change**

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**Abstract**

It is well-known that extralinguistic factors play an important role in many cases of lexico-semantic change (Durkin 2009, 222–223; Kay and Allan 2015, 72–74). This is mainly due to the close relation of meaning with society and culture, which adds more complexity to the task of describing the evolution over time of particular words since non-linguistic history must often be resorted to in order to explain changes in meaning (Blank 1999). Consequently, it is perhaps unsurprising that scholars have recently shown an interest in testing the viability of linguistic corpora, the default datasource in historical linguistics today, to explore the interrelations between linguistic and social change (e.g., studies in Rautionaho, Nurmi and Klemola 2020). Such work provides evidence of corpora being adequate resources to investigate these interrelations if corpus analyses are conducted in a methodologically sound way.

This paper empirically tests whether semantic changes undergone by adjectives from the domain of SMELL (e.g. *fragrant*, *perfumed*) in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American English are influenced by societal developments (AUTHOR). In particular, the study examines whether the tendency of such items becoming increasingly more

frequently used to denote synthetic aromas – at the expense of natural ones – over the period 1810–2009 are caused by socio-economic developments that American society underwent throughout the first and second industrial revolutions (e.g., industrialization and mass-production). To this purpose, data is drawn from COHA (Davies 2010–) and two distributional analyses are conducted. First, a dictionary-based approach (cf. Schneider 2020) is carried out to identify whether the noun collocates of the adjectives in artificial (e.g. *soap, candle, glove*) and natural (e.g., *blossom, field, rice*) semantic categories also increase and decrease in frequency, respectively, in general, not only when co-occurring with the adjectives. Second, a more data-driven approach is employed to establish the association that the adjectives' noun collocates hold with other words in COHA and whether these associations fluctuate diachronically. To do so, second-order collocates (e.g., Hilpert and Flach 2021) are analyzed, that is the collocates of the collocates of the adjectives: *blossom* is a first-order collocate of *fragrant* and all collocates of *blossom* (e.g., *bee, pollen*) would be second-order collocates of this adjective.

The results demonstrate that (i) extralinguistic factors are not only reflected in the rise and decline of the prototypically artificial and natural noun collocates, respectively, when modified by the adjectives, but also in general, and (ii) the conceptualization of nouns in the majority of semantic categories examined clearly become increasingly associated with words located towards the artificial end of the semantic continuum. Therefore, the present analyses offer support to the claim that semantic changes undergone by adjectives from the domain of SMELL have in all likelihood been influenced by the societal developments taking place in the United States in the period examined. As a consequence of these developments, the presence of artificial smells in people's daily lives increased as well. This general move towards more artificiality can therefore not be coincidental, but must be the result of some underlying motivation steering change.

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**Keywords:** semantic change; social change; corpus linguistics; collocation; smell.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>'A very pleasant, safe, and effectual medicine': The Serial Comma in Late Modern and Present-day British English</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The present paper traces the historical development of the serial comma in the history of English until its eventual decline in the course of the 20th century. Punctuation in historical documents has been traditionally disregarded in the literature, especially in the particular case of early and late Modern handwritten and printed texts, despite their active participation in the process of standardisation. Curiously enough, no studies have focused on the use of the *serial comma* in the history of English, referring to the placing of a comma immediately before the coordinating conjunctions *and/or* (and *nor*) in a series of three or more elements, irrespective of the existence of an actual pause (Marcello 2020: 128). Although the use of this mark is no longer a desideratum in present-day British English, it was a widespread practice among 17th, 18th and 19th century writers. In fact, this is the prerogative almost universally recommended by a number of prescriptive grammarians such as, for instance, Charles Butler's *The English*

*Grammar*, arguing that “many single words, of de sam’ sort, coming togeder, ar distinguised by commas” (1633: 59).

Since then, the use of that serial comma has been the subject of much debate in many grammar and usage books. The dilemma was more of a linguistic than of a geographic preference in the course of the 20th century. It is usually assumed that Present-day British English punctuation is essentially grammatical and signals the structural relationship between the sentence constituents in order to yield syntactic sense. Consequently, many symbols were adapted to the requirements of grammatical punctuation, with the only exception of the serial comma which remained impervious to this trend over the centuries until its eventual disappearance in the 20th century, as argued in our study. The present work is conceived as a continuation of last year’s paper entitled “On the Use of the Oxford Comma in Early Modern English Scientific Writing” where the deployment of the serial comma was investigated in the early Modern English period. This update pursues the following objectives: a) to study the use and distribution of the serial comma in the period 1700-1999; b) to evaluate its distribution across handwritten and printed documents, and across text types; and c) to ascertain whether the number of elements in the series participates in its dissemination. The source of evidence comes from *The Málaga Corpus of Early English Scientific Prose* (MCEESP), the corpus of *Early English Medical Writing* (CEEM) and *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers* (ARCHER 3.2). The results point to a drastic decrease in the use of this mark from the second half of the 20th century as a result of a change from a close to an open style of punctuation and the influence of the expansion of the mass media throughout that same century.

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**Keywords:** Late Modern English; Present-day British English; punctuation; serial comma; standardization.

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**“These adventitious accents”: Accentuation and Prosody in William Kenrick’s *A New Dictionary of the English Language* (1773)**

Mar Nieves Fernández

**Abstract**

The late eighteenth century witnessed a growing concern about linguistic propriety, this being the core period of the standardisation of the English language (Beal 2016). In the field of Normative Linguistics, scholars have investigated norms and usage mostly in the context of written English, whilst spoken English has received relatively less attention. As Beal (1999, 13) pointed out, “[w]here interest is shown in the eighteenth century, phonology is neglected, and where interest is shown in the history of English phonology, the eighteenth century is neglected”. The publication of pronouncing dictionaries and manuals of rhetoric thrived during the late Georgian period, targeting the socially and economically mobile middle classes. The value of pronouncing dictionaries for the study of variation and change in historical phonology has been demonstrated (Beal 1999, Jones 2006, Yáñez-Bouza 2020) and a number of studies have shed light on the importance of orthoepists such as William Perry (Sturiale 2006), Thomas Sheridan (Hickey 2008), Thomas Spence (Beal 1999) or John Walker (Trapateau 2017). This paper will add to this growing body of research by examining another critical contemporary author which has been less explored to date, namely William Kenrick.

William Kenrick (1729/30-1779) was born in London, where he developed a career as writer, reviewer and translator. In 1773 he published *A New Dictionary of the English Language*, attending not only to lexicon and orthography but also to “Orthoepia or Pronunciation in Speech, according to the present Practice of polished Speakers in the Metropolis” (title page), and to these principles he prefixes a rhetorical grammar too. My study aims to shed light on Kenrick’s views on spoken (standard) English, with a focus on his approach to “accentuation” and “prosody” from a phonetic/phonological and rhetorical perspective. The analysis is based on the close reading of the prefatory material incorporated in the original source, expanding over sixty-five pages of insightful discussions and illustrative tables of sounds and modes of articulation.

Amongst the main findings we can highlight Kenrick’s understanding of “accent” from a twofold approach: the syllabic accent, which refers to the prominent syllable within a word, and the oratory accent, which operates at the sentence level. Besides, the author divides syllabic accent into acute and grave, each with a different effect on the onset. Furthermore, Kenrick regards accent as an emphasis on particular syllables, a notion which runs against Thomas Sheridan’s view of accented and unaccented sounds. For Kenrick, accentuation did not involve a change in pitch; instead, it was only a matter of loudness. On the matter of prosody, Kenrick’s account is primarily concerned with poetic composition and musicality, and makes two

innovative claims: he opposes the tendency to imitate the prosody of ancient languages and he advocates a model in which accented syllables are not necessarily long.

All in all, this piece of research will contribute to the understanding of the “Rudiments of Articulation, Pronunciation and Prosody” (1773, title page) in eighteenth-century London and in the context of the standardisation of spoken English.

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**Keywords:** accent; Late Modern English; pronouncing dictionaries; prosody; William Kenrick.

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<b>Screening Colloquialisation Strategies in the Recent Diachrony</b>
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## Abstract

Recent corpus-driven studies of grammatical change in English based on large corpora have unveiled a diachronic and stylistic shift towards informality in written British English that has gone unnoticed in traditional research (Leech et al. 2009). In previous literature, the rationale for this trend has been claimed to be either sociocultural, i.e. democratisation, or linguistic, i.e. stylistic levelling (Hiltunen and Loureiro-Porto 2020). This paper focuses on one of the sociolinguistic phenomena proposed in the literature, namely ‘colloquialisation’, which is defined as the convergence of the norms of spoken and written language as a consequence of the spread of originally spoken features in writing (Mair 1997). Evidence of this phenomenon has been provided by statistically significant changes in the frequency of stylistically competing variants: on the one hand, ‘colloquial’ features, i.e. linguistic alternatives conventionally linked to informal style which have been on the rise since the seventeenth century and contribute towards greater orality in writing (e.g. contractions and phrasal verbs; Collins and Yao 2013), and, on the other, ‘anti-colloquial’ features, i.e. linguistic variants associated to formal style that have been declining in frequency, resisting this trend towards colloquiality (e.g. nominalisations and *for*-conjunction; Mair and Hundt 1999). These linguistic features have been found to differ in frequency, register and period.

In this paper, colloquialisation is assumed to account for the recent grammatical variations already mentioned. To prove this claim, a taxonomy of fifteen linguistic features has been compiled on the basis of previous research on colloquialisation, democratisation and other related phenomena in contemporary British English. The analysis of these features was carried out with data from the two releases of the *British National Corpus*: BNC1994 (BNC Consortium 2007) and BNC2014 (Love et al. 2017; Brezina et al. 2021). The goal of this study is twofold: stylistic, since it intends to locate registers along scales of formality and colloquialisation, within the spirit of Biber’s (1988) dimensions; and diachronic, as it aims to determine, in Mair and Hundt’s (1999, 13) words, the “cline of openness to innovation” manifested by registers in the period 1990s–2010s.

Firstly, the results indicate that the frequency of the features associated with informal style, such as contractions and interpersonal pronouns, increases over time, while those features that are commonly connected with formal style are either stable or decrease in the period under investigation. Secondly, whereas the linguistic features that involve predicates, such as *get*-passives and preposition stranding, pave the way for colloquialisation, those related to nominals, such as relativiser *whom* and nominalisations, are indicative of anti-colloquialisation. All in all, this corpus-based diachronic investigation has demonstrated that traditional inventories of linguistic features may serve as control measures of colloquialisation trends in the most recent history of the language.



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**Keywords:** colloquialisation; British National Corpus; diachronic change; stylistic change; informality.

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**“I remain, my Dear Lady Wake, Your sincere & obliged Friend Mary Dickenson.”**  
**Personal Names as Forms of Address and Self-Reference in Mary Hamilton’s**  
***Correspondence* (c.1740-1830)**

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**Abstract**

In the late Georgian period, England witnessed significant social and cultural changes whereby politeness became an “ideal that was aspired to in all aspects of daily life,” including language use (Jucker 2020, 117-34). This is also the period when letter writing became a social practice and letter-writing manuals laid down directions for addressing persons of all ranks with propriety and elegance of style (Barton and Hall 2000, Bannet 2005). In this context, the use of appropriate forms of address became a customary feature in correspondence and a key strategy for individuals to construct their social identity in light of their relations with others (Nevala 2004, 2010).

Previous studies in the field of historical sociolinguistics and historical sociopragmatics have often investigated the use of direct address towards the recipient (e.g. Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 1995, Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1999, Bijkerk 2004, Navest 2004). This paper turns our attention to author-oriented address, with a focus on the use of personal names in self-reference expressions. The special relevance of self-references lies in that they “describe the status or the emotional state of the writer at the same time as they address the recipient of the letter” (Nevala 2004: 95). Thus, the aim of this case study is to explore the role of self-reference as a means of socially governed linguistic practice and as an index of politeness in a period dominated by linguistic correctness, propriety and etiquette (Brant 2006, Whymman 2006). In addition, it traces intra-speaker variation in the use of personal names as a means to convey different values on the sliding scale of the positive-negative politeness continuum, as proposed for Early Modern English correspondence (Nevala 2004: 89, 137).

The study is based on the private letters written by Mary Hamilton (1776-1814), a well-educated and well-connected figure who stands at the intersection of several interlocking royal, aristocratic, literary and artistic circles in late eighteenth-century London. The dataset consists of 170 items (c. 53,000 words) drawn from *The Mary Hamilton Papers* by means of manual reading and data retrieval of customised xml-markup for self-reference expressions in the body of the letter and in the signature. The socio-pragmatic analysis considers traditional sociolinguistic factors (gender) as well as

notions traditionally connected with pragmatic language use (social distance, relative power).

The findings reveal that Mary Hamilton styles herself in a rich variety of forms, from her married name *Mrs Dickenson* to her nickname *Miranda*, but most often she signs her letters with the combination first name and last name, as *Mary Hamilton* or *Mary Dickenson*. It is observed that intra-speaker variation correlates with social distance (friends, acquaintances, Royal family) and with relative power (equal relation, inferior to superior rank), but not with the recipient's gender. The research presented in this case study will thus contribute to the growing body of literature which view ego-documents as a representation of the *self* (Baggerman and Dekker 2018) and as a window onto eighteenth-century language and society (van der Wal and Rutten 2013).

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**Keywords:** ego-documents; forms of address; Late Modern English; Mary Hamilton; politeness.

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### Abstract

The English language possesses various ways to convey epistemic and evidential meanings, ranging from grammaticalized strategies (e.g. modal verbs) to others showing lower degrees of grammaticalization, such as parentheticals (e.g. *it seems*) and adverbs (e.g. *perhaps*) (cf. Chafe 1986: 261). In our ongoing research project on parentheticals in historical and contemporary English, we have drawn attention to various parenthetical clauses which are used with epistemic and/or evidential value (cf., e.g., Authors 2014, 2021). This paper represents a further step in this project by paying attention to a clausal parenthetical type which has been overlooked in the extensive literature on parentheticals and which is used with a clear evidential function: encoding the source of information on which a given statement is based. The pattern, illustrated in (1a) and (2a), features a third person subject of the type survey, evidence, researchers, experts, etc. and a predicate of demonstration (e.g. show, demonstrate), of reporting (e.g. warn, say) and the like. As (1b) and (2b) show, these parenthetical clauses have a main clause counterpart as matrices in complementation structures, in line with has been shown in the literature for other clausal parenthetical types (cf. Thompson & Mulac 1991, among many others). The two structures differ in that they show a reversal in terms of both syntax (main vs. subordinate status) and discourse prominence (primary vs. secondary information) (Boye & Harder 2007).

(1) a. This targeted ridicule, **studies show**, can have lasting effects. (COCA, MAG, 2015)

b. but **most studies show that** some FORTY PERCENT do NOT commit the offense again. (COCA, BLOG, 2012)

(2) a. Done wrong, they can do more harm than good, **experts warn**. (COCA, NEWS, 2004)

b. **Experts warn that** toll is likely to increase. (COCA, SPOK, 2019)

In this study we focus on parentheticals with subjects containing the nouns *study*, *research*, *report*, *researcher*, *scientist* and *expert*. This selection is based on the premise that animacy of the subject may play a role in the development of the parenthetical. In addition to the position of the parenthetical in the sentence (medial position (1a) vs. final position (2a)) and the type of verbal predicate typically associated in the

parenthetical pattern with the selected nouns (demonstration predicate in (1a) vs. utterance predicate in (2a)), we examine the formal indicators of on-going grammaticalization of the parenthetical clause, in particular its morphosyntactic fixation (loss of variability in the subject NP; TAM restrictions in the VP). For our purposes, we draw our data from the multigenre *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA; Davies 2008-), with the aim of identifying potential register and/or diachronic tendencies in the distribution of the evidential parentheticals under analysis. The data from COCA are complemented, whenever relevant, with material from corpora such as *Corpus of News on the Web* (NOW; Davies 2016-) and *TIME Magazine Corpus* (TIME; Davies 2007), since preliminary results have shown that the parentheticals at issue here are particularly common in journalese.

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**Keywords:** evidentiality; parenthetical; grammaticalization; American English.

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**“But, plot twist, he's not single!”: on the rise of parenthetical plot twist in recent English**

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**Abstract**

Over the last decades, a particularly salient number of parentheticals have emerged— a group of expressions that convey mirative and assumed evidential overtones and which are frequently used with humorous or ironic intentions. This group includes expressions like *spoiler alert*, *plot twist*, *shocker*, *oh wait*, and *surprise, surprise*, as well as rebukes like *duh* and *no shit (sherlock)*. Many of these are associated with online communication and seem to be passing fads; in fact, not all of them have diffused into the general language. With the exception of *duh* (Andersen 2015) and *spoiler alert* (AUTHOR), these expressions have received little scholarly attention. Regardless of whether these pragmatic parentheticals are ephemeral trends, they actually serve very specific functions in language. The present paper zooms in on one such expression, a relatively recent innovation that remains unexplored: parenthetical uses of *plot twist* like the one exemplified in (1):

- (1) But, **plot twist**, he's not single! And yes, he brought his new girlfriend here tonight and in walks... Henrietta! (NOW:2020)

In (1), *plot twist* is used as a humorous device to underscore the surprising nature of the statement, by acknowledging that the information under its scope introduces a sudden, unexpected revelation.

This corpus-based study traces the development of parenthetical *plot twist*, which has its roots in the homonymous compound noun used to denote “an unexpected turn of events in a work of fiction” (OED, s.v. *plot*, C2):

- (2) In an odd **plot twist**, Claudin plans to flee to America with Christine to further her career. (COHA:TV/MOV:1943)

Moreover, the present study also explores the meanings and pragmatic functions that the expression has acquired in the course of its short history. Data for this paper was drawn from *COHA*, *COCA*, and *NOW*. While *COHA* and *COCA* are used primarily to document early instances of *plot twist* and trace the development of the expression from nominal instances such as (2) to parenthetical uses like (1), the *NOW* dataset is used to delve into the functions of this grammaticalizing pragmatic parenthetical in greater detail.

My findings reveal that despite its initial restricted use in discussions about works of fiction, the grammaticalizing expression has attained some dispersion, appearing parenthetically across a wide range of contexts and genres. Additionally, the expression has undergone semantic generalization and subjectification and is used today to convey mirative extensions. Thus, *plot twist* in (1) is used as an *mirative strategy* (see Aikhenvald 2012), i.e., it has come to express surprise by means of unexpectedness and counterexpectation. Furthermore, as in the case of *spoiler alert* (AUTHOR), this pragmatic parenthetical can also be used with an ironic twist: notwithstanding its literal meaning, *plot twist* does not necessarily introduce a revealing, unexpected piece of information: it can be used as an *assumed evidential strategy* (see Aikhenvald 2004, 63) to introduce evidence based on assumption, logical reasoning, or general knowledge. Thus, in its evidential use, *plot twist* has developed an interactional and intersubjective function, aimed at creating an ironic effect, among other discourse functions.

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**Keywords:** mirativity; assumed evidentiality; *plot twist*; parentheticals; cooption.

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**Constructionalising non-canonical expressions in recent diachrony: A corpus-based study of fragments in English**

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**Abstract**

The concept of ‘fragment’ may refer to a wide array of structures of a very diverse nature, from interjections and headings to lists. In this study, ‘fragment’ is narrowed down to encompass only stand-alone constructions which, despite their reduced, non-canonical, fragmentary structure, convey a propositional meaning comparable to that of a complete clause, as in the italicised expressions in (1)-(3):

- (1) Hope the summer’s good / – *well done to Giles!* [= ‘Say well done to Giles’] (W1B-011 #116:3)
- (2) There lies the problem. / *Not much to entertain you with on the Nrth Line tonight* [= ‘There is not much to entertain you with’] (W1B-010 #087:2)
- (3) Better go now. / *Good old Hendon next stop* [= ‘Good old Hendon is the next stop’] (W1B-003 #105:1)

Fragments have garnered a great deal of scholarly attention in recent decades, but prior research has been framed mainly within the Generativist framework, with a particular focus on the syntactic derivation and interpretation of fragments as full propositional sentences (e.g. Merchant 2004; Stainton 2006). Corpus-based syntactic accounts of fragmentary utterances (cf. Fernández et al. 2007; Bowie and Aarts 2016), and particularly constructional accounts (cf. Cappelle 2021), are scarce and/or mostly based on spoken discourse. This paper aims to bridge that gap by presenting a theoretical and empirical characterisation of fragmentary expressions in contemporary English.

On theoretical grounds, this study takes fragment constructions as alternative to complete clauses, and advocates for the allostructional treatment – as in Cappelle (2006) and Perek (2021) – of both construction types. Fragments and clauses instantiating an allostructional choice, the former are conventionalised via augmentation with the propositional meaning, communicative function and force typical of complete clauses.



As for the empirical description of fragments, this study reports the results of a corpus analysis of sentence fragments in written and spoken English in recent diachrony, based on data retrieved from the two releases of the *British National Corpus*: BNC1994 and BNC2014. In a pilot study with data from the last decades of the 20th century, approximately 1,000 valid instances of fragments were coded for variables such as ‘category’, ‘structure’, ‘missing constituents’ and ‘augmentation type’. The results confirmed that fragments are more commonly found in speech, but revealed that they are nonetheless common in written registers, particularly in more informal text types (e.g. letters and fiction). It was also been found that verbless fragments (*Regards to Simon*) are more frequent in written texts, and clausal-finite fragments (*Not that I've really noticed*) in speech, while nominal fragments (*No idea what time it is!*) are very common in both registers. Most of the instances analysed lack an overt subject and/or a main verb, both being mainly functional elements, as in (2) and (3) above, or latent items that can be left unexpressed, as in the latent ditransitive construction in (1). The ultimate goal of this paper is to analyse data from the BNC2014 to account for the diachronic evolution of the use of fragments in English in recent decades.

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**Keywords:** fragment; corpus; Construction Grammar; allostruction; augmentation.

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<b>On periphrastic DO in nineteenth-century representations of south-western speech</b>
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**Abstract**

Periphrastic DO is one of the grammatical characteristics of the traditional dialects of the South-West of England (Klemola 2018), which, as Ihalainen (1994: 225) explains, refers to the unstressed use of the auxiliary in affirmative declarative sentences; thus:

- (1) You *did* only see Silas a-foot once a week
- (2) You mine how yer zister *da* read

As example (2) shows, periphrastic DO is not inflected for third-person singular subjects, nor does it carry sentence stress, as signalled by <a> in *da*, and was traditionally employed as a tense carrier and marker of habitual aspect (Kortmann 2004: 256; Wagner 2004: 170- 171). Even though it has been well reported in the literature (see also Klemola 1996; Jones and Tagliamonte 2004; Wagner 2007), the distribution of periphrastic DO and its contexts of use prior to the *Survey of English Dialects* (Orton et al. 1962–1971) (SED) remain rather obscure. In fact, Wagner (2012: 926) highlights that early accounts of dialect tend to discuss this feature “in terms of [its] presence (or absence)” with little information (if at all) about its “frequencies (relative and absolute) and distributional patterns”.

This paper seeks to cast some light on the history of periphrastic DO by looking at nineteenth-century representations of south-western dialects included in the *Salamanca Corpus*. I undertake a “frequentist approach” (de Both 2019: 5) to determine whether literary recreations of dialect can inform our understanding of the frequency and geographical distribution of this grammatical feature. The analysis draws on thirteen representations of the dialects of Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorset, Somerset and

Wiltshire, and examines a total of 1810 tokens of positive declarative sentences with present and past verbs, which have been annotated manually for dialect and aspect. The findings show, on the one hand, that, in line with later evidence (e.g. Klemola 2018; de Both 2019),

DO periphrasis is more frequent in present contexts, with Somerset as one of the focal areas and Devonshire showing a gap in the south-western distribution of this feature. On the other hand, the data indicate that instances of periphrastic *do* and *did* tend to express habituality, though not exclusively, with some cases pointing to punctual and continuous aspect. The argument is made, therefore, that nineteenth-century representations of dialect not only report on and testify to the presence of a localised feature that was commonly evaluated as characteristic of south-western speech. They also reveal patterns of distribution and frequency that seem to accord with later data to an interesting degree.

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**Keywords:** periphrastic DO; south-western dialects; nineteenth century; dialect writing.

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**Dunna Say Thatten, for Lord's Sake!: A Third-Wave Sociolinguistic Approach to Non-Standard Negation in Late Modern Derbyshire Dialect**

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**Abstract**

Over the last two decades, the so-called third wave of variation studies (Eckert 2012) has given rise to fruitful sociolinguistic frameworks that allow a more refined exploration of historical varieties of English. These approaches have highlighted the value of textual material, including dialect writing, as a window into the main linguistic features and social values associated with particular dialects, as well as its role as a conscious social practice in which authors' ever-changing linguistic perceptions and deliberate choices reveal, contribute, and determine processes of indexicality and enregisterment (Silverstein 1976; Agha 2003). Indeed, studies like Cooper (2013, 2016) and Ruano-García (2020) have called the attention on the dynamic nature of such mechanisms and on the agentive role of writers and readers in the construction and legitimation of the form-meaning indexical connections that make up linguistic repertoires, which can and do indeed vary over time and populations.

In an attempt to contribute to this field of research, this paper examines the enregisterment and indexical development of late modern Derbyshire dialect by focusing on the representation of non-standard negation in literary renditions of the variety. By considering instances of dialect literature and literary dialect (Shorrocks 1996), I aim at (1) identifying the main negative strategies associated with notions of

locality and authenticity in the texts analysed, while (2) determining whether there is a correlation between such features and the information provided in contemporary non-literary accounts of Derbyshire negation. Following Cooper (2013, 2016) and Ruano-García (2020), I also intend to (3) ascertain whether meaningful time and text type-dependent indexical changes have affected the way in which this morphological feature was understood over the course of the late modern period, and whether or not it continues to be perceived as a distinctive Derbyshire dialect trait in the present day.

Quantification of the data has revealed a set of non-standard negative strategies that were consistently employed to characterise Derbyshire speech in the texts scrutinised, among which *-na* negation (e.g. *dunna* 'don't', *wunna* 'won't') clearly stands out as the most prominent, which points to its enregisterment as part of the Derbyshire morphological repertoire. The data have likewise uncovered discrepancies in the degree of perceived localness of this feature depending not only on time, but also on the type of dialect representation, which suggests that the Derbyshire dialect might have been understood and represented variably over the course of the centuries, and by insiders and outsiders of the dialect.

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**Keywords:** dialect writing; indexicality; enregisterment; late modern Derbyshire dialect; non-standard negation.

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**'I don't know was he too happy with the mixer': embedded questions in Irish English across time**

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**Abstract**

Embedded inversion is a characteristic feature of the English spoken in Ireland. While attested in other varieties of English too, it has traditionally been considered a contact-induced feature that may have survived, as this paper will argue, due to low salience. The fact that it goes under the radar of prescriptivist attitudes towards the English language at the time the language shift from Irish into English was taking place may be the reason why this feature was not 'avoided' in writing and was indeed exported to other parts of the English-speaking world without any particular stigma attached to it.

This paper investigates the occurrence of embedded inversion in the variety of English spoken in Ireland. By looking at patterns of use in historical and contemporary corpora it will discuss how embedding is employed in contemporary Ireland and will then look at its development across time. Thus, the paper will start by looking at its present-day use. Data from the ICE-Ireland corpus (International Corpus of English - Ireland component) and the LCIE (Limerick Corpus of Irish English) will be discussed and then compared with historical data from CORIECOR, *the Corpus of Irish English Correspondence*, which contains emigrant letters written to and by Irish emigrants from 1760 to 1940. The analysis of ICE-Ireland and LCIE will provide a clear picture of the patterns that emerge in present-day spoken IrE, while the CORIECOR data will allow us to see how this structure has developed diachronically. Attention will focus on the use of *wonder*, *ask*, *see* and *know* as matrix verbs followed by direct constructions of a question, where no inverted order has taken place, as in the title: I don't know was he too happy with the mixer.

The study confirms that this feature was already strong enough by the 1830s, when public education was introduced in Ireland; and the type of patterns that emerge from the comparison between the corpora indicate that certain formal preferences in terms of matrix verbs of question types existing today in (both formal and informal) spoken discourse in Ireland had not fully developed by the turn of the twentieth century yet. From a historical sociolinguistic angle, it is interesting to observe that during the nineteenth century this feature was being used by educated as well as uneducated speakers at the time the language shift from Irish to English was under way. Given that this was also a period of feature loss in other contexts of Irish English, this could be interpreted as meaning that embedded inversion was not prescribed against, which would explain its acceptability by Irish English speakers at present.

The fact that it is not seen as a vernacular feature in other varieties of English will also be discussed at the end, where future directions will be pointed out. During the course of my talk I will make reference to the CORVIZ project, which uses visualization tools to tap into sociolinguistic aspects at play in the analysis of embedded inversion in CORIECOR.

**Keywords:** Irish English, Embedded inversion, emigrant letters, corpus linguistics, visualizations.

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### Abstract

Applied linguistic research has shown that metaphor forms part of speakers' overall communicative competence (Littlemore and Low 2006) and it applies to all its four areas in a second language (L2): grammatical competence, textual competence, illocutionary competence, and sociolinguistic competence (Bachman and Palmer 1996). This has important consequences for L2 learners who need to use metaphor appropriately in the target language (see Nacey 2017). Applied cognitive linguistic (CL) research into metaphor has generally focused on L2 learners' understanding of metaphor (Piquer-Píriz 2008), and on metaphor comprehension and its use together (MacArthur and Littlemore 2011), while scant attention has been paid to the metaphorical language L2 learners truly produce (MacArthur 2010). Yet we little know about where L2 speakers can be supported to develop metaphor use. Although previous studies have tackled this issue by exploring metaphor use in textbooks (Amaya-Chávez 2010) or analysing metaphor production in learner discourse (see above), side-by-side exploration of both research angles, to the best of my knowledge, remains unexplored in instructed L2 settings.

This presentation analyses the relationship between input and output discourse in terms of metaphor use by applying CL methods to L2 instruction. I seek to explore to what extent incorporating metaphor awareness in the primary input source, namely, the textbook used in class, for L2 Spanish speakers of English (N = 22) preparing for B2 level may provide some support for written metaphor use in the context of topic-based instruction. The investigation was designed as a two-week study to run alongside the range of normal activities performed in the instructed L2 setting in a one-hour class three times a week. The Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU; Steen et al. 2010) was employed to analyse the amount –i.e., metaphoric density measured– and type –i.e., open-class versus close-class metaphors– of metaphorical language in both oral and written input texts (n = 4), and in written output texts (n = 22) in the form of argumentative writing. The analysis of metaphor use in one textbook unit on the topic of *careers and aspirations* and the production of essays on the same



topic reveals a notably high density of metaphorical language ranging from 17.9% to 19.8% across input and output texts. Findings will be discussed in relation to the analysis of frequently used metaphors cooccurring in both types of discourse suggesting preliminary insights into how topic similarity may contribute to facilitating written discussion at B2 level.

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**Keywords:** applied cognitive linguistics; metaphor; L2 instruction; textbook; written production.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Negative Form of “Used to” in English. An Approach from Corpus Linguistics</b></p>
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**Abstract**

“Used to” is one common semi-modal verb that most students of English as a foreign language become acquainted with at a rather early stage in their learning process. Unlike with most other modals and semi-modals, however, “negation is generally rare with [this verb]” (Biber et al., 1999, p. 244). It is in fact so infrequent that English seems not to possess a unique agreed-upon form, for a whole array of alternatives – “didn’t use to”, “didn’t used to”, “never used to”, “usedn’t to” and even “usen’t to”– can be found both in specialized manuals and elsewhere.

In this paper, a descriptive account of the explanations found in a large number of English grammars and textbooks will first be presented. This starting point will be followed by a corpus-based analysis intended to shed some light on how the negative form of “used to” is utilized in English, both from a diachronic and a synchronic perspective.

The conclusions of the analysis might perhaps prove useful to create some consensus among future authors of descriptive manuals on English regarding this topic. Thus, together with some quite predictable “findings” –e.g., that abbreviated forms are found more often in informal contexts–, some results were somehow unexpected. To wit, that “didn’t used to” is by far more frequently employed than the supposedly canonical “didn’t use to”; that hardly any speaker nowadays utilizes or is even familiar with “usedn’t to” or “usen’t to” and still they are included in many grammars and textbooks; or that, in spite of being ignored by more than half the scholars consulted, “never used to” can safely be proclaimed as today’s favourite option among English speakers. It is perhaps about time, then, that the instructions provided about the negative form of “used to” in English grammars and textbooks should be updated and adapted to these standards.

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**Keywords:** used to; negative form; semimodal; corpus linguistics.

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<b>A lexical and syntactic analysis of a telecollaborative ELF interaction</b>
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**Abstract**

In our research we analysed the asynchronous (email) and synchronous (video conference) English as a Lingua Franca output of 25 Japanese (B1 level) students and 25 Spanish (C2 level) students involved in a telecollaborative project.

In the first stage of our study, we analysed lexical density, lexical diversity, and lexical sophistication (Godwin-Jones, 2017, 2018) in both the participants' written and oral production. To the best of our knowledge, there are no other studies that include all three indices in both written and oral production. The programmes used were, respectively, Text Analyzer, TAALED 1.4.1 and TAALES 2.2 (Kyle, 2018; Kyle, Crossley, & Berger, 2018).

The number of words in the written output of both groups was similar (3794 vs. 3735). This is probably because students writing asynchronous emails experience no contextual time pressure. Sentence length, a sign of syntactic complexity, however, was almost double for the Spanish cohort. However, regarding the oral task, the Spanish group produced nearly four times more words as the Japanese cohort. The explanation (Akiyama, 2017: 192) is that in oral tasks more proficient students, when faced with the pauses and silence of less proficient students, often resort to hyperexplanation. Regarding the written production of both cohorts, the Spanish students scored higher for most of the lexical indices. However, regarding oral production, although the Spanish cohort scored higher for lexical diversity and lexical sophistication, the Japanese cohort scored higher for lexical density. Our hypothesis is that this is a distortion due to the much greater number of words used by the Spanish cohort. The most salient result is that the lexical density and the lexical sophistication of the oral production of both cohorts is higher than the written production –contradicting all previous research. We hypothesise that this is due to the preparation (Ure, 1971) needed for the oral task on national superstitions, involving sophisticated vocabulary compared to the simple "getting to know you" email task.

The next phase of our research involved the syntactic analysis of the same Spanish and Japanese corpora using the TAASSC (Kyle, 2016) tool for the automatic analysis of syntactic sophistication and complexity. The differences between the oral and written corpora were, again, salient. In the written corpora the Spanish indices were higher for noun phrase complexity (111 of 132 indices), clause complexity (28 of 32 indices), and syntactic complexity (97 of 192 indices). On the other hand, although the indices for the Spanish oral production were higher for noun phrase complexity and clause complexity (91 of 132 and 21 of 32 respectively) than the Japanese corpus, the Spanish indices for syntactic complexity were higher for only 22 of 192 indices. Our hypothesis is that the Spanish oral production was affected by the interaction with the Japanese cohort which caused discursal disfluency. Left to their own devices, in the written production, the Spanish students' higher proficiency shone through.

In all, the more proficient Spanish students scored higher regarding both lexical and syntactic indices for both written and oral production than their Japanese counterparts.

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**Keywords:** telecollaboration; EFL Learning; lexical indices; syntactic analysis.

**Profiling lexical production in EMI classes: what is the role of L2 proficiency?**

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**Abstract**

With the implementation of the Bologna Process, the so-called "internationalization at home" (Beelen & Jones 2015) practices have arisen to respond to the current demands for preparing tertiary education students with the necessary skills to succeed in a globalized world. In this respect, Higher Education Institutions have increasingly offered English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI) programmes in the class (Macaro 2018). These programmes allow students to attend some content courses in English, which is expected to help them improve their L2 proficiency level. However, to the best of our knowledge, research on EMI has mainly focused on identifying stakeholders' (mainly lecturers and students) needs (Coelho 2022; Piquer-Piriz & Castellano-Risco 2021), while relegating to a second place the identification and analysis of the linguistic features that may characterize EMI settings. In this respect, in order to understand the linguistic benefits of the implementation of EMI programmes, it would be interesting to define the kind of oral interaction that occurs in the class from the perspective of lexical production.

This paper aims to explore the impact of L2 proficiency level and task typology on learners' lexical production in a specific educational setting: the EMI seminar. The analysis will be carried out using a learner corpus of nine academic EMI seminars (METCLIL; Alejo et al., 2021), collected in six European Higher Institutions from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands. The corpus accounts for a total of 110,000 words, has a total number of participants of 119 (including 6 lecturers), with varying L2 proficiency level (ranging from B1 to C2), and more than 15 different L1s. Speakers' production was described in relation to the number of words uttered (token, types and content words), the diversity of these items, and the frequency of these lexical items in the BNC/COCA corpus. Data was examined using RANGE, a corpus tool that allow users to calculate tokens and types, and frequency indexes, while statistical analysis was finally performed to explore groups' differences. The results seem to show that L2 proficiency level does not lead to significant differences in relation to lexical production in EMI settings, where students' main aim is to understand and be understood; while other factors mainly related to class-variables

(the content of the seminars or the degree of interaction) seem to play a much more important role.

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**Keywords:** EMI; lexical production: Higher Education; L2 proficiency.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What Are EFL Learners' Perceptions and Emotions Regarding Their Intercultural Competence?</b></p>
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### **Abstract**

This study evaluates Iranian EFL learners' intercultural competence and reveals to what extent they are interculturally competent. Therefore, it targeted Iranian EFL learners' cultural awareness to help them not only to pull out their strong and weak

points of their intercultural competence, but also to find a way to have a successful communication with people who have different socio-cultural, regional, socio-economic or linguistic backgrounds besides considering their emotions.

The applied research method is descriptive, qualitative and quantitative. Deardorff (2006) proposed that intercultural competence should be measured progressively (at different points in time, over a period of time) and using multiple methods. For this case, data collection was done via a questionnaire named Recognizing Intercultural Competence designed by European Wergeland Centre (2008), observations and interviews. The total study population included 50 male and female students from upper intermediate of the adult department in Pardis English language centre. To accomplish this study, first of all, a QPT (Quick Placement Test) was administered to homogenize the participants and then 25 EFL learners were chosen. Then they answered the questionnaire as a pretest to specify their perceptions regarding their intercultural competence and the same questionnaire as a post test with different order to consider their perceptions and their cultural awareness's promotion regarding intercultural competence. Classified Educational English films were applied as a treatment to promote their intercultural awareness and consequently affect their intercultural competence. At last, to provide an answer to the research question- What are the Iranian EFL learners' perceptions and emotions regarding their intercultural competence?, the participants' ratings made for the items of the intercultural competence questionnaire were analyzed in terms of the mean ranks and standard deviations. For this measure, comparisons were made between the ratings done by the learners for each category of the questionnaire. Findings revealed that, a) Iranian EFL learners became acquainted with their perceptions and emotions regarding the intercultural competence and b) the classified educational English films can be applied as one of the audiovisual aids that play a significant role in promoting L2 EFL learners' intercultural competence. According to Gudykunst (2003), face-to-face interaction is not the only means of intercultural communication. The mass media and international organizations are also parts of intercultural communication.

The innovative aspect of applying audio visual aids methods lies in the fact that it can be considered a mild contribution in the latest theories and models of teaching target language' culture to (Iranian) EFL learners to develop their intercultural competence beside their language learning process. This includes the investigation of the effectiveness of course multiplicity, which is supposed to lead to a communicative and interactive way of teaching culture as a fifth skill in EFL contexts along with linguistics elements. Another aspect of the results of such a study is that it seems to be more practical and compatible to an Iranian situation of foreign language learning, particularly for those who encounter problems regarding their intercultural competence. This study can be used by language teachers, syllabus designers, curriculum developers, and language learners.

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**Keywords:** EFL learners' perceptions; emotions; intercultural competence; foreign language; audio visual aids.

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<b>The EPOSTL Revisited: a Portfolio for Language Teacher Training in our Times</b>
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### Abstract

Language education has been given foremost importance in the construction of the European Union since the beginning. With the aim of fostering the learning of languages and to encourage the homogenization and facilitate mobility and the recognition of qualifications, the Language Division of the Council of Europe commissioned experts to develop tools to improve language learning, and as there is



no learning without teaching, to improve the training of language teachers in Europe. Several influential documents were published and their use has been promoted, mainly through the European Centre of Modern Languages in Graz (Austria), being the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe 2001) and the European Language Portfolio (Little, 2001) the best-known and most widespread, and the European Profile for Teacher Education (Kelly et al. 2004)

In the year 2007, a team from the European Centre of Languages, led by Professor David Newby, published the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (Newby et al. 2007), based on the above mentioned documents, to provide an instrument which promotes reflection, discussion and understanding of the competences future language teachers should acquire and develop not only throughout their training, but also during their professional career. It aims to foster critical reflection on one's competences and to serve as an instrument to chart professional development.

The EPOSTL is already fifteen years old and language teaching and learning has changed greatly in this period of time: new technologies and social networks have become essential in education, the CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe 2017) has given more relevance to some linguistic competences and included new ways of communication, such as online interaction, for example. Therefore, language teachers need to be competent in areas that the EPOSTL does not develop, or does not pay enough attention to. In sum, the EPOSTL needs to be updated to be as efficient a tool as it has proven to be since its publication.

This paper starts analysing the structure and main elements of the EPOSTL: the Personal Statement, the Self-assessment section with its descriptors, and the Dossier, and continues revising its implementation cases and its usability and utility for language teacher education to highlight its strengths and shortcomings. This analysis will shed light on how some of the shortcomings could be overcome.

This paper will unveil the reasons why this European document has not been as widely and systematically implemented as the other above mentioned publications. Then, some features of the EPOSTL will be revised and some proposals will be made in order to facilitate its use for student teachers of languages, teacher educators and in-service teachers.

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**Keywords:** language teaching; teacher education; student teacher; EPOSTL; pre-service teacher.

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<p><b>What kind of English-related Activities do Spanish University Students Indulge in outside the Classroom?</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Nowadays, L2 learners have easy and almost unlimited online access to English language knowledge and technology-enhanced language learning resources and materials outside the classroom. In fact, an increasing number of L2 learners engage in digital practices and English language activities in their leisure time (i.e. incidental learning, Hulstijn (2013); informal learning, Sockett (2014); extramural English, Sundqvist, (2009), etc.). These new learning contexts offer L2 learners wider opportunities to enhance their autonomy and supplement their language learning experiences beyond the classroom (Sockett 2014). Although a growing body of research suggests out-of-classroom L2 contact promotes language learning, further studies are needed to investigate university students' engagement in out-of-classroom language learning.

Thus, the main aim of this study is to examine the contact with English that university students have beyond the classroom, and analyse potential differences across gender and university degree courses. A questionnaire was administered to 44

students enrolled in two university degree programmes: 'Tourism' (T = 20) and Hotel management (T = 24) at the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB). The data indicate that the most frequent English-related activities participants engage in outside the classroom is 'listening to English music', followed next by 'watching films or series in English' (see Lindgren & Muñoz, 2013; Peters, 2018), mainly with subtitles in English, in line with findings that suggest that L2 learners seem to be highly motivated to use visual media to improve their learning of the target language (Rodgers & Webb, 2011). On the contrary, students seem to show little interest in playing videogames in English, being the least motivating activity for university students. Results also reveal statistically significant gender differences in the kind of activities participants perform in out-of-class settings (Peters, 2018; Muñoz, 2020). Thus, males appear to be more frequent video game players than females, whereas females tend to show more interest in writing in English (e.g. chats, emails, twitter, Facebook, etc.) or doing 'other' kind of English activities (e.g. singing along to English songs, playing trivial, etc.). Interestingly, significant differences were also found in the frequency participants engaged in these latter types of activities across university degree programmes. Thus, hotel management students engaged more frequently in playing videogames where the written text is in English or where they speak in English and the written text is in Spanish. In contrast, tourism students spend more time on writing in English (e.g. chats, emails, twitter, Facebook, etc.) than their counterparts.

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**Keywords:** incidental learning; L2 learning; frequency of input; multimodality; information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

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**Audio-visual material and Second Language Acquisition courses: An analysis for  
English Philology / English Studies**

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**Abstract**

The use of audio-visual material in the second/ foreign (L2) language classroom has been the focus of research in many studies to date. Findings generally point to the benefits of its use for the acquisition of the L2, as in the case of Gesa & Miralpeix (2022) for vocabulary, and Pattemore & Muñoz (2020) for grammar. More recently, research has also addressed the acquisition of the L2 pragmatics with the support of audio-visual material, both inside and outside the classroom context (see Barón & Celaya, 2022; Derakhshan & Eslami, 2020; Sánchez-Hernández & Herráiz-Martínez, 2018, to name but a few). However, to the best of our knowledge, the use of audio-visual material to lecture on the contents in the field of *Second Language Acquisition* (SLA) courses in higher education, more specifically, in English Philology/English Studies has not been the focus of published research yet. Hence, contrary to the use of audio-visual material for L2 language teaching, the present study delves into the use of film and series excerpts, which showcase issues in the field of SLA, to explain, analyse and discuss contents in our university classes. Our proposal, therefore, analyses several excerpts from films and series (e.g., *The Terminal*, *Spanglish*, *Arrival*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Friends*, *How not to live your life*, *New Amsterdam*) to be used in SLA courses in English Philology/English Studies.

Using audio-visual material in such a context may yield two main benefits, as we have experienced in our classes. First, from the students' point of view, presenting them with real examples of theoretical issues in their syllabus may enhance their motivation and interest. Especially in the case of L2 pragmatics issues in SLA courses, films and series are very helpful because of their contextualized language and similarities between fictional and real-life interactions (see Bruti, 2016). Students can easily establish a link between the university classroom and their daily lives where audio-visual material is part and parcel of it. Second, from the lecturers' perspective, the use of carefully selected clips may help them to organize classes where issues belonging to different modules of the course can be integrated in the same session so that the contents become more faithful to what acquiring an L2 involves. In other words, since a short excerpt may exemplify different topics at the same time, lecturers can organize sessions with the clip as the focus for the analysis of several SLA issues. For instance, in the case of the first minutes of the film *Spanglish*, the following topics are susceptible of analysis: naturalistic context, the first stages of development of the acquisition of L2 English, route and rate of acquisition, the use of the L1 in L2 interaction, and L2 pragmatics (sociopragmatic aspects such as power and social distance). It is our belief that the use of audio-visual material in SLA content courses can help us to prepare engaging lessons and be as effective and helpful as it has been in L2 language courses.

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**Keywords:** Audio-visual material; Higher education; English Philology / English Studies; SLA courses.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pairing Method and Use of Previously Known Languages during Task-Based Interaction</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The potential of collaborative tasks for young learners has been the focus of investigations framed within the interactionist and the sociocultural framework. Studies conducted along sociocultural lines have tackled the effect of pairing method and pair dynamics on task-based interaction (García Mayo & Imaz Agirre, 2019; Basterrechea & Gallardo-del-Puerto, 2020), as well as the use of previously known languages (PKL) as a mediational tool during collaborative dialogue (Vraciu & Pladevall-Ballester, 2020). The former studies have examined the effect of pair formation method (proficiency vs. friendship) on the production of Language Related Episodes (LREs) (Basterrechea & Gallardo-del-Puerto, 2020; García Mayo & Imaz Agirre, 2019), self-selected pairs being less on task in García Mayo and Imaz Agirre (2019), and proficiency-matched pairs exhibiting a collaborative pattern and more target-like resolutions of the LREs produced in Basterrechea and Gallardo-del-Puerto (2020). Nevertheless, except for Vraciu and Pladevall-Ballester (2020), who looked into the impact of proficiency pairing, no studies have explored the influence that matched proficiency or student self-selection have on the use of PKL by young learners during task-based interaction. Thus, this study will try to fill this gap by exploring the effect of pairing method (proficiency vs. friendship) on the amount and functions of PKL use during the performance of speaking and speaking+writing tasks.

