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EDITED BY
ROMAN TRUŠNÍK
GREGORY JASON BELL
KATARÍNA NEMČOKOVÁ

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EDITORS' NOTE

ROMAN TRUŠNÍK, GREGORY JASON BELL, KATARÍNA NEMČOKOVÁ

The present volume, the fifth in the *Zlín Proceedings in Humanities* book series, contains selected papers from “From Theory to Practice 2013: The Fifth International Conference on Anglophone Studies,” hosted on September 5–6, 2013, by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic.

The 2013 conference was quite possibly the best so far, with eighty participants from eight different countries presenting their findings on a wide array of Anglophone Studies topics, from Mozart to motorcycles, and vampires to verbs. Although not every presenter submitted a paper to the proceedings, the editors had plenty to choose from, yet they were burdened with the responsibility of making difficult choices. Ultimately, this proceedings contains articles written by scholars from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and the United Kingdom, along with two articles written by American expatriates representing Czech universities. Due to the number of articles submitted and reviewed, the editorial process has taken more time than in the previous years; on the other hand, this enabled many authors to bring their papers up to date and reflect on the latest developments, thus affirming the conference’s status as one monitoring the latest research trends in the region.

While we are always happy to see articles from previous volumes cited (and, they do get cited all around the globe, demonstrating the academic fecundity of the conference series), we are even more pleased to see a paper presented at our conference and published in our proceedings expanded into a full-fledged book. Indeed, the roots of *English: The Language of the Vikings* (2014) by Joseph Embley Emonds and Jan Terje Faarlund can be traced back to Emonds’s article “English as a North Germanic Language: From the Norman Conquest to the Present,” published in the second volume of the series.

As previously, this book is published in print to be distributed primarily to libraries and, in order to facilitate the rapid exchange of information among scholars all over the world, it is simultaneously released in PDF form on the Internet (<http://conference.uaa.utb.cz/tp2013>). The volume is divided into a linguistics section and a literature and cultural studies section, and each section adheres to the appropriate citation formats defined in the current edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*: papers on linguistics make use of the author-date form, while papers in the literature and cultural studies section are in the notes-bibliography style.

We are thankful to the participants at the conference, without whose contributions this book would not have been possible. Thanks are due to our review board, as well as our student assistant, Dana Jašková. Moreover, we wish to thank the conference organizers, our two conference keynote speakers, Thomas A. Lorman and Christiane Nord, the dean of the Faculty of Humanities, and the Zlín Region.

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LINGUISTICS

GERUNDS VS. INFINITIVES IN ENGLISH: NOT MEANING BUT FORM

JOSEPH E. EMONDS

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: jeemonds@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT: English gerunds and infinitives are often treated as nearly equivalent ways of using verb phrases as syntactic subjects and objects, even though this assumption is falsified by the actual grammatical patterns. Gerunds are indeed verb phrases that appear in all positions of freely-expandable noun phrases, but infinitives and finite clauses, termed 'verbal clauses' in this study, actually never occur in noun phrase positions. What is shown here is that (i) verbal clauses that appear to be 'objects' of verbs are in clause-final position, rather than in the position of object noun phrases, and that (ii) initial verbal clauses that appear to be 'subjects' are in a pre-subject position where they bind a null expletive subject. The hypothesis in (ii) is tested and confirmed by showing that initial verbal clauses, in contrast to lexical noun phrase and gerunds, never occur in embedded or inverted subject positions. In this way, initial verbal clauses have the same distribution as other well-known 'root' or 'focus' constructions, which in pre-subject position are limited to main clauses.

KEYWORDS: clausal complement; expletive; extraposition; gerund; infinitive; topicalization

1. SOME MISLEADING SIMILARITIES OF GERUNDS AND INFINITIVES

Grammars of English point out that according to the form of their verbs, there are three types of subordinate clause complements: (i) finite subordinate clauses introduced by *that* (which can sometimes be zeroed), (ii) infinitives, (the verb has no inflection), and (iii) gerunds / participles, whose first verb ends in *-ing*.¹

Apparently all three types can serve as either subjects (1a-c) or objects (2a-c), with various restrictions on the classes of verbs that select them.

- (1) a. *That we had to use that airport* annoyed us.
 That Bill knows German well was made obvious to all of us.
 b. *To find a well-paying job nearby* would be a pleasant surprise.
 To read so many magazines is a waste of time.
 For the house to be painted would confuse him.
 c. *Your being able to find a new job nearby* would be surprising.

1. With certain main verbs, subordinate clause complements can also take the form of "indirect questions," i.e., finite or infinitival clauses introduced by *if*, *whether* or a *Wh*-phrase. For our purposes here, finite indirect questions are treated with finite complements, and infinitival indirect questions are grouped with infinitives. Traditional grammar glosses over the impossibility of forming indirect questions with gerunds (**Which gifts buying teenagers is a delicate issue*; **We remembered how often changing the filters*). The analysis here returns to and easily explains this pattern.

Reading so many magazines is a waste of time.
Mary's having so many books impressed him.

- (2) a. *Ann believed (that) Mary was a foreign agent.*
Ann will see to it that you have a reservation.
 b. *Bill would prefer for Mary to stay awhile.*
Susan tried to buy a ticket on time.
Barbara decided to buy fewer foreign books.
 c. *Ann regretted stealing Mary's book.*
Ann will see to your buying a ticket in time.
Bill would prefer buying fewer foreign books.

However, these apparently free alternations are very misleading; there are more differences than similarities between infinitives and gerunds. For example, one widely recognized asymmetry is that as objects of prepositions, only gerunds (V+ing) occur freely as in (3a), in contrast to finite and infinitival clauses, which appear after only a few temporal prepositions such as *until* and *after*, but with others not at all, as in (3b). For some examples with temporal prepositions, see (19).

- (3) a. *John just came back from driving his cab.*
She blamed it on Bill's being too strict.
Because of John's being old, Mary gets a pension.
Your explanation for the table's being badly scratched sounds suspicious.
 b. **John just came back from (to) drive his cab.*
**She blamed it on (Bill) to be too strict.*
**Because of (John) to be old, Mary gets a pension.*
**Your explanation for the table to be badly scratched sounds suspicious.*

This restriction is usually attributed to some unpredictable asymmetry in English, with no further analysis. We will see below that the difference in (3a-b) falls out naturally from a more general structural hypothesis about gerunds.

TERMINOLOGY. Since this paper groups together *finite and infinitival clauses on the one hand, and gerunds and participles on the other*, we need a term that encompasses the former types but not the latter. So rather than resort to a new label or to the clumsy phrase, “non-gerund, non-participial clauses,” the term “verbal clause” will here throughout include only finite and infinitival clauses and *exclude gerunds and participles*. As we proceed, an informal justification for this term will arise from the fact that gerunds share aspects of noun phrases, and participles share aspects of adjective phrases, which finite and infinitival clauses *don't* share. So in a way, only the latter are “purely verbal.”

- (4) VERBAL CLAUSES. In this study, “Verbal Clauses” refer to finite and infinitival clauses, and exclude gerunds and participles, i.e., clauses whose head is V-ing.

Thus, the term “verbal clause” does not encompass the gerunds in (1c), (2c) and (3a). This decision has no implication for how clauses should be assigned structure or interpretation; the term in (4) simply provides an easy way to refer to non-gerund and non-participle clauses.

A typical approach to differences between infinitives (1b)-(2b) and gerunds (1c)-(2c) is to say that they are alternatives located in the same structural positions, distinguished by some delicate and formally unspecified “differences in meaning.” The nature of these differences is elusive, since the complements in, e.g., *Mary forgot to turn down the heat* and *Mary forgot turning down the heat* differ in factivity, while *John started to work on his paper* and *John started working on his paper* differ only in some “semantic nuance” which does not involve truth values of the complement clause.² Similarly, the difference between *I’d like to have/having an expensive car* is again only a “nuance.” Such imprecise semantics-based discussions, no matter how many ways rephrased, never succeed in uncovering a predictive general distinction between infinitives and gerunds / participles.

2. GERUNDS ARE NOUN PHRASES

The semantics-based distinctions of traditional grammar, which some generative treatments have more or less continued, can be fruitfully replaced by an accurate, simple and empirically testable structural distinction between gerunds and verbal clauses. It turns out that the “pre-verbal” position of verbal clauses in (1a-b) is *not the same* as the subject position of gerunds in (1c). In the same vein, the “post-verbal” position of embedded clauses in (2a-b) is not the same as the object position of gerunds in (2c).³

- (5) ENGLISH GERUND DISTRIBUTION. English gerunds are DPs. They occur in all and only the positions where noun phrases (“DPs”) can be freely generated.

Ordinarily, there is a single phrasal position before a clause’s first verbal position (which here as in many sources is termed “I”), which contains either a finite auxiliary or the infinitival marker *to*. This single phrase is the subject DP. So by (5) gerunds should be *uniformly acceptable* as DP subjects not only in main clauses but also in all types of embedded clauses. The underlined gerunds (6i-vi) confirm this prediction. (Throughout, σ stands for Verbal Clauses, and does *not* refer to gerunds.)

2. The “method” of traditional descriptions is to take an individual verb and comment on whatever meanings come into the mind of the analyst. Thus with *remember to V*, the remembering precedes the action, whereas with *remember V+ing*, the remembering follows the action. The comments must be modified for each verb considered (in *forget to V*, the activity need not happen at all, and with either use of *start*, one cannot distinguish the starting and the action). These discrepancies are of no matter in these analyses, as their goal is to accumulate commentary rather than to express generalizations.

3. Throughout, I use the now common symbol DP for (Determined) Noun Phrase, or Noun Phrase which has a possible Determiner. Readers used to the symbol NP should simply take the two symbols as equivalent here.

- (6) (i) Subjects of clausal complements to Verbs, including indirect questions:
I don't believe (that) [σ your studying history helps you].
She forgets [_{CP} how expensive [σ visiting the dentist is]].
- (ii) Subjects of clausal complements to Adjectives:
John was happy that [σ owning a car didn't disqualify you].
Nobody is ready for [σ wearing headphones to be legally required].
- (iii) Subjects of clausal complements to Nouns:
He protested the decision that [σ his/him being on time counted for nothing].
We are noticing a tendency for [σ smoking tobacco to be criminalized].
- (iv) Subjects of comparative clauses:
A day at the beach is more fun than [σ playing golf is].
Going by car doesn't seem as relaxing as [σ riding a horse used to seem].
- (v) Subjects of adverbial clauses:
Although [σ the house('s) being empty may depress you], it pleases me.
He exercises so rarely that [σ lifting those bricks is bad for his heart].
- (vi) Subjects of relative clauses, whatever the function of the relativized phrase:
Pupils for whom [σ diagramming sentences was easy] often became linguists.
Being a citizen is the reason why [σ your having insurance can protect you].
Situations in which [σ writing out a check is necessary] should be avoided.
It was the salesman who [σ my/me buying a car seemed important to].
She likes the kind of man that [σ seeing a few movies a year will satisfy].

The next section will contrast the pattern of gerunds in DP subject positions in (1c) with the distinct “pre-verbal position” of verbal clauses in (1a-b).

3. VERBAL CLAUSE SUBJECTS: NOT IN SUBJECT POSITION

Unlike gerunds, verbal clauses in the pre-verbal position of main clauses are *not DPs*. They are rather “topicalized” initial constituents in a clause (CP). As soon as some clause σ is embedded in another CP, a verbal clause (finite or infinitival) in σ 's initial position becomes *ungrammatical*, as shown by the underlined examples (7i-vi); compare these point for point with (6i-vi).

- (7) Six contexts for subject where verbal clauses *cannot appear*:
- (i) Verbal clause subjects in complements to Verbs:
**I don't believe (that) [σ for you to study history would help you].*
**She forgets [_{CP} how expensive [σ to visit the dentist is]].*

(ii) Verbal clause subjects in complements to Adjectives:

**John was happy that [σ to own a car didn't disqualify him].*

**Nobody is ready for [σ that one exercise daily to be legally required].*

(iii) Verbal clause subjects in complements to Nouns:

**He protested the decision that [σ for him to be on time counted for nothing].*

**We are noticing a tendency for [σ that we can smoke them to be criminalized].*

(iv) Verbal clause subjects in comparative clauses:

**A day at the beach is more fun than [σ to play golf is].*

**Going by car doesn't seem as relaxing as [σ to ride a horse used to seem].*

(v) Verbal clause subjects in adverbial clauses:

**Although [σ that the house is empty may depress you], it pleases me.*

**Although [σ for the house to be empty may depress you], it pleases me.*

**He exercises so rarely that [σ to lift those bricks is bad for his heart].*

(vi) Verbal clause subjects in relative clauses, whatever the relative's function:

**Pupils for whom [σ to diagram sentences was easy] often became linguists.*

**Being a citizen is the reason why [σ that you have insurance protects you].*

**Situations in which [σ to write out a check is necessary] should be avoided.*

**It was the salesman who [σ for me to buy a car seemed important to].*

**She likes the kind of man that [σ to see a few movies a year will satisfy].*

These diverse paradigms show clearly that verbal clauses (= infinitives and finite clauses) cannot generally occur in the "subject position," in contrast to the gerunds in (6). Rather, these clausal CPs occur initially in the "topicalized" position in *only main*, or "root" clauses.⁴ An issue in more recent literature concerns whether different types of root clauses have special labels such as TopP and FocP (Rizzi 1997) or whether these types are to be identified only by their tree geometry (whether they contain a gap or not; cf. Emonds 2012). This distinction plays no role in the discussion here.

The actual subject position in the main clauses of (1a-b) is a *null DP* between the preposed verbal clause CP and the finite or infinitival position I. This topicalized, pre-subject CP is then co-indexed with an "empty expletive" DP, as in (8). Section 7 returns to characterising expletives more formally.

- (8) [_{CP} *That Bill knows German well*]_j [_{IP} [_{DP} \emptyset]_j [_I *was*] [_{VP} *made obvious to all of us*]].
 [_{CP} *For the house to be painted*]_j [_{IP} [_{DP} \emptyset]_j [_I *would*] [_{VP} *confuse him*]].

4. The term "topicalized" for pre-subject phrases other than adverbials is due to Ross (1967), who in the same work gave the first patterns showing that such phrases are largely limited to main clauses. This restriction is more fully exemplified and explained theoretically in Emonds (1976), where the term "root clause" is defined to include main clauses and some other unembedded constructions that share certain of their properties.

The following generalization unites the exclusions in (7) with the structure in (8).

- (9) EXCLUSION OF VERBAL CLAUSES IN SUBJECT POSITION. English verbal clauses never occur in a DP position.

That is, clause-initial verbal clauses are either excluded entirely or *external to IP and initial in CP*. This conclusion is further confirmed by clauses in which the finiteness constituent I *separates* the initial positions of CP and IP, rather than following them both. As (5) predicts, only gerunds are then allowed in the subject position of IP, for example when a *Wh* or a negative phrase and an inverted auxiliary I both precede IP: These preposed (underlined) constituents cannot be followed by a topicalized position, and so verbal clauses can never follow them:

- (10) *Why did* [_{IP} {*Mary's liking old records* / **that Mary liked old records*} irritate him]?
When did [_{IP} {*arriving so early* / **to arrive so early*} become a requirement]?
Never will [_{IP} {*being comfortable* / **to be comfortable*} be a priority in this office].
A disease like that [_{IP} {*taking a lot of pills* / **to take a lot of pills*} won't cure].

As we will now see, the *Wh*-phrase is not the crucial factor here. The problem with the ungrammatical examples in (10) is that finite I inverts only over an *DP position*, but never over a topicalized clause σ in pre-subject position.⁵ Since verbal clause subjects in declaratives like (1a-b) never invert with an auxiliary, as in (11), it must be that, unlike gerunds, verbal clauses are *not* DPs.

- (11) **Does* [σ *that we have to use that airport*] annoy you?
 **Wouldn't* [σ *to find a well-paying job nearby*] be a pleasant surprise?
 **Isn't* [σ *to read so many magazines*] a waste of time?
 **Would* [σ *for the house to be painted*] confuse him?

As expected by (5), no such restriction applies to inverted gerund subjects (12), because they are possible in any DP position:

- (12) *Does us/our having to use that airport* annoy you?
Wouldn't finding a well-paying job nearby be a pleasant surprise?
Isn't reading so many magazines a waste of time?
Would the house being painted confuse him?

Since initial verbal clauses are “to the left of the subject,” we should determine more exactly where. In fact, because they are *incompatible with either preceding (10) or following (13) Wh-phrases*, they must be in *the same surface position* as a *Wh*-phrase:

5. This fronting is traditionally termed “subject-auxiliary inversion,” though in current terms it is more accurately described as “I to C movement” in the “Barriers framework” of Chomsky (1986).

- (13) **That Mary liked old records why irritated him?*
 **To arrive so early when became a requirement?*
 **That Sue is unqualified how obvious is?*
 **To hire John how easy was?*

Ross (1967) suggests that these verbal clauses are excluded in subject position only because in (10)-(12) they are “sentence-internal.” However, examples (14a) show rather that verbal clauses are equally well excluded at the right edge as well as “internally.”

- (14) a. **How obvious is that Sue is unqualified?*
 **How easy was to hire John?*
 b. *How obvious is Sue’s being unqualified?*
 How easy was hiring John?

As expected by (5), gerunds are immune to this restriction on verbal clauses, as seen in (14b).

A final paradigm illustrating (9) is that *verbal clauses are always ungrammatical as subjects of other clauses that are already initial*. The initial bracketed clauses in (15a) allow gerunds in this position (15b), as (5) predicts. But (15c) shows that these same clauses do not allow another verbal clause in their first position, because in general, as seen in (15d), subordinate clauses exclude pre-subject XPs.

- (15) a. [*That cigar smoke bothers the teacher*] *is quite possible.*
 [*For the house repairs to be so expensive*] *is no surprise.*
 b. [*That smoking cigars bothers the teacher*] *is quite possible.*
 [*For repainting the house to be so expensive*] *is no surprise.*
 c. *[*That to smoke cigars bothers the teacher*] *is quite possible.*
 *[*For that we are repainting the house to be so expensive*] *is no surprise.*
 d. *[*That this teacher cigar smoke bothers*] *is quite possible.*
 *[*For how very expensive the house repairs are*] *is no surprise.*

This section has now substantiated the claim that initial verbal clauses occur not as subject DPs, but only in *a main clause initial position*. In this way they resemble several other English “root constructions” studied in the last forty years, such as those in (16):

- (16) a. *Down the street rolled the baby carriage.*
 b. *Into the street with those boxes!*
 c. *More interesting would be a talk on ceramics.*
 d. *In the hall was hanging a portrait of Lincoln.*
 e. *One more bottle out the window and I’ll call the police.*
 f. *Isn’t Susan wonderful!*

For the purposes of this paper, I will simply take (17) as a broad and accurate descriptive generalization:

- (17) ENGLISH VERBAL CLAUSE “SUBJECTS.” A non-DP argument of a verb, such as a verbal clause, can occur sentence-initially only in a main or “root” clause.

Exactly how to account for such root / embedded asymmetries is beyond the scope of this paper.⁶

As a counterpart to the distributional generalization for gerunds (5), I now make an equally general claim about the distribution of English (finite and infinitival) verbal clauses. The first part of this claim is what has just been established, and the second part is the topic of the next two sections.

- (18) DISTRIBUTION OF ENGLISH VERBAL CLAUSES. When embedded, verbal clauses can occur only (i) topicalized in main (=root) clauses, or (ii) extraposed, at the end of phrases.⁷

4. GERUND OBJECTS VS. VERBAL CLAUSE COMPLEMENTS OF P

The category P in current formal grammar has a larger extension than in traditional grammar, and for very good reasons. Different uses of a word which both exhibit the same pre-modification system (e.g., the intensifier *right*, measure phrases) and which also satisfy the same selectional requirements should be in a single category (for example, transitive and intransitive verbs are both in the same category V). Thus, traditional prepositions and subordinating conjunctions of time such as *until*, *before*, *after* and *since* are all in the category P, and differ only in whether they take DP or IP complements.

6. There are several approaches in the generative literature to how grammatical theory should exclude embedded structures as in (17). In the last decade, that of Haegeman (2009, 2011) has been very influential. She and other authors claim that the fronted phrases themselves block subordinators and complementizers like *when* and *if* from entering trees (“Merging”). This approach involves somewhat elaborate accounts of various movements into clause-initial positions, which can be blocked by “intervention effects,” which force a derivation either to terminate as a root clause or alternatively to “crash.” In my view, this framework has serious problems, and Emonds (2012) is an account of a different sort.

7. Though we have shown that English verbal clauses do not occur in a DP subject position, one might try to maintain that when topicalized, as in (1a-b), they somehow “become” DPs, so as to defend the traditional view that verbal clauses are some kind of noun phrase. This might be plausible if pre-subject topicalized constituents were always limited to noun phrases, but pre-subject topics can be of any phrasal category, as shown by the “root constructions” discussed in Emonds (1976, Ch. II):

With John she often talked about politics.

Into the storeroom Mary threw the extra blankets.

Down the street the baby carriage rolled/rolled the baby carriage.

We thought she would win the prize, and win the prize she finally did.

How ill did the boy seem?

Clever though the speaker was, he failed to convince.

So special it all seemed.

- (19) *The girls worked right until {their bedtime / they went to bed}.*
The explosion occurred two hours before {the cabinet meeting / the cabinet met}.
They will put the interview after {the cabinet meeting / the cabinet meets}.

Quite generally, Ps, even in this wider sense, select a single phrasal complement (Stowell 1981).⁸ So a traditionally named preposition is lexically specified as P, +___DP, while a traditional subordinating conjunction is specified as P, +___IP, i.e., it takes verbal clauses rather than DPs.

Given the distributional generalization for gerunds (5), it is expected that gerunds will occur with any and all prepositions (which have the selection feature +___DP). This is what in fact we have already observed for the typical Ps *from*, *on*, *for*, *because of* in (3a), repeated here:

- (3) a. *John just came back from driving his cab.*
She blamed it on Bill('s) being too strict.
Your explanation for the table('s) being badly scratched sounds suspicious.
Because of John('s) being old, Mary gets a pension.

Since these same four Ps lack a selection feature +___IP, they are incompatible with infinitival verbal clause complements, as we have seen in (3b):

- (3) b. **John just came back from (to) drive his cab.*
**She blamed it on (Bill) to be too strict.*
**Your explanation for the table to be badly scratched sounds suspicious.*
**Because of (John) to be old, Mary gets a pension.*

If we instead choose Ps with the selection feature +___IP (such as *in order*, *although*, *because*) but lacking the selection feature +___DP, gerunds are predictably excluded:

- (20) a. *Our friends ordered schnitzels, in order that they could / to drive all night.*
**Our friends ordered schnitzels, in order for a better trip.*
**Our friends ordered schnitzels, in order (for) driving all night.*
 b. *We were cold, although we were wearing warm clothing.*
**We were cold, although warm clothing.*
**We were cold, although dressing warmly.*
 c. *Because John is so old, Mary gets a pension.*
**Because John's age, Mary gets a pension.*
**Because John's being so old, Mary gets a pension.*

8. Emonds (1985, Ch. 7) presents arguments that verbal clauses represented by the symbol CP (= C + IP) are special cases of PPs, whose head is a grammatical P that takes a clausal sister. That is, the subordinate conjunctions of traditional grammar should be re-analysed as prepositions with clausal complements.

In (21), *despite*, which seems to mean the same as *although* but differs from it *only* in its subcategorization feature, exhibits the expected reversal of acceptability judgments, with the gerund again patterning as DPs.

- (21) **We were cold, despite we were wearing warm clothing.*
We were cold, despite warm clothing.
We were cold, despite dressing warmly.

The verbal clauses selected by traditional “subordinating conjunctions” such as *in order* and *although* are required by (18) to be final in their PPs. Of course, since they are sole sisters to P, it is not word order that distinguishes them from gerunds, but rather the classes of Ps that select them. Gerunds are predictably selected like other DPs, while infinitives are selected like finite clauses.

Finally, it follows that verbal clauses, even though they appear as topicalized subjects of active verbs (22a), are impossible in passive *by*-phrases, which can contain only DPs (22b).

- (22) a. *That some boys were dancing together was amusing John.*
For Susan to arrive early would cause embarrassment.
That you spoke out of turn didn’t help the situation.
To suggestion devaluation would anger the bankers.
 b. **John was being amused (by) that some boys were dancing together.*
 **Embarrassment would be caused (by) for Susan to arrive early.*
 **The situation wasn’t helped (by) that you spoke out of turn.*
 **The bankers would be angered (by) to suggest devaluation.*

We have now seen that, in contrast to gerunds, English verbal (finite and infinitival) clauses occur neither in subject position nor as objects of Ps such as *by*, *for* and *with*, whose selection feature is +___DP. The next section will show that verbal clauses do not actually occur in direct object position either, counter to the impression given by (2a-b). Only gerunds are in DP object positions.

5. GERUND OBJECTS OF V VS. PHRASE-FINAL (“EXTRAPOSED”) VERBAL CLAUSES

The syntactic distinctions between verbs that select gerund complements and those that take verbal clause complements become evident only in more complex structures. Such structures reveal that the seeming alternation between verbal clause complements and gerunds in (2a-b) vs. (2c) is as illusory as their seemingly free alteration in (1).

Consider a verb like *prefer*, which can select a gerund, an infinitive or a finite complement. The gerund is necessarily a direct object DP, and so can be followed by *another selected PP*, which serves to compare the preference for the object DP. Similarly, the idiom *take upon oneself* can select a gerund or an infinitive.

- (23) a. *Bill prefers that we ride bicycles / to ride a bicycle / that she ride a bicycle.*
 b. *Bill preferred riding a bicycle [PP to endless hitchhiking].*
I will take this responsibility [PP upon myself].
I will take repairing the roof [PP upon myself].

Since verbal clauses cannot be in the DP object position, they are necessarily in VP-final position (= “extraposition”). Hence, unlike the gerunds in (23), they *cannot precede* a selected PP complement.

- (24) **Bill prefers that she ride a bicycle [PP to her hitchhiking].*
 **Bill preferred to ride a bicycle [PP to endless hitchhiking].*
 **I will take to repair the roof [PP upon myself].*

Along the same lines, the verb *report* can have a finite clause or a gerund as an object, and also an indirect object. If the object clause is finite, it must *follow* the indirect object in extraposition and not be in DP position, whereas, as expected, an object gerund can *precede* an indirect object.

- (25) *John reported having seen the fight to the police.*
John reported to the police that he had seen the fight.
 **John reported that he had seen the fight to the police.*

The analyses of this study thus explain the contrasts in (23)-(25).⁹

A contrast between gerunds and verbal clauses, such as after verbs like *prefer* and *report*, is otherwise not so widespread, which in itself suggests that the constructions belong to different categories, i.e., DPs vs. IPs. There are other verbs whose object DPs cannot be gerunds, even though these objects alternate with verbal clauses. For several such verbs (*tell*, *promise*, *teach*), the direct and indirect objects can appear in either order.

- (26) *She told a fairy tale to the children.*
She told the children a fairy tale.
You promised a new hat to Mary.
You promised Mary a new hat.
The man taught the importance of books to his sons.
The man taught his sons the importance of books.

However, Distribution of Verbal Clauses (18) predicts that a finite or infinitival verbal clause complement cannot be a DP internal in a VP, but only *at the end* of the VP, in “extraposition”:

9. Gerund objects can appear at the end of the VP by virtue of the “Heavy NP Shift” of Ross (1967), which allows object DPs containing phrasal constituents such as VP to move to clause-final position.

- (27) *She told the children how to make a kite / that she was ill.*
**She told how to make a kite / that she was ill to the children.*
You promised Mary you would do the wash / to be quiet.
**You promised that you would do the wash / to be quiet to Mary.*
The man taught his sons that books contain much wisdom.
**The man taught that books contain much wisdom to his sons.*

Still other verbs (*say, expect*) can take verbal clauses but exclude gerunds as objects, and require any indirect object DP to have an overt head P:

- (28) *They expect that you co-operate.*
They expect some cooperation of (from) you.
John said that her family was dysfunctional.
John said something nasty to Mary.

When such verbs take both an indirect object and a verbal clause, the clause cannot be in object DP position (before the indirect object), but must rather, by (18), be at the end of the containing VP:

- (29) *They expect (it) of you that you cooperate.*
**They expect that you cooperate of you.*
John said to Mary that her family was dysfunctional.
**John said that her family was dysfunctional to Mary.*

Finally, adjectival secondary predicates modify a direct object and must follow it inside a verb phrase, as in (30b). If one tries to replace a direct object with a verbal clause (i.e., to use an infinitive as subject of the secondary predicate), the result is clearly ungrammatical (30c):

- (30) a. *Writing out / To write out their grievances is silly.*
Complaining a lot / To complain a lot would be pretty useless.
 b. *The women consider writing out their grievances silly.*
We found complaining a lot pretty useless.
 c. **The women consider to write out their grievances silly.*
**We found to complain a lot pretty useless.*

This contrast is again explained by my claim that gerunds but not verbal clauses are DPs.

Overall, we have seen that any selected complements of a verb can always follow a gerund, because a direct object (the gerund) can always precede other complement phrases. In contrast, verbal clause complements do not precede these same

complements because they are not DPs but rather in the final position under VP. Thus, *gerunds are well-behaved DPs* in standard positions of subjects and objects, while verbal clause complements, when post-verbal, must be *at the end of VPs*.

There is one additional position for DPs where not only infinitives but also gerunds are excluded, and that is possessive position modifying nouns. In line with our expectations, the unacceptability of verbal clause infinitives in this DP position is stronger than that of gerunds.

- (31) a. ?*Does he know about* [_{DP} [_{DP} *smoking pot's*] *being illegal*]?
 **We agree about* [_{DP} [_{DP} *shovelling snow's*] *being fruitless*].
 b. ***Does he know about* [_{DP} [_{VP} *to smoke pot's*] *being illegal*]?
 ***We agree about* [_{DP} [_{VP} *to shovel snow's*] *being fruitless*].

From all that has been said so far, we might expect the examples (31a) to be acceptable, but they are not. However, there is an independent reason for this that leaves generalization covering Gerund Distribution (5) fully intact.

The reason is that there are strong restrictions on acceptable types of DPs in the possessive position, and one such restriction is that possessive DPs *cannot contain any type of event nominalization*, whatever its internal form:

- (32) **I don't know the arrival in Chicago's time.*
 **I found out the cheapest ticket to Chicago's cost.*
 **Did you meet that man teaching history's cousin?*

The modifying DPs in (32) have absolutely typical internal structures, but they are excluded as possessives. The reason is semantic: they refer to events. For the same reason, the gerunds in (31a) are excluded, even though by (5) the structures themselves would be permitted.¹⁰

6. TWO FURTHER CONFIRMATIONS THAT ONLY GERUNDS HAVE THE DISTRIBUTION OF DPs

6.1 COORDINATION WITH LEXICAL NPs

Generally speaking, categorical identity is a necessary condition for coordination (Higgins 1973, 191), with the exception of some coordinated Adjective and Prepositional

10. It is of some interest that more recent grammars prefer to drop the ending 's on subjects of gerunds, and this same choice improves the examples in (31a):

Does he know about [_{DP} [_{DP} *smoking pot*] *being illegal*]?
 **We agree about* [_{DP} [_{DP} *shovelling snow*] *being fruitless*].

In fact, in *some very recent usage* in both Britain and the United States, overt subjects of gerunds have entirely fallen out of use, though I have not seen documentation. I disregard this development throughout this paper.