19 learners from the 5th and 29 from the 6th grade of primary education were divided into two groups depending on the pairing formation method. Dyads in one group were matched on the basis of their proficiency scores, while pairs in a second group on the basis of self-selection. Learners in each grade were randomly assigned to the two groups. This resulted in seventeen pairs in the proficiency-matched group and

six in the self-selection group (see Basterrechea & Gallardo-del-Puerto, 2020 for the same pairing method with the same sample). All PKL turns were identified and subdivided into predominant or minor PKL turns. Subsequently, they were classified according to the functions they served on the basis of Azkarai and García Mayo (2015) and Storch and Aldosari (2010), namely off-task, metacognitive talk, grammar talk, vocabulary, phatics, and mechanics.

The analysis of the results shows an effect of the pair-formation method on the overall use of PKL, self-selected pairs resorting to PKL to a higher extent than proficiency-matched pairs, particularly in the speaking+writing task. Pair-formation method effects are also evident in the type of turn, self-selected pairs employing more minor turns than proficiency-matched pairs in both tasks. Likewise, pair-formation method has an effect on functions of PKL, self-selected pairs evincing a greater use of PKL for the discussions about vocabulary in both tasks and for off-task talk in the speaking-writing task. All in all, the results reported in the present investigation together with the ones obtained by Basterrechea and Gallardo-del-Puerto (2020) with the sample seem to confirm a tendency towards more effective languaging mediated by PKL in the case of proficiency-matched dyads.

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**Keywords:** use of previously known languages; task-based interaction; pair-formation method; young learners; task-modality.

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## **The Importance of Motivation, Usefulness, and Organization in Materials for Second Language Acquisition**

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### **Abstract**

When it comes to teaching a second language, the majority of the teachers resort to text books as these provide a framework for the acquisition of the different skills that a language student needs to master a certain level of the said language. They are an easy tool for the teacher to organize their lessons and teach new concepts that are already graded according to difficulty. Also, these text books, at least to a great extent, should be following the guidelines provided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in terms of level adequacy, skills, competences, usefulness, and strategies. All this creates a logical, easy-to-follow, and well-structured plan for both students and teachers which, in theory, makes the teaching-learning process smooth. However, apart from logical order, level adequacy and usefulness of contents, there are other factors that can be equally important that are being left aside of the equation.

There are many studies that claim that motivation and interest can play a major role in the acquisition of a second language. However, the topics covered in text books rarely appeal to their real users, the students. Although these books try to cover a wide variety of topics that could easily be applied to real-life situations, the lack of interest on the part of students, especially teenagers and young adults, results in lower levels of intrinsic motivation that can, in turn, result in poorer performance.

The aim of this paper is to explore and contrast what text books offer to students in terms of topics; discover what students actually find interesting and motivating, which they stated in a survey conducted among Spanish students of English; and examine what the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages says regarding the usefulness of materials and contents used for the acquisition of languages. After that, some reflection will be made on whether motivation or usefulness is more important when it comes to learning a second language, and what problems could arise when trying to merge both ideas in the planning of lessons. Finally, the idea of Open Educational Resources will be explored as a possible solution to the problems mentioned in the previous section, but at the same time pointing to some other areas that need to be improved in order to make this an effective solution to



the problem of merging motivation and usefulness in an effective and practical way when it comes to designing and organizing lessons for the acquisition of a second language.

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**Keywords:** motivation; usefulness; language learning; open educational resources; text books.

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**Students' perceptions after performing intralingual dubbing activities. Potential benefits on language learning, skills development, and motivation in Spanish EFL learners**

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## Abstract

Intralingual dubbing is an audiovisual translation (AVT) modality in which, in language learning environments, the original audio track of an audiovisual product, created originally in a foreign language (L2) is replaced by a different one created by learners, also in the same foreign language (L2). Different activities designed using this translation modality offer versatile solutions for language learning, since students find themselves working on communicative tasks being exposed to authentic L2 audio input (oral comprehension) and creating a new L2 audio track (oral production) through the elaboration and checking of scripts (written comprehension and production). This all-around value has made intralingual dubbing the most frequently researched and applied dubbing technique in foreign language learning, especially

along the 2010s onwards, where several experimental studies emerged on the matter, focusing on its effect on overall speaking skills (He & Wasuntarasophit, 2015), pronunciation, intonation and speed (Sánchez-Requena, 2016; 2018) and prosodic features (Chiu, 2012; Florente, 2016), although its greatest virtue, as all studies seem to agree on, is its remarkable motivational value.

The application and research on intralingual dubbing activities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments in Spain, however, has been scarce, with Talaván & Costal (2017) as pioneers on the study of its potential benefits on general oral skills and motivation, encouraging further research on the matter.

The purpose of this study is, then, to offer valuable information on the didactic value of intralingual dubbing activities in language learning, oral skills and motivation in Spanish learners of EFL. In order to do so, qualitative and quantitative data collected from questionnaires filled by 66 students from the Degree in Primary Education from the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (UCLM) was analyzed. The items included in the questionnaire delved into the students' views and perceptions after performing intralingual dubbing activities.

As some of the most interesting results, it seemed like the students broadly endorsed the potential value of this AVT modality in their language learning process, since most of them found the dubbing experience as an interesting, fun and innovative opportunity that helped them enhance their overall language learning and oral competence and increase their motivation. The vast majority of them also highlighted its innovative value, since they had never done anything similar before, indicating their eagerness to repeat these kind of activities in the future. The data collected also included relevant information on their preferred technological devices and software/apps with which to carry out such activities.

As a conclusion, this study provides much-needed, interesting information on why the emerging field of the didactic applications of intralingual dubbing in particular, and AVT in general, offers useful, motivational and powerful opportunities for effective language learning.

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**Keywords:** intralingual dubbing; English as a foreign language (EFL); audiovisual translation (AVT); oral skills; motivation.

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**'Provocalips': Linguistic Blends in Product Names within the Beauty Industry**

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**Abstract**

Linguistic blends are defined in various ways, from involving “a telescoping of two or more separate forms into one or, rarely, a superposition of one form upon another” (Cannon 1986, 730), to a “new lexeme formed from parts of two (or possibly more) other words in such a way that there is not transparent analysis into morphs” (Bauer 1983, 234), as well as “a combination of two or more forms, at least one of which has been shortened in the process of combination” (Algeo 1977, 48), amongst others. According to López-Rúa (2012, 23), this word formation process is characterised by being a “powerful aesthetic device to catch the audience’s attention by striking the eye and the ear”. In the context of the ever-productive beauty industry, the constant product release flow results in language being manipulated by marketers in the search for the unprecedented. Cosmetic and skincare products have several names and the present study focuses on blends in product names in particular, also regarded as range or collection names (see Espinosa-Zaragoza 2022). These appealing inventions are often present in collection names to maximise the information given (see Espinosa-Zaragoza 2022), since blends condense ideas in the least amount of space. For this study, a sample of 55 blends was manually collected from two main skincare and cosmetic chain stores (e.g. [www.sephora.com](http://www.sephora.com) and [www.druni.es](http://www.druni.es)) during May 2022. Their form, underlying structure, meaning and purpose was analysed and the results indicate that the majority of the blends in the sample are those whose first element remains intact while the second presents fore clipping (18; 32.73%) (i.e. *full word + splinter*), such as *Nailfinity Gel Top Coat* (e.g. nail + (in)finity) or *The POREfessional Pore Minimizing Primer* (e.g. pore + (pro)fessional). Additionally, those whose first element is back clipped and the second element is intact (14; 25.45%) (i.e. *splinter + full word*) are also very prominent. Like, for instance, *PermaGel Eyeliner Pencil* (e.g. perma(nent) + gel) or *Benetint* (e.g. Bene(fit) + tint). Furthermore, there are nine instances (16.36%) that present a combination of overlap and clipping. *Juicy Watermellow* (e.g. waterme(lon)+mellow) is an example of this kind. The rest of instances gathered are either a combination of clipping in both elements (7; 12.73%) (e.g. *splinter + splinter*), as in *Foundcealer Multi-Tasking Sponge* (e.g. found(dation) + (con)cealer) or examples of

phonemic overlap where the elements are integrated (7; 12.73%), as in *GloWish Cheeky Vegan Blush Powder* (e.g. *glow* + *wish*) or *Expressie* (e.g. *express* + *essie*). The degree of constituent integration is assessed and recognisability is highly influenced by graphic indicators (e.g. capital letters). Semantically, there is a patent creative purpose aimed at surprising the consumer, condensing the qualities and/or promise of the product and achieving market distinctiveness. In sum, these creative ad hoc formations are invented by marketers in order to (1) appeal to the consumer and (2) to increase the beauty products' sense of newness and purchase intent.

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**Keywords:** lexical blends; ESP; English for Beauty: naming; marketing.

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<b>Petting o Sexting? El Anglicismo de la Esfera Sexual en Foros de Internet</b>
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## Abstract

El lenguaje erótico-sexual, especialmente sensible a la innovación léxica dado su uso habitual en contextos informales que propician la aparición de voces de nuevo cuño, refleja inequívocamente la huella del inglés en la lengua española. En efecto, el préstamo extranjero, especialmente del inglés, es uno de los recursos que la lengua pone a disposición de sus usuarios para la materialización verbal del tabú, y el sexo, tabú por antonomasia, no es, ni mucho menos, una excepción (Crespo-Fernández y Luján-García 2018).

Partiendo de estas premisas, el objetivo de esta comunicación es ofrecer, dentro del marco general de la interdicción lingüística (Casas Gómez 2018) y del modelo analítico-discursivo de la metáfora (Steen 2011), un análisis de los valores expresivos y connotativos que presentan los anglicismos puros o no adaptados con referente sexual, aquellos que reflejan de manera más evidente el impacto del inglés en el español europeo, en un corpus léxico extraído de dos foros españoles de internet de temática sexual: “Foro en pareja” y “Foro sexualidad”. La muestra en la que se basa el análisis cubre un periodo de tiempo de tres años: desde mayo de 2018 hasta abril de 2021, ambos inclusive.

En esta investigación se ha puesto en práctica un método inductivo: se parte de los datos de lengua presentes en los foros consultados y se procede a su examen y valoración. Para recopilar las voces anglicadas prestadas directamente del inglés, se ha recurrido a la búsqueda manual, método que ha permitido una recogida exhaustiva y precisa de los anglicismos dentro de su contexto de uso. Una vez recopilados las lexías anglicadas, se procedió a una triple clasificación: primero, según la categoría temática dentro de la esfera sexual en la que inciden; segundo, de acuerdo con su valor axiológico, es decir, según los valores connotativos (eufemísticos, cuasieufemísticos) que presentan con respecto al tabú; y tercero, según la función comunicativa que desempeñan en su contexto de uso. Las lexías anglicadas con un componente metafórico se incluyeron en su correspondiente red conceptual. Para ello, se determinó a qué dominio fuente pertenece la voz en cuestión y qué aspectos de este dominio coadyuvan en su valor expresivo.

El análisis demuestra que los anglicismos no adaptados de temática sexual presentes en los foros, incluidos los resultantes de un proceso metafórico, desempeñan principalmente funciones expresivas de naturaleza cuasieufemística, a saber, provocar y atraer la atención del receptor, mostrar adhesión a un determinado colectivo en la línea de las voces argóticas o incluso provocar excitación sexual en el lector, mientras que una minoría de los préstamos observados responden a la intención eufemística de atenuar términos sujetos a interdicción. En cuanto al análisis por campos semánticos, los anglicismos cuasieufemísticos recogidos inciden en distintas áreas temáticas (prácticas y relaciones sexuales no convencionales, sadomasoquismo, deseo y excitación, entre otras) mientras que los anglicismos eufemísticos tienen como objeto la

expresión atenuada de conceptos relativos principalmente a la prostitución y la homosexualidad.

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**Keywords:** anglicismo léxico; tabú sexual; eufemismo; cuasi-eufemismo; comunicación mediada por ordenador.

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<p><b>Fostering cross-border plain legal English vocabulary: helping experts communicate with the "not-so-experts"</b></p>
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**Abstract**

When providing training in legal English as a foreign language, one of the common assumptions is that the goal of judges, prosecutors and lawyers is to communicate with native speakers, or at best, with other legal professionals with the same level of language or content knowledge. This is the case in high-level cross-border criminal cooperation, where liaison magistrates, extremely proficient in language and legal skills, must contact their foreign counterparts. However, when English is used as a lingua franca, the linguistic competence may vary, and not all users may have the same skills, especially regarding specialized lexis and terminology. Let us imagine a scenario where a judge from country A who wishes to directly contact a judge from country B regarding a case of human trafficking. While one judge has studied English at secondary and tertiary level and has attended international courses for legal professionals, the other judge B has learnt English in evening lessons, and has limited knowledge of legal vocabulary in English, which might not even be his or her first foreign language. While grammar complexity can be kept to a minimum, legal terminology may become a barrier: terms like *cassation*, *statute of limitations* or *jurisprudence* may prove unsurmountable if learners lack the tools for rephrasing or lexical simplification. English words from French or Latin, which may appear simple because they resemble some learners' L1 (and are therefore considered "transparent"), may be impossible to recognize for other speakers whose legal vocabulary has resisted the influence of borrowing. Thus, "plain lexis" does not simply mean concept and term simplification for non-experts (Adler, 2012) within the same community, but an awareness of the intricacies of legal English as a foreign language for users with more limited vocabulary skills. In our study, we hypothesize that (1) speakers of Romance languages tend to favour Latin-based legal terminology when speaking English, since (a) it is the one they are most familiar with, and (b) they assume that it is common to all legal practitioners regardless of their L1. The second hypothesis is that (2) such speakers may be (1) made aware of such intricacies and (2) provided with tools to overcome potential communication problems. Our study shall start with a survey among users of courses in international Legal English regarding lexical preferences and perceptions of the difficulty of selected legal terms. The results of such survey will lead to a set of specific lexical units likely to be obscure in legal English as a lingua franca in international settings. Then, we shall explore different strategies (rephrasing, synonyms where feasible, examples, explanations) allowing users to overcome such gap. We believe that, if English is really to become an international lingua franca for law, and also in order to avoid power imbalances (Orts, 2015), users must be provided with the means to explain and negotiate meaning, while at the same time considering the dangers of excessive language simplification (Candlin et al., 2002).

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**Keywords:** legal terminology; English as a Lingua Franca; legal English training; plain English.

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**Estudio diacrónico de las erratas del *Diccionario de términos económicos, financieros y comerciales* (Ariel 2012)**

Santiago Rodríguez-Rubio Mediavilla

**Abstract**

Señala Haensch que la crítica supone un estímulo para mejorar las obras de consulta (1986). Nielsen manifiesta que la crítica debería hacer aportaciones al desarrollo de la lexicografía y metalexicografía, así como a las labores de profesionales e investigadores (2018). Por supuesto, la crítica ha de hacerse de manera respetuosa; no hay que olvidar que un diccionario es fruto de una labor compleja y cara (Atkins 1993) que requiere de gran destreza y paciencia.

La trascendencia o gravedad de las erratas de los diccionarios ha sido referida desde la metalexicografía (Iamartino 2017; Rodríguez-Rubio y Fernández-Quesada 2020) y desde la edición (Martínez de Sousa 2005). De ahí que la referencia a la errata esté presente, con una formulación u otra, en prólogos, introducciones o notas a la edición de muchos repertorios. En las diversas ediciones del *Diccionario de términos económicos, financieros y comerciales* (objeto del presente estudio, en adelante "DTEFC"), es frecuente la alusión a la «corrección de las erratas y los errores detectados» (Alcaraz-Varó *et al.* 2012).

Pero la categorización y comprensión del error es, a menudo, difusa; un velo de indeterminación las cubre. En la crítica lexicográfica, se ha de distinguir entre errores de contenido, errores de forma y diferencias de interpretación. No es fácil diferenciar

una errata de un arcaísmo, de un cambio de ortografía o de una voz popular (*vagamundo* por *vagabundo*).

Por otro lado, la nomenclatura de un diccionario tiene cierto carácter orgánico, pues evoluciona, se adapta, se amplía o reduce, según el momento. Cada diccionario tiene su propia vida, en función de su entidad, de su extensión en el tiempo. El DTEFC es netamente acretivo, según consta en los propios volúmenes. De las 1 242 páginas de la primera edición (1996), se pasó a las 1 440 de la última (2012, reimpresión de 2014).

Nuestro objetivo es establecer los factores determinantes en la aparición de nuevas erratas en la serie histórica del DTEFC. Para ello, vamos a comprobar en qué medida las erratas por sustracción de letra presentes en la última edición analizada (la de 2012, reimpresión de 2014) se encontraban en ediciones anteriores, concretamente las de 1996, 2004 y 2007 (reimpresión de 2008). Elegimos la subcategoría de errata por sustracción de letra por ser la más frecuente del diccionario.

Concluimos que los factores que intervienen en la aparición de nuevas erratas son: 1) la introducción de nuevas entradas o subentradas; y 2) la modificación de entradas o subentradas existentes. Será necesario profundizar en el estudio de estos factores para determinar en qué medida afectaron a la ocurrencia de nuevas erratas de todos los tipos no solo en el *Diccionario de términos económicos, financieros y comerciales*, sino también en las demás obras de la colección lexicográfica a la que pertenece (diccionarios de Alicante, Mateo 2018) que se editaron varias veces. Con ello, contribuiremos, desde una crítica constructiva, a un mejor conocimiento de las dinámicas que presentan los defectos formales y, en definitiva, a la mejora de estas destacadas obras de referencia o de otras que puedan elaborarse en un futuro.

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**Keywords:** crítica lexicográfica, indeterminación del error, aparición de nuevas erratas, ampliación de entradas léxicas.

**Shakespeare's Religious Afterlives: Text, Reception and Performance – (Round table)**

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Universidad de Extremadura

Marta Cerezo-Moreno

Isabel Guerrero-Llorente

Antonio A. Ballesteros-González

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia

**Abstract**

**Chair**

Marta Cerezo-Moreno will explain how this round table aims to participate in the “turn to religion” (Jackson and Marotti 2004, 2011) experienced by Shakespearean scholarship in the last few decades by delving into an undeveloped field of research within the area of Shakespeare studies: the author's religious afterlives. By focusing on specific case studies, this round table proposes to analyse how the author and his work have been variously recreated in religious terms and in different contexts. It will focus on how Shakespeare's work has been a) critically perceived in religious terms; b) translated into Spanish considering the implications of biblical intertextuality; c) performed in Anglican churches; d) staged from a Buddhist perspective.

Scholars devoted to the area of Shakespeare and religion have mostly focused since the seventeenth century on two main themes: a) the engagement between the author's works and the religious circumstances or theological complexities of his time; and b) the historical debate on the author's faith. However, attention to the study of Shakespeare's religious afterlives has been scarce. The chair will explain the need to categorise and define this area of study by producing a general integrated approach to the topic and by then illustrating it from various but complementary perspectives by case studies from the eighteenth to the twenty first century.

The round table will focus on the intersections of the different religious contexts of Shakespeare's readers (scholars, theologians, translators, playwrights, directors, actors) with the religious and spiritual resonances they find in the author's *oeuvre* and how they have engendered new critical, literary, philosophical, artistic and/or religious approaches to them. The round table intends to explore the cultural and ideological implications of some of these approximations to the work of Shakespeare.

The main research questions of the round table are as follows: (1) to what extent are Shakespeare critical reception and religious discourses mutually influential? (2) how have the complexities of translating Shakespeare between cultures been addressed in religious terms? (3) how does the circulation between secular and religious energies work in Shakespeare's religious afterlives? (4) in what ways have Shakespeare's explorations of spiritual themes become pivotal in religious discourses worldwide? (5) what are the global interconnections resulting from Shakespeare's various religious afterlives? (6) do Shakespeare's religious afterlives have an ethical value in our globalised environment?

#### **Author 1.**

Marta Cerezo-Moreno will reconsider Shakespeare's eighteenth-century critical canonization within the context of religious controversy and doctrinal dispute. Conventionally explained as a key manoeuvre within contemporary Anglo-French culture wars, the very term "canonization" invites consideration of Shakespeare's rise to preeminence at a time when, in the wake of the Toleration Act of 1689, England's internal confessional divisions had put paid to all thought of a single, unifying national church and religious dogma. That identitarian deficit was gradually closed as a new aesthetic creed converted Shakespeare into a creative deity in which all Englishmen could deposit their faith and around which forge a unitary identity. One major component of that new creed was the concept of "enthusiasm", which was enjoying renewed currency during the Longinian revival but was also one of the principal bones of religious and philosophical contention. Acquaintance of Pope, Swift and Johnson, John Boyle, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Cork and Orrery, wrote in 1759 that "We are Methodists in regard to Shakespeare. We carry our enthusiasms so far that we entirely suspend our senses towards his absurdities and his blunders" (Vickers, ed. 1976, 4, 353). Boyle ascribed to himself a critical Methodism when confronted with what neoclassicists regarded as Shakespeare's vexing or unfortunate contravention of naturalistic verisimilitude, confessing in the process to an enthusiasm associated with the fanatics at either end of the religious spectrum (Quakers, Methodists, Roman Catholics, infidels). As such, Boyle's move is paradigmatic of the intersecting and mutual conceptual cross-fertilisation of religious and aesthetic discourses; and also philosophical, for the concept of enthusiasm centred debates about revelation and reason from Locke to Kant, while the phenomena of miracles centred discussions of

nature and supernature. Naturally, there was no watertight division between religious dispute and philosophical enquiry, and the same thinkers and writers often participated in both, as some also did in the fast-growing industries of the criticism and edition of Shakespeare's plays. That criticism was greatly concerned to identify the source of Shakespeare's creative fecundity and originality on the one hand, and to press claims for his verisimilitude on the other. Enthusiasm, revelation and inspiration were crucial to new appraisals of the source of Shakespeare's art, allowing them, on the strictly aesthetic plane, to vindicate the magical, fairy or miraculous elements of his plays by undermining the rationalist and naturalistic imperatives of neoclassical aesthetics. On the broader, sociological plane, those new appraisals constituted a new aesthetic creed, purportedly congenial to the English humour and centred on a new God, which a confessionally fragmented nation might readily venerate in a unifying secular cult.

#### **Author 2.**

Luis J. Conejero-Magro will centre on the religious iconography of Shakespeare's language to elucidate the stylistic and cultural function of the biblical intertexts underpinning the speeches of the characters of plays with a strong Spanish presence. In this roundtable, author 2 will show how the function of the Biblical intertextuality in *Love's Labour's Lost* is pivotal to the development of the plot. He will then focus on the most important Spanish translations of Shakespeare's play. Author 2 will then compare Spanish versions by the three most relevant Spanish publishing houses of Shakespeare's works (Espasa Clásicos; 2015; Penguin Clásicos, 2016-2021; Edimat Editorial, 2019) to evaluate the extent to which they have maintained the echoes of the Scriptures contained in the original text. The conclusions drawn from this investigation will be particularly valuable both for future Spanish translations of Shakespeare's work, and for future Spanish theatrical productions. As Shakespeare's interest in quoting the Bible was not only religious, but cultural and political, the focus of this research is twofold. Indeed, a better understanding of Shakespeare's use of the Bible will explain, first, our culture's (in)ability to fully appreciate the author's work and, second, the representation of his drama within the Spanish theatre, paying attention to nationalism and cultural politics.

#### **Author 3.**

Isabel Guerrero-Llorente will analyse Shakespearean productions staged in religious settings in the Christian tradition but intended to reach a general public and with powerful historical civic and commemorative resonances. She will centre on several recent examples of Shakespeare in performance in religious spaces, such as churches or cathedrals. Her/his contribution will look into the ways these Shakespeare's religious afterlives have strengthened P. Edmondson's and E. Fernie's concept of "Civic Shakespeare" by making the author more accessible to all sectors of society in spaces

that gain new cultural meanings. The performance of Shakespeare's plays in these spaces draw attention on how the religious setting confers new meanings to Shakespeare in performance, as elements from an extra-theatrical realm which is highly performative encounter the plays. Previous research on Shakespeare in relation to how the context of performance influences the production and reception of the plays and analyses on performance studies centred on the religious space as a stage (Gharavi 2021, Mason 2018) will pave the way to articulate now the connection between Shakespeare in performance, space, and religion. Author 3 will also use the analytic methods employed in the field of Shakespeare and the cultures of commemoration such as memory studies (Calvo and Kahn 2015) in connection with religious studies.

#### **Author 4.**

Antonio A. Ballesteros-González will trace and analyse the religious, spiritual, and ritual features of Shakespeare's plays in the dramatic context of the Indian subcontinent, taking into consideration Hindu and Buddhist elements in specific theatrical performances. For example, author 3 will explore the religious and spiritual projection of some relevant productions of Shakespeare's plays originated in India, as the *Kathakali-King Lear*, which premiered in 1989 and toured internationally through 1999. It was staged at the Globe Theatre in London at the annual Globe to Globe Festival in 1999. It was also staged at the Royle Opera House in Mumbai (India) in December 2018 and at the Théâtre de la Ville in Paris in April 2019, celebrating its 30th anniversary. It is a significant paradigm of "Global Shakespeares" presenting fundamental and suggestive spiritual connotations of Shakespeare's. Although there are some noteworthy critical studies on the importance of Shakespeare's work in India, little attention is paid to its spiritual and religious dimension. The same can be applied to the confluence between Shakespeare's plays and the teachings of the Buddha, a topic researched by James Howe's *A Buddhist Shakespeare: Affirming Self-Deconstructions* (1994) and Edward Dickey's *Shakespeare Meets the Buddha* (2020), the latter being an appealing book, though scarcely valuable in academic terms. Consequently, the presence of religious and spiritual elements, especially of a Hindu provenance, in Indian interpretations, adaptations and productions of Shakespeare's plays remains to be rigorously and thoroughly studied. It is the intention of author 3 to shed light on that intriguing and undeveloped field.

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**Keywords:** Shakespeare; afterlives; religion; reception; performance.

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<p><b>Stereotypes in Speech: Clichés of Continental Nations in <i>The Beau's Duel</i> by Centlivre</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Susanna Centlivre was certainly one of the most successful writers of the late Restoration and early Hanoverian stage, with popular plays like *The Busie Body* (1709) and *The Wonder: A Woman Keeps a Secret* (1714). Like other female playwrights of the period, however, she did not garner much critical attention from scholars until a few decades ago. In spite of the uncertainty surrounding her upbringing, it is widely known that she was a firm Whig supporter throughout her lifetime. Her earlier plays are not credited as being as patently partisan as the pieces that premiered after 1705, but this does not mean that they were not political: she started her career as a playwright a few months before the Spanish War of Succession began, which points to the fact that all her writing was informed by and filtered through the ongoings in



England specifically, and Europe more widely (Harris 2017b). This includes the representation of or reference to foreign (continental) nationalities, which inevitably leads to stereotyping. This is an effect that could be carried out in two ways: firstly, by having a continental character in the play embody the nation serving as a walking stereotype; secondly, by means of allusions in the speech of English characters, who generally speak of other nations in derogatory terms, in contrast to the attitudes, words, and dress of English characters.

In her first comedy, *The Beau's Duel; or, A Soldier for the Ladies* (1702), Susanna Centlivre did not feature any foreign characters, but she did include several references to European demonyms and toponyms. This paper explores all the allusions of this kind made in the play, placing them in context and analysing how the several continental others are constructed in England at the turn of the century, specifically as they relate to local politics.

This paper will examine the significance and connection of the nationalities to the ongoings in England at the time. Particular attention will be paid to French stereotypes and how they shape the character of the titular beau and his servant: whereas one embraces the stereotype, the other continually parodies it when he appears on stage. Furthermore, throughout the play, the French stereotype is frequently identified with Jacobitism; this was notably important in the early months of 1702 for two main reasons: the Act of Settlement received royal assent in 1701 and a few months later, the deposed James II died in exile in his chateau at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France.

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**Keywords:** Susanna Centlivre; Restoration comedy; stereotyping; imagology.

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**The Beholder and the Eavesdropper. Drayton's Literary Career from *Endymion and Phoebe* (1595) to *The Man in the Moon* (1619)**

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**Abstract**

In 1595, following the fashion of the Elizabethan minor epic, Michael Drayton published the fourth of his works, the epyllion *Endymion and Phoebe. Idea's Latmus*, a poem more orientated to Neoplatonic issues than those of his contemporaries, which were usually reelaborations of specific erotic tales from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Endymion's love for Phoebe, inspired by the goddess's power to access his dreams, is also his love for wisdom, which evolves as he increases his ability to derive higher knowledge from common sensual experience. Once he recognises Phoebe in her divine essence, Endymion is able to disclose heavenly secrets and to hear the divine music of the spheres. In his first epyllion, and as the poem's subtitles suggests, Drayton identifies the moon-goddess Phoebe as Idea, the beloved of his sonnet sequence, *Ideas Mirrour* (1594), and his eclogues, *The Shepherd's Garland* (1593). As he reveals his beloved's divine identity, he turns those two previous works' timid interest in Platonism into a much deeper analysis of cosmology, numerology, the hierarchy of the senses and other distinctive aspects of the Pythagorean science. This first version of the poem is fundamental for the consolidation of Drayton's early literary career, marked by the recurrence of elevated, spiritual topics. A second version of the poem, renamed *The Man in the Moon*, was published in 1606, included in a volume called *Pastorals*, and reissued with minor changes in Drayton's 1619 *Poems*. In this new epyllion, Endymion's senses play an unexpected role. The poem itself holds now a different textual status, as it is presented as a tale narrated by one of the eclogues shepherds, Rowland, to entertain his companions at night. At the end of his performance, Rowland jokes about Endymion's new interest in spying the nightly affairs of lovers and thieves. After having listened to the music of the spheres, Endymion is now

portrayed as an eavesdropper; after having contemplated the harmonious proportions of the upper world, he spends the night as a voyeur of the shepherds' lascivious activities. This new satiric dimension, which questions the transcendence of Endymion's ecstasy, is distinctive of Drayton's later literary career, as it features both the reedition of previous works and the writing of new poems in the first decades of the seventeenth century, a period marked by the interplay of complex influences and the author's paratextual experiments. Drayton's double epyllion is therefore a valuable literary work for the understanding of an evolutionary line that descends from the Platonic heavens to more mundane topics, complicating the conventional ideas about English Renaissance poetic careers.

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**Keywords:** Michael Drayton; *Endymion and Phoebe*; *The Man in the Moon*; Epyllion; literary career.

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### Abstract

The English College of St Alban's was established in Valladolid in 1589 as part of a network of seminaries across Catholic Europe. Placed in Jesuit hands since its inception, the main purpose of this institution was training young English recusants who could not obtain a priestly formation in their home country. The College was a centre of learning for almost two centuries, until 1767, when the expulsion of the Society of Jesus from Spanish territories put an end to their administration.

As part of the expulsion process, an inventory of all the belongings of the College was drawn up. This document contains a detailed account of the objects and valuables found in different areas of the College. A special section of this catalogue is devoted to the library and its holdings. Not only is this document a perfect snapshot of the contents of the library, it also a window into the cultural and intellectual life of St Alban's College in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A close examination of the books listed in this catalogue allows us to determine what tools the students could use to complete their priestly formation under Jesuit guidance.

This paper aims to explore part of the collection of books listed in the library catalogue of St Alban's library: those devoted to the training in Classical Humanities, which was a key area of the Jesuit curriculum. Ever since the foundation of the Society of Jesus, the order was renowned for its emphasis on intellectual training as part of the essential qualities of not only members of their order, but also of their lay pupils. So great was their educational zeal that the Society compiled all their pedagogical practices into a single document, the *Ratio studiorum* (1599). The contents of this curriculum drew from scholastic theology, as well as Renaissance Humanism. Thus, learning Latin, Greek and, to a lesser extent, Hebrew was of vital necessity for students.

This presentation will examine whether the books found in the 1767 catalogue follow the recommendations proposed in the *Ratio studiorum*. These works include dictionaries and thesauri, grammars, and 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century editions of works by classical authors. An analysis of these titles will allow us to ascertain whether the library was well-equipped for a comprehensive training in Renaissance Humanist learning. Moreover, further insight into the way in which they were used may be gathered by examining Inquisitorial censorship and ownership marks made by readers of these texts.

In conclusion, a closer analysis of these books intended for students of Humanities will allow us to broaden our insight into the education received by English Catholic exiles

in Spain and to evaluate whether it was comprehensive enough for Jesuit standards, as well as an adequate formation for missionaries-to-be.

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**Keywords:** English Catholicism; classics; Jesuit education; libraries; book history.

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**Edmund Spenser's *Daphnaïda* (1591) as an intertextual antipastoral pastore**

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## Abstract

The objective of this paper is to outline Spenser's intertextual stratagems and resultant semi-reversal of accepted gender roles in *Daphnaïda* (1591). In this poem, Spenser incorporates topoi from Longus' romance-as-*bildungsroman* *Daphnis and Chloe* (Longus 1587), Theocritus' elegiac *Idyll* 1 and Bion's *Lament for Adonis* (Capps 1912), and borrows characters from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* I and IX (2002) and Chaucer's *The Book*

of the *Duchess* (Benson 2008). By introducing multiple hypotextual layers of allusion, Spenser eschews Chaucer's humorous, self-effacing narrator and blurs the line between the gendered representations of Longus' and Theocritus' Daphnis, Ovid's Daphne and Chaucer's Alcyone in order to create in his Alcyon a prototype of the over-emotional mourner.

Spenser is consistently regarded as a generically hybrid poet, but Rachel E. Hile's concept of indirect satire (2017, 2-3, 7-8), as the natural extension of Bakhtin's dialogism (2014) and Kristeva's intertextuality (2017), is very applicable to Spenser, as it allowed the sharpest and most daring of poets to skirt uncomfortable issues shielded by plausible deniability, alleged compositive distancing, coded allusion and allegory.

While *Daphnaïda* avoids such delicate subject matter as the Queen's marriage policies and attempts at religious tolerance, which Spenser tackled in *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, it is by no means devoid of criticism: his target of choice, Arthur Gorges, was a gentleman-courtier, so deniability was not a pressing issue, and yet Gorges' mourning is still indirectly and obscurely ridiculed through a complex web of allusions, possibly forming part of a veiled campaign of criticism of the Oxford-Howard circle of Catholic courtiers.

With its title, *Daphnaïda* (Oram et al. 1989) already misleadingly implies an *Aeneid*-like masculine epic around the figure of Daphnis. Alternatively, one might expect *Daphnaïda* to follow the pattern of Theocritus' first *Idyll*, elegiacally remembering the pastoral shepherd-hero Daphnis, bringing a darker closure to Longus' more idealised *bildungsroman* and lamenting the fate of a shepherd-less pastoral nature, as did Bion. Once again, Spenser challenges his hypotexts and it is not Daphnis' but Daphne's passing that is mourned, so the role of Daphnis falls on Gorges' shoulders.

Moreover, Spenser transforms Chaucer's dream-vision widow Queen Alcyone—herself borrowed from *Metamorphoses* IX—into his Alcyon, while replacing the Chaucerian dream-vision framework and the Ovidian love-after death conclusion to Ceyx and Alcyone's tale with a long, intemperate monologue. Revising Chaucer and Ovid, Spenser switches Alcyone's gender, so that he, the new Black Knight originally patterned after John of Gaunt, is now a conflation of Gorges, John of Gaunt and Ovid's mourning queen. A result of this gender- and genre-switching is that Alcyon's mourning is not puzzling or comedic for the narrator, as it was in Chaucer, but rather morally questionable: in his mourning, Alcyon/ Gorges is, finally, an emasculated, female Daphnis.

*Daphnaïda*, an unsettled poem that relies on its hypotexts to question excessive mourning, had a suggestive afterlife in *The Faerie Queene*: where Book III already

explored gender (re)presentation through Britomart, *Daphnaïda*, a midpoint in the progression towards Book V, re-emphasises the ambiguity of Britomart and Artegall's dual and often conflicting gender characteristics.

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**Keywords:** Edmund Spenser; *Daphnaïda*; anti-pastorale; intertextuality; Chaucer.

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Lodge's <i>Scillaes Metamorphosis</i> (1589): analysis and interpretation of the volume
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**Abstract**

The Elizabethan penchant for compiling several poetic texts within an individual printed volume has become object of study so as to determine to what extent the selection of these texts in each particular case was due to the choices of the publishers or should be interpreted as one more aspect of the performativity of the authorial voice. For instance, in their comprehensive review on Shakespeare's *The Lover's Complaint* (2006: 1-53), Sharon-Zisser and Whitworth argued that this narrative poem, traditionally eclipsed by the *Sonnets*, with which it shares the 1609 Quarto, is "a significant companion to the *Sonnets*" (2). They support Duncan-Jones (1983) and Kerrigan's (1991) contention that both works were conceived to be connected parts of a single volume. In addition, these scholars have noted structural parallels among most of the volumes of the 1590s sonnet vogue which they ascribe to the influence of the tripartite organization of the pioneer volume of Samuel Daniel's *Delia* (1592), where the sonnet sequence is followed firstly by several anacreontic poems, and then by a love complaint that, in their view, provides a conclusion to the sonnets. Internal semantic connections among the texts are taken as a proof that the authors conceived the volumes as whole entities. However, Dubrow (2007) questions those assumptions and opens a debate when she affirms that that interpretation does neither respond to the variety inherent to Elizabethan collections of lyrics nor take into consideration early modern printing and publishing conventions.

In the light of this debate, this paper analyses Thomas Lodge's *Scylla's Metamorphosis* (1589), a volume containing the narrative poem "Glaucus and Silla", followed by an apparently heterogeneous miscellany of poems. Lodge's editors and biographers have tended to prioritize the *epyllion* to the extent that only Singer (1819) and Gosse (1883) have included the poems in their editions. This paper attempts to demonstrate that the miscellany of poems included in *Scylla's Metamorphosis* is internally linked with the narrative poem, and that this connectedness confers a significance to the volume as a coherent entity. On the one hand, through the analysis of thematic and semantic coincidences along the volume and through their contrast to contextual evidence, I intend to prove that the poetic voice of the *epyllion* is not only prolonged through the annexed poems but may also be identified with the authorial voice. On the other hand, textual evidence such as title-page, drop-titles, and other printing marks and conventions are analysed so as to establish the structural hierarchies of the texts within the volume in order to determine their purpose on it. Although my analysis aligns with those of Duncan-Jones, Kerrigan, and Sharon-Zisser and Whitworth in identifying an authorial intention of cohesion in the volume, I also take sides with Dubrow's contention in favour of the disruptive role of the annexed poems and of the instability of these volumes' structures and authorial voices.

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**Keywords:** Elizabethan epyllia; lyric volumes; miscellanies.

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<p><b>The Literary Fortunes of <i>Lettres portugaises</i> in England: Ventriloquizing the Feminine</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Following the publication of Sir Roger L'Estrange's translation of *Lettres portugaises* in 1678 as *Five Love Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier*, two other prose fiction texts appeared some years later to capitalise on its literary success, namely *Seven Portuguese Letters* (1681) and *Five Love-Letters Written by a Cavalier, in Answer to the Five Love-Letters Written to him by a Nun* (1683). L'Estrange's edition proposed an English translation of the alleged French translation of a Portuguese original which claimed to be the passionate letters of a Portuguese nun to a French officer who had abandoned her. Centuries later, this origin was refuted by critics, as being merely a literary device of

the author, the French nobleman Guilleragues, and it was demonstrated that the person of quality (or the literary persona) who claimed to have found the letters was in fact the author (or the publisher, Claude Barbin, for that matter).

In England, the rendering of the nun's letters of complaint was even further ventriloquised in the two sequels mentioned above, the first of which, *Seven Portuguese Letters*, was a translation of the second part of *Lettres portugaises*, apparently by the same author. Like L'Estrange's first translation, this sequel was printed for Henry Brome, and it was claimed in its preface to have been written by another "Person of Quality," who had found the letters of a woman who had assumed the voice of a cloistered nun and had claimed that they imitated the Frenchman's style even to the point of plagiarism ("Advertisement," A2v). The anonymous author of the other text, *Five Love-Letters Written by a Cavalier*, and no doubt the booksellers Richard Bentley and Mary Magnes, in partnership since 1679, also saw the opportunity in following the craze for the nun's letters, though this time from the perspective of the French cavalier. Some years later, Bentley also got the rights to publish a new English edition of Guilleragues's first part, and he then reprinted it in 1693. No second edition of *Seven Portuguese Letters* was printed, though, but a reprint of *Five Love-Letters Written by a Cavalier* by Bentley appeared later in 1694, and a second edition was published in 1700, this time by Richard Wellington and Edward Rumball, the first of whom had inherited Bentley's copies at his death.

Though the Portuguese letters were also turned into verse in the early eighteenth century (*Love without Affectation*, 1709, and *New Miscellaneous Poems*, 1713, 1714, 1716 and 1718) in this paper I will focus on the fiction to illustrate the complex interplay of voices that were at work in the different texts, and how these experiments and renderings of female complaint followed the dictates of the market for the novel in the late seventeenth century. In so doing, I will situate the phenomenon of *Lettres portugaises* in England in the context of the growing interest for love letters in the period and also of the creation of new epistolary "spaces" in which authors, publishers and translators played with the gender and class associated with fictional senders and addressees. The iterability and reproducibility of the model of the Portuguese letters helps us read the different texts as letter manuals rather than as bouts of spontaneous and boundless emotion.

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**Keywords:** Portuguese letters; nun; female complaint; Guilleragues; translation.

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<b>New Prose-Fiction for Young Readers in the Early Years of the Restoration Period</b>
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**Abstract**

In 1932, Darton restricted the notion of children's books to "printed works produced ostensibly to give children spontaneous pleasure, and not primarily to teach them, nor solely to make them good, nor to keep them *profitably* quiet" (1). For him, this kind of books emerged in Britain in the mid eighteenth century, acknowledging few others before then, such as Aesop's *Fables*. In 1989, Mary Jackson revised the scope of children's literature by arguing that "major developments in children's books reflect diverse influences from the adult world and reflect the nearly universal assumption that children were resources to be molded or engineered to needs and specifications determined by a prevailing social standard" (xi). This wider notion coincides with the

guiding principles of Warren Wooden's posthumous collection of essays about children's literature of the English Renaissance (1987). The cultural and literary changes of the Restoration brought along many prose-fiction books and stories which could potentially appeal the juvenile audience, though they were seldom addressed to them in the prefatory notes. The aim of this paper is to assess to what extent these texts can be ascribed to children's literature, considering not only the story purpose, plot and characters, but also the external evidence of the book itself (such as small size, type of font, illustrations, and so on), though always bearing in mind that prose fiction was read and enjoyed by every social class, age and gender, and that some publications tried to instruct children by terrorising them, for example, with dreadful images of hell punishment. The texts under focus here were explicitly or implicitly addressed to, or likely to be adopted by, the juvenile audience in the early years of the Restoration (though also enjoyable by adult readers). They include Burton's *The History of Eriander* (a didactic romance which hardly fall in the current notion of children's book), the moral exempla in *The History of the Seven Wise Mistresses of Rome*, *The Noble Birth and Gallant Achievements of that Remarkable Out-Law Robin Hood* (a prose rendering of the 16<sup>th</sup>-C garland ballads), *Don Flores of Greece* (part of the Amadis of Gaul cycle of romances), the quasi-picaresque *Fortune's Uncertainty*, and three short moral "novels" in *Angliae speculum morale*. Bunyan's revision of *Grace Abounding* will also be considered. The results will show that some books originally published in the 1660s match Darton's definition of pleasurable texts and are definitely children's literature, whereas some others which blend alluring narratives with moral teaching (though not articulated after each story) could also be labelled as children's literature following Jackson's wider category of these texts.

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**Keywords:** prose fiction; Restoration; children's literature.

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**Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (dir. José Tamayo, 1955 and 1964) at the Roman Theatre of Mérida: Site-Specificity and Intermediality as Methodological Tools to Examine Shakespeare in 'Teatroscope'**

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**Abstract**

After more than fifteen years of closure consequent from the Spanish Civil War, performances at the Roman Theatre of Mérida (Extremadura, Spain) re-started in 1953. Characterized by a style called *teatroscope*—aka *tamayoscope*—, the Spanish director José Tamayo mounted a large-scale production of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* in 1955—which was revived in 1964 to celebrate 'the 25th Anniversary of the Victory.' This production combined displays of extras, spectacular battles and military parades in both the theatre and the amphi-theatre of Mérida. Perhaps influenced by the Spanish première of Joseph Mankewicz's *Julius Caesar* in 1955, this production had a cinematic feel. Due to its success, it contributed to laying the foundations of what is known today as the International Classical Theatre Festival of Mérida. However, this staging was ethically compromised since: 1) Shakespeare's play was rewritten by José María Pemán to serve the interests of the government's propaganda; 2) To serve such interests better, those in charge of these productions erased the memory of the first performances in the Roman Theatre of Mérida mounted by the Pedagogical Missions—with actress Margarita Xirgu in the lead—during the Spanish Second Republic in 1933 and 1934. But although the government appropriated Shakespeare to disseminate a sanitized view of what they judged to be the happy conclusion of a dark period of dissensus, this *Julius Caesar* presents, I argue, a number of "faultlines" (Sinfield 1992) which are observable thanks to the semiotic richness of both the performance space—theatre, amphi-theatre, the archaeological ensemble—and of the production's intermediality—combinations of filmic and theatrical modalities—. This semiotic complexity facilitates a look into Tamayo's *Julius Caesar* as something more dialogical than the epic it was proclaimed to be.

Shakespearean studies develop with an eye to ethics and politics when analyzing production and adaptation (Albanese 2010; Lanier 2014). While, arguably, Shakespeare in theatre festivals contributes to confirm the socially transformative power of the plays (Prescott 2022), these claims need to be examined with an extra dose of skepticism in contexts such as this one. We intend to examine (1) the production's

para-texts (including newsreels, photographs, press reviews, letters, etc.) and (2) Pemán's text, an outstanding performance document. The former predominantly use intermediality and space to confirm that the spectacle pays homage to the regime's values; the latter, despite the author's affiliation to this regime, lends itself to the identification of fault lines in the social order. To analyze these materials, I will take critical works on Shakespeare in Spain— Gregor (2010); Calvo (2007), etc.—and Shakespeare in Spanish and European Festivals—Guerrero-Llorente (2017); Cinpoes, March & Prescott (2022), etc.—as starting points and will use Shakespeare and intermediality in performance—Mankewicz (2014), etc.—and theatrical sitespecificity—Tompkins (2014), etc.—as methodological lenses. The anticipated results reveal that Tamayo's *Julius Caesar* brings together a dialectics which made its mark on the festival's history. This history is not understood as a univocal narrative but as an ambivalent trajectory of socioeconomic progress and concessions to state policies.

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**Keywords:** Mérida; Theatre; Amphitheatre; Space; Intermediality.

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**An emblem of post-Armada Rhetoric: Pedro de Valdés in England's nationalistic imagination**

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**Abstract**

Battles can be lost and won well before they are fought, and the battle for propaganda is usually the one which takes preeminence in any conflict. The Armada sent by Philip II in 1588 against the coasts of England might have lost the day in its fight against the elements, but it not less accurate to say that in the decade following this naval confrontation it was the English that definitely managed to win the day before an international audience which witnessed Spain's incipient decadence and England's unstoppable raise to power. In the opening skirmishes, the English fleet managed to capture only one Spanish vessel, the one commanded by Pedro de Valdés, and Sir Francis Drake's main booty probably was the treasure of information he surely got from this unexpected guest he welcomed aboard his own ship. Back in England, and for the more than three years that his imprisonment lasted, Valdés became the target of some prominent English propagandists who, at this precise historical junction, assumed the task of undermining the prestige of Spain, both as a colonial and as a military power. Valdés was incorporated to the imaginary of English letters as both an emblem of Spanish perfidy and a harbinger of Spain's ultimate defeat in favor of the English. This paper explores the rhetorical mechanisms at work in these literary pieces, the ways in which Valdés became synonym with Spain's doom and England's rise to imperial dominance.

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**Keywords:** Anglo-Spanish relations; rhetoric; emblems; Armada; discourse.

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<b>Confining the Fanatics: “Melancholy” and Political Satire in <i>Mr. Turbulent</i></b>
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**Abstract**

The anonymous *Mr. Turbulent; or, the Melancholics* is a satirical comedy of humours with an open political purpose. It was premiered by the Duke’s Company at the Dorset Garden Theatre in 1681, and published a year later. This play was reissued in 1685 under the title of *The Factious Citizen; or, The Melancholy Visioner*. As both titles imply, this comedy focuses on certain characters that are described as “melancholic”, not in the present-day meaning of being pensive or sad, but in the early-modern sense of suffering from a humoral imbalance that makes them sullen, irritable, and even aggressive, hence the name of the eponymous protagonist. Mr. Turbulent is the “factious citizen” of the second title, and this points at the political nature of the play. He is a puritan dissenter that hates the *status quo* after the Restoration of the monarchy with Charles II: the government, the court, the Anglican Church, universities, the theatre, music, taverns, libertinism, and any kind of entertainment. He and his fellow “melancholics” (also called “fanatics”), such as Mrs. Turbulent, Rabsheka Sly and his wife, and Abdanego Suckthumb (the “visioner” of the 1685 subtitle), are constantly railing against the times. From the Tory perspective of this comedy, produced during the period of the Exclusion Crisis, those fanatics threaten the establishment and the social order, and are consequently the butts of this political satire. The originality of this play in comparison to other comedies of the time is that the puritan whiggism of those characters is exaggerated and presented as a sign not only of social disorder, but also of mental disorder. In a lengthy speech about melancholy, Mr. Turbulent’s French physician, Dr. Quibus, explains the different types of that disease and states that visionary people who imagine strange things, such as Suckthumb, are fit for Bedlam.



So are those individuals whose melancholy mixes with choler and become violent, such as Mr. Turbulent, because they may cause riots, treasons, and rebellions. This comedy draws on this idea of fanaticism as a type of insanity, confines the “melancholics” in the recently opened Bethlem Hospital in Moorfields, and displays other inmates in a kind of freak show. As Michel Foucault has noted, mental institutions were precisely established in the seventeenth century in order to segregate and confine those who were deemed insane and anti-social.

This paper will analyse the play in the light of humour theory and of early modern explanations and literary representations of melancholy. The analysis will show that not only folly, but also madness, were considered adequate objects of derision, as they were forms of mental and social deviation that deserved to be exposed and corrected. Jonsonian comedy of humours actually intended to create unbalanced characters dominated by a peculiar disposition. Moreover, the inclusion of religious and political fanaticism in the contemporary notion of melancholy allowed the anonymous author to use the madness trope in his contribution to the Tory offensive of the early 1680s.

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**Keywords:** *Mr. Turbulent*; Restoration comedy; political satire; fanaticism; melancholy.

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**New Light on the Dating of Durfey's *Love for Money* (1691): From the Siege of Mons  
to Playing "on Thursday"**

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**Abstract**

Thomas Durfey (1653-1723) was undoubtedly one of the most prolific of Restoration playwrights, yet his literary production has been vastly underrated and understudied. The first comedy he produced after the Glorious Revolution, *Love for Money, or, The Boarding School* (1691), affords a good example of this critical neglect. The play achieved considerable popularity when it was first produced: prompter John Downes noted that it "took well being justly Acted" (Milhous and Hume 1987, 88), publisher Abel Roper agreed to pay Durfey a substantial £20 to secure the text (Sanville 1950–1951, 71), and two consecutive quarto editions appeared in quick succession. Modern critics, however, have not paid the comedy much attention and even cursory accounts of basic data are surprisingly riddled with errors and oversights. McVeagh, for instance, states that the play has no epilogue (2000, 175), though all the published quartos carry it. *The London Stage* (Van Lennep 1965, 393) mistakenly notes that it was entered in the *Terms Catalogues* for May 1691, when the text that is listed there is a satirical attack on the comedy entitled *Wit for Money, or Poet Stutter*. Van Lennep, moreover, placed the première in January 1691 building on a misdated allusion in the memoirs of the earl of Ailesbury (1965, 393). Their conjecture was accepted by Milhous and Hume (1974, 395)—who added to the confusion by apparently mixing up the memoirs with a letter that was actually written in May—and Danchin (1985, 3).

The present paper attempts to correct some of these errors and revise the dating of Durfey's *Love for Money*. It will start with a review of the information gathered by Sanville, Van Lennep, Milhous & Hume, and Danchin, and move on to analyse internal evidence drawn from the prologue and epilogue. Special attention will be paid to a hitherto unnoticed variant reading in the epilogue. The text concludes inviting the audience to return the following day—"tomorrow"—for a new performance, but the Huntington Library copy of Q1 substitutes "on Thursday." Since the theatres were

normally closed on Wednesdays in Lent, this variant may indicate that the first run of this comedy took place between February 25 (Ash Wednesday) and 5 April 1691 (Palm Sunday). The Lent opening is confirmed by an allusion in the prologue to the siege of Mons. News of these military operations did not reach England till mid-March 1691 but, according to contemporary sources (Luttrell 1857, 198), the siege became a hot topic of conversation in just a couple of days. The combination of these two pieces of evidence, therefore, points to a late March première.

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**Keywords:** Restoration comedy; Thomas Durfey; *Love for Money*.

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**Poor Blanco! Illness, Heresy and Mental Health in José María Blanco White's  
Conversion to Unitarianism**

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**Abstract**

In his posthumous autobiography, published in 1845, the Anglo-Spanish heterodox José María Blanco White (1775-1841), mentioned two illnesses: a nervous one characterized by acute sensitivity and fatigue that he associated with religious enthusiasm since his childhood, and a physical one: a progressive colon stricture that appeared early after his self-exile in England. He affirmed, however, that the pain produced by his inflammatory bowel disease never affected his rational capacity.

In England, Blanco's impairment was always noted by his contemporaries and friends, who associated his condition to the most violent, or tormented aspects of his personality. Recent research has also pointed at a relation between his illness and his strong rationalism in religion and literature (Murphy 1989; Durán 2005). It was, however, after his unexpected conversion to Unitarianism, marked by the publication of *Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy* in 1835 that Richard Whately, archbishop of Dublin, his mentor and close friend, declared that Blanco's physical condition had worsened and that he was suffering from mental derangement (Whately 1866). This opinion was shared by most of his Anglican friends at Oxford, who considered "poor" Blanco's decision unexplainable on rational grounds. This view was challenged by his new friends and supporters: Unitarians, Quakers and progressive thinkers, some of them atheists. They maintained that his rational capacity had not been affected despite his intense pain and suffering (Thom 1867). His late religious evolution should be respected as the manifestation of the personal faith of a sick man searching for truth. "Poor Blanco" became "Saint Blanco the Martyr". Whately's reaction was considered overprotective and abusive. Showing compassion for a friend on the grounds of his mental derangement was the best way of invalidating both the logic and the truth of his conversion. Further, it could be seen as a way of legitimating religious orthodoxy over heresy by means of a discriminatory use of medicine, a very sensitive issue for religious dissenters and independent thinkers (Thom 1867; Martineau 1870).

This paper examines the reception by his contemporaries of Blanco White's conversion to Unitarism from the perspectives of medicine, literature and religion (Davies 2014; Bray 2019; Mangham 2021). His readers' reactions and comments provide very useful insights on the conflicting views of the society of the time about the relation between personality, pain, mental health, religious belief and the quest for truth on the one hand and the voices of heterodoxy and dissent, not only in religion but also in politics, race or gender, on the other.

This study focuses only on Blanco White's last religious phase. Further research should be carried out on other key moments of his life and also on how pain and illness are described in his works. Incorporating a medical perspective seems necessary to grasp in full the special character and significance of his figure, both as an intellectual and as a human being. It is also essential to understand the different reactions his heterodox views on religion and politics have produced during the years.

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**Keywords:** José María Blanco White; heterodoxy and heresy; religious conversion; medicine and literature; Early Victorian period.

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(Mis)recognizing the destitute other in Damon Galgut's *The Promise*

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**Abstract**

Damon Galgut's *The Promise* gained the writer the Man Booker Prize in 2021. The novel gives an overview of the last decades of South-African history through the Swarts, a white family of mixed Christian and Jewish descent. *The Promise* is divided in four sections, each of them focusing on the death of a family member. At the end, only Amor, the youngest member, remains alive and the likely witness to the country's uncertain future. The title of the novel comes from the moment when Amor eavesdrops her father promising her dying mother to leave their black servant, Salome, the house she already inhabits. Yet, *The Promise* shows how the oath is procrastinated every time one member of the family dies, despite Amor's insistence on keeping to it.

This paper intends to analyse how Galgut's novel denounces misrecognition of the destitute other in recent South-African history. However, it is not a political manifesto but a fictional text, whose narrator appeals to the characters and the implied reader to respond to ethically-charged events, especially the Apartheid and the country's endemic feel of precariousness. To do so, *The Promise* breaks with conventional narratives and adopts some features of surrealism and magic realism to address the destitute and the unattended. South-African history, especially concerning race relations, has been traumatic and, therefore, a dislocated discourse and multifarious focalization are a very suitable approach. To deal with social fracture(s), the novel reveals how white supremacy and Western alleged "rationality" have suppressed the non-white and non-human as disposable others. To examine this (post)traumatic coming to terms with the radical other –especially obvious in Amor's redemptive martyrdom (in Galgut, *The Promise*, 191)– the paper draws on Judith Butler's conception of precariousness (2004, 2006, 2020), Guillaume Leblanc's ideas on the same issue (2016), Jean-Michel Ganteau's vulnerability (2018) and Butler's and Athena Athanasiou's dispossession (2013). The novel focuses on a privileged white family, but from a satirical viewpoint, which helps to understand how precarious lives are configured. Likewise, dispossession informs and accounts for South-African post-colonialism under the shadow of the Apartheid. With all this in mind, it can be argued that Galgut's text exceeds a mere representation of the destitute mass and claims for relationality and empathy as fundamental driving forces of change (Rifkin, 2010).

After the analysis of *The Promise*, it can be concluded that it approaches traumatic history (both familial and national) very effectively. Amor's redemptive discourse is a thread that joins all the family and national history together. However, the final effect is more complex than that, for it is not reduced to whites' guilt complex in moralistic terms. The novel ultimately addresses the multilayered discourses that challenge (white) South-Africans' (mis)recognition of the precarious others, whether human and non-human.

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**Keywords:** Galgut; precariousness; dispossession; relationality; South-African history.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Existentially Pessimistic Weird Fiction: The Influence of Emil Cioran's Philosophy on Thomas Ligotti's Work</b></p>
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Germán Biener Camacho

### Abstract

Weird fiction has recently started to be regarded as a fertile field to explore unique philosophical worldviews and ideas. Particularly, contemporary weird fiction is often concerned with the horrors of urban life and the psychological and social consequences of living in a modern world marked by capitalism. This context leads to existentially-oriented speculation, and especially the advent of Thomas Ligotti and his work signalled a profoundly pessimistic turn for the genre. While the author's literary influences have been easily traced and connected to his own literature, there remains much to be made of the materialization of pessimistic philosophical ideas in his fiction. Given this situation, we must turn to Emil Cioran, one of the most celebrated pessimistic philosophers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and an admitted strong influence on the author. A succinct analysis of a selection of Ligotti's earliest and latest works (namely, "Drink to Me Only with Labyrinthine Eyes" [1982], "Ghost Stories for the Dead" [1989], "The Medusa" [1991] and *My Work Is Not Yet Done* [2002]), along with a few comments on his non-fictional book *The Conspiracy Against the Human Race* (2010), shows how Cioran's philosophical pessimism pervades Ligotti's oeuvre and intermingles with the author's imaginatively nightmarish scenarios. This examination will include both a stylistic connection and a conceptual one following Ligotti's profoundly metaphorical

texts. This will also show the evolution of the author's work from a bleak and dreamlike philosophical type of horror literature toward one more grounded in the mundane corporate environment. Thus, this paper aims to show how Cioran's existentially hopeless worldview influences Ligotti's weird stories and fatalistic thought throughout his career, with an especial focus on the way philosophical pessimism reveals the uncomfortable, unspoken truths hidden behind the quotidian reality of our capitalist world and, beyond that and more importantly for these authors, behind human existence itself.

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**Keywords:** Thomas Ligotti; Emil Cioran; weird fiction; pessimism; existentialism.

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**Overcoming Trauma through Metafiction: Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth* and the Revenge Narrative**



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### Abstract

Ian McEwan's oeuvre is riddled with the exploration of diverse traumatic experiences, which encompass a collective as well as an individual approach to the phenomena. In his 2012 novel, *Sweet Tooth*, a text preoccupied with the importance of discerning which literary agent holds power over a text, McEwan presents a character-author, Tom Haley, who, having experienced the betrayal of both his government (by the hands of an MI5 organisation which attempts to tamper with his creative writing experience) and his new-found lover, Serena Frome, decides to work through his trauma through the creation of a revenge narrative. To create such a narrative, Haley conveniently makes use of the often dubiously-considered metafictional artifice.

To cover all such concepts, this paper will focus on studies on authorship, trauma and postmodernism (focusing on metafiction) to be able to exert an exploration of Haley's process of creation, his reasoning in the creation of his final narrative, and an in-depth analysis of his traumatic experience(s). The paper will expose the ways in which the fictive author decides to redefine his writing process after two different traumatic experiences (one occurring on a professional, authorial, and creative layer, involving the MI5 organisation; the other occurring on a personal level, involving the realisation of romantic betrayal) and thus produce a text which can be branded as a revenge narrative. To do so, trauma theory will be utilised so as to understand his processing of the situation as well as his eventual resolve. In this paper, the concept of 'revenge narrative' will be understood and utilised as the emergence of a new literary genre, one which may be considered to correlate to the concept of revenge porn being relatively newly employed in the legal system.

Haley, by exposing the organisation that has been *patroning* his work, takes revenge on his own government, by reclaiming his position as the ultimate possessor of meaning within his text (thus claiming his position as an all-knowing, God-like author figure, one which opposes Roland Barthes' proclamation of the death of the author in 1967). Concurrently, he repurposes his novel to take revenge on his lover, by making public intimate details about their life together, details which inevitably will have repercussions on her personal life, her career, and most probably her emotional well-being.

McEwan shows that making use of both, a revenge narrative and a metafictional twist, his fictional author can overcome his traumatic experiences, by not only exposing and fictionalising the characters around him (more specially so, Serena)

but also by blurring the divide between reality and fiction. In this way, Tom Haley is capable of rising as an all-knowing powerful authorial figure, one that through a violent narratorial act can reclaim the power lost during traumatic events.

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**Keywords:** Postmodernism; Metafiction; Contemporary British Literature; Trauma studies.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>'There is something accursed in wealth': Postcolonial Ecocriticism in Joseph Conrad's <i>Nostromo</i></b></p>
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### **Abstract**

For years, Joseph Conrad has been lauded as one of the most outspoken critics of European colonialism. His broad scope and clear opposition to the "white man's burden" arguments used to justify imperialism as a civilizational mission made his novels fascinating subjects of inquiry in postcolonial studies. Nonetheless, many critics cannot help but wonder about the broad natural descriptions present in his narrative. Is nature only a literary background for the growth of his anti-colonial sentiment? Drawing from this increasingly extended concern, this paper intends to be an ecocritical, postcolonial analysis of Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* (1904). This novel has most often been read as an allegory of colonial exploitation. However, and without disavowing this reading, I will argue that the way in which Conrad narrates the profane exploitation of the virginal land of Costaguana, likewise conjures up an interesting ecocritical analysis of how nature is presented as more than simple scenery. Then, I will proceed to examine *Nostromo* and, the ecological environment displayed in this particular narrative, in light of what Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin have designated "Postcolonial Ecocriticism". After explaining this concept, this paper will argue for a new paradigm for understanding the colonial practices displayed in the novel, highlighting the greed that dominate most characters and their actions while emphasizing the gradual degradation of natural environments, particularly the San Tomé Silver mine concession. In this way, the present study will focus on three major lines of enquiry, concentrating first on Mr. Gould's pragmatic and materialistic principles, that drive him to the deprivation of the land's natural state to develop a profitable silver-mining concession. This perspective will lead to a study of the different ways in which corruption dents most characters in the novel and leads them to death. I contend that it is human corruption and imperial activities that turn nature into a source of avarice and delusion. To conclude my analysis, I will make a note on indigenous communities as one of the primary objects of concern from a postcolonial and ecocritical perspective, illustrating how Conrad's discourse becomes problematic as a result. This study, at its core, intends to provide a more holistic approach to how land and sovereignty might be integrated into this literary analysis in an environmentally conscious way, rather than focusing solely on postcolonial issues in the traditional sense. The San Tomé silver mine, undertaken for the benefit of economic wealth, leads not only to the decay and corruption of some characters, but also to the terminal destruction of the immaculate paradise that Conrad had previously presented. This paper will prove that a postcolonial, ecocritical approach to *Nostromo*

allows a new reading of the novel, as well as of the natural world in Conrad's prose fiction, which goes far beyond the notion of an inconsequential, beautiful scenery.

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**Keywords:** Joseph Conrad; *Nostromo*; ecocriticism; postcolonial studies.

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<p><b>"Homes for us, los hispanos": the Symbol of the House in in Junot Díaz's "Otravida, Otravez"</b></p>
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### Abstract

Junot Díaz's entire oeuvre is colored at some level by the migrant experience. *This is How You Lose Her* (2012), despite having failed and doomed relationships as its tethering bond, is no exception. In fact, it is especially relevant in stories like "Otravida,

Otravez” and “Invierno”, where it is placed at the fore. In these stories, Díaz talks unabashedly about the loneliness and isolation that people migrating in the United States often feel. In the case of “Otravida, Otravez”, the most prominent phenomenon of the migrant experience is Ramón’s resolve to buy a house with Yasmin and the difficulties that they encounter throughout the entire process.

Díaz’s portrayal of this process has its basis on real-life experiences by migrants in the United States (Díaz McConnell and Marcelli 2007), who encounter countless obstacles when attempting to acquire a house due to the consequences of the historically racist housing policies in the country (Crossney and Bartelt 2005; Glantz and Martínez 2018; Massey 2015). Díaz’s “Otravida, Otravez” reflects this bleak reality through Ramón and Yasmin’s house-hunting experience and comments on how the United States keeps segregating migrants and its population of color so that they always remember which is the place they belong in, which are the appropriate “homes for us, los hispanos” (Díaz 2012).

The analysis of the use of the house in “Otravida, Otravez” through the optics of Gaston Bachelard’s *Poetics of Space* (1958) will show how the house becomes a symbol or the hopes and dreams of the migrant, as Manzanos (2013) has already established. Additionally, this analysis also reveals how the house in this short story is the ultimate refuge and means of integration for the migrant in a society that is inherently hostile to outsiders and people of color. Thus, the endeavor of house-hunting becomes a ritualistic process—comparable to obtaining a visa (Díaz 2012)—, another step in the life of the migrant to achieve the American Dream.

As such, my presentation aims to expand Manzanos’ analysis of Junot Díaz’s “Otravida, Otravez” by further exploring the symbology of the house through the lens of Bachelard’s *Poetics of Space*. In addition, it also intends to establish how, for the migrant characters of the short story, this symbol is tainted by the obstacles that the American housing system presents for people of color and migrants, making the hope of American Dream more of a mirage than an achievable reality.

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**Keywords:** Junot Díaz; Chicano literature; citizenship; migration; housing discrimination.

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<p><b>Representing Vulnerable and (Eco)Precarious Lives: Between Social Cohesion and Exclusion in a Globalized World – (Round Table)</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The manifold conceptualizations of *vulnerability* emerge from the (historically) fruitful application of the term to academic fields like sociology, psychology, political science and philosophy, critical theory, civil engineering, medicine, among many others. Such multifarious nature further enriches—as well as problematizes—its operational definitions that make possible literary analysis and cultural enquiry. Etimologically, vulnerability recalls a *wound* (*vulner, -eris* in Latin)—a key term strongly stemming

from trauma studies—alongside *-ability*, i.e., agency that can be expressed in forms of resilience (Bracke 2016; O'Brien 2017) and/or resistance (Butler, Gambetti and Sabsay 2016) in contrast to passivity or victimhood. Theorists describe vulnerability acknowledging the tension between its universal nature—shared by all (non)human beings and thus as an ontological feature (Fineman 2021)—and its specific manifestations (Brown 2018; Cole 2016). Concomitant to vulnerability, another protean theorization in the wake of the so-called *ethical turn* is the more recent conceptualization of *precariousness* and its twin term *precarity* (Butler 2009). This pair somehow mirrors vulnerability's two-fold nature: on the one hand, precariousness echoes the sense of a shared, and therefore universal, embodied exposure consisting of our dependence on others; on the other hand, precarity denotes a contextual specificity as a spatio-temporal occurrence that is politically induced and differentially enacted. Alternatively, these complex definitions regard vulnerability either as detrimental because it causes social exclusion or desirable due to the opportunities it provides to foster interdependency based on social cohesion.

In this context, this round table intends to provide a space for reflection on the applicability of vulnerability and precarity as helpful notional underpinnings in the literary analysis devoted to the representation of various (non)human vulnerable lives in our global world. It also seeks to explore the liminal spaces created in literary texts at the margins of those individuals and communities socially and politically signified as grievable, livable, healthy, and productive in neoliberal terms, in contrast to the representation of those others' lives whose existences are drastically devalued—dehumanized, animalized, objectified—or ignored, silenced, forgotten and erased. In so doing, this round table will address these apparently aporetic representations oscillating between the binaries of vulnerability as aspiring social cohesion and as generating social exclusion.

The literary texts discussed cover a wide variety of genres, ranging from fiction, docu-fiction, literary journalism, to drama. Likewise, these contemporary texts written in English depict complex realities in a globalized world: migration and refugee crises featured as “superfluous population” (Bauman 2005, 95) by far-right ideologies; several forms of structural oppression and violence in the first and the third world exemplifying intersectional discriminatory practices; the emergence of the precariat in the first world; the heavy toll of neoliberal consumerist ideologies in the individual's psyche; and deferred effects of slow violence, among others. The incommensurability of the global nature of these phenomena in human epistemological capacities are epitomized by vulnerable and precarious others across nations and cultures in these texts, which enact a clarion call to an ethical response to and care for the other.

**Keywords:** vulnerability; precarity; social exclusion; social cohesion; globalization.

## 1. Precarity as Identity: Social Cohesion and Cruel Optimism in Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

As a young Vietnamese gay refugee growing up in a working class town in the US, Little Dog, Ocean Vuong's alter ego in his autobiographical novel *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019), embodies multiple forms of vulnerability. As Judith Butler has noted, vulnerability "characterizes a relation to a field of objects, forces, and passions that impinge on or affect us in some way" (2016, 25). Little Dog's existence is framed by others – his family, his neighborhood, the US – by means of race, social class, sexual orientation and citizenship. His identity is a composite of prejudices and denials: depending on who defines him, he is not man enough, not American enough, not white enough.

However, as Butler, Gambety and Sabsay show (2016), there is also resistance in vulnerability and even the body's vulnerability may eventually develop into a powerful political symbol. Working in a tobacco farm with Latino men, Little Dog's body becomes a tool for identification with other migrant, working class, non-white men and women: "Because no one stays long enough and someone is always just-gone. Because there are no salaries, health care, or contracts, the body being the only material to work with and work from. Having nothing, it becomes its own contract, a testimony of presence. We will do this for decades [...] stringing together a kind of life" (Vuong 2019, 80).

For Vuong, the migrant's precarious condition is an element of social cohesion that strings together the migrant's identity as "a kind of life" with other vulnerable migrant bodies. These bodies share the burden that liquid modernity imposes on them, since they have become redundant human beings by virtue of capitalism's global triumph (Bauman 2007, 28).

In addition, Little Dog and also his mother find solace in everyday objects: plastic mood rings, Victoria's Secret's underwear, Wonder Bread and peanut butter, Green Apple candy, Godiva chocolates, Walmart pens... American commercial brands populate the novel, symbolically representing a promise of happiness (Ahmed 2010) that is virtually unachievable for migrants. Strolling through malls and surrounded by things they cannot afford to buy, Little Dog and his mother try to feel more American. Their sense of belonging is identified with a capitalist scheme: buying-being. Due to their limited purchasing power, this identification is thwarted by what Lauren Berlant defined as "cruel optimism": a relation that takes place "when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing" (2011, 1). This communication shows that precarity can be a form of identity through the shared embodiment of the migrants' experience and the enactment of the fantasy of a good life.



**Keywords:** precarity; vulnerability; migration; cruel optimism; social cohesion.

## **2. Vulnerable Lives, Disposable Bodies, Ungrievable Deaths: A Thanatopoetical Approach to Migrant Docu-fiction**

Though admitting that we are globally affected by a “mortalist humanism” based on our shared finitude and vulnerability, Bonnie Honig (2011) refuses any equalizing claims about death arguing that our very concept of humanity is intersectionally shaped along the discriminatory axes of race, gender, class, age, and nationality that make some losses more grievable than others. Such “uneven allocation of grievability” (Butler 2009) has intensified in present-day contexts of migration and border-crossing where the management of death has become inextricably linked to questions of citizenship, belonging and human rights. My contribution addresses Tim Z. Hernández’s *All They Will Call You* (2017) and Emma J. Kirby’s *The Optician of Lampedusa* (2017) as two examples of life-narratives framed within the space defined by death, as they are respectively set in the deadly routes of the US-Mexico border and the Mediterranean Sea. Though necropower (Mbembe 2003) has different expressions in different geopolitical contexts, a comparative approach to these two migratory environments allows for an analysis of their common reliance on the *pro morituri* principle.

Considering how migrants’ “bare lives” (Agamben 1998) are subjected to a regime of “racial expendability” (Márquez 2012) that simultaneously erases them from public politics and renders them as visibly disposable, I contend that we might regard Achille Mbembe’s (2003) necropolitics as a more capacious term in light of the recent work on (post)human waste-ability and disposability (Bauman 2004; Bales 2004; Valencia 2018).

Hernández’s and Kirby’s texts can typify as documentary fiction, which, compared with more traditional modes of storytelling, provides readers with in-text documents for analysis and interpretation, remaking their role from passive observers to active co-creators (Hinken 2006). In this light, these authors’ narrative ethics proves to be attentive to (and responsible for) the “vulnerable other” (even if the other is dead), allowing for this participative observation anticipated by the contributors to the so-called Ethical Turn in literary studies (Rorty 1989; Nussbaum 1995; Levinas 1998; Spivak 1999; Butler 2004).

As if to compensate the failed forensic work in connecting migrants’ bodies and names following the tragedies of Los Gatos Canyon (1948) and Lampedusa (2013), Hernández’s and Kirby’s respective thanatological work is one of gathering the pieces in life narratives that had so far been ignored and obviated, thus resignifying

vulnerability and resistance in non-binary terms (Butler 2016) and depicting the migrants not just as bare lives but as examples of transformative agency (even if post-mortem agency).

**Keywords:** Necropolitics; Disposability; Migration; Mourning; Vulnerability.

### **3. The Dynamics of Social Cohesion and Exclusion in Aman Sethi's *A Free Man*: Urban Precarious Others and the Neoliberal Aporia of Freedom**

The aim of this proposal is to look into the dynamics of social cohesion and exclusion found in Aman Sethi's *A Free Man* (2011), a non-fiction narrative in which Sethi carries out a series of interviews in quasi-ethnographical research to prepare this piece of literary journalism. I will explore the features of neoliberal forces at work in informal economy displayed in the volume, and theoretically draw from Judith Butler's notion of *precarity* (2004; 2009) and Saskia Sassen's "Urban Capabilities" (2012) among others, as key theoretical elements which reveal the emergence of urban identities in active response to systemic poverty, labor insecurity, and the consequences associated to it, such as addiction, mental illnesses, and death. Sassen states that "urban spaces possess the capacity to make new subjects and identities that would not be possible in, for example, rural areas or countries at large, which are dominated by different norms" (2012, 86) and adds that "joint responses required to solve urban problems place emphasis on an urban subject or identity, rather than on an individual or group identity, like one's religious creed or ethnic background" (Sassen, 2012, 87). Thus, the contention in this paper is that the city brings about particular identities and subjectivities, driving together various adverse attributes, such as endemic mental pathologies and addiction on one hand, and synergies such as affective bonding, community organization, and individual freedom on the other.

Sethi's literary reportage reflects the impact of globalization and neoliberal mechanisms in the life of Mohammed Ashraf who, despite being educated in biology, a succession of menial and low-qualification jobs such as a butcher, a tailor or an electrician's apprentice finally took him to homelessness in Delhi. However, his situation is contextualized in the precarious lives and choices of other street dwellers whose dependence on informal labor make them prone to similar conundrums and survival strains, and whose resistance strategies place them between the binaries of social cohesion and exclusion. Therefore, this presentation will look into this journalistic account to point towards the tension between the will to thrive and the hope these workers have in becoming free subjects in the face of their continued vulnerability, social isolation, and ungrievability. Sethi brings to the fore the many physical, emotional and mental responses that arise from oscillating between feeling ensnared in poverty and social injustice and the so-called emerging opportunities and freedom when there is nothing left to lose in informal economies. I will open up a

space to explore the multifarious consequences of precarity and ungrievability in their bodies and minds.

**Keywords:** Aman Sethi; *A Free Man*; literary journalism; precarity; vulnerability.

#### 4. 'Packing Boxes in Boxes': Vulnerability and Precarity in *Wish List* by Katherine Soper (2016)

Vulnerability as a concept needs to be re-signified by emphasizing perceptions of inequality and specific vulnerabilities that might be diluted in the universal generative capacity of the term. In increasingly competitive societies, social vulnerability and uncertain employment favour an extreme pressure particularly over the less privileged. Social structures of oppression determine the vulnerable condition of some sectors resting on precarious life conditions. Recently, the representation of vulnerability in theatre forms is also visibly problematized by the intersection with precarity questionings about the neoliberal job market. This paper argues how the general spectrum of precarious conditions intersect with different forms of vulnerability in Katherine Soper's debut play *Wish List*.

This analysis is grounded on the theoretical construct of precarity developed by Judith Butler (2009) focusing on the consequences of globalization and the conditions of social exclusion associated. Additionally, Butler's reading of vulnerability (2016) as related to dispossession, poverty and insecurity shapes the relationship with precarity proposed in this paper. Guy Standing's conceptualization of the precariat (2012) and Rob Nixon's slow violence (2011) will be addressed as complementary sociological argumentations.

Awarded with the Bruntwood Prize, *Wish List* devastatingly narrates zero-hour contracts and benefit cuts in an Orwellian and Kafkaesque atmosphere. Since her mother died, Tamsin must combine long hours of packing in an online warehouse with the cares of her brother Dean, a 17-year-old boy, housebound and with an obsession of compulsive rituals of his own. When Dean is declared fit for work, state benefits disappear. Then, Tamsin is forced to survive in constant management impositions about figures and the lack of control over her own life. Soper's play successfully dramatizes different types of vulnerability through a tragedy of dependency, frustration and immobility while directly criticizes dehumanising jobs and austerity measures in Great Britain.

The cathartic effect of the drama offers the readership/audience a temporary immersion in the lives of the characters that is transformed into a reflective practice on representations of vulnerability and precarity in connection. Yet, the strategies of individual resilience do not seem to offer a realistic opportunity to overcome Tamsin and Dean's harsh reality addressing directly to the responsibility of the system and the

labour market. 'Boxed in' by her responsibilities and stuck in the online business, the protagonist clearly embodies the life of the precariats and the unseen victims of slow violence. For her, and thousands of others, there is no chance of actively resisting or having their dreams fulfilled.

**Keywords:** vulnerability; precarity; theatre; slow violence.

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**Beyond Borders: Redefining Generic Boundaries and Threshold Identities in  
Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other***

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**Abstract**

In 2019, Bernardine Evaristo won the Booker Prize for *Girl, Woman, Other*, thus becoming the first Black woman to receive this award. Albeit marketed as a novel, *Girl, Woman, Other* wears this label rather uncomfortably consisting, as it does, of twelve stories which, displaying varying degrees of interconnectedness, can stand independently. Written in a free-flowing style that hybridises prose and poetry – what Evaristo has referred to as “fusion fiction” (Waterstones 2019) – *Girl, Woman, Other* emerges as a fragmented narrative that challenges the more familiar character- or plot-driven structure of the traditional novel. Yet, its last chapter – where different characters cross paths – and the final epilogue – where Penelope’s journey provides closure to the whole – thwart an unproblematic classification of Evaristo’s text as a mere short story collection. Drawing on previous studies addressing the boundaries between the novel and the short story collection (Ingram 1971; Dunn & Morris 1995; Ferguson 2003; Butts 2001; D’hoker 2018), this paper intends to examine the borderline nature of *Girl, Woman, Other*, showing how the narrative’s interstitial position in terms of genre mirrors the identity thresholds occupied by the characters, and how the interplay between fragmentation and unity at the structural level echoes Evaristo’s project of giving visibility to a Black British female experience which, albeit hinging on shared historical links, is extremely heterogenous. In addition, by examining the synergies between “the one and the many” (Ingram 1971, 19), this contribution also seeks to shed light on the seemingly invisible threads that provide “connectedness” to the whole beyond tangential connections and the after-party gathering featuring in the last chapter. Firstly, as I shall argue, the stories in *Girl, Woman, Other* are all linked via different “roots/routes” (Gilroy, 1993) that connect the characters to the history of the Black Atlantic; and, in fact, when read alongside one another, these stand-alone narratives provide a fictionalised *herstory* of the Black presence in Britain, one that predates the twentieth century and establishes links to other geographical locations of

the Black trans-Atlantic diaspora. Secondly, the intersectionality of the mother-daughter experience provides structural cohesion to the four main chapters – each of them featuring a triad of stories internally linked, in the main, via matrilineal bonds – and it also serves to connect the final epilogue to the whole. The polyvocality afforded by the text’s structure allows Evaristo to bridge the gap between “daughter-centric and matrifocal perspectives” (Podnieks & O’Reilly 2010, 10), whilst simultaneously re-historicising female genealogies and exploring different expressions of motherhood in our contemporaneity. Finally, as this paper contends, despite its fragmentary nature, *Girl, Woman, Other* exists within a structure made circular by the final epilogue, where Penelope’s journey back into the maternal womb uncovers her mixed ancestry and becomes a predicament of the mixedness and heterogeneity at the heart of “the human family” to whom Evaristo dedicates *Girl, Woman, Other*.

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**Keywords:** *Girl, Woman, Other*; borders; identity; Black Atlantic; motherhood.

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**AI Embodiments: Narrative Forms of Transhuman Vulnerability in the 4th IR.  
Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021)**

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**Abstract**

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4th IR) has been defined as the historical context where the wider spectrum of posthumanist embodied continua (Braidotti 2013; Herbrechter 2013; Nayar 2014) becomes specific in the fusion, interaction, and co-evolution of the physical, the digital and the biological (Schwab 2016). Strongly supportive of transhumanist premises envisioning a better future for humanity through technological development, advocates of the 4th IR also warn against, but mostly prepare for the challenges that may threaten the full implementation of a2a (anything to anything) connectedness in the near future (Floridi 2014). As we witness nowadays reality racing towards the singularity (Kurtzeil 2005) of the human and the non-human, the role of science fiction as an instrument to imagine and/or prevent embodied forms of transhuman vulnerability (Vint 2007) gets increasingly similar to, rather than allegorical of, our experience of the present (Schmeink 2016) (Ishiguro 2021)

This paper explores the depiction of Artificial Intelligence (AI) embodiments in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by delving into the individual and social vulnerabilities of transhumanist alleged perfectibility. Ishiguro's novel is a first-person narrative focalized through the algorithmic processing of a humanoid Artificial Friend that has been designed to give company to and take care of children who become sick because of bioengineering enhancement in a not-so-distant future.

Firstly, it questions the human ontology of transhumanist individuals whose humanity is reduced to mere data when their intelligence is uploaded to synthetic storage systems imitating human appearance. Secondly, by favoring rationality as the quality that determines human ontology, transhumanism disregards the physical vulnerabilities that transhumanist premises not only take for granted, but also inflict upon human beings who are therefore disabled as a species. Also, the novel also problematizes transhumanist ethics regarding human perfectibility, as it may trigger class/speciesist divisions based on genetic difference and labor redistribution in the service sector. Finally, the unconditional hospitality of AF Klara, embodied as a female child, updates the literary trope of the *ingénu* to complicate transhumanist premises in



the 4th IR by opening the possibility of AI empathic subjectivity and its possible humanization via readerly identification with AI homodiegetic subjectivity.

Stylistically though, the novel reads smoothly with a well-paced calculation of tension and momentum that are constructed around the narrative focus of the AI *ingénu*. The effect is intensely erotic in terms of the progressive disclosure and demands that readers participate in completing the information lacking in AI intelligence, adding a satisfactory effect to readerly *bare* human superiority that runs contrary to transhumanist premises. However, the novel's closure is transhumanist in essence in the sense that its narrative of hope, faith, trust, and generosity relies almost absolutely on the narrative construct and construction of an AI.

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**Keywords:** artificial intelligence; ethics; genetic engineering; *Ingénu*; posthumanism

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<b>Crafting, Collecting, and Clubbing in the Victorian Drawing Room</b>
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### Abstract

In her volume *Inside the Victorian Home* (2003), Judith Flanders scrutinizes the space of home and domesticity as a microcosm of the ideal society of the nineteenth century. Considering Flanders' ideas as a point of departure, the aim of this paper is to explore the sociocultural representation of domesticity as a rupture of the traditional perception of Victorian society from the point of view of the theory of separate spheres. To this purpose we consider the middle-class home as a starting point and as a crossroad between the public and the private with a threefold perspective. First, we analyse the Victorian drawing room as a dynamic and fluid space where the public and the private meet and intertwine to create new cultural meanings. Second, we address craft and collecting in the Victorian drawing room, as arguably, they represent private entertainment, but also, they challenge received notions of public-private divide. Largely considered a semi-public space, the Victorian drawing room "in fact occupied a dual role as an arena for competitive social discourse...[t]he drawing room operates as a show-room" (Evans 2008, 115). In it, there were things and items to cover things, and other things to hold yet more things, and this ever-increasing number of objects and items turned the drawing room into a museum-like space. Also, crafting homemade albums facilitated the negotiation between the private and the public in Victorian times, since, following Deborah Lutz, "albums functioned also as social spaces for gathering traces of friends, families, or the famous" (2015, 228). In addition, collecting, or *bric-a-brac*, established a metonymic relationship between body and object, the material world, thus erasing boundaries of subject vs object, inside vs outside, private vs public. This assemblage of various parts through collecting contributes to generate new meanings about the Victorian drawing room. Lastly, we will deal with the porous nature of the drawing room in the context of late nineteenth-century female clubs. The cultural agenda of the clubs hosted in their own premises will be studied as a replica to the Victorian home and the middle-class respectability. Therefore, in this paper we will consider the Victorian drawing room as an interstitial space of negotiation between public and private, as well as address the Victorian domestic environment as porous and fluid.

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**Keywords:** Victorian drawing room; separation of spheres; craft; collecting; clubbing.

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<b>Images of Spain in British Literary Annuals (1823-1830)</b>
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**Abstract**

Spain figured prominently in British Romanticism. It inspired a wide variety of literary texts that imagined scenes from its past, portrayed its most picturesque customs and manners, depicted its monuments and landscapes and, on the whole, interpreted Spain and its culture in different ways. Due attention has been paid to the representations of Spain in Romantic prose, drama and poetry (Saglia 2000; Valladares 2015; Saglia and Haywood 2018; Beatty and Laspra Rodríguez 2019), including the poems about the Peninsular War and the Liberal Triennium (Coletes Blanco and Laspra Rodríguez 2013 and 2019). However, even if the representations of Spain in Romantic print culture have been explored in significant depth for the last two decades, there are still certain lacunae or neglected primary sources that deserve further examination. One of them is the British literary annual.

Literary annuals were small-sized embellished anthologies of prose and verse texts that were sold annually—generally at the Christmas season—as tokens of friendship and affection. They were lavishly embellished by engravings, which were often privileged over the texts they illustrated since contributors frequently had to write in response to the already selected images. Although the annual was mostly aimed at a middle-class female readership and was considered a feminine genre, contributors included both male and female contemporary British authors. Some of

them were second-rate, now-forgotten writers, but the annuals also featured texts by renowned female authors like Letitia Elizabeth Landon and Felicia Hemans, and even by male canonical figures like Wordsworth or Coleridge, who had some reservations about the reputation of these anthologies but eventually accepted lucrative offers to collaborate on them (Harris 2015, 3).

The literary annual was introduced in Britain in November 1822, when Rudolph Ackermann published *Forget Me Not: A Christmas and New Year Present for 1823*, the first volume of the successful *Forget Me Not* series (1823–1847). Its success led to a sudden proliferation of literary annuals in Britain, including titles like *Friendship's Offering* (1824–1844), *Literary Souvenir* (1825–1837), and *Keepsake* (1828–1857). Their popularity reached its peak in the 1830s but started to decline in the 1840s, and they finally disappeared in the following decade.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the references to Spain in *Forget Me Not* and *Friendship's Offering* from 1823 to 1830. The mid-1820s are a central period in the study of Anglo-Spanish relations as the interest in Spanish affairs intensified with the collapse of the Spanish liberal regime in 1823 and the reappraisal of Spanish literature and culture in Britain. *Forget Me Not* and *Friendship's Offering* include poems and short stories set or somehow related to Spain as well as a few pieces translated from Spanish, which contribute to the promotion of the Romantic image of Spain celebrating the legacy of Muslim Iberia and perpetuating certain stereotypes.

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**Keywords:** Anglo-Spanish relations; British Romanticism; literary annual; *Forget Me Not*; *Friendship's Offering*.

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<b>Sophia Lee, María Rosa Gálvez and the Elizabethan Court</b>
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**Abstract**

In 1795 the Spanish writer María Rosa Gálvez appeared on the subscription list of the translation of Sophia Lee's novel *The Recess; or, A Tale of Other Times* (1783-5), which was published in Spain in three volumes under the title *El subterráneo, o la Matilde*. Most importantly, years later, in 1804, Gálvez published a tragedy, *La delirante*, inspired by some events narrated in Lee's novel. *The Recess* mixes real historical events and characters with fictional ones, as it describes the life of two alleged twin daughters of Mary Queen of Scots and the Duke of Norfolk, Matilda and Ellinor, who, due to their dubious origin, grow up in a recess under the ruins of an abbey. As adults, when the sisters are able to leave their confinement, they get romantically involved with two powerful and influential men in the court of Queen Elizabeth I: Matilda with the Earl of Leicester and Eleanor with the Earl of Essex. Consequently, they resist the queen's authority not only as her potential dynastic rivals, but also because of their love affairs with Elizabeth's favourites. From Lee's long and eventful novel, Gálvez just takes Ellinor's subplot, as she is the one who resides for a longer time in the Court, which allows the Spanish writer to concentrate on the confrontation between Elizabeth I and Ellinor, transforming them into the two protagonists of her tragedy.

This study intends to analyse the depiction of royal women from the past in Lee's and Gálvez's texts. Both writers were part of the increasing number of women who were creatively venturing into historical projects, showing a particular interest in royal women and their ambiguity and paradoxical role as women and rulers (Lewis, 1998; Dobson & Watson, 2002; Spongberg, 2007). In the British eighteenth-century context, as occurred with their mother Mary Queen of Scots, Matilda and Ellinor would represent the feminine ideal, as they are women driven by their sensibility and emotions, as

opposed to Queen Elizabeth I, who would be a masculine woman immersed in the public world of politics (Pelling, 2020). Gálvez, on her part, using *The Recess* as an inspiration, created a tragedy filled with female power, animosity and drama, situated in the Elizabethan court (Whitaker, 1992), capitalizing on the growing Anglomania found in Spain at the end of the eighteenth century and first decades of the nineteenth century (Villamediana, 2019). Finally, it is also remarkable that by means of their texts, Lee and Gálvez were able to express their concerns about women's place in contemporary political, social, intellectual and domestic realms, particularly women's limited ability to make their own choices, and to provide suggestions for its amelioration.

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**Keywords:** Sophia Lee, María Rosa Gálvez, Elizabethan court, royal women, eighteenth century.

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**Feeling Climate Change: Exploring Tanya Tagaq's *Split Tooth* as Affective Inuit Life Writing**

Claudia Isabelle Miller

**Abstract**

Inuit adaptability and ingenuity during the rapid pace of colonization and modernization have proven vital attributes in the face of the current Anthropogenic climate crisis. Based on Keavy Martin's (2012) study of Inuit texts that have effectively adapted to new contexts, I will examine Tanya Tagaq's *Split Tooth* as an example of innovative life writing that commits to Inuit ways of being and honors principles of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ). The fictional memoir depicts the cyclic pattern of traumatic incidents, symptomatic of the precarious state of Inuit communities, and the ordinary everyday of a schoolchild in the High Arctic. The raw images of poverty, substance abuse, violence and suicide delineate a stark contrast between the once close-knit community that treasured kinship between the human and nonhuman and present Inuit life, removed from the land and plagued by southern institutions. Despite her alienation from traditional ways of being, Tagaq's protagonist is sought out by spirits and, willingly, interacts with them. Impregnated by the Northern Lights, she seeks out an elder in the community to oversee the birth of her twins, but the babies, inapt for living among humans, are tragically returned to the spirit world and the mother's grief is never appeased.

The text shows how modern-day Inuit, like Tagaq herself, must withstand the weighty upheaval of a generation that has become estranged from their own identity, language, principles and stories. Unsettlingly, it is not only the permafrost that is giving way underfoot, but the very bedrock of her being. Through motifs of binary contrasts such as life/death, love/hatred and violence/tenderness, Tagaq re-conceptualizes trauma and manifests the heaviness of her existence. These binary contrasts are indicative of the prevalence and influence of traditional storytelling (Saladin d'Anglure 288-9) and thus substantiate the ubiquitousness of Inuit epistemology and IQ in *Split Tooth*.

Catriona Sandilands (2019) argues that narratives of "grief, rage, hope, wonder, perplexity and love" will help to "notice, feel, understand, talk about and respond to the reality of climate change in ways that better acknowledge the personal complexities of our social and environmental problem" (8). This paper will look into how Tagaq's affective strategies intimate Inuit experience of climate change. Ultimately, I will argue that Tagaq's affective narration succeeds in decrying the environmental demise incited by capitalism and colonialism. In doing so, *Split Tooth* validates life writing as a means of advancing discussions of Indigenous self-presentation, self-determination and environmental justice.

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**Keywords:** affect; climate change; Inuit literature; life writing; Tanya Tagaq.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Revisiting 'The Memory Palace': Disclosing the Potentialities of Traumascapas in <i>Vanishing Monuments</i> (2021)</b></p>
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### Abstract

The exploration of memory and place in narratives of trauma is a recurrent motif in literary studies. Nonetheless, the notion of place has always been considered as a trigger for 'shattered' memories or other pathological symptoms of traumatic processing. It was not until the advent of the pluralistic theory of trauma that external factors like place, history, culture began to be considered as active in the conditions that facilitate trauma instead of being rendered as pathological. Specifically, Maria Tumarkin, followed this perspective with the concept of traumascapes, which defined as places "marked by traumatic legacies of violence, suffering and loss" (2005, 12), set the possibility of exploring physical places of trauma outside a medicalized perspective.

Taking this into account, this paper examines John Elizabeth Stintzi's book *Vanishing Monuments* (2021) with the aim of analyzing the mechanisms behind the intersection between trauma and place. Being a novel about trauma, *Vanishing Monuments* (2021) adopts the dominant tenet of the pluralistic theory of trauma; that is, the author rejects traditional formulaic descriptions of trauma in terms of pathology and foregrounds, instead, the role of place in registering and conveying it. Through a focus on the traumatic return of the genderfluid protagonist Alani Baum to their



birthplace, I contend that the protagonist's house could be read as a traumascapes that serves as a blueprint for delineating Alani's past queer trauma.