Phrases, e.g., *Mary is clever and without financial worries*. The fact that DPs with lexical N heads freely coordinate with English gerunds in all DP positions confirms the correctness of English Gerund Distribution (5):

- (33) *She always liked physical exercise and watching television shows.*
The town proposed a tax increase and reviving the translation service.
Outdoor bathrooms and pitching a tent every day would wear us out.
The country aimed at self-sufficiency in fuel and discontinuing food imports.
Someone arranged for a new swimming pool and painting the house.

The same diagnostic shows that English infinitives and finite clauses are *not* DPs, again confirming (18):

- (34) **She always liked physical exercise and to watch television shows.*
**The town proposed a tax increase and to revive the translation service.*
**The town proposed a tax increase and that offices be moved to the outskirts.*
**Outdoor bathrooms and to pitch a tent every day would wear us out.*
**Outdoor bathrooms and that we couldn't cook ourselves would irritate us.*
**The country aimed at self-sufficiency in fuel and to discontinue food imports.*
**Someone arranged for the house to be painted and a new swimming pool.*

The different categorical status this paper accords to gerunds and infinitives also accounts automatically for the inability of gerunds and verbal clauses to coordinate:

- (35) **She always liked watching television shows and to play volleyball.*
**Eating canned foods and to pitch a tent every day would irritate us.*
**The town proposed reviving the translation service and that its offices be moved.*
**The advisor suggested that we rent our house and selling some stocks.*

These robust grammaticality distinctions remain mysterious in accounts that consider gerunds to differ from verbal clauses only in “semantic nuance” (meaning) rather than in categorical status (form). In contrast, these differences are explained by the structural generalizations (5) and (18).

The coordination patterns just discussed indicate that coordinated verbal clauses are simply not separate DPs at all, while coordination of gerunds can be coordinate DPs (and hence lead to plural number agreement). A third possibility, given that a gerund is some kind of (possibly extended) VP, is that coordinate gerunds can also form a single (extended) VP under a single DP. These possibilities predict precisely three different patterns of number agreement with coordinated clausal subjects, and these are exactly what is observed.

- (36) COORDINATE VERBAL CLAUSE SUBJECTS, WITH A SINGLE, SINGULAR NULL EXPLETIVE DP SUBJECT:

[_{CP} *To paint the house and to build a garage*]

[_{IP} [_{DP} Ø] *is* / **are* *a year's work.*]

[_{CP} *That Ann married and that Jim stayed single*]

[_{IP} [_{DP} Ø] *was* / **were* *widely known.*]

[_{CP} *That taxes went up and that services got worse*]

[_{IP} [_{DP} Ø] *doesn't* / **don't* *surprise me.*]

- (37) GERUND SUBJECTS, FORMING *EITHER* COORDINATE DPs (PLURAL AGREEMENT) OR COORDINATE VPs IN A SINGLE DP (SINGULAR AGREEMENT):

[_{DP} *Painting the house and building a garage*] *is* / *are* *a year's work.*

[_{DP} *Her marrying a priest and her brother staying single*]

was / *were* *part of village lore.*

[_{DP} *Taxes going up and services getting worse*] *doesn't* / *don't* *surprise me.*

These agreements contrast coordinate verbal clauses interpreted as a subject via an expletive (always with singular agreement) and coordinate gerund subjects, with either singular or plural agreement. They provide decisive evidence that every gerund can be a DP, while no verbal clause can ever be.

6.2 THE FOCUS POSITION IN CLEFT SENTENCES AS A DIAGNOSTIC FOR DP

The focus position in English cleft sentences, underlined in (38), is a diagnostic for the constituents DP and PP.

- (38) *It's the lemon pie that we disliked / talked about.*
Was it John that you were speaking to?
Was it John that broke the window?
It was to John that she spoke.
It's because of the flood / because it was raining that they are leaving.
It is with great pleasure that I present our speaker.

As seen in examples (39), this position excludes APs, VPs (including participles introduced by V-ing) and CPs (with the complementizers *that* / *for*).

- (39) **It's very unhappy that Bill is / appeared.*
**It was too quickly that she spoke.*
**It's quite dark that he likes his study.*
**It is sell some buildings that you should (do).*
**It was playing outside that Bill continued.*
**It was ask John for money that I heard you.*

- *It was to report on time that we failed.*
**It was that the guests left that John drank so much.*
**It's for the kids to be able to walk to school that they moved back.*

Gerund Distribution (5) correctly predicts that gerunds appear freely in cleft focus position:

- (40) *It was buying a new hat that he enjoyed.*
It was John's knowing the location that surprised her.
It's driving carelessly that upsets me.
It was explaining your motives that was important.
It might be filing that report that Susan is concentrating on.
Was it her smoking cigars that John was struck by?

An interesting contrast with gerunds is furnished by the present participles that occur after temporal aspect verbs (*begin, start, continue, resume, keep, go on, cease, finish*, etc.) and verbs of perception (*see, hear, feel, watch, notice, smell, catch, find*, etc.). As shown in Rosenbaum (1967), the V-ing complements of these verbs *fail to act like DPs* with respect to passivization and coordination, and so are participles rather than gerunds. Thus, unlike the examples (40), these participles are not DPs and thus cannot appear as the focus in cleft sentences:

- (41) **It is drinking beer from the bottle that she keeps.*
**Is it painting the house that you've finished?*
**It was throwing away some letters that John noticed Bill.*
**It was stealing my money that she caught him.*

The cleft sentence diagnostic for DPs demonstrates equally well that neither finite nor infinitival Verbal Clauses are DPs, another correct consequence of (18):

- (42) **It was to buy a new hat that he wanted.*
**It's for Mary to drive carelessly that upsets Ann.*
**It is to always be on time that you should decide.*
**It was that you explain your motives that was important.*
**It's that John has arrived too late that Bill realizes.*
**Was it that Mary had cashed the check that Bill regretted?*

In conclusion, all available constituency tests converge to show that English gerunds behave as DPs, while English verbal clauses are not DPs.

7. EXPLETIVE CHAINS: INTERPRETING CLAUSES AS ARGUMENTS

Section 3 has shown that the structure for an initial verbal clause should be as in (8), where this clause is co-indexed with (or “binds”) a “null expletive” in the main clause subject position:

- (8) [_{CP} *That Bill knows German well*]_j [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_j [_I *was*] [_{VP} *made obvious to all of us*]].
 [_{CP} *For the house to be painted*]_j [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_j [_I *would*] [_{VP} *confuse him*]].

To motivate this structure, I discuss the nature of “expletives” in more general terms. In a number of constructions, some XP in a clause which is *not a subject (or an object)* can be interpreted as a “substitute” for that subject (or object). Thus, I propose here that the bracketed CPs in (8) above and the underlined CPs in (43) below are neither DPs nor structural subjects; the subjects are rather the null DPs inside IP, which are then co-indexed with these CPs:

- (43) [_{CP} *That the boys were dancing together*]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_i *was amusing John*].
 [_{CP} *For John to arrive now*]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_i *would cause embarrassment*].
 [_{CP} *That the children are always late*]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_i *shows the necessity of discipline*].
 [_{CP} *That you spoke out of turn*]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_i *didn't help the situation*].
 [_{CP} *To suggest devaluation*]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_i *would anger the bankers*].

Thus, the underlined verbal clauses in (43) are interpreted with the semantic roles that these predicates ordinarily assign to their subjects. For example, the underlined clause in the last example has the same role as e.g. *devaluation* in *Devaluation would anger the bankers*. An analysis with a null expletive is unavailable in traditional grammar, because it never uses or even imagines “empty phrasal categories.” (Hence traditional treatments are at a loss to explain the many differences between English infinitival and gerund subjects).

- (44) EXPLETIVE CONSTRUCTIONS. A semantically null subject or object DP is an “expletive.” An XP other than a subject or object co-indexed with an expletive is called its associate.
 (45) INTERPRETATION OF ASSOCIATES. An associate is interpreted as having the semantic role that a predicate can assign in the position of its expletive.

The only expletives in traditional grammar are overt but meaningless pronominals such as *it* and *there*. Such expletives always bind (= are co-indexed with) *lower* phrases XP in the same clause, which are, as in (44), called their associates. The overt expletive for associate predicate nominals is *there* (46a), while the overt expletive for PP associates (46b-c) is *it*.¹¹

11. Some authors such as Andrews (1971) and Kallulli (1999) have argued that predicate nominals may be only NPs, because they lack some properties of full DPs such as certain quantifiers. Perhaps a

- (46) a. *There was a warmer place in the hallway.*
There will be many new students who lack rooms.
There has never occurred such a cold summer.
Today, there are a lot of people homeless.
- b. *It might be warmer in the hallway.*
It is more comfortable by the fireplace.
- c. *The idea that it might be warmer in the hallway seemed silly.*
Let's go into the library because it is more comfortable by the fireplace.

Overt expletives are thus hierarchically distinct from the earlier null expletives in (8) and (43), which are *lower in a tree than their associates*. But both types are alike in being in subject position and assigning the semantic role of the subject of a verb to a co-indexed associate XP.

In main clauses, the underlined associate PPs in (46b) can be sentence-initial (“topicalized”) and can bind a null expletive in subject position, just like topicalized verbal clauses in (8) and (43):

- (47) [_{PP} In the hallway]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_j *might be warmer*].
 [_{PP} By the fireplace]_i [_{IP} [_{DP} Ø]_j *would be a better location*].

Just like topicalized clauses, pre-subject PP associates are excluded in dependent clauses:

- (48) **The idea that in the hallway might be warmer seemed silly.*
 **Let's go into the library because by the fireplace is more comfortable.*

This restriction on topicalized PPs is exactly the same restriction on pre-subject CP associates that was observed in Section 2 with many examples in (7). Cf. note 8.

The following descriptive generalization seems adequate for describing the patterns of expletives and associates.

- (49) ASSOCIATE-EXPLETIVE BINDING (ENGLISH):
- (i) If an expletive asymmetrically binds (= c-commands) its associate, it must be overt.
 - (ii) If an associate (e.g., topicalized) binds an expletive, the expletive is null.

In these terms, the “extraposed” clausal subjects underlined in (50) are the associates of the subject expletive *it*, which binds them.

more general distinction is between case-marked arguments (subjects and objects) and all other XP arguments, i.e., those which are not assigned case.

- (50) *It was amusing John that the boys were dancing together.*
It would cause embarrassment for John to arrive now.
It shows the necessity of discipline that the children are always late.
It didn't help the situation that you spoke out of turn.
It would anger the bankers to suggest devaluation.
It is obvious to all of us that Bill knows German well.
It is a waste of time to read so many magazines.

The extraposed clauses in (50) are exactly those with subject interpretations which can also appear sentence-initially, as in examples (8) and (15a-b). In both positions, these verbal clauses are linked with expletive subjects, and so have interpretations as subjects. But unlike the ungrammatical topicalized clauses inside embedded sentences in (7i-vi), extraposed clauses are well-formed in any type of embedded clause:

- (51) *I don't believe (that) [σ it would help you for you to study history].*
She forgets [_{CP} how expensive [σ it is to go to the dentist]].
Nobody is ready for [σ it to be legally required that one exercise daily].
He protested the decision that [σ it counted for nothing for him to be on time].
A day at the beach is more fun than [σ it is to play golf].
Although [σ it may depress you that the house is empty], it pleases me.
Situations in which [σ it is necessary to write out a check] should be avoided.
It was the salesman who [σ it seemed important to for me to buy a car].

It also appears that empty expletive DPs can be generated in the object position and then moved by passivization to the subject position, where an overt expletive *it* is inserted to bind the extraposed verbal complement interpreted as a surface subject:

- (52) *It was said by John that we had betrayed him.*
It was suggested to us that he was correct.
It was explained to her by several people how it should be done.

We will see more examples of null object expletives and verbal complement associates in Section 8.

The overall distribution of finite and infinitival verbal clauses in English can now be summarized as follows. These clauses can be either selected arguments or freely added adjuncts, generated as rightmost daughters of larger phrases.

- (53) Interpretation of verbal clauses:
 a. If verbal clauses are rightmost *sisters of selecting head V*, they are interpreted as objects of these verbs. (They are in “extraposition” and are *not DPs*.)¹²

12. With some verbs, fewer than is usually assumed, extraposed object clauses can be “doubled” by the idiomatic expletive *it* in direct object position: *She likes it a lot / doesn't believe it at all that her brother*

- b. If verbal clauses are rightmost *adjuncts of phrases*, they are interpreted like other adjuncts, such as PPs, etc.
- c. If verbal clauses are *co-indexed associates* in any position, they are subject to Interpretation of Associates (45).

A final detail is that as sisters to verbs, clausal complements, though in principle “heavy” constituents that can be rightmost, should be able to *precede* adverbial phrase adjuncts of a selecting verb. And indeed this seems to be the case:

- (54) *They plan to announce that we are capable of reaching Mars today.*
It means nothing to speak of simultaneity in Einstein’s framework.
It isn’t required that the players be tall in this school.
It pleased me that they played those records very much.
It doesn’t frighten me to watch horror movies anymore.
It isn’t necessary to be smart on this campus.

The important generalization to be retained from this study is that unlike gerunds, *English verbal clauses are never structurally DPs*. Though they can be *interpreted as subjects*, as in (1a-b), they are in this use in topicalized *pre-subject position*. Therefore, they can be neither the focus constituent in clefts like DPs, nor coordinate with DPs, nor agree like DPs. Their interpretation as subjects, which has confused traditional analyses, is due to the fact that they bind phonetically null expletive subjects of following predicates.

English verbal clauses can similarly also be interpreted as direct objects, for the good reason that both CPs and DPs can be selected as sisters to often the same verbs, such as *forget, hate, like, prefer, remember, take upon oneself, try*, etc. But when verbal clauses are selected by such verbs, they do not show the properties of DPs, unlike gerunds, which do. For example, such verbal clauses do not passivize (Rosenbaum 1967; Stowell 1981).

When we realize that only root/main clauses tolerate pre-subject positioning of verbal clauses, we are led to ask: are these constituents transformationally fronted from either the position of the expletive or from an underlying extraposed position of an associate? Such possibilities were in fact proposed in classical transformational grammar, in which topicalized constituents are both selected and interpreted in clause-internal argument positions.

But in fact there is no motivation for such movements. Since Chomsky’s (1981) proposal of a Principle of Full Interpretation, constituents can be generated in their surface positions, provided independently motivated principles can account for both their positions and interpretation. In the present case, the principle of Interpretation of Associates (45) accomplishes this.

walks to work. Rosenbaum (1967) took these expletives to mean that these extraposed clauses are moved from an underlying direct object position, but there is no independent evidence for this account of doubling.

In fact, there are verb classes that can take two arguments that are verbal clauses, one a subject and one a complement. In such situations, the subject-interpreted verbal clause can appear nowhere except at the beginning of the sentence:

- (56) a. *That John has blood on his hands proves (that) Mary is innocent.*
 **It proves (that) Mary is innocent that John has blood on his hands.*
 b. *That John is late persuades me that the train was delayed.*
 **It persuades me that the train was delayed that John is late.*
 c. *To see this movie is to relive the past.*
 **It is to relive the past to see this movie.*

On the basis of this data, one must conclude that the sentence-initial verbal clauses of (1a-b) are generated in (not moved to) this position, and linked to null expletives in the subject position by Associate-Expletive Binding, thereby satisfying Full Interpretation.

Of course, as stated earlier, these pre-sentential verbal clauses are allowed only in root constructions, as shown at length in Section 3. But nothing excludes certain generative mechanisms from having effect only in root clauses. There are many such constructions in the literature on root clauses, and the devices proposed for them in Emonds (2012) work equally well whether they result from movement (e.g., topicalized DP arguments) or from generation in situ.

8. VERBAL CLAUSES LIMITED TO PHRASE-FINAL (EXTRAPOSED) POSITION

This section will discuss several classes of English clausal complements which are *not* DPs, but are rather in VP-final position (53a), after any direct or indirect objects of verbs. Many of them are verbal clauses that do not even alternate with DPs. Here is a table of such clausal complements:

(57) ENGLISH VERBAL CLAUSE COMPLEMENTS (neither DPs nor associates of expletive DPs)

Selecting verb type	intransitive V	transitive V: ___DP + verbal clause	intransitive V with underlying empty subjects
clause = present participles	a. temporal aspect: <i>be, start, keep (on), resume, finish, stop</i>	d. perception verbs: <i>see, hear, feel, find watch, notice, catch</i>	g. participles “in extraposition” (rare): <i>be fun / nasty / hellish</i>
infinitives with empty subjects	b. <i>decide, fail, hesitate, manage, try</i>	e. <i>cause, force, make, oblige, persuade, tell</i>	h. subjects raise to main clauses: <i>appear, be likely, happen, seem, turn out</i>
finite clauses	c. manner of speaking: <i>growl, mutter, quip, shout, whisper</i>	f. <i>answer, convince, inform, persuade, remind, tell</i>	i. expletive subjects: <i>appear, be likely, happen, seem, turn out</i>

All these classes of complements have in common that they occur *only where a V selects them as a sister*, i.e., at the end of VP. If the selecting verb is intransitive, these

complements can neither be passivized (showing they are not DPs nor topicalized, nor focused in cleft sentences. These properties are illustrated for non-finite complements in (57a-b):

- (58) a. Complement in selected position in VP:
My friend keeps staying out late.
Her husband finally finished writing that book.
A teacher rarely manages to satisfy a class.
Some residents tried to fix their plumbing.
- b. Passivization fails:
**Staying out late is kept by my friend.*
**Writing that book was finally finished by her husband.*
**To satisfy a class is rarely managed by a teacher.*
**To fix the plumbing was tried by some residents.*
- c. Topicalization fails:
**Staying out late my friend keeps.*
**Writing that book her husband finally finished.*
**To satisfy a class a teacher rarely manages.*
**To fix their plumbing some residents tried.*
- d. Focusing in cleft sentences fails:
**It's staying out late that my friend keeps.*
**It was writing that book that her husband finally finished.*
**It's to satisfy a class that a teacher rarely manages.*
**It was to fix their plumbing that some residents tried.*

The verbs in (57c) that select clausal complements that are not DPs are “manner of speaking” verbs. Zwicky (1971) gives examples and properties of this class of complements.¹³

- (59) *Morris whispered that night was falling.*
Some kid shrieked that Manchester had scored two goals.
One guest growled to the waiter that an hour was too long.
John quipped that she could pass without trying.

Zwicky's descriptive generalization is that these clausal complements never act like DPs. Rather, like other complements in Table (57), these clausal complements are final in the VP and so always follow an indirect object PP if there is one.

13. In discussing these verbs, Zwicky adds that they are “understood communicatively.” Infinitival complements of manner of speaking verbs are interpreted as embedded imperatives: *A guest whispered to Harry to move over*; *A bystander shouted to shoot the assailant*. These latter are analysed in more detail in Emonds (2000, Ch. 9).

- (60) Clausal complements of manner of speaking verbs cannot undergo passive:

**That night was falling was whispered by Morris.*
**That Manchester had scored two goals was shrieked by some kid.*
**That an hour was too long was growled to the waiter by one guest.*
**That she could pass without trying was quipped by John.*

- (61) Nor can passivization apply to an expletive in object position that might be linked to them:

**It was whispered by Morris that night was falling.*
**It was shrieked by some kid that Manchester had scored two goals.*
**It was growled to the waiter by one guest that an hour was too long.*
**It was quipped by John that she could pass without trying.*

- (62) Nor can they be topicalized:

**That night was falling Morris whispered.*
**That Manchester had scored two goals some kid shrieked.*
**That an hour was too long one guest growled to the waiter.*
**That she could pass without trying John quipped.*

- (63) Nor can they be focused in cleft sentences:

**It was that night was falling that Morris whispered.*
**It was that Manchester had scored two goals that some kid shrieked.*
**It was that an hour was too long that the guest growled.*
**It was that she could pass without trying that John quipped.*

Manner of speaking verbs contrast with many epistemic and emotive verbs, whose finite complements bind *phonetically null expletives in object position* (49ii): *admit*, *believe*, *conclude*, *fear*, *know*, *realize*, *regret*, *understand*, etc. (Recall that expletives are semantically null.)

- (64) *Morris admitted / believed* [_{DP} Ø] *that night was falling.*
Some fans concluded / feared [_{DP} Ø] *that Manchester had scored two goals.*
One guest knew / realized [_{DP} Ø] *that an hour was too long.*
John regretted / understood [_{DP} Ø] *that she could pass without trying.*

These expletives can move to subject position by passivization, where they asymmetrically bind their verbal complement associate in extraposition, and hence must be overt (*it*), as (49i) requires:

- (65) *It was admitted / believed by Morris* [_{DP} Ø] *that night was falling.*
It was concluded / feared [_{DP} Ø] *by some fans that Manchester had scored two goals.*
It was known / realized [_{DP} Ø] *by one guest that an hour was too long.*
It was regretted / understood [_{DP} Ø] *that she could pass without trying.*

Alternatively, if the verbal complements of these transitive verbs are in pre-subject position, as is allowed in main clauses, they asymmetrically bind the expletives in object position, which must then remain null, by (49ii):

- (66) *That night might fall soon Morris had to admit / refused to believe* [_{DP} Ø].
That Manchester had gone ahead many fans already concluded / feared [_{DP} Ø].
That an hour was too long at least one guest already knew / realized [_{DP} Ø].
That she could pass without trying John really regretted / fully understood [_{DP} Ø].

It can be observed that pragmatic felicity of such topicalized object clauses often requires various kinds of adverbs, modals, etc. Elucidating such requirements is beyond the scope of this paper.

It would be tedious to repeat the above diagnostics with the six further classes of complements given in (57d-i) in the Table. The topicalization and cleft focus tests applied to all these subclasses of clausal complements fully replicate the results above, namely that none of these verbal clause complements pass these DP diagnostics. Already in Rosenbaum (1967), some of these tests are applied to some of the verb classes in (57).

One can easily get the impression from early generative literature that selection of complement clauses is somehow always related to their being or at least being like noun phrases, both in distribution and in interpretation. However, many different verb classes select clausal complements which are *in no way* *DPS*, and a fortiori these verbs cannot select DP gerunds. We can verify that many types of verbs in (57) that select only verbal clauses are incompatible with gerund objects, exactly as Gerund Distribution (5) predicts:

- (67) **The teachers failed satisfying their classes.*
 **We hesitated flying by way of Chicago.*
 **Morris whispered night's being about to fall.*
 **Some kid shrieked Manchester's having scored two goals.*
 **A guest growled an hour's being too long to the waiter.*
 **John quipped her being able to pass without trying.*

I thus conclude that English finite and infinitival clausal complements can be selected by the clausal subcategorization frames ___CP, ___IP and ___VP, and that these verbal clause complements have nothing to do with the syntax or selection of the category DP. These verbal clauses undergo movement neither in the clause in which they originate nor out of that clause. Nor are they in any way noun phrases (DPs). As opposed to clauses interpreted via expletives in DP argument positions, seen in (64), all the clausal complements selected by the verb classes in Table (57) appear only in the clause-final position where they are lexically selected and *not elsewhere*.

Although there is no evidence against concluding that many types of verbal clauses are neither DPs nor co-indexed with expletives, a persistent tendency in both

generative and traditional grammar has been to assume that every clausal complement is somehow a DP (noun phrase) or associated with one. This tendency has to do with a longstanding, conscious or unconscious identification of clausal embedding with a notion of embedded predication in symbolic logic. The “arguments” of predicates in logic are felt to “correspond” to noun phrases (DPs), so that if some proposition (a “verbal clause”) is an argument of a higher predicate, then that clause must also be a DP. As a non-metaphorical justification for a grammatical analysis, such thinking is baseless, as shown by the properties of the array of constructions in Table (57).

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ADJECTIVE HIERARCHY: COMPARING THE ORDER OF ADJECTIVES IN THE PRENOMINAL FIELD IN ENGLISH AND CZECH

LUDMILA VESELOVSKÁ

Palacký University, Olomouc, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic. Email: lidave@email.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper discusses the ordering of prenominal modifiers in Czech. Surveying first several traditional proposals of existing universal or English specific hierarchies, it concentrates on the proposal presented in Scott (2002) and attested to also for Russian by Pereltsvaig (2007). The study searches for data in the Czech national corpus to demonstrate that the orderings inside Czech nominal complexes are as restricted as the ones in English and Russian and follow the same specific hierarchy. The Czech data also confirm the distinction between the strict orderings of elements in the functional domain and the more relaxed orderings in the modifier domain. The semantic hierarchy of syntactic adjuncts is therefore proposed as more suitable for adjective premodifiers than an analysis assuming a string of universally-ordered syntactic functional heads.

KEYWORDS: Czech nominal phrase; hierarchy of adjectives; word-order

1. THE DP ANALYSIS OF A NOMINAL PHRASE

English and Czech are typologically distinct languages although they both belong to the same Indo-European group. The distinction, however, is not so striking when a closer look is taken at the structure of individual phrases in more abstract terms. As for the noun complexes, the two languages are clearly distinct with respect to the morphological realisation of the nominal grammatical categories, e.g., morphological case is obligatorily present in Czech nouns while it is not present in English. On the other hand, determination is obligatorily represented in English noun phrases (NPs) while it remains lexical and arbitrary in Czech. The realisation of the referential characteristics of nouns is related to the analysis of a nominal phrase as a more structured complex headed with a specific functional category Determiner (D). A presence of DP is uncontroversial in English, and the reasons for accepting the DP analysis for Czech as well are also several. They can be briefly summarised as follows:¹

(1) Interpretation

- a. Both languages are able to express the same semantics with regard to specificity and definiteness, and the mapping of the semantic features to the structure is preferably the same, too.

1. For discussions of more alternatives see, e.g., Zlatić (1998), Bašić (2004) or Caruso (2012).

- b. Both languages show a parallel semantic hierarchy of positions related to the V and N heads including the position of an external argument able to bind an anaphor.
- (2) Lexical entries for the position of the functional head above NP, i.e., demonstratives and quantifiers and other elements related to the functional projection (with the exception of articles) are attested to in Czech as well as in English.²
- (3) The Linear order of the constituents inside the nominal projection suggests the existence of several separate projections.

For the topic of this paper, the linear order mentioned in (3) is the most important and will therefore be discussed in more detail in the following sections concentrating on the prenominal field of the NP/DP structures.

1.1 THE D AND N FIELD

Traditionally, the premodification of the nominal head is divided into two distinct fields. In, e.g., Quirk et al. (1985), the prenominal elements are divided into the determination field and modification field.³ The distinction is given in terms of semantics, but the determination field contains a strictly given list of mostly grammaticalized items (with the exception of possessives), while the modification field contains the lexical entries belonging to the open class categories. The relevance of the linear order within NP/DP mentioned in (3) follows from the fact that the linear order within the two fields of nominal premodification is subject to two distinct kinds of restrictions. The determination field not only contains a restricted number of slots (positions), but it also requires a strict ordering and does not tolerate many changes. A violation of the order is perceived as ungrammatical (*).

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----|------------------|-------|------------------|---------|
| (4) | CZ | a. | všichni (*čtyři) | ti | čtyři (*všichni) | chlapeč |
| | ENG | b. | all (*four) | those | four (*all) | boys |

On the other hand, the order of adjectival pre-modifiers is not restricted in number depending on salience and parsing economy only, and their order seems to allow individualised re-orderings related to interpretation. In (5) the alternative order is not marked as ungrammatical (*) but as less salient (?) only.

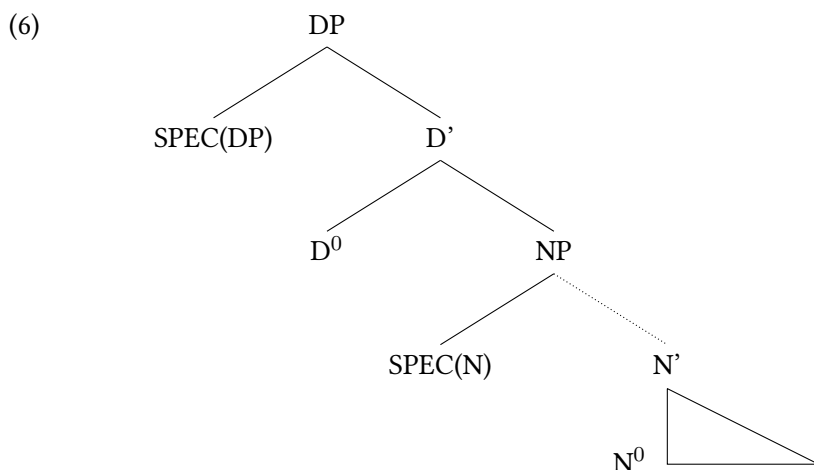
2. In both languages, the functional projections in the verbal domains are realised as either a lexical entry in a canonical position or they are realised “alternatively” as a kind of inflection on the lower lexical (verbal) head. In the nominal projection, the alternative realisation on the lower lexical head is richer in a synthetic Czech.

3. Determiners are discussed as a distinct category from modifiers also in Biber et al. (1999, 574) and Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 329–33). The latter use the term peripheral modification. See also sections 2.1–2.4 of this paper.

- (5) CZ a. velký (?černý) černý (?velký) pes
 ENG b. huge (?black) black (?huge) dog

In the structural description, the distinction between the determination field and modification field is respected in the DP analysis of a nominal projection, i.e., introducing a specific functional (grammaticalized) head D above the NP projection as in (6) where the DP projection provides positions for both a D head and some phrasal elements attested to in the DP field, i.e., at the very left periphery of a complex NP/DP.

A DP-analysis, i.e., the structure of noun phrase as in (6), explains why the mixing of the elements belonging to the determination and modification fields is perceived as a violation of grammatical rules (and why the position is able to influence the interpretation) but it is not enough to explain the ordering of pre-modifiers, which cannot be analysed as determiners. The string of adjective phrases (APs), e.g., the “light” APs, which do not have a complement of their own and therefore are located in prenominal position in both Czech and English, appear in between determiners and a head noun. In the structure in (6) they can be adjoined to both NP and N'.⁴ The ordering of such adjuncts will influence the scope of individual APs, but no other clear restriction on some specific order seems to follow from a structurally-recursive adjunction, or multiple Specifiers (SPEC). If some order is attested, however, the analysis may require some more complex analysis explaining the hierarchy.



This paper argues in detail in favour of a specific analysis of AP adjunction or AP functional projections as in, e.g., Cinque (1994). It compares the corpus data from two languages – English and Czech – checking the level of validity of some more or less universal and more or less predictable orders of adjectival premodifiers in the prenominal field. The conclusions may be suggestive but await conclusive diagnostics taking into account other characteristics of adjectives.

4. Or, in multiple SPECs of N, if the field allows such positions.

2. ADJECTIVAL HIERARCHY

Considering the left to right order of adjectival premodifiers, let us first look at the phenomena, as it is described for English in the most standard English grammar manuals, e.g., in Quirk et al. (1985), Biber et al. (1999), Huddleston and Pullum (2002), etc. Although verbally non-prescriptive, these grammar manuals describe the language without citing any individual (or more controversial) linguistic analysis and do not discuss specific issues in much detail. Still, all of them describe multiple premodification and mention the ordering of individual adjectives.

2.1 QUIRK ET AL. (1985)

Discussing the relative sequence of multiple pre-nominal modifiers, Quirk et al. (1985, 1337–45) first separate the determinative field, which they treat as a separate issue preceding the discussion of the modifiers. Even with those, the authors find it “helpful to divide the territory” into several zones. They state that the best way to generalise it is to refer to a subjective/objective polarity. In the following citation the stress is mine.