By virtue of a theoretical framework that combines trauma theory, more specifically the pluralistic branch (Buelens et al. 2014; Cvetkovich 2003), with potential discussions around the notion of place (Balaev 2012; Tumarkin 2005), this paper will attempt to illustrate the potentiality that places can have for the queer traumatized subject. In order to achieve this aim, first, I will draw on Tumarkin's concept of traumascapes to examine the crucial role that the protagonist's house plays in the reverberation of the main character's traumatic experiences. This will be further achieved through an exploration of how the protagonist's trauma is materialized in the narrative, for which I will briefly link the concept of traumascapes with the notion of queer trauma developed by Ann Cvetkovich. Lastly, I will turn to the different discourses around the productive processing of trauma in order to evaluate how it is articulated in the book. As for results, the close analysis of *Vanishing Monuments* (2021) reveals that instead of representing the dissociative experience of trauma that might be caused by a place marked by it, the novel works towards a productive version of trauma which is developed creatively through a narrativization of memories evoked by the protagonist's house.

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**Keywords:** trauma; place; traumascapes; queer trauma.

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**Abstract**

There is a general consensus among literary critics that Eugene O'Neill's cycle play *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931) is a modern retelling of the myth of Orestes and Electra (Asselineau 1958; Burian 1997, 254-256; Khare 1998, 339-374; Black 2004, 174-178; Alexander 2007, 33-37). The plot of the first play (*Homecoming*) as well as its structural elements validates this assumption. O'Neill's trilogy, like its most recognized classical counterpart (Aeschylus's *Orestia*) deals with Mannon's children who kill their mother's lover to avenge their father's murder. Biographers also highlight O'Neill's ardent reading of Greek tragedy before and during his career as a playwright as another evidence for his deliberate reception of a classical myth in *Mourning Becomes Electra* (Black 1999; Weiner 2013). Nevertheless, the second and third parts of this modern American tragedy (*The Hunted* and *The Haunted*) deviate from the Orestes-Electra narratives which is usually taken as O'Neill's act of modernization or literary appropriation. In the present article, I intend to follow the plot of *Mourning Becomes Electra* sequentially in order to demonstrate that O'Neill's trilogy embraces other classical intertexts as well. I focus my analysis on classical literary topoi to demonstrate that O'Neill's act of appropriation has more profound layers. To achieve this, Laguna Mariscal's definition of topoi as "medium-level semantic contents framed in a particular structure and developed through the literary history" (1999, 201) is used to distinguish classical topoi from literary motifs for their possession of an evolution from the classical tradition towards modern culture. It is argued that the intertextual incorporation of literary topoi could be an unconscious literary process whereby a *topos* as a living element is naturally developed through the literary history. To show this in practice, several amatory topoi such as declaration of love, love rejection, quarrels between lovers, lies out of love, death for love and unrequited love are introduced and their development in O'Neill's play is examined. Unlike the original assumption that *Mourning Becomes Electra* is a modern "replica" of Aeschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides's tragedies (Rutledge 1982, 143-144), in the present study, it is argued that this play incorporates architextual references to Classical Latin poetry such as Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* through the use of literary topoi. O'Neill's treatment of these topoi is twofold in nature: while they originate from the classical tradition, they adhere to the conventions of modern American society.

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**Keywords:** Eugene O'Neill; Classical Literature; *Mourning Becomes Electra*; Amatory Topoi; Literary Topoi.

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<p><b>Women (Re)-Writing Nineteenth-century Entertainment: Past and Present – (Round Table)</b></p>
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**Abstract**

This round table aims at presenting an overview of women's agency in the theatre history of the nineteenth century and its afterlives. With this purpose, the first speaker (and chair of the round table) will consider the position of the research in the field of the presence of women in nineteenth-century theatre and entertainment industry. Research questions to be discussed in the round table are: 1) What is the role of women's agency in the theatre industry of the nineteenth century? 2) What is the role of women's agency in the reception of the nineteenth century on the contemporary stage? To answer these questions, the first speaker will provide an outline of recent approaches to the theatre history of the nineteenth century and women. Then, the other three speakers will open new research avenues on three different topics related to the field and with questions to engage the audiences in the discussion.

Therefore, in this roundtable we aim to foster cross-disciplinary discussion on the cultural agency of women in the history of nineteenth-century theatre raising questions involving, for example, the role of women when following the interaction and interplay between the arts to create cultural artifacts, and the relevance of their agency in bridging the gaps between the commercial and the liminal. The theoretical framework for the roundtable emerges from the publications by Kewey (2005), Davies (2007) and others who, since the early twenty-first century are re-orienting the theatre history of the nineteenth century and its afterlives from a gendered perspective. The results presented in this roundtable are framed within the wider research carried out for the funded research project AICO/2021/225 which develops under the auspices of the research group LAP (Literature, Arts and Performance GIUV 2017-354).

## **1. Stage Pioneers in Late Nineteenth-century London**

The chair of the round table will continue the topic addressing the presence of theatre in the cultural agenda of the women-only clubs of the nineteenth century. To this purpose he/she will scrutinize the various and different clubs available only for women in London in the second half of the century which have been partially analysed by Doughan and Gordon (2006) and Evans (2019). The women writers and managers who build the British theatrical canon of the nineteenth century as agents of both popular and highbrow entertainment are heterogeneous. On the one hand, there are women writers who had already been placed in the traditional Western canon; there are also wives of acclaimed playwrights whose works were apparently a 'private family matter' supporting the work of their husbands even if there exist public reviews of their plays (Newey 2005, 78); there are also wealthy benefactresses whose engagement with professional theatre was limited even if they actively participated in amateurish productions, and professional playwrights, theatre managers and actresses. Some of these women participated in the club life of London at the turn of the century.

As shall be discussed, women's clubs of the 1890s heavily relied on the performing arts for the dissemination of their ideas. Archival evidence also suggests that they contributed to the cultural texture which promoted the birth of the New Drama. This is a history which, nonetheless, has been systematically erased from the map of entertainment of the period. The aim of this discussion, therefore, is to bring to light the presence of drama in London's Women's Clubs of the late nineteenth century from a threefold perspective: as centers for entertainment and education, as cultural spaces to promote unknown female playwrights, and as sites for ideological contestation. For the latter, the speaker shall rely on the Pioneer Club to prove how it nurtured the progressive narrative of the Ibsenites and movements of independent theatre that will encourage the flourishing of a New Drama by the turn of the century. Being one of the most political women clubs of the late nineteenth century, the Pioneer club participated, as shall be expounded, on the debates of the most innovative and advanced topics that involved the engagement of women in society.

## **2. *Treasure Island* and the Neo-Victorian Stage at the National Theatre**

A story for boys from the moment of its conception, in which women had no place, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1881-82) has arrived to our days as one of the most well-known pirate stories of all times. Pivotal in the establishment of the boy's adventure story genre, Stevenson's novel's influence on popular culture is reflected on its multiple adaptations into different mediums, being this partly the cause of its endurance through time.

Albeit the fact that it has not been as prolific adaptation-wise as Stevenson's popular novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), yet *Treasure Island* has enjoyed a fair amount of attention from adapters. The film industry seems to have paid a fair amount of attention to this piratical story, for it counts with over fifty filmic adaptations, probably being *Muppet Treasure Island* (1996). Notwithstanding, *Treasure Island* has also found its place in other mediums such as comics and graphic novels, musical theatre and radio performances. The novel's presence in theatre is not to be ignored either, for its presence on stage has been vast for the most part of the twentieth century.

One of the most recent dramatical adaptations of Stevenson's *Treasure Island* is the eponymous play by Bryony Lavery, performed at the National Theatre of London in 2014 and directed by Polly Findlay. As the Christmas show of the season, they immersed audiences into a story at times both darker and more naïve than the original. However, it is characters and their development what attracts special attention. Both written and directed by women, Lavery's and Findlay's approach on the novel seems

to be a direct confrontation against Stevenson's deliberate exclusion of women. By including women characters and putting them forefront in a rather "female-less" story, they vindicate the often-ignored existence of female pirates in history while claiming girls' right for adventure, despite their approach to gender roles in the play not being fully, or efficiently, subversive.

Being characters the play's stronghold, however, they use their characterization to explore topics already existing in the original novel, even if at times their involvement seems superficial. It is thus that this brief communication's aim is to, firstly explore the function of the feminine characters altogether with their relevance and difference to their male novelistic counterparts, while determining how themes such as identity development, the evil and good dichotomy, and greed relate to those same characters.

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**Keywords:** women; theatre; Neo-Victorianism; nineteenth-century; translation.

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**A Psychoanalytic Approach to Complex Female Relationships in Eliza Clark's *Boy Parts* (2020)**

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**Abstract**

The present paper aims to analyze the psychological nature of complex relationships between female characters in Eliza Clark's *Boy Parts* (2020), namely the one between Irina, the protagonist, and Flo, her best friend and former lover. For this purpose, I will use Jessica Benjamin's psychoanalytic theories, based on D. W. Winnicott and Margaret Mahler's object relations, which refer to the "psychic internalization and representation of interactions between self and objects" (Benjamin 1995, 28). Benjamin, known for her contributions to both psychoanalysis and social work, proposes an intersubjective perspective, which "reorients the conception of the psychic world from a subject's relations to its object toward a subject meeting another subject" (Benjamin 1988, 19-20). For my analysis, I will focus on concepts such as *recognition* and *destruction*, developed by Benjamin in books such as *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and the Problem of Domination* (1988); *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference* (1995) and *Beyond Doer and Done To: Recognition Theory, Intersubjectivity and the Third* (2018). Benjamin describes *recognition* as a process of identification with the other, and *destruction* as a process which allows the individual to go beyond identification with the other and, consequently, to perceive them as a separate self (Benjamin 1995). Furthermore, I will combine Benjamin's theories with the concept of *attachment*, which has its origin on John Bowlby's psychoanalytical theories. At the heart of attachment theory is the idea that the human infant is "predesigned to relate to others from birth, and that their relationships with primary others are paramount in shaping his psychic development" (Schneider 1991, 251). The concept of *attachment* has been further developed by other critics such as Rita Felski, who affirms that *attachment* includes (but not requires) "warm and fuzzy feelings" (2020, ix), which vary in shape, scale, intensity and object, and which go beyond love. In Eliza Clark's *Boy Parts*, Irina is a photographer who specializes in taking explicit pictures of "interesting"-looking men. Already involved in a complicated relationship with alcohol, drugs, sex and extreme cinema, the offer of an exhibition at a gallery in London triggers a tailspin of self-destructive behavior partly centered around Irina's relationship with her best friend, Flo. The analysis of Irina's bonds with Flo and other female characters will lead us to conclude that the aforementioned theories provide us with an enriching ground for uncovering the intricacies and what lies at the core of such kind of relationships.

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**Keywords:** recognition; destruction; female relationships; attachment; psychoanalysis.

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**"There's no woods left": The Mutability of Queer Hope through William di Canzio's Alec (2021) and E.M. Forster's Maurice (1971)**

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### Abstract

During the years 1913 and 1914, the British author E.M. Forster wrote his novel *Maurice*, a tale of homosexual love that narrates the quest of its homonymous hero to find a partner with whom to share an idyllic happy ending far from social conventions. Even though the text was originally circulated among Forster's closest associates and like-oriented friends, and was finally published posthumously in 1971, Forster never altered – and he *did* alter many of its contents – the novel's "happy ending". As the author stated at its end: "A happy ending was imperative. I shouldn't have bothered to write otherwise" (220), his wish was, ultimately, that literature should offer a space in which queer men could find love and stay in it "for the ever and ever that fiction allows" (220). To procure the bourgeoisie Maurice and his working class lover, Alec,



that happy ending, Forster finished the novel by sending them to live a pastoral and simple life in the English greenwoods.

Fifty years after *Maurice* became available to a wider public, William di Canzio's *Alec* (2021) was published. Di Canzio's text acts as both prequel and sequel to Forster's *Maurice*, re-telling it from Alec's perspective. Stretching past WWI, *Alec*'s ending differs considerably from *Maurice*'s. In the later text, the protagonist claims "We were goin' to live in the greendwoods ... But there's no woods left" (319). Instead, the lovers sail to America, in circumstances that widely and significantly differ from Forster's original plot.

This paper aims, in this sense, to analyse how both texts interact with each other and produce an ideal of "queer hope" that is, ultimately, a construct of each author's period. What seemed liberating for Forster, becomes ridiculous for Di Canzio, who offers, instead, a "happy ending" more palatable and understandable for contemporary audiences. This shift, I argue, evidences, on the one hand, the impact that Forster's text has had for queer literature, in as much as it still provides contemporary authors with a structure through which to keep experimenting with desire between men and hopefulness. On the other hand, however, it also exemplifies Sara Ahmed's conceptualisation of "queer use", as a way to constantly re-shape what is traditional and adapt it to create a queer affinity that alleviates the oppressions felt by those outside heteronormativity (219-27).

While acknowledging Heather Love's claim that "hope that is achieved at the expense of the past cannot serve the future" (29), this paper ultimately uses Ahmed's theories of (re)orientation and queer use to prove that the literary past can still be an effective (and affective) space through which to articulate contemporary queer concerns and frame them within a tradition of resistance and hopefulness.

Di Canzio's queer use of Forster's original narrative can be regarded, in conclusion, as an example of how queer literature is orientated towards the past and towards the future at the same time, thus creating a sense of hopefulness that defies traditional temporalities.

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**Keywords:** E.M. Forster; William di Canzio; Queer studies; Sara Ahmed.

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**Fear the Millennial God: Fundamentalism in the post-apocalyptic patriarchal utopia**

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**Abstract**

Pandemics oblige us to understand the complex interdependence between environmental crises, economic precariousness, and social despair, together with women's life value and sovereignty over their bodies in patriarchal systems. In the latest decade, feminist dystopian narrative has widely used the gender pandemic trope to alert readers of possible anti-utopian outcomes in the post-apocalypse. Among the possible dystopian scenarios, the imposition of fundamentalist phallogocratic regimes appears as a form of triumphant restoration of social order. The reactionary dogmatism from patriarchal institutions condemns feminism, rescuing the old parallelism between *woman* and *disease* in opposition to *man* as *welfare*. In so doing, Davie remarks that the resulting theocratic regime conceives a compliant model of patriarchal womanhood inasmuch as "traditional female roles become [...] one of the 'fundamentals' that must be re-established, justified by appeal to the sacred text" (2007, 198). This paper undertakes a comparative study of three post-apocalyptic feminist dystopias to analyse the emergence of contemporary forms of religious fundamentalism, characterised by the "rejection of new and different roles for women in the modern world" (Davie 2007, 195).

Particularly, I expose the manipulations to conceive and mould the fundamentalist (re)writings of the modern myths for these patriarchal utopias. Their sectarian mindset guarantees their continuance by distorting reality at a personal level—as observed among the fundamentalist leaders—and at a systemic level, whose pillars rely upon their neglected daughters. On the one hand, the deification of the paternal figures in the three origin stories endows patriarchs with sacred infallibility. The elevation of fathers' intellectual pregnancy justifies mothering's withdrawal and their surrogacy to serve the contemporary *patria potestas*. On the other hand, geographical and architectural-wise, the social insularity presented in these walled neo-panopticons prevents the utopian territory from being infected with dissident ideologies that would endanger the fantasy of patriarchal individuality, while it

ensures girls' mutual sousveillance and ignorance about the world and other versions of *history*.

The writers of these gender pandemics observe how the cataclysm justifies the brutality against women's bodies, mobility, and discourse as a tactic to ensure patriarchal survival. Sargisson demonstrates how such "legitimation of violence towards the Other and the repression of dissent" originates not simply from precarity, but due to the urge to achieve perfectionism—which turns into a "malign type of utopianism" (2012, 53). At the same time, the nullification of female agency secures their bodies as mere matrixial spatiality to perpetuate an escapist perfectionist utopia that evades but does not solve the global emergency. Nevertheless, the consolidation of patriarchal fundamentalisms in the millennial utopia proves paradoxical, as they "perceive themselves as resisters not only to modernity itself, but to its philosophical foundations, make optimal use of its technological outputs" (Davie 2007, 186). Based on revolution, rupture, and displacement, millennial utopias eventually achieve the extreme continuity of the already existing patriarchal statism. There exists a rupture in the forms of building utopia, though the content core is untouched, and the hierarchical power relations simply expose what tacitly is agreed in our contemporary neo-capitalist civilization.

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**Keywords:** Patriarchal utopia; feminism; fundamentalism; post-apocalyptic narrative; dystopia.

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<p><b>Riots, Foster Homes and a Royal Wedding: The Unequal Allocation of Vulnerability in Kit de Waal's <i>My Name Is Leon</i></b></p>
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Magdalena Flores Quesada

**Abstract**

Kit de Waal's debut novel, *My Name Is Leon* (2016), was an instant success. Both critics and readers praised de Waal's ability to capture the social complexities of Britain in the 1980s, a moment largely marked both by the royal wedding of Princess Diana and Prince Charles, and by the Handsworth race riots of 1981. With this background, the novel centres on Leon, a mixed-race nine-year-old boy that struggles in the British foster care system while his half-brother, Jake, a white and blue-eyed baby, is soon adopted. The author, who had worked most of her life in foster care, wanted to portray "a care system that didn't care very much" (de Waal, 2020). In that way, de Waal's novel provides a good framework to put the ethics of care in dialogue with the notion of vulnerability. In this paper, I claim that de Waal manages to capture the unequal allocation of vulnerability in today's societies, especially when it comes to the distribution of responsibility for the care of the marginalised other. As such, vulnerability does not simply become more evident in particular groups, but it also evinces how the private and the public spheres become intertwined. Thus, the racism that Leon suffers in the foster care system extends to that found in the riots. The poverty that surrounds Leon's circle contrasts with the wealth that the preparations for the royal wedding involve. By applying Robert E. Goodin's "vulnerability model" (12) and Judith Butler's understanding of vulnerability, I analyse the unequal allocation of responsibility and care in the novel. Goodin's model demonstrates that the care for the other should extend outside the realm of family and friends, whereas Judith Butler's analysis of vulnerability connects the notion with personal and collective resistance and resilience. In this paper, I show how Leon's sense of identity, belonging, and his personal relationships are shaped by a multilayered vulnerability. With my analysis, I demonstrate how Leon achieves to use this vulnerability as a transformative and empowering characteristic: he transforms trauma into self-development and learning, and he manages to create new bonds by substituting the shortcomings of his dysfunctional parents for an entire community that acts as a surrogate family. As such, I argue that this novel is not only a tender bildungsroman told through a child's perspective, but also, an effective denouncement of the unequal distribution of vulnerability in the public sphere that calls for a reorientation of our gaze towards the vulnerable other.

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**Keywords:** Vulnerability; contemporary literature; British fiction; critical theory; ethics of care.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>When Doris Day Lost her Home and Agreed to Be a Prisoner: Capitalocene and Posthuman Dictatorship in Margaret Atwood's <i>The Heart Goes Last</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

As Marshall McLuhan claimed, the interaction between human beings and our technological extensions transforms the human at a very quick pace with the result that technology becomes a quasi-biological extension of the human (1994, 46). That is, technology has a direct and appreciable effect upon human nature in a compressed time than any other extension of man had in past times. Some voices are concerned and pessimistic about the possible negative consequences of these precipitated alterations in the form of socio-political and ethical changes (Fukujama 2002). Not only human rights, but also the construction of human identity undergo changes brought about by technology and its effects on everyday moral decisions and experience. To map these changes, I would like to discuss how the identity of *The Heart Goes Last's* main character, Charmaine, is influenced by her gradual acceptance of new rigid socio-cultural patterns, that compromise her civil rights, identity formation, and that ultimately trigger her evolution into a specific kind of (post)human being. On the other hand, and according to Laurie Vickroy, a shared feature of many of Atwood's female characters is that they "are victim-survivors who are ethically or emotionally compromised by their fears of male violence and exploitation" (2013, 254). Trying to understand Charmaine's motivation to accept living in a society without personal or

communal freedom and with a priori unacceptable impositions of behaviour, especially shaped and altered by the intervention of technology, in this paper I examine Charmaine's family background. *The Heart Goes Last* outlines how her childhood history of unspecified violence, together with an escapist education, led her to crave for the domestic dream of happiness based on a safe home for her own, and eventually to marry Stan, a "sturdy" man. After being abused by her father, Charmaine is encouraged to forget about the issue, and hide and calm her fears within the domestic realm. Due to the economic crisis depicted in the novel –which originated because "someone had lied, someone had cheated, someone had shorted the market, someone had inflated the currency" (Atwood 2015, 6)—Charmaine loses her dream of happiness, her domestic safety. However, and even if corporations and the capitalist system seem to be abstract formations free of human participation, individuals always have some weight and responsibility in the development of history and contribute to making society. In this age that is baptized as the Anthropocene period but also as the "Capitalocene," humans are both victims and perpetrators of the situation. In *The Heart Goes Last*, Atwood renders a version of the predicted apocalypse, the apocalypse of the weakest part of society. Atwood remarks how the capitalist system devours those who allow the system to determine their destinies, and buy the capitalist dream of success. The result is a wild unsupportive society populated by a new kind of humans who, devoid of any principles, become a kind of unethical [post]humans.

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**Keywords:** domesticity; Economic crisis; Capitalocene; posthuman society; trauma.

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<p><b>When the Voice of the Refugee is heard: Sharing experiences of detention in <i>Refugee Tales IV</i></b></p>
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Universidad Complutense de Madrid

### Abstract

*Refugee Tales IV* (2021) is the last volume to date of four collections of short stories written by refugees and asylum seekers in the first person or, because the ongoing threat to their safety that some of them still experience, co-produced with other writers. The *Refugee Tales* projects, edited by David Herd and Anna Pincus, and published in the UK by Comma Press between 2016 and 2021, result from walks in solidarity and some online gatherings in 2020 (due to the social distancing necessitated by the pandemic) with refugees and asylum seekers, organised by the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group “as a response to the silence that surrounded indefinite immigration detention in the UK [and other countries around the world]” (Herd 2017,113). On the 12th May 2016, the UK government’s new Immigration Bill made its final appearance in the House of Commons. Those involved in this literary project show their concern for the third and the fourth part of this new act. While the former permits the immigration officers to retain asylum seekers’ documents for longer periods and without any warrant, the latter part backs the concept of deport first appeal later, which primarily means that the individual’s prospects for success are significantly reduced. In the four afterwords at the end of the *Refugee Tales* collections, the editor concludes that the detention estate is a breach of a person’s human rights and that the effect of this legislation is “to criminalize the asylum process” as to make the commitment of a crime (for instance, trying to leave the country under false papers) so much more likely (Herd 2017,117).

In this paper, I will explore how the short stories in *Refugee Tales IV*, the last part of this project, contribute to help refugees and asylum seekers to achieve a space of recognition in which stories that are often discredited or ignored can instead be heard and shared. Rafael Rojas and Frederick W. Mayer focus on the political role of literature when claiming that “literature produces subjectivities, cultural and political citizenships” (Rojas 2006:420, my translation) and that narratives can be a powerful tool in establishing ideological interests” (Mayer 2014, 92). In the TED talk “The Danger of a Single Story” (2009), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie also acknowledges the potential of narratives and asserts that “like our economic and political worlds, stories are defined by [...] how they are told, who tells them, when they are told, and how many stories are told” (Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story”). According to her, their relevance lies in that “they are very dependent on power” and defines power as “the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definite story of that person” (Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story”). Drawing on this theory, I will analyze the various ways this collection constitutes an effective tool when it comes

to providing asylum seekers with a voice and a way to fight the passivity to which they are continuously relegated. Also, I will pay attention to the various forms in which they express the impotence of not being able to decide for themselves in the stories, as well as the ways in which the act of storytelling allows them to occupy aliterary space from where expressing themselves and become active agents.

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**Keywords:** Refugees; political literature; agency; storytelling; active agents.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>“I want to feast with her on the wishes/ of the unseen pilgrims”: Catholic Tradition and its influence in Contemporary Sapphic Irish Poets</b></p>
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Alba de Juan I López

Universidad de Oviedo

### Abstract

Cognitive dissonance is a “psychological state resulting from inconsistency between two or more elements in a cognitive system”, a condition of discomfort caused by two opposing values ingrained within the individual’s construction of their own belief system. Modern Irish society is an example of this battle of dualisms; of the co-existence of a deeply ingrained Catholic tradition with an unstoppable growing of movements advocating for LGBT+ rights. Ivana Bacik states in her essay included in ‘Theory on the Edge: Irish Studies and the Politics of Sexual Difference’ (2013) that “in order to understand anything about Irish society and the politics of sexual difference in Ireland today, it is necessary to understand the enduring influence of the Roman



Catholic Church' (Bacik, 2013:17) because, regardless of the level of affiliation towards a certain religious movement, growing within a religious background inevitably influences how we interact with it.

Hence, the influence of Catholicism is deeply rooted in the way Irish women poets build their conceptions of romantic love and desire. Even in cases of atheism, Catholic imagery and lore are entrenched in Irish culture — particularly when the Catholic Church is still a rooted presence in Irish people early formative years and in other general areas in which they have 'retained significant power' (Bacik, 2013: 27). Despite the undeniable development of Ireland towards equality, the consequences of religion-grounded homophobia are still visible in the works of LGBT+ artists. In spite of a growing general acceptance of homosexuality in Ireland — proven by the implementation of the Civil Partnership Legislation in 2011 and legalising same-sex marriage in 2015—, being a country so closely linked to a religion that has systematically oppressed and demonised the LGBT+ community risks the lack of a critical approach to the homophobic sediments still present in Irish society. The issue, however, proves to complicate itself further when this systematic societal rejection develops into processes of internalised homophobia that remain unaware even for the person suffering them. Reygan and Moane state in their study of members of the LGBT+ community within religious communities that “organised religion can have a negative impact on the psychological health of LGB people and that this may be as a result of negative religious teachings about homosexuality [and] the isolation of LGB people within communities of faith” (Reygan and Moane, 2014 :300).

Thus, the aim of this communication focuses on analysing the works of Sarah Clancy, Mary Dorsey and Cherry Smyth— poets who identify themselves within the queer spectrum—and the scope of influence Catholicism had on queer women's construction and notions about romantic love, locating this way potential discourse markers tied to a religious upbringing and the possible cognitive dissonances born from the conflict of being queer and growing in a Catholic oriented society. In addition to that, the problematics regarding the lack of representation of sapphic women within LGBT+ movements in Ireland will also be explored in order to study the scope not only of homophobia in Irish society and culture but also the patriarchal remnants still present within LGBT+ organisations.

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Finn Reygan and Geraldine Moane. 2014. "Religious homophobia: The experiences of a sample of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Ireland". Article in *Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 15:3, 298-312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2014.942329>

**Keywords:** Contemporary Irish poetry; lesbian poetics; Catholicism; homophobia; cognitive dissonance.

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<p><i>The Wild Irish Girl: Overturning Gender Stereotypes</i></p>
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**Abstract**

This Project proposes overturning gender stereotypes through the analysis of the female Gothic novel: *The Wild Irish Girl*. While much of the criticism surrounding this epistolary novel concentrates on Ireland as a political subject seeking an equal distribution of power with Britain, this study focuses on female agency and the metamorphose of the villain into a man of feeling, more in line with a constant in the Gothic tale seeking to mould a person who incarnates the best stereotyped qualities of both sexes.

In the lines that follow, I present this early 19th century tale by Sidney Owenson from a feminist standpoint. Of resounding success, Owenson's novel introduces Horatio as the male protagonist and sender of the missives. Situated some time in the eighteenth century, the second son of an English earl is sent to the West of the Isle as atonement for some unspecified sins committed in London, which opens the door to his encounter with the magnificent Irish nature and people. It seems as though following the 18th-century guidebooks, Horatio contemplated the landscape as a painting. Further, the subsequent mention of the artists Lorrain and Rosa allows Owenson to bring the new European aesthetic closer to the 'uncivilized' territory of Ireland, resulting in a more familiar and tame landscape. In the line of a bildungsroman, Horatio's initial disdain marks the start point of the story swinging to

devotion by the end of the volume. Contrary to the expected identification of the wild Irish sublime landscape to the male hero, Horatio ends up bewitched by lady Glorvina's gusto for pastoral and beautiful nature. In a conclusive attempt to frustrate the equation of the aggressiveness and ferocity with the villain, the hearty damsel is depicted as Gorgon, the heinous monster imbued with Gothic attributes. In much the same way as *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* Emily deserves a companionate family after an endless list of misfortunes, Horatio too merits Glorvina's love after accepting her as partner and equal. This sharing of cooperation and power allows the self to recover their importance, provides fertile terrain for the development of self-esteem, which ultimately makes women seek an escape from the patriarchal tyranny.

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**Keywords:** gothic novel; female agency; overturning gender stereotypes; man of feeling.

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**Pearse Hutchinson's Life and Work in Spain: notes from his archive at Maynooth  
and some insights into his unpublished conversations**

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the lesser-known aspects of the life and literary views of the Irish poet Pearse Hutchinson, who died in 2014 at the age of 84. Hutchinson maintained a long idyll with some Iberian cultures, particularly Galicia and Catalonia, from a stance of resistance and subversion, which characterised all his literary production and also his vital attitude, especially his rebellion against any form of power. He achieved an artistic synthesis that is manifested in his poetic work as a whole and in his translations from Galician, Catalan and Spanish, collected in his famous book *Done into English* (2003). For Robert Welsh, "the act of poetry, for Pearse Hutchinson, is an act of translation, whereby things shift in relation to each other".

It is almost impossible to separate Hutchinson's life and work, because his literary work is deeply connected to his everyday experiences, to the people he met and with whom he celebrated life and artistic creation in various parts of the world. Hutchinson liked to live on the margins, on the peripheries, to experience the music of other languages: and, as a result, his literature represents an extraordinary passion for diversity. These ideas should certainly be taken into account in these complex times when it comes to understanding Europe's multiple identities. In the words of Vincent Woods, "Hutchinson has always written as one aware of boundaries – cultural, political, linguistic, sexual, national – and who has sought, through his work, to question the legitimacy of those boundaries, to examine and interrogate their origins and structure, to suggest ways of crossing them, or ways, indeed, of breaking them down altogether." (*Estudios Irlandeses*, 5, 2010, 118)

Some of these hitherto unpublished conversations, kindly provided by the poet and philosopher Emilio Araújo (Coles, 1946), have been used in some of my previous articles on Hutchinson, but most of them appear here for the first time. Most of them have to do with Hutchinson's ideas about Galicia and Galician poetry, but there are also many reflections of Hutchinson's ideas about politics, minority languages and, above all, Irish literature and literature in general. In my view, the transcriptions of

these conversations, which are virtually complete, will offer new human and artistic perspectives on Hutchinson, especially those on Galicia and Galician culture. It has the value of spontaneous conversation and is probably an almost unique example of a transcription of an informal talk by Hutchinson, alongside, of course, the well-known recordings made by Hutchinson himself around 2010 about his life and travels, the transcription of which is listed as one of the documents in the Maynooth archive and which have also been used in this article.

In addition to the conversations between Pearse Hutchinson and Emilio Araújo, this article contains some new insights into the author's life and work taken directly from documents collected in Hutchinson's archives, held by the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Many of these documents provide in-depth knowledge about the author, often derived from his personal relationships and his celebratory way of combining life and literature.

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**Keywords:** P. Hutchinson; Araújo; Ireland; Catalonia; Galicia.

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#### Abstract

The use of social networks has highly increased in a progressive manner during the last years, especially during and after the confinement of 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic (Fernández 2021), and it has also had repercussion on the educational field. Nowadays students feel more and more related to social networks or, at least, the use of these applications have hugely grown among the young population (Qustodio 2021), and that is the reason why motivated teachers opted by giving this trend and opportunity to build bridges between curricular content and their students by means of this sort of applications. Using these popular tools among the young population makes the point of departure easier for teachers because students feel more motivated (Manchado y Gil 2021). Despite that fact, including social networks in class is still an innovative and emerging practice (Giles 2021) in the different educational levels, above all at higher education.

Therefore, including social networks in class is a practice that teachers do improvising, applying it in the best way possible. Given that this trend is becoming popular and useful at the same time, it is necessary to share the use and good practices of social networks with the young students so that teachers could learn from other teachers. To that end, this work presents innovative didactic activities addressed to the pre-service teachers from the University of Extremadura, more specifically to students from both, the primary education degree specialised on French as a foreign language (at the Teacher Training College), and the teacher training masters on Spanish language (at the Philosophy and Letters Faculty).

The foundation of these activities are based on a didactic contract (Filloux 1973, Brousseau 1986), where the teacher agrees the rules to use the social network with their students in order to make sure that everyone is satisfied as well as determined to use it in a proper manner, taking care of the material, respecting others and adjusting everything to the content of the subjects in question. Thanks to this didactic contract, it is possible to bear in mind the disadvantages, or rather, the cons or difficulties to use social networks in class, which may become a challenging task, like taking risks about preserving the privacy, or having a lack of experience. By contrast, such challenging task may also accrue on inclusion, creativity, realia, adaptable or enjoyable task, according to the results obtained, without forgetting the development of competences,

like the digital competence and the social abilities. After these activities were implemented through TikTok and Twitter, all the pre-service teachers were satisfied and motivated, and they are willing to use them in their primary and secondary education classrooms.

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**Keywords:** education, innovation, pre-service teachers, didactic contract, social network.

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**Integrating Content and Language at the University of Extremadura (ICLUEx):  
fostering academic literacy in EMI**

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Universidad de Extremadura

## Abstract

The so-called "internationalization at home" (Beelen & Jones 2015) practices at Higher Education (HE) institutions have increased significantly in the last years to provide students with the necessary skills to succeed in a globalized world. In this context, a

good command of an L2 (mostly English) has arisen as a key skill and, consequently, English for Specific Purposes (ESP; Anthony 2018; Dudley-Evans, St John & St John 1998; Johns & Dudley-Evans 1991; Paltridge & Starfield 2014) and English as Medium of Instruction (EMI; Macaro et al. 2019) have become two of the most demanded L2 learning approaches in Higher Education. However, the development of other kinds of competences, such as L1 and L2 academic literacy or the 21st-century skills (Larson & Miller 2012, van Laar et al. 2020), are, sometimes, overlooked. In this respect, in the specific context of EMI, there seems to be a current need for helping EMI students improve their academic literacy in the L2 while providing them with technological tools to face university requirements.

This paper aims to present the results of ICLUEX, a regionally funded project (project number: IB18055) at the University of Extremadura whose main aim was to design Open Educational Resources (OERs) adapted to the HE context. This project integrates two complementary fields of research: the work on ESP and the contributions of the research into EMI, in order to help students to develop their L2 academic literacies in EMI contexts while supporting their appropriate use of digital tools. Grounded on an analysis of EMI lecturers and students' needs, a total of seven OER modules aimed at B2 level were designed and piloted: 'creating outlines', 'concept maps', 'writing definitions', 'writing summaries', 'the language of presentations', 'reporting data' and 'writing abstracts'. Each module has gone through two piloting experiences: the first one was aimed to ensure the coherence of the modules' structure and their target language level. The second piloting involved more than 200 students from various BA and MA degrees and sought to check whether modules assisted language learning by assessing a pre- and a post-task and comparing both marks. At the end of both piloting phases, participants answered a questionnaire exploring four different aspects: 1) demographic data, 2) suitability of the module to their language level, 3) organisation of the module's tasks and phases, and 4) self-reported L2 learning. Results suggest that, in general, these modules are attractive, well-structured and closely related to participants' studies and future working life. Besides, their use appears to help academic language usage.

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**Keywords:** EMI; academic literacy; Higher Education; OERs.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Web 2.0 tools and digital natives as students: On the use of blogs in Higher Education</b></p>
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**Abstract**

A perennial issue in education is how to engage students in the learning process. In an attempt to bridge the gap between teachers (mostly "digital immigrants") and the "digital native" students (Prensky 2001), new technologies are increasingly used in the classroom. In this regard, blogs have become a successful tool due to their "ease of use and the availability of open platforms" (del Blanco and García-Magariño 2018: 1; see also Garcia et al. 2019). In this spirit, this paper presents the results of a case study in which Web 2.0 (O'Reilly 2009) strategies are placed at the core of the teaching process so as to make materials more attractive to the Generation Z students. The project was carried out in spring 2022 with students from the Early Childhood Education Degree (subject: Oral Language Learning). The main aim was to involve students in the teaching process as they had to create activities that could be used with their future students and publish them in a blog. In the elaboration of the activities, they had to follow these steps:

1. Share the topic chosen for the activities by each group in a forum available in the online campus in order to avoid the repetition of topics.
2. Use an online text editor to work with the rest of the group and create their blog entries.
3. Copy their entry in the blog, where the teacher would revise and correct both the content and the form before their publication.

The aim of this study is to assess the outcomes of implementing this methodology.

To that end, the paper will try to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. What benefits can be derived from the use of blogs in Higher Education?

RQ2. What are Education students' attitudes towards and perceptions of the elaboration of a blog as a collective work?

RQ3. Do Education students perceive a pedagogical value in elaborating a blog with teaching resources?

Classroom observation and an end of the semester survey unveil some enlightening results: (i) students benefited enormously from team work (e.g. collaborative thinking to decide and design the activities); (ii) they had to think outside the box when elaborating the materials, so creativity was fostered; (iii) they could create activities which were not just classroom tasks but material which would be accessible (for free) to anybody visiting the blog (including themselves); (iv) they learned how to use the decree which is currently in force as each activity should state the contents included in the decree and covered in the activity; (v) they improved their writing skills as they would write to be read, and each entry was revised by the teacher prior to their publication; (vi) they put themselves in a teacher's shoes as each activity should be carefully planned in advance bearing the target students' needs in mind, which would prepare them for their future role as teachers; and (vii) all this was done while they put into practice the contents covered in the theory-based lessons.

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**Keywords:** Web 2.0 tools; blogging; motivation; Higher Education; Early Childhood Education Degree.

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## A case study to implement online communication through the European framework for digital competences

María José Naranjo Sánchez

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### **Abstract**

The current extension of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages CEFR. (2018) and The Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu, 2017) have triggered the potential of digital tools at all educational levels. Nevertheless, digital literacy for language teaching seems not to be expanded widely beyond the traditional focus facilitated mainly by multimodal texts which combine sound, image, and text. In response to the integration of digital technologies into the curricula and the aforementioned frameworks that support language professionals improve the quality and effectiveness of digital literacy, we aim to create a self-organizing map for the classification of the A1-C2 digital expertise level into which the six general areas of the DigComEdu are divided to cover the new competences of the 2018 version of the CEFR. Furthermore, the proposal also shows a practical case study based on one of the areas of the DigComEdu to provide hands-on activities which may help to understand, interpret and make meaning across technological media.

To support the objective and in the light of the European project IDEAL (Integrating Digital Education in Adult Language Teaching), the research aims to present a straightforward plan to train language teachers to become digitally competent when developing the aforementioned language competences through a set of digital tools and strategies included in the DigCompEdu and a set of assignments for the tools recommended. The match between tools, language skills and digital competences will be done through the automatic and filtering system of the IDEAL's platform search engine, available at <http://platform.ideal-project.eu/>. To achieve these goals, we need to (1) identify the European profile of a digitally competent language instructor; (2) assess the digital competence trainers initially show; (3) provide them with a toolbox of resources and methodological tips for furthering this initial knowledge; and (4) provide hands-on activities for the new descriptors considering the different competence levels for one of the areas of the DigComEdu.

In this sense, technologies have yielded a plethora of potential benefits in many aspects such as more friendly learning and teaching environments, motivation as well as improving digital literacy skills for both teachers and students. Language teachers need to continue developing their digital skills to become digitally competent since the last generations are taking advantage of technologies that have become fundamental to their social, educational, and even professional lives. Therefore, a need for qualified

literate teachers willing to apply new technologies and new ways of teaching is more than justified.

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IDEAL project <http://platform.ideal-project.eu/>

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**Keywords:** Digital literacy; online communication; mediation; good practices; language teaching.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Flipgrid as a complementary classroom interaction tool for lowering students' L2 anxiety</b></p>
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### Abstract

Students' productive language skills, in particular oral skills, are often the focus of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) yet sometimes actually getting students to feel comfortable speaking in their L2 is difficult, in particular at lower levels. This has been confounded by the current educational context in higher education, where post-pandemic teaching tries to balance the introduction of on-line teaching environments with the return to physical classrooms. Many students seem to favor working on-line, yet it is not an environment that is immediately conducive to practicing productive skills like speaking and interaction.

Students' willingness to use the foreign language was termed willingness to communicate (WTC) by Macintyre (1998; 2007), who established a model for WTC with six layers of variables associated with students' willingness, including L2 self-confidence, among others. One facet of L2 self-confidence looks to the presence and degree of learning anxiety a student might experience, which is particularly notable in

lower-level students. WTC may be determined by how secure students feel with their classmates (Kang, 2005), how familiar a situation in class may be (Barjesteh, 2012), how factors in the classroom environment directly impact attitudes and communication confidence (Khajavy et al., 2016) or how perceived communicative competence is related to WTC (Elahi Shirvan et al., 2019). However, few studies have examined how components of L2 confidence and anxiety may be influenced by the use of particular digital tools, a question particularly relevant these days.

To treat this gap, a pilot study (Author, under review) showed how students' speaking anxiety lowered after four weeks of using Flipgrid, an on-line video recording platform for educational use. Flipgrid allows teachers to establish prompts, in video or text formats, for students to respond to with their own videos replies. Results showed that students' levels of anxiety came down significantly and, in some cases, dramatically, in particular on issues such as for physical symptoms (trembling, heart racing, feeling panicked, etc), for items on feeling nervous, confused or in general embarrassed, as well as for how they might feel speaking outside the classroom with native speakers. In fact, significant differences revealed Flipgrid to have a positive impact on all survey items except those pertaining to: rules for speaking as confusing, being worried about T catching mistakes, worried about others laughing at them and worried about what others think, which may signal by allowing students to work on their speaking skills in an alternative environment like Flipgrid, we can treat students' language learning anxiety more efficiently than in the physical classroom.

This second phase of the study tests this theory by comparing these significant results with a control group of the same subject, but where speaking practice was only done in the classroom itself in interaction with the teacher and fellow classmates. Firstly, we will review the results from the pilot phase and why these are interesting for L2 speakers at lower levels in terms of anxiety and L2 confidence. Secondly, we will re-examine third year university students' (level A2) communicative confidence before and after a four-week program involving weekly oral assignments in Flipgrid when compared to a control group of the same class who did not use Flipgrid and only used English in class. Results will shed light on the effectiveness of digital tools for lower anxiety about speaking practice when compared with classroom interaction alone, which may indicate that on-line tools are an important complement to classroom interaction for improving students' L2 confidence.

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**Keywords:** English speaking anxiety; Digital tools; Oral forums; Flipgrid; Speaking interaction.

### Does speaking Andalusian Spanish affect the pronunciation of English as an L2? The case of aspirated voiceless stops

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#### Abstract

Much research has been done on the acquisition of English pronunciation by Spanish native speakers. One aspect that seems to be of special difficulty for Spanish learners to acquire and that results in non-native pronunciation is the failure to produce initial voiceless stops with aspiration. Aspiration is measured through VOT (Voice Onset Time), the interval between the release of the stop and the start (onset) of voicing. In English, voiceless stops in initial position show a longer delay referred to as long lag VOT (Lisker and Abramson, 1964), whereas Spanish presents short lag VOT. Multiple studies (Flege and Eefting, 1987; González López, 2012; Gorba and Cebrian, 2021) have examined and compared the production of these consonants in both languages. Nevertheless, these previous studies have focused on speakers of standard Spanish varieties and have tended to overlook the fact that other varieties of Spanish might share features with English. For example, it is known that there are varieties of Spanish that present /s/ aspiration, i.e., the deletion or debuccalization of word-medial and final /s/ when followed by a consonant and the consequent aspiration of a following stop, if present (Torreira, 2007).

In this paper, the focus is on Andalusian Spanish (AS), a variety of Spanish spoken in the southern part of Spain, in which /s/ aspiration before voiceless stops results in post-aspiration (Torreira, 2007). The aim of this study is to analyze post-aspiration in AS and to compare it with the production of aspirated voiceless stops in English as a second language (L2). Eighteen AS students and seven Castilian Spanish (CS) students, all learners of English, completed a picture naming task followed by an interview. Two vocabulary tests were used to assess their proficiency level. In the production task, participants were asked to repeat 24 carrier sentences in singular and in plural, 18 of which included initial /p, t, k/ tokens (e.g., *Veo un coche aquí/Veo dos coches aquí*). The latter served to elicit the desired /s/ + voiceless stop sequences. The same structure was used for English (e.g., *I see this table here/I see two tables here*). In addition, the interview served as a sample of spontaneous speech and as a source of sociolinguistic data. Results are currently being analyzed. The VOT of the initial stops produced by the participants will be measured and compared within groups

(comparing English and Spanish productions) and between groups (AS and CS). It is expected that AS participants will produce longer VOT than CS subjects, both in Spanish and English. Nevertheless, it is expected that AS speakers will only produce longer VOT in cases in which they will also aspirate /s/ in English, which is most likely to happen with Andalusian learners of English with a low/beginner level of the L2. The results of this study will help us understand the role of L1 dialectal features in L2 speech learning and may also shed light on new methodologies that could be implemented using AS as a tool to teach English pronunciation to AS speakers.

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**Keywords:** Andalusian Spanish; aspiration; L2 English; VOT; L2 speech learning.

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<p><b>The perception of mispronunciations in cognate and non-cognate words by English Studies undergraduates</b></p>
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### Abstract

The effect of the cognate status of words in L2 perception has been understudied. Previous literature in the field states that, during L2 production and perception, the L1 may be activated at different levels (Costa, 2016). This could have both a beneficial and a detrimental effect. The beneficial effect has to do with the processing of cognate words. That is, a greater level of L1 activation takes place when processing cognate words, which leads to faster vocabulary learning and access to lexical meaning (Tessel et al., 2018). The detrimental effect is observable in the production of L2 words. Namely, the similarity of cognate words affects L2 pronunciation accuracy as cognate words tend to show greater influence from the L1 during L2 production (Amengual, 2016; Flege & Munro, 1994; Goldrick et al., 2014). Since the effect of cognate status on L2 perception has not been studied in depth, this paper examines the ability to identify L1-based pronunciation errors in cognates and non-cognates by L2 listeners before and after a course on English phonetics.

Spanish-Catalan bilinguals who were undergraduate students in English Studies ( $N = 200$ ) completed three online tasks using the online platform Labguistics (Ménétrey & Schwab, 2014) before taking a course on English phonetics and pronunciation. The first task was a lexical decision task in which half the real words were English-Spanish cognates and the other half were not. Results confirmed the predicted facilitating effect of cognate status on lexical retrieval. The other two tasks were perceptual tasks in which participants were presented with target-like and accented versions of English words starting with /p/, /v/, /ɹ/ and the initial onset cluster /s/+stop (often mispronounced by Catalan/Spanish L2 English speakers as unaspirated [p], [b], [r], [esC], respectively). Stimuli included cognate and non-cognate words. In a forced-choice goodness task, participants were asked to indicate which production within each pair sounded more English-like, whereas in a same/different task, they had to decide whether the two productions they heard were equally native-like (i.e., same), or not (different). The results showed a detrimental effect of cognate status on L2 perception (i.e., a lower ability to detect non-native productions) for /v/ and /sC/. No effect was found for rhotics, as expected because the mispronunciation of the English retroflex r as a trill is probably salient, nor for the unaspirated vs. aspirated /p/, showing that subphonemic differences like amount of aspiration might be more difficult to detect.

At the end of the term, the same participants were asked to complete the tasks again, administered in a laboratory on this occasion. A preliminary analysis of this second set of data seems to indicate an overall replication of the first set of results. Further, the results for the pre- and post-tests, within and between tasks, were statistically correlated. Therefore, the initial findings seem to be confirmed. Further, a greater metalinguistic knowledge of English phonetics does not seem to have an effect

on L2 speakers' detection of mispronunciations, probably because generally participants' responses at "pretest" were already relatively accurate.