- (7) “That is, modifiers relating to properties which are (relatively) *inherent* . . . visually *observable*, and objectively *recognizable* or accessible, will tend to be placed nearer to the head and be preceded by modifiers concerned with what is relatively a matter of *opinion*, imposed on the head by the observer, not visually observed, and only *subjectively* accessible. . . . there is plenty of room for difference of opinion.” Quirk et al. (1985, 1337–45)

The following (8) gives the brief summary of the discussion:

- (8) The order of pre-modifiers: Quirk et al. (1985)
- a. subjective → objective
 - b. precentral (peripheral non-gradable adj.) → central (gradable, nonderived adj.) → postcentral (particular, colour, participles) → prehead (nationality, relational adj.)

Thus, for Quirk et al. (1985), the general principle for the ordering of pre-modifiers is “the natural order of recursive qualification,” based on factual, not linguistic information.

2.2 BIBER ET AL. (1999)

The Biber et al. (1999) grammar manual is based on corpora and discusses the linearity of several noun premodifiers in terms of the frequency of attested combinations. The authors state that though there are no absolute rules, there are still many strong tendencies. They describe the tendencies as depending on meaning and form.

- (9) “The order of forms in the premodification is dictated in the first place by the intended meaning. However, the order is also strongly influenced by the structural type of the premodifiers. . . . First, there is an overall tendency for the

most noun-like modifiers to occur closest to the head noun . . . This structural tendency has a semantic correlate: positions closest to the head noun will be filled by modifiers describing attributes that are more integral to identification, classification, or description of the head noun referent.” (Biber et al. 1999, 598–99)

The authors state the descriptive generalisation (with a 95 percent probability) as follows in (10).

- (10) The order of pre-modifiers: Biber et al. (1999)
 adverb → adjective → colour adjective → participle → noun

Notice that with the exception of colour, the authors provide the scale more in terms of form than referring to the individual meaning (i.e., they do not say much about the order of potentially more than one adjective).

2.3 HUDDLESTON AND PULLUM (2002)

Discussing the ordering of elements inside the NP, Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 452) do not separate the determiners but deal with them together with the adjectival and other premodifiers. On the other hand, they do explicitly distinguish between rigid and labile constraints on ordering. The rigid ones, the violation of which results in ungrammaticality, apply in fact only on determiners, which the authors call “external” modifiers and divide into more groups as suggested in (11a). The latter – less strict constraint – is more liable to individual choice – and such a labile constraint applies on (11b/c), which represent the main bulk of adjectival “internal” modifiers, further subdivided into early and residual (defined vaguely semantically). Representing the basic order with the use of those terms (labelling a *rigid* constraint as >> and *labile* as >), Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 452) propose the following basic order of elements:

- (11) The order of pre-modifiers: Huddleston and Pullum (2002)
- a. External modifiers:
 Peripheral external modifiers >> predeterminer external modifiers
 - b. Internal pre-modifiers:
 Early pre-head modifiers > Residual pre-head modifiers
 - c. Residual pre-modifiers:
 Evaluative > general property > Age > Colour > Provenance > Manufacture > Type

2.4 DUŠKOVÁ ET AL. (2013)

Dušková et al., in their *Electronic Grammar of Modern English* (based on the previous printed version of her *English Grammar on the Background of Czech*) is following Quirk et al. (1985) in claiming that

- (12) “The rule about the position of predeterminers and determiners is absolute. The heavier is lexical content of attributes the more difficult it is to state their order

... The problem of the order of multiple preposed adjectival attributes is not solved yet, there are several different proposals. It seems, however, that the decisive primary criterion is semantic.”⁵

Relating the phenomena to universal sentence dynamism, they provide the order in three formats:

- (13) The order of pre-modifiers: Dušková et al. (2013)
- a. inherent (close) semantic features > adherent (arbitrary) semantic features
 - b. permanent features (colour, nationality, age, size) > relative properties (size, shape)
 - c. evaluative, subjective > objective

2.5 OTHER AUTHORS

The above grammar manuals share the notion that the determination field is significantly distinct from the modification field. As for the modifiers, the authors spend paragraphs discussing the more precise definitions of each of the labels they use to categorise the adjectival premodifiers. That they choose distinct terminology signals that there is no common agreement. This feeling is supported by the following scales (14 a/b/c, including determiners as well as modifiers). The authors cited in (14a/b/c) use terms mixing subjective evaluative terms together with concrete concepts.

- (14) The Order of Adjective premodifiers (universal)
- a. Halliday (1985): numerative > epithet 1 (evaluative/attitudinal) > epithet 2 (objective/experiential) > classifier
 - b. Sproat and Shih (1991): possessive > cardinal > ordinal > quality > size > shape > colour > provenance/nationality
 - c. Cinque (1994): possessive > cardinal > ordinal > speaker-oriented > subject oriented > manner > thematic

What makes these authors distinct from the previously-discussed grammar manuals is that they assume a more universal value to their constraints on word-order.

More specifically, e.g., Sproat and Sikh compare English and Chinese, arguing that there exist two kinds of multiple adjectival modifiers. They propose a distinction between parallel and hierarchical modification. In the parallel modification, the adjectives assign their θ -roles directly to the head noun independently of one another. In the hierarchical modification – which according to Sproat and Sikh’s analysis appears in the two languages they discuss (English and Chinese) – each adjective assigns its θ -role directly to its sister and the whole structure is thus hierarchical. The central claim of

5. “Absolutně platí pravidlo o postavení predeterminátorů a determinátorů; s přibývajícím vahou na lexikálním významu přívlastků je pořadí stále obtížněji stanovitelné. . . . Problematika určování pořadí několikanásobných preponovaných adjektivních přívlastků není dosud definitivně vyřešena, existuje řada různých koncepcí, zdá se však, že rozhodujícím a primárním faktorem je přitom hledisko sémantické.” See Dušková et al. (2013, <http://emsaff.cuni.cz/13.52.12>).

their paper is that the ordering of the hierarchical direct modifiers is fixed and it follows a specific hierarchy. Based on a comparison of genetically and typologically distinct English and Chinese, the authors propose that with the hierarchical modification the ordering hierarchy seems to be universal.

The reason for the universal nature of the phenomena is not addressed directly, but one can assume that it can follow from either

- (15) a) universal semantic hierarchy, or
- b) a string of universal functional head projections related to the head N.⁶

The string of fixed ordered functional heads would be certainly reflected by a relevant interpretation as well, so it seems that the two reasons mentioned above are equivalent. However, the semantic hierarchy which is not grammaticalized to the form of a string of functional heads would most likely be less strict than the string of functional heads.

The following section will briefly summarise the word order constraints mentioned in a traditional descriptive linguistic framework with regard to Czech.

2.6 THE ORDER OF ADJECTIVES (IN CZECH)

In an influential syntactic handbook, Šmilauer (1969) states that the unmarked word order of the Czech hierarchical attributes preceding the noun is

- (16) *all/every/whole/demonstratives* → *possessives* → *numerals* →
quantitative/qualitative adjectives → *determining adjectives* → *adjectives*
*idiomatically related to the noun*⁷

In the Academic Czech Grammar (Daneš et al. 1987), in the third volume dealing with syntax, the ordering of prenominal attributes is characterized as depending on the variety of adjectives combined. According to the authors, the ordering tendency can generally be characterized as follows: the closer the relation of the attribute to the head noun, the closer its position to the head.

- (17) As for the ordering of individual attributes, the relevant lexical semantic properties are traditionally labelled as “objective,” “subjective” and “relational.” (See Daneš et al. 1987, 164).⁸

The authors provide a number of not always clearly defined combinations and mention a high level of freedom. The ordering they mention can be summarized as follows:

6. Projection Hierarchy (see Adger 2003) is the principle that requires an ordering of functional heads. It is a descriptive rule that lacks independent motivation but is, at the moment, probably necessary. The same result would be achieved by stating that functional heads have a highly restricted (or unique) c-selection.

7. “(1) *všechn, každý, celý; zájména ukazovací*; (2) *přivlastňovací adjektiva a zájména*; (3) *číslovky*; (4) *adjektiva, nejprve kvantitativní a kvalitativní, pak rozlišující; přímo u substantiva ta, která s ním tvoří sousloví*.” See Šmilauer (1969, 311).

8. Pokud jde o vzájemné postavení složek přívlastku u postupně rozvíjejícího, jsou pro ně relevantní lexikálně-sémantické vlastnosti tradičně označované pomocí charakteristik “rozlišující,” “hodnotící” a “relační.” See Daneš et al., 164.

- (18) Academic Czech Grammar 3 (Daneš et al. 1987, 160–66)
 relational (pronouns, numerals, temporal/local/contextual adjectives →
 subjective adjectives → close objective adjectives → distant objective adjectives
 → idiomatic adjectives

The *Encyclopaedia of Czech Language* (2002, 426) states the order of embedded agreeing attributes preceding the noun as follows:

- (19) determiner → quantifier → adj. quality (evaluative) → adj. relative (restrictive, classifying) → other adj. relational.

Recalling sentence dynamism, the dictionary states that in the case of more relative adjectives, those closer to the noun are closer also semantically.

The order of multiple premodifiers does not seem to be much of an issue in students' Czech grammars and more popular manuals. They discuss, above all, the distinction between the parallel multiple (několikanásobný) attributes and multiply embedded (postupně se rozvíjející) attributes because only the former is divided by commas in Czech. As for ordering, the multiple attributes are said to have a free word order and the multiple embedded attribute order cannot be violated. Which order it is, however, they do not specify.⁹

3. EXAMINING THE ORDER OF ADJECTIVES

The references in the previous chapter affirm a general lack of agreement about the ordering of adjectives and even about the concepts which should be relevant for their classification. This section will summarise in more detail a comparative study of adjectival modifiers based on data collection and corpora search.

Pereltsvaig's careful analysis of the structure of Russian noun phrases (2007) compares Russian and English data, and the ordering of adjectival premodifiers is one of the arguments she makes for the universal DP hypothesis. She shows that in Russian, adjective modifiers are distinct for demonstratives, possessives and cardinality expressions with respect to all linguistic levels, i.e., their meaning, format (morphology) and distribution. While discussing the relative ordering of adjectival modifiers, Pereltsvaig recalls a detailed hierarchy of adjective types taken from Scott (2002, 102).

- (20) The order of pre-modifiers: Scott (2002, 102):
 Subjective Evaluation → Size → Length → Height → Speed → Depth → Width
 → Weight → Wetness → Age → Shape → Colour → Nationality/origin →
 material

Pereltsvaig conducted a survey of both Russian and English speakers to compare their judgements about relative ordering of pre-modifiers in a complex NP. Her test consisted

9. See, e.g., the first references one can get on the web when searching for the order of multiple attributes: Korekturyjazykove (2011) or Diktatorek (2014).

of 30 pairs of adjectives followed by a compatible noun. All the adjectives were the first matching types on the frequency list (all belong to the top 500 items), and a noun was chosen which represented a possible collocation choice. In the test, both options of adjective order were proposed and the speakers were asked to give their preferred order or indicate that both orders are equally acceptable. The pairs occurring in the test were, e.g., as follows in (21). The numbers in broken brackets refer to the numbers used in the Figures 2–3 below in Pereltsvaig's tests.

- (21) [1] *čornyj staryj botinok* – *a black old shoe*
 [2] *glavnyj ruskyj poet* – *a major Russian poet*
 [3] *znakomyj vysokij špil* – *a familiar tall spire*
 [4] *seryj strašnyj barak* – *a grey hideous cabin*
 [5] *mělkij bystryj ručej* – *a shallow fast creek*
 [6] *karotkij prostoj otvět* – *a short simple answer*
 [7] *zdarovyj ryžij kot* – *a huge red cat*
 [8] *prijatnyj vzroslyj razgovor* – *a nice adult conversation*
 [9] *goluboj tonkij svitěr* – *a blue thin sweater*
 [10] *plochoj anglijskij čaj* – *a bad English tea*
 [11] *staryj bělyj taburet* – *an old white stool*

The tested speakers were repeatedly instructed to work with neutral and no comma intonation and with no focus or contrastive stress reading of any of the adjectives. Although the prozodic requirements are not easy to guarantee, the speakers of both languages (34 native Russian and 26 native English) were subject to the same conditions. The speakers' responses were then evaluated as to whether they were contradicting Scott's hierarchy in (20).

The findings were as follows: the overall rate of disagreement with the proposed hierarchy was 11.5 percent with the Russian and 11.4 percent with the English speakers. Moreover, the Russian speakers judged both orders possible with 3.2 percent of the samples, while the English speakers allowed both orders for 10 percent of the samples. In both groups the closeness of the two adjectives on the Scott's hierarchy played a role—i.e., those adjectives appearing close to each other were evaluated as allowing a higher level of freedom. When the two adjectives were far apart in the hierarchy, the restrictions of their order were much stronger than when the two adjectives were close to each other on the hierarchy. That the distance on the hierarchy makes a difference lends support to Scott's list.

(22) The results of an English–Russian comparison (Pereltsvaig 2007, test)

	ENGLISH	RUSSIAN
rate of disagreement of the “wrong” pair	11.4%	11.5%
both orders possible	10%	3.2%
closeness of the adjs. on the scale and the fixed ordering are correlated	yes: ↑↑	yes: ↑↑
higher frequency of the adj. forces more fixed ordering	yes: ↑↑	yes: ↑↑

The author concludes that when prosody, stress and the relative length of the adjectives were made comparable,¹⁰ both Russian and English speakers exhibited a fully comparable degree of sensitivity to the hierarchy given in (20).

In her study, Pereltsvaig (2007) mentions also a corpus survey that checked the occurrence of the orders corresponding to what is expected from Scott’s hierarchy with the number of occurrences of the order not predicted. Her test, however, was done for Russian data only, and the study does not give exact numbers. Her findings demonstrate that the number of expected orderings substantially exceed the number of unexpected orderings and that this distinction is more striking with the high frequency pairs.

3.1 RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This study presents the results of a comparable test of the preferred ordering in chosen pairs of adjectives in English and in Czech. It tests Scott’s hierarchy and compares the results with Pereltsvaig’s data. Because Czech native speakers’ evaluations proved difficult to obtain, only the corpus was utilized.¹¹

The questions in (23) were addressed in the test. (23a-d) have already been proposed for English, and therefore the main value is in contrasting the results between the two languages, i.e., (23e), which can be used to argue for the universal NP/DP hypothesis.

- (23) a. Do Czech/English respect any adj. hierarchy – i.e., are their NPs “hierarchical”?
 b. Do Czech/English respect the adj. hierarchy proposed by Scott (2002)?
 c. Is the preference influenced by the distance of the adjectives on the scale?
 d. Is the preference influenced by the frequency of the adjectives in a specific pair?
 e. Are the answers on (a)-(d) above comparable in English and Czech?

10. A prosodic effect requiring a short element to precede the long element was attested for, e.g., coordination structures in English. Phrases like ‘salt and pepper’ or ‘men and women’ are more likely than ‘pepper and salt’ and ‘women and men.’ The traditional explanation refers to the general preference in English for the beats organised into a trochaic foot structure. The only prosodic explanation, however, need not be the right one, as far as no similar effects (shorter-before-longer requirement) was attested to in either English or Russian combinations of adjectives tested in Pereltsvaig’s test.

11. The discrepancy between what the Czech speakers believe is acceptable and what they productively use is huge, lowering thus the relevance of their evaluations. After being told repeatedly that Czech has a free word order language, only very few of them can abstract from pragmatically marked constructions and they seem to be unable to ignore stress and focus criterion, especially with written language.

4. THE DATA

The following table provides examples (in both Czech and English) of adjectives representing the individual categories (prototypes) of the hierarchy used in Scott (2002). The most frequented types were chosen – based on the frequency lists – according to SYN2010 and COCA for English.¹²

(24) Corpora

	CZECH	ENGLISH
Corpus	Syn2010	COCA
Description	Synchronic representative corpus	Corpus of Contemporary American English
Size	121 667 413 positions	425 million words (1/5 of the size is spoken)

4.1 TYPES OF ADJECTIVES

The following tables in (25a) and (25b) provide the choice of adjectives which were combined into pairs. The table also gives the frequency of the adjective and the absolute number of its occurrences in the corpus.

(25) [Placed in the Appendix at the end of the article]

4.2 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

From the list, two kinds of combinations (pairings) were searched for in corpus: one following Scott's hierarchy and the other not. Tables (26) and (27) give in detail the numeric values of the corpora search first for English and then for Czech. The tables provide numbers of occurrences of the combinations predicted by Scott's hierarchy in the A column and the number of occurrences representing the violation of the hierarchy in the B column. The last two columns give a minimalized ratio between the A and B numbers. If Scott's hierarchy is valid, the A in the ratio should be substantially higher than 1.

(26) [Placed in the Appendix at the end of the article]

Notice that the tables in (26) and (27) provide results for the pairings with the couplings of adjectives in all possible combinations, i.e., they check the frequent and infrequent pairings separately. Moreover, the [1]-[6] pairs combine adjectives that are not very distant on Scott's scale, while [7]-[10] search for more distant pairs.

(27) [Placed in the Appendix at the end of the article]

Comparing the last two columns in the two tables (26) and (27), we can see that in the ratio between (A), the number of predicted occurrences, with (B), the number of

12. I am highly indebted to my research assistant Monika Pitnerová for her careful dealing with the corpora data collection. Without her help this paper would not have been possible.

occurrences out of compliance with the hierarchy as proposed by Scott (2002) and Pereltsvaig (2007), the first of the numbers gives the amount of the examples predicted in Scott's hierarchy. Notice that this number (with the exception of one pair [4] *weight* → *age*) is always higher than the number of the examples which do *not* comply with Scott's hierarchy. The summarised ratio for English is 6:1, and for Czech it is 32:1. Given that [4] provides unpredicted results for both languages, it is perhaps a flaw in the hierarchy. Omitting those results not to obscure the others, the ratios are 8.3:1 for English (1732:208) and 49.8:1 (1694:34) for Czech. Without [4], the results signal that if English can be taken for a language with an uncontroversially hierarchical NP structure, Czech has such a hierarchical structure as well. The numbers from the above tables are summarised for each pairing in (28), which gives the percentage of occurrences of the examples not complying with Scott's hierarchy with respect to those that followed the hierarchy. The pairing [4] is taken as inverted.

(28) Percentage of acceptability of the unpredicted examples

pair	CZECH				ENGLISH	
	ΣA	ΣB	%	%	ΣA	ΣB
[1]	12	0	0	16	173	28
[2]	19	5	26	11	80	9
[3]	3	1	33	11	9	1
[4]	17	5	29	56	79	44
[5]	85	1	1	12	631	78
[6]	16	1	6	2.3	426	10
[7]	22	11	50	32	44	14
[8]	881	11	1	21	261	55
[9]	4	0	0	2	46	1
[10]	652	4	1	19	62	12
	1711	39	2.3	13.9	1811	252

The percentage of toleration to the counter-hierarchical pairings is 2.3 for Czech and 13.9 for English. This result thus confirms that in both English and Czech, NPs show a hierarchy among adjective premodifiers and the tolerance for re-orderings is in Czech even lower than in English.¹³

4.3 DISTANCE CRITERION

If Scott's Adjective Hierarchy is valid, one also expects that the tolerance for reordering will be lower with pairings of adjectives which can be found far from each other on the scale. The table below checks this criterion, showing the percentage of tolerance for

13. The discrepancy between (22) and (31), i.e., between Pereltsvaig's 11.4 percent for English and the 16 percent resulting from the research in this study, may signal a distinction between the data collected from native speakers' evaluations and from corpora.

the pairings [1]-[6], which represent pairings close on the scale, separately from the pairings [7]-[10] which are adjectives appearing further apart in Scott's scale. ([4] is omitted).

(29) Close and more distant pairings

pair	distance on the scale	CZECH			ENGLISH		
		ΣA	ΣB	%	%	ΣA	ΣB
[1]	2	12	0	0	16	173	28
[2]	2	19	5	26	11	80	9
[3]	2	3	1	33	11	9	1
[5]	2	85	1	1	12	631	78
[6]	2	16	1	6	2.3	426	10
		135	8	5.9	9.6	1319	126
[7]	6	22	11	50	32	44	14
[8]	7	881	11	1	21	261	55
[9]	11	4	0	0	2	46	1
[10]	12	652	4	1	19	62	12
		1559	26	1.7	19.9	413	82

Comparing the percentile average acceptability of counter-hierarchy orders with the percentage of acceptability for the pairings closer/more distant on the scale, in Czech the average 2.3 percent is contrasted with 5.9 and 1.7 percent, thus confirming the expectation that the more distant pairs of adjectives will allow less tolerance and will follow their order more strictly than those closer to each other on the scale. However, in English, the average 13.9 percent is compared with only 9.6 percent for the close pairings and about 19.9 percent for the more distant ones. This result was unexpected. In other words, the results of this comparison suggest that Czech respects the hierarchy more strictly than English and the adjectival order in the premodifying field is more fixed in Czech than in English.

4.4 FREQUENCY CRITERION

The following two tables compare the levels of acceptability of the counter-hierarchy orderings related to the frequency of the adjectives used for the pairings. The A column gives the number of occurrences of the more frequent pairings (examples marked as (a) in (25)) with the pairs containing the less frequent examples (examples marked as (b) in (25)).

(30) Tolerance related to a more/less frequent Adjs. pairings

ENGLISH										
more frequent pairings					less frequent pairings					
		A		B	%		A		B	%
[1]	1a-3a	149	3a-1a	21	14	1b-3b	3	3b-1b	0	0
[2]	3a-5a	0	5a-3a	0	0	3b-5b	2	5b-3b	1	50
[3]	5a-7a	1	7a-5a	0	0	5b-7b	0	7b-5b	0	0
[5]	10a-12a	142	12a-10a	38	26.8	10b-12b	106	12b-10b	0	0
[6]	12a-14a	220	14a-12a	6	2.7	12b-14b	48	14b-12b	0	0
[7]	2a-8a	4	8a-2a	1	25	2b-8b	14	8b-2b	3	21.4
[8]	2a-13a	115	13a-2a	21	18	2b-13b	43	13b-2b	5	11.6
[9]	1a-8a	3	8a-1a	0	0	1b-8b	1	8b-1b	0	0
[10]	1a-13a	43	13a-1a	11	25.6	1b-13b	3	13b-1b	0	0
		677		98	14.5		220		9	4.1

CZECH										
more frequent pairings					less frequent pairings					
		A		B	%		A		B	%
[1]	1a-3a	1	3a-1a	0	0	1b-3b	0	3b-1b	0	0
[2]	3a-5a	4	5a-3a	1	25	3b-5b	1	5b-3b	1	100
[3]	5a-7a	0	7a-5a	0	0	5b-7b	0	7b-5b	0	0
[5]	10a-12a	29	12a-10a	0	0	10b-12b	22	12b-10b	0	0
[6]	12a-14a	14	14a-12a	1	7.1	12b-14b	0	14b-12b	0	0
[7]	2a-8a	8	8a-2a	0	0	2b-8b	6	8b-2b	0	0
[8]	2a-13a	413	13a-2a	4	1	2b-13b	14	13b-2b	0	0
[9]	1a-8a	0	8a-1a	0	0	1b-8b	0	8b-1b	0	0
[10]	1a-13a	525	13a-1a	3	0.6	1b-13b	0	13b-1b	0	0
		994		9	0.9		43		1	2.3

The results show that, contrary to Pereltsvaig's claim, in this corpora study of English the more frequent examples tolerate more freedom than those less frequent. The percentage of tolerance in the left column (for the [a+a] examples) is lower than the percentage in the right column (for the [b+b] examples). In other words, the level of acceptability of the hierarchy violation is higher with the frequent adjective pairs than the level of acceptability of the violation with the less frequent pairs. Notice that the phenomena is distinct in Czech, where the higher frequency results in a lower tolerance to the counter-hierarchical pairings.

However, looking more closely at the Czech table, the results are the consequence of one single example.¹⁴ Without this one, the frequency in the right column would be

14. "... odcházela chůzí, na kterou nikdy nezapomenu: *pomalými krátkými krůčky*" (Kundera 1991).

0. Similarly in English, the results depend on 1–3 examples. The small amount of data therefore does not allow any conclusions, and the frequency parameter must remain open in this study.

5. CONCLUSION

In (23), questions were formulated, which were then addressed using the data collected in the corpora search. The topics are repeated below together with the answers based on the data statistics presented in the preceding sections.

- (31) a. Do Czech and English data suggest a word-order hierarchy inside NP – i.e., are their NPs “hierarchical”?

Yes. Both English and Czech prefer one specific order of adjectival premodifiers over the opposite one.

- b. Do Czech and English respect the hierarchy proposed by Scott (2002)?

Mostly yes, though some specific qualities may still require more research.

- c. Is the preference influenced by the distance of the adjectives on the scale?

Contradictory results: In Czech, the more distant pairs of adjectives follow the hierarchical order more strictly than those closer to each other on the scale. In English, the result is opposite. The more distant pairs of adjectives follow the hierarchical order less strictly than those closer to each other on the scale.

- d. Is the preference influenced by the frequency of the adjectives in a specific pair?

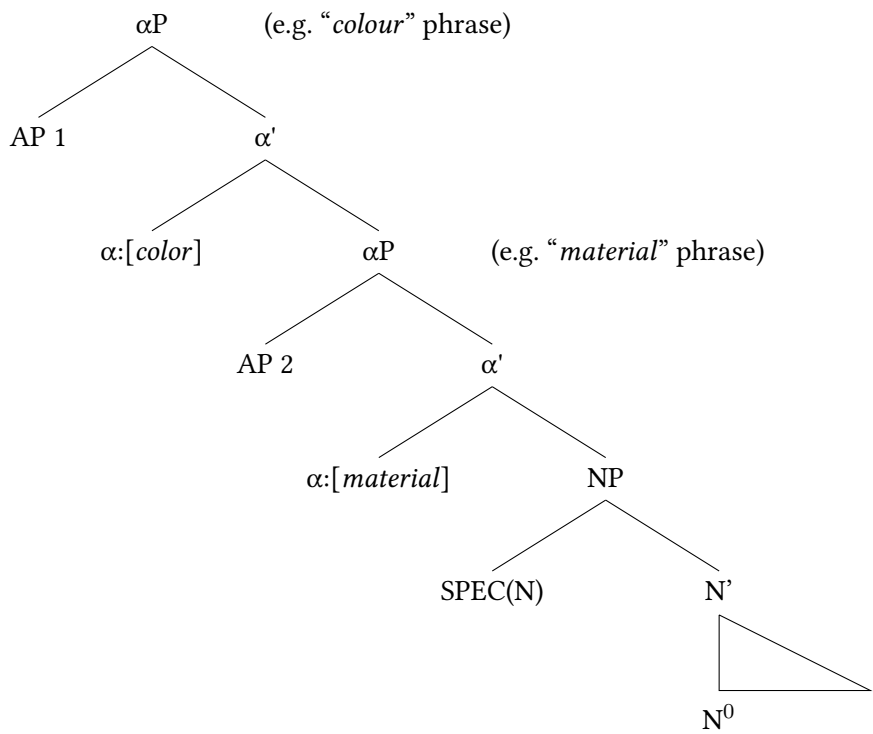
Pereltsvaig (2007) claims that the more frequent adjectives follow the proposed hierarchy more strictly than the less frequent ones. The results of the corpora search provide opposite data for English. However, given the low numbers of examples, the influence of frequency cannot be either confirmed or denied using this study.

- e. Are the preferences in English and Czech the same?

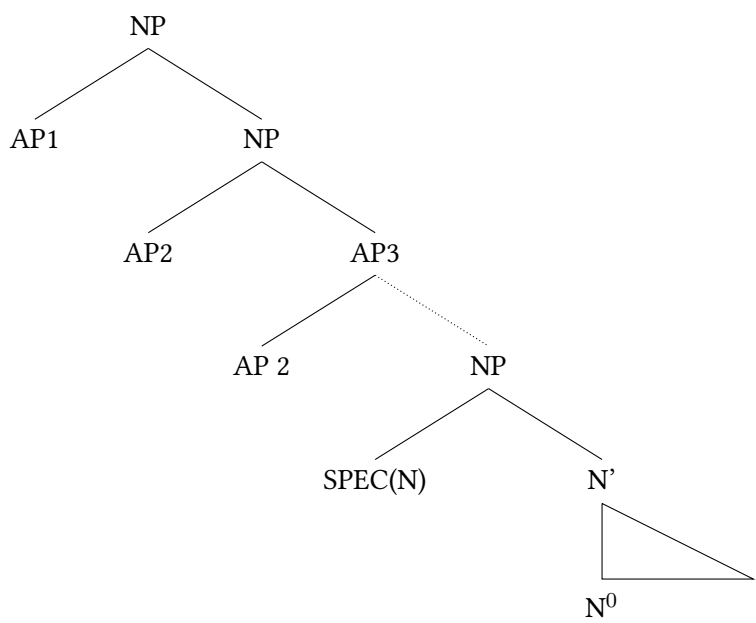
Yes, in most aspects they are very comparable, even in those details which contradict the expectations. If there is any distinction, then it is in favour of stricter word order in a Czech NP than in an English NP.

I accepted the methodology used in Pereltsvaig’s study to allow comparison with her results. However, I do not accept her conclusions and claims. She takes a relatively fixed ordering of adjectives (to a high extent universal) as proof of the existence of a hierarchically- ordered string of functional heads between NP and DP in (6). This kind of layered NP projection is using the framework developed in Cinque (1994) and in the couple of trees in (32) is represented by the upper one, i.e. (32a).

(32) a. α P functional heads



b. Recursive NP adjunction



According to the scheme in (32a), Pereltsvaig (2007)¹⁵ assumes for each adjective a specific functional head Alpha (α), which hosts the AP in its SPEC. Each of the probably up to 15 functional heads would carry its own semantic feature, and the APs with the same interpretation will be located in its SPEC. This proposal, however does not respect several characteristics of the adjectival premodifiers, which are widely attested to cross-language and at least one of which has been attested to in this study. The relevant characteristic is the distinction between the word order changes inside the D and N fields. Recall that every author dealing with the topic mentions the strict ordering within the determiners and more relaxed (though still hierarchical) ordering inside the NP field. I propose that the tendencies (i.e., rules with a serious number of exceptions) are more likely a result of a semantic component that allows for individual reinterpretation than of a syntactic subcategorization.¹⁶

If there were a string of functional heads above NP, their ordering would probably depend on strict and unique subcategorization and such a hierarchy is unlikely to be violated. Using the parallel with a VP, the functional projections represented by English auxiliaries and modals would not tolerate 20 percent counter-hierarchical orders, i.e., the same amount of freedom as attested with the prenominal adjectives. Therefore I propose a traditional adjunction analysis as in the second scheme, i.e., (32b). The adjuncts are imposing their own scopes, and this scope probably respects a semantic hierarchy that allows individual modification.

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15. For more cross language development of the same idea, see also Julien (2002).

16. In a more elaborate functional framework, Rijkhoff (2002, 332) proposes a similar Principle of Scope, which requires “an embedded domain . . . occur next to the element(s) it has in its scope.” The author, moreover, refers to other principles (Principle of Domain Integrity, Principle of Head Proximity and Principle of Pragmatic Highlighting) and assumes a language specific (optimalist) hierarchy between the principles.

APPENDIX

(25) a) Types of Adjectives (and their frequency¹⁷) – in Czech

	category		type	frequency	absolute number
1	subjective evaluation	a	dobrý	6.	113 354
		b	špatný	29	30 855
2	size	a	velký	1.	186 500
		b	malý	7.	89 884
3	length	a	dlouhý	19.	46 469
		b	krátký	69	18 859
4	height	a	vysoký	9.	74 547
		b	nízký	51	22 868
5	speed	a	rychlý	99.	14 952
		b	pomalý	487.	3 738
6	depth		hluboký	118.	12 463
7	weight	a	těžký	44.	25 068
		b	lehký	164	9 563
8	temperature	a	studený	261	6 751
		b	horký	279.	6 454
9	dampness		suchý	286.	6 254
10	age	a	nový	3.	141 358
		b	starý	10.	71 596
11	shape		kulatý	598.	2 930
12	colour	a	bílý	31.	29 744
		b	červený	95.	15 177
13	origin/nationality	a	český	8.	77 158
		b	evropský	26.	34 290
14	material	a	dřevěný	178.	9 005
		b	železný	413	4 406
15	type attribute		jižní	135.	11 308

17. In Table (25) the examples on the lines marked (a) are those with a very high frequency. The examples marked as (b) are substantially less frequent.

b) Types of Adjectives (and their frequency¹⁸) – in English

	category		type	frequency	absolute number
1	subjective evaluation	a	good	3.	271 653
		b	bad	23.	113 642
2	size	a	big	6.	192 554
		b	small	8.	189 213
3	length	a	long	16.	139 673
		b	short	60.	58 970
4	height	a	tall	167.	27 080
		b	low	24.	111 782
5	speed	a	quick	181.	25 634
		b	slow	240.	20 823
6	depth		deep	96.	41 883
7	weight	a	heavy	104.	39 570
		b	light	140.	31 475
8	temperature	a	cold	88.	44 348
		b	hot	68.	54 909
9	dampness		dry	178.	25 835
10	age	a	new	2.	413 125
		b	old	5.	227 651
11	shape		round	457.	10 833
12	colour	a	white	17.	127 823
		b	red	46.	69 531
13	origin/nationality	a	American	9.	183 524
		b	European	138.	31 781
14	material	a	plastic	??	??
		b	rubber	794	5 396
15	type attribute		southern	121	34 947

18. In Table (25) the examples on the lines marked (a) are those with a very high frequency. The examples marked as (b) are substantially less frequent.

(26) The predicted (A) and unpredicted (B) order of chosen adjectives (English)

	A – OK – combination	tokens	B – *?? – combination	tokens	A	B	
[1]	good – long	149	long – good	21	7	1	
	good – short	17	short – good	1	17	1	
	bad – long	4	long – bad	6	0.7	1	
	bad – short	3	short – bad	0	3	0	
[2]	long – quick	0	quick – long	0	0	0	
	long – slow	73	slow – long	0	73	0	
	short – quick	5	quick – short	8	0.6	1	
	short – slow	2	slow – short	1	2	1	
[3]	quick – heavy	1	heavy – quick	0	1	0	
	quick – light	4	light – quick	1	4	1	
	slow – heavy	4	heavy – slow	0	4	0	
	slow – light	0	light – slow	0	0	0	
[4]	heavy – new	8	new – heavy	11	0.7	1	
	heavy – old	25	old – heavy	6	4	1	
	light – new	9	new – light	51	0.2	1	
	light – old	2	old – light	11	0.2	1	
[5]	new – white	142	white – new	38	3.7	1	
	new – red	107	red – new	17	6	1	
	old – white	276	white – old	23	12	1	
	old – red	106	red – old	0	106	0	
[6]	white – plastic	220	plastic – white	6	37	1	
	white – rubber	23	rubber – white	0	23	0	
	red – plastic	135	plastic – red	4	34	1	
	red – rubber	48	rubber – red	0	48	0	
[7]	big – cold	4	cold – big	1	4	1	
	big – hot	16	hot – big	10	1.6	1	
	small – cold	10	cold – small	0	10	0	
	small – hot	14	hot – small	3	5	1	
[8]	big – American	115	American – big	21	5.5	1	
	big – European	18	European – big	2	9	1	
	small – American	85	American – small	27	3	1	
	small – European	43	European – small	5	8.6	1	
[9]	good – cold	3	cold – good	0	3	0	
	good – hot	38	hot – good	1	38	1	
	bad – cold	4	cold – bad	0	4	0	
	bad – hot	1	hot – bad	0	1	0	
[10]	good – American	43	American – good	11	4	1	
	good – European	5	European – good	1	5	1	
	bad – American	11	American – bad	0	11	0	
	bad – European	3	European – bad	0	3	0	
		1776			287	6	1

(27) The predicted (A) and unpredicted (B) order of chosen adjectives (Czech)

	A-OK	combination	tokens	ipm	ARF	B	combination	tokens	ipm	ARF	A	B
[1]	1a-3a	dobrý – dlouhý	1	0.01	1	3a-1a	dlouhý – dobrý	0	0.0	–	1	0
	1a-3b	dobrý – krátký	11	0.09	6	3b-1a	krátký – dobrý	0	0.0	–	11	0
	1b-3a	špatný – dlouhý	0	0.0	–	3a-1b	dlouhý – špatný	0	0.0	–	0	0
	1b-3b	špatný – krátký	0	0.0	–	3b-1b	krátký – špatný	0	0.0	–	0	0
[2]	3a-5a	dlouhý – rychlý	4	0.03	2	5a-3a	rychlý – dlouhý	1	0.01	1	4	1
	3a-5b	dlouhý – pomalý	7	0.06	2	5b-3a	pomalý – dlouhý	1	0.01	1	7	1
	3b-5a	krátký – rychlý	7	0.06	4	5a-3b	rychlý – krátký	2	0.02	1	3.5	1
	3b-5b	krátký – pomalý	1	0.01	1	5b-3b	pomalý – krátký	1	0.01	1	1	1
[3]	5a-7a	rychlý – těžký	0	0.0	–	7a-5a	těžký – rychlý	0	0.0	–	0	0
	5a-7b	rychlý – lehký	1	0.01	1	7b-5a	lehký – rychlý	1	0.01	1	1	1
	5b-7a	pomalý – těžký	2	0.02	1	7a-5b	těžký – pomalý	0	0.0	–	2	0
	5b-7b	pomalý – lehký	0	0.0	–	7b-5b	lehký – pomalý	0	0.0	–	0	0
[4]	7a-10a	těžký – nový	2	0.02	1	10a-7a	nový – těžký	8	0.07	6	0.25	1
	7a-10b	těžký – starý	3	0.02	2	10b-7a	starý – těžký	3	0.02	2	1	1
	7b-10a	lehký – nový	0	0.0	–	10a-7b	nový – lehký	4	0.03	2	0	4
	7b-10b	lehký – starý	0	0.0	–	10b-7b	starý – lehký	2	0.02	1	0	2
[5]	10a-12a	nový – bílý*	29	0.24	16	12a-10a	bílý – nový	0	0.0	–	29	0
	10a-12b	nový – červený	12	0.10	7	12b-10a	červený – nový*	1	0.01	1	12	0
	10b-12a	starý – bílý*	22	0.18	11	12a-10b	bílý – starý*	1	0.01	1	22	1
	10b-12b	starý – červený*	22	0.18	10	12b-10b	červený – starý	0	0.0	–	22	0
[6]	12a-14a	bílý – dřevěný	14	0.12	6	14a-12a	dřevěný – bílý	1	0.01	1	14	1
	12a-14b	bílý – železný	0	0.0	–	14b-12a	železný – bílý	0	0.0	–	0	0
	12b-14a	červený – dřevěný	2	0.02	1	14a-12b	dřevěný – červený	0	0.0	–	2	0
	12b-14b	červený – železný	0	0.0	–	14b-12b	železný – červený	0	0.0	–	0	0
[7]	2a-8a	velký – studený*	8	0.07	4	8a-2a	studený – velký	0	0.0	–	8	0
	2a-8b	velký – horký	1	0.01	1	8b-2a	horký – velký*	11	0.09	1	0.1	1
	2b-8a	malý – studený*	7	0.06	3	8a-2b	studený – malý	0	0.0	–	7	0
	2b-8b	malý – horký	6	0.05	2	8b-2b	horký – malý	0	0.0	–	6	0
[8]	2a-13a	velký – český	413	3.39	169	13a-2a	český – velký	4	0.03	2	103	1
	2a-13b	velký – evropský*	344	2.83	139	13b-2a	evropský – velký*	4	0.03	2	86	1
	2b-13a	malý – český	110	0.90	57	13a-2b	český – malý	3	0.02	2	37	1
	2b-13b	malý – evropský	14	0.12	7	13b-2b	evropský – malý	0	0.0	–	14	0
[9]	1a-8a	dobrý – studený	0	0.0	–	8a-1a	studený – dobrý	0	0.0	–	0	0
	1a-8b	dobrý – horký	4	0.03	2	8b-1a	horký – dobrý	0	0.0	–	4	0
	1b-8a	špatný – studený	0	0.0	–	8a-1b	studený – špatný	0	0.0	–	0	0
	1b-8b	špatný – horký	0	0.0	–	8b-1b	horký – špatný	0	0.0	–	0	0
[10]	1a-13a	dobrý – český*	525	4.32	197	13a-1a	český – dobrý	3	0.02	1	175	1
	1a-13b	dobrý – evropský	116	0.95	51	13b-1a	evropský – dobrý	1	0.01	1	116	1
	1b-13a	špatný – český*	11	0.09	4	13a-1b	český – špatný	0	0.0	–	11	0
	1b-13b	špatný – evropský	0	0.0	–	13b-1b	evropský – špatný	0	0.0	–	0	0
			1699						51		32	1

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(DE)VERBAL MODIFIERS IN ATTRIBUTE + NOUN COLLOCATIONS AND COMPOUNDS: VERBS, DEVERBAL NOUNS OR SUFFIXED ADJECTIVES?

RADEK VOGEL

Masaryk University, Faculty of Education, Department of English Language and Literature,
Poříčí 9, 603 00 Brno, Czech Republic. Email: vogel@ped.muni.cz

ABSTRACT: English as an analytic language particularly poor in inflections and relatively poor in derivational suffixes does not often mark word classes by specific morphemes. On the contrary, one form of a word can be used in several grammatical functions, and an identical word form can have several meanings in several word classes. The frequent occurrence of conversion between word classes thus allows one form, often the base or simplest one, to perform several roles, and, at the same time, makes identification of its grammatically and semantically defined word class difficult, especially in multiword phrases functioning as a whole. The most frequent type of a noun phrase, Attr+N phrase, can thus be realised in several ways, with different word classes performing the function of syntactic attribute. This paper looks into a less frequent subtype of this phrase in English, one which uses a semantically (de)verbal attribute, and tries to establish rules governing the choice between the two main options, using either the base form or a derived one (e.g., *call centre* vs. *writing paper*). Shedding light on this issue has practical applications in mastering appropriate formation as well as correct understanding of English multiword phrases or terms (mostly nominal), which is an important skill in a non-native environment (especially in EAP) where English is used as a lingua franca.

KEYWORDS: argument; attribute; base; compound; modifier; noun phrase; semantic roles; verb

1. NOUN PHRASES WITH PREMODIFYING ATTRIBUTES

English syntactic structures functioning as noun phrases differ from their equivalents in inflectional languages (e.g., Czech, Russian, and to a lesser degree German) both formally and semantically. The attributive word does not often possess any typical or visible marker of attributiveness, such as adjectival suffixes or at least genitival/possessive inflections. Although these are also frequent in English, they are employed non-systematically. Attributes in noun phrases express such relations as description, possession, purpose, material, provenance, origin, etc. The lexical forms used to correspond to these functions can be derivational adjectives with adjectival suffixes, sometimes analogical to those used in verbal participles (*-ing*, *-ed*) or with purely adjectival suffixes (*-al*, *-ic*, *-ish*, *-ous*, etc.), denominal (or genitival/possessive) forms of nouns, or unchanged, base forms of nouns and even verbs used as attributes to other nouns. Similarly, Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 444) state that “internal modifiers in pre-head position are realised by DPs, AdjPs, VPs with past participle or gerund-participle heads, and nominals in plain or genitive use.”

1.1 (DE)VERBAL ATTRIBUTES IN NPs

Particularly interesting among these is a group of fixed noun phrases, i.e., collocations, but rather compounds, which include the attribute derived from a verb. Having such dynamic properties, the verb may be transformed into a deverbal adjective, expressing either the activity performed by the agent or instrument referred to by the head noun, or the activity to which the head noun is exposed as an affected object, recipient, experiencer, location, etc. A more complex case is when the activity is transformed into a deverbal noun, such as in *cooking apple* (which can be paraphrased as “apple for cooking”). In other cases, just the base form of the verb (or should it be interpreted rather as a noun converted from the verb?) functions as the attribute, not taking any adjectival suffixes. In short, virtually all these combinations are used when the attribute derives from a dynamic verb.

Collocations and compounds are an effective method of integrating and/or modifying meaning for the purposes of naming complex concepts. Compounding is also a productive process as far as formation of terms or other complex neologisms is concerned. Numerous examples of relatively recent coinages using verbal attributes prove it, such as *break-dance*, *catchphrase*, *checklist*, *drive range*, *helpdesk*, *touchpad*, *pay-phone*, *shareware*, *watchdog*; also the names of products and services, such as *Clickpad*, *Pay Pal*, *PlayStation*, *Savenet*, *Readlog*, etc.

The question then is what rules exist, if any, that explain the choice of the form of such an attribute in NPs? If there are some rules, are they strict or only very rough? Are the potentially existing rules reliable enough to guide users of English (particularly non-native ones) when they want to express a new complex meaning and therefore need to create a naming for it (in our case a noun phrase formed from a predicate and its argument)? Does the form chosen for such an attribute reveal more precisely the dominant semantic traits incorporated in the meaning of the whole noun phrase?

1.2 METHODOLOGY

When a semantically dynamic verb gives rise to an attribute to the head noun in a conventionalised noun phrase (i.e., one that is accepted as a multi-word expression referring standardly to some concept) and such an attribute in different phrases occurs in several morphological forms, these variants are compared and analysed. The properties subject to comparison are the form, the meaning and the syntactic function.

The results of analysis focused on the three above-mentioned characteristics are then summed up, and conclusions are drawn as to the relevant correlations between their individual variants. It is assumed that some rough rules can be identified that govern the choices underlying the formation of attributes based on dynamic verbs.

The hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

1. There exists a correspondence between the forms of (de)verbal attributes functioning as premodifiers in lexicalised NPs and the semantic roles of the arguments of predicate (syntactically its complements and adjuncts).

2. The most frequent type of premodifier is morphologically marked (i.e., it has an adjectival suffix or participial/gerundial inflection).
3. The choice of morphologically unmarked type (i.e., the base form of verb) is semantically explainable.
4. Despite easy conversion in English, the verbal rather than nominal status of deverbal attributes is distinguishable.

Selection of the noun phrases for this research was determined by the level of their lexicalisation, i.e., whether they have established a phraseological status. Therefore, primarily those NPs were chosen that are included in some basic dictionaries, namely *Anglicko-český / česko-anglický slovník* by Josef Fronek (1999), *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (1995) and *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Brown 1993) (further abbreviated as *NSOED*). Also, some nominal compounds and collocations containing commonly used (de)verbal attributes were added although they are not included in the chosen authoritative dictionaries.

As there is ambiguity between compounds (particularly the open, multiword type) and collocations, this criterion has been considered as secondary to the dominant lexical one. However, the distinction between (active) gerundial-particles and verbal passives on the one hand (i.e., those in a collocation, syntactic combination with the head of an NP) and active and passive deverbal adjectives or nouns as premodifiers in NPs on the other hand is, if possible, respected, with the focus on the latter, lexical, type. Apart from this, a type of NP using a base form of verb as a modifier, whether this occurs in solid or open (multi-word) compounds, has been identified as a distinctive type of the lexical combination.

Determination of the verbal character of (de)verbal attributes was complicated by differences in tagging in individual sources, if any at all was provided. Referring to concordancers (such as *Sketch Engine*), browsing through the British National Corpus did not prove useful, since tagging in the case of suffixed words often applies formal methods only (e.g., whatever word derived or inflected from a verb by suffixes or inflectional endings *-ing* or *-ed* is by default labelled as a verb).

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The dominant type of noun compounds in English are N+N compounds (Biber et al. 1999, 326). The share of compounds with premodifying nouns is estimated at 30 to 40 percent (*ibid.*, 589) and in some formal written styles, such as the styles of newspapers and science, the share of N+N compounds even reaches 50 to 66 percent (*ibid.*). The Adj+N type is also frequent (though difficult to distinguish from syntactic combinations, i.e., collocations), but pure V+N compounds are rare.

Before possible conversion of verbs into adjectives or rather keeping their verbal status is discussed, some attention should be paid to the phenomenon of English conversion in general, utilising a parallel with the relationship between substantives and adjectives. Dušková et al. claim that a complete conversion of a substantive into an adjective is rare in English (compared with the opposite direction, substantivisation

of an adjective by conversion) (1988, 26–27). The adjectives then behave as other adjectives, e.g., can be intensified and graded.

Dušková et al. (1988, 27) also state that using substantives in adjectival function as a pre-modifier of another noun is frequent in English. It is also an example of partial conversion, which is only realised syntactically, i.e., by the position of the word. The adjectival character of the substantive is only revealed by its position before another substantive (and conversely, an adjective used substantively is revealed by an article). The morphological markers of a word class are absent.

As Dušková et al. further point out (1988, 27), adjectivisation of a substantive (used as a pre-modifier) is marked by loss of the contrast in number (e.g., *passenger list*, *child labour*), but this is not always the case (e.g., *goods train*, *sports ground*). What is relevant to the question postulated in this paper is Dušková's observation (1988, 28) that if there exist at the same time an adjectivised (converted) substantive and a derived (suffixed) adjective with the same base, the forms are semantically differentiated (*dirty road* vs. *dirt road*).

As Dušková et al. note in relation to modification by several concatenated nouns (or adjectives), the mutual relations between individual components of such phrases are determined by their semantic relations, since formal indicators of the dependences are absent (1988, 28). Logically, if there are several possible interpretations of the relationships, it results in semantic ambiguity. Thus, semantic relations between the attribute and the head noun in a noun phrase is the key to solving our question of distinguishing between different morphological types of deverbal and verbal attributes.

Biber et al. (1999, 530) state that, "Both *-ing* and *-ed* participle forms can be used as participial adjectives." However, they claim that sometimes they can be analysed as being derived from verbs (*working*, *leading*, *prepared*), but sometimes rather from nouns (*interested*, *crowded*). Also, they "vary greatly in how far they possess all the defining characteristics of adjectives," namely gradability and attributive vs. predicative use (where they are very close to main verbs when combined with the copula *be*).

3. TYPES OF PREMODIFYING ATTRIBUTES IN ENGLISH

Pre-modifying attributes in English NPs can be determiner phrases, adjective phrases (where adjectives are either words suffixed by adjectival suffixes such as *-al*, *-ic*, *-ish*, *-ous*, or by suffixes shared with verb participles or VPs, such as *-ing* and *-ed/-en*), verb phrases (present participle/gerund ending in *-ing*, past participle ending in *-ed/-en*, and the base/plain form) and nominals. Nominals can occur either in a plain or a genitive form, as deverbal nouns derived by nominal suffixes (*reaction time*), suffixes shared with verbal nouns (=gerunds) (*singing lesson*, *working hours*) or converted, i.e., identical with base form (*sleep deficit*, *playtime*). This category is the particular focus of this paper.

3.1 DISTINCTION BETWEEN COMPOUNDS AND COMPOSITE NOMINALS

Formally, most nominal premodifying attributes in English NPs show ambiguity with adjectives and verbs. Another ambiguity concerns the distinction between compounds

and composite nominals. Huddleston and Pullum suggest five tests to distinguish between syntactic constructions (collocations) and compounds (2002, 449). In this respect, they also offer an overview of functions and semantic roles of noun pre-head dependents. Passing the first test, i.e., possible COORDINATION of the first element, proves the constructions as syntactic. Relations such as composition (*vegetable salad*), purpose (*cooking apples* = “for cooking”), instrument (*ink printer*) are syntactic constructions with the first component functioning as a MODIFIER, whereas the relations of inherent part (*television screen* = “screen of a television”) and theme (*microfilm reader* = “device for reading microfilms”) have the modifier in the role of a complement (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 449).

If there is some semantic unpredictability in the relation of denotation of the whole to the denotation of its parts, the combination is rather a compound, and it fails the coordination test (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 450). However, some semantically-clear N+N combinations fail the coordination test as well. What makes them compound nouns is thus a syntactic, not a semantic difference. As Huddleston and Pullum note (2002, 450), “the semantic relations involved in composite nominals and compound nouns may be exactly the same: for example, *cutlery box* denotes a box for cutlery, and a *matchbox* denotes a box for matches.” However, *matchbox* does not pass the coordination test. Even the orthography reflects that one is a syntactic construction, while the other a compound.

Showing that an evident compound *washing-machine* fails the coordination test thanks to a different morphological make-up of similar machines, but theoretically is able to pass it with an invention of a descriptively called *washing-, drying- and pressing-machine*, Huddleston and Pullum conclude that such tests “do not yield a sharp division between composite nominals and compound nouns. A good deal of the apparent blurring of the distinction, however, is attributable to reanalysis” (2002, 450). Treating all N+N combinations as composite numerals or, conversely, regarding them all as compounds is not a solution. The other approach would even weaken the distinction between syntax and morphology, accepting as compounds phrases with very long coordinations. As Huddleston and Pullum state: “Both approaches, moreover, raise the problem of the relation between N+N combinations and Adj+N combinations: the coordination and modification tests [...] apply to both” (2002, 451).

Also non-syntactic criteria are suggested for differentiating between composite nominals and compound nouns, namely those based on STRESS, ORTHOGRAPHY, MEANING and PRODUCTIVITY (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 451). As far as stress is concerned, the composite nominal carries primary stress on the second element (*working 'hours*), but in the compound it is the first element which is stressed (*'workplace*). Orthographically, the compound is written as one word, while the composite nominal is two. The meaning of the composite nominal can be directly predicted from the meanings of its parts, whereas the meaning of the compound cannot, as the relations between the parts are not so obvious, the compound is thus not so transparent and its denotation is specialised. In terms of productivity, the modifier in

the composite nominal can be substituted by a collocate that can combine semantically with the head noun, but chances of such an easy substitution are highly restricted in the compound (2002, 451).

However, these criteria and syntactic tests of coordination and modification do not match very perfectly, as there are composite nominals with primary stress on the second element (*cooking 'apple, income 'tax*) and vice versa, there exist alternative forms in orthography (solid, hyphenated, open compounds), the semantic specialisation can also be found in composite nominals and conversely, many compounds are perfectly transparent (*backache*). Concerning productivity, Huddleston and Pullum note its gradient character, saying that, "Syntactic processes are overall more productive than morphological ones within the lexicon, but this is a tendency, not a matter of productive vs. non-productive" (2002, 451).

3.2 COMPARISON WITH SYNTHETIC LANGUAGES

It is likely that synthetic languages, conveniently represented by Czech, possess a larger variety (compared with English) of synthetic (inflectional and derivational) means to express shades of meaning, but a comparably smaller number of analytic ways, epitomised by compounding. The ease of compounding, assisted by conversion of word class, is a characteristic analytic property of English. The Czech attribute should be, with very few exceptions (usually based on foreign patterns), an adjective. As such, it is also clearly distinguished morphologically from a close form, verb participle, despite their semantic proximity. The participles in English most closely correspond to the Czech *přechodník* (transgressive) or a verbal participle (which are not identical), but they differ from a deverbal adjective, which in English has the same form as the participle. On top of these forms, there exists a range of adjectival derivational suffixes, possibly wider than in English. Thus, for example, an active participle *míchající* (*mixing*) is a transitory form between a verb (semantically) and an adjective (formally) in Czech, distinguished both from the present transgressive *míchaje/míchajíc/míchajíce* (*mixing*) and the proper deverbal adjective, e.g., *míchací*. Similarly, the Czech passive participle *míchán/a/o/i/y* (*mixed*) is morphologically distinguished from the past transgressive (*na/za/etc.*) *míchav/míchavši/míchavše* as well as from the deverbal adjectives (*na/za. . .*) *mícháný/á/í/é*. Only the last mentioned forms can function as attributes in noun phrases in Czech, unlike English where the word class is not expressed specifically, or, in other words, the suffixes *-ing* and *-ed* have each several distinct functions, namely as a gerundial/participial inflection in verbs and as a derivational suffix. Moreover, English can also use the unchanged base form of the verb or one derived by noun suffixes in the attributive sense, which is impossible in Czech (at least in a premodifying function). If the use of *mixing* and *mixed* seem to be quite universal equivalents to different Czech verbal and adjectival forms, when is it possible then to use attributively only the forms *mix* or *mixture*?

In Czech, the distinction between a derived (deverbal) adjective and an active participle form can also be expressed by a subtle difference in vocalic quantity. However,

this distinction affects only a certain verb class and sometimes is only reflected in spoken language (short pronunciation of [balitsi:] and [lepitsi:] in *Kup balící papír / lepící pásku* compared with the canonical long [i:] in *dívka balící dárky / lepící obálky* etc. The distinction is reflected in spelling in, for example, *holící strojek* x *holící se muž*, *kropící vůz* x *kropící vůz*. Another marker of the distinction is the presence of a reflexive pronoun (and a clitic) *se/si*: *vařící voda* (Adj+N) vs. *vařící se voda* (Vpart+N). In most cases the adjective differs from a verb form by absence of a typically verbal suffix, although the final adjectival/participial suffix is shared (*koupací* vs. *koupající (se)*, *sedací* vs. *sedající/sedící*, *houpací* vs. *houpající (se)*, etc.). In *spací* vs. *spící*, *sedací* vs. *sedící*, *prací* vs. *přející*, the difference in the vocal in the suffix is based on the fact that adjectival suffixes use the past stem endings of respective verbs, whereas active participles are derived from the present stem forms.

TABLE 1: OVERVIEW OF GRAMMATICAL FUNCTIONS EXPRESSED BY THE (DE)VERBAL SUFFIX OR INFLECTION
-ING

No.	English form using suffix or inflection -ing	Grammatical function of an expression ending in -ing	Status of -ing	Czech equivalent translation
(1)	a <i>singing</i> policeman	deverbal suffixed <i>adjective</i> (a permanent property)	suffix	zpívající policista
(2)	I saw a <i>singing</i> girl.	deverbal suffixed <i>adjective</i> (a temporary property)	suffix	Viděl jsem zpívající dívku.
(3)	The girl was <i>singing</i> .	<i>verb</i> : present (active) participle in a finite VP	inflect.	Dívka zpívala.
(4)	<i>Singing</i> , I went home.	<i>verb</i> : present (active) participle in a non-finite VP	inflect.	Zpívaje, šel jsem domů. / Šel jsem domů a zpíval jsem si. / Šel jsem domů se zpěvem.
(5)	She likes <i>singing</i> (carols).	<i>verb</i> : gerund	inflect.	Ráda zpívá (koledy).
(6)	a <i>singing</i> lesson	deverbal suffixed <i>noun</i> – as a pre-modifier in NP	suffix	hodina zpěvu
(7)	The <i>singing</i> of the anthem is banned.	deverbal suffixed <i>noun</i> – as the head of NP	suffix	Zpívání hymny je zakázáno.

Structures (1), (2) and (6) are Attr+N phrases; only (6) is subject to analysis in this research.

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), attributes of the V-ing (*the gleaming showroom*) and V-en (*the defeated army*) types are VPs, NOT CLAUSES, apart from other possible attributes formed by determinatives, adjectives and nouns (including those in possessive case). The latter type of attributes (*their employment policy*) are nominals, not NPs.

As Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 540) point out:

Primary forms of verbs, and also the plain form, are clearly distinct from adjectives: it is only with the gerund-participle and past participle forms that problems arise, for there are many adjectives that are homophonous with these forms of verbs. We need to consider two cases, one where the verb or adjective follows the verb *be*, and one where it modifies a noun.

In the former case, the *-ing* and *-ed/-en* forms of verbs follow *be* as an auxiliary of progressive aspect or passive voice (*He was speaking. We were invited.*). Adjectives are used after *be* in the function of a copula (*He is amusing. We were dissatisfied.*). The adjectival status can be tested by replacing *be* by another copula (i.e., a complex intransitive verb), modifying the adjectives by *very* and *too*, and a semantic distinction (2002, 541). Also, gerund-participles in transitive verbs take objects, which participial adjectives do not do. So, when a noun is modified, at least the criteria of semantic difference and modification by intensifiers can be used to distinguish a verb participial form in e.g., *a sitting boy* from the adjective in *this sitting room*. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 541–42) suggest:

In general, we will take the form as a verb if it cannot function as a predicative adjective. [. . .] Again, past participles and corresponding adjectives in attributive position are usually interpreted passively: a rarely heard work is a work which one rarely hears. But here too there are a fairly small number of exceptions: fallen rocks, a failed businessman, the escaped prisoner, a grown man, the recently departed guests. The category status of these items is rather problematic, but since they cannot occur as predicative adjectives, they are perhaps best regarded as verbs.

TABLE 2: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN VERB PARTICIPLES AND (SUFFIXED) DEVERBAL ADJECTIVES

VERB PARTICIPLES	DEVERBAL ADJECTIVES
After the verb <i>be</i> : <i>-ing</i> and <i>-ed/-en</i> forms are used as auxiliaries of progressive aspect or passive voice.	After the verb <i>be</i> : they are used as a copula (complement) (<i>He is amusing</i>).
Take objects (in transitive verbs).	Do not take objects.
Semantic difference (dynamic m.: <i>a sitting boy</i>).	Verb <i>be</i> can be replaced by another copula (<i>seem</i>), modified (<i>very, too</i>); semantic distinction (stative m.: <i>the sitting room</i>).
When the forms are not used as predicative adjectives, they are taken as verbs (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 541–42).	

4. RESEARCHED VERBS USED IN COMPOUNDS

The research involved compounds including dynamic verbs as pre-modifying attributive components. Such lexemes were included that can be considered as compounds, i.e., single lexemes denoting a single concept. 35 common dynamic verbs used as premodifiers were selected as a representatives, namely *bath, blow, break, close, cook, cry, cut, draw, drink, drive, fly, fry, jump, kill, look, live, melt, paint, pay, play, read, rock, send, shave, sing, sit, sleep, stop, swear, swim, swing, think, touch, wait, walk*. Altogether, 290 such compounds structured as NPs were found. The type V+N, where V is a base form of a verb, contains 168 expressions (58 percent). However, in some doubtful cases several expressions were counted here as V+N although they are marked as N+N by NSOED (Brown 1993) (or not specified) (*playtime, playhouse, playground, playlist, plaything, . . .*). The reason is that the modifier rather denotes an action than a person, object, property or similar concept (“a time during which st. is played,” “a ground where sb. Plays,” etc.), which enables a paraphrase using a finite verb form. The morphologically marked type, V-ing+N, was identified in 122 expressions (42 percent).

TABLE 3: LIST OF ATTR+N COMPOUNDS WITH VERB OR DEVERBAL ADJECTIVE AS THE PREMODIFIER.