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**Keywords:** Cognates; L2 perception; segmental phonetics.

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<b>Full Time Equivalent (FTE) as a measure to assess L1 and L2 perception</b>
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### Abstract

The revised version of the Speech Learning Model (SLM-r, Flege and Bohn 2021) regards Full Time Equivalent (FTE), which involves the amount of L2 use during the length of residence (LOR) in an L2 setting, as a main factor in L2 speech acquisition. Previous studies (Author, 2019; 2020; Author & Cebrian, 2021) showed that LOR has a significant effect on L2 and L1 production and perception but does not explain variability between populations (i.e., L1-Spanish L2-English vs. L1-English L2-Spanish).

A reanalysis of the perception data in those studies has been conducted by calculating the FTE of the experienced participants. Note, however, that the resulting

FTE values were very low (L1-Spanish: 2 (SD:2.2; L1-English: 0.2 (SD:0.6)), possibly due to the relatively short length of residence of the participants (a mean of about 2 years). The aim was also to investigate whether the assumptions of the SLM-r are applicable to the perception of L1 and L2 contrasts. To do so, the data obtained in a forced-choice identification task involving a VOT continuum in each language were used.

A correlation test between FTE and category boundary was conducted for each population, language, and contrast. Surprisingly, none yielded significant results. Still, different trends were observed for each population. In the case of the English learners, results revealed consistent results for both places of articulations, specifically positive correlations between FTE and category boundary in the L1 and negative correlations in the L2 were found. This result could indicate category dissimilation – i.e., that the L1 and the L2 categories were becoming more distinct – but the non-significant results and unclear patterns revealed in the individual analyses indicate that this result may be a matter of coincidence or that the process is still in very early stages. Different results were observed for the Spanish groups, as all the correlations were positive. This could point out that a greater FTE results in later – i.e., more English-like – category boundaries in both languages, that is, that it has an effect on both the L1 and the L2. However, the correlations were again very weak and the individual analyses did not reveal consistent patterns.

Several reasons could explain the lack of a clear effect of FTE in the current study, including the relatively short LOR of participants, the quality of the input and differences in terms of L2 instruction and metalinguistic awareness between participants. Therefore, FTE solely may not be sufficient to account for L2 accuracy in perception and individual differences concerning other factors should be considered. Although some methodological limitations could explain this result, the outcome of the paper suggests that FTE seems more suitable to investigate the performance of highly experienced participants – i.e., with a great FTE value – whereas L2 experience already seemed to predict the performance of some of the L2 learners with a modest LOR, particularly regarding the Spanish population.

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**Keywords:** Phonetics and Phonology; Perception; L2 acquisition; L1; crosslinguistic influence; SLM.

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## A Diachronic Study of Tapped /r/ in RP across the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

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### Abstract

Received Pronunciation is a standard variety of British English spoken by a minority (Trudgill 2002) because it is frequently regarded as a sociolect due to its association with the upper-classes and those who attended public schools (Agha 2003). Furthermore, this variety has long been linked to the BBC as it was used in broadcast speech, and by newsreaders (Cruttenden 2014). From a linguistic perspective, this variety has undergone some diachronic changes in its phonological system, one of them being related to rhotic sounds. The phoneme /r/ has had several variants across time such as the alveolar trill [r], the alveolar tap [ɾ] and the post-alveolar approximant [ɹ]. Another phenomenon related to rhotics is the connected speech process of r-sandhi (Wells 1982), where a distinction is made between linking /r/ and intrusive /r/. Despite the stigmatization attached to intrusive /r/, this phenomenon has increased over the 20<sup>th</sup> century while linking /r/ has decreased (Bauer 1984; Mompean 2019). In addition, another remarkable change in the rhotic system is the replacement of the alveolar tap by the post-alveolar approximant in intervocalic and unstressed syllables (i.e. *very*, *period*). Some studies such as that of Fabricius (2017) or MacKenzie (2017) focused on the use of the tapped variant across this century and observed a prominent drop in the use of the alveolar tap in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Therefore, this study aims to obtain a deeper insight into the period comprising the 1940s-1960s focusing on intervocalic and linking /r/ contexts. A corpus of 54 speakers was compiled following a judgmental sampling, where speakers were divided into three age cohorts (<35, 35-54 and ≥55) to observe potential differences at different age levels. Materials were retrieved from online sources such as British Pathé or the BBC Archive, and are characterized by a scripted, formal register and a monologic form. As a result, the written transcripts amount to 28400 words approximately and the number of lexical items considered for analysis was 810 tokens. As for the analysis used, the procedure consisted of an auditory analysis and an acoustic analysis with the software Praat in order to classify the articulation of /r/ into 'tap' or 'no tap'. Results showed a decreasing trend of tap rate in these three decades, in particular from the 1950s to the 1960s, which may be explained by the sociohistorical events of the time. Regarding the phonological contexts, taps were also in decline at both contexts although the rate of taps in the linking /r/ context was lower (Fabricius 2017). As for age and gender, females led this sound change by using the innovative

approximant, adopting a more progressive attitude as opposed to conservative males. As expected, taps were higher among older speakers as this is the more traditional realization. In conclusion, speakers may use this variant as a agentive practice to project conservative values or index social meaning.

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**Keywords:** Tapped /r/; linking /r/; Received Pronunciation; sound change.

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<p><b>A longitudinal study of EFL learners' self-perceived pronunciation competence and self-rated performance</b></p>
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## Abstract

Although EFL learners often express a strong desire to attain native-like pronunciation in the L2, research evinces that the nativelikeness principle (i.e. the belief that native-like pronunciation is achievable) is far from being a realistic goal for most learners [1]. Therefore, current L2 speech research generally supports adherence to the comprehensibility principle (i.e. the ease with which listeners are able to understand speech), which is a more realistic goal in L2 speech learning [2]. A wide range of studies have examined the dimensions that underlie accentedness and comprehensibility through native listeners' ratings [3]; fewer studies have done so through L2 learners' self-assessments [4], and even fewer of them have analysed these dimensions longitudinally [5]. An emerging field of research on pronunciation training, including training through self-assessments, has shown that explicit training can have a positive impact on L2 learners' speech comprehensibility [6]. However, a crucial dimension to understand learners' awareness of their pronunciation and learning progress which is still under-researched is self-perception of pronunciation skills [7]. Insights into one's pronunciation and self-concept, self-reported anxiety and confidence levels are however vital to L2 speech learning progress [8]. The present study therefore addresses the existing gap in research by investigating longitudinal quantitative data on learners' self-assessments of comprehensibility and accentedness, as well as qualitative data gathered from learners' reports of self-perceptions, over a four-month training on segmental phonetics. The present study examines (1) the extent to which learners' self-assessments of comprehensibility and accentedness match the ratings of native listeners; (2) the extent to which their self-perceptions change over a four-month training on segmental phonetics.

Catalan-Spanish learners of English (N=48) underwent a three-month training programme aimed at improving phonological competence in perception and production at a segment level. Before and after the training, trainees performed a picture-based story-telling task, which they had to later self-assess for comprehensibility (1=very easy, 9=very difficult to understand) and accentedness (1=no foreign accent, 9=very strong accent). A group of native English listeners (N=7) also evaluated learners' speech samples. A questionnaire, consisting of 20 closed and 1 open-ended questions, was administered to participants both at pre- and post-tests. It was aimed at prompting learners to reflect on their self-perception of L2 pronunciation (i.e. satisfaction with own pronunciation, awareness of difficulty, awareness of importance of pronunciation features, anxiety during speaking performance, fear of pronunciation errors, fear of being evaluated by others, degree of self-confidence, and motivational factors).

Findings point to the relevance of training to better align learners' self-assessment with their actual L2 performance, and to minimize the mismatch between self- and listeners' ratings. Longitudinal data on pronunciation self-reports also shed light on the importance of gaining higher phonological awareness and improving pronunciation self-confidence for better production outcomes as well as better calibration of self-assessments. The pedagogical implications of using well-constructed

pronunciation questionnaires in the FL classroom to prompt noticing and introspection will be discussed too. Future studies can direct into whether building positive self-perception of one's own pronunciation could play a crucial role in L2 pronunciation improvement.

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<b>The identification of English codas: a longitudinal exploration in CLIL</b>
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## Abstract

Research on the phonological development of young learners in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is scarce with inconclusive results, only one study having explored longitudinal data (Rallo-Fabra & Jacob, 2015). Besides, there are not any studies focusing on the acquisition of consonants in such a learning context. Basque and Spanish present a limited set of word-final consonants when compared to English, Spanish learners of English having been investigated with the purpose of exploring this difference in previous literature (Drozd, 2006; Lopez-Soto & Kewley-Port, 2009). The present study explored the development of the perception of English simple and complex codas by exploring two different groups of Basque/Spanish speakers longitudinally at two different times of their Secondary Education CLIL exposure.

46 Spanish/Basque students, 22 learners in earlier Secondary CLIL (at ages 15 and 17) and 24 learners in later Secondary CLIL (at ages 16 and 18), performed a four alternative identification task in which i) a unary coda position was presented along with usually misperceived/mispronounced sounds on account of Basque and/or Spanish L1 as in bath (-T -D -d -t), ii) a binary coda position was presented along with three phonotactic alternative distributions considering dropping of one element and position distributions as in tenth (-nT -n -T -Tn). Students were asked to identify the sound they heard and were also offered a free option to give the sound they heard if this was not in the options provided.

As for simple codas, the longitudinal analysis in earlier Secondary CLIL (age 15 vs. 17) showed no significant changes in the perception of the consonants; the later Secondary CLIL group (age 16 vs. 18) exhibited overall significant improvement, which was also shown for /-k/ and /-g/ sounds, which reached ceiling perception performance at age 18. Interestingly, both groups showed two scoring patterns –plosives /-k -p -g/ were perceived with near ceiling performance (around 90% correct) and fricatives /-T -v/ showed a weaker performance (around 50% correct) across analyses. As for complex codas, no significant changes were observed in either analysis.

Overall, results point at a very modest phonological development when inspecting consonant perception along two years in a Secondary Education CLIL programme. The identification of some consonants seems to have reached ceiling but those codas which were poorly perceived earlier were not significantly better perceived two years later. Results will be discussed in the light of the influence of previously known languages and/or sonority. Besides, pedagogical implications will be raised.

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**Keywords:** English codas; CLIL; longitudinal; consonant perception

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Examining the Role of Task Complexity in the Speaking Fluency-Rhythm Relationship in Advanced EFL Learners</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Recent second language (L2) acquisition research has addressed the effect of speaking tasks on the learning of L2 pronunciation (e.g., Gordon 2021) and the contribution of suprasegmentals to listener ratings of accentedness, comprehensibility, intelligibility and fluency (Pinget et al. 2014). The available findings on task effects seem to indicate that an increase in the cognitive complexity of oral tasks leads to L2 learners’ more accurate segmental perception and production (Solon et al. 2017), provided tasks incorporate a focus on phonetic form. However, learners’ enhanced pronunciation accuracy resulting from increased task complexity, as Robinson’s (2011) Cognition Hypothesis predicts, is so far unattested in pronunciation unfocused tasks. For instance, Crowther et al. (2018) found increased cognitive task demands to be associated with stronger accentedness, higher segmental and lexical stress error rates, and less natural rhythm, intonation and speech rate in L2 English. Moreover, suprasegmental features (rhythm, intonation, fluency) were related to L2 learners’ speech comprehensibility in more cognitively complex tasks. On the other hand, narrower pitch ranges and stress misplacement have been found to predict a degree of accentedness in learners’ oral production (Kang et al. 2010). Furthermore, rhythm might be related to L2 speaking fluency (Valls-Ferrer 2011) and it can affect speech rate and accentedness ratings (Polyanskaya and Ordin 2019).

Following this line of research, the aim of the present study was to examine the potential effects of cognitive complexity in pronunciation-unfocused tasks on advanced EFL learners' pronunciation accuracy as characterized by fluency measures and rhythm metrics. Eighty-two Spanish/Catalan university learners of English carried out cognitively simple and complex versions of the Dinner Table task (Ur 1981) in counterbalanced order, where task complexity was manipulated along +/- reasoning demands (Robinson 2011), in addition to a battery of tests to control for individual differences in oral proficiency, vocabulary size, working memory and selective, sustained and switching attention skills. Temporal measures of speed and breakdown fluency (speech rate, articulation rate, mean length of AS-unit, pause frequency and duration, phonation-time ratio and mean length of run) and rhythm metrics (%V and Varco-V) were calculated. Preliminary linear mixed-effects models on the fluency data indicate that learners' speech was less fluent as a function of task complexity, in accordance with the Cognition Hypothesis predictions. The analysis of rhythm metrics, currently underway, will help to determine whether increased task complexity drives attention away from speech production accuracy, detrimentally affecting L2 learners' stress-timed rhythm, whether rhythm relates to their speaking fluency in English and how task complexity might mediate in this relationship.

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**Keywords:** Task complexity; fluency; rhythm; speech production; English as a foreign language.

**Exploring the Perception-Production Link at Different L2 Speech Processing Levels**

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**Abstract**

L2 learners have to process L2 speech in perception and production at various phonetic and phonological levels. They first have to analyze speech at an acoustic level, then, sounds need to be mapped into phonetic categories at a prelexical level, and finally, these sounds need to be encoded at the lexical level for word activation to be successful (see Ramus et al., 2010). But, how are these levels related? The relationship between perception and production at the lexical level (Melnik et al., 2021; Simonchyk & Darcy, 2021) or across pre-lexical and lexical levels (Llompert & Reinisch, 2019; Melnik et al., 2021; Turner, 2022) is currently under-researched. Melnik et al. (2021) suggested that the perception–production link may be limited to a specific level (i.e., lexical or pre-lexical). Indeed, this is what Simonchyk and Darcy (2021) found for production, pronunciation accuracy at a pre-lexical level (measured through word imitation) was unrelated to learners’ production accuracy at a lexical level (measured through read aloud tasks). More recently, Turner (2022) obtained similar results to those in Melnik et al. (2021). The author found that the relationship between perception and production was stronger within than across levels. All these studies have applied different testing methodologies, and most did not have a task for each domain and level, hence, no solid conclusions can be drawn. The current study investigated how EFL learners’ perception and production skills are related when considering multiple levels of L2 speech processing.

Fifty-seven L1-Spanish-Catalan learners of English were tested on the perception and production of English /æ/-/ʌ/. For perception, we included an ABX task with non-lexical items (pre-lexical), to look at learners’ vowel discrimination, and a lexical decision (LD) (lexical) to analyze how precisely they had encoded the phonological contrast lexically. For the former, we analysed discrimination accuracy, while for the latter, we analysed nonword identification accuracy scores. For production, we included a delayed-word repetition task (DWR) with non-lexical items (pre-lexical), which served as word imitation, and a delayed-sentence repetition task (lexical), which gave us a measure of learners’ phono-lexical forms in production. In both tasks, we obtained between (NS-NNS) and within (NNS-NNS) mahalanobis distance scores to gauge production accuracy.

Production data from this study is currently under analysis, but preliminary results from perception suggest a weak correlation across the pre-lexical and lexical levels (ABX and LD), where learners’ discrimination abilities weakly correlated with how precisely they had encoded the phonological contrast. Further exploration of the data suggested that not all learners who exhibited highly advanced levels of L2

discrimination presented a more precise phono-lexical encoding. For production, previously collected data also indicated a weak correlation between learners' ability to produce nonwords in isolation and their ability to produce words in a lexical context. Results will be discussed in relation to how they can be informative for designing phonetic training.

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**Keywords:** perception and production link; L2 speech; lexical encoding; phono-lexical representations

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<b>Task Complexity Effects on L2 Segmental Accuracy in Pronunciation-Unfocused Tasks</b>
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## Abstract

Robinson's (2011) Cognition Hypothesis states that complexifying tasks by increasing resource-directing dimensions (e.g., reasoning demands) and controlling for resource-

dispersing dimensions (e.g., planning time) generates increased attention to form-function mappings, resulting in added lexico-grammatical complexity and accuracy, often at the expense of speaking fluency. Therefore, sequencing tasks from simple to complex may lead to gradual complexification of the learners' interlanguage to meet the increased task demands (SSARC model; Robinson 2010). However, whereas preliminary evidence suggests that task complexity may be beneficial for learners' development of L2 phonology in pronunciation-focused tasks (Gordon, 2021; Solon et al., 2017), it is currently unknown to what extent increasing the cognitive complexity of a task facilitates or hinders L2 segmental accuracy in pronunciation-unfocused tasks.

Eighty-two Spanish/Catalan EFL learners performed cognitively simple and complex versions of a monologic oral task in English (the dinner party; Ur, 1981) in which they had to come up with a sitting arrangement that would generate pleasant conversations among 6 characters considering their personalities, jobs and interests. In both versions, target words included L2 confusable vowel pairs /æ, ʌ/ and /i:, ɪ/ (n=36) that assimilate to L1 /a/ and /i/ or /e/, respectively (Cebrian, 2019), and initial voiceless stops /p, t, k/ (n=25), often realized as L1-like unaspirated stops (Gorba & Cebrian, 2021). Learners were given 1.5-minute planning time and task complexity was manipulated along +/- reasoning demands, hence, simple and complex tasks differed in how coherent characters' personalities were (kind and peaceful vs. kind and greedy) and how many sat at each table (2 vs. 3). Finally, learners were asked to rate their self-perceptions of L2 task performance, difficulty, mental effort and anxiety on a 9-point scale. Grammatical and lexical accuracy measures (error-free AS-units) based on orthographic transcriptions were obtained. We calculated VOT duration (ms) for oral stops and Mahalanobis distances (Barks) between contrastive vowels.

Preliminary analyses revealed a detrimental effect of increased task complexity on segmental pronunciation accuracy (i.e., more target-like VOT productions and increased Mahalanobis distances between L2 vowels in the simple than the complex tasks), and a potential trade-off between lexico-grammatical and pronunciation accuracy. Task complexity effects were only visible in simple-to-complex task sequences, in line with the predictions of the SSARC model. Learners perceived the L1/L2 complex tasks to be significantly less well-performed, more difficult, involving more mental effort and generating more anxiety than the simple tasks. Implications for L2 pronunciation teaching and learning will be discussed.

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**Keywords:** Task complexity; task sequencing; L2 consonants; L2 vowels; pronunciation accuracy

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**Abstract**

The recent Nobel Prize winner for literature, Abdulrazak Gurnah, is considered one of the most distinguished chroniclers of the Indian Ocean. Indeed, much of the fiction of the Tanzanian-born author narrates Indian Ocean exchanges as well as the migratory flows between Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. That is the case of *By the Sea* (2001), an epic narrative criss-crossing three continents in which Persians, Zanzibaris and other East Africans interact with each other in Arabic, English and Swahili. As can be observed, Gurnah is constructing a markedly cosmopolitan and polycultural vision of the East African littoral in which multilingualism and transculturation are the norm rather than the exception. *By the Sea* certainly paints Zanzibari society as a multicultural hub articulating the connections between African, Middle East, and Asian cultures via the Indian Ocean sea-lanes. Nevertheless, as Shanti Moorthy has keenly stated, Gurnah “contests depictions by Indian Ocean scholars of apparently idyllic premodern East African societies. His writings lend themselves to more nuanced and problematic readings of these societies as cosmopolitan” (2010: 73). In light of this, the purpose of my paper is to test the concept of cosmopolitanism as applied to the characters in the aforementioned novel by Gurnah. My main contention is that the characters in the novel, as they try to make sense of their identities in an unfolding globalization, unmoor silenced cosmopolitan visions of the globe. In this sense, I read *By the Sea* as an example of contemporary maritime fiction that seeks to record the changing notions of cosmopolitanism that have been put forward in global studies. In particular, I intend to validate Bruce Robbins’s claim in his introduction to *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (1998) that “the term [cosmopolitanism] should be extended to transnational experiences that are particular rather than universal and that are unprivileged – indeed, often coerced (1998: 1). In other words, I argue that the characters populating Gurnah’s novel forge and configure their identities as cosmopolitan in an emerging global world, even if their cosmopolitanisms can be said to be coerced, unprivileged and against their will. Ultimately, my paper seeks to demonstrate that the transoceanic connections represented in the novel feature the Indian Ocean as an arena in which new world orders and new patterns of globalization are emerging, patterns that illustrate “a set of transnational relations alternative to hegemonic northern globalisation” (Ghosh and

Muecke 2007: 2) and therefore reveal that oceanic basin as a testing ground to analyse the shape-shifting contours of contemporary globalization.

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**Keywords:** Abdulrazak Gurnah; Cosmopolitanism; Indian Ocean; Maritime fiction.

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<p><b>"The bad blood": Affect and Posthuman Monsters in Two Short Stories by Hiromi Goto</b></p>
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### Abstract

While research on speculative fiction has become increasingly relevant in academia, not often does it focus on authors from the margins. As such, there is undoubtedly still space for developing innovative readings of the genre and its intersections with issues of gender, sexuality and racialization. This paper presents an analysis of two short stories from *Hopeful Monsters* (2004), a collection of speculative fiction by the Asian Canadian queer author Hiromi Goto: "Tales from the Breast" and "Hopeful Monsters." Drawing on Affect Theory and Posthumanism, my reading will focus on the corporeality of emotions in these stories. I will follow Sara Ahmed's intersectional approach to affects and their relation to the body, as articulated in *The Promise of Happiness* (2010), to explore the meaning of pregnancy and birth in Goto's stories, highlighting the expectations and pressures placed on pregnant subjects and how such expectations in general are conditioned by identity markers like gender, race and sexuality. On the one hand, the proposed paper will not only study how the stories represent emotions as experienced through the body, which is read as a sign of



difference, but also the role of reproduction and transformation at an individual and national level: that is, the effect that pregnancy has on birthing individuals and how reproduction becomes a fundamental aspect of the promise of happiness as it perpetuates the national ideal of the nuclear family and the role that women have in this dynamic. On the other hand, this paper will use the posthuman challenge of the humanist Man defended by Rosi Braidotti in *The Posthuman* (2013) to support the idea that the characters' non-normativity places them in the spectrum of the subhuman or, as presented by Tomasz Sikora (2014), the monstrous, which is also present at a corporeal level through physical deformities and transformations. In addition, birthing individuals are presented as dehumanized, vessels for life and victims of medical violence. Their monstrosity and capacity for transformation not only result from their non-normativity but also become transgressions of the norm in themselves, which ultimately means a diversion from the promise of happiness. Accordingly, the proposed paper will be divided in two sections. Firstly, I will place the stories in the context of affects and connect them to Ahmed's promise of happiness. The second section will be dedicated to exploring the monstrous aspect of the characters and connect that monstrosity to the ideas developed in the previous section. With this proposal, I attempt to contribute to the ongoing theoretical discourses with Affect Theory and Posthumanism from the perspective of literary analysis and a focus on the role of speculative fiction as a medium for the expression and debate of crucial ideas in the field. My proposed intersectional approach also draws attention to the importance of emotions in marginalized communities and their connection to the body and reproduction.

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**Keywords:** Affect Theory; Speculative Fiction; Hiromi Goto; Posthumanism; Monster.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Settlers or Stewards: Towards Trans-Ethnic Cosmopolitanism in Black and Indigenous Vancouverite Speculative Fiction</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The global city is the place of miscegenation, a space where cultures meet and a multiracial mosaic is produced, mapping its skin from exchange to shock. Cities are the tip of the iceberg where national identities begin to break down or, paradoxically, to assert themselves as a defence mechanism against the stranger (Sharma 2020). In the case of Canada, despite the myth of benevolence and tolerance, multiculturalism as a normative framework has been articulated around discourses that suture non-White citizens externally or adjacent to the nation (Sharma 2020; Walcott 2021). In this context, there are intense debates between Afro-descendant communities and movements for the Indigenous resurgence (Coulthard 2015; Amadahy & Lawrence 2009) to establish legitimacy over the territory. Indigenist discourses based on pre-political notions of autochthony would place Afro-descendants as settlers, and the latter's response is problematic, caught between fighting for their civil rights guaranteed by the Canadian state and the colonial relationship of this state with Indigenous communities.

Overcoming the bitter positions of this debate, authors of Black speculative fiction such as Wayde Compton (2015) and Celu Amberstone's *Indigenous Futurism* (2004) question the limits of identity entrenchments, seek to make sense of the past and explore possible futures through their fiction. This paper will analyze from the transmodern, decolonial perspective (Dussel 2020) how Compton and Amberstone transcend the epistemological clash between Afropessimism and Indigenous resurgence to establish a dialogue that transcends both. The rise of a volcanic island in Vancouver Bay occupied by flickering migrants and the repopulation of an alien planet with Indigenous peoples from Vancouver will highlight the problematic connection between land, people and coexistence for existing categorizing discourses. We will argue that Compton and Amberstone's work challenges simplistic views of ethnic-racial communitarianism, state multiculturalism, and indigenous resurgence. In turn,

their work seeks a transmodern, trans-ethnic cosmopolitanism as an ethical position negotiated in the exchanges of daily coexistence, and citizenship as a universalizing element of urban space.

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**Keywords:** Black; Vancouver; Indigenous; Transmodern; Decolonial.

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<p><b>"I wanted to have a spirit": Decolonising Human-Robot Relations in Drew Hayden Taylor's Stories</b></p>
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### Abstract

This paper analyses the representation of human-robot interactions in two short stories by Ojibwe author Drew Hayden Taylor: "I Am... Am I" (2016) and "Lost in Space" (2016). While in the western canon, literary representations of robots and other automata have always challenged the nature of humanity itself, drawing attention to theological conceptions about the human soul to enforce a separation between the human and the nonhuman robot, from an Indigenous point of view this separation is non-existent. In fact, many Indigenous North American cultures are characterised by

an inherently posthuman ethos. The aim of this paper is to read Taylor's stories with the intention of understanding how Indigenous cultures approach human-robot interactions. In other words, I attempt to show how these stories challenge preconceived notions of the 'robotic moment,' which Sherry Turkle (non-Indigenous) defines as the point when society reaches acceptance and normalisation of human-robot relations, and thus inherently leads to a loss of human values, such as the ability to empathise with other living beings (2011, 18). In opposition, Indigenous authors such as Taylor show us that the field of robotics can lead to a betterment of the human condition by creating new kinship connections between humans and social robots.

This paper grounds itself on the notion of kinship as defined in Indigenous studies, which, as Cherokee author Daniel Heath Justice explains, works as a series of interpersonal connections and duty-relations designed to teach how to be human through the practice of humanness (2018, 41-2). Importantly, Justice also mentions that "in thinking about how we learn to be human, we also have to keep firmly in mind that Indigenous traditions generally don't limit the category of person solely to the human" (2018, 37, emphasis in original). While Justice's is referring to kinship transcending interpersonal human relations and encompassing relations with the land and nonhuman animals, I would assert kinship still holds relevance when seen under the light of speculative connections with other nonhuman species, and for the purposes of this analysis, robots. The human-robot relations portrayed in Hayden's short-fiction are characterised by the subversion of Western binaries such as the Cartesian human/nonhuman dichotomy that was often utilised to legitimise colonial efforts (Mignolo, 2018, 157-8). As such, Taylor showcases robot-human relations which are neither negatively charged nor reify colonial tropes. In this way, robots can be agents through which Indigenous characters reconnect with their ancestral traditions, thus showing the "vast potential the genre [speculative fiction] holds for decolonization processes" (Lempert, 2014, 164).

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Turkle, Sherry. 2011. *Alone Together*. New York: Basic Books.

**Keywords:** Indigeneity; Posthumanism; Speculative Fiction; Robotics; Decolonisation.

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**A Tale of Futures Past: Ghosts of Partition in Shilpa Agarwal's *Haunting Bombay***

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**Abstract**

The independence of India and the simultaneous partition of the subcontinent reach their seventy-fifth anniversary in 2022. At this point, much has already been written about that momentous event and its profound consequences, predominantly in dichotomic terms encompassing religion, gender or class that have progressively given way to less dualistic approaches. However, there is still room to revisit history and to reassess its legacy through works which, counterintuitive as it may sound, do not deal with Partition, or at least do not address it directly, but are nonetheless enormously influenced by it. One of such sources would be Shilpa Agarwal's debut novel *Haunting Bombay* (2009), which finds in 1947 the breeding ground for ulterior tragedies in spite of focusing on contents other than independence. The book covers the years right after through the eyes of an adolescent protagonist, her immediate family and their domestic staff, all of whom personify different sets of binary opposites which can be overcome the moment the past is taken into consideration and valuable teachings are derived from it. In particular, it is the presence of ghosts, both visible and metaphorical, that enables a crossing of boundaries and, consequently, a much-needed transcendence of otherness. Apart from presenting haunted characters and settings, "[a] text can be highly ghosted [...] by embodying the ghosts of distant generational traumas or cultural traumas so collectively well tolerated as to have become accepted norm" (Atkinson 2017, 95). Hence, the personal turmoil of the protagonists intermingles with the strong echoes of colonial times and patriarchal attitudes, both of which are potentially traumatic.

This paper seeks to analyse the novel from the optics of trauma theory, paying special attention to the intergenerational transmission of painful memories. For that purpose, the matching concepts of postmemory (Hirsch 2012) and post-amnesia (Kabir 2014) will prove highly relevant in order to determine which recollections are preserved and passed down as opposed to those which are silenced or even entirely

forgotten. Agarwal's foray into postcolonial Gothic fiction will then be read as a piece of trauma literature that unearths hidden testimonies through the female supernatural and evinces how the past lingers in the present, making it necessary to negotiate one's relationship with it if a less uncertain future is to be ensured. Therefore, it will be argued that Partition carries more weight in the narrative than what is readily apparent, thus showing that its ramifications are an underlying condition of other traumas the resolution of which greatly depends on whether—and, if so, how—they are properly processed.

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**Keywords:** gender; India; memory; Partition; trauma.

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## The Intersectionality of Caste and Gender: Dalit Feminism Evolving in Resistance

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### Abstract

Dalit literature articulates the oppressions and exploitations faced by Dalits in a caste ridden society as it records their cultural and social lives before and after India's independence. This cultural revolt that burgeoned in the 1970s has largely been Dalit male-centric in its orientation, adopting paternalistic and patronising tones towards Dalit women. These accounts failed to properly address Dalit women's predicament and the interlocking oppression of caste and gender and it compelled them to create a distinct space for themselves.

Dalit women writers have traversed a long path over the last four decades. During this time their consciousness of what it means to be a Dalit woman has evolved in many ways as reflected in their writing. Life narratives, such as Bama's *Karukku* (2014) and Yashica Dutt's *Coming Out as Dalit: A Memoir* (2019), have functioned as the locus of enunciation where agency and self-identity are attended and asserted by Dalit

women in a particular narrative framework. As social location determines the perception of reality, this paper attempts a look at how these two texts tackle and bring to the centre the gendered nature of caste and the power-relations that still affect Dalit women, from a heterogeneous standpoint. It further analyses how through form, language and subject matter they defy generic conventions, depart from the imposed identities and manage to build up resistance against this enduring double oppression and the forces that attempt to homogenise Dalit women body politics. Uma Chakravarti (1995, 2003), Gopal Guru (1995) and Sharmila Rege's (1995, 2000, 2003) ideas and theories on gendered casteism and Dalit feminine consciousness are going to serve as a basis for the analysis.

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**Keywords:** Dalit Literature; Gendered Casteism; Dalit Patriarchy; Dalit Feminism; Resilience.

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"Reconsidering Ecotones in Tishani Doshi's Environmental Poetry"

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**Abstract**

This paper peeps into Tishani Doshi's poetic world, using both her novel *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010) and her poetry collection *Girls Are Coming Out of the Woods* (2017). The focus of discussion points at studying the multiple nature metaphors that are used to convey messages of understanding and epiphany in Tishani Doshi's texts. Born December 9 (1975) in Chennai, Tishani Doshi is an Indian author who has gained indisputable reputation as a novelist and poet, with other cultural and artistic interests like dancing and writing journal articles in newspapers. In her writings, Doshi makes use of subtle environmental elements (with an emphasis in animal and vegetal metaphors) to be able to speak about the ineffability of being, without forgetting the ideological (gender, social and racial) urges of contemporary human existence. Using the divide between topophilia and topophobia (Tuan), the analysis of metaphors of the natural world, multifaceted and ambivalent, proves that the author fuses both negative connotations of sublime landscapes and dark places with positive diverse (green and/or maritime) habitats where magic, witches, ghosts transform bizarreness into harmony (Pujolràs & Oliva, Arnold et al.). Indeed, forests i.e. tend to be presented as loci where scared amateur travelers find ordeals while they face nature, not as an ally that gives answers to their quests, but rather as a jigsaw puzzle where disorientation and all kind of menaces appear. This is most patent when the background of the lore and fairy tales is acting as sub-reading of the story. Thus, the author pushes to the limit the essence of poetry in a self-quest for discovery of essential truths and cultural nuances. Consequently, Doshi makes not only use of a sensitive gaze that is environmentally aware of toxic places and spatial phobias and phobias, but she can also crisscross seemingly not-so-similar cultural identities to delve into ecotonal urges and pushes that come from hybridity and dislocation of third spaces (Bhabha). Being the descendant of a Welsh mother and a Gujarati father, the author is, therefore, capable of tackling unsaid silences and emotional misunderstandings derived from a lack of living commonplaces and complicities, and she does so through humour, in all its facets, and critical lyricism, in equal parts. Thus, a universe is created in which to state simultaneously (and paradoxically) unequivocal gender violence and ironic comicality of manners. Finally, an analysis of the borders between humans and more-than-humans regarding living-togetherness will add up to the portrait of edging, tensional and identity rhizomes.

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**Keywords:** Tishani Doshi, Indian Ocean Ecotones, Environmentalism, Eco-Poetry, Interspecies Drives.

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<b>Resilience Patterns in Canadian Literature – (Round table)</b>
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**Abstract**

The term resilience, denoting the capacity of both individuals and ecosystems to adapt to adverse, usually sudden changes, allowing them to not just endure and survive but even thrive, has become a buzz word in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, marked by successive, overlapping crises, ranging from the 2008 financial crash to global warming, from health emergencies to migratory and security concerns. The current EU program Recovery and Resilience Facility mobilizing 723.8 billions of euros to “mitigate the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic and make European economies and societies more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions” (European Commission) is a salient example of the currency of the notion of resilience. However, resilience has only recently turned into the object of attention in the Humanities (Basseler; Fraile; Cyrulnik; Huebener, et al.; O’Brien).

This roundtable posits that the trope of resilience underlies both the production and the discipline of Canadian Literature. Suffice it to consider Margaret Atwood’s

seminal book *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972), where the author argued that Canadian literature coheres around the human struggle to live in a frequently hostile environment, to understand the centrality of resilience as constitutive of a key strain in the Canadian literary tradition that continues into the twenty-first century. The participants of this roundtable draw on the work carried out in previous collaborations and in the framework of the current research project *Narrating Resilience, Achieving Happiness? Toward a Cultural Narratology* (PID2020-113190GB-C22; NARESH: <https://naresh.usal.es/>), to ponder whether the resilience paradigm is opening new avenues in creative writing and literary criticism. Departing from the hypothesis that there is a new strand of literature from Canada that emphasizes the trope of resilience as an alternative to narratives of trauma and victimization, this roundtable aims to identify potential thematic and formal patterns in a selection of recent Canadian writing in English that foregrounds resilience-building around the axes of health, humanitarian, and environmental concerns. Animating our analyses is the question of the potential agency of literature as a guide to navigate the current cultural context of risk, vulnerability, uncertainty, and precarity that Zygmunt Bauman connected to the era of liquid modernity, as well as to imagine new, hopeful ways to face the future and enable social and cultural transformation.

### **1) Representations of Resilience in Anthropogenic Climate Change Narratives from Canada**

Author one draws on ecocriticism and resilience theory to examine representations of resilience in anthropogenic climate change narratives from Canada. Fifty years after the publication of Atwood's *Survival*, Canadians are not so much confronted with the challenge of surviving in the Canadian wilderness as with the question of how to survive in a world that humans are in the process of ruining. Yet, "climate change has not been a major [literary] concern, until now" (Meyer xv) in Canada. Atwood herself has interpellated Canadian authors with the question, "Where are all the Canadian writers who should be addressing the greatest crisis of our age?" (Meyer xv). Author 1 heeds Atwood's question by focusing on recent cli-fi in order to assess whether it aligns with the sterile dystopian master narrative that dwells on fear and reinforces the epistemic blockage and anxiety characteristic of our times, or on the contrary, imagines scenarios and opens new paths toward adapting to, mitigating, or even reversing the ongoing effects of global warming, which are not limited to climate change, but as Atwood puts it, to "everything-change" ("It's Not Climate Change"). Thus, climate change is linked to other changes that impact human and non-human life in the planet prompting adaptation and resilience, such as recurrent natural disasters caused by floods, extreme heat and wild fires, the acidification of the oceans and species extinction, the expansion of invading species, viruses and bacteria outside their natural ecosystems due to the globalization of trade and easy travel, global migratory movements, the over exploitation of the land, and fossil fuel extraction and consumption causing air, water and land pollution.

Animating this proposal is a set of questions that include but are not restricted to the following:

- Do the selected texts follow or depart from the anti-utopian disaster mode?
- Are there specific features in climate change narratives from Canada that link them to a distinct national tradition?
- Do they make a particular intervention in the context of cli-fi produced globally?
- What aesthetic/formal elements are used to explore imaginative ways of reworking notions of resilience and wellbeing/happiness in the face of the current ecological challenges?
- Can a poetics of climate change resilience be identified in these Canadian works, and if so, how does it relate to the aesthetic strategies identified by authors 2 and 3 in the texts featuring resilience in refugee and illness narratives?

## **2) Indigenous Eco-feminism? Decolonial Practices and Indigenous Resistance in Lee Maracle's Fiction**

In the foreword to *International Perspectives in Feminist Ecocriticism* Chickasaw poet and novelist Linda Hogan, whose work often addresses ecological concerns, defines herself as a “woman who grew as a wild medicine called a weed” and suggests that “[w]eeds have their undesirable, unacknowledged place,” painting a poignant image of the wild vegetation growing in “manicured, domestic gardens . . . unworthy of respect or consideration” (xv) to evoke the marginal perspective from which she writes. Similarly, in her 1993 novel *Ravensong*, Stó:lō writer Lee Maracle evokes the figure of the weed to introduce an epistemological variance when Stacey, an Indigenous girl, contemplates a white woman uprooting weeds from her manicured garden and making them “disappear in a strong black garbage bag out of sight from the public” (21). Stacey, recognizing the plants as “[c]omfrey root, dandelion, plantain and mullein” (21) all used as sources of food in her village, is bewildered by the fact that in the white town, “[a]esthetic waste supplanted good sense and thrift in the care of their yards” (23), effectively de-centering Western/Eurocentric (non)relations to the natural world. Indeed, eco-critical and eco-feminist studies have frequently borrowed from Indigenous epistemologies to conform new approaches to human-nature relations, particularly now that the pressing climate crisis is making Western societies contemplate the need for radical solutions. As Leanne Simpson remarks, “the Western academy is now becoming interested in certain aspects of Indigenous Knowledge” such as “Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)” (373). However, the scope of this interest is reduced and disconnects ecological knowledge from decolonial practices, such as land claims or Indigenous feminisms. Arvin et al emphatically support that “settler colonialism has been and continues to be a gendered process” and thus its

ramifications and effects (upon nature or indigenous communities) cannot be detangled without an indigenous feminist perspective.

Consequently, in this paper, Author two's eco-critical analysis focuses on fictional works by Lee Maracle, who dedicated her career to the regeneration and revalorization of Indigenous systems of knowledge, in order to pinpoint the intersections between feminism, decolonization, and non-human ecological thinking that might develop into a potential indigenous eco-feminism that truly recognizes Indigenous epistemologies in their full context. Drawing on Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's theories on Indigenous radical resurgence, which assert that a cultural resurgence (such as a revalorization of Indigenous ecological knowledge) cannot take place without a political resurgence (such as the acknowledgement of indigenous sovereignty), author two argues that Maracle's portrayal of natural elements and her imagining of human-natural relations is inextricably linked to a decolonizing perspective foregrounded on Indigenous feminism.

### **3) Psycho-Social Resilience in Lawrence Hill's *The Illegal* (2015)**

Global migration, and more specifically forced migration, has become one of the main concerns of this era. It is certainly embedded in a national discourse—inherently political—that is turning out to be hostile towards migrants and refugees, who are construed as dependent and vulnerable individuals. The persistence of a political rhetoric of fear transforming refugees into a threat to the nation and its citizens only brings about anxieties, indifference, and rejection towards refugees and asylum seekers (Bauman 2016). In this context, refugee fiction has emerged as an alternative and hospitable space to represent the social and political framework that characterizes refugees and to bring to light the national discourses rooted in fear on the part of host countries that prompt racial and discriminatory responses.

In his novel *The Illegal* (2015) Lawrence Hill probes the risks faced by forcibly displaced people, and more specifically, by those individuals who are denied their refugee status in the country where they seek refuge, becoming undocumented or non-status people, and deemed illegal. Hill presents the story of a non-status refugee, Keita Ali, who arrives in a new country, where he is forced to hide his identity in order to avoid deportation. His vulnerable and precarious position is constantly accentuated by the internal bordering practices that keep him in a liminal position in the country where he seeks refuge. However, as will be analyzed in this paper, the challenges Keita faces impel him to develop resilience strategies in order to adapt, survive, and thrive despite being exposed to chronic stressors.

Drawing on recent theories on psycho-social resilience, this paper will explore the main elements and tropes used in Hill's novel to build a model of resilience building that takes into account the interaction between individual psychological factors and the social and ecological environments. More specifically, this paper relies on Judith Butler's (2016) recent articulation of vulnerability in order to explore how the protagonist's vulnerability allows him to construct reciprocity bonds with others,

maintain autonomy, regain agency, and thrive in the face of adversity. In doing so, Hill's novel offers emotions, personal attachments, reciprocity bonds, and personality traits as some of the main variables involved in the development of coping strategies and defence mechanisms to survive in hostile environments. Moreover, this paper argues that Hill deconstructs the negative stereotype of refugees as passive and vulnerable subjects while demonstrating their capacity to regain agency and build up resilience.

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**“Try Not Translating, What Happens?": Linguistic Opacity in Vivian Pham's *The Coconut Children***

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**Abstract**

The question of translation is central to multilingual authors writing for a postcolonial anglophone market such as Australia's. Sometimes, this centrality is found in the writing itself, translation becoming a theme. For example, in Ouyang Yu's poem "Translating myself", the narrator ponders about the paradoxes of translating: "how can a language be so indestructible that / it remains itself while being turned into another" (1995, 82). Most of the time, the centrality of translation is present in the construction of the texts themselves. As Ommundsen argues, while multilingual authors write in English to successfully publish, this "does not always mean that they leave their other language(s) behind" (2018, 3). In addition to self-translation, writers may inner- or auto-translate, a process that can be differentiated from self-translation in that it is a mental translation of a text in its process of creation, during which no external source text is created to be translated. In that light, Nicholas Jose writes that "Australian writing in English contains a fair amount of translation, and more that can be read as translation in a less literal sense: writing that transports forms and expressions from other languages and cultures into an Australian literary field" (2014, 1); that is, writing that contains inner translations.

In her essay published in the multilingual edited volume *Silent Dialogue / 沉默的对话* (2020), Maria Tumarkin narrates that she asks young multilingual writers to: "Try not translating, what happens? Can you bear not giving your readers keys to all doors straight away? And those (Anglo) readers who will be incensed by not being brought in, who will get rattled by a momentary experience of exclusion, can you enjoy

letting them go?" (20) Her questions highlight at the same time as they interrogate the need for inner translation, echoing Édouard Glissant's "right to opacity" (1997). Vivian Pham's first novel *The Coconut Children* (2020) seems to experiment with these questions with some degree of linguistic opacity. This paper will analyse how the text resists giving the "keys" —to use Tumarkin's analogy— to non-Vietnamese speakers through a close reading of the many instances of untranslated code-switching between English and Vietnamese. Unlike the provision of a glossary or in-text translations, this key-less treatment of the language creates gaps in the reading experience of non-Vietnamese speakers that contrasts with that of the bilingual readers, whose more transparent reading may spark a positive recognition. While opaque, these gaps are not impenetrable and can generate a fruitful, thoughtful silence —a desire to approach what is unknown while acknowledging that one's comprehension will remain incomplete.

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**Merlinda Bobis's *The Kindness of Birds* (2021): Planetary Love across Continents, Cultures and Species**

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**Abstract**

The aim of this talk will be to analyse Merlinda Bobis's latest short story collection, *The Kindness of Birds* (2021), as this Filipino-Australian author's transmodern attempt to counter the anxiety often generated by our turbulent times. Transmodernity is the term coined in the late eighties by the Spanish philosopher Rosa María Rodríguez Magda in order to designate a paradigm shift inaugurating a new global worldview. The prefix 'trans' takes up Modernity's utmost ethical and political challenges and values (equality, justice, freedom, etc.), but assuming the postmodern criticism of it, which in turn allows for the integration of some formerly discarded values from premodern cultures. Linked by the omnipresence of birds, which stand for the human need to connect and learn from other species (Haraway 2003), the stories in this collection will be analysed as an example of 'narratives of the limit', to rely on Rodríguez Magda's (2019) term to refer to a new generation of transmodern literatures which, unlike the 'narratives of celebration' that reiterate the dominant discourse and ideology with a view to making them hegemonic, attempt to think what has not been conceptualised yet, both as regards form and content, thus marking the advent of a paradigmatic turn towards the new understanding of the very notions of liminality and relationality brought about by the effects of global warming, the spoliation of nature, the excesses of post-industrial capitalism and, more recently, the pandemic and its consequences on a worldwide scale. As this talk will show, not only does *The Kindness of Birds* posit new kinds of anti-establishment (aesth)ethics by conflating fiction, testimony and (auto)biography, but it also undermines Eurocentric assumptions to pay homage to non-Western cosmovisions and ultimately advocate planetary love across continents, cultures and species as the only way to pave the way for a better global future.

This analysis will also rely on the ideas forwarded by Dussel (2012), another well-known Transmodernity advocate, who claims that the complexity of the contemporary globalised world requires the accommodation of diverse worldviews and strands of knowledge, namely, what he labels as 'pluriversality', an alternative to the univocal knowledge provided by grand universal narratives. Likewise, Walter Dignolo (2011) emphasizes the need to prompt "a pluriversal response and confrontation with universal Eurocentrism" (344), while urging to build 'histories-others', that is, "histories written by those who were made others and the histories of Western expansion seen from the receiving end of globalisation" (330). Other relevant theories used will be Jeremy Rifkin's defence of an 'empathic civilization' (2009), the ethics of care as formulated by critics such as Carol Gilligan (1982) and Virginia Held (2006), Elias and Moraru's emphasis on the interrelationality between 'ecology' and 'planetary' (2015), and Rosi Braidotti's idea of the 'nomadic subject' (1994), to mention but some. As will be concluded, Bobis's stories demand that new ways to relate to our human and non-human Others should be conceived and enforced to allow for the encouragement of mutual cooperation, and ultimately the survival of life on the earth as we know it.

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**Keywords:** Merlinda Bobis; transmodernity; ethics of care; planetarity; ecology.

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<b>Under the Same Flag: Filipinas Writing the Nation in the 1920s</b>
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**Abstract**

The mid 1920s in Philippine literature is a time of continuation and initiation. Philippinists working in the field of Filipino literature in Spanish define the time from 1902 to 1946 as the Golden Age of Filipino literature in Spanish, while those approaching the beginning years of Philippine literature in English see it as the start of a new literary tradition affected by the acquisition of the language of the new colonial power, the United States.