VERB	List of compounds with the verb as a modifying base
break	break-bone, break-crop, break-dance (L20), break-even, breakfast, break-front, break-line, breakneck, break-point, breakstone, breakwater, breakwind (Aus), breaking news, breaking-point, breaking strength
cook	cook book, cook-chill, cook-camp (NA _m), cook-room/cookhouse, cook-shack, cookshop, cookstove (NA _m) / cooking stove, cooktop / cooking top, cookware, cooking apple
drive	drive-belt /drive shaft /driving belt, drive system, driving box, driving course, driving iron, driving licence, driving seat, driving school, driving test, driving range, driving force, driveway (M19 NA _m), driving-wheel
play	playbox, playing-card, play-centre, play clothes, play-day, play-debt, play-dough, play face, playing field, playfield (1883), playground (L18), playboy (E19), playgirl (M20), playhour, playland, play-material, play-pen, PlayStation (L20), playtime (E17), playlist (M20), playgroup (E20), playhouse (LOE), play school, play-suit, playstreet, play-table, NOTE: Compounds such as <i>play-acting</i> , <i>playbook</i> , <i>playfellow</i> , <i>playfighting</i> , <i>play therapy</i> , <i>playwriter/playwright</i> , etc. were not included since their first base is rather nominal (cf. a paraphrase “book of plays,” analogy with <i>story book</i> , <i>schoolfellow</i> , <i>speech therapy</i> , etc.).
stop	plaything stopbank (Aus/NZ), stop bath, stop bead, stop-block, stop-butt, stop-button, stopcock, stop chords, stop chorus, stop-cylinder, stop-dog/stop-hound, stop-drill, stopgap, stop-gate, stop-handle, stop-knob, stop lamp, stop lights (20), stop list, stop-lock, stop log, stop-net, stop-order, stop-press, stop-ridge, stop-seine, stop sign, stop signal, stop-thrust, stoptime, stop-valve, stop volley, stop-water, stopwatch (M18), stopway, stop word, stop-work (20), stopping ground, stopping house (Can), stopping mixture, stopping place, stopping rule, stopping station, stopping train

Source: NSOED (Brown 1993).

Some of the expressions were counted as V+N or V-ing +N although their attributes are probably rather deverbal nouns. Cf. *paintbox* (“a box of paints”) x *paintbrush* (“a brush for applying paint / for painting”), *walking race* (“a competition in walking”) x *walking stick* (“a stick carried in the hand when walking”) x *walking leg* (“a limb used for walking”) x *walking corpse*; *reading room*, *reading-glass*, *reading age* = all of them refer to the ability or activity of reading. However, the dynamic verbal character of the attributes was given priority here. It is also in compliance with a similar approach by Biber et al. (1999, 327), who classify as VERB/NOUN + NOUN COMPOUNDS those “cases of compounding where one of the elements of the compound could be either a verb base or a noun, but where the underlying relationship is more appropriately expressed by a verb.”

An interesting finding made during the study is that when only the commonly-used compounds were assembled, the marked type of premodifier (*-ing*) slightly prevailed over the base form. After adding less frequently used compounds, mostly terms from various areas of technology or other professional terminologies, the overall ratio gradually reversed. The preference for unmarked forms of (de)verbal premodifier thus seems to characterise technical and professional terms (most evident in compounds using the bases *draw* and *stop*, but also *pay*, *cook*, *swing*, etc. – compare with Table 3).

5. SEMANTIC ROLES OF BASES IN COMPOUNDS

After the approaches to distinguishing compounds (i.e., semantic combinations) from composite nominals (i.e., syntactic combinations, including also collocations) were discussed and applied in section 2.2 and after the collected lexical units were analysed in terms of their morphological structure (sections 2.3 and 3), the underlying semantic principles explaining the variety of types found in (de)verbal attributes of lexicalised NPs were sought. Specifically, the question was whether the forms of (de)verbal attributes correlate to some degree with the semantic roles they assumed as arguments of predicate in a clause.

Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik propose a comprehensive classification of semantic roles of clause elements. The most typical role of a subject is agentive, the role of the direct object is that of the affected participant, and that of the indirect object is typically the recipient participant (1985, 741). Syntactic complements function as semantic attributes. However, a more subtle division of the roles of subject is necessary, so it can perform, apart from the agentive role, also the roles of external causer, instrument, affected, recipient, positioner, locative, temporal and eventive subject (*ibid.*, 743–48). Direct objects, in addition to functioning normally as the affected participant, can be also locative, resultant, eventive, cognate and instrumental (*ibid.*, 749–52), whereas indirect objects perform the role of recipient as well as affected participant (*ibid.*, 753). These roles are closely connected with the meaning of the verb used in predication of the underlying clause or phrase and complementation ensuing from the meaning.

The grammar by Huddleston and Pullum (2002) recognises similar semantic roles, but it characterises the relationship between the syntactic and semantic roles more generally, which seems to suit better the needs of the present study. In their outline, the propositional meaning of a clause involves a semantic predicate and at least one argument of the predicate. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 226) define the concepts thus: “The semantic predicate represents some property, relation, process, action, etc., and the arguments represent the entities involved – the bearer of the property, the terms in the relation, etc.” There normally exists correspondence between the semantic predicate and the verb functioning as the predicator syntactically, and between semantic arguments and syntactic complements. The semantic predicate normally has several arguments upon which it imposes selection restrictions, and these arguments perform various roles in a given situation (*ibid.*, 227). These roles do not simply correspond to the syntactic roles, e.g., the agent (performer of an action) is not always the syntactic subject nor is the patient (undergoer of an action) always the direct object (cf., Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 227).

The semantic roles of arguments remain relatively constant, but the syntactic functions associated with the arguments obviously depend on their presentational status, i.e., on the semantics of the lexical verb functioning as the predicator and on the arrangement of the clause. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 230–33) suggest the following major semantic roles of arguments.

CAUSER – a semantic role which “involves direct or immediate causation of an action or event” (ibid., 230).

AGENT – a subtype of causer, typically animate and acting “consciously, volitionally” (ibid., 230–31). The role of an agent is heavily dependent on the verb and how precisely the action is performed by the causer.

INSTRUMENT – an entity used by an agent when performing an action (ibid., 231); it is sometimes identical with the causer.

PATIENT – defined as an entity “affected by an action performed by some causer, especially an agent – the agent (or causer) does something to the patient” (ibid., 231).

EXPERIENCER AND STIMULUS – these roles appear in situations connected with “emotional feeling or sensory perception” (ibid., 231), as well as cognition, and reflect the relation between two arguments, subject and internal complement.

THEME – it is rather a wide role, particularly associated with movement and location in space where “the theme is the entity that moves or is located” (ibid., 232). The role of theme can be assigned also to temporal meanings, transfer and possession, change and having properties.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY THEME – two themes appear in situations of transfer where the secondary theme presupposes a primary one (ibid., 232).

FACTITIVE THEME – such a theme “comes into existence by virtue of the process expressed, and cannot be simultaneously agent or patient” (ibid., 233) (*He made a fold on the paper.*)

PATH, SOURCE, GOAL, AND LOCATION – “in the central case where the theme moves [. . .], the starting-point is the source, the endpoint is the goal, and the intermediate point is the path” (ibid., 233). These roles apply to space, possession as well as to the ascription of properties or states.

RECIPIENT – a subtype of goal which is used in the semantic field of possession (*Tom gave the ball to Jack* – the goal (Jack) is more specifically identified as a recipient).

BENEFICIARY – the role of an (usually animate) argument “that something is obtained for or done for” (ibid., 233).

6. ANALYSIS OF THE POSSIBLE TYPES OF ATTRIBUTES

6.1 SUFFIXED BY -ING

Dušková et al. state: “The English participle corresponds either to Czech verbal adjective or a transgressive” (1988, 580). (“Anglickému participiu v češtině odpovídá jednak přídavné jméno slovesné, jednak přechodník.”) The attributive function can be performed by both the present and past participle (ibid.). It can be expected that the *-ing* attribute expresses either the action, which the head performs or experiences as an agent, causer or experiencer, whereas the *-ed* attribute expresses an action which the head is or was affected by.

6.2 SUFFIXED BY *-ED*

The suffix *-ed* is clearly a deverbal passive suffix, denoting that an entity expressed as a head of a noun phrase was, has been or is affected by the action contained in the root of the noun phrase. For example, a *used car* refers to a car which has already been used. This type of NP seems to use the explicit *-ed* attribute very consistently (*boiled eggs*, *written exam*, *used car*) and avoid the non-explicit base form. On the other hand, explicitness of such an attribute in fact disables a higher level of semantic and syntactic condensation (i.e., compounding) and the combinations remain syntactic (composite nominals, collocations).

6.3 NOMINAL SUFFIXATION

This combination of an attribute and its head noun can be paraphrased as Nattr + Prep + Nhead. The attribute thus has a semantically clearly defined nominal properties. For example, *driver license* denotes a “license of/for a driver” or a “license issued to a driver.” Driver, the holder of the license, is a semantic beneficiary here.

This type of attribute overlaps with the *-ing* type, since *-ing* is a multi-purpose suffix, used in adjectives, verb participles, deverbal nouns, as well as in the function of verbal inflection (in the progressive aspect and in the gerund).

6.4 NOMINAL SUFFIXATION AND POSSESSIVE INFLECTION

Except the often ambiguous *-ing* modifiers, those (de)verbal attributes suffixed by nominal suffixes (*-ion*, *-ance/-ence*, etc.) do not meet the criterion of prevalingly verbal character. Therefore, NPs which contain them were excluded from the set of expressions analysed in this study.

6.5 BASE FORM

Using the base form of a word, originally a verb, as an attribute implies that its verbal meaning is still largely kept, and a paraphrase should reveal that. For instance, *stopwatch* is a watch than can be stopped when necessary, *bathtub* is a tub in which one bathes or a *walkway* is a way (along) which one walks. Using an *-ing* adjectival or participial form would probably arouse improper associations (**stopping watch* would be a watch that (often) stops by itself or is doing it now, **bathing tub* probably a tub which (itself) bathes and a **walking way* would mean either a correct way of walking or a way that is walking, which is a nonsense).

However, here lies the biggest problem addressed by this paper. When is the attribute derived semantically from a word denoting an action, activity, state, feeling, etc. (normally expressed by a verb) kept unchanged, and when is it subject to some morphological adaptation, i.e., participial, adjectival or nominal suffixation? What makes *bathtub* and *bathing costume* semantically different? Why (at least in British English) is there a *swimsuit* but a *swimming pool* (and not a **swimming suit* and **swimpool*)?

7. CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN SEMANTIC ROLES OF COMPONENTS AND NP STRUCTURES

7.1 THE DOER OF SOMETHING

This relation between the head and pre-modifier contains the head as “a person/entity that does something,” i.e., “the doer of something.” The semantic causer or, more specifically, the agent (syntactically, the subject in an active sentence) tends to be modified by a participial adjective in the construction V-ing + N.

- (1) *visiting professor* = the professor visits the institution
- (2) *ruling family* = the family rules the country

Unlike the following type, the head noun is formed from a syntactic subject, and the verb is often intransitive, but it can be also transitive or copular.

- (3) *stopping train* = a train that (often) stops
- (4) *shooting star* = a star that shoots across the sky
- (5) *measuring equipment* = the equipment measures (some magnitudes) /
sb. measures (magnitudes) with the equipment

7.2 THE PARTICIPANT AFFECTED BY DOING SOMETHING

When the relation is “an object affected by doing something,” expressing the relation SVO, then the modified NP uses the combination V-ing + N. The noun expresses a direct object, semantically a patient, of the action expressed by the transitive verb (*drinking water*).

- (6) *cooking apple* = somebody cooks an apple
- (7) *drinking water* = somebody drinks/can drink the water

This type of relation gives rise to a large number of noun phrases (with a few exceptions not regarded as compounds) with the passive participial adjective or a passive participle in the premodifying function and the semantic patient as the head noun (*baked bananas, closed door, lost time*). Similarly, themes perform the role of heads of NPs with such passive pre-modifiers (*the sold car, the returned money*). The passive/past participles are employed here as the action is seen as finished in the past. As these NPs are usually not very lexicalised (not considered compounds) and they are very regularly formed, they are not studied in detail here.

7.3 THE TOOL FOR DOING SOMETHING

The semantic relation “a tool for doing something” is based on the clause type SV(O)A, and the NP uses components V-ing (the action) and a noun taken from a prepositional

phrase (an instrument for the action): V-ing+N(<PrepP/Adv) (*walking stick*). The noun from the prepositional phrase functions as an adverbial in the underlying clause. Semantically, the argument plays the role of an instrument. Another frequent type of construction is Vbase+N(<PrepP/Adv) (*cookware*, *swing-chair*). The noun cannot be identified as the agent/causer as it denotes an inanimate entity (so although it is true that “a chair rocks,” an animate agent is implied here: “somebody rocks in/with the chair”).

TABLE 4: CONSTRUCTIONS OF COMPOUNDS WITH A (DE)VERBAL PREMODIFIER EXPRESSING THE RELATION “A TOOL FOR DOING SOMETHING”

V-ing + N(<PrepP used as Adverbial)	<i>walking stick</i> = somebody walks with the stick <i>washing machine</i> , <i>washing powder</i> = somebody washes with the machine/powder
Vbase + N(<PrepP used as Adverbial)	<i>cookware</i> = somebody cooks with the ware <i>swing-chair</i> = somebody swings with the chair / the chair swings?

7.4 THE PLACE OR TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING

When the relation is “a place or time for doing something,” expressing the relation SV(O)A, then the modified NP often uses the combination V-ing+N(<PrepP/Adv), as the noun is included in prepositional phrases expressing a locative adverbial. The semantic role of such an argument is path, source, goal and location, which are associated with the location and movement in space and time of the theme, its possession and ascription of properties to the theme (which is often identical with an agent) (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 233). The head noun typically refers to a spatial (*waiting room*, *swimming pool*) or temporal (*closing time*, *opening day*) location. The verb can be both intransitive (*waiting room*) or transitive (*reading room*), but in such cases a multiple membership is possible (*read* can be used as a transitive as well as intransitive verb).

In the latter two semantic relations (place or time, tool), the constructions with V-ing seem to be replaced in more recently formed compound NPs by a simpler, unmarked construction Vbase + N or Vbase +N (<PrepP/Adv), as illustrated in Table 5.

TABLE 5: CONSTRUCTIONS OF COMPOUNDS WITH A (DE)VERBAL PREMODIFIER EXPRESSING THE RELATION “A PLACE OR TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING”

V-ing + N(<Adv-PrepP)	<i>waiting room</i> = somebody waits <u>in the room</u> <i>sleeping car</i> = somebody sleeps <u>in the car</u> <i>closing time</i> = somebody closes something <u>at a certain time</u>
Vbase + N or Vbase + N (<PrepP/Adv)	<i>playground</i> = somebody plays <u>in the ground</u> <i>paycard</i> = somebody pays <u>by the card</u> <i>swimsuit</i> = somebody swims (dressed) <u>in the suit</u> <i>bathtub</i> = somebody baths <u>in the tub</u>

Two notes need to be made here: (i) The semantic type “a place or time for doing something” must be distinguished from the previous types. Although formally identical with the other NPs using a V-ing premodification, the relationship is not so direct. A *singing lesson* is not a lesson for singing, but for learning to sing. The real verb (predicator) is dropped and another is used instead, functioning originally in fact as an object (learn *what?* to sing). In this type, unlike the previous ones, the V-ing can be interpreted also as an adjunctive deverbal noun (cf., a *tennis lesson* = a lesson for learning tennis; *singing lesson* = a lesson for learning singing). The full clause underlying *singing lesson* is that “somebody learns to sing in the lesson.”

(ii) The semantic relation of “characterisation or condition” can be expressed as “something (A) that is characteristic of something (B)” or “something (A) that conditions something (B),” where the latter noun (B) becomes an attribute of the former one (A). Noun (B) is often expressed by a deverbal noun of the V-ing type, which makes this type of compounds or collocations superficially similar to the previous combinations. However, the attribute may assume many other forms here (noun or adjective), e.g., *gymnastic(s) skills*, *government policy*, etc.

- (8) *learning habits* = habits necessary for learning; habits that characterise learning
- (9) *reading skills* = skills important for reading (not *“skills that read”)
- (10) *walking distance* = distance that one can walk; distance which is manageable by walking

Also here the modifier has quite a nominal character (a deverbal noun used attributively).

8. CONCLUSIONS

The study involved 290 English compounds containing premodifiers based on 35 selected dynamic verbs. It has shown that the decisive factor for the choice of a morphological form of (de)verbal attributes in lexicalised noun phrases is quite evidently the semantic role of the argument (which now functions as the head noun of a noun phrase) in an original clause, which expresses the predicate with all its arguments. There seems to exist some correlation between the semantic roles of the nouns and the form of the pre-modifier.

The most frequent type of Attr+N with a premodifying (de)verbal attribute is Vbase+N, but it does not surpass the occurrence of V-ing+N very substantially (their ratio is roughly 3:2). The Vbase+N type seems to be more numerous as it is often found in technical terms and neologisms, as well as in naming units stemming from American English.

The base form of a verb (Vbase+N) is typically used in compound NPs with a noun (semantic argument) originally functioning as instrument and location (place or time) of the predicate. NPs expressing these relations also use the most typical V-ing+N form. On the other hand, the relation with the head functioning as the doer uses exclusively

the V-ing+N construction type. The relation with an affected participant (object) uses V-ing+N type, but also V-ed+N constructions if the action is seen as finished. However, the latter construction is usually considered to be a collocation, not a semantically-condensed compound.

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MODAL VERBS

FROM A CROSSLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

DAGMAR MACHOVÁ

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: machova@fhs.utb.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper analyses modal verbs in selected languages in terms of their morphological and syntactic properties. It deals in detail with English modal verbs, demonstrating that they form quite a homogenous group. Furthermore, the paper explores properties of modal verbs in other languages (Germanic, Slavonic, Romance, Hungarian, Balto-Finnic, Turkic and Chinese), demonstrating that, contrary to their English counterparts, modals in the majority of languages form quite heterogeneous groups with respect to their morphological and syntactic properties, such as conjugation, subcategorization and agreement. In other words, the paper demonstrates that the category of modal verbs cannot be crosslinguistically based on formal grounds. The paper also shows that modal verbs are found predominantly in Indo-European languages, whereas other languages frequently employ other grammatical means to express modal meanings.

KEYWORDS: modal verbs; auxiliary verbs; English; agreement; subcategorization

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper explores modal verbs from a crosslinguistic perspective. More precisely, it will analyze their morpho-syntactic properties to ascertain if modal verbs constitute a distinct class within the lexicons of particular languages. Furthermore, it will compare modal verbs in various languages to find out whether modal verbs can be universally defined on formal grounds. Finally, it will analyze to what extent modal verbs appear in the systems of grammar crosslinguistically.

2. STATUS OF MODAL VERBS

According to Palmer (2003), modal verbs, together with mood, are two main means of expressing modality in a language. Other authors provide a more expanded list of means of modality belonging to various morphological, syntactic and lexical categories, such as de Haan (2006) – see Table 1.

This paper will focus only on modal verbs; other means of modality will not be considered here. First, the study will focus on modal verbs in English and other selected Germanic and Romance languages. To analyze modal verbs outside the group of Indo-European languages, the paper will discuss modal verbs in Hungarian, Balto-Finnic, Turkic and Chinese.

3. MODAL VERBS IN GERMANIC LANGUAGES

Modal verbs in the Germanic group are rather unique since the majority of them descend from Preterite-Present verbs, i.e., verbs the forms of which date back to

TABLE 1: MEANS OF MODALITY

modal verbs	<i>must, may, might</i>
mood*	Indicative, Subjunctive, Imperative, Optative, Jussive, Hortative
modal affixes	They occur in Turkic languages (see section 6.3.), Greenlandic Eskimo. In contrast to <i>mood</i> , modal affixes are not an obligatory part of a verb (i.e., they can but do not have to be used).
modal adverbs and adjectives	<i>possibly, probably, maybe</i>
modal tags	<i>I think, I believe</i>
modal particles	<i>denn, doch</i> (German)
modal case	Modality is marked on the noun in the form of a case (for example in Lardil, Yangkaal).

* De Haan’s perception of *mood* (2006) does not correspond to Palmer’s (2003), who distinguishes only two basic moods, namely *Indicative* (non-modal, default) and *Subjunctive* (modal).

the Proto-Germanic period. As a result, the cognates across languages demonstrate similar grammatical (mainly morphological) properties – compare *shall* (English), *zullen* (Dutch), *sollen* (German), *skulle* (Danish), and *skulu* (Icelandic). The shared origin of these verbs explains irregularities in the morphological paradigm of modal verbs in Germanic such as the lack of 3rd person singular present in English, German, Dutch, and Icelandic. Still, syntactic properties of modal verbs in Germanic languages demonstrate a certain variety, with the exception of English.

3.1 ENGLISH MODAL VERBS

Modal verbs in English demonstrate unique morphological and syntactic properties. They belong to a group of auxiliaries, as stated among others by Warner (1993), Lightfoot (1979) or Roberts and Roussou (2003). Despite the fact that they originally developed from lexical verbs, in contemporary English they do not have verbal properties. The most obvious demonstration of this is probably their distribution, which is strikingly different from the distribution of lexical verbs. Whereas modals appear in question tags, invert in questions, or precede the clausal negative *not*,¹ no lexical verb appears in these contexts, as exemplified in (1a)–(1f).

- (1) (a) *John must do it, must he not?*
(b) **John wrote it, wrote not he?*
(c) *Must he write it?*
(d) **Writes he it?*
(e) *He must not do it.*
(f) **He wrote not it.*

1. These are often labelled as NICE properties – used, for example, by Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 92).

Besides the syntactic criterion, modal verbs do not exhibit verbal properties in the field of morphology either, since they do not occur in forms typical of verbs such as infinitive, past participle, present participle, e.g., **to can*, **canned*, **canning*. In fact they appear exclusively in the present form, and only a few of the modal verbs appear in some past contexts such as *can* – *could* but for example not *must* – **musted*.

Furthermore, English modals have a restricted subcategorization, since they are compatible only with bare infinitive VPs. Contrary to this, lexical verbs subcategorize for a wide range of phrases such as NPs, PPs or even clauses:

- (2) (a) *I know* _{NP}[*that song*].
 (b) *I can* _{VP}[*sing that song*].
 (c) **I can* _{NP}[*that song*].
- (3) (a) *I went* _{PP}[*to the hospital*].
 (b) *I must* _{VP}[*go to the hospital*].
 (c) **I must* _{PP}[*to the hospital*].

As shown, modal verbs in English form a highly homogenous class in terms of their morphological and syntactic properties, i.e., they lack agreement and subcategorize only for VPs. I thus conclude that English modal verbs do not belong to the class of verbs at all, but rather form a separate part of speech.

3.2 MODAL VERBS IN OTHER GERMANIC LANGUAGES

As mentioned, modal verbs in the Germanic group are mainly Preterite-Presents sharing some idiosyncratic properties such as the lack of 3rd person singular as in (4).

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| (4) | English | Dutch | German |
| (a) | <i>I make</i> | <i>ik maak</i> | <i>ich mache</i> |
| | <i>he makes</i> | <i>hij maakt</i> | <i>er macht</i> |
| (b) | <i>I must</i> | <i>ik moet</i> | <i>ich muss</i> |
| | <i>he mustØ</i> | <i>hij moetØ</i> | <i>er mussØ</i> |

The examples in (4a) show that whereas lexical verbs receive an agreement suffix, modal verbs in selected Germanic languages in (4b), namely English, Dutch and German, lack the agreement in the 3rd person singular.

In contrast to English, modal verbs in other Germanic languages do have verbal morphology – they appear in verbal forms, for example infinitive, present participle, and past participle, for example in *müssen* ‘must’ (German), *kunnende* ‘can’ (Danish), *gemoeten*, ‘must’ (Dutch). In terms of their syntactic behaviour, Germanic modals (with the exception of English) are also compatible with a wide range of non-verbal

complementation, i.e., they can be followed by NPs, PPs, APs or even whole clauses; see (5a)–(5c); (5a) and (5b) taken from Mortelmans et al. (2009).

(5) (a) Dutch

Hij moet _{NP}[*haar*] *niet*.

‘He doesn’t like her.’

(b) Danish

Kongen vil _{Clause}[*at den sorte prins forlader landet*].

‘The king wants that the black prince leaves the country.’

(c) German

Ich muss _{PP}[*ins Stadtzentrum*].

‘I must (go) to the city centre.’

However, the compatibility of modals with different types of phrases differs from verb to verb as well as from language to language. Whereas in some Germanic languages, non-verbal complements are quite common and varied, other languages are more restrictive on this point, or allow a non-verbal complementation only with certain modal verbs. In Dutch, for example, the modal verb *moeten* ‘must’ can be followed by an adjectival phrase; whereas such subcategorization is not possible in German – see example (6); with the Dutch example taken from Mortelmans et al. (2009).

(6) (a) Dutch

Deze fles moet _{AP}[*vol*].

‘This bottle must (be) filled.’

(b) German

**Die Flasche muss* _{AP}[*voll*].

‘This bottle must (be) filled.’

In the majority of Germanic languages, modal verbs are, as in English, combined with a bare infinitive, not a *to*-infinitive. This, however, does not hold for all of them since some Icelandic modals, such as *kunna* ‘can’ or *þurfa* ‘need’, combine with the *að*-infinitive (a cognate of the *to*-infinitive), whereas *skulu* ‘shall’ and *vilja* ‘will’ subcategorize for a bare infinitive.

As explained, modals in Germanic languages other than English do not behave differently from other verbs, i.e., apart from an idiosyncratic lack of the 3rd person singular in the present paradigm, modals in Germanic languages do not demonstrate any properties that would differentiate them from lexical verbs; nor do they constitute a formally homogeneous group.

4. MODAL VERBS IN SLAVONIC LANGUAGES

Similarly to Germanic languages, Slavonic languages also possess modal verbs – such as *muset* ‘must’, *moci* ‘may’, *mít* ‘must’ (Czech), *móc* ‘can’, *musieć* ‘must’ (Polish),

môct ‘can’, *mat* ‘must’ (Slovak), *musyty* ‘must’, *mohty* ‘can’ (Ukrainian).² Contrary to the modals in Germanic languages, which share etymological development, Slavonic modals affected by several non-Slavonic influences exhibit various syntactic and morphological behaviours. Besters-Dilger et al. (2009) observe that modals in Slavonic languages differ in three fields:

- argument case assignment,
- agreement marked on the modal,
- agreement marked on the full verb.

Modal verbs in Slavonic appear in various combinations of these three properties – some of the examples of the patterns provided by Besters-Dilger et al. (2009) are given in examples in (7).

(7) (a) Russian

My možem rabotat’.

we.NOM can.PRS-1PL work-INF

‘We can work.’

(b) Russian

*Ivanu nado bylo rabotat’.*³

Ivan-DAT must be-PST-N.SG work-INF

‘Ivan had to work.’

(c) Polish

Należało pracować.

must-PST-3SG.N work-INF

‘One had to work.’

(d) Serbian

Ivan može da radi.

Ivan can.PRS-3SG COMP work.PRS.3SG

‘Ivan can work.’

In Example (7a), the argument of the verb is in Nominative, the modal verb occurs in the agreeing form, whereas the full verb does not agree. Example (7b) demonstrates another pattern, namely that if the argument is in Dative, the modal is in the non-agreeing form and the full verb is in the non-agreeing form as well. The Polish sentence in (7c) demonstrates that some verbs do not tolerate an argument at all, and there is no agreement morpheme either with the modal or with the full verb. Example (7d) shows

2. In Slavonic languages, however, modal verbs are only one of many possible ways to express a modal meaning. As pointed out by Besters-Dilger et al. (2009), Slavonic languages use more frequently sentence adverbs, e.g., *navernoe* ‘probably’ (Russian), or adjectives, e.g., *konieczność* ‘necessity’ (Polish). In Czech, for example, the most frequent expressions for epistemic modality are the modal particles *asi*, *snad* ‘probably’ and *jistě*, *určitě* ‘certainly’ (Čechová et al. 2000).

3. In other approaches, such as in de Haan (2002), the expressions *nado* and *nužno* are regarded as adverbs, leaving the Russian *moč* as its only modal.

that the argument is Nominative, and contrary to (7c) the agreement appears with a modal as well as with the full verb.⁴

Besters-Dilger et al. (2009) further maintain that modals in some languages follow one particular pattern (e.g., Lower Sorbian) and thus form quite a coherent class in terms of their syntactic features. On the other hand, in languages such as Polish, modal expressions can exhibit several distinct patterns. Considering these facts, modal verbs in Slavonic form an even less homogenous class than the modal verbs in Germanic languages.

5. MODAL VERBS IN ROMANCE LANGUAGES

Cornillie et al. (2009) point out that modal verbs in this language group form a heterogeneous class in terms of their syntactic and morphological qualities. Illustrative examples are the Italian verb *bisogna* ‘need’ or the Romanian *a trebui* ‘need’, which are impersonal verbs with conjugation restricted only to the 3rd person singular as exemplified in (8). In contrast, other modal verbs have fully developed paradigms.

(8) Italian

Bisogna chiamare un medico.

must-IND.PRS.3SG call-INF a:M.SG doctor:M.SG

‘Someone has to call a doctor.’

The subcategorization of modal verbs in Romance languages exhibits a degree of variety. The Italian modal *bisogna* ‘need’ subcategorizes for a clause or an infinitive, while the Romanian *a trebui* ‘need’ requires a clause with a subjunctive or past participle. Neither in terms of their morphological nor syntactic qualities do the modal verbs in Romance languages constitute a homogenous group with properties that would not be shared by lexical verbs in respective languages.

6. MODAL VERBS IN SELECTED NON-INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

The previous section focused on the morpho-syntactic properties of Indo-European languages. To explore the properties of modal verbs outside of this language family, the following part will provide a brief outline of morphological and syntactic properties of modal verbs in Hungarian, Balto-Finnic, Turkic and Chinese languages.

6.1 MODAL VERBS IN HUNGARIAN

Körtvély (2009) makes clear that Hungarian modal verbs form a homogenous group neither syntactically nor morphologically.⁵ A behaviour similar to that of modal verbs

4. Besides these, there are two more patterns; only the lexical verb agrees (not the modal), and the argument can be either in Nominative or Dative.

5. Besides modal verbs, Hungarian possesses a wide range of linguistic means that can express modality. It uses modal adjectives such as *tilos* ‘forbidden’ or *szükségszerű*, *szükséges* ‘necessary’, modal tags such as *hogy* ‘it may be that’, or bound modal affixes such as *-hAt* ‘can’ – Körtvély (2009).

in other languages can also be witnessed in Hungarian, namely that some modals do not reflect person and number agreement – such as *kell* ‘must’, *szabad* ‘may’ and *lehet* ‘be possible’, and the verb *muszáj* ‘must’ lacks inflection altogether. Modals such as *kell* ‘must’, *szabad* ‘may’, and *lehet* ‘be possible’ are defective in their paradigms through their lack of participle forms; other modal verbs, on the other hand, such as *tud* ‘can’, *bír* ‘can’, and *akar* ‘want’ do possess that form. Besides, Hungarian modal verbs vary in their syntactic independence. More precisely *kell* ‘must’ and *talál* ‘might’ cannot bear stress and thus are inseparable from the related verb. Other modal verbs carry their own stress and are more autonomous in terms of their distribution in a sentence.

In terms of subcategorization, modal verbs *kell* ‘must’, *tud* ‘can’ or *szabad* ‘may’ can be followed by non-infinitival complements, whereas other verbs such as *lehet* ‘be possible’ and *talál* ‘might’ do not tolerate such subcategorization. As Körtvély (2009) concludes, modal verbs in Hungarian demonstrate a different degree of independence and are not at all consistent in terms of their morphosyntactic properties.

6.2 MODAL VERBS IN BALTO-FINNIC LANGUAGES

Similarly to other languages, modals in Balto-Finnic languages (such as Estonian, Livonian, Votic, Finnish, Ingrian, Karelian, and Veps)⁶ can follow two patterns, namely the personal and impersonal. With the personal pattern, the modal demonstrates agreement in person and number, and argument is Nominative; as exemplified in (9a). As far as the impersonal structure is concerned, a modal appears in 3rd person singular only, it does not demonstrate any agreement features, and the argument is in Dative or Genitive, as exemplified in (9b) – examples provided in Kehayov and Torn-Leesik (2009).

- (9) (a) *Sinä voi-t nukkua.*
 you.NOM can-2SG sleep.INF
 ‘You can sleep.’
 (b) *Sinun täytyy nukkua.*
 you.GEN must.3SG sleep.INF
 ‘You must sleep.’

More interestingly, different languages favour different patterns (personal vs. impersonal) and, moreover, one modal can follow both patterns in different dialects of one language. As stated by Kehayov and Torn-Leesik (2009), modal verbs do not form a homogenous morpho-syntactic group in Balto-Finnic languages.

6. Balto-Finnic languages express modal meanings by various other means such as mood, a wide range of modal adverbs, which are according to Kehayov and Torn-Leesik (2009) used in eastern Balto-Finnic languages instead of modal verbs.

6.3 MODAL VERBS IN TURKIC

Languages belonging to the Turkic family such as Turkish, Azeri, Uzbek or Tatar are agglutinative languages. As a result, the means used for expressing modality in these languages are rather synthetic – modal verbs thus play a marginal role here.⁷

6.4 MODAL VERBS IN MANDARIN CHINESE

Chinese has a wide variety of modal verbs: *yinggai*, *yingdang*, *gain* ‘should’, *neng*, *nenggou*, *hui*, *keyi* ‘be able to’, *neng*, *keyi* ‘has permission to’, *gan* ‘dare’, *ken* ‘be willing to’, *dei*, *bixu*, *biyao*, *bidei* ‘must’, and *hui* ‘will’. Li and Thompson (1989) point out that modals in Chinese do not share the morphosyntactic properties with verbs. Their only similarity to lexical verbs is that they can be negated – see example (10a), and they can appear in polar questions with the structure “V not V” – see example (10b).

- (10) (a) *Ta bu neng chang ge.*
 He not can sing song.
 ‘She can’t sing the song.’
 (b) *Ta neng bu neng chang ge?*
 He can not can sing song?
 ‘Can she sing the song?’

Apart from these two properties, however, Chinese modals do not demonstrate any further verbal features. Modal in Chinese must co-occur with a verb, i.e., they cannot stand on their own with the exception of elliptical contexts. Furthermore, their subcategorization is purely verbal, i.e., modals do not combine with NP objects or other types of phrases – see examples (11a) and (11b) comparing a modal and a lexical verb.

- (11) (a) **Ta neng nei jian shi.*
 He can that CLASSIFIER job.
 ‘He can that job.’
 (b) *Wo yao yi ge pingguo.*
 I want one CLASSIFIER apple.
 ‘I want an apple.’

7. To exemplify a range of grammatical means used in Turkic, Johanson (2009) shows that Turkish and Azeri use the suffix *mali* as a necessity marker, as in *Oku-mali-yim* ‘I must read’. Besides synthetic devices, the languages have a few analytical ways to express modal meanings; more precisely they can use the combination of a predicate combined with an infinitive. As Johanson (2009) states, necessity can be for example expressed by an adjective meaning *gerek* ‘needed’ (Turkish) plus a nominalized lexical verb, or adjective *mümkün* ‘possible’ (Turkish) plus an infinitive of a verb. Languages in Turkic families do have several other analytic means for expressing modal meanings. These are, however, as stated by Johanson (2009), not native but entered the system though contact with other, mainly European, languages.

Chinese modals are not compatible with the aspect modal markers *le*, *gue*, and *zhe* either, as exemplified in (12a) and (12b).

- (12) (a) **Ta neng le chang ge.*
 He can PERFECTIVE sing song.
 ‘She could sing a song.’
 (b) *Ta shui le san ge zhong tou.*
 He sleep PERFECTIVE tree hour.
 ‘She has slept for three hours.’

Moreover, Chinese modals cannot be, unlike lexical verbs, modified by *hen* (meaning *very*), they cannot appear before the subject, and they cannot be nominalized. From the perspective of syntax, they seem to build a separate homogeneous category, distinct from verbs. In this respect, they are similar to their English counterparts despite maximal typological distinctions.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper has analysed modal verbs, which serve to express modal meanings in languages. The analysis departed from the perspective of the English modal verbs, which form a well-defined group with distinct morphological and syntactical properties. It showed that English modal verbs in fact do not behave as verbs but rather as auxiliaries. What is true for English does not, however, hold for all Germanic languages since these (despite their etymologically conditioned morphological resemblance) do not possess any shared properties. The paper also showed that modal verbs in other language families demonstrate an immense variety of morphological and syntactic behaviours. As modals in these languages have a different subcategorization, the agreements are realized in different ways and they relate differently to their arguments, it is impossible to universally define the category of modal verbs on formal grounds.

From the crosslinguistic perspective, the paper has shown that modal verbs do appear in Indo-European languages. The languages unrelated to them (Turkic) favour other grammatical means of modality. A similar conclusion is also stated by Hansen and de Haan (2009), who claim that modal verbs are found in European languages, but in the rest of the world they are rather rare (e.g., Mandarin Chinese), and their function is realized by other (mainly synthetic) means.

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ON POSSIBILITY MEANINGS OF *COULD* IN WRITTEN ENGLISH

PETRA HUSCHOVÁ

University of Pardubice, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Department of English and American Studies,
Studentská 84, 532 10 Pardubice, Czech Republic. Email: Petra.Huschova@upce.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper is concerned with possibility meanings of the modal auxiliary *could*, focusing primarily on interpreting its contextualized occurrences in contemporary written British English. Although *could* conveys essentially root possibility and is commonly employed as the preterite form of *can* in past contexts, this paper explores its occurrence in non-past contexts and its potential epistemic interpretations. In order to obtain a complex picture of the usage and distribution of *could* conveying possibility, discourse and stylistic aspects are included as well. The former relates to the usage of the modal verb as a hedging device, whereas the latter is reflected in the selection of the excerpted material; the data have been drawn from administrative, academic, popular scientific and journalistic texts.

KEYWORDS: the modal verb *could*; epistemic possibility; root possibility; gradience; hedging

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the modal verb *could*, particularly with the occurrence of its possibility meanings in written English. It focuses on the role of context in interpreting its meanings with regard to syntactic correlations, semantic and pragmatic aspects. Although *could* primarily represents the morphologically past tense form of *can*, it is treated in this paper as an independent lexical item unmarked for tense in that it is expected to occur predominantly in non-past contexts and to be associated with tentativeness. The major objectives are to describe contexts in which the modal verb typically occurs and identify relevant contextual features that may help disambiguate between its root and epistemic possibility readings. The paper also demonstrates that, in certain contexts, root possibility occurrences of *could* can be employed as hedging devices.

As for the analysed material, the corpus comprises a total of 200 tokens of *could* conveying epistemic/root possibility. The instances of possibility *could* have been drawn from four different types of texts (registers), 50 instances of *could* from each text type (see Table 1). The excerpted texts are: 1) academic texts represented by *Text, Context, Pretext: Critical Issues in Discourse Analysis* by H. G. Widdowson and *The Phonology of English as an International Language* by J. Jenkins (the samples taken from these books are marked as ACAD); 2) four official governmental documents representing administrative style, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications> (the samples taken from these documents are marked as ADMIN); 3) newspaper articles from two issues of *The Times* (the samples taken from newspapers are marked as

journalistic (NEWS); and 4) popular scientific texts represented by articles from one issue of *New Scientist* (the samples taken from *New Scientist* are marked as NAT).

First, distinctive features between the categories of root and epistemic possibility are presented. Then, various senses of *could*, illustrated with examples from the corpus, are discussed in sections 3 and 4. These sections also examine the relation between the analysed modal verb and other domains of grammar (voice, time reference or hypothetical marking), which seemingly help disambiguate the intended reading. Finally, section 5 deals with the usage of *could* in relation to the concept of hedging, presenting its meanings commonly employed as hedges.

2. EPISTEMIC VS. ROOT POSSIBILITY

Since this paper focuses primarily on the issues relating to the concept of possibility, the root-epistemic distinction is adopted, the term *root* being employed here to cover all the non-epistemic meanings of *could*.

Epistemic possibility is basically understood as conveying the speaker's lack of confidence in the truth of the proposition (Palmer 2001), which can be illustrated in (1), where the speaker's uncertainty is apparent. On the other hand, root possibility usually relates to statements of fact and can be defined in terms of general enabling conditions (Bybee and Fleischman 1995), as in (2):

- (1) *So when are we likely to see unequivocally synthetic life, with the entire cell built from the scratch?* "It **could** be five months or ten years," says Church. (NAT) [NS, 7]
 = *it is possible that it will take five months or ten years* (epistemic)
- (2) This default interpretation **could**, of course, be changed under more particular contextual conditions. (ACAD) [HGW, 25]
 = *it would be possible to change the interpretation under more particular conditions* (root)

Unlike epistemic possibility in (1), the speaker's attitude to the truth of the proposition is not involved in (2) in that its reading is bound to external circumstances (*more particular contextual conditions*). Additionally, with epistemic possibility, it is the main predication that is affected by time reference or hypothetical marking, as in (1) *it is possible that it will take five months*, whereas in the case of root possibility the modal predication is affected, see (2) *it would be possible to change the interpretation* (cf., Coates 1983, 20; Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 175; Silva-Corvalán 1995, 74–75).

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF *COULD* IN THE ANALYSED MATERIAL

INTERPRETATION	ACAD	ADMIN	NEWS	NAT	TOTAL
root possibility	44	48	43	42	177 (88.5%)
gradience	6	2	5	5	18 (9%)
epistemic possibility	–	–	2	3	5 (2.5%)
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200 (100%)

Table 1 clearly shows that in the analysed corpus of written English, *could* predominantly expresses root possibility (88.5 percent), whereas its epistemic reading seems to be rare (2.5 percent) and restricted in its distribution (Leech 2004, 85). When the analysed corpus was scanned for the possibility readings of *could*, 3 cases of permission and 45 cases of ability were identified as well, which implies that *could* reflects the semantic distribution of *can*; it basically conveys three root senses, i.e., possibility, ability and permission (Coates 1983, 107; Leech 2004, 132).

3. EPISTEMIC POSSIBILITY

As stated, the analysis proves the relative infrequency of epistemic *could* in written English (a mere 5 occurrences recorded in NAT and NEWS). Epistemic *could*, semantically quite distinct from all the other uses of *could*, is employed only in the contexts where the speaker/writer draws conclusions but is not confident about the truth of the proposition:

- (3) His body is in Denver for a post-mortem examination and **could** be there for a week, Mrs Mikha was told. (NEWS) [T1, 16]
 = *perhaps the body will be in Denver for a week*

The findings indicate that epistemic *could* seems to be restricted in its use, and it most commonly co-occurs with an inanimate third-person subject and the verb *be*, see (1), (3) and (5). Furthermore, it tends to occur in direct speech, as in (1) and (5), which might indicate that it is probably more common in spoken language and that it may be related with a lower degree of formality (Coates 1983).

As far as the use of epistemic *could* is concerned, Leech (2004, 132) and Quirk et al. (1985, 233) conclude that it seems to be identical in meaning to epistemic *might*. By contrast, Coates (1995, 58) or Biber et al. (1999, 491) suggest that *might* represents the neutral form, while *could* can be seen as an alternative to *might* in the expression of a more tentative and hesitant attitude. Regarding the degree of tentativeness, epistemic *could* seems to be associated merely with tentative conclusions, whereas *might* can convey a higher degree of probability,¹ which is illustrated in (4) and (5).

- (4) “This is definitely a cause for concern and I **might** have to postpone my visit now.” (NEWS) [T2, 5]
 (5) *Once it is ready, the transplant method should allow the first bacterium with a synthetic genome to be created with little delay.* “It **could** be weeks or months,” he says. (NAT) [NS, 7]

In (4) the logical possibility that *might* expresses is based on the existence of some evidence and the speaker thus conveys that *the postponement of his visit* is likely, which is supported by the phrase *this is definitely a cause of concern*. By contrast, in (5) the

1. Coates remarks that “while *may* and *might* cover the gamut of likelihood from probable (*might well*), through a 50/50 assessment of possibility, to tentative possibility, *could* expresses only tentative possibility” (1983, 165).

speaker has no evidence to support his conclusion, and thus it is purely speculative and tentative.

4. ROOT POSSIBILITY

4.1 GRADIENCE

Before discussing root possibility *could*, it is necessary to explain the term *gradience*, which is associated with the root senses of *could* (possibility, permission, ability). Since these senses can be difficult to distinguish in some contexts (Leech 2004, 73), they may be described in terms of gradience, where the intermediate cases cannot be clearly assigned just to one category (Coates and Leech 1980; Tárnayiková 1978). The possibility reading is generally considered to be more neutral (unmarked) than the other two senses. It often applies only because there is no clear indication of permission or ability.

The gradient of inherency (16 cases) relates the possibility and ability sense of *could* because, as Leech (2004, 75) or Quirk et al. (1985, 221–22) note, ability implies possibility. In other words, if someone has the ability to do x, then x is possible. Hence, in the cases representing the gradient of inherency, the fulfilment of the action depends on a mixture of external factors and inherent properties of the subject, as in (6).

- (6) *The nature of dark matter and the source of ultra-high energy cosmic rays are two of the biggest unsolved mysteries in physics.* A mammoth instrument nearing completion **could** soon tell us whether the two questions are linked. (NAT) [NS, 8]

Example (6) might read *it is not clear whether the instrument will tell us because the external conditions will allow that or because it will be in its capacity* (cf., Coates 1983, 93).

The gradient of restriction (2 cases) relates the meaning of possibility and permission, for permission may be interpreted as granted possibility (Coates 1983, 88):

- (7) The review should include: . . . a set of treatments for which the NHS **could** charge. (ADMIN) [HC,18]

Example (7) could be interpreted in terms of external circumstances (*it would be possible for the NHS to charge*), however, some regulations indicating permission seem to be employed as well, but the permission-granting authority is not specified (*some authority would allow the NHS to charge*).

In conclusion, when interpreting the cases of gradience, it is not obvious upon which factors the fulfilment of the action is dependent; it usually results from combining different factors.

4.2 ROOT POSSIBILITY *COULD* IN NON-PAST CONTEXTS

To analyse root possibility *could*, it was necessary, apart from ruling out the permissive and ability reading, to distinguish between its past or hypothetical interpretation and also between *could* followed by a bare infinitive and *could* in conjunction with a perfect infinitive.

TABLE 2: INTERPRETATIONS OF ROOT POSSIBILITY *COULD*

	TIME REFERENCE	INTERPRETATION	NO OF TOKENS	%
<i>could</i> + bare infinitive (164 tokens)	present/future	hypothetical possibility	141	79.7
	past	past possibility	12	6.8
		reported possibility	11	6.2
<i>could</i> + perfect infinitive (13 tokens)	past	past hypothetical possibility	13	7.3
TOTAL			177	100

The findings (Table 2) confirm that *could* is not restricted to past contexts. It occurs freely in both past and non-past settings, being predominantly used with present or future time reference (79.7 percent). Consequently, it can be argued that *could* is unmarked for tense and may be treated as an independent lexical item. Basically, hypothetical *could* occurs with present verb forms and other conditionals while *could* referring to past time is usually found with other past forms (Palmer 1990; Dušková 1972). The difference is clearly demonstrated in Larreya's examples: *He had the key, he could open the door* where *could* has temporal meaning, while in *He has the key, he could open the door* it has hypothetical meaning (2003, 31).

As mentioned, the vast majority of root possibility tokens of *could* appear in non-past contexts, where they are interpreted as hypothetical forms for the root possibility sense of *can*, like (8). Leech sees the hypothetical uses of *could* as "generally toning down the meaning of the corresponding non-hypothetical auxiliary" (2004, 130), which implies that such occurrences can be viewed as tentative:

- (8) The glove **could** be also used in online meetings to provide virtual handshakes.
(NAT) [NS, 23]
= *it would be possible to use the glove in online meetings*

Example (8) also illustrates the co-occurrence of *could* with passive, which is considered to be an important correlation for its root possibility reading (as opposed to ability and permission). The modal verb has been identified in passivized sentences mainly in ACAD (27 occurrences) and ADMIN (16 occurrences); in nearly all the recorded passive structures (41 instances) the agent is unexpressed, as in (8).

The prototypical examples of *could* conveying root possibility are those where the enabling conditions affecting the outcome of the proposition are specified, as in (9).

- (9) ... suggested in the last chapter that there may indeed be some significance in their absence in that if such procedures of analysis were provided they **could** be used to come up with findings in support of unwelcome alternative interpretations. (ACAD) [HGW, 167]

Example (9) might thus read, *if certain conditions were fulfilled, i.e., if such procedures of analysis were provided, then nothing would prevent us from using them to come*

up with findings . . . Nevertheless, only a few recorded occurrences specify external circumstances; most instances, like (8), occur without an overtly expressed condition.

In conclusion, hypothetical *could* commonly appears in settings discussing potential states or situations dependent on external circumstances where the writer merely reports a state of fact and draws tentative conclusions on the basis of experiments or observations.

4.3 ROOT POSSIBILITY *COULD* IN PAST CONTEXTS

The modal verb *could* in past contexts is, in comparison with hypothetical *could*, infrequent (see Table 2). All the instances of past possibility *could*² (12 tokens) occur in contexts clearly indicating past setting, for example, the verb forms *was deserted* and *stayed* in (10).

- (10) The explosions **could** be heard across the capital, which was almost deserted as people stayed home for fear of the escalating fighting which flares up almost every night in districts where guerrillas have their forces. (NEWS) [T1, 2]
= *it was possible to hear the explosions across the capital*

Reported possibility *could* can be typically found in reported speech (11 backshifted tokens have been identified), usually in subordinate nominal clauses:

- (11) The Gershon review suggested that civil servants made redundant under efficiency measures **could** be redeployed as frontline staff such as classroom assistants. (NEWS) [T1, 4]

Nearly all the cases (10 out of 11) have been drawn from newspaper reporting, like (11), where *could* is used in a reported nominal clause and reflects the use of root possibility *can*.

The modal verb *could* in conjunction with a perfect infinitive has past time reference and seems to be contra-factive, i.e., it denotes something that did not happen as viewed now. This is shown in (12), which clearly states that the action did not happen (*it was not said*):

- (12) What people mean by what they say is therefore signalled by their choice of wording, but since there are different options to choose from within the grammatical systems, analysis can reveal what **could** have been said but was not. (ACAD) [HGW, 98]

As Dušková (1972, 22) concludes, the structure refers to situations which could have happened in the past but their actualisation remains open and non-fulfilment is implied in the context.

2. According to Leech (2004, 99), the label 'past possibility' may be misleading because possibility tends to be a timeless thing.

5. HEDGING

Hedging in written language generally represents a defensive strategy when the writer qualifies a statement to reduce its strength (Thompson 2002). This means that modal verbs functioning as hedges indicate that there are insufficient grounds to make a strong claim and that an alternative to the proposition may also be valid. Since hedged statements signal primarily a judgment, hedging is related basically to epistemic possibility senses (Hyland 1999), where the uncertainty is identified with the speaker (see section 3). However, as Markkanen and Schröder observe, “no linguistic items are inherently hedgy but can acquire this quality depending on the communicative context or the co-text” (1997, 3). Stated differently, some root possibility modal senses can be employed as hedges in particular contexts, usually when related to tentativeness. As has been exemplified in 4.2, in non-past contexts *could* expresses weaker meanings than its present counterpart *can*; it presents possibility as less probable or improbable (cf., Dušková 1972, 46; Quirk et al. 1985, 231; Leech 2004, 130). Consequently, the prevalent hypothetical senses of root possibility *could* can be seen as expressing an element of tentativeness or diffidence, which are concepts closely related to hedging.

In all its epistemic uses (5 cases), *could* undoubtedly functions as a hedge in that it mitigates the force of the proposition. Nevertheless, hypothetical root possibility *could* (141 occurrences) seems to mitigate the strength of the statements in which it occurs as well, as in:

- (13) The number of possible contexts this expression **could** relate to is infinite, but we can narrow them down by co-textual extension. (ACAD) [HGW, 71]

Examples like (13) imply that hedging is not restricted only to epistemic modal meanings. It may apply to the occurrences of root possibility *could* expressing tentativeness in non-past contexts. Different hedging devices also tend to co-occur (Thompson 2002), as in (13), where the modal verb collocates with the adjective *possible*. To conclude, certain uses of root possibility *could*, particularly those of hypothetical *could* in non-past contexts, seem to satisfy the criteria defining hedges and can be thus viewed as hedging devices.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that even if *could* can convey both root and epistemic possibility, in written English its root possibility reading prevails significantly. The modal verb is essentially associated with root possibility in non-past contexts, whereas its epistemic possibility reading is in written language infrequent and seems to be contextually restricted (cf., Coates 1983, 167). Hence *could* might be characterized as monosemantic. It has a core invariant meaning (potentiality), and its occurrences interpreted as ability, possibility, or permission, which may in some contexts result in gradience, can be seen as a modification of the underlying core sense in the appropriate contextual conditions.

It has been confirmed that *could*, primarily a past tense form acting as the past time equivalent of *can*, often refers to present or future time (cf., Bybee 1995, 503; Quirk et al. 1985, 231; Downing and Locke 1992, 387) and is thus seen as contra-factual, tentative, and unmarked for tense. Finally, it has been demonstrated that hedging is not restricted only to epistemic modal meanings, as a considerable proportion of the examined tokens seem to be related to the concept of hedging. Specifically, hypothetical root possibility *could* might be viewed as a hedge in that it is associated prevalently with settings expressing facts tentatively.

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RECENT SYNTACTIC RESEARCH ON EVENT AND RESULT NOMINALS IN ENGLISH AND CZECH

KATEŘINA HAVRANOVÁ

Palacký University, Olomouc, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic. Email: katerina.havranova@upol.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper makes a comparison of English gerunds and Czech deverbal nouns of two types. The first type of nominalizations ending in *-ní* / *-tí* is referred to as DN_i (*psaní*, *šití*, etc.) while the second type of nominalizations ending in *-ba* / *-ka* and other segments as DN_{ii} (*četba*, *procházka*, etc.). The aim is to look at their nominal and verbal features to demonstrate that although the English and Czech constructions differ substantially, especially as far as morphology is concerned, in terms of other aspects there are some similarities.

KEYWORDS: gerunds; nominalizations; result nominals; process nominals; event nominals; deverbal nouns; nominal features; verbal features

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1972, Thomas Wasow and Thomas Roeper published “On the Subject of Gerunds,” in which they argued persuasively for two sources of English gerunds in the deep structure. They distinguish nominal gerunds, which are generated directly in the base as NPs, and verbal gerunds, which exhibit sentence characteristics. The distinction is illustrated well by the following examples, where all the (a) sentences have the internal structure of NPs while the (b) sentences have the internal structure of VPs (1972, 45):

- (1) a. *I detest loud singing.*
b. *I detest singing loudly.*
- (2) a. *John enjoyed a reading of The Bald Soprano.*
b. *John enjoyed reading The Bald Soprano.*
- (3) a. *The killing of his dog upset John.*
b. *Killing his dog upset John.*
- (4) a. *Sightings of UFO's make Mary nervous.*
b. *Sighting UFO's makes Mary nervous.*
- (5) a. *No acting is good enough for John.*
b. *Not acting is good enough for John.*
- (6) a. *I enjoy graceful diving.*
b. *I enjoy having dived gracefully.*

Following Chomsky's lead (1970), Wasow and Roeper considered the use of articles, adjectival and adverbial modifiers, the category of number, distinct forms of an object, negation and aspect as the main criteria for their analysis. Thus, while the

nominal gerund in (1a) is modified by an adjective, the verbal gerund in (1b) requires adverbial modification. Just like regular NPs, the nominal construction is preceded by a determiner (2a) and the complement must be in the form of an of-phrase (3a); on the other hand, the VP gerund cannot be determined (2b) and the complement will be in the ACC case (3b). Similarly, while nominal gerunds can be pluralized (4a), verbal gerunds do not allow pluralization (4b). Their internal analysis is also reflected in the form of negation and tense markers. Like other Ns, the nominal construction (5a) is negated by *no*, but the verbal construction (5b) is negated by the particle *not*. The NP gerund (6a) does not take any tense marker, while the VP gerund (6b) allows the tense marker aspect.

Drawing parallels between English and Czech, this paper examines the Czech *-ní* / *-tí* nominalizations (e.g., *psaní*, *šití*, etc.) and compares them with other types of Czech nominalizations, namely those ending in *-ba* / *-ka* and other segments (e.g., *čítba*, *procházka*, etc.) as they are both derived from verbs and therefore exhibit some verbal characteristics, but as a part of speech are classified as nouns, albeit not prototypical. These two types have been chosen because they share part of their internal structure, have similar distributions in a sentence and the same interpretations of their arguments, but differ with respect to the tense marker [aspect]. This paper will look at their specific properties one by one and, when possible, compare them with their English counterparts, bearing the above mentioned criteria in mind.

2. A FEW NOTES ON WORD FORMATION

For purposes of comparison, I will label the first type of deverbal nouns ending in *ní* / *-tí* as DN_i and the second type of deverbal nouns ending in *-ba* / *-ka* (and other segments) as DN_{ii}. Both types of nominalizations are potential Czech words, which means that every Czech speaker should be able to form them as well as interpret their meaning. DN_i can be formed regularly from almost all lexical verbs by adding the suffixes *-ní* / *-tí* (*číst* – *čtení*, *procházet* – *procházení*, *hrát* – *hraní*, *jásat* – *jásání*, *sklízet* – *sklizení*, etc.), while DN_{ii} are formed irregularly by adding different suffixes (*-ba* – *čítba*, *-ka* – *procházka*, *-o* – *hra*, *-ot* – *jásot*, *-ň* – *sklizeň*, etc.). However, DN_i cannot be created from modal verbs (*mušet* – **mušení*, *moci* – **mocení*, *mít* – **mití*, etc.), from copula verbs (*být učitelem* – **bytí učitelem*), stative verbs of belonging (*patřit k* – **patření k*, *náležet k* – **náležení k*) or verbs of speaking (*říct* – **říkání*, *pravít* – **pravení*, *odpovědět* – **odpovědění*). Therefore, it seems that the more properties of a functional category the verb has, the less accessible it becomes for the process of nominalization (Petr 1986, 101–2).

3. SEMANTICS

Both DN_i and DN_{ii} are traditionally described as a special group of nouns denoting activities which are formed from verbs by the nominalization process. Jane Grimshaw (1990) distinguishes between process (or event) nominals, which denote the activity or process itself, and result nominals, which denote the result of an activity. Her distinction appears to have many advantages for my understanding of the two types

of nominalizations as well. While DNi can always express the process (7) and with the use of the same form sometimes also the result of the activity (8), DNii are usually interpreted as the result of the activity (9) and sometimes also as the process (10). The following examples illustrate the differences:

- (7) *Balení knihy ho unavilo.* (process)
'The packaging of the book exhausted him.'
- (8) *Balení je vodotěsné.* (result)
'The packaging is waterproof.'
- (9) *Betonová stavba stála mnoho peněz.* (result)
'The concrete building cost a lot of money.'
- (10) *Několik let se táhnoucí stavba trati byla nákladná.* (process)
'The several-years-long building of the track was expensive.'

Other properties are also related to this classification of DNi and DNii nominalizations, especially the interpretation of arguments and some morphosyntactic features. Stehlíková (2010, 137) suggests that if both DNi and DNii are understood as a process, their subjects and complements can be interpreted as arguments and cannot be interpreted as possessors, while subjects and complements of DNi and DNii, which are understood as the result of the activity, allow the interpretation of possessor and cannot be interpreted as arguments. In this respect, she agrees with Grimshaw (1990), who also claims that only process nominals legitimate the argument structure and consequently select arguments, while result nominals lack this ability to inherit the argument structure of the verb they are derived from, although they can still have participants such as the possessor. When we compare the following example sentences, the concept becomes clearer. Thus, example (11) introduces the arguments of the verb *to write*; (12) demonstrates that these arguments do not change if the DNi nominalization is interpreted as the process; but (13) shows that if the DNi nominalization is interpreted as the result of the activity, *Peter* should be interpreted as possessor and not as agent:

- (11) *Petr* (AGENT) *píše dopis* (PATIENT).
'Peter is writing a letter.'
- (12) *Petrovo* (AGENT) *psaní dopisu* (PATIENT) *trvalo hodinu.* (process)
'Peter's writing of a letter took an hour.'
- (13) *Petrovo* (POSSESSOR) *psaní *dopisu* *přišlo včera.* (result)
'Peter's writing *of a letter arrived yesterday.'

3. MORPHOLOGY

Despite being derived from verbs, DNi and DNii exhibit mostly nominal features and therefore as a part of speech are placed in most grammars in the class of nouns and

described as nouns, although not prototypical, as DN_i also have one grammatical feature in common with verbs.

DN_i have a unified gender, neuter, and are declined according to the paradigm *stavení* so that in the singular form the case inflection is visible only in the instrumental case and in the plural form in the dative and the instrumental case (see the table below).

TABLE 1: DN_i DECLINATION

1. NOM	<i>psaní + Ø</i>	<i>psaní + Ø</i>
2. GEN	<i>psaní + Ø</i>	<i>psaní + Ø</i>
3. DAT	<i>psaní + Ø</i>	<i>psaní + m</i>
4. ACC	<i>psaní + Ø</i>	<i>psaní + Ø</i>
5. VOC	<i>psaní + Ø</i>	<i>psaní + Ø</i>
6. LOC	<i>psaní + Ø</i>	<i>psaní + Ø</i>
7. INSTR	<i>psaní + m</i>	<i>psaní + mi</i>

Unlike DN_i, DN_{ii} differ in gender. Some of them are masculine, others feminine or neuter depending on the suffix, and have full declensional paradigms.

Their classification in terms of process versus result nominals is also reflected in quantification. Both DN_i and DN_{ii} are uncountable and considered to be mass nouns if they are interpreted as process nominals, but they become countable if they are understood as result nominals. Consider the following example:

- (14) **Dvě balení těch léků ho unavila.* (DN_i, process) X *Dvě balení těch léků byla v ledniče.* (DN_i, result)
 ‘‘Two packagings of the pills exhausted him. X Two packagings of the pills were in the fridge.’’

However, DN_i inherit an important grammatical feature [aspect] from the verbs they are derived from, which is something other nouns and DN_{ii} do not have. DN_{ii} have lost this feature, and for this reason they are often considered closer to regular nouns than DN_i. The following two nominalizations of the verbs *to write* and *to read* illustrate this phenomenon:

- (15) *psát* (V, imperf.) / *napsat* (V, perf.) – *psaní* (DN_i, imperf.) / *napsání* (DN_i, perf.) X
 **pis* / *nápis* (DN_{ii}, no aspect)
 (16) *číst* (V, imperf.) / *dočíst* (V, perf.) – *čtení* (DN_i, imperf.) / *dočtení* (DN_i, perf.) X
četba (DN_{ii}, no aspect) / **dočetba*

This grammatical feature is also reflected with respect to their ability to be combined with certain prepositions in PPs. So unlike DN_{ii}, DN_i are sensitive to aspect-marked prepositions such as *během* (*during*), which must be followed by imperfective, or *po* (*after*), which can be followed by both perfective and imperfective (17):

- (17) *během četby* / *po četbě* (DN_{ii}) – **během dočtení* / *po dočtení* (DN_i, perf.) – *během čtení* / *po čtení* (DN_i, imperf.)