The defeat of the Philippine army in the Philippine-American War (1889-1902) led to forty-four years under American rule during which the Filipinos invested all their efforts in convincing the American administration of granting them their independence (Churchill 1981). Throughout these years, all Filipinos, women included, were called to make a contribution to the construction of a new nation founded on a

Filipino identity yet to be defined. As Mina Roces contends, since 1900 elite women played an important role in the construction of the Philippines by creating associations focussed on working towards social welfare, women's rights and independence from colonial governance (Roces 2017). Their agenda was based on Christian values, feminism and nationalism. They also created their own periodicals through which they aspired to educate women on the principles that could turn them into co-authors of independence.

Two of the contributors of this new press were Maria Paz Zamora Mascuñana (1887-1978) and Paz Marquez Benitez (1894-1983). Mascuñana is considered to be the first Hispanophone Filipina to have published a collection of short stories in Spanish, *Mi obolo* (1924), while Benitez is the author of the first short story of merit written by a Filipina in English, "Dead Stars" (1925). Although they were writing under the same flag, they were separated by their choice of language. Mascuñana belonged to the ilustrado elite who were characterized by their attachment to Hispanic traditions as a way to oppose American rule, while Benitez was married to a prominent pensionado, Francisco Benitez. The pensionados were a group of Filipinos chosen by the Americans to travel to the States to acquire a university education and later return to the Philippines to put into practice what they had learned and thus, contribute to the improvement of the Philippines.

The aim of this paper is to compare two of their short stories, Mascuñana's "La frívola" ["The Frivolous Woman"] and Marquez's "Dead Stars" in order to analyze how they put their literature to the service of the Filipino woman's agenda which was guided by Christian principles and nation building. With this, I aim to open a space for the discussion of the transculturality of Filipina literature of the early decades of the twentieth century. My working hypothesis is that, although separated by their language of expression, both Mascuñana and Benitez defended the same ideal of a Filipino identity based on Christian values, female empowerment through education as well as collaboration with men in the construction of the nation.

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**Keywords:** Philippine literature; Filipina writers; short story writing; nation building; transculturality.

<b>Natureculture and Australian Indigeneity in Inga Simpson's <i>Where the Trees Were</i></b>
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**Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to explore the current turn to Australian indigenous worldviews on the part of non-indigenous authors such as Inga Simpson. Her 2016 novel *Where the Trees Were* revolves around the destruction of a grove of arborglyphs – ceremonial trees carved by indigenous Australians to mark a sacred place— by the protagonist's father with the aim of retaining the legal title to his farmland. The story alternates chapters between Jayne's teenage years in the late 1980s and early 1990s and her adult life as a museum conservationist in the 2000s. Under the cover of her job, Jayne helps Ian, her indigenous childhood friend, to return arborglyphs removed from their original locations and featuring as exhibits to secret natural spots.

I here argue that Jayne's commitment to preserving arborglyphs provides a useful figure for studying how the insights of indigenous wisdom predate some state-of-the-art concepts like "natureculture." Coined by Donna Haraway in 2003, the term "natureculture" attempts to overcome the dualistic dynamics at the basis of much Western thought, stressing continuity between the two poles and questioning their hierarchical relationship. Rosi Braidotti also speaks of "a 'naturecultures' continuum" in the process of dismantling the either/or tenets of anthropocentrism. In the context of Australia, the philosopher and ecofeminist critic Val Plumwood takes a more nuanced view of the relationship between the two terms, as she advocates for the right balance between difference and continuity. Her stance seems to be consonant with indigenous philosophy and spirituality, which highlight "the connections between people and parts of the natural world in bonds of mutual life-giving" (Rose, James and Watson). The arborglyph, a carved living tree that is at the same time culturally significant and integral to the natural world, provides a complex signifier of the mutually enriching relationship. Jayne's attitude towards this artifact of indigenous culture and her collaboration with Ian will be read as expressions of Post-Mabo literature in Australia. The analysis of *Where the Trees Were* will reveal a new perspective of indigeneity by white authors, one that strives to avoid the pitfalls of cultural appropriation and the pain of unbelonging lurking behind some forms of apology and attempts at reconciliation. I defend that this sensitivity, which takes the cue from indigenous Lawmen such as David Mowaljarlai and was praised by indigenous author Melissa Lucashenko in her 2016 Barry Andrews address, is part of the wider cultural paradigm shift occurring at a global scale known as transmodernity. In the opinion of some of its proponents, transmodernity is characterised by values such as "respect for Mother

Nature, care for communities, for family relations, for internal growth, for other cultures” (Luyckx), all lying at the core of Simpson’s work.

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**Keywords:** arborglyphs; indigenous worldviews; natureculture; transmodernity; post-Mabo Australian literature.

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<p><b>Excavating Transtemporal and Transnational Affinities in Gail Jones’s <i>Our Shadows</i> (2020)</b></p>
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## Abstract

The mining industry has been one of Australia’s major sources of economic income and shaping factor of its national identity since the first discoveries of payable gold in New South Wales and Victoria in 1851 to the present. The finds of these and other subsequent deposits across Australia motivated a rocketing increase of the colony’s

migrant population and wealth to the extent that, by the end of the nineteenth century, Australia's "standard of living [became] the envy of the world" (National Museum of Australia). However, what this triumphalist profit-based discourse on the gold rushes fails to acknowledge is the history of dispossession that underpinned it. From its beginning, the capitalist exploitation of mineral-rich areas in Australia has entailed the expropriation of Australian Indigenous peoples from their traditional lands. Although the 1992 Mabo No. 2 Australian High Court decision and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth) (NTA) recognised some Indigenous peoples as the traditional owners of their sacred lands, the NTA did not confer them the ownership of their lands' minerals nor the right to veto their mining exploitation. Generally, the Australian state has supported mining corporations' interests in Australian deposits by claiming the economic prosperity they bring to the nation, while disregarding the devastating damaging impact that this minerals-based economy is having on Indigenous peoples' culture and forms of life, the environment and miners' health (See Altman 2009 and Galloway 2020).

Eighteen years after publishing her first novel entitled *Black Mirror* (2002), Australian author Gail Jones revisits the issue of mining in *Our Shadows* (2020a), her latest novel to date. Echoing her previous work, Gail Jones craftly tackles the long enduring damaging effects of the colonialist mineral extraction in Kalgoorlie, "Wangkatha lands" (Jones 2020a, 89). In this case, her narration interweaves the lives of three different generation characters: namely, the Irish-born Paddy Hannan (historically known for discovering gold in Kalgoorlie in 1893); the fictional Super Pit miner and Second World War prisoner Fred Kelly and his wife Else; and, finally, their orphaned granddaughters Nell and Frances. In "writing this layered structure," Gail Jones stated in an interview (2020b), she wanted to "set in proximity [two] different scales of knowing": the "inhuman scale of mining where everything is about profit, wealth and machinery" on the one hand, and "the human scale of fiction," fiction's ability to "imagin[e] the precious interiority of other people" on the other hand. Following on Jones's words, this paper seeks to examine the narrative and stylistic strategies Jones uses to excavate the silenced stories of loss and precarity underlying Australia's mining industry. Specifically, it will focus on her use of ekphrases. Linking Rothberg's model of "multidirectional memory" (2009) to Foucault's "heterotopology" ([1984] 1986), the paper will analyse and discuss the meaning and reparative function of the transtemporal and transnational symbolic and thematical affinities that may be established between the characters' stories of grief and the two iconic images that recur throughout the novel: a photograph of the rescued miner Modesto Varischetti and Hokusai's *The Great Wave*.

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**Keywords:** Mining; grief; heterotopia; Australia; Gail Jones.

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<b>Honouring Mothers in 21st Century Greek-Australian Literature</b>
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**Abstract**

As a distinctive part of Australian Literature, Greek-Australian Literature started to be studied academically in the 1980s (Nickas 1992). Most of its writers had migrated to Australia in the 1950s and 1960s but their works were not published until the 1970s and 1980s. Forty years later, when many of these migrants and authors are retiring or dying, different texts by their offspring pay tribute to them: to their lives, their sacrifices, their dreams, and their understanding of life. Some of these texts include Angeliki Aristomenopoulou's documentary *A Family Affair* (2015) on the Xylouris family -a Cretan family of musicians-, and George Kouvaros' *The Old Greeks. Photography, Cinema, Migration* (2018) or Olympia Papagioutopoulos' *Beneath the Fig Leaves: A memoir of food, family and Greece* (2020), which focus on the authors' mothers.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the way the second-generation of Greek migrants acknowledge, respect and honour the first-generation migrants, especially their mothers. Contrary to the characters depicted in many fictional texts (Charalambous' *Furies*, Papaellinas' *No* or Tsoulis' *Between the Ceiling and the Sky*, for example), these texts evoke their older and elder family members and are generous towards them. The tools used to present the first generation, that is, photographs and videos, and recipes and food, can have a healing effect and, thus, ease the feeling of

exile migrants may feel. "Exile," Edward Said defined, "is life led outside the habitual order" (2000: 186) and oftentimes migrants start a phase in their lives under conditions they have not chosen and are alien to them, which add to the difficulties they experience. This was the case of the ancestors presented in Kouvaros' and Papagiopoulos' texts, which will be analysed.

The discussion is expected to move around narratives of healing and memory and the literary shift in focus from the lived experiences of the first-generation migrants in fictional texts to the perception the adult offspring has of their parents' lives in biographical ones.

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**Keywords:** Greek-Australian literature; migration; representation; mothers; food; photography.

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## Clothing and Identities in Alice Munro's "A Red Dress" and "Carried Away"

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### Abstract

It is my purpose to look at the fashion codes employed by Canadian Author, and Nobel Prize for Literature (2013), Alice Munro in the selected short stories "A Red Dress" (1946) and "Carried Away" (1991). Clothes is a noun but, as I will prove, it acts

like a verb. Clothes dress up identities and, as Zygmunt Bauman highlights, identity: “though ostensibly a noun, behaves like a verb” (1996, 19). A garment that may seem meaningless, becomes crucial when dressing identities, since they dress up or, on the contrary, shadow identities. Both clothes and identities, acting like verbs, have an undeniable power. Clothes serve to subordinate subjects, to confine them to social classes, and to pigeonhole them into stereotyped identities. On the other hand, subjects may use clothes to subvert normative hegemonic identities. Following trending dress codes at a given time means that subjects, consciously or unconsciously, reify, and on the other hand deconstruct, the power of dominant discourses. It is necessary then to examine the effects that this form of socialization through clothing has on identities. Therefore, it is my purpose to study clothing in the selected short stories and specifically the different dress codes contained in Munro’s fiction, interpreting them as texts in which cultural meanings are inscribed. My intention is to capture how clothing acts as material memory becoming a tool for Munro to show readers how identities are manipulated. As the main character in “A Red Dress” says “I had worn these clothes with docility, even pleasure, in the days when I was unaware of the world’s opinion” (1946,1). At the same time, Munro adds alternative usages of clothing by which subjects break with western canonical stereotypes enabling them a subversive use of clothing which inscribes other ways of being. Louisa, main character in “Carried Away” (1991), who at the beginning of the story wore “blue silk shirtwaist and bound her hair as usual” (5) ends up wearing “a dark-red blouse. Her lips were reddened to match, and her hair was bobbed” (22). This physical transformation mimics her inner one and clothing allows this character to leave aside, at the same time as showing, her otherness and to become an active character. Louisa’s appearance through her choice of clothing is “in fact, a matter of effect merely, and it is with the effects of nature that you have to deal, not with the real condition of the object” as Oscar Wilde underlined in “Lecture to Art Students” (2021[1883]).

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**Keywords:** Identity; Clothing; Alice Munro.

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**"Britain's Broken up with Me": The Symbol of the Break-up in Transformative Practices of Dissent by Transnational Artists in the UK**

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**Abstract**

Practices of individual dissent and collective articulations of protest play crucial roles in contemporary representation of transnational societies such as contemporary Britain. The procedures to exercise and embody dissent implement an interdependent and affective responsibility that has a two-fold effect. On the one hand, as Parmar et al. (2009: 5) and Langballe Jensen et al. (2020: 1) define, this interdependent responsibility combines the geographical understanding of the term (that links spatial and temporal variables) to the political realm of individuals' accountabilities. The effect is an interrogation on past and present inequalities as sites of enormous potential in/for evolving relationalities. On the other hand, performances and portrayals of cultural dissent allow "reparative histories" (Gopal 2020: viii, 3), challenges to "normalcy" (Chaudhuri 2019), "constellations of co-resistance" (Simpson 2016) and "disruptive acts" (Ahmed 2017: 261) that aim to dismantle narrations of hate and fear (Khair 2017; Maillard 2018; Roy 2019). The consequent effect of this opposing agency aims to *renaturalise* new processes and histories of transformative resistance (Bracke 2016; Braidotti 2017; Armaksiz 2018). Accordingly, transnational artists call for this agency and become activists who practise a change and/or a questioning beyond theoretical and legal conceptualisations of individual responsibilities and care.

This paper studies two transnational British artists who released their transformative practices of dissent using the symbol of breaking-up with Britain one month before the outbreak of COVID-19. Riz Ahmed's album *The Long Goodbye* (March 2020) and Bhanu Kapil's poetry collection *How to Wash a Heart* (April 2020) will be analysed to illustrate the narrative ways employed in this metaphor of the interrupted relationship as symbol of the reasons, possibilities and hopes that exist behind the

practices of dissent exercised by South Asian communities in the UK. I will explore Ahmed's album and Kapil's poetry collection to present their practices of individual and collective dissent as well as their demands for an interdependent responsibility from the home-nation, Britain, their communities, and their own individualities. Firstly, I will use the above-mentioned transnational theories of dissent and responsibility to illustrate the diasporic particularities of both artists as activists that are committed towards political and economic transformation of governments and cultural industries. Secondly, I will study their conceptualisation of a failed relationship to display the political responsibilities urged by Ahmed as a British Muslim with a Pakistani-Indian origin and Kapil as an Indian-British woman who is always made to feel a guest in the connivance. Thirdly, I will enhance in a discussion with fellow researchers on transnational and postcolonial studies to see how other works or artists have used this image of breaking-up with your own country to explore practices of transformative dissent and exercises of interdependent accountabilities in COVID-19 mediated times.

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**Keywords:** Dissent; South Asian Diaspora in the UK; Riz Ahmed; Bhanu Kapil; Literary Activism.

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## Ventriloquizing Europe

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### Abstract

Mediating issues regarding Middle Eastern women and the contentions over the discourses of freedom and modernity, contemporary autobiographical representations such as Masih Alinejad's *Wind in My Hair: My Fight for Freedom in Modern Iran* (2018), "are linked to the modalities of political, military, and economic power" (Whitlock 88). To Analyze Alinejad's representation of women's situation in contemporary Iran, this paper examines the development of her autobiographical self, constructed through anecdotes of her life in poverty and restrictions in Iran toward where she stands today enjoying a successful career as a journalist in the US. The fundamental premise of this paper is that Alinejad's "fight for freedom" is informed by a binary divide between a backward Iran and a modern West. Drawing on Gayatri Spivak's groundbreaking essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," as well as her later works such as *The Postcolonial Critic* (1990), where she further critiques the issue of representation, I argue that the

construction of Alinejad's autobiographical self as a revolutionary freedom fighter is paradoxically packaged in a colonial language that perpetuates the binary divide between the European Self and a colonized Other. For this purpose, first I will review Spivak's conceptualization of representation and subalternity. Then, to demonstrate the way the memoir depicts Alinejad as a revolutionary freedom fighter, I clarify how this essay is informed by Hannah Arendt's elaborations on the terms "freedom," "liberation," and "revolution," in her essay "Freedom to Be Free". Since Arendt compares the revolutions in France and America, her work is useful for my analysis of Alinejad's portrayal of herself as an heir to the legacy of American revolution. And finally, her popular campaign against compulsory veil is addressed by offering a genealogy of the Iranian women's right's movement, which has been associated with the controversies around the veiled/unveiled bodies.

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**Keywords:** Iranian Diaspora; Postcolonialism; Modernity; Masih Alinejad; Feminism.

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**Abstract**

Ayòbámi Adébayó's *Stay with Me* (2017) tells the story of a Hausa couple formed by Yejide, who is blamed for not having children, and Akin, who hides his erectile dysfunction condition to preserve his manly reputation. This paper analyzes Adébayó's work as a postromantic contemporary Nigerian novel. The focus is on Yejide's evolution, which will be introduced as affecting both the personal sphere, when it comes to her affective relationships, and the public sphere, in what concerns the collective construction of Nigeria as a nation. I attempt to establish a parallelism between Yejide and Akin's intimate and romantic relationship and the socio-political evolution of the Nigerian nation between the 1980s to the 2010s. In this context, I will delve into the romanticization of the Nigerian nation as a process which combines sacrifice and gratification, happiness and devotion, both to one's "one and only" nation and to one's "one and only" partner. In my exploration of the novel, I will first underline the relevance of gender "performativity" (Butler 2010, xv) in Yejide's marriage. She shall be introduced as having to conform to pre-established feminine and heterosexual models of performativity derived from Nigerian traditional practices (Akanji et al. 2019, 114; Okeke 2000, 51). Subsequently, social and affective dictums imposed upon Yejide will be analyzed as romanticized both at a national and at a personal level. Abuse and oppression are idealized or justified as traditional or customary practices in which the family epitomized source of happiness (Antwi et al 2013, 6). In this sense, I will hinge upon the effects of combining fear and "the promise of happiness" (Ahmed 2010, 14). As part of Yejide's performativity, the romanticization of her partner, Akin, will be read as analogous to the romanticization of the nation. In this regard, my analysis of *Stay with Me* shall draw from seminal works on affect theory and its impact on nation and belongingness (Ahmed 2017; Berlant 2012; Brennan 2004). This is where the notion of "postromance" comes into play as a counter-response to the institutionalized social practices that dictate what normative affective interactions entail both at a personal and at a national level. Ultimately, I will refer to Yejide's evolution as "postromantic", since she is able to transcend the performativity linked to romanticization both of Nigeria and of his relationship with Akin. Hence, by exploring the affective and socio-cultural evolution of Yejide, I aim to prove that there is a direct association between demystified representations of the nation and a disillusionment with the romantic ideals of Yejide's and Akin's marriage in the novel.

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**Keywords:** Nigerian Literature; Nation; Performativity; Postromance; Ayòbámi Adébáyò.

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**A legacy to his people: *Chronicles from the Land of the Happiest People on Earth* by Wole Soyinka**

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### Abstract

In an interview after launching the novel, Wole Soyinka pinpointed that he "wanted this to be my present to the nation, to the people who live here: both the governed and those who govern, the exploiters and the exploited" (The Guardian, 25/10/21), as a kind of commemoration to the 60 years of the Independence of Nigeria. Formerly, the writer had published *A Dance of the Forests* (1960) to celebrate the Independence of the country. Sixty years later, he retakes fiction to criticize the ongoing process of the nation with the authoritative voice of the jailed and exiled. The author pertains to a generation he portrayed in *The Interpreters* (1965), his first novel; He was accustomed to

being the voice of the expatriate, as he has suffered jail and exile during the years of the Nigerian Civil War for his opposition to the conflict. Being an outsider, he represents the insider too, as he shows us a deep analysis of the political Regimes, which condemn Nigeria to be one of the most corrupted countries in Africa. This exile will give voice to the outsider but he is also an insider as he accomplishes a perfect description of the territory in the last sixty years of independence. In addition, this is the legacy, to be the chronicler of the recent history of his country.

Thus, the purpose of my paper is to focus my attention on the development of Nigeria from *The Interpreters* to the *Chronicles* establishing the evolution of a whole generation who were witnesses of the process of independence as well as direct observers of the transformation of the country. In fact, a number of common areas will be analysed, from individualism to political corruption and diaspora. Besides, bearing in mind the writer's age, this novel represents a literary testimony for his own people, a 'gift' for a nation with the primary necessity of understanding his past to build an honourable present. The voice of the expatriate encompasses the landscapes of his childhood as he has written the novel during the lockdown in two nearby countries, Senegal and Ghana. The author goes back to the settings of his childhood in a kind of circular journey so useful to understand Soyinka's art. Adorno's theory of circles as well as African philosophy are represented by means of cultural syncretism.

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**Keywords:** African Literature; Wole Soyinka; Nigeria; Postcolonial; Exile.

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**"Lovely tropical things": Museums as Institutional Tools in Wicomb's Short Story  
"In the Botanic Gardens"**

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## Abstract

Theories on how the Western perspective has shaped a distorted view of non-white communities have been exhaustively analyzed in recent years. In his book *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) Edward Said claims that colonial discourse has relegated non-whites to an inferior hierarchical position while failing to remember that Western dominance is entirely dependent on those cultures. Considering that without that part of the world population their authority would decrease, the Western outlook continues to preserve that widespread idea of non-whites being inherently inferior and subordinate to the "colonial voice". One common way to keep the national discourse of Europeans *helping* the "inferior" community was, among others, museums used as colonial institutions, where they could exhibit all the conquerors' achievements. Museology studies the role museums have in society, their history or their preservation techniques; a field which could be considered intrinsically inside the theories on the Western views of developing countries. The South African writer Zoë Wicomb displays in some of her writings how non-whites deal with the white-world perspective through stories of migration. In her short story collection *The One That Got Away* (2008) there are five different stories in which she deals with Scottish-South African relations through non-white characters moving to or visiting Scotland. In the short story "In the Botanic Gardens" Dorothy Brink flies from South Africa to Glasgow to find her missing son, Arthur. Once in Scotland, she discovers by herself not only how South Africa is depicted in museums but also how Scottish people treat non-whites with contempt and derision. This paper aims to examine class and race in Wicomb's short story "In the Botanic Gardens" through the Saidian idea of the Western attempt to maintain a racial and hierarchical society based on the colonizer-colonized relation. At the same it will pay special attention to the representation of developing countries in museums and how they were used as institutional tools for visitors to marvel in front of the displays that highlighted the power of their nation overseas. Consequently, the national discourse would be absorbed according to which "inferior" peoples would "progress" accordingly through the gift of Western modernity. This short story illustrates the Western perspective towards non-whites, how the empire has created a distorted image of non-Europeans to keep that superiority over the rest of the cultures and how the European population has internalized this image. All ranges of Scottish people Dorothy encounters, from MacPherson and his perfect English to the "lights on and off lady" or the taxi driver speaking in Scots, have a similar reaction to the South African woman: a person from a primitive culture without learning and easy to manipulate. I conclude the paper by arguing that there is still much work to be done as regards Westerners' mindset. I claim that institutions need to deal with cosmopolitanism at all levels, including the representation of non-white cultures.

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**Keywords:** South African literature; race; class; migration; museums.

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## PRAGMATICS AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

### “Has Europe Forgiven Us for Brexit?”: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Tweets about the Eurovision Song Contest

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#### Abstract

The Eurovision Song Contest, an international songwriting competition, has garnered international attraction as a cultural spectacle: its latest edition, held from May 10 until May 14, 2022, was followed by more than 161 million viewers worldwide (Eurovision Press Office 2022). The main aim of the contest is to find Europe’s most popular song: participants perform an original song and spectators vote for their favourite from home. The dynamics surrounding the contest, however, has changed a lot since its inception in 1956, when it was up to a series of professional panels appointed by each country to decide the winner of the contest. Nowadays, the popular voice is also very much taken into account, and viewers go well beyond their role as voters and engage with the contest through social media platforms where they can voice their feelings towards the contestants and their songs.

Of these platforms, Twitter stands out as one of the most relevant, since it provides users a space for communal, unmediated, and live communication (Highfield, Harrington, and Bruns 2013). Within the context of Eurovision, Twitter is now even considered an extension of the event, as there are official hashtags and accounts that publish comments in real time regarding what is being televised. Viewers express in 240 characters their own opinions and simultaneously engage with others’ comments about the performances they are watching via hashtags, which facilitates the flow of the discussion. From a linguistic perspective the analysis of these tweets is undoubtedly valuable: the platform is home to a wide range of users who constitute a very rich sample, and the amount of data that can be easily accessed is massive. In addition, as Twitter allows users to remain anonymous, their messages are often extremely polarized in terms of sentiment and intertwine references to political or socio-historical events with evaluations of the musical quality of the songs or the performance of the singers.

The present work, therefore, aims to analyse the language employed to talk about the United Kingdom’s representative at the Eurovision Song Contest, Sam Ryder (who finished in second position) on Twitter. In order to do so, tweets including the keyword “Sam Ryder” and the hashtags #Eurovision, #Eurovision2022, and #ESC2022 have been used. The tweets have been extracted using Twitter’s API platform, which

allows the download of raw data. The methodology followed is based on two aspects: (a) a sentiment analysis of the tweets using *Lingmotif* (Moreno-Ortiz 2017) to explore their overall semantic orientation, and (b) a qualitative analysis using *Sketch Engine* (Kilgarriff et al. 2014) to examine how different types of reactions to this participant are manifested from a linguistic perspective. The main objective is to observe patterns of discourse and sentiment polarity regarding the Eurovision Song Contest and, more specifically, Sam Ryder. Our results show that positive and congratulatory messages predominate in the corpus, while negative references to political events such as *Brexit* can also be found.

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**Keywords:** Eurovision; Twitter; sentiment analysis.

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## Conceptualizing Migration in Multimodal Narratives for Children

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### Abstract

This paper addresses the question of how migration is conceptualized for young readers in children's literature. As an unwanted consequence of war, conflict and other difficult situations, migration is often understood as a challenging, controversial, and extremely unsettling topic to be addressed in children's literature (Evans 2015). In

order to study how migration is conceptualized by writers and illustrators of children's picture books, an analysis has been carried out of ten picture books for children dealing with migration and migrant narratives. One of the main features of picture books is that they combine visual and verbal resources in order to produce meaning in an integrate way (Nikolajeva and Scott 2006; Painter, Martin and Unsworth 2013), so their multimodal constitution offers unique and complex ways of exploiting the available resources for writers and illustrators in order to produce narratives for young and adult readers.

The picture books of the sample analysed feature protagonists who are migrant boys, girls or mothers from a variety of backgrounds, including South America, Africa, or Asia. Their stories narrate part of their diasporic lives in very different ways. However, the analysis carried out has explored the patterns that the narrations present more recurrently in terms of the elements that are employed by different authors for conceptualizing migration visually and verbally. A content analysis has been carried out, which has allowed me to identify in the first place the stages of a migrant's journey. In this way, the picture books analysed has been identified in terms of the stages covered by each story. This has allowed me to study patterns of conceptualization according to their distribution in each story. In this way, I have been able to study the specific narrative functions that each of those elements serve in the stories.

The methodology employed is based on an integrate framework combining Halliday's (1978) perspective on language as social semiotic, with a special focus on the transitivity system in his systemic functional grammar (Halliday 2004; 2014), Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006; 2021) visual social semiotics, together with the refinement of the model made by Painter, Martin and Unsworth (2013) for the multimodal analysis of picture books in particular. The paper presents some of the findings made in relation to the patterns found and their specific functions, illustrated through two recurrent elements: suitcases and birds. Both birds and suitcases are present in most of the samples analysed. However, unlike birds, which have one main function in the stories, suitcases present a greater flexibility in the type of functions and the roles they serve in each narration for conceptualizing migration both visually and verbally.

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**Keywords:** children's picture books; migration; multimodal analysis; social semiotics.

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**Methodological issues in building diachronic corpora: *The Corpus of News on Economic Inequality (1971-2020)***

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**Abstract**

According to experts, UK has experienced a process of growing economic inequality since 1971. This is reflected, for instance, in the reduced share of national income, the higher numbers in relative poverty or the more polarized wealth distribution (Lansley et al. 2013, Stiglitz 2012, Marquand 2013, and Wilkinson and Pickett 2009). Following the socio-constructionist theory of language (Fowler 1991, van Dijk 1988, 1998, Fairclough 1992, 1995), I assume in this work that newspapers may have contributed to this situation, in that they not just report facts in society but also affect people's attitudes and expectations towards societal issues. In other words, I believe that newspapers may have produced and reproduced a discourse that is supportive of the political decisions that have rendered UK a less egalitarian society today.

Bearing this in mind, my overarching aim is therefore to critically explore discourse and look for possible discursual changes (if any) in discussions around wealth inequality in the UK from 1971 onwards in the context of UK press. As part of this project, this paper specifically examines several issues in the process of compilation of a large-scale diachronic corpus of newspaper material that will serve for future investigations in discourses around economic inequality in this country since the early 1970s: the *Corpus of News on Economic Inequality* (DINEQ corpus). When finished, it will be the first of this nature and will include news from UK national newspapers from 1971 to 2020. Since there is no single available database providing access to the whole period under consideration, the process of compilation of DINEQ will inevitably include the gathering of both text readable data (temporarily referred to

as Dineq\_online) and OCR data (temporarily referred to as Dineq\_historical), these two types implying significant differences from a methodological perspective. It is work in progress, with further steps still to be done for the completion of DINEQ corpus.

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**Keywords:** economic inequality; class; corpus linguistics; critical discourse analysis; newspaper discourse.

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<b>The Discourse Functions of the "X if not Y" constructions</b>
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### Abstract

Ever since Kjellmer (1975) the ambiguity of the concessive *if not* construction has been recognized in the literature. Structures like those exemplified in (1) may have two potential interpretations: the concessive or intensive interpretation exemplified in (2a) and a metatextual or extensive interpretation as in (2b):

(1) *Republicans want to gut welfare and Planned Parenthood which provides affordable, if not free, medical services for low-income families.*

(2a) *Planned Parenthood provides affordable, but not free medical services.*

(2b) *Planned Parenthood provides affordable, perhaps even free medical services.*

In the “X if not Y” construction X and Y are points in a scale with Y marking a stronger element. Under the concessive interpretation the X element is clearly marked as the highest point in a scale and, therefore, the interpretation is X *but not* Y. In that sense, it serves as a reinforcement of the scalar implicature. Under the metatextual interpretation, a cancellation of said implicature takes place and Y is considered as a potential readjustment giving us an X *and perhaps* Y interpretation (Kjellmer 1975, Granger 2007, Pennec 2018, among others).

Despite the ambiguity, the construction is reasonably productive in different registers. Previous corpora studies (Author 2021, 2022) have shown that the construction is quite varied in terms of the syntactical elements that may participate in it, the relative adjacency of the X and Y items and the co-occurrence of adverbials. However, it is clear that a complete analysis of the construction requires also a study of the discursive function(s) of the construction.

For a full understanding of the construction, it is also important to analyze its similarities and differences with related constructions as those exemplified in (3)-(5), where the X element is a negative proform (3), a wh-phrase (4), or where the “if not Y” element is preposed:

(3) *The cigar-chomping Eckman was **nothing if not brutally frank** about life and work.*

(4) *But **where** did Ashkenazi Jewry, male and female alike, derive from **if not from the Rhineland**?*

(5) *But as hard as that is now, it's going to be -- **if not impossible, close to it.***

This paper aims to contribute to the study of this construction by providing a corpus analysis of four different written registers: blogs, magazines, newspapers and academic language in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008-). The study focuses on two distinct goals: (a) the analysis of the discursive function(s) of the basic construction and (b) a comparison with the related constructions exemplified above (preposed if not construction, wh-X if not Y and nothing if not Y).

The results shows that there are different discursive functions present in the base construction that range from hedging, to explicitness and even ironic play on words. On the other hand, the related construction share (to a certain extent) some of the discursive functions of the base construction.

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**Keywords:** X if not Y; ambiguity; discourse function; corpus analysis.

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<p><b>Mirative extensions in discourse-pragmatic markers: a crosslinguistic study of <i>finally</i> and <i>in the end</i> in the EuroParl Parallel Corpus</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Mirative meaning, the linguistic expression of surprise and related senses (DeLancey 1997; Aikhenvald 2012), may emerge from an array of sources, one of which is conclusive or resultative meanings. Such meanings can acquire mirative readings via the pathway completion/ end result > surprise (González Fernández and Maldonado 1998; AUTHOR). This study zooms in on the English discourse-pragmatic adverbials *finally* and *in the end* and their translations in Spanish (e.g., *finalmente*) and Swedish (e.g., *äntligen*), which along their conclusive and resultative meanings, may convey mirative nuances of counterexpectation and/or unexpectedness:



(1) **Finally**<sub>1</sub>, from tools to target: it is our responsibility, and the ALDE Group will stand by you when it comes to a decision and deliver value for voters—**finally**<sub>2</sub>!

(2) **Finalmente**<sub>1</sub>, de las herramientas a los objetivos: es nuestra responsabilidad, y el Grupo ALDE le respaldará en la decisión de hacer, **por fin**<sub>2</sub>, algo útil para los electores.

(3) **Avslutningsvis**<sub>1</sub> har vi ansvar för att gå från mål till medel, och ALDE-gruppen kommer att stödja er i ert beslut och se till att väljarna—**äntligen**<sub>2</sub>! —får påtagliga bevis för att något händer.

Examples (1)-(3), taken from *EuroParl* (Koehn 2005), instantiate both conclusive and mirative readings of the pragmatic-discourse markers. While the first occurrence in each example (e.g., *finally*<sub>1</sub> in (1)) illustrates a conclusive use, indicating the last point or conclusion of a discourse, the second occurrence (e.g., *finally*<sub>2</sub>) conveys counterexpectation and unexpectedness, as the speaker emphasizes that the long-awaited decision will ultimately be made.

The aim of this paper is to explore the semantic relations between the different discourse-pragmatic expressions: (i) English *finally* and *in the end* and (ii) these two English adverbials vs. their equivalents in Spanish and Swedish. Therefore, we want to explore the use of translation as a measure of (dis)similarity (e.g., Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg 2004). To this purpose, instances of the two English adverbials, together with their translations into Spanish and Swedish, are retrieved from *EuroParl*, a parallel corpus containing the proceedings of the European Parliament from 1996 to 2011 in a range of European languages, with the aid of *EuroParl Extract* (Ustaszewski 2019). Subsequently, we conduct both intra- and interlinguistic analyses of the data. First, we examine the distribution of the English adverbials according to their senses (e.g., unexpectedness, conclusiveness) and clause-position (i.e., initial, medial, final). Then, we resort to Multidimensional Scaling (e.g., Levshina 2015, Chapter 17) to visualize the semantic (dis)similarity between these adverbials, measured this time on the basis of their translations into Spanish and Swedish.

From a purely intralinguistic perspective *finally* and *in the end* do not seem to differ significantly regarding their distribution, since both markers are used almost equally frequently to convey mirative and conclusive nuances. Nevertheless, differences do emerge from the interlinguistic analysis of the expressions: when taking into account their Spanish and Swedish counterparts together with their senses and positions, clearer patterns of usage become evident that differentiate between them. Therefore, this study further proves the usefulness of translation as a measure of semantic (dis)similarity.

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**Keywords:** mirativity; discourse-pragmatic markers; semantic (dis)similarity; translation; multidimensional scaling.

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<p><b>Who has been murdered? A corpus-stylistic analysis of the victim of murder in the TV series <i>The Killing</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

Taking as an example the acclaimed cult series *The Killing* (2011-2014), this paper explores the functional role of the victim in the sequence of the events narrated through dialogue, using a corpus stylistics methodology. The analysis addresses three issues. First, it tackles, quantitatively, the chronological sequentiality (Fludernik 2010 & Häusler-Greenfield 2010) of the victim within the narrative. Secondly, and considering the extracts in which the victim is mentioned, I analyse them qualitatively in order to see how they contribute to construct or characterise the victim of murder Rosie Larsen. The qualitative analysis implied looking at three different but complementary aspects: a) which linguistic features are used to construct the victim (NPs, adjectives etc.) (Tabbert 2015; Jeffries 2010); b) how these linguistic features help establish the

relationships between the victim and the rest of the characters; c) what kind of information the other characters provide about the victim (other-characterisation). Ultimately, the purpose of the analysis is to bring together the results obtained from a, b, & c, in order to clarify how characters establish their participation frameworks (Goffman 1981, Burguer 1984, Schiffrin 1987, Levinson 1988, Clark 1992, (Bubel 2011, Kozloff 2000, Dynel 2011, Brock 2015, Messerli 2017) in relation to the victim of murder.

The exploration of the chronological sequentiality of the victim (a) was carried out exploring dispersion plots. The identification of linguistic structures that were used to introduce the victim in the dialogue (b) were detected both automatically and manually through frequency word lists as well as POS tagging. These linguistic structures were indicative of the *participation framework* (c) between Rosie Larsen and the rest of the characters and were studied in detail. Goffman (1979: 11) defined participation framework as "the relation of all the persons in the gathering for that moment of speech" and Schiffrin (1987:27) described it "as the different ways in which speaker and hearer relate to one another," and to their talk, i.e., "speakers are oriented towards ideas: they evaluate them ... express commitment." Finally, the extracts in which the victim was mentioned, or what is the same, the explicit textual-cues in the text that tell us something about character and identity (Culpeper 2001; Bednarek 2011), were analysed using concordance and collocation analysis. Characterisation of Rosie Larsen was done according to those general ways to build her relationship through naming with the rest of the characters that appeared in the corpus, The results obtained using corpus methodologies prove the central role that the victim has in the design of the narrative.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exploring Stance Constructions in the Coronavirus Corpus: An Ecolinguistic Approach</b></p>
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**Abstract**

Recent studies on meat consumption and production have determined that transmission of zoonoses is commonly caused either by consuming wild animals (or farm animals which have been in contact with wild ones) or by intensive livestock farming (Espinosa et al. 2020). In this context, even though the cause of Covid-19 remains unresolved, this issue has certainly raised awareness on the risks entailed by zoonotic diseases and on the role played by humans in their origin and spread. Thus, the way such controversy has been managed in public discourse since the beginning of the pandemic is of interest from an ecolinguistic perspective. As a matter of fact, the last couple of years have seen the emergence of a growing body of studies concerned with how language mediates, and construes attitudes toward pandemic issues (see, among others, Curry and Pérez-Paredes 2021; Mahlberg and Brookes 2021; Yang and Wang 2021). In line with such studies, this paper aims at investigating speaker's stance in texts dealing with the origin of Covid-19. The study examines stance, i.e. the set of "personal feelings, attitudes, value judgments, or assessments" (Biber et al. 1999, 966) manifested towards the proposition being expressed, through the lens of ecolinguistics and using the methodology of corpus-assisted approaches to discourse studies.

The analysis is applied to a selection of online newspapers and magazine articles published since the beginning of the pandemic until the present day. Data have been drawn from the United States component of *The Coronavirus Corpus* (Davies 2019–). In order to analyze the subjective character of the online content under scrutiny, the focus is on the primary markers of stance in discourse i.e. adverbials, in particular, on

epistemic stance adverbials, such as *probably, likely, certainly, arguably*, among others, which convey the speaker's degree of commitment to the information expressed in the proposition (e.g. certainty, actuality and reality, source of knowledge, limitation, perspective or imprecision) (Biber et al. 1999, 854–856). An example from the corpus is given in (1), from Aljazeera news online platform, where the adverbial *most likely* brings to the fore a kind of discourse which could conceivably seek to steer readers' opinions:

(1) "The novel coronavirus most likely started in a 'wet market'"

The objective is to assess the frequency of epistemic stance adverbials in the corpus material and evaluate the degree of speaker's commitment toward the proposition in which they occur. In this vein, a qualitative analysis is performed following the precepts ascribed to ecolinguistics in order to evaluate whether the texts endorse the factual character of zoonoses as a result of human activities. The results of this analysis may shed some light on how epistemic stance can manage readers' opinions and perceptions on contentious and uncertain issues in the context of a global pandemic as addressed by online media, thus promoting premature postures on such topics.

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**Keywords:** Ecolinguistics; stance; corpus; zoonosis; Covid-19.

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**“Neuronal ideology”: A Critical Discourse Analysis of contemporary neurobiology  
research paper**

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**Abstract**

This paper provides empirical evidence for the assertion of French philosopher Catherine Malabou (Malabou 2008) that contemporary neuroscientific discourse mirrors that of post-Fordist capitalism, in particular managerialism. Malabou’s provocative manifesto *What Should We do With Our Brain* provides a couple of salient examples of such mirroring, noting the similarities between “a plurality of mobile and atomistic centres” and notions such as “network, delocalization, and adaptability” which appear both in the domain of the neuronal and that of socioeconomics (Malabou 2008, 41).

However, her reliance on a handful of influential texts by authors such as Antonio Damasio, Daniel Dennet and Jean-Pierre Changeux means that such “neuronal ideology” (p. 11) is not demonstrated to be a general condition of neurobiological research papers, nor are variations in its realisation through different forms of discourse established – or indeed variations in the specific form of this neuronal ideology and what effects it might have. This paper consequently tests the hypothesis of “neuronal ideology” by applying critical discourse analysis (Cervera, Postigo, and Herrero 2006; Fairclough 2013) to a small corpus of neurobiological research articles, each by a different author. This corpus is taken from *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* (ISSN 16625161) with article topics limited to brain connectivity, neuronal plasticity, the neuronal workspace hypothesis and brain computer interfaces.

Working within the paradigm of critical discourse studies, this paper predominantly uses Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA) (O’Halloran 2003; 2007) while continuing to address the challenge that “Theory” presents for critical applied linguistics (Mcnamara 2015; Pennycook 2018) – in this instance, via critically incorporating Malabou’s deconstruction of neurobiology into an SF-MDA framework.

Previous analysis as part of the same broader project has found examples of “neuronal ideology” in Dehaene et al.’s work on the neuronal workspace hypothesis (1998), in particular transitivity patterns characteristic of grammatical metaphors that transfer the problem of consciousness onto neuronal networks and assemblies as actors (O’Halloran 2003; Removed for review 2014; Fairclough 1996, 177–85).

In conclusion, this paper shows that there is empirical support for the presence of “neuronal ideology” within current neurobiology research papers, while at the same time demonstrating the value of “Theory” for adding to the toolkit of critical discourse analysis – though with some caveat.

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**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis; neurobiology; ideolog.

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## SHORT STORY

### The Changing Masks of Death: Troping the Traumatic Real in A.S. Byatt's *Little Black Book of Stories*

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#### Abstract

In her discussion of the evolutionary significance of the arts, psychiatrist Sandra Bloom contends that the development of artistic practice has to do with its survival value: the arts constitute “*the bridge across the black hole of trauma, the evolved individual and group response to the tragic nature of human existence.*” (210, original emphasis) All forms of art help to cope with vulnerability, fear and loss, but myths, legends and fairy tales seem to be especially effective to do so, and can therefore be seen as vital aids at the service of what Arva calls “the traumatic imagination” (2011). My paper approaches Byatt’s fifth short-story collection from this perspective and argues that, even if her works generally prompt reflection on the value of art and literature, *Little Black Book of Stories* (2003) particularly engages with this issue in connection with loss, illness, death and traumatic experience in general. I accordingly analyse the way in which the book challenges us to ponder on dark and unthinkable things by presenting them indirectly, in tales that contain artists and fictions within the fiction, and that are often intertextually connected with fairy tale, myth, and legend. My discussion is structured on the basis of three stories, the first, the last and the one at the centre of the collection. In “The Thing in the Forest”, which opens the book, the Blitz is evoked in a narrative about the experience and memories of two children evacuees that meet as adult women. I explain how war trauma emerges from the story’s fairy-tale template in the shape of the loathly worm the girls “saw, or believed they saw” (Byatt 3) in a forest, as if Hansel and Gretel met the legendary Lambtom Worm and could never forget the encounter. As I contend, this worm figuratively crawls through the collection to portray different faces of fear, pain and traumatic loss, including death –of loved ones as well as one’s own death. As to the former, the volume closes with “The Pink Ribbon”, in which a husband who suffers for his mentally ill wife entertains thoughts of euthanasia on conversing with a visitor that is drawn after a figure of folklore: the fetch, his wife’s living ghost. For its part “A Stone Woman”, at the center of the volume, tells the story of a woman that faces her own death as she progressively turns into stone, a process I analyse by commenting on the narrative’s blending of the magic transformations typical of fairy tales with myths and legends of female petrification. As Claire Messud puts it: “Death is present in many forms throughout this collection,”



which brings back to the surface “our awareness of the unnamable Things that slither through each life.” (n.p.) Approached from a trauma-oriented perspective, *Little Black Book of Stories* will be shown to variously exploit intertextuality as a vehicle for “troping the traumatic real” (Adams 2011), an ability inherent in all storytelling but best illustrated by narratives like the ones analysed in this paper.

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**Keywords:** A.S. Byatt; *Little Black Book of Stories*; intertextuality; trauma; death.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Language and the Transcultural Self: An Exploration of the Twenty-First-Century Chicano Short Story</b></p>
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### Abstract

Given the increasing growth of the Latino and Chicano minorities in the USA, the present century has witnessed an evolution regarding the publication of works written by Mexican American writers. In recent decades, Chicano literature has been gaining momentum, giving rise to literature written by distinguished authors as well as by emerging voices. Thus, it is not surprising anymore to find their work published in several literary forms, such as poetry, narrative, or short stories, along with anthologies that aim to comprehend the different genres chosen to materialize their voice and express the complexity of being a Mexican American living in America today. Giving voice to those individuals who used to be voiceless is commonly the main purpose of these writings (Vidal: 2021), and they choose to do so using a “bastard” language (Anzaldúa: 1987) that is as hybrid as their identities: the language of the *in-between*.

This contribution explores the assorted proposals and the transcultural and translingual dimension of the works included in the anthology edited by Margarita Longoria, *Living Beyond Borders: Growing Up Mexican in America* (2021).

It is our intention to study how these writers convey the beauty of the Mexican American culture by reflecting their diverse perspectives and experiences. It is by writing fiction and non-fiction compositions that these authors will explore their reality and what it means to be Mexican American, at times demonstrating their struggles to feel a sense of belonging to either culture.

Therefore, our main purpose is to focus on how language not only affects at an identity level, as characters and writers will go through a process of identity construction, but also at a creative and expressive one, given the linguistic choices the authors will have to make when writing their work. For this reason, we will focus mainly in three short stories: "Ghetto is not an Adjective" by Dominic Carrillo, "Yoli Calderón and Principal Hayes" by Angela Cervantes and "My Name is Dolores" by Guadalupe Ruiz-Flores. Within these short compositions we will be able to discuss varied topics such as *language pain* (Pratt: 2012) and the power of words, translanguaging (as a creative tool and topic of discussion within the text), transculturalism, as well as the feeling of *not fitting* in either culture.

This work is part of the activities being carried out in the context of the research project "NEMICATID: Aesthetics, Ethics and Strategics of the New Migratory Cartographies and Transcultural Identities in Twenty-First-Century Literature(s) in English (2007-2019)" (PID2019-109582GB-100), recently funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

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**Keywords:** Transculturalism; identity; translanguaging; Chicanx; short story.

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Ecological Thresholds and Posthuman Anxieties: Daisy Johnson's *Fen* (2014)

**Abstract**

Contemporary discussions of limits, borders and demarcations may often extend to reflections on the nature of human subjects and their relationships to the world, to non-human animals and to machines and artefacts. These explorations eventually lead to a questioning of the dominant paradigm of natural law by posing the question of whether “human” as a category can still refer to a Kantian community of reasonable beings (Wolfe 2010). Clear-cut boundaries between the given and the constructed, nature and culture are currently being replaced by “a non-dualistic understanding of nature–culture interaction” which aims to overcome the boundaries firmly established by anthropocentrism (Braidotti 2010). In 1986, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari insisted on the need to deterritorialize the boundaries of the human by “becoming animal” and to participate in a “continuum of intensities” which would enable the crossing of thresholds (13) as well as to rethink our relationship with other animals across disciplinary boundaries (Turner 2013, 2). Contemporary attention to limitrophy comprises an attempt to step away from traditional species hierarchies through a close examination of human and non-human relationships and the impact of what Giorgio Agamben has termed the “anthropological machine” (2004, 37). Departing from such premises, this paper aims at examining Daisy Johnson’s recent collection of short stories, *Fen* (2014), in the wake of border studies and the posthuman paradigm. Johnson’s deliberate focus on the English Fenlands as a liminal topology mirrors the collection’s anxiety at overtly exposing human’s destructive intervention of nature and the radical environmental alterations of the so-called Anthropocene, an ecological threshold which urgently demands “new ways of thinking and new communities that produce environmental solutions as a form of civic knowledge” (Emmett and Nye 2017, 7).