4. SYNTAX

From the point of view of external syntax, DN_i and DN_{ii} have the distribution in a sentence like DP / NP and can have the grammatical function of subject, object, attribute or adverbial. The fact that deverbal nouns can be coordinated with other nouns not derived from verbs, (18), illustrates that they must belong to the same part of speech since only members of the same category can be coordinated. Moreover, deverbal nouns appear after prepositions in PPs, which is a typical position of noun phrases (19). These two tests show that the Czech deverbal nouns of both types externally behave in the same way:

- (18) *test a zkouška* (DN_{ii}) / *test a zkoušení* (DN_i)
 ‘the test and the exam / the test and the examining’
 (19) *chystal se na koncert / zkoušku* (DN_{ii}) / *zkoušení* (DN_i)
 ‘he was preparing for the concert / exam / examining’

Furthermore, Veselovská (2001, 19–20) demonstrates that, like other nouns, both DN_i and DN_{ii} can be premodified by demonstratives and other elements (20) and postmodified by a relative clause (21). This suggests that they must have a functional category D and in fact can be analyzed as DPs:

- (20) *tato zkouška* (DN_{ii}) / *toto zkoušení* (DN_i)
 ‘this exam / this examining’
 (21) *test / zkouška* (DN_{ii}) / *zkoušení* (DN_i), *kterého se nebojím*
 ‘the test / exam / examining which I do not fear’

However, DN_i and DN_{ii} differ with respect to negation and their co-occurrence with reflexive pronouns. Thus, for example, while DN_i can be negated, DN_{ii} are negated only occasionally:

- (22) *čtení / nečtení* (DN_i) X *četba / *nečetba* (DN_{ii})

Unlike DN_{ii}, which can never be followed by reflexive pronouns, those DN_i that are interpreted as process nominals can be followed by reflexive pronouns (Karlík 2002, 15–19):

- (23) *číst si* → **četba si* (DN_{ii}) / *čtení si* (DN_i, process)

The interpretation of postnominal genitive of both DN_i and DN_{ii}, which are understood as the process, can in some cases be ambiguous (it can be interpreted either as patient or as agent). Different scholars have slightly different judgments, but according to

Veselovská (2001, 19–20), the preferred reading will be that of patient. However, the sentence is disambiguated if both arguments are present at the same time as in (25) and (26):

- (24) *zkoušení Evy*
‘examining of Eve’
- (25) *Mariino zkoušení Evy*
‘Mary’s examining of Eve’
- (26) *zkoušení Evy Marií*
‘examining of Eve by Mary’

Since both DNi and DNii belong to the class of nouns, they are normally modified by adjectives, and not adverbs (27), which shows their nominal features. However, if DNi and DNii are interpreted as process nominal, they can be premodified by VP adjectives or possibly postmodified by adverbs (28). This fact illustrates that process nominals unlike result nominals retain verbal features.

- (27) **Rychlé / modré balení těch léků bylo v ledničce.* (result)
‘*The quick / blue packaging of the pills was in the fridge.’
- (28) *Rychlé balení těch léků ho překvapilo.* (process)
‘The quick packaging of the pills surprised him.’

5. CONCLUSION

This article has shown that nominalizations behave differently in different languages. Although they are similar with respect to some features, Czech nominalizations are not English gerunds. Czech nominalizations are classified as nouns, they always have external characteristics of DPs, and they require the complement to be in the genitive case and never in the accusative case as in English. Moreover, unlike English gerunds which allow both adjectival and adverbial modification depending on whether they are analyzed in the deep structure as NPs or VPs, Czech nominalizations are typically modified by adjectives and not adverbs. In line with Grimshaw (1990), it has proven useful to distinguish the two types of deverbal nouns, namely DNi and DNii, according to whether they express the activity as a result or as a process. This distinction becomes evident with respect to the interpretation of their arguments and also some morphosyntactic features. Finally, DNi appear to have more verbal features than DNii, which completely lack the perfective / imperfective distinction.

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CHANGING CLAUSE TYPES IN WRITTEN ENGLISH

MARCELA MALÁ

Technical University of Liberec, Faculty of Science, Humanities and Education, English Department,
Voroněžská 13, 460 01 Liberec 1, Czech Republic. Email: marcela.mala@tul.cz

ABSTRACT: Diachronic research into written English, which includes the language of academic texts, newspaper articles and fiction, focuses on change in explicitly-expressed finite and non-finite predication over a period of about a century. The findings reveal that both current academic texts and newspaper articles display a trend towards a non-finite mode of expression. When the perspective is diachronic, in these two registers non-finite clauses seem to be used more frequently now than they were a hundred years ago. In the language of fiction, no such developmental features were found. As regards individual types of finite and non-finite clauses, the registers of written English show some similarities as well as differences. This paper deals with diachronic changes in concrete clause types of finite and non-finite clauses expressing different syntactic functions that occurred in academic texts and newspaper articles.

KEYWORDS: written English; academic prose; newspaper language; language change; finite/non-finite clauses

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the results of long-term diachronic research into written English. The study detects changes that have occurred in the use of different kinds of finite/non-finite clauses in the last one hundred years. To achieve this goal, continuous running texts of three registers, namely academic English, newspaper language, and fiction were analysed. Academic English was represented by texts from the fields of psychology, economics and sociology; newspaper language came from articles in *The Guardian*, *The New York Times/ International Herald Tribune* (the global edition of *The New York Times*) and *The Daily Mirror*; fiction texts came from both British and American fiction. In each academic discipline, particular newspaper or text of fiction, the analysis focused on a text published at the end of the nineteenth century or the beginning of the twentieth century and a text published towards the end of the twentieth century or the beginning of the twenty-first century. From each text, one hundred consecutive sentences of a continuous running text were chosen as a unit of analysis. Within the stretches of continuous running texts, each explicitly-expressed predication was counted as a clause and categorized as a main, finite subordinate or non-finite clause. Finite subordinate and non-finite clauses were further divided into categories according to which syntactic function a particular clause performs. Four categories were created. The first category was formed by clauses replacing sentence elements normally expressed by noun phrases, such as subjects, objects, complements. The second category was made by clauses occupying an adverbial element slot. The third category was formed by clauses that contribute to the complexity of noun phrases in the form of pre- and postmodification. The fourth category consisted of comment clauses that were

independent of the rest of the sentence. Finally, each finite subordinate and non-finite clause was categorised according to which clause type it is. An effort was made to detect changes that are not register-dependent only, but are more universally valid, which means that they are valid across registers. In that respect the findings concerning the analysis of fiction often did not fit and it seems that, in terms of style, texts from fiction should be taken rather as idiolects. For this reason they were not included in the research results.

Contrasting the frequency of occurrence of finite subordinate and non-finite clauses, the results of the above-mentioned diachronic studies analysing academic texts and newspaper articles consistently show that if the numbers of clauses in the modern texts increase, finite clauses increase less than non-finite clauses. And if the numbers of clauses in the modern texts decrease, finite clauses decrease more than non-finite clauses. Thus when viewed diachronically, it seems that there is a growing tendency towards a non-finite mode of expression in British and American written English. If the perspective is synchronic, the tendency does not appear obvious because there are still more finite clauses than non-finite ones (Malá 2013, 34–35). The findings referring to the tendency towards a non-finite mode of expression and syntactic functions of finite subordinate and non-finite clauses in academic prose are discussed in Malá 2009, Malá 2010 and Malá 2011. The findings related to both academic prose and newspaper language are evaluated in Malá 2012 and Malá 2013.

As mentioned, three grammatical values were assigned to each explicitly-expressed predication. The first stated whether the predication was finite or non-finite. The second categorised the syntactic function. The third specified the concrete type of finite or non-finite clause. Since the previous publications are concerned with the finite/non-finite mode of expression and syntactic functions of finite/non-finite clauses, this paper deals with the third value assigned to each explicitly-expressed finite/non-finite predication, namely concrete clause types that occurred in academic prose and newspaper articles. It discusses mostly those clause types that were found in all 6 sets (12 texts) analysed. The numbers in Tables are absolute numbers. In most stretches of 100 sentences, there were fewer clauses in the modern texts. This means if the absolute numbers are the same or even higher in the modern texts, it indicates that a particular kind of clause type gained greater prominence in the modern texts. In this paper, the samples taken from the old psychology text are marked as (P1), the samples taken from the modern psychology text are marked as (P2). Similarly, the samples from economics are marked as (E1) and (E2) for the old and modern texts respectively. Finally, the samples representing sociology are marked as (S1) if they are taken from the old text and (S2) if they are taken from the modern text. As for the newspaper texts, the samples from the old texts are marked as (DM1) for *The Daily Mirror*, (G1) for *The Guardian* and (NYT1) for *The New York Times*. The samples taken from the modern texts are marked as (DM2) for *The Daily Mirror*, (G2) for *The Guardian* and (IHT1) or (IHT2) for the *International Herald Tribune*.

2. INDIVIDUAL CLAUSE TYPES

2.1 FINITE AND NON-FINITE CLAUSES OCCUPYING A NOUN PHRASE SLOT

The most common finite clause used as a substitute for noun phrases is a nominal *that* clause after a verb functioning as a direct object. Absolute numbers found in the texts are displayed in Table 1. In academic prose, both old and modern, *that* is mostly preserved as in example (1). In the old newspaper texts, the retention of *that* seemed to be the norm. Modern newspaper texts often prefer zero *that* clauses, as is shown in example (2).

- (1) The circulars declared *that Democrats should vote this Fall under the Liberty Bell emblem*, . . . (NYT1)
- (2) The British government, which lavishly praised the declaration, tells me *it has no printed copies*. (G2)

TABLE 1: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF NOMINAL *THAT*- CLAUSES IN ACADEMIC ENGLISH AND NEWSPAPER TEXTS

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
<i>That</i> - clause	28	24	14	18	8	6
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
<i>That</i> - clause	41	25	1	10	16	31

DM = *Daily Mirror*; *NYT* = *New York Times*

Two non-finite clause types occurring in all the academic and newspaper texts analysed are a *to*- clause after a verb functioning as a direct object, which is illustrated in example (3), and a subject to subject raising construction exemplified in (4) and (5). The absolute numbers can be seen in Table 2. The *to*- clause after a verb functioning as a direct object was and is the most common non-finite clause type used as a substitute for a noun phrase. This is certainly due to the analytical character of the English language, a feature of which is “the reduced dynamism of the Modern English finite verb” (Vachek 1961, 35) and a tendency to use nominal forms derived from a verb base instead, with the infinitive being one of them. The subject to subject raising construction is used after certain verbs, adjectives and passive voice mental verbs. This non-finite construction is interchangeable with a finite structural option, namely extraposition with a *that*-clause. Thus, sentence (4) can be changed into *It is supposed that Sir Ernest adopted the Buddhist religion* and (5) can be converted into . . . *It is likely that demands on the health service will rise*. The main clause subject in subject to subject raising and the subject of the extraposed *that*- clause are often linked anaphorically with the preceding context. In other words, they present a known piece of information. However, the main clause subject in subject to subject raising used with passive voice mental verbs may also present new information. This means that the high or low amount of communicative

dynamism, which the main clause subject in subject to subject raising contains, does not influence why the structure is used (Biber et al. 1999, 731–32). Table 2 shows that the differences between the absolute numbers in the old and modern texts are not substantial. The choice of subject to subject raising instead of an extraposed *that*-clause thus remains a structural option in which a non-finite clause is used.

- (3) The US, despite proclaiming a new commitment to multilateralism, refuses *to ratify the convention on biological diversity*. (G2)
- (4) *Sir Ernest . . . is supposed by his friends to have adopted the Buddhist religion*. (DM1)
- (5) As the population ages, *demands* on the health service are likely *to rise*. (E2)

TABLE 2: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF *TO*- INFINITIVE CLAUSES AND SUBJECT TO SUBJECT RAISING CONSTRUCTIONS

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
to- inf. clause	6	11	6	7	14	13
S to S raising	9	4	7	4	1	1
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
to- inf. clause	16	14	6	6	12	26
S to S raising	2	3	4	3	1	2

2.2 FINITE AND NON-FINITE CLAUSES OCCUPYING AN ADVERBIAL ELEMENT SLOT

In terms of finite clauses occupying an adverbial element slot, in both old and modern texts there are different semantic relationships between main and subordinate clauses. As demonstrated in Table 3, the most common types of subordinate clauses are adverbial clauses of time, condition and concession. This is not surprising, because such clauses are vitally important for the development of an argument. Viewed from a diachronic perspective, the situation has not changed in the course of a century.

TABLE 3: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
Time	17	1	4	5	3	6
Condition	19	–	11	9	14	9
Concession	8	7	11	8	7	5
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
Time	3	4	6	11	15	11
Condition	4	3	2	5	3	7
Concession	1	2	6	2	1	4

In the three registers analysed, there are 6 types of non-finite clauses used as a substitute for an adverbial. The absolute numbers found in academic prose and newspaper articles are displayed in Table 4.

TABLE 4: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF NON-FINITE CLAUSES SUBSTITUTING FOR AN ADVERBIAL

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
-ing /overt sub.	8	7	4	4	6	6
-ing without s.	2	–	1	12	1	1
	absolutes					
-ed/overt sub	–	2	3	1	2	2
-ed without s	1	–	–	2	–	–
to-purpose	3	10	9	10	6	9
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
-ing /overt sub	5	8	3	1	8	3
-ing without s.	4	3	8/3	11/4	6/1	14
	absolutes					
-ed/overt sub	3	–	–	–	–	–
-ed without s	–	–	2	3/2	1	–
	absolutes					
to-purpose	11	8	5	10	4	6

Sentences (6) and (7) illustrate an *-ing* clause with an overt subordinator. Sentence (8) demonstrates an *-ing* clause without an overt subordinator. Also *-ed* clauses can be used with or without an overt subordinator. The unexpressed subject of the non-finite clause is normally coreferential with the subject of the superordinate clause. Especially in the old newspaper texts, but also in small proportions in the modern newspaper texts, there are some *-ing* /*-ed* absolute participle constructions. The numbers are listed in Table 4. The figure *8/3 absolutes* for example means that altogether there are 8 participle constructions, 3 of which are absolute participle constructions. Concrete examples are shown in (9), (10) and (11). Such constructions have their own subject, which is often anaphorically linked with a clause element in a superordinate clause. The link is indicated by a lexical means that may be introduced by the preposition *with* and varies from “reiteration (including a synonym) or substitution by a pro-form” (Malá 2005, 76) to indirect anaphoric reference by means of an “inference from what has already been mentioned” (Quirk et al. 1985, 267). In (9), *his chrysanthemums* is related to *a gardener*, while in (10), *organisers* is linked to *the four-day Diamond Jubilee*, and in (11), *each bell* to *a floating belfry*. The semantic relationship of absolute participle constructions to their superordinate clauses is often ambiguous. If their subjects refer anaphorically to an element in their superordinate clauses, “they resemble postmodifying non-restrictive clauses rather than adverbial ones” (Malá 2005, 79). The problem with finding the right semantic relationship between a non-finite clause and its superordinate clause also arises when *-ing* and *-ed* participle clauses are used without an overt subordinator

(Biber et al. 1999, 783). In this current study, both kinds of clauses were analysed as non-finite clauses substituting for an adverbial.

- (6) *On reading this* he thought that . . . (G1)
- (7) . . . *when staying at . . .*, she delighted the party by . . . (DM1)
- (8) *Looking back . . .*, shrewd observers have hinted that the basis of our taxation . . . (E1)
- (9) He is . . . proud of his skill as a gardener, *his chrysanthemums being famous even in Japan*. (G1)
- (10) The water-borne extravaganza will be one of the highlights of the four-day Diamond Jubilee *with organisers hoping* to recreate scenes not seen since the reign of Charles II. (DM3)
- (11) At its head will be a floating belfry *with each bell named after a senior member of the Royal Family*. (DM3)

Apart from non-finite *-ing/-ed* clauses substituting for an adverbial, two kinds of infinitive clauses were also found, namely *to-* infinitive clauses expressing purpose and in small proportions also *to-* infinitive clauses articulating sufficiency/ excess. The infinitive of sufficiency/excess is illustrated in example (12). On the whole, the semantic relationship of purpose, which is another semantic relationship vitally important for the development of an argument, was and is rarely expressed by means of a finite clause. The situation has not changed in the last century. As for the infinitive of purpose, however, its usage has increased. Old and modern academic texts and old newspaper articles display different alternatives of the *to-* infinitive of purpose, namely *in order to* as in (13) or *so as to* as in (15). Sentence (14) demonstrates the usage of the infinitive of purpose when the subjects are different and a construction *for+object+infinitive* is used. In modern newspaper articles, the plain *to-* infinitive of purpose prevails.

- (12) . . . the subliminal is seldom so completely segregated from the supraliminal consciousness *as not to be to some extent disturbed in its operations* . . . (P1)
- (13) The Emperor will arrive on Wednesday *in order to spend Christmas with his eldest daughter* . . . (DM1)
- (14) . . . Lord Elgin submitted additional words in the resolution by which the provision would be made *for the Prime Minister to be president* . . . (G1)
- (15) . . . it enables the scientific worker to break up his subject-matter, *so as to isolate various component parts* . . . (S1)

2.3 CLAUSES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPLEXITY OF NOUN PHRASES IN THE FORM OF PRE- AND POST-MODIFICATION

Since the aim of the study was to examine explicitly expressed predication, *-ing /-ed participles* used as a premodification of noun phrases derived from a verb base were counted as non-finite clauses. Examples are given in sentences (16), (17) and (18). Table 5 shows an increase in the use of premodification of noun phrases in newspaper language

in the modern texts. A tendency towards a growing complexity of noun phrases mainly in newspaper language has been well researched (Biber 2003).

- (16) . . . they have failed to produce a *written* agreement. (G2)
 (17) This was the high point – an *astonishing* display of the country’s affection for her. (DM2)
 (18) But Mr Perry’s *continued* presence should also boost Mr Romney, by continuing to divide the social conservative vote. (IHT1)

TABLE 5: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF PREMODIFICATION

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
-ed premod.	12	10	13	10	25	10
-ing premod.	3	3	7	2	6	5
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
-ed premod.	8	10	2	7	5	8
-ing premod.	6	10	5	8	4	8

As for postmodification, the most common clause type of a finite clause postmodifying noun phrase is a defining relative clause. Absolute numbers are displayed in Table 6.

TABLE 6: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
Relative c.	49	25	71	14	41	20
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
Relative c.	27	26	12	11	29	26

Here, the changes in the use of relative pronouns could suggest some developmental trends. The findings indicate that a *who/which* alternative, which was the dominant usage after personal and impersonal antecedents respectively in the old texts, is replaced by a *who/which/that* alternative in the modern texts. When the relative pronoun functions as an object, it is preserved in the old texts. This is shown in examples (19) and (20). In the modern academic texts, such clause types are rare. If they occur, the relative pronoun is preserved, as is illustrated in example (21). In the modern newspaper texts, however, relative clauses in which the relative pronoun would occupy the role of an object are frequently used, and the relative pronoun is commonly omitted as demonstrated in examples (22) and (23).

- (19) It is exactly this tendency . . . *which we call Sensationalism*. (S1)
 (20) He referred . . . to the effect *which such a new arrangement would have upon . . .*
 (G1)

- (21) The findings . . . underscore the careful attention *that sociologists must give to all elements* . . . (S2)
 (22) Having secured the headlines *it wanted*, the staff . . . (G2)
 (23) . . . he demanded that Mr Romney explain in more detail the impact *the firm had had on jobs*. (IHT2)

Examples (24), (25) and (26) display three kinds of non-finite clauses used as postmodification, namely *-ed*, *-ing* and *to-* infinitive postmodification.

- (24) He sits at his desk and examines the figures *laid before him*. (S1)
 (25) . . . the idea of the phenomenon of one person's will *dominating another's*. (P2)
 (26) This has some economic logic, unless there are reasons *to believe* that it is . . . (E2)

As for the frequency of occurrence, Table 7 indicates that in the academic texts the order is consistently *-ed*, *-ing* and *to-* infinitive postmodification. In the newspaper texts, it varies.

TABLE 7: ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF NON-FINITE CLAUSES POSTMODIFYING NOUN PHRASES

	Psychology old	Psychology modern	Economics old	Economics modern	Sociology old	Sociology modern
-ed postmod.	27	9	37	16	22	11
-ing postmod.	18	7	22	10	16	9
to- postmod.	8	9	2	3	9	7
	<i>Guardian</i> old	<i>Guardian</i> modern	<i>DM</i> old	<i>DM</i> modern	<i>NYT</i> old	<i>NYT</i> modern
-ed postmod.	25	7	9	12	12	5
-ing postmod.	33	8	4	7	6	18
to- postmod.	6	10	4	5	3	11

Generally speaking, modern academic texts show a decrease in finite/non-finite clauses expressing postmodification. In newspaper language, however, non-finite postmodification increases.

3. CONCLUSION

Diachronic research focusing on changing clause types in written English included academic texts, newspaper articles and fiction. The aim of this study was to detect changes in the usage of concrete types of finite/non-finite clauses in the last century. Another aim was to detect changes that would be more universally valid, that is to say valid across registers. During the study, it became apparent that fiction texts should be taken rather as idiolects. A comparison of the findings of the diachronic research into academic prose and newspaper language revealed that some clause types were and are used in both registers in a more or less similar way while others were the same or similar in the old texts, but are different in the modern texts. Among those that were and are the same belong for example *to-* infinitive clauses after verbs, which are

used as direct objects, or adverbial clauses of time, condition and concession, which express the most common semantic relationships necessary for the development of an argument. Examples illustrating the differences between these two registers in usage in the modern texts are more numerous. For instance, in both registers the most common finite clause used as a substitute for a clause element normally expressed by a noun phrase was and is a nominal *that*-clause after a verb functioning as a direct object. While in the old texts *that*- was mostly preserved in both registers, in the modern texts *that*- is often omitted in newspaper language. Other differences between these two registers in the modern texts would include the following: the usage of the plain *to*- infinitive of purpose in the modern newspaper texts, as opposed to other alternatives in the modern academic texts; the very low frequency of occurrence of defining relative clauses with the relative pronoun in the object position and the retention of a relative pronoun in the modern academic texts, as opposed to frequently used defining relative clauses with the relative pronoun in the object position and the omission of a relative pronoun in the modern newspaper texts; the increase in the use of -ing/-ed premodification in the modern newspaper texts; the decrease in the use of finite/non-finite postmodification in the modern academic texts; the rise of especially non-finite postmodification in the modern newspaper texts, etc. Current newspaper language thus seems to display signs of a more economical way of expression than current academic prose.

The differences in the way individual clause types were used one hundred years ago and are used now provide tangible evidence that language is a dynamic system that develops over time. However, overall developmental tendencies would have to be established through further research.

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CORPUS

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THE HIGHLIGHTING SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH AND THEIR TRANSLATION INTO CZECH IN COLLECTED SAMPLES OF LITERARY TEXTS

JANA RICHTEROVÁ

Akcent College, s.r.o., Bítovská 5, 140 00 Praha 4, Czech Republic. Email: 4563@mail.akcentcollege.cz

ABSTRACT: The syntactic structures with marked word order, employed for the purpose of highlighting elements of utterances, are carriers of the expressive function of the language, used across its functional styles. Not only do they serve as a unique example for illustrating the differences between typologically different languages such as English and Czech, but they also represent a challenging phenomenon for a translator. This paper summarizes the basic concepts of sentence dynamism analysis from the functional grammar perspective, and compares the English-Czech translations of syntactic structures with marked word order within a collection of selected samples of literary texts, the translations of which have been published in the Czech Republic.

KEYWORDS: word order; functional sentence perspective; highlighting; theme; rheme; Rheme Proper; sentence dynamism; clefting; fronting; inversion

This paper is grounded in the studies of the Prague School of Linguistics, dating back to the 1930s. It will point out and illustrate that some applications of the Mathesian theory of word order are still highly topical within the domain of contemporary translation from English into Czech and vice versa.

Vilém Mathesius, who elaborated on the typological differences between English and Czech in relation to word order, defined the following principles ruling it: 1. the grammatical principle, 2. rhythm, 3. the principle of functional sentence perspective, and 4. the principle of highlighting clausal elements. He claims that whereas in Czech the highlighted element tends to be placed in the final position, the typical position for highlighting an element in English is at the beginning of the sentence (1975, 159). Given that word order in both languages identifies the theme/given information and the rheme/new information of the sentence (while in English it is also subordinated to the grammatical principle), wording an utterance with a highlighted clausal element initiates the change of its original arrangement, following the principles of *functional sentence perspective* (henceforth FSP, Firbas 1992). This principle is employed in both English and Czech, yet by different methods.

The primary division of an utterance into a theme and rheme¹ has a neutral or unmarked form, i.e., the one where the theme (the part given by the context) precedes the rhematic part (the actual message). Firbas (1992, 10), who worked out the theory of functional sentence perspective in detail and spoke about the *linear modification* as

1. *Functional generative description* concerns *topic* and *focus*, with the verb as the nucleus of the sentence, where the *topic/focus articulation* is analysed (Hajičová and Panevová 1993, 60).

one of the three *FSP* factors, defined the Th-Rh ordering as *natural*, while Mathesius (1975, 156) coined the term *objective word order* as distinct from *the subjective word order*, i.e., such that ignores the recipient of the message. This commonly occurs only in emphatic utterances. For the purpose of this paper the term *marked word order* will be used, contrary to the *unmarked word order*, where the linear ordering of elements modifies their dynamism towards the final position, occupied by the elements with the highest degree of dynamism (Dušková 1994, 519).

While the marked word order is a device expressing the emotional and emphatic character of utterances in both languages, Dušková maintains that their “markedness” is of a different character: in English the emphatic word order is a deviation from the grammatical word order and at the same time a carrier of different sentence dynamism, whereas in Czech this type of word order only reflects the divergence from the basic sentence dynamism, as the arrangement of clausal elements is relatively flexible here (Dušková 1994, 520).

When analysing sentence dynamism, Firbas (1992, 35) takes into consideration the *contextual dependence*, which is signalled by co-reference, the use of pronouns, morphological exponents or ellipsis. He claims that context is a gradable phenomenon and observes the *dynamic weight* of contextually independent clausal elements, defining the *Rheme Proper* as the most dynamic element of the sentence. An interesting situation relevant for this reasoning occurs when the sentence contains a contextually independent subject realized by NP with an indefinite determiner. Firbas explains that the newly presented constituent realized by the subject will be stronger in terms of dynamism, regardless of its position within the utterance. The Czech version of such a structure will yet regularly follow the linear thematic arrangement of the sentence, and place the subject in the final position (Firbas 1992, 59).

Firbas (1992) asserts that though the interpretation of the level of dynamism among the elements in these structures will be alike, the emotive word order causes the overall rise in sentence dynamism, realized namely within the rheme of the sentence. The marked word order as a carrier of the additional, attitudinal information, entails a rise in sentence dynamism:

It follows from what has been demonstrated that the objective and the subjective word orders do not necessarily produce the same effect in English and Czech. This is due to the different positions of the English and the Czech emotive principles in their respective word-order systems. Two languages may use the same word order, but the effects produced need not necessarily be the same. (124)

As for the theory of translation, Knittlová (2010) explains that since the second half of the twentieth century, when Nida introduced his theory of *dynamic equivalence*, *functional equivalence* has held sway in translation. This concept of translation does not rely on the use of the same linguistic devices, but those reaching the same function, thus covering the denotative meaning as well as the connotative and pragmatic (Knittlová 2010, 7). House (2009, 5), who adopted Halliday’s functional approach to text analysis, also maintains that translation is defined as a process of substituting one text in one language by another text in the other language, the target of translation being not the substitution of individual constituents, but again a text as a whole. The functional equivalence thus necessarily

covers the matters of the FSP, as the identification of the Rheme Proper and its consequent location at the final part of the utterance is essential (Knittlová 2010, 156).

Zehnalová, having accepted House's criteria for evaluating translation, covers the topic under the heading of *disputable acceptability* and gives a range of examples showing word-by-word translation, stylistically inadequate translation of grammatical forms (e.g., forms of passive or aspect) or insensitivity towards the target language (Zehnalová 2010 in Knittlová 2010, 248). One of the pitfalls for a translator is the so-called *cline of similarity*, i.e., the "relative mirror reflections of sentence structures," leading to "the unwanted effect of automatic copying of source language strategies in complexing into the target language translation, regardless of different priorities and tendencies in use" (Tárnyiková 2007, 201).

To sum up, when reading a text in a foreign language, the style of which is affected by the application of marked word order, a non-native language user's perception may become distorted. When attempting to translate such a text into a mother tongue, substantial shifts in sentence dynamism occur frequently, namely due to the tendency for word-by-word translation.

The highlighting or marked syntactic structures include primarily the following: the cleft-constructions and there-constructions as the explicit types (establishing a new specific frame of a sentence), and fronting and inversion as the implicit types, i.e., those created by only restructuring the original sentence (Tárnyiková 1992). The cleft construction (e.g., *It was John that/who passed the test last week*), based on breaking the original structure into two while giving the prominence to the element at the end of the first clause and leaving the second clause as *background information* (Quirk 1985 in Tárnyiková 1992), enables the subject (or other elements) of an unmarked utterance to become the rheme regularly (Dušková 1994, 538). The Czech equivalent, rather than copying the structure, is more likely to place the chosen element into the final position, often adding an emphasizing particle, e.g., *vždyť* (Grepel and Karlík 1986, 330). The pseudo-cleft construction (*What I cannot get used to is the noise of the traffic*), which could be described as a *thematic equative* (Halliday 2004), or a *nominalized theme* in a Theme – be – Rheme pattern (Tárnyiková 1992), though preserving the original basic distribution of sentence dynamism, produces tension within the utterance and adds more dynamism to the rhematic element. As Halliday puts it, the identifying structure adds to the Rheme a semantic component, i.e., the feature of exclusiveness (2004, 71). With the original rheme in the final position, the Czech equivalent, should it preserve the sentence dynamism, is again likely to make use of a lexical device. Similarly, fronting an element, which in unmarked sentences follows the verb as its complementation into the initial position, has a strong effect on the distribution of sentence dynamism of an utterance, with a different level of markedness depending on the clausal element (complement, object, adjunct) fronted.² Dušková (1994) maintains that the fronted element becomes the carrier

2. Halliday, who defines the theme as the first clausal element regularly, asserts that the least marked theme is an adverbial phrase functioning as Adjunct, whereas the least likely to be thematic is a Complement (2004, 73).

of the main focus, i.e., the element with the status of RhPr if non-recoverable, while in Czech such an element will again be placed in the final position.

The inversion, either full (*Up the hill ran the soldiers*) or partial (*Never has she mentioned that to me*), again has a strong effect on the sentence dynamism distribution, illustrating that in the English language it is not only the final position that commonly takes the information focus, but also the initial position when occupied by an element which is not prototypical there, i.e., the subject in a declarative sentence. The basic types of the highlighting structures can even combine, e.g., *They hoped that Herbert Frost would be elected and Frost indeed it was that topped the pool*. (Quirk 1985, 1379). Such constructions will consequently require a sensitive approach of a translator.

Grepl and Karlík (1986, 330) present the following list of means that serve the emphasis of the rheme in the Czech language: a) marked intonation variations, b) movement of the clausal stress, c) the word inversion (e.g., *toto je otázka zásadní*), d) the employment of intensifying adverbs and particles (e.g., *ani, právě, teprve, zrovna, už, dokonce, aspoň, jedině, hned, pouze, až*), e) individualization of parts of utterance, f) repetition of parts of utterance. The first two and the last two expressions, however, are related to the spoken form of language.