Formally speaking, the thematic hybridity which characterises the contemporary short story seems particularly suited to address issues that pertain to limits, thresholds and borders, be these geopolitical, cultural or ontological ones. Defined as the “liminal genre per excellence” (Achilles and Bergmann 2015), the short story’s borderline quality may turn the genre into a site from where to foster potential change and reorientations, in as much as borders are places of conflict, but also contact zones which are simultaneously close and open, divide yet also invite us to transgress. As borders themselves, liminality combines seemingly oppositional phenomena and reveals itself as a stimulus for reflection, potential innovation and transformation, thus destabilising concepts of reality and inviting to reconsider fixed limits, demarcations and boundaries, particularly appealing in an age of “global mobility, digital networking, and interethnic transnationality” (Achilles and Bergmann 2015, 3). Johnson’s short story collection partakes of an urge to reassess physical and ontological borders, placing characters on an ecological and ontological threshold which invites

further reconsiderations of human identity as solely defined within the limits of their own species. In addition to this, Johnson's stories bring to the fore the disastrous effects of climate change in nature, non-human and human animals, whose behaviour is being radically altered in the wake of the "sixth extinction" of the Anthropocene.

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**Keywords:** Anthropocene, posthumanism, short story, borders, Daisy Johnson.

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<b>Prefiguring Phytoacoustics: Roald Dahl's "The Sound Machine" (1949)</b>
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## Abstract

Roald Dahl (1916-1990) is world famous as an author of children's fiction. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964), *George's Marvellous Medicine* (1981) or *The BFG* (1982) are among his most notable works. Not unlike Lewis Carroll, Dahl had a liking for wordplay so that his eccentric characters often coin new terms that sound like English

words but do not actually exist, though (young) readers can guess their meanings. For example, the BFG (Big Friendly Giant) tells little orphaned Sophie that he can hear ants and understand their “‘langwitch’” (Dahl 1998, 44). Words with magic powers (as George’s witchy grandmother’s), or made-up words exhibiting homophonies that joyfully undermine the meaning-making operation of normative linguistic difference (Dolar 2006, 36-37) are elements that belong in the field of articulated language recurrent in Dahl’s fiction.

Dahl, however, was not only interested in the sound of words but also in sound itself. Animal sounds in Dahl’s fantasy narratives are instances of articulated language, like the ones heard by characters like the BFG (Dahl 1998, 44 and 46). But as to other sound emissions their consideration is different: though not articulated meaning, they do express something (distress and pain, in particular). The sounds of plants and trees, the BFG says, are not “‘exactly talking’”, but “‘noises’”, so that when he picks a flower, he hears it “‘screaming’”, and when he chops “‘an axe into the trunk of a big tree’”, he hears a “‘a moaning sound [...] like the sound an old man is making when he is dying slowly’” (Dahl 1998, 44-45). What the giant in possession of amazing powers of audition is capable of hearing as coming from the vegetal world in Dahl’s 1982 novel is an *echo* of an early SF short story, “The Sound Machine”, published almost many years before the first acoustic emissions of plants were actually recorded in 1966 (Milburn and Johnson). In the story, amateur scientist Klausner builds a machine capable of capturing sounds in a frequency much above the human hearing range. He tries it in his garden and first hears “a frightful piercing shriek” coming from yellow roses when they are cut by a neighbour (Dahl 2010, 159). And when he drives an axe into a tree trunk, he hears a louder “screaming sound” that eventually dies out (Dahl 2010, 160). The technological progress in sound amplification and recording in recent years has brought about a dramatic advance in the field of Ecoacoustics (Farina 2104; Farina and Gage 2017), which in the case of plants has received the name “phytoacoustics” (Khait, Obolski, Yovek and Hadany 2019). The aim of this paper is to discuss Dahl’s 1949 story as a prefiguration of phytoacoustics and its focus on plant sound emissions under stress. Science has somewhat achieved what Dahl had imagined. The fact plants react acoustically to violence inflicted on them has strong implications for our relations with the vegetal world, which the story also tackles. The present tendency to identify the non-human with animals must, perhaps, be revised.

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**Keywords:** Roald Dahl; "The Sound Machine"; phytoacoustics; sound; plants.

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### Decision-making in the Face of Fuzzy Boundaries: a Preliminary Discussion

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#### Abstract

The aim of this presentation is to provide an overview and discuss the current challenges of my research, which examines the intra- and extralinguistic factors that determine variability in the clausal complementation patterns of the verb ADMIT in PostColonial Englishes - varieties of English that are products of an evolutionary process tied directly to their colonial and postcolonial past (Schneider 2007: 3). More specifically, it focuses on non-categorical clausal complementation, which refers to variants that are freely interchangeable (e.g., *She admits to stealing the bag* or *She admits that she stole the bag*). With data from the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE), this study compares the clausal complementation patterns of this verb in the two main Inner Circle varieties, American and British English, with the varieties used in India and Pakistan, which have a geographical and historical connection and intersecting substrate languages.

Before I try to determine which language-internal and language-external factor(s) could be responsible for the choice between the interchangeable variants, I need to provide a detailed account of the complementation patterns of ADMIT in each of the varieties and their inter-varietal similarities and differences. For this purpose, I extracted 23,710 examples and pruned manually to eliminate duplicates and non-valid tokens, and started their codification regarding their complementation profile. While the process is fairly straightforward in many cases, it faces serious challenges in two respects. Firstly, from a syntactic perspective, I have identified instances of ADMIT in comment clauses - which need to be excluded because they do not present variability. However, many instances pose a challenge in that the boundary between a comment clause and a regular complement clause is fuzzy. Their syntactic status is ambiguous when they occur in initial position without the complementizer that (e.g., *I must admit I didn't sleep very well*; Biber et al. 1999: 197; Brinton 2008: 5).

From a semantic perspective, the meaning of ADMIT determines the complementation profile it may take, and for this reason it is essential to analyse it in context for every example. The classification of the meaning of ADMIT used in Cuyckens and D'hoedt (2015), whereby ADMIT can be used as a speech act verb or meaning 'admit to wrongdoing', also proves not fully operational when applied to

actual data. Given the above-mentioned connection between the meaning of ADMIT and its complementation profile, I have found it necessary to propose a new, corpus-driven semantic taxonomy. Discussing these two challenges will undoubtedly shed light on the decision-making process previous to the analysis of variability.

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**Keywords:** World Englishes; corpus linguistics; complementation; variation; comment clauses.

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<b>"As I Love the Name of <i>honour</i>": Orthography in the L1 Varieties of English</b>
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### Abstract

English is spoken today by an estimate of 1,452 million users around the globe. Though the language scores second when it comes to native speakers, its status as a lingua franca accounts for its diffusion among non-native communities (*Ethnologue* 2022). As of today, English is spoken in the five inhabited continents: Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania. Such a geographical expansion on the part of the language means that linguistic variation is bound to occur, and it does. Research on the field of World Englishes has recently undertaken the study of the patterns of usage among the many varieties that exist today. A quick literature review reveals a myriad of works addressing syntactic, lexical and even pragmatical differences (see, for example, Kirkpatrick 2010), always enquiring into both the inner- and the outer-circle varieties (Kachru 2008). However, the linguistic level of orthography has been systematically disregarded until very recently (cf. Calle-Martín 2021; Gonçalves et al. 2018). One of the



reasons for this lack of attention in terms of research is the invariable aspect of spelling today, which exhibits near-to-no variation in standard Present-day English. Moreover, when taking into consideration the few cases of spelling variation that do exist today –such as *-ise* vs. *-ize*–, the assumption has always been that the varieties of English worldwide would normally adhere to the British model in light of their shared historical and cultural bonds with the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, numerous publications in the area of World English are shedding light on the phenomenon of Americanisation in most linguistic levels, and that should include orthography. Indeed, the extant cases of spelling variation in Present-day English are geographically distributed and descriptions of the current orthographic paradigm are typically provided in binaries, with British English facing off American English (Trudgill & Hannah 2008). Such a state of affairs has raised the following questions: Is spelling also becoming Americanised? If so, are all the varieties of English equally susceptible to this phenomenon? The present paper puts forward a corpus-based investigation on the distribution of *-our/-or*, *-rel/-er* and *-isation/-ization* to answer these questions. By drawing quantitative and qualitative data from the *Corpus of Global Web-based English*, the aforementioned spelling variants will be analysed in the six inner-circle varieties. In doing so, the study aims not only at describing the usage patterns of these orthographic forms, but also at understanding what sociolinguistic mechanisms –if any– are responsible for setting this phenomenon in motion in those varieties that are less prone to linguistic change. The tentative results so far show correlation between the developmental stage of each of the varieties under study and their degree of Americanisation.

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**Keywords:** inner-circle Englishes; orthography; spelling variation; world Englishes.

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<b>Null subjects on the web: An exploratory study using <i>GloWbE</i></b>
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**Abstract**

English has traditionally been classified as a prototypical non-null subject language, that is, one in which the subjects of finite clauses cannot be deleted (Dryer 2013). However, referential and non-referential subject omission, as in examples (1) and (2), respectively, are attested with different degrees of pervasiveness in up to 52% and 35% of the varieties of English included in *The Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English* (eWAVE; Kortmann et al. 2020).

(1) Shyly, she told him she lived across the inter-section. He escorted her there. **Told** her to go straight home. (*GloWbE*, BD G, thedailystar.net)

(2) **Seems** to me that the preload will not be enough to prevent the binding from rotating once you remove the teeth. (*GloWbE*, CA B, bomberonline.com)

Null subjects have recently received attention in the field of World Englishes but they have so far been investigated in a restricted set of varieties and in rather small corpora such as the *International Corpus of English* (e.g. AUTHOR; Schröter 2019).

The present paper, therefore, aims to describe the occurrence of null subjects across a larger and representative set of varieties of English in different evolutionary stages of Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model. To this purpose, data was retrieved from the *Corpus of Global Web-Based English* (*GloWbE*; Davies 2013). *GloWbE* is the largest corpus available for the study of language variation in English, since it contains 1.9 billion words from 20 English-speaking countries (Davies and Fuchs 2015). For this reason, *GloWbE* is particularly useful for the study of low-frequency linguistic features, as is the case of null subjects in English (cf., for instance, Schröter 2019, 162). Moreover, *GloWbE* contains web-based written language, a communicative context in which null subjects have so far not been investigated. A random sample of 3rd person null subjects in initial clause position was extracted from the corpus using the search strings

[. VVZ] and [. VVD] for present and past tense verbs, respectively. After some manual pruning to eliminate false positives, the resulting database was annotated for the following factors:

- Variety: stage in the Dynamic Model and L1 vs. L2 status.
- Verb: verb form, verb lemma, verb tense, and verb semantics.
- Genre: general websites vs. blogs.
- Referential status: referential vs. non-referential null subjects.
- Referential (dis)continuity: reference maintenance from previous clause vs. partial switch vs. full switch.
- Persistence: previous subject is null vs. a pronoun vs. a full noun phrase.

The distribution of null subjects across varieties, genres, and contexts of use was explored by examining their relative frequency and by resorting to dimensionality reduction techniques such as Multidimensional Scaling (Levshina 2015, 336–48). The results of this study shed light on the frequency and distribution of null subjects in World Englishes, as well as on the factors that have an influence on the occurrence of this linguistic feature in web-based written communication.

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**Keywords:** Null subjects; web-based language; GloWbE; World Englishes; multidimensional scaling.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Second Person Pronouns in Geographical Varieties of English: A Corpus-based Study</b></p>
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**Abstract**

This paper aims to analyse the use of second person pronouns in different varieties of English. Personal pronouns represent a closed grammatical category and are amongst the most frequently used words of any language. Thus, they have been the subject of a wide array of works, ranging from studies on the development of the current third person plural pronominal forms (Lass 1992) to research on the expansion of *they* as a non-gendered third person singular pronoun (Bradley et al. 2019; Loureiro-Porto 2020). Yet, the literature on English second person pronouns mostly revolves around their diachrony. Authors have specially focused on the Early Modern English period to cast light on the uses of *thou* as the informal second person singular alternative and of *you* as its formal counterpart, as well as the consolidation of the latter and the confinement of *thou* to religious texts, regional and archaic uses (Walker 2007). However, little attention has been paid to non-standard varieties of English and the possible pronominal forms that may be used by their speakers. Katie Wales's seminal study on personal pronouns (1996) highlighted the existence of an ample set of forms across geographical varieties of the language, and the different contexts and registers in which they may be found. Subsequent works have built on this data to provide information about non-standard forms of second person pronouns and their usage across countries in which English is spoken as mother tongue (Valentinyová 2015). Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge, no studies on this topic have been conducted taking into account the variety of states where English has co-official status or is spoken as a non-native, second language, which correspond to the outer circle of the English language. In this paper I intend to consider the geographical varieties from both the inner and the outer circle in order to determine whether there are any significant differences regarding second person pronominal forms and their uses, and to assess the potential impact that substrate languages may have had on them, thus contributing to expand our knowledge of World Englishes. To this purpose, the data has been extracted from the *Corpus of Global Web-Based English* (GloWbE; Davies 2013), which includes text samples from blogs, newspapers, articles and other online sources

from several Anglophone countries. Preliminary research shows some interesting results, such as the many instances of the plural form *youse* in Australian and New Zealand English and the high frequency of *thou* in American and Pakistani sources (mainly used to refer to God/Allah). These and other data will be analysed so as to discover any possible trends in particular varieties of English.

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**Keywords:** corpus studies; language variation; personal pronouns; World Englishes.

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<b>A look at the nativization of Bangladeshi English through corpus data</b>
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**Abstract**

This presentation aims to explore the development of English in Bangladesh and its present-day sociolinguistic situation, with a focus on its current phase of development and the linguistic relationship it has with other South-East Asian varieties (SAEs). English in Bangladesh has traditionally been considered a second language (L2), relegated to use in international communication, but unlike some other varieties in the region, it has seen a notable revival in the 21st century, driven largely by globalization. In this presentation, I will seek to confirm whether BdE (Bangladeshi English) has reached the phase 'nativization', as other neighbouring varieties such as Indian English or Sri Lankan English, with an analysis of data from GloWbE (Corpus of Web-Based Global English, Davies 2013), one of the few databases which contains language from the variety of interest. We analyze potential linguistic features associated with Bangladeshi English in particular, and/or South East Asian Englishes (SAEs), such as Indian English, Sri Lankan English and Pakistani English, working from the extended hypothesis that Indian English, the largest institutionalised second-language variety of English, is emerging as the epicenter for English use in South Asia (Hundt 2013), and as such might be seen as serving as a model for the neighbouring varieties. The analysis of neighbouring varieties would also confirm the relevance of geographical proximity between varieties, which predicts dialectal similarity (Szmrecsanyi 2012: 837). We have selected a list of specific morphosyntactic features reported as 'pervasive or obligatory' (label A) or 'neither pervasive nor extremely rare' (label B) in these three varieties, as represented in the *Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English* (eWAVE, Kortmann et al. 2020), and have checked their use in GloWbE.

Results show that SAEs are homogeneous in the use of some of the linguistic features (e.g. use of the progressive with stative verbs, as in *What the Bengalis had really been wanting were regional autonomy and social and economic justice*), which would confirm the role of Indian English as an epicenter as well as the strength of geographical proximity, but for some other features the picture is less clear and results are more heterogeneous, which would suggest that Bangladeshi English may also exhibit an individual developmental path, motivated by (i) different paces of evolution, affected by different extralinguistic factors, (ii) the influence of different substrates, such as the clear presence of Bengali in the context of BdE, unlike in the case of Indian, Sri Lankan or Pakistan English and (iii) the non-prototypical evolution followed by BdE in comparison to other Postcolonial Englishes.

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**Keywords:** World Englishes; nativization; geographic proximity; morphosyntactic variation.

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<p><b>Are we Concerned about Eating Healthily in Spain? The Increasing Proliferation of Anglicisms in the field of Food and Drink</b></p>
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**Abstract**

A considerable amount of literature has reported on the use of Anglicisms in a number of domains in Spanish daily life: sports (Rodríguez-Medina 2021), fashion and beauty (Balteiro & Campos 2012; Luján-García 2017a), teenagers' language (Luján-García 2017b), sex (Crespo-Fernández & Luján-García 2018), to list a few domains. In the last decade, we have witnessed not only a remarkable influence of fast food culture coming from Anglo-American countries, but, as a reaction to this tendency, an increasing concern about the quality of the food that we eat has also emerged among certain areas of Spanish society. This paper intends to reveal the increasingly degree of influence of the English language and Anglo-American culture on Spanish linguistic domains of food and drinks. This paper intends:

- To examine, from qualitative and quantitative approaches, a sample of Anglicisms that seem to be increasingly used in the area of food and drinks among Spanish speakers. Some more specific goals are as follows:
- To find out which Anglicisms are included in three reference Spanish dictionaries.
- To distinguish different sub areas within the semantic fields of food and drinks in Spanish.
- To discuss the functions of these food/drinks related Anglicisms in Spanish.

In methodological terms, the recently created search tool of Anglicisms “Observatorio Lázaro” (Álvarez Mellado 2020) has been employed to build the sample. The collection was carried out throughout the last semester of 2020 (from June to December) and the first trimester of 2021 (January, February, March) and it provided a collection of 94 food/drinks related Anglicisms. The following dictionaries have been used as reference works to check the inclusion and definitions of some of the examined terms: *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (DLE), *Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas* (DPD) and *Gran Diccionario de Anglicismos* (GDA). This analysis focuses on pure or non-adapted lexical Anglicisms.

Findings present a breakdown of the sample by distinguishing the following sub-areas: drinks, food, places, practices and techniques and objects. Food is the sub-field which offers the highest amount of English lexical items with 42 terms. In quantitative terms, some of the Anglicisms in this paper have been reported with considerable occurrences in the examined press: *snack*, *light*, *fast food*, and *cookies* performed high frequencies of usage. The majority of lexical items of the sample are not included in any of the three employed dictionaries. Eventually, following Rodríguez González (1996) the three pragmatic functions (textual, expressive and referential) are analysed with examples in context. Conclusions highlight the constant emergence of new food trends and the urgency and univocity imposed by the cultural globalisation in addition to the speed of our communications make English as the lingua franca necessary to respond to these communicative necessities.

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**Keywords:** Anglicisms; Spanish; food; drink; gastronomy.

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**The Expression of (Im)Politeness in the Language of Teenagers: The Courtesy Marker *please*, Taboo Vocatives and Swear Words as Three Cases in Point**

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**Abstract**

This paper focusses on the expression of (im)politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987; Watts 2003; Culpeper 2011; Leech 2014) in the language of teenagers, more in particular on cases of so-called 'pragmatic reversal' (cf. Mazzon 2017; Fedriani 2018), that is, a change whereby a politeness marker is used to attack face with confrontational meanings, and viceversa. A broad interpretation of this concept may account for episodes in which a traditional modal particle (Aijmer 2002), illocutionary modifier (Biber et al. 1999), politeness or courtesy marker (Leech 2014) such as *please* is used to express positive and negative impoliteness as well as sarcasm or mock politeness (cf. Culpeper 2011; Aijmer 2015). Thus, examples are found in which young speakers make use of *please* to tease some of their peers and to express disapproval, negative attitudes or irritation, while it is also employed together with taboo words yielding situations where there is a clear mismatch between polite and impolite formulae (e.g. *What's that shitty thing please*; LEC Corpus). Something similar, but in the opposite direction, applies to taboo vocatives or offensive address terms, e.g. *you are fucking gorgeous you bastard*; LEC Corpus), which may express affectionate meanings, solidarity and badinage rather than positive impoliteness by being aggressive (Stenström & Jørgensen 2008; Rodríguez González & Stenström 2011; author 2021). The same is true for some swear words such as *fuck(ing) and shit* (e.g. *you look fucking good; he's such a little shit he's really good*; COLT Corpus), whose use may respond to a social function with the aim of showing the speaker's determination and independence or even respond to a positive purpose, when employed among friends without causing, as would be

expected, any face-threatening act, bad feelings or resentment on the addressees (Stenström & Jørgensen 2008; Fagersten 2012; Drummond 2020).

Our study will be supported with spoken data retrieved mainly from the Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Language (COLT), the London English Corpus (LEC) and the spoken component of the British National Corpus 2014 (BNC2014). When necessary, comparisons will be drawn with the same phenomena in the language of adults and with previous studies in these areas (Stenström & Jørgensen 2008; Rodríguez González & Stenström 2011; Fagersten 2012; Aijmer 2015; Drummond 2020, among others).

These pragmatic reversal processes just described contribute to reinforcing the harmonious relationships established among teenagers, consolidating bonds and solidarity, thus creating a general atmosphere of comradeship, which helps them to strengthen their identity as members of the peer group. This is of key importance at that age, since it allows these young speakers to be ruled by socio-pragmatic norms different from those of adults. The paper concludes by drawing attention to the need and importance of examining not only the role of factors such as the speaker's age but also the role played by cognitive and developmental variables in the study of (im)politeness theory.

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**Keywords:** teen talk, pragmatic reversal, (im)politeness, please, taboo vocatives, swear words.

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<p><b>EFL self-concept and its relationship with anxiety levels and international friendships at the start of university studies</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The present study is embedded within the frame of a research project that studies whether multilingual and multicultural classrooms with full English-medium instruction foster the development of transcultural competence of students enrolled. So far, this competence has been looked at from an identitary, intercultural and attitudinal

perspective (Anonymous, 2021). Thus, it seems crucial to add a linguistic perspective from the point of view of speakers who, in a country like Spain, typically believe and are deemed in the social arena as not good speakers of EFL, even if they are. Therefore, their views, perception and evaluation of themselves, namely, their EFL self-concept, needs to be understood and further explored at the time students arrive at university, a moment of personal and academic transition. For this study, we were interested in observing whether personal and contextual variables from previous experiences would play a significant role in students' report of their EFL self-concept. We were interested in exploring the relationship between EFL self-concept levels and EFL anxiety levels, which we assumed would be negatively correlated, based on previous studies (Iwaniec, 2014). We believed that these constructs and their seeming connection would allow us to focus on a range of aspects from a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspective (Mercer, 2011; Marsh et al., 2006), while taking into account a strong affective factor. Our participants were a group of nearly a hundred first-year, local undergraduate students in Barcelona. They were given three questionnaires: 1) a Sociolinguistic Profile Questionnaire (AUTHOR, 2014), which gathered information, among other variables, about their linguistic repertoire and their educational trajectory; 2) an EFL self-concept scale (Iwaniec, 2014) and 3) an EFL anxiety scale (Saito et al, 2018; Iwaniec, 2014; Ryan, 2009). A first correlation matrix between the two scales allowed us to confirm a very strong existing negative correlation between the two of them. Secondly, we performed several lineal regressions in order to understand the strength of predictors in the variance of the EFL self-concept scale. Among our results, we observed that the English Anxiety Scale itself was able to predict more than a 33% of the variance in the EFL self-concept scale, which was raised to a 37% when analyzed in block with the number of international friends that our students reported to have. These results seem to suggest that students views of themselves seem to depend on a moderate level of English Anxiety and less so, but to a certain extent as well, on the number of international friends they have made over the years. All these quantitative data were completed by means of interviews, in which we asked students about their insights regarding the relationship between having more international friends and feeling more at ease with their abilities in English. Further research will be conducted in the future by means of more quantitative data, and the study will be replicated with a bigger sample in order to confirm the insights gained from these results.

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**Keywords:** EFL self-concept; Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence; international friends; undergraduate students; quantitative study.

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<p><b>Enregisterment and the Nineteenth-Century Representation of South-Western Speech: Two Examples (paper)</b></p>
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**Abstract**

The massive migratory waves provoked by the Industrial Revolution were behind the clash between countryside dialect forms of English and the growing standardised speech of the capital. This situation caused a desire for self-improvement and eradication of dialects to conceal one's humble origins. Literature did a fine job at portraying the dissimilarities between social classes in linguistic terms, and more often than not served to stereotype specific forms of speech. At the same time, dialect levelling motivated by the standardization and the spread of education, along with social mobility sparked fears that the so-called natural English (Ellis 1869-89, pt. IV, pp. 1243-4) could be lost. As a response, the literary market embraced an increasing number of works where representations of provincial speech were included with a view to honouring rather than censuring contemporary dialects and identities. Literary representations of dialect have been employed in the past few years as a valuable source to examine dialect enregisterment, which Agha (2005) defines as the "processes whereby distinct forms of speech come to be socially recognized (or enregistered) as indexical of speaker attributes by a population of language users" (38). Whilst enregisterment has been mostly examined with regard to varieties of Northern English (see Beal 2009, Cooper 2013, Ruano-García 2012), little attention has been yet devoted

to the dialects of the Southwest of England despite the fact that it is a region of linguistic interest due to its distinctive features.

This paper explores the representation of south-western dialect speech in Walter Raymond's *'Love and Quiet Life' Somerset Idylls* (1894) and George Ford's *Postle Farm* (1899). I will undertake a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the linguistic choices documented in both works, which I will scrutinize against the catalogue of south-western features provided by Wakelin (1986), Ihalainen (1994), Görlach (1999) and Wagner (2004), and the descriptions and metacommentary on the dialect circulated in contemporary works such as F. T. Elworthy's *The Dialect of West Somerset* (1875) and Sarah Hewett's *The Peasant Speech of Devon* (1892). Attention will be paid to phonological features like the voicing of initial fricatives (zee 'see') and grammatical constructions like pronoun exchange, e.g. *Her be my mum* 'She is my mum'. The results of the analysis indicate that representations like Raymond's and Ford's worked to enregister salient dialect forms such as those mentioned at a time of intense dialect writing that aimed to preserve regional speech before it was lost.

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**Keywords:** enregisterment; literature; dialect; South-western.

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## Verbal alternations and the role of information structure in their typology

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**Abstract**

Argument structure alternations have been a crucial area of investigation in generative linguistics since its beginning, carrying implications for our understanding the relation between the lexicon and syntax (Levin 1993; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005; see also Ramchand 2013 for a general overview). In discussing alternations such as Double Object Constructions as in (1), there have been two views.

- (1) a. John has given a present to Mary.  
b. John has given Mary a present.

On the one hand, proponents of the derivational paraphrases view often take the position that one of the alternating frames derives from the other (Larson 1988, 2014; Aoun and Li 1989; Baker 1997; Antoniuk 2020); on the other hand, the proponents of the non-derivational view assume that the two constructions encode different semantic relations and hence they should be encoded as two different frames (Jackendoff 1990, Pesetsky 1995, Harley 1995).

In this talk, I intend to add information structural factors to the discussion and explore the available basic verb patterns in contexts where no previous shared information is presumed (broad focus or all-sentences focus), which may be useful as diagnostic of the derived or non-derived nature of a given verbal alternation (Jiménez-Fernández & Rozwadowska 2017; Jiménez-Fernández 2009; Cépeda & Cyrino 2020). I discuss two alternations in English (and Spanish), namely Dative and Locative alternations. English Locative alternation shows two patterns, which are acceptable as all-focus sentences, thereby standing as possible replies to open questions such as *What happened?* As illustrated in (2):

- (2) a. John loaded wood on to the cart.  
b. John loaded the cart with wood.



I examine the different discourse interpretations of the two alternates and suggest a non-derived nature of the two instantiations of these verbs. On the contrary, English Dative alternation exhibits derivational properties from a discourse perspective in that only the pattern /DP + dative PP/ (1a) of the two alternates can be a fully acceptable sentence as broad focus. In a nutshell, I propose two types of alternates in English (a derivational type and a non-derivational type), for which I find evidence in the notion of scope freezing (Antoniuk 2020).

Following Larson (2014) and Antoniuk (2020), scope freezing supports a derivational approach for (at least some types of) ditransitives. Focusing on the dative alternation, I have claimed that in broad focus contexts, only the prepositional variant is natural (1a). If this is correct, a derivational analysis will be suitable. This is confirmed by the following pair and their scope interpretations:

- (3) a. The teacher gave a present to every student.  $\exists\forall, \forall\exists$   
 b. The teacher gave a student every present.  $\exists\forall, * \forall\exists$

(3a) shows two interpretations. There is one gift that the teacher gave to every student. In addition, for every student there is a potentially different gift that the teacher gave them. However, (3b) exhibits scope freezing since its only reading is that in which one single student is given all the presents. This is evidence in favor of the derivational relation between the two verbal alternates.

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**Keywords:** Verbal alternations; argument structure, information structure; broad focus; scope freezing.

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## Neg-raising and Question Tags in English: An Experimental Pilot Study

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### Abstract

In this paper I investigate how two negation-related phenomena such as Neg-raising and polarity-reversed question tags in English can inform each other's analyses. Neg-raising is a phenomenon according to which (1a) gives rise to the reading in (1b).

- (1) a. I don't *think* that she will attend the meeting. (*think* = Neg-raising predicate).  
b. I *think* that she will not attend the meeting.

While Neg-raising was initially treated as a syntactic phenomenon (Fillmore 1963, Lakoff 1969, Horn 1978; a.o.), with negation being generated in the embedded clause and raising to the matrix, the mainstream analysis shifted to a pragma-semantic one since Bartsch (1973), the main assumption being that that Neg-raising predicates come with an *excluded middle or homogeneity of presupposition*: *think* in (1) presupposes that either one thinks *p* or one thinks that *not p* and, thus, (1a) entails (1b). In addition, the negation surfacing in the main clause is assumed to semantically reconstruct in the embedded.

Yet, any approach to Neg-raising must be able to account for the possibility that a negated Neg-raising predicate licenses a Negative Polarity Item (NPIs), (2), and a Horn-clause, (3), in the embedded clause.

- (2) I don't think that she likes him *one bit*.  
(3) I don't think that *under any circumstances can she find a better job*.

According to Zeijlstra (2018), pragma-semantic approaches can account for (2), but (3) constitutes a strong argument for a syntactic analysis of Neg-raising. Hence, he proposes to reinstall the mainstream pragma-semantic approach assuming that negation is interpreted in the matrix clause and that only when the embedded clause contains an NPI or a Horn-clause does a negation generated in the lower clause raise to

the matrix. Elsewhere, the Neg-raising reading obtains thanks to the predicate's excluded middle.

Following an observation by Horn (2020), who shows that question tags can be anteceded by the embedded clause of a predicate with excluded middle, (4), I experimentally test whether polarity-reversed question tags are sensitive to syntactic material (e.g. the presence/absence of a negation in the antecedent) or to the semantics/pragmatics of the antecedent clause, which is an unsettled question.

(4) I don't think that she likes him, *does she?*

Assuming Zeijlstra's (2018) analysis of Neg-raising, different approaches to question tags make different predictions for the (un)grammaticality of polarity-reversed question tags with negated Neg-raising and Cloud-of-Unknowing (*know, to be convinced of*) predicates in the matrix clause with and without an NPI/Horn-clause in the embedded clause, thus allowing us to deepen our understanding on the nature of the dependency between a question tag and its antecedent. The results of a pilot experiment run with 8 British English speakers robustly support sensitivity of the question tag to the semantics/pragmatics of the antecedent clause, except in those cases where Zeijlstra (2018) proposes that a negation syntactically raises from the embedded clause to the matrix, thus supporting the reinstated pragma-semantic approach to Neg-raising.

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**Keywords:** Neg-raising; polarity-reversed question tags; English.

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## Data and theory hand in hand: Determinants of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis in Modern English

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### Abstract

This paper reports the analysis of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis (PAE; Sag 1976; Warner 1993; Miller 2011; Miller & Pullum 2014) in Modern English through the statistical modelling of the variation between two subtypes of PAE: Verb Phrase ellipsis (VPE) and Pseudogapping (PG) in the Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English (PPCMBE; Kroch et al. 2010). Examples (1) and (2) illustrate, respectively, VPE, which involves the ellipsis of the constituent following the licenser, and PG, where a remnant is kept after the licenser.

- (1) We don't want to postpone the conference, but due to the pandemic we will ~~postpone the conference~~.
- (2) If you don't tell me, you will tell your mum.

The research question addressed here is: what is the nature of the determinants that trigger either VPE or PG in patterns of PAE in English? In order to undertake the statistical analysis of every instance of PAE ellipsis in our data, a query algorithm was designed that relies on the syntactic parsing of PPCMBE (see Author1). This algorithm led to the retrieval of the relevant set of examples of PAE. After manual pruning, the database consisted of 976 and 86 instances of VPE and PG, respectively. Every example where variation between VPE and PG was potentially at work was analysed addressing a number of grammatical, semantic/discursive and processing linguistic predictors. Firstly, among the grammatical predictors of the variation, the actual licenser (*be, have, do, to*, modal auxiliaries), the occurrence of an auxiliary before the licenser, the type of syntactic linking (coordination, subordination) between the antecedent clause and the one containing the ellipsis site either within one clause or across sentences or turns, voice mismatches between the source and the target clauses, and the type of clause (declarative, interrogative, imperative) entered the statistical model. Secondly, as regards the semantic/discursive factors, we investigated the (ana-, cata)phoric connection between the target and its antecedent. Thirdly, the influence exerted by the syntactic (number of IPs) and the structural (number of words) distance between the antecedent clause and the target was also considered a potential

processing determinant. Finally, the genre (speech-related, writing-related or fiction) of the texts was added to the model.

A fixed-effects binary logistic regression model, supported by Random Forests and reduced with no statistically significant loss of explanatory power through the operationalisation of backward stepwise, determined the relative weight of the potential determinants of either VPE or PG in Modern English. The C(concordance) discrimination index (0.899) provided by Random Forests revealed that the definitive model was very good at explaining the variation and, consequently, adequate to the research question. The model revealed that the only determinants that significantly contributed to the variation were, in descending order of importance, those instantiating distance (in IPs and in words) between the antecedent and the target of ellipsis, the licenser, and the type of syntactic connection between the sentence containing the antecedent and the PAE clause. These results were confronted with the findings reported in qualitative and quantitative studies on English PAE (see Author 2020).

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**Keywords:** Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis; statistical determinants; Modern English; corpus-based.

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## In Defence of a Juxtaposition-cum-Ellipsis Analysis of English Hanging Topic Left Dislocations

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### Abstract

Hanging Topics (HTs) such as *Girls<sub>k</sub>, they<sub>k</sub> wanna have fun* (Cyndi Lauper, 1983) commanded the attention of generative linguists from Ross' (1967) seminar work until the advent of cartographies/split-CP analyses (Rizzi 1997 et seq.). Early work showed that HTs are genuinely extra-sentential constituents linked to their accompanying sentence by pragmatic, not syntactic rules (Cinque 1983/1997). This too was the conclusion of functionalist approaches (see Dik 1978; Acuña-Fariña 1995). Under cartography (split CP/left periphery), however, HTs started to be analyzed as high, left-peripheral constituents, but crucially, as intra-sentential phrases on the clausal edge (I refer to these approaches as integrated/monosentential proposals):

- (1) [XP Girls ... [TopicP [FocusP ... [IP/TP they wanna have fun]]]]

I argue instead that HTs should be analyzed as extra-sentential constituents in a different root sentence that paratactically precedes the syntactically complete host sentence (i.e., [CP<sub>1</sub> HT] [CP<sub>2</sub> host sentence]). Given their 'aboutness,' theme-marking character (Radford 2018 and references therein), I submit that the HT is a remnant of a reduced copular sentence juxtaposed to the host sentence, (2) (see Merchant 2004 and Ott 2016 on limited ellipsis):

- (2) [CP<sub>1</sub> ~~the topic/theme is~~ Girls] [CP<sub>2</sub> they wanna have fun]

An analysis of this ilk makes a number of correct predictions regarding the behavior of HTs, in stark contrast to monosentential proposals:

- (i) absence of connectivity (including absence of Binding-Theory Condition B and C violations, as in *Peter<sub>k</sub>, he<sub>k</sub>'s nice* and *The money<sub>k</sub>, where is the money<sub>k</sub>?*, in exactly the same way as pronouns/nominals across unambiguously separate sentences: *I met Peter; he's nice*;
- (ii) lack of canonical agreement (e.g., *Information and tickets<sub>k</sub>, it<sub>k</sub>'s all on the website*) and issues related to pronouns crosslinguistically;
- (iii) case (acc. in English; nom. in Spanish: the case of predicates (i.e., [CP<sub>1</sub> ~~the topic/theme is~~ me/\*I], [CP<sub>2</sub> I don't drive]));

- (iv) prosodic independence, represented by a comma/suspension points in writing:  
*Mary<sub>k</sub>... I still love her<sub>k</sub>;*
- (v) extra-sentential nature, including complementizers in Spanish/Italian, V3 in German, alongside clitic directionality in Bulgarian;
- (vi) insensitivity to islands (e.g., *Peter<sub>k</sub>, I didn't go to London [island because you wanted to marry him<sub>k</sub>]*) and the fact that HTs themselves are islands (Cinque & Rizzi 2010);
- (vii) the possibility of intercalated interjections, as in *Mary, well, \*(she) likes me;*
- (viii) 'interrogative' HTs accompanying non-interrogative sentences (as in *My book<sub>k</sub>? I don't wanna talk about that<sub>k</sub>;*
- (ix) orphaned HTs with no correlate in the attending sentence (Radford 2018, among others) (e.g., *Mikonos, I hate tourist traps;*
- (x) no HTs in right-dislocated positions (e.g., *\*I<sub>k</sub> bought a car, me<sub>k</sub>;*), and
- (xi) hyperdetached HTs (Acuña-Fariña 1995), as in *My son<sub>k</sub>, as I was travelling, believe it or not, we had just had lunch and then went into a shop that sold t-shirts designed by him<sub>k</sub>.*

Overall, the evidence overwhelmingly points to the conclusion that HTs are outside their host sentence. A paratactic analysis like that in (2) captures these properties in a principled fashion without further stipulation, which provides a strong argument in its favor, to the detriment of monosentential/intrasentential accounts, (1).

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**Keywords:** hanging topics; elliptical fragments; parataxis; left periphery; juxtaposition.

<b>Wh&amp;Wh questions in English: A corpus-based perspective</b>
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**Abstract**

Multiple questions with coordinated *wh*-phrases, as that in (1), are attested in many languages, among them English.

(1) Where and when did you meet John?

Although the discussion of this construction in English is relatively frequent, many questions are still open concerning its derivation in the generative framework (Browne 1972, Giannakidou & Merchant 1998, Gračanin-Yuksek 2007, Citko & Gračanin-Yuksek 2013, Whitman 2002, 2005, etc.). One of the reasons for this is the complication derived from the fact that not all the combinations of *wh*-phrases are uniformly accepted by native speakers. Thus, although there is general consensus regarding the acceptability of sentences involving the coordination of two *wh*-adjuncts, as in (1), acceptability judgements become more unstable in the case of so-called mixed coordinations (i.e., *wh*-adjunct & *wh*-argument). An example is shown in (2). Finally, consensus reappears with the coordination of two *wh*-arguments, as in (3), which is generally rejected.

(2) What and where did you eat?

(3) \*What and to whom did you give?

Given this inter-speaker variation, it is sometimes difficult to know for certain which combinations of *wh*-phrases are actually allowed and which restrictions apply to the construction. Where the judgements of native speakers alone could lead to unreliable conclusions, the support of corpora may play an important role. Thus, the frequency with which certain patterns are represented in the corpus may help to draw a more realistic picture of what native speakers are actually doing.

In this talk, I will present the results of a corpus search in progress. My focus will be on the problematic area of mixed coordination to find information in various corpora about the frequency of occurrence of questions with *wh*-subjects and *wh*-objects as one of the conjuncts. Thus, the corpora will be searched for concordances for the following strings: (i) *who and where, who and when, who and how, who and why* and (ii)



*what and where, what and when, what and how and what and why.* The same combinations of *wh*-phrases coordinated by means of *or* and the reverse orderings of all the sequences will be considered as well.

The corpora used for the study are NOW and COCA. The results of each individual search will be classified attending to predicate type as the transitive-intransitive dichotomy has been shown to play a role in the acceptability of the construction. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (4) has been attributed to the fact that *fix* is an obligatorily transitive verb. Notice in this respect, the contrast with (2) above, a sentence headed by the optionally transitive predicate *buy* (see Lewis et. al. 2012 and Larson 2013).

(4) \*What and how did you fix?

I expect that the results of this corpus study will replicate previous findings to a certain extent, but it will also allow to have a clearer idea of the frequency of mixed combinations in real use. Examination of the types of predicates that appear in the sample will also throw light on the constraints that apply to the construction.

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**Keywords:** coordination; multiple questions; corpus; *wh*-argument; *wh*-adjunct.

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### Caracterización de la traducción comercial (inglés-español): dificultades

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#### Abstract

En el contexto internacional, cada transacción comercial conlleva beneficios para más de un sector por el efecto de arrastre en la producción, la comercialización, el transporte, el seguro de la carga y en muchos otros usuarios económicos involucrados (Huesca Rodríguez 2012, 15). Del mismo modo, cada transacción comercial implica unos requisitos documentales asociados a un contrato de compra-venta específico, lo que implica la producción de una tipología textual muy variada (facturas, documentos de transporte, pólizas y certificados de seguros, documentos de pago, documentos aduaneros, etc.) como reflejan las distintas propuestas taxonómicas establecidas para la traducción comercial (Mayoral 2007; AUTOR 2008; Herrero y Román 2014). Teniendo en cuenta que la actividad comercial no es una disciplina aislada, sino que conlleva una tarea interdisciplinar que hace que se produzca una tipología textual muy heterogénea (Mayoral 2007, 33), el objetivo de este trabajo es abordar las principales dificultades a las que se enfrenta el traductor (Nord 1991, 151; Hurtado 2001, 288) de los documentos que generan las distintas operaciones comerciales con el fin de acercarnos a este ámbito de la traducción especializada. La caracterización de estos textos de especialidad se convierte en una tarea difícil ya que debe dar cuenta de la naturaleza compleja del texto en el que se articulan los conceptos especializados (Cabré y Gómez Enterría 2006).

El presente trabajo comienza con una introducción al ámbito de especialidad en el que se destaca la importancia del desarrollo de las competencias textual y temática que incorpora la comprensión de los elementos característicos de la situación comunicativa, en especial los que afectan a las circunstancias de producción. En segundo término, no pueden establecerse las principales dificultades a las que se enfrenta el traductor de textos comerciales, o los elementos que los caracterizan, sin tener en cuenta su condición heterogénea y naturaleza híbrida. Por ello, se abordan aspectos relacionados con el formato del documento mercantil (*short form, long form*) (AUTOR 2008) y se profundiza en cuestiones como la normalización y la hegemonía de la lengua inglesa y del Derecho inglés que dan lugar al internacionalismo y la intraducibilidad (*Incoterms*, normas ISO o códigos internacionales aprobados por

organismos oficiales o instituciones de prestigio). Posteriormente, se tratan aspectos orto-tipográficos como las medidas de los contenedores o el tratamiento de las divisas a nivel internacional, así como aspectos terminológicos (términos de especialidad) y fraseológicos (formulismos y convencionalismos) tanto de los textos en general como de los más representativos del sector, en particular (conocimiento de embarque, factura comercial u orden de pago vía SWIFT). Seguidamente, se dedica un apartado a la diglosia y a otro tipo de dificultades que aparecen de forma recurrente en los documentos mercantiles y que ha de conocer o interiorizar el traductor de este ámbito de especialidad (abreviaturas, acrónimos o elementos no verbales, entre otras). El trabajo se cierra con una serie de conclusiones.

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**Keywords:** traducción comercial; documentos mercantiles; caracterización; lengua franca, dificultades.

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**One espeto de sardinas coming up! On the translation of culinary terms in Costa del Sol restaurant menus into English**

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## Abstract

Much of the image a given territory intends to project outside is associated with its culinary offer. Taking into account the role of gastronomy in the attraction of potential visitors and its close relation to culture, the importance of restaurant menus to promote tourist destinations cannot be denied. In spite of the importance of this type of text with regard to tourist promotion and local economies, it has been highlighted (Fuentes-Luque 2017; Saihong 2018) that menu translation has been neglected in translation studies research.

The present paper aims, in this sense, to analyse the translation solutions adopted to translate the names of dishes and drinks in a bilingual Spanish-English corpus of menus of restaurants in Costa del Sol. Names of dishes may be considered culture-bound terms, which justifies the adoption of an approach focused on the translation of cultural references. The corpus of study, which has been manually compiled by the researcher, contains 80 restaurant menus in Spanish from four localities of Malaga province – Málaga, Torremolinos, Benalmádena, and Marbella – together with their English versions. All in all, 1436 culinary terms in Spanish and their English translations have been analysed. As a result of this analysis, six different translation solutions were identified, ranging from those which are most oriented towards the source culture, such as exoticism or cultural borrowing, to those which are target-culture biased or domesticating, such as cultural transplantation.

The results of the study reveal a tendency to make use of foreignising translation solutions, in Venuti's (1995) terms, or solutions oriented towards the source culture. Apart from linking the target texts to the Andalusian culture with which the dishes are associated, this foreignising tendency may make them more appealing to the target audience. Side by side with this observed tendency, it is also true that translators tried to make sure that the target menus were informative and understandable by the target-language audience. This led them to combine the most source-culture biased translation solutions – like exoticism or cultural borrowing – with other solutions – such as explanation –, or to use translation solutions with no trace of the source language, such as calque or communicative translation. The double-sided function of restaurant menus, persuasive and informative, then, is reflected in the translation solutions adopted to translate the names of dishes and drinks. Moreover, the culture-specificity variable has been found to have an effect on the choice of translation solutions, as proved by the Chi-square test applied to the data. As might be expected, the translation solutions with a source-culture bias are adopted to translate those dish names which are or contain Andalusian or Spanish culture-specific items, such as *espeto de sardinas*, *gazpacho andaluz*, *ajoblanco*, *patatas bravas*, or *paella*.

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**Keywords:** menu translation; Malaga; culture-specific items; Spanish; English.

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<p><b>Richard Fanshawe's <i>To Love Only for Love Sake</i>: Exploring Theatre Translation Methods in pre-Restoration England</b></p>
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### Abstract

In recent decades, the notion of drama translation in seventeenth-century England has experienced an increasing growth of scholarly interest (Loftis 1996; Currell 2016; Author 2009, 2021), with the largest proportion of publications focused on the period between 1660 and 1700. Less attention, however, has been directed to its practice in pre-Restoration times despite its potential appeal to theatre and translation studies.

This paper focuses on English diplomat, poet and translator Richard Fanshawe (1608-1666) and his version of the Spanish court play *Querer por sólo querer* (written by Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza in 1622) as *To Love Only for Love Sake* (1653-1654). The purpose of the study is two-fold: on the one hand, it aims to shed light on the non-verbal agents (personal motivation, literary and performative contexts, patronage) that bear specifically on the translation and reception of the source verse play in England. On the other, it intends to depict the mechanisms that Fanshawe – who was mainly a classical poetry translator – used in order to recreate a platonic love story by a Spanish playwright who was not as well-known as Lope de Vega or Calderón de la Barca.

The analysis shows how the resulting play owes a great deal to Fanshawe's passion for the Spanish literature and culture, but also to the political circumstances he found himself in. Regarding the approach adopted for his English rendition of Hurtado

de Mendoza's play, he retained the Spanishness of the original, as can be perceived in act-division, characterisation, the choice of locations and the preservation of the plot-driving forces. Other aspects, though, were naturalised for the recipient audiences: the original skilful versification partially disappeared, some asides and stage directions were modified or replaced, and rhythm, rhetorical devices and poeticity were fully accommodated to the target dramatic arena.

Even though the book cover of the English printed edition (1670) refers to *To Love Only...* as "written in Spanish" and "paraphrased in English", Fanshawe slightly departs from Dryden's notion of paraphrase (in Steiner 1975, 31), creating a composition closer to Dryden's concept of "imitation". In fact, the alterations present in the target text attempt to combine beauty and fidelity while respecting the theatrical dimension of the original. Consequently, Fanshawe emerges as a poet who leaves behind Caroline translation practice and timidly anticipates successful devices that early-Restoration theatre translators would adopt eventually.

Conclusions demonstrate how Spanish Golden Age drama served as "rewritable" material for English practitioners in mid-seventeenth-century England, hence acting as a trigger for further *comedia* translations for the Anglophone stage in subsequent years.

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**Keywords:** Theatre Translation; Paraphrase; Richard Fanshawe; *To Love Only for Love Sake*.

<b>Retos y Censura en la Traducción de <i>Romeo y Julieta</i>: Macpherson vs. Conejero</b>
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### **Abstract**

Los textos literarios engloban connotaciones sociales, políticas y culturales que exigen soluciones de traducción que sean comprensibles para los lectores de cada época, sin que ello implique una alteración de las ideas que el autor quiso transmitir. No obstante, en muchos casos los traductores no consiguen reflejar correctamente el contenido exacto de un texto literario original, no solo por la necesidad de adaptarlos a los lectores, sino por la censura directa o indirecta a la que se ven sometidos. Esta circunstancia suele producirse, por ejemplo, cuando el texto a traducir incorpora expresiones sensibles relativas al sexo o que utilizan lenguaje obsceno.

Con este punto de partida, este trabajo tiene como objetivo general analizar cómo el entorno en el que un traductor ejerce su actividad profesional influye en la traducción de connotaciones sexuales. Para contrastar la hipótesis de la influencia del entorno en la actividad del traductor, se comparan seis fragmentos extraídos de la tragedia shakesperiana *Romeo y Julieta* en las versiones vertidas al español de Guillermo Macpherson (1880) y Manuel Ángel Conejero (2003) junto a su equipo de traductores procedente de la Fundación e Instituto Shakespeare de Valencia. Se estudian tres cuestiones. Primero, si la traducción de Macpherson altera el sentido original de la tragedia. Segundo, se indaga sobre las posibles causas por las que realiza modificaciones y omisiones en su versión. Tercero, se contrasta si la traducción literaria refleja los cambios sociales. Para alcanzar estos objetivos, se emplea una triple metodología cualitativa que divide el proyecto en tres etapas bien diferenciadas: la elección de los dos traductores pertenecientes a épocas distintas, la identificación de las técnicas de traducción literaria descritas por Hurtado-Albir y Molina (2002) que Macpherson y Conejero aplican, y la verificación de los criterios de textualidad establecidos por De Beaugrande y Dressler (1981) que orientan sus versiones de *Romeo y Julieta*.

Para contextualizar el estudio comparativo, se describe cómo el entorno influye en la traducción de una obra en general, se resume brevemente la historia de las traducciones al español de Shakespeare y se recopilan como antecedentes varios análisis en los que se contrasta las versiones de autores nacionales e internacionales de diversas etapas. Las principales conclusiones apuntan a que el periodo histórico en el



que vive el traductor influye en su labor debido a las condiciones de escritura, la existencia de censuras, la necesidad de adaptarse a las circunstancias culturales del lector y la fama del autor. La versión de Macpherson, caracterizada por sus manipulaciones y variaciones, estaría condicionada por la presencia de la censura literaria de la época o por mantener intacta la gran reputación de Shakespeare en el siglo XIX. Conejero, sin embargo, ofrece una ajustada aproximación sin necesidad de encubrir la vertiente sexual de la tragedia universal.

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**Keywords:** Shakespeare; *Romeo y Julieta*; connotaciones sexuales; Guillermo Macpherson; Manuel Ángel Conejero.

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<b>Formal errors and their impact on the automatic translation of institutional websites</b>
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**Abstract**

In a world immersed in digital information, texts seem to grow increasingly impermanent and brief, while the hypertext makes digital content fragmentary and variable in terms of the length of the *chunks* (Price and Price, 2002) or *textual segments* (Jiménez-Crespo, 2008) that the hypertext presents. As a result, a progressive neglect of formal aspects is spreading through many areas of human communication. The hypertext in some Spanish institutional websites currently exhibits a plethora of formal errors. This not only minimizes the communicative intent for which every text is conceived, but also hinders the functionality that, according to Shepherd and Watters (1998), distinguishes cybergenres from printed texts. The problem acquires yet another twist when it comes to machine translation (MT), since, in many cases, the automatic translation of institutional websites is not preceded by pre-editing neither followed by post-editing services.

Building on previous studies on formal error in the fields of natural language processing (Damerau, 1964; Mitton, 1987), metalexigraphy (Author, 2021) and translation (Williams, 2009; Parra-Galiano, 2017) the aim of this paper is to analyse the repercussion that errata in the Source Text (ST) can bear on the Machine Translation (MT) of institutional websites from Spanish into English.

Our methodology is based on a two-fold approach: on the one hand, we test a model for errata categorization regarding type, frequency, reproduction and severity of lexical errors. We do not study typographical errors, such as the incorrect use of speech marks, question marks, hyphens, bold type, italics, capital letters, etc. Neither do we consider punctuation mistakes. Here, as in previous works, we focus on mistakes made on a lexical level and we distinguish between non-word errors and real word errors. This typology is not based on the psychomotor mechanisms behind the errors, but on the apparent effects observed in the erroneous words. On the other hand, we search for possible errata systems in the ST in order to study how patterns are transferred to the machine-translated text. We consider two hypothesis: a) errata systems in the Translated Text (TT) are similar to those found in the ST; b) new formal errors appear in the TT, where sometimes unintelligible or confusing segments result from the MT.

The conclusions drawn from our study prove the usefulness of formal error analysis, not only to optimize the classification and correction of errors, but also to understand how errata are transferred from one language to another and, therefore, how MT services can be improved. As a practical goal, the portals under study will be notified of the results, so that government-citizen communication via institutional websites can be enhanced to truly serve its functional purpose.

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**Keywords:** Hypertext; formal error; machine translation (MT).

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The porous walls of the domestic in George Saunders's *In Persuasion Nation*

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**Abstract**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, what was originally read as a period of confinement in the relative and varying comforts of our homes, soon turned into a way of life which revealed our intimacy to the outside world. Parts of our homes were seen by hundreds of people via our computer cameras in meetings, classes, seminars and conferences; members of our family —human and non-human animals—became involuntary secondary actors of our activities, etc. In a way, the lockdown, more than stressing the impenetrability of the walls of our homes, showed us how the separation between the inside of our homes and the outside world was thinner than we thought. At the same time that our homes became more public, they also became a sort of self-sustained, autonomous entity from which we could work, shop, and entertain ourselves without the need to engage in the forms of socialization that tended to be associated with those activities. Paradoxically, at the same time that our domestic spaces and private lives were becoming more public than ever, a sort of stage from which we broadcasted our lives to the world, they were also isolating us from the dialogic relationships that shaped our subjectivities before the pandemic. From this perspective, our experience of the lock-down has reinforced the blurring of the distinction between the private and the public, between the domestic and the social that had already emerged from the remoteness of the global structures being paired with the definition of self as a liquid state of constant *becoming* (Bauman “Liquid Arts”, 2007). The exploration of the domestic and of the houses or dwellings where it can be lodged have proven fruitful ways to explore the blurring of said distinctions. George Saunders, in his story collection *In Persuasion Nation* (2017), had already started to explore how the increasing presence of technology, computers, and the virtual in the existence of, at least, a considerable percentage of the Global North had the effect of thinning the walls between privacy and exposure. Houses do not necessarily become the location for domestic experiences of comfort, privacy and safety. Conversely, those experiences can be found in unexpected, sometimes even public, locations. In this paper, I will explore how, in the collection of short stories, Saunders ponders how much of the supposedly secluded and safe experience of our homes is really private and under our control,

prompting a redefinition of the domestic which is not necessarily in need of a house for its expression.

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**Keywords:** George Saunders; *In Persuasion Nation*; Domesticity; Privacy; Exposure.

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## Meaning vs. Technique. Houses in Bernard Malamud's "The Last Mohican"

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### Abstract

Bernard Malamud's "The Last Mohican," one of the thirteen short stories in his collection *The Magic Barrel* (1958)—winner of the 1959 U.S. National Book Award for Fiction— opens with the accidental encounter of two men in Rome. One, Fidelman, is an American Jew from New York. The other, Susskind, is a European Holocaust survivor, "A Jewish refugee from Israel [and] Where else but Germany, Hungary, Poland, Where not?" (1958, 158). After their first meeting, and only through a slow, painful, and indirect process, Fidelman, "a self-confessed failure as a painter" (155) who is in Italy to write a study on Giotto, is paradoxically taught by the peddler Susskind that the true value of the Trecento artist's paintings is not in their technique, but in their meaning. This is illustrated with the fresco "[San]Francesco che dona il mantello a un povero" and its message that truly caring for others should be expressed in giving in empathy (that is, giving what the other person needs) instead of giving in charity (giving what one wants to give). But if empathy is, according to specialists (Roman Krznaric, Amy Coplan, Peter Goldie, Simon Baron-Cohen), best defined not scientifically, but by the popular expression "putting oneself in somebody else's shoes", the "t'shuva"—or moral epiphany resulting in an affective turn—to empathy in this story is triggered by putting oneself in somebody else's *house*. Fidelman only realizes that Susskind *needs* when the American sneaks into the European's uninhabitable domestic space, "an overgrown closet containing bed and table [...] a pitch black freezing cave [...] not more than an ice-box someone probably had lent the refugee to come in out of the rain" (180) with no heat, light, or door lock; a visit from which Fidelman "never fully recovered" (181). Conversely, and whereas the story never leaves Rome, the readers learn that Fidelman, originally from the Bronx, lives now in New York "State, not city" (174) and that his family own property in

Levittown. Malamud's choice of setting for Fidelman's American domesticity is anything but innocent. The blueprint on which the American suburb has been modeled, Levittown was planned as a segregated community where only whites and assimilated Jews could buy property and live, and where owners signed in their contracts when buying that they would not rent to Black people. The story thus contrasts Susskind's Roman "dwelling", the result of the horrors of the policies of denial of ethnic diversity in mid-twentieth century Europe, with Fidelman's American house, which, literally, builds upon those policies. This paper reads Malamud's story focusing on the domestic through notions such as Dolores Hayden's "cohesive community" (1979, 42) and "domestic segregations" (2003, 70), Zygmunt Bauman's residential "mixophobia" (31), and Nancy Rosenblum's "homophily" (126), terms coined to denounce those policies of domestic homogeneity and rejection of communitarian pluralism that deny the fact that, as Malamud claimed, referring to the universality of human vulnerability in the twentieth century, "Every man is a Jew though he may not know it" (1968; 13).

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**Keywords:** "The Last Mohican"; Bernard Malamud; Domestic Space Studies; Empathy; Homophily.

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<b>Zombified (B)orders in Bao Phi's "Revolution Shuffle"</b>
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**Abstract**

In his short story “Revolution Shuffle” Vietnamese American author Bao Phi recounts the apocalyptic decline of the U.S. during a zombie epidemic. Phi addresses the (ab)uses of armed violence during the outbreak and connects them to the exclusion and structural segregation of racialized communities in the country, binding present and past with a not-so-imaginary future. The story opens with a conversation between the protagonists. Indulging rather nostalgically in memories from the past, the two of them recall cultural objects that remind them of home. They speak of Phở and its pronunciation. Their retrospective imaginings are tinged with the presence of pain and violence too, as the characters remember the blaming and brutal lynching of people of color at the start of the epidemic. They describe how these abuses resulted in the internment of disempowered communities in fortified camps, operating the machinery that would keep rabid zombies away under a premise of state protection. In “Revolution Shuffle,” Phi challenges the assumption that the nation-state protects the integrity of its citizens and instead suggests that it legitimizes abuse and the policing of *some bodies* (Ahmed 2000) under a false promise of preservation and safety. Through the illusion of shelter, the nation imposes dialectical borders, drawing lines of difference that legitimize cruelty and exploitation. In this sense, Phi’s selection of the zombie plot is of special relevance, as the zombie myth codifies racial strangeness and political alienation: it emerged as an answer to historical and colonial violence (Luckhurst 2015; Canavan 2017) and solidified in visions of the racial Other as “a threat and a source of terror” (Bishop 2010). In Phi’s story, the zombie imaginary is expanded to include experiences of containment that recall neoslavery, the mass incarceration crisis, and internment camps. Even as the author searches for places of belonging for his protagonists, he only finds insecure locations that reflect “interiorized” exclusion (Derrida and Cixous 2006). For Phi, the zombie is a metaphor for political discrimination and, following Deleuze and Guattari, it is read in relation to capital and to the im/possibility of cultural death: a “mortified schizos, good for work, brought back to reason” (1983). “Revolution Shuffle” denounces, then, the rigid state apparatuses that administer inhospitality and exclusion under a fantasy of hospitable reception, problematizing notions of state protection and interpreting the border in its dialectical and epistemological forms. This paper proposes a reading of Phi’s story in the light of recent spatial and hospitality theory. It centers on Phi’s speculative account of U.S. biopolitics and interprets his depiction of zombies, zombified spaces and dystopian cultures as an exploration of the spatiality of race in the U.S. It argues that Phi challenges prefigured notions of selfhood, nationhood and homeness, considering affiliation for those who always move at the margin between inclusion and exclusion. Ultimately, it delves into the characters’ yearning for a secure location that, however transiently, can escape the tyranny of borders—and of their inherent orders—and become a home.

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**Keywords:** Ethnic American literature; zombie; space; borders, home.

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<p><b>Charting the Streets of Washington, D.C.: Urban Inhospitality in Edward P. Jones's <i>Lost in the City</i></b></p>
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**Abstract**

In *Lost in the City* (1992), Edward P. Jones walks down memory lane to map the city that saw him grow up, Washington, D.C. This collection of short stories, spanning from the 1950s to the 1980s, documents what being a Black resident of the capital city of the USA is like. Jones offers a glimpse into an ever-changing yet still cityscape, whose violence morphs into different quotidian reiterations that echo the decades-long shadow of crime and harshness hanging over the city. Through a kaleidoscopic narrative, readers are embraced by a choir of never-heard-before voices. Women are at the heart of these soulful stories. Covert forms of hostility towards them play out and are unveiled in both private and public spaces.

The main aim of this paper is to examine how Black women's experience of the city is mediated by race and gender. The investigation advances an intervention on space to peel away the many layers of violence that Black women embody. The



framework that illuminates this research is space theory. The capital city is read through Henri Lefebvre's notions of "representation of space" and "representational space" (1991, 33-39) with a view to discerning dominant spatial discourses of power and the potentiality of the spatial arena to challenge the latter. Washington, D.C. is revealed as an androcentric and orderly city that paralyses women's freedom and access to certain spaces. To respond to the erasure of women from this urban landscape, the study brings to the fore the geographies inhabited and produced by the racialised and gendered subjects as these are, according to Katherine McKittrick, those "at stake in the production of space and who have paradoxically been missing from several geographic analyses" (McKittrick 13-14).

Everyday life is negotiated in different locales as the hostility of the metropolis permeates the latter and hampers social and spatial mobility. The vulnerability of the Black women appears amplified by the resulting geographies of gendered and racialised violence. The collection of short stories suggests an urban landscape that imposes a stasis that anchors women to a geography of violence, where spatial, racial and gendered forms of hostility blend and blur. The study also seeks to examine the counter-practices that are adopted to withstand the ubiquitous reach of this urban threat. The women try to find protection and exert resistance by holding on to familiar spaces, communities and memories. In addition, following De Certeau's urban analysis (1984), walking is examined as a potentially freeing practice as it becomes an exercise of remembrance that allows characters to temporarily defy estrangement. The attempts to create a more welcoming city are hampered by a brutal hostility that renders every spatiality inhospitable and immobilising.

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**Keywords:** Washington, D.C.; walking; topographies; gendered violence; urban hostility.

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**From Washington to Trump: Revolutionary Literature, Contemporary Politics, and the Myth of the Un-American Monster**

Álvaro Albarrán Gutiérrez

**Abstract**

Revolutions, such as the one the Thirteen Colonies experienced by the end of the eighteenth century, reinvent societies. As the former “British colonists” gave way to the newborn “American people,” redrawing the lines that had traditionally bound the British and North American communities became one of the prime challenges facing poets and pamphleteers who set out to devote their efforts to securing popular support for the revolutionary cause. Not surprisingly, in this context, monstrosity became a particularly recurrent locus for self- and other-reflection within revolutionary circles, where anti-British sentiment gradually came to be expressed through a deliberate exercise of other-rejection or, rather, vilification, in which the American people’s foes, more often than not, were increasingly depicted as an inherently monstrous community. In recent decades, monstrosity, too, has become one of the central foundations underpinning a collection of nationalistic and populist discourses, associated with the American far-left and right, and predicated on an underlying endeavor to demarcate a (presumably) legitimate national ingroup from an (allegedly) illegitimate outgroup. Much like the revolutionary generation, numerous political and social commentators at present conjure up images of monstrosity as a primary means to articulate distinct spaces of collective belonging, and to discriminate those entitled to remain part of the broader national community from those who, purportedly, remain a threat to the same.

Drawing from different anthropological and sociological contributions to the study of self- and other-configuration, the aim of this paper is to examine how monstrosity has been instrumentalized within both revolutionary and contemporary political propaganda as a privileged site for the articulation of an emerging politics of fear, founded upon a markedly populist bias, and directed towards the legitimation of a nationalistic project. In general terms, the paper will analyze a selection of representative writings by both revolutionary and contemporary political writers and commentators, ranging from Philip Freneau, Phillis Wheatley, Thomas Paine, and Mercy Otis Warren, to Tuckler Carlson, Ann Coulter, Bernie Sanders, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. By adopting a comparative methodology of analysis, this paper will endeavor to evince how revolutionary poets and pamphleteers, on the one hand, and contemporary pundits and commentators, on the other hand, aim to rally popular support for their respective causes by appealing to an eminently monstrous imagery in which the absence of “Americanness” is equated to the absence of numerous basic human traits. Ultimately, this paper will prove how revolutionary and contemporary propagandists in America appeal to a set of traditional monstrous motifs to advance

their particular political and social agendas, rendering a collection of groups and communities, within and beyond national borders, as the dehumanized foil of a contrarily idealized American people.

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**Keywords:** Self-Configuration; Identity; Otherness; Monstrosity; Populism.

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<b>Marcie Rendon's Cash Blackbear Series and the New Indigenous Heroine</b>
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### Abstract

This paper is set to analyze White Earth Anishinaabe Marcie R. Rendon's mystery novels *Murder on the Red River* (2017) and *Girl Gone Missing* (2019) as relevant to account for the most recent developments of Native American literatures. The Cash Murder Mystery Series—soon to be enlarged with the forthcoming third volume, *Sinister Graves* (2022)—is an illustrative example of the good health and growing diversity of Indigenous writing since the beginning of the Native American Renaissance in the late 1960s. Somewhere in-between a more classical return to

tradition and the most innovative forms of Indigenous futurism, Rendon's novels manage to do something new and interesting by reappropriating and parodying old forms and themes. These texts' main merit may not be about an original plot or a subtle weaving of Anishinaabe traditions into the narrative. Yet, they show an unquestionable strength in the creation of a memorable main character, the unifying force of the novels.

It is 1970 and Renee Blackbear, aka "Cash," is nineteen years old and lives in Fargo, North Dakota. Removed from her family at three, she spent years in various foster homes, where she suffered from different forms of abuse. Sheriff Wheaton, her guardian and friend, helped her out of the foster care system and allowed her to live an independent life. She now drives trucks for local farmers, plays pool and pays the rent with her winnings, and has even enrolled in college. Cash is broken, a misfit: she is lonely, drinks too much beer, chain-smokes and protects herself from pain by pretending she does not care about anything or anyone. There is a very real explanation for what happens to her, and Rendon explains how the removal of Indigenous children, first in the boarding school system and later in non-Indian homes or institutions, involved 25 to 35% of Native children on a national level, even higher in some reservations like her own (Rendon 2017, "Author's Note"). This was stopped by the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 but the transgenerational trauma and its effects are ongoing. Cash, however, is also smart and intuitive, she has a special connection to the natural landscape of the Red River Valley between North Dakota and Minnesota, and she has dreams where she leaves her body in the traditional Anishinaabe manner, which allows her to collaborate with Wheaton to solve various murder cases.

The text thus presents us with the story of Cash's abuse and transgenerational trauma and her resilience, rooted in Anishinaabe identity. The explicit combination of vulnerability and strength in her characterization makes her both special and just as everyone else. Cash is a heroine that we do not expect, in the tradition of other (Western, male) heroes, and a model for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to learn. For those who know her, she represents hope; for readers, she offers another unusual, albeit fresh and interesting example of Indigenous literary resurgence.

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**Keywords:** Indigenous trauma; vulnerability; Native American resurgence; Anishinaabe literature; Native American heroines.

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**The Macro and Micro Levels of Historical Narratives in Louise Erdrich's *The Night Watchman***

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**Abstract**

Unlike her earlier fiction, Louise Erdrich's latest novel, *The Night Watchman* (2020), could be easily classified as a work of historical fiction. As the author acknowledges in an afterword to the novel, she was inspired by the figure of her grandfather, Patrick Gourneau, and the voluminous letters that he wrote in the mid-1950s as a chairman of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Advisory Committee. These were troubling times for many Native American tribes because the US Government, by means of the House Concurrent Resolution 108, was trying to "emancipate" Indigenous people from their lands and tribal affiliations. Although the resolution intended, allegedly, to free a number of tribes from Federal supervision, the true intention of the government's plan was in fact a unilateral abrogation of earlier treaties and a complete termination of the tribes' rights. The protagonist of Erdrich's novel, Thomas Wazhashk, is based on her recollections of her beloved grandfather who spent the last years of his life writing letters to politicians in Washington "in an effort to save his tribe from termination" (Urrea). In this sense, it could be argued that *The Night Watchman* is more overtly political than any of Erdrich's earlier works of fiction, as the legislative history (of the "Termination period," 1953-1968) and the congressional battles resulting from it loom large over the horizon. However, despite this interest in the macro structures of historical evolution, this paper intends to show that, as is usually the case with Erdrich's novels, the story remains very much focused on the micro narratives of the ordinary folks living on the Turtle Mountain Reservation. While the reader could definitely think of this book as an act of political resistance, the author seems particularly engrossed in smaller concerns such as how to make ends meet, how to hold a family together or how to win somebody's heart.

This paper aims to show how Erdrich succeeds in blending the two levels of historical discourse—macro and micro—by never losing sight of the interconnectedness between the events and dynamics taking place at both levels. Scholars such as Lyotard and White or, more recently, de Vries and Sewell have

discussed at some length the intricacies of those interconnections. In Erdrich's novel, those intricacies are soon observable in the two main plots of the narrative: Thomas Wazhashk's struggle for tribal survival and his niece's, Patrice Paranteau's, efforts to keep her dysfunctional family afloat. Although apparently running in parallel throughout the book, several points of convergence will be unearthed in the analysis.

Most reviewers of the novel have underlined that, besides the harmonious comingling of modern realism and Native spirituality, what is best in the book is the incredibly humane and sympathetic rendition of characters who may be more or less praiseworthy in the history of the tribe, but are presented in all cases as round and complex human beings.

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**Keywords:** Historical Narratives; Native Americans; Louise Erdrich; *The Night Watchman*; Macro and Micro Levels.

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<b>Liberty and Equality in US Political Speeches</b>
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### Abstract

In political speeches, a rich repertoire of discursive mechanisms deployed, such as the positive self and the negative strategies of presentation of the other, serve to influence audiences. However, the notoriety of this genre goes beyond its rhetorical and persuasive impact. These speeches are brief and encapsulated, but quite revealing and eloquent, statements of the politicians' mentalities and their conception of fundamental values and principles.

In this paper, the main question to be answered is how the different US presidents have understood and in turn expressed some of the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence through history in their inaugural addresses, in which they present their thoughts and objectives for their own terms of office, according to the socio-political, economic, cultural, and religious circumstances they have to cope with in every historical situation.

For all this, an ex-post descriptive-relational study has been carried out about the most frequent references to the two principal rights written in the Declaration of Independence: liberty and equality. We have analysed the frequency and use of these concepts in the different inaugural addresses given by the presidents of the United States of America, from George Washington (1789) to John Biden (2021). Questions such as what has been the lexical-semantic evolution of these concepts along US history as reflected in the presidential inaugural addresses, and how these have developed in relation to the political, social, and economic situations of the diverse periods along US history have been tackled.

The methodology adopted for this purpose is corpus-driven. Based on robust statistical measures without any preconceived hypothesis we have automatically found in the texts of the speeches the keywords related to these two concepts appearing in the first propositions of the US Declaration of Independence. While corpus methods are widely used in linguistics (McEnery & Hardie, 2012; Biber, Conrad & Reppen, 1998), including gender analysis (Baker, 2012), we have used the NVivo software to generate a list of key words ranked by their keyness, i.e., the words that are related to the lemma of the four concepts most frequently used in our study corpus.

The conclusion we expect to reach is that differences in chronology and ideology have a direct relationship with the use of the concepts of equality and liberty in US political discourse and society in general when we look at the inaugural addresses from an evolutionary perspective.

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<p><b>Un imaginario transnacional: el Oeste norteamericano en la literatura española – (Round table)</b></p>
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**Abstract**

El principal objetivo de esta mesa redonda es analizar la representación del Oeste norteamericano y su mitología en la literatura española. La mesa redonda es, en primer lugar, el reflejo de la creciente atención crítica hacia la dimensión transnacional del Oeste de los EE.UU. y su literatura (ver, por ejemplo, el número monográfico que la revista *Western American Literature* dedicó en 2019 a la proyección global del Oeste norteamericano en la literatura: "Writing the Global Western: Circulations and Transformations of the American West in World Literature"). Nuestro análisis comenzará con una visión panorámica de la presencia del Oeste norteamericano en la literatura española, una literatura que fue pionera en representar este territorio ya que no debe olvidarse que los primeros testimonios escritos sobre el Oeste nos los proporciona Álar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca en su célebre crónica colonial *Naufragios y comentarios* (1542). De hecho, las historias literarias sobre el Oeste de los EE.UU. publicadas en aquel país durante las últimas décadas (ver, por ejemplo, *The Literary West: An Anthology of Western American Literature*, editada por Thomas J. Lyon, 1999, o



*The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the American West*, editada por Steven Frye, 2016) reconocen explícitamente que los orígenes de la literatura escrita sobre el Oeste norteamericano no se sitúan en los diarios en inglés de Lewis y Clark (*The Journals of Lewis and Clark*, 1804-1806), sino que se remontan a los relatos de los primeros exploradores españoles de aquel territorio (Cabeza de Vaca, Fray Marcos de Niza, Pedro Font, Gaspar de Villagrà...).

A pesar de esa temprana vinculación entre el Oeste norteamericano y la literatura española y del impacto indudable que el mito del Oeste tiene entre los autores españoles de los siglos XX y XXI, tanto en el ámbito de la narrativa popular como entre autores canónicos como Ramón J. Sender o Camilo José Cela, hasta fechas bien recientes no se ha prestado mucha atención ni por parte de la crítica ni por el mundo académico a la representación del imaginario del Oeste en la literatura española. Posiblemente una de las causas sea el hecho de que hasta fechas bien recientes la versión literaria del Oeste se ha identificado en España casi exclusivamente con el subgénero de las novelas de aventuras de bolsillo, orientadas a un consumo masivo y caracterizadas por la repetición de argumentos, temas y escenarios del universo wéstern más estereotípico. Ciertamente, la calidad literaria de buena parte de las novelas del Oeste escritas en castellano originariamente y distribuidas de forma mayoritaria en los quioscos españoles durante las décadas de los cuarenta a los setenta no puede considerarse precisamente como la característica principal de estas obras. Sin embargo, su condición de narrativa popular no debe convertirse en un obstáculo para su estudio, al igual que sucede en los EE.UU., donde en las últimas décadas la literatura popular del Oeste cada vez recibe más atención por parte de la crítica especializada y los ámbitos académicos. Además, el protagonismo de la novela del Oeste en su versión más popular en España durante las citadas décadas no puede hacernos caer en el error de considerar que el Oeste en la literatura española se reduce únicamente a un período concreto o a un género determinado. En efecto, desde el relato pionero de Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca el Oeste ha conocido múltiples versiones y representaciones en la literatura española y en esta mesa redonda se analizarán algunas de dichas versiones del Oeste en esta literatura, tanto en su vertiente clásica como en su dimensión revisionista.

Tras esta visión panorámica del papel del Oeste en la literatura española, la mesa redonda incluirá el análisis de la novela *Los hijos del desierto* (1876) de Esteban Hernández y Fernández y su vinculación a distintas formas de colonialismo. Descrita por algunos como el primer wéstern escrito en la península por un autor español, la novela de Hernández y Fernández representa un claro contrapunto a algunos de los rasgos que van a definir este género en épocas posteriores. De hecho, en su forma, la novela se asemeja más a un diario de viaje y aventuras que a las típicas ficciones de conflictos entre indios y vaqueros, *outlaws* y *sheriffs* que dominan el paisaje del

wéstern. No sólo eso, sino que puestos a decidir de qué lado se decantan los afectos del autor con respecto a la contienda que están librando las tribus nativas y el gobierno de los Estados Unidos –así como las oleadas de pioneros que se lanzan a la conquista del oeste–, es evidente que Hernández y Fernández se alinearía más con los intereses e inquietudes de los primeros que con las conductas mostradas por los segundos. Y, sin embargo, a pesar de la indudable preocupación que el autor muestra por el devenir de los pawns, los delaware o los comanches, resulta también evidente que los dos protagonistas españoles de la novela y sus acompañantes hacen gala durante sus aventuras de unas actitudes y comportamientos que no difieren, en lo sustancial, de los mostrados por otros colonos de ascendencia anglo. En este sentido, aunque es obvio que las intenciones últimas del Sr. Marín y Ricardo no son las mismas que las de los pioneros provenientes de otras partes del país, sí se asemejan a ellos en la utilización de ciertas prácticas (de caza, comercio, mediación, dominio, etc.) que resultan típicas de diferentes tipos de colonización. Apoyándonos en las ideas de teóricos de este fenómeno como Nancy Shoemaker, Patrick Wolfe o Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, esta parte de la mesa redonda intentará demostrar que la novela de Hernández y Fernández, a pesar de mostrarse más afín a algunos de las inquietudes de los pueblos nativos, sigue mostrando elementos y dinámicas fácilmente reconocibles como pertenecientes a distintos paradigmas de colonización (desde el extractivo y el comercial hasta el romántico y de asentamiento). En último término, la novela de Hernández y Fernández muestra algunos rasgos atípicos e innovadores en la narrativa sobre el oeste norteamericano, pero también sucumbe a los preceptos sobre la colonización (ver Cooper o Audubon) que emergen en buena parte de las novelas que tienen lugar en la frontera americana.

A continuación, la mesa redonda se centrará en la literatura española contemporánea, comenzando por el análisis de *Nocilla Dream*, obra escrita por Agustín Fernández Mallo en 2007. Se trata de una novela compleja y con impacto en la tradición literaria española más reciente. En su momento, fue celebrada por su capacidad de innovación. Una de las innovaciones que más fue subrayada por la crítica fue la mezcla de literatura y ciencia, el rigor académico que se advertía en algunos pasajes de la novela, destacando, por ejemplo, las referencias a la teoría del rizoma de Gilles Deleuze y Felix Guattari. Y es precisamente esa teoría la que nos acerca al principal interés en esta parte de la mesa redonda: examinar esta obra, en tanto en cuanto se puede relacionar con la tradición cultural e histórica del Oeste de los Estados Unidos. Ese mismo rizoma que inspira la trama literaria de *Nocilla Dream* también evoca las exploraciones más recientes y revisionistas del Oeste norteamericano como mito y arquetipo. En otras palabras, la referencia al rizoma nos traslada hasta Neil Campbell y su idea de un Oeste rizomático.

Al mismo tiempo, la novela de Fernández Mallo contiene otras referencias, más superficiales, quizás, que igualmente permiten esgrimirla como un buen ejemplo para observar la larga tradición de diálogo creativo entre el Oeste norteamericano y otras culturas foráneas. De hecho, Fernández Mallo aprovecha el paisaje y la realidad del desierto de Nevada, la ciudad de Las Vegas y otras localizaciones en el mencionado estado, tales como las ciudades de Carson City y Ely, de manera recurrente y significativa. En esta presentación, se examina el uso que se hace del paisaje y la escenografía concreta del Oeste de los Estados Unidos, una elección en absoluto caprichosa. Además, Nevada es una localización muy sugestiva por las consecuencias simbólicas que ha tenido este territorio en el imaginario de los Estados Unidos de América.

La novela de Fernández Mallo revela las implicaciones que comporta la elección del espacio y el empleo de ciertas referencias culturales en la ficción, así como suscita una serie de matizaciones sobre el diálogo entre culturas, la tensión entre los extremos o el enredo posmoderno de la identidad. En cualquier caso, el objetivo final de esta investigación será discernir si, en *Nocilla Dream*, Fernández Mallo contribuye o no a la revisión posmoderna del mito del Oeste norteamericano.

La parte final de la mesa redonda abordará la representación de las mujeres del Oeste en la literatura española contemporánea, centrandó su análisis en *Pioneras* (2020), de Silvia Coma. Esta novela narra la vida de María Ferrer, joven catalana que en el año 1863 emigra a Nuevo México con su familia en busca de las oportunidades que brinda el "Nuevo Mundo". Sin embargo, a su llegada, y tras la masacre de su familia y el rapto de su hermana por (aparentemente) los indios comanches, María decide salir en su busca con un grupo de buscadores.

La novela, cuyo hilo argumental evoca al wéstern clásico de John Ford, *The Searchers*, sin embargo, presenta un Oeste en el que la vida de las mujeres se encuentra condicionada tanto por los mandatos de una sociedad en la que la frontera entre lo público (lo masculino) y lo privado (lo femenino) está claramente establecida, como por la propia esencia del Oeste, y en particular de la frontera: es un lugar hostil en el que la supervivencia es ardua, y por lo tanto, no apto para mujeres.

*Pioneras*, impregnada de numerosos estereotipos relacionados con una representación clásica y pseudo-mitológica del Oeste, de sus habitantes y de su espacio (tales como la representación del desierto, los nativo-americanos, los buscadores, las mujeres del *saloon* y/o el *sheriff*, entre otros), propone, no obstante, una revisión del papel de la mujer en el Oeste de mediados del siglo XIX. Para ello, presenta unos personajes femeninos que tratan de romper con los roles asignados y forjar su futuro en un espacio sociogeográfico predominantemente masculino. Así, María, protagonista

indiscutible de la novela, quien tendrá que vestirse de hombre para acompañar a los buscadores, demostrará que el Oeste de los cowboys solitarios también puede ser un espacio femenino. Del mismo modo, las mujeres del *saloon* tendrán una voz y un espacio en la novela. Sin embargo, es interesante observar que serán aquellas mujeres que salgan de la norma, tales como las mujeres nativo-americanas y Rosa, hija de María que se convertirá en una fugitiva, quienes experimenten una verdadera vida en libertad, consciente y elegida. Ellas se convertirán, así, en las pioneras de la revisión del mito del Oeste que propone la autora en su novela.

La mesa redonda concluirá con un debate crítico en torno a la interacción entre la mitología fronteriza y una tradición literaria distinta a la norteamericana, estimulando la participación de la audiencia con referencias y preguntas en torno a la huella del Oeste en diferentes autores españoles y al proceso de revisión del imaginario del wéstern clásico. Se trata de un proceso que incluye una serie de trasvases temáticos y formales con otros géneros literarios y el creciente protagonismo de grupos, temas y minorías habitualmente relegados al olvido en la literatura del Oeste más convencional.

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**Keywords:** Oeste norteamericano; literatura española; mitología fronteriza; revision; transnacional.

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**Abstract**

Neal Stephenson's *Cryptonomicon* (1999) is a science fiction novel that narrates two different stories in two different time periods. In the first plotline, a group of characters try to decipher the Enigma code used by the German army for their military communications during the WWII. They belong to a secret intelligence unit of the British government, unknown not only to the general population, but also to most of the military structure. The second storyline is set at the end of the 20th century, when two entrepreneurs run a startup that will eventually create a data haven in the fictional Sultanate of Kinakuta. This haven will be available to be used by anybody, and will protect its content from any government meddling.

It is the goal of this paper to explore the novel in search of the tensions created between secrecy held by the state and individual secrets, and to discuss how these secrets can be read from the perspective of contemporary secrecy studies.

*Cryptonomicon* approaches the controversial issue of secrecy from the perspective of the state and the individual. On the one hand, the plotline that takes place during the war period explores the necessity of the political secret, as defined by Horn (2011), in order to save human lives. The deciphering of the Enigma code by the top-secret government unit that is in charge of the task is key in order to oversee the Nazi strategic movements and win the war. Political secrecy collides with the idea of the transparency society stated by Byung-Chul Han, in which secrets, particularly state ones, are loaded with negative connotations. As Robertson points out, "Although secrecy is neither good nor bad, there is a presumption against the legitimacy of collective secrecy, especially secrecy associated with the exercise of power" (1999, 13).

The plot concerning the creation of the data haven, on the other hand, leads us to focus on the idea of individual secrecy as a way of "controversary dissidence" (Wills, 28) against the total transparency system. The use of a data haven that resists the interference of any government can be considered as a symbol of individual resistance against the state, and a way of dealing with secrecy as an essential part of democracy and personal freedom. As Han puts it forward, "The society of transparency is not a society of trust, but a society of control" (2015, vii).

All in all, *Cryptonomicon* proposes several topics in which secrecy confronts the transparency society and is necessary for both the survival of the state and its citizens, and as a non-negotiable part of the individual freedom, necessary to understand democracy in its plenitude.

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**Keywords:** Secrecy; democracy; state; Neal Stephenson; *Cryptonomicon*.

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<p><b>Cartographies of inclusion/exclusion and contested belongings in Raquel Cepeda's <i>Bird of Paradise: How I became a Latina</i></b></p>
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### Abstract

In a globalized world where the number of displaced people is increasing exponentially new debates have emerged around the ways in which people on the move need to negotiate and reformulate their sense of identity, citizenship and (non)belonging. Permeable borders and hybridized identities have also sparked in diasporic individuals the desire to explore contradictory positionings regarding identity and belonging within unstable spaces. As bordering processes proliferate, both on the fringe of nation-states and within the host territory, there is a need to re-examine the impact of a politics of space that, by setting boundaries that result in urban ghettos, reveals serious shortcomings in the ethics of hospitality. These migrant sites (Kandiyoti 2009), demarcated by "ethnic borders" (Balibar 2004), not only unveil the ethnocentric perspective of a host who is eager to impose on their guests restrictions that stigmatize them culturally or racially, but also raise serious identitarian issues among ethnoracialized populations. In such context, constructions of belonging, which often reflect a yearning for recognition and inclusion, are articulated around the

segmentation of urban space, the loyalty to a particular ethnic group or neighbourhood and the host country's politics of hospitality. As a result, younger generations of Latinas/os are writing narratives of identity that explore the continuous crossing of borders experienced by outsiders navigating through the threshold of invisibility and (non)belonging. By focusing on the cartographies of inclusion and exclusion deployed within the inside, barriocentric narratives help visualize the oppressive side of hospitality and provide a deep insight into the distressful experiences associated to placelessness, othering and belonging. Raquel Cepeda's *Bird of Paradise* (2013), a memoir depicting "contested experiences of belonging" (Davis et al. 2018), reveals the myriad of mechanisms used by the host country to selectively filter and classify individuals by race or ethnicity, thus creating different statuses of inclusion or belonging within the same political space. By shedding light on the ways in which citizenship and belonging are shaped and contested in migrant sites, the author provides invaluable insights on the filtering mechanisms, grids of power structures and multiple borders mapping urban social space. This paper will explore the frameworks of differential inclusion (Mezzadra and Neilson 2012) that crystallize within the new borders erected in the core of great cities, where immigrants are relegated to impoverished ghettos in which minority communities are hierarchically stratified. Moreover, as this memoir reveals, the concept of differential inclusion is clearly connected to the politics of belonging in so far as it highlights the identitarian tensions that weave through the contemporary diasporic experience. In her novel, Cepeda poses relevant ontological questions that go beyond the clear-cut distinction between inclusion and exclusion by pointing to a politics of belonging that establishes different degrees of inclusion and citizenship. It is my contention to analyse how Cepeda depicts the bordering processes involved in the hierarchization of social space in New York city as well as to scrutinize the ways in which Dominicans and other Latinos struggle to construct, negotiate and contest their (non)belonging in a hostile context.

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**Keywords:** Inclusion/exclusion; contested belongings; ethnic borders; mapping of space; (non)belonging.

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**Intersecting Mental Health and Climate Change in Contemporary US Fiction: The  
Case of *Bewilderment* (2021)**

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**Abstract**

Set in the present capitalogenic climate crisis, Richard Powers' most recent work, *Bewilderment* (2021), follows the story of Theo, an astrobiologist, and Robin, a neurodivergent child with a great sensitivity towards the natural world. In the novel, technological and digital advances, the "race for priority" (Powers 2021, 43), and the constant need for instant gratification do little to help Robin's desire for "all sentient beings [to] be free from needless suffering" (Powers 2021, 24). In Powers' text, climate change is not presented as the backdrop of the story, nor as a simple concern or preoccupation of the characters. Rather, climate change and current damage to the environment constitute a trigger for Robin's mental health issues. In my paper I argue that *Bewilderment* does not only raise mental health awareness by resisting the labelling and stock categorization that frequently accompany notions of disability, it also allows for the character to become and intersectional site of functional and environmental vulnerabilities. For this reason, in my paper I aim to combine the critical frameworks of disability and ecocriticism. My main objective is to analyze how Robin's neurodivergence is not constructed as a literary device on which narrative prosthesis relies on (Mitchell and Snyder 2000), but is instead presented as an experience of socio-political implications inserted within the wider frame of environmental degradation. In my analysis, I firstly examine the double conceptualization of 'bewilderment' as on the one hand, the state of confusion that emerges within an anthropocentric and ableist society, and on the other hand, as a celebration of nature's uncanniness, preventing disability from being limited to a positivist convention of normalcy (Michalko and Titchkosky 2009). In addition, I explore how the novel, seemingly avoiding the cynical nihilistic misanthropy that Braidotti warns readers against falling into (2013), emphasizes that climate change and ableism are brought about by a lack of human empathy, clearly evoking Philip K. Dick's (2007) envisaging of a world in need of an empathy box for its survival. Finally, I delve into the sense of discouragement and impotence that dwindles all hope in the novel. Very much in line with Johns-Putra's



(2019) “sense of no ending”, *Bewilderment* concludes with an element of cyclicity, denying readers any sense of closure or optimism with regard to the vulnerabilities it depicts.

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**Keywords:** Cli-Fi; capitalocene; neurodivergence; vulnerability; empathy.

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<p><b>Washington Irving and the Quixotic satire on Erudition: <i>Salmagundi</i> (1807-1808) and the British Cervantean tradition</b></p>
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### Abstract

Satire on erudition and pedantic learning is a long-standing presence in Western literature. If the figure of the erudite pedant had already given its first steps in the French and Italian drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the eighteenth century will witness its naturalization within the realm of the novel. According to Pedro Javier Pardo, the eighteenth century will generate an ideal context for the satiric portrayal of any deviation from the standard notions of knowledge (2004: 7), making the erudite outcast a natural choice for authors willing to experiment with the satire of outdated or extravagant forms of knowledge. The period will also see the naturalization of the type in British soil, and more importantly, its association with another successful import from European literature, the Quixotic archetype, which will permeate most of the satiric portrayals of erudite outcasts of this century.

In America, Hugh Henry Brackenbridge's *Modern Chivalry* (1792-1815), the first American novel of clear Cervantean descent, had already experimented with the figure of the erudite outcast through its main character, Captain Farrago, whose readings, mainly Greek and Roman classics, turn him into a figure completely out of line with the purely materialistic and unidealistic world of the American frontier (Wood 91), a trend which can be also observed in Tyler's Doctor Underhill, the "Classical Quixote" (Wood 109) of Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive* (1797). Both figures, quite reminiscent of other erudite Quixotes of the British Cervantean tradition like Fielding's Parson Adams or Sterne's Toby and Walter Shandy, evince a clear influence of the British reception of Cervantes' masterpiece, and this eighteenth-century understanding of the Quixotic figure will also permeate one of the early works of Washington Irving, *Salmagundi* (1807-1808), which demonstrates the clear influence of the British Cervantean tradition in the early work of one of the privileged receptors of Spanish literature in America.

In *Salmagundi; or the Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq.* (1807-1808), James Kirk Paulding, William Irving Jr. and Washington Irving establish a mock erudite journal very much in the vein of Addison and Steele's Quixotic articles in the *Spectator* (1711), but also quite reminiscent of the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus* (1713-1714), a satirical work co-written by Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope and Dr. John Arbuthnot. In their work, Paulding and the Irving brothers give voice to "a clutch of Quixotic commentators" who represent "a community of Quixotic figures, a gentleman's club after the manner of Sir Roger de Coverley" (Wood 56) who tries to satirise the inhabitants of New York from their country seat in Cockloft Hall, where the library is explicitly compared to "the motley collection of the renowned hero of La Mancha" (*Salmagundi* 308), thus satirising the manners and fashions of New Yorkers, but also their own literary affectation.

The aim of this paper will be to analyse the links of this work with the previous work of other British and European Cervantean authors, demonstrating how the long shadow of Cervantes' influence in Europe during the eighteenth-century crosses the Atlantic and eventually defines the first steps of the American reception of the Spanish masterpiece.

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**'It's a Presence, a Perfume, a Touch. It's a Soul, a Story, a Life': Domestic Ventures into the Fourth Dimension in Henry James's "The Jolly Corner" (1908)**

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**Abstract**

In Henry James's works houses are one of the privileged sites of encounter between—national, social, cultural, religious, and sexual—others. In this sense, once the doors of the domestic interior are open, both guests and hosts are forced to reckon with their own (ethical and political) limitations and (epistemological and ontological) immobilities, their preconceptions, prejudices, beliefs, and truths being (in)directly challenged and exposed. As houses become places of encounter, they might perform, it could be argued, a mediating function, becoming the stage where conflicts play out, a space to deal with, and navigate, the clash between different ways of being in, and looking at, the world. In this light, houses harbor the potential of both rejection and acceptance, (self-)destruction and healing, synthesis and segregation. Bearing these ideas in mind, and in contrast to the "failed" domestic experiences of James's characters in his early and middle works (1860s-1880s), where certain doors remain locked forever and national differences and familiar hierarchies prevail—from the "voluntary" seclusion of Catherine Sloper in Washington Square to the burning down of Poynton in *The Spoils* and the rejection and non-understanding which results from the implementation of certain politics and regimes of hospitality in *The American* and *The Europeans*—this paper aims to explore a tentative opening in James's turn-of-century fiction to a more fruitful and therapeutical experience of the "domestic" as it unfolds in "The Jolly Corner" (1908). In this text, I contend, the house at the center of the story functions as a portal to another dimension of reality, allowing middle-aged American expatriate Spencer Brydon to come to terms with choices not made, "bypassed alternatives" (Bell), and his own domestic demons. Notably, as the

protagonist seeks access to this “kind of fourth dimension” (James, *The Spoils*; Throesch) through the jolly abode of his childhood, certain material requirements must be met. Following from this, and through the analysis of the material texture of this Jamesian domestic space—focusing, among others, on the (dis)orientation of the house and the self as it moves through it, its structure and distribution, its airs, lights, and shadows, as well as the role of its thresholds and apertures in the creation of new transitory arrangements, shapes, and vistas—this paper will demonstrate the extent to which Brydon’s domestic epiphany is anchored in the house, how his (meta)physical journey starts and ends within its walls as they perform a healing function and facilitate the construction of an “acceptable synthesis” (Thompson) between Byron’s old-world and new-world selves.

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**Keywords:** Henry James; “The Jolly Corner”; Domestic Encounters; Mediation; The Fourth Dimension.

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