I thus believe, that if in an English text one of the specific syntactic forms for highlighting is employed, the level of its expressiveness – and the overall sentence dynamism – is rarely transmitted to Czech by the change of word order exclusively. The original dynamism of the utterance is often preserved by relying on lexical expressions, too, namely in literary text. Knittlová (2010, 34) also points out that the new information may require a multi-word expression, thus it has a longer structure and the organization scheme of the utterance must account for more weight at the final position of the sentence.

The cleft constructions, fronting and inversion were the structures I focused on when comparing the sentence dynamism in the Czech translations of a set of literary samples. For the purpose of the observations, I chose ten books by English authors whose translations were published between 1959 and 2007, including Evelyn Waugh, Kingsley Amis, Alan Sillitoe and Roald Dahl. The reasons for this selection were a) the assumption that there would be a high frequency of marked syntactic structures in the humoristic genre they represent, and b) the books I used for my brief survey are generally considered attractive for students (the survey was closely related to research focused on the capacity of adequate perception of such structures by students of English at an advanced level). I collected a corpus of over 250 samples of the structures, each of them being clearly a carrier of a strong expressive function. Consequently, I compared them with their Czech equivalents in the published versions in terms of sentence dynamism.

The following three samples come from the book *Three Men in a Boat* by J. K. Jerome (1993) and the Czech translation by L. Vojtik (2007):

- (1) What it was that was actually the matter with us, we none of us could be sure of, but the unanimous opinion was that it – whatever it was – had been brought on

by overwork. (11) – Ani jeden z nás si vlastně nebyl jistý, co mu schází. Nakonec jsme se shodli, že ať už je to cokoliv, může za to přepracování. (14)

The first sample represents a relatively complex structure including fronting of the complement, which is itself realized by a pseudo-cleft construction; the structure is highly marked, its unmarked version might be: *We none of us could be sure of what the matter with us actually was* (the Czech translation actually corresponds with this form). The English version shows the preference for breaking the syntactic pattern, whereas in Czech the preference is evident for complying with the FSP criteria, with the support of lexical devices (*ani, vlastně/even, indeed, actually*) employed. The Czech version seems satisfactory, though other solutions are also possible, providing more tension and contrast within the sentence.

- (2) Where the thousands and thousands of bad sailors that swarm in every ship hide themselves when they are on land is a mystery. (14) – Je vážně záhada, kde se na pevnině schovávají ty tisíce a tisíce lidí, co trpí mořskou nemocí, jimiž se hemží všechny lodě. (17) (It is a real mystery where on land hide the thousands and thousands of people who get seasick and who swarm in every ship.)

This structure is commonly not a part of the prototypical highlighting syntactic structures described in grammar books, though Tárníková (2002) mentions it. In accordance with the heavy-end-shift principle, extraposition is commonly expected of longer clausal elements and once it is not realized, the structure is perceived as marked. The unmarked form would then involve extraposition of the subject, i.e., *It is a mystery where the thousands and thousands of bad sailors that swarm in every ship hide themselves when they are on land*. Ignoring the possibility of extraposing the long subject and keeping the complement *mystery* intentionally in the final position gives it more emphasis. With its level of dynamism it should also be placed at the very end of the whole proposition in Czech.

Suggested solution: Kde se ty tisíce chudáků s mořskou nemocí, kterých jsou na každé lodi hejna, ukrývají na pevnině, to je vážně/mi záhada. (Where the thousands and thousands of people who get seasick hide themselves when they are on land is a real mystery.)

- (3) “If you never try a new thing, how can you tell what it’s like? It’s men such as you that hamper the world’s progress.” (136) – “Když nikdy nechceš zkusit nic nového, jak můžeš říkat, jaké by to bylo? Lidé, jako jsi ty, brzdí světový pokrok.” (160)

The it-cleft structure in the sentence above (translated into Czech: Men such as you hamper the world’s progress.) is used to highlight the complement *men such as you*. In accordance with the FSP theory, the element highlighted by the it-cleft is the Rheme, and thus it might be a better solution to shift the highlighted element to the final position in the Czech version. (This would possibly emphasize the humorous assumption of “the world’s progress being hampered.”)

Suggested solution: “Světový pokrok brzdí přesně/právě takoví lidi jako ty!” (The world’s progress is hampered by those men such as you.)

The next pair of examples comes from *Decline and Fall* by Evelyn Waugh (1965); translation by Josef Schwarz (1986):

- (4) “I don’t suppose I shall see you again for some time.” – “No, sir, and very sorry I am to hear about it.” (14) – “Podle všeho se nějaký čas neuvidíme.” – “Asi ne, pane, a přišlo mi to líto, když jsem se to dověděl.” (14) (Probably not, sir. And I was sorry when I heard about it.)

This sample includes the example of a fronted complement as the carrier of the highest level of dynamism (the other elements being context-dependent), which makes us expect in the Czech translation its placement in the clearly rhematic final position.

Suggested solution: “Podle všeho se nějaký čas neuvidíme.” – “Asi ne, pane, a ta zpráva mě opravdu moc mrzí/a je mi to (celé) moc líto.” (Probably not, sir, and the news made me very sorry indeed.)

- (5) “They tell me that married this afternoon you were?” said the stationmaster. (107) – “Tak vás, dovidám se, sezdali dnes odpoledne, pravdaže?” zeptal se přednosta stanice. (92) (So, you, I hear, were married this afternoon, right?)

The structure includes a fronted complement and adverbial as part of a subordinate clause, which again produces a highly expressive utterance with the so-called *divided focus* (Quirk 1985), the emphasis being on both *married* and *this afternoon*. The translation into Czech places the most dynamic element in the end position – in accordance with the FSP theory. This could yet be supported by using some lexical device.

Without the intention of systematically assessing the quality of all ten translators’ work, I suggest that a large number of the samples collected within my survey could be subjected to effective critical analysis with students of English at the university level. The most accurate and apt translations can serve as good examples to students, e.g., Škvorecký’s translation of Sillitoe, Kořán’s translation of Wyndham or Vrba’s translation of Tolkien. These can be effectively used as illustrations – for the purpose of teaching English language syntax by the contrastive method.

The following two samples come from *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* by Alan Sillitoe (1959) and its excellent translation by Josef Škvorecký (1965):

- (6) Cunning is what counts in this life, and even that you’ve got to use in the slyest way you can; (7) – Jediný, co na tomhle světě platí, je mazanost, a to ještě člověk musí mít moc za ušima, když chce bejt mazanej; (5).

The structure above includes the so-called inverted pseudo-cleft, i.e., a pseudo-cleft construction with the inverted order of the elements preceding and following the

copula BE (Tárnyiková 2002, 191).³ Here, the emphasis is on the word *cunning*, which is then the Rheme Proper of the whole sentence. The translation into Czech keeps the same level of dynamism by placing the Rh in the end position, while employing a lexical device – the idiom (*mít za ušima*), and a repetition of words with the same stem: *mazanost* – *mazanej* (shrewdness – shrewd).

- (7) And if I don't get caught the bloke I give this story to will never give me away; he's lived in our terrace for as long as I remember, and he's my pal. *That* I do know. (47) – A jestli mě nelíznou, ten chlápek, kterému tuhle historii dávám, mě neshodí; co se pamatuju, bydlí u nás v ulici, a je to muj kámoš. To teda vim na betón. (53)

The last English sentence structure, corresponding with the characteristic style of the narrator's discourse, involves strong emphasis at both the syntactic and morphological levels. The fronted object *that* gets the prominence, but as it is contextually dependent (anaphoric reference to the previous utterance), it is rather the verb that realises the Rheme Proper, being even emphasized by the auxiliary *do*. The Czech version finds support in incorporating lexical devices, with the emphasis on the rhematic verb realised inventively by the expressive phrase *na betón* (idiom).

I have also carried out a systematic survey concerning the thematic structure of highlighted syntactic structures in the translation of the renowned and school-recommended classic by George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (1990), translated into Czech by Gabriel Gössel (1991). In the book I found 67 cleft sentences and instances of fronting and inversion. The following examples are illustrative of the translators' inconsistent work with the functional sentence perspective.

- (8) I am twelve years old and have had over four hundred children. Such is the natural life of a pig. (5) – Je mi dvanáct let a mám přes čtyři sta dětí. To je normální život vepře. . . . (7) (I am twelve years old and have had over four hundred children. It is a normal life of a pig.)

The structure includes a fronted complement *such* which induces the S-V inversion. I suggest that its published Czech translation, substituting the fronted complement by the *it* subject, is lacking dynamism. Though the fronted complement is context-dependent, as in English it is given prominence by fronting, it should be preserved and moved to the final position in Czech, and another lexical item (e.g., *už*) could be employed. (It should also be noted that *vepř* is a castrated pig – the text concerns a breeding male pig.)

Suggested solution: Je mi dvanáct let a mám přes čtyři sta dětí. Život kance je už prostě takový; or: Takový už je život kance. (The natural life of a pig is simply such/like that.)

3. Halliday (2004) speaks about the *marked thematic equatives*, e.g., the "pseudo-cleft sentences" with nominalization, as Rheme (2004, 70).

- (9) About the rebellion and its results he would express no opinion. (20) O revoluci a jejích výsledcích se nikdy nevyjádřil. (17) (About the rebellion and its results he would never speak.)

The structure includes a fronted post-modifier of the noun phrase head noun *opinion*, which, as a direct object, stays in the final, rhematic position. With the modifier being quite long, but occupying the initial position, and the head being left in the end position, it is evident that the Rheme Proper is *opinion*. The Czech translation, unfortunately, overlooks the Rh Pr and leaves it out.

Suggested solution: Pokud šlo o revoluci a její výsledky, nikdy nevyslovil žádný názor. (As for the rebellion and its results, he would express no opinion.)

- (10) “The rule was against *sheets*, which are a human invention. We have removed the sheets from the farmhouse beds, and sleep between blankets. And very comfortable beds they are, too! But not more comfortable than we need, I can tell you, comrades, with all the brainwork we have to do nowadays.” (47) – “Přijalo se usnesení proti prostěradlům, která zavedli lidé. My jsme prostěradla odstranili a spíme mezi dekami. Ano, postele jsou pohodlné. Ale ne víc, než potřebujeme, soudružky, při naší namáhavé duševní práci.” (35)

The highlighting in the English sentence *And very comfortable beds they are, too!* is missing in the Czech version (translated into Czech: Yes, beds are comfortable.), though a fronted complement, according to Halliday (2004, 73), signalizes a high level of *markedness*, i.e., sentence dynamism. The translator probably intended to contrast the utterance with its continuation, but the effect is producing an utterance with less dynamism, leaving the grading of the original speaker’s contradicitions underused.

The suggested solution corresponds with the exclamative mood in English: *My jsme prostěradla odstranili a spíme pod dekami; a jak jsou to pohodlné postele!* (We have removed the sheets from the farmhouse beds, and sleep between blankets. And how comfortable these beds are!)

- (11) When the boulder began to slip and the animals cried out in despair at finding themselves dragged down the hill, it was always Boxer who strained himself against the rope and brought the boulder to stop. . . . (42) – . . . Když balvan začal prokluzovat a zvířata se již viděla stažena dolů jeho vahou, Boxer se zapřel do lana a balvan zarazil. . . . (32) (Boxer strained himself against the rope and brought the boulder to stop.)

The Rheme in the it-cleft construction above is *Boxer*, and in the Czech version it should thus be placed in the final position. The marked syntactic structure remains virtually ignored.

Suggested solution: . . . ten, kdo se vždy zapřel do lana a balvan zastavil, byl právě Boxer. (The one who strained himself against the rope and brought the boulder to stop was actually Boxer.)

- (12) There was more leisure, too, inexperienced though the animals were. . . . (19) –
 . . . A ačkoli neměla žádné zkušenosti, získala mnohem více volného času. . . . (16)
 (And though they were inexperienced, they gained much more leisure.)

Given that between clauses within a sentence the Theme–Rheme linear arrangement is commonly reflected too, the second part of the sentence is more dynamic in the English sample and should also be kept in the final position in Czech. The second clause includes a highlighted (fronted) complement, which should be placed in the end of the whole sentence.

Suggested solution: A zvířatům dokonce zbývalo víc volného času, přestože neměla žádné zkušenosti. (And the animals had even more leisure, though they were inexperienced.)

- (13) Yes, there it lay, the fruit of all their struggles, levelled to its foundations, the stones they had broken and carried so laboriously scattered all around. . . . (48) –
 . . . Ano, tady ležel výsledek jejich dřiny, srovnaný se zemí, všude kolem rozházeno kamení, jež tak pracně shromažďovala. . . . (36) (Yes, here it lay, the fruit of their struggles, levelled to the ground, all around the stones scattered that they had so laboriously collected.)

The sample contains a configuration for S-V inversion after a directional adverbial in the initial position, succeeded by an appositive modifier of the subject. The subject is further developed by an embedded multiple relative clause with the verb phrase (*scattered all around*) in the rhematic position (the verb *be* in the passive construction is ellipted). It is evident that the Rheme Proper is in the end position within the English sentence, and it should be there, too, in the Czech equivalent.⁴

The suggested solution corresponds with the English original, only dividing the whole structure into two sentences: Tam tedy leželo ovoce jejich každodenní lopoty, stržené až k základům. Všechno kamení, které nalámali a tak pracně vynesli vzhůru, bylo rozházeno všude kolem.

- (14) In nothing that he said or did was there any sign that his strength was not what it had been. It was only his appearance that was a little altered; his hide was less shiny than it had used to be, and his great haunches seemed to have shrunken. . . . (81) – . . . Mluvil i pracoval tak, jako by měl stále dost sil, jen jeho vzezření se poněkud změnilo. Kůži už neměl tak lesklou jako kdysi a boky se mu propadly. . . . (59) (He spoke and worked as if he still had enough strength, just his appearance somewhat altered; his hide was less shiny than it had used to be, and his great haunches seemed to have shrunken.)

The last sample shows a succession of highlighting syntactic structures, including fronting, inversion, and the cleft construction. The first sentence, comprising two

4. Though inversion does not take place in a clause with a personal pronoun as subject (Quirk 1985, 1381), the form is still perceived as a strongly dynamic highlighting structure in English.

negative propositions (*nothing what he said, was not what it had been*), contains fronting (the negated adverbial clause) followed by a full inversion. The second sentence includes the it-cleft construction. The published translation into Czech again seems inadequate, with the dynamism of the rhematic elements substantially reduced.

There were a number of other similar occurrences of highlighting within the Czech version of the book, where the appropriateness of the thematic structure seemed disputable (let alone numerous grammatical mistakes in the text, as well as lexical ones).

On the one hand, it may be stated that the translation of syntactic structures with expressive function reflects our subjective taste and preferences, which makes quantitative research in the field questionable. On the other hand, the detailed analysis of the individual constructions in *Animal Farm* suggests that the translator failed to observe the thematic structure theory adequately. As a consequence, the Czech text the translator has produced is less dynamic and stylistically poorer than the source text.

CONCLUSION

This paper summarizes the basic findings in the field of the information structure of a sentence from the functional perspective, and observes the potential of the syntactic forms and lexical devices employed in translation. The samples analysed were chosen to illustrate the effective application of the FSP theory in the work of Czech translators from English, and to suggest that more appropriate solutions could be found for a number of them to preserve the sentence dynamism of the original text.

Based on the results of this study, I suggest that information structure theory, although almost a century has passed since its origin, still represents a field within the linguistic studies with a revealing value and perspectives, namely in the field of contemporary translation.

Last but not least, modern functional linguists and translato-logists (e.g., Halliday, Matthiessen, de Beaugrande, Stubbs, House, Duff and many others) emphasize that text analysis be applied in practice. Such is the target of this paper; the corpus collected can suitably be used for teaching English syntax and stylistics at the university level, either as illustrations of the syntactic transformations involved, or as a motivation and challenge for students of translato-log-y.

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THE “WRONG DIRECTION”? TRANSLATING INTO ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN SLOVAKIA

ROMAN LIČKO

Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Faculty of Humanities, Department of English and American Studies, Tajovského 50, 974 01 Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic. Email: roman.licko@umb.sk

ABSTRACT: This paper deals with translation into English as a foreign language in Slovakia. Directionality, as an aspect of translation, has received relatively little attention in Western translation studies, and translation into a non-mother tongue – also known as inverse translation – has been traditionally viewed as unprofessional. The paper explores traditional and recent views on the subject, looks at directionality issues in certain European countries, and presents the analysis of a survey conducted among Slovak translators of English in 2012. It argues that in Slovakia, a country with one of the lesser-used national languages in Europe, translation into English as a foreign language is very common. All but a few English translators in the country work into English as a foreign language. They translate inversely almost as often as they do directly, and they rarely regard this practice as unprofessional.

KEYWORDS: translation into a foreign language; inverse translation; translation into a non-mother tongue; translation into a second language; direction of translation; directionality

Western translation theory long adhered to the view that an ethically-minded translator should only translate into their mother tongue. This axiom was based on the rationale that the most natural-sounding translation could only be produced by a native speaker of the target language. Even today, direct translation is accepted by many as ‘right,’ whereas inverse translation, i.e., working out of one’s native tongue, is regarded as ‘wrong,’ or unprofessional. Notwithstanding the merit of such an argument, many European translators today are faced with the pressure of having to translate into English as a non-mother tongue. This paper focuses on the phenomenon of translation into English as a foreign language in Slovakia. It presents some of the results of a survey conducted among Slovak translators of English in 2012. A brief overview of the traditional and more recent scholarship on the phenomenon is followed by an analysis of selected data from the survey. The argument advanced in this paper is that in Slovakia, a country with one of the lesser-used national languages in Europe, translation into English as a foreign language is very common. All but a few English translators in the country work into English as a foreign language. They translate inversely almost as often as they do directly and rarely regard the practice as unprofessional.

The opposition of English-speaking translation scholars to $A \rightarrow B$ translation is deeply entrenched in some of the most iconic works of Western translation theory.¹ In his introduction to *A Textbook of Translation*, for example, Peter Newmark reminds

1. In addition to *inverse translation*, this paper makes use of the synonymous term $A \rightarrow B$ translation, mostly for reasons of convenience and brevity of style. Terminology of this kind is employed by the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), which divides the working languages of its

his readers that translating into one's language of habitual use is "the only way you can translate naturally, accurately and with maximum effectiveness" (1988, 3). He mentions briefly, however, that many translators do translate into foreign languages anyway, leaving the reader in no doubt as to how translators-to-be should feel about the malpractice: "In *fact*, however, most translators do translate out of their own language ('service translation') and contribute greatly to many people's hilarity in the process" (Newmark 1988, 3). The objection against inverse translation, justified on the grounds of its incompatibility with the best professional practice, has come to be widely accepted in Western translation theory.² Alan Duff, who wrote several resource books for both translators and learners of English in the 1980s, argued that the intuitive capacity to grasp word associations in a natural way belongs exclusively to native speakers (Duff 1981, 111, 125 in Pokorn 2005, 26). Geoffrey Samuelsson-Brown, the author of the widely read *Practical Guide for Translators*, contends that even bilinguals, if they exist at all, are bound to have problems translating equally well in both directions. Despite being an experienced translator himself (with forty years' experience translating into Swedish), he doubted his own ability to produce a native-like translation into his second language (2010, 27).

Today, translation theory seems to be slowly coming to terms with the fact that directionality in translation may depend on contextual factors such as political conditions, institutional constraints, geographical setting or even the individual abilities of a particular translator. The first major comprehensive work in the West to explore the phenomenon of translation into a non-mother tongue was *Translation into the Second Language* (see Campbell 1998). Written by the Australian linguist, translation trainer and second-language acquisition specialist Stuart Campbell, the work breaks new ground in several important ways. Firstly, it draws extensively on empirical research and acknowledges that translation into a non-mother tongue is a fact of life in numerous countries worldwide. Surprisingly, this is also the case in Australia, an English speaking country, where a continual dearth of native-born English translators from Arabic has necessitated recruiting translator trainees from among first- or second-generation Arabic immigrants. Secondly, Campbell is nearly revolutionary among Western translation scholars in his observation that translation into a second language is, in its very nature, part of second-language acquisition. In his book, he analyses samples of texts translated into English by Australian translator trainees whose first language was Arabic. On the basis of the analysis, he then identifies the components of translation competence needed for the task. Unsurprisingly, the translator competences

members into active (A, B) and passive (C). Language A is defined as the interpreter's native language, while language B is understood to be "a language other than the interpreter's native language, of which the interpreter has a perfect command and into which she or he works from one or more of her or his other languages." See International Association of Conference Interpreters.

2. As a postscript to the chapter on translation methods, Newmark writes: "*Service translation*, translation from one's language of habitual use into another language. The term is not widely used, but as the practice is necessary in most countries, a term is required." See Newmark (1988, 52).

singled out by Campbell differ significantly from those commonly developed by translator trainers specializing in B → A translation.

Directionality has been much more of a scholarly issue in the so-called minor, or peripheral language communities. The greatest contribution to the study of the problem so far has come out of Slovenia. Nike Pokorn (2005) published the results of her examination of a set of literary translations from Slovene to English. Entitled *Challenging the Traditional Axioms: Translation into a Non-mother Tongue*, the study is an analysis of the work of nine translators who, in various periods of the twentieth century, translated literary texts by the prominent Slovene writer Ivan Cankar into English.³ The translators involved in the study included native speakers of Slovene and English, as well as speakers of neither of the two. Some of the translators worked individually, while others collaborated in translator pairs, i.e., a native speaker of the SL with a native speaker of the TL. Two of the nine translators were native speakers of Slovene, two of English. The remaining six translators worked in three pairs (see Pokorn 2005, 46). The quality of the English translations was evaluated by means of reader responses elicited from a group of native speakers of English. The conclusions arrived at by Pokorn revealed two principal findings. First, B → A translations did not prove superior to their A → B counterparts. This is all the more remarkable taking into account that the translated texts were literary pieces. Second, Pokorn challenged the linguistic infallibility of the native speaker. The quality of translation did not depend, primarily, on the direction of translation.

Groundbreaking as it was, both Campbell and Pokorn's research reflect the particular reality of the time and place in which it was carried out. Campbell's subjects may have been native speakers of Arabic, Spanish or Vietnamese, but they had nonetheless been living in Australia at the time of the research. They were translator trainees who had been using English as their second language, i.e., they were members of a community that used the English language every day, whether in informal settings or in official communication. Pokorn's A → B translators, too, were not typical native speakers of Slovene. One of them had already been living in the United States when he translated the text that became the object of Pokorn's analysis, while other subjects had worked in translator pairs, teamed up with native speakers of English. Moreover, there was only one 'true' native speaker of Slovene among Pokorn's nine translators. For him, however, English was not a foreign but a second language. Louis Adamic, the person in question, moved to the United States at the age of 15, and he spent the rest of

3. It could be argued that the translation of the works of Ivan Cankar into English is a good example of the asymmetrical distribution of translation between the Slovene and English languages. From Pokorn (2005), we learn that the majority of Cankar's works translated into English were translated either by non-native speakers of the target language or by pairs of translators involving a native speaker of Slovene. In some cases the translators were not even native speakers of either of the two languages. Moreover, some of those who counted as native speakers of English were either first- or second-generation Slovene immigrants in an English-speaking country. This goes to show that literary works of a peripheral language community, if not translated by native speakers of the source language, suffer from a lack of translation into a major language community, such as that of the United States and Britain.

his life there (See Pokorn 2005, 46). The observations that immigrants can make good $A \rightarrow B$ translators in Australia and that direct translations from Slovene to English are not necessarily the best, prompted both authors to redefine the concept of the native speaker. The work of Campbell and Pokorn is thus useful to the research of inverse translation, but only to a point. The limitations of both studies lie in their applicability to the socio-linguistic realities of the translation market in countries such as Slovakia. Native Slovaks, along with other national minorities living in the country, learn their English as a foreign, not a second language. With the exception of a handful of English-speaking expatriates who work in Slovakia as direct translators, the overwhelming majority of Slovak-to-English translators are native speakers of Slovak.

Inverse translation, i.e., $A \rightarrow B$ translation into a foreign language, as opposed to the more vaguely defined translation into a second language, is widely practiced in Europe, in peripheral and major language communities alike. Right or wrong, European translators are happy to translate into foreign languages if the market demands it of them. According to Margaret Grindrod, "it was usual for translators to translate into one or two languages other than their mother tongue" (1986, 9–11). Allison Beeby points out that translation into a non-mother tongue is "quite common" in Spain and "very common" in Finland (Beeby 2004, 41). In Germany, as many as 65 percent of German translators are ready to offer their $A \rightarrow B$ translation services if the need arises (Baker and Saldanha 2009). It is true, though, that inverse translation is far more commonplace in countries with lesser-used languages. Finland is a typical case in point. According to a survey conducted in 1987, inverse translators in this country were translating between 69.7 and 91.7 percent of various text types from Finnish, with 94 percent of the Finnish Translators and Interpreters Association members giving their nationality as Finnish at the time of the survey (see McAlester 1992, 291–98). Slovakia appears to be in the same category, though this is difficult to say exactly as nationwide statistics on $A \rightarrow B$ translation into English are non-existent. As far as it is known to the author of this paper, his survey conducted among Slovak translators of English in 2012 was the very first attempt to investigate the scope and professional status of inverse translation in Slovakia. The following is an analysis of some of the data collected in the said research.

The survey was carried out in the form of a questionnaire, and its chief objectives were to investigate the extent of $A \rightarrow B$ translation among Slovak translators of English and their attitudes towards it, as well as to understand more about the nature of it. The survey questions were thematically grouped around the following three areas: (1) who the Slovak translators are and how they feel about $A \rightarrow B$ translation into English, (2) how much and what is translated from Slovak to English and, finally, (3) how Slovak translators go about translating into English. The questionnaire was sent out to over 450 prospective participants via e-mail. It was anonymous and available online from August 22 to September 22, 2012. Software data management and web design were provided by an internet polling company (iAnkety.sk). Sworn translators and freelancers were

the primary target groups of respondents.⁴ Also included in the survey were English-language translator and teacher trainers in all the university departments of English and American studies throughout the country. All in all, 112 responses were collected, 111 of which were accepted as suitable for further analysis. For the purpose of evaluating the collected data, the participating translators were divided into the following six categories:

- A. *full-time translators* – one of two umbrella categories comprising different groups of translators whose common denominator was that they translated from and into English full-time, not being otherwise employed. These may be qualified translators or teachers, or practicing translators without an academic degree.
- B. *part-time translators* – the other of the two umbrella categories, including qualified teachers, translation studies graduates or translators without an academic degree. What these translators had in common was that they combined their translating jobs with other forms of employment such as teaching, etc.
- C. *qualified translators* – this category comprised university graduates with an academic degree in translations studies.
- D. *qualified teachers* – this category consisted of those who had studied English at university with an academic degree in teaching English as a foreign language.
- E. *non-qualified translators* – an umbrella category including all the groups of translators without an academic degree in either the English language and literature or translation studies.

With regard to the first set of questions, i.e., who the Slovak $A \rightarrow B$ translators of English are by profession, the research findings were not so surprising. The typical inverse translator from Slovak to English is not that different from his or her non-English language counterpart. According Martin Djovčoš, the typical Slovak translator, regardless of the language in which they specialize, is university-educated (86 percent) and below 30 years of age (49 percent) (2012, 48–51). Inverse translators, on average, are 41.5 years of age and university educated (91 percent). What is somewhat more surprising is that the majority of Slovak inverse translators today are not translators by trade, but qualified teachers. This also applies to the category of full-time translators. Among these, as many as 26 percent held a teaching qualification and 21 percent had an academic degree in English language and literature without either teaching or translation qualification. Only 18 percent held university degrees in translation. As far as the extent of $A \rightarrow B$ English translation and the attitudes towards it were concerned, the questionnaire asked two straightforward questions. In order to answer the first – *How common, do you think, is the practice of translating into English as a foreign*

4. As far as the sworn translators are concerned, their number, the languages they work with as well as the regions in which they operate are listed on the government-run website JASPI. As of August 30, 2012, in Slovakia's eight regions there were 323 registered translators certified to translate from the English language. Dozens of people, however, have been struck off the list, with their permission to use the seal of the sworn translator suspended. The number of active translators, then, stood at 251. See JASPI.

language among translators in Slovakia? – respondents had to choose one of the four possibilities: (1) very common, (2) common, (3) occasional, (4) rare. The most frequent answers, within all categories of translators, were “very common” (53.6 percent) and “common” (35.7 percent). Interestingly, the answer “very common” was even more frequent among the full-time translators (65.7 percent). The second question inquiring about the extent of A → B into English was worded as follows: *Do you do Slovak-to-English translations yourself?* Here the respondents were asked to expand on this yes/no question by answering a complementary subquestion: *How do you feel about it professionally?* The responses were thought-provoking and in some respects quite different to what had been anticipated. Not only did translators across all categories feel professionally unashamed of translating into English as a foreign language, most of them took it as a professional challenge and even enjoyed it (41 percent). Quite astonishingly, qualified translators did not buck the trend at all. Only 5 percent of them objected to it on the grounds of professional ethics.⁵ This is indeed surprising, given the prevailingly negative views on inverse translation in academia and translation theory. Perhaps the least surprising were the data collected within the category of full-time translators. Only a miniscule minority of these – 2.6 percent – refrained from the practice on principle. 97 percent of them translated into English as a matter of course, having very few professional qualms about it.

Establishing how much of the output of the typical Slovak-born English-language translator consists of inverse translation was one of the main objectives of the survey. In order to create a representative sample, the respondents were asked to look back over the previous year and estimate, in percentage terms, how much of their entire translation production was into a language other than their mother tongue. The multiple-choice question offered 10 possibilities to choose from, ranging incrementally from 10 percent (choice 1) to 100 percent (choice 10). First, the two umbrella categories A and B (full-time and part-time translators respectively) were evaluated collectively as one group. Most frequently, these translators estimated that roughly half of their translation output over the past year had been into English (24.5 percent of respondents). None of the other 9 choices in the answer matrix received more than 14 percent of the responses. The full-time translators, as expected, were significantly more productive in A → B translation than their part-time counterparts. As many as 39 percent of them reported that half of their annual translation production was into English.

In order to establish what Slovak translators of English translated inversely, a question with an answer matrix was devised which inquired about the frequency of translation in pre-defined public, commercial, scientific and academic areas. Translation was divided into 19 fields according to the subject matter, taking into account the

5. This was the group of respondents who chose the emphatic *I DO NOT DO IT; It's unprofessional!* The disapproval rate among qualified teachers was around 7 percent.

specific features of the Slovak economy, government and public life.⁶ The respondents were asked to indicate how often they were commissioned to translate in the 19 areas, having to choose one from the following three options: 1) FREQUENTLY, 2) OCCASIONALLY, or 3) RARELY. The data collected in response to this question revealed some interesting, though not entirely unexpected patterns. Firstly, the area in which Slovak A → B translators translated the most often (i.e., FREQUENTLY) was *law and legal advice* (64.5 percent). The top contributor to the total translations in this area was the category of full-time translators (91.6 percent).⁷ Somewhat surprisingly, applied science, technology and industries, in general, did not feature prominently among the most frequently translated areas. None of these areas comprised more than 20 percent of the total – *information technologies and electronics* as well as *engineering and construction* each made up 19.4 percent, while *energy, gas and oil* and *other technical areas* made up 12.9 percent each. The *Automotive industry* ended up near the bottom of the table with 3.2 percent. Second in terms of the frequency of translation (i.e., rated as OCCASIONALLY translated), came the texts from the following three areas – *financial and banking* alongside *state, regional and local government* as well as *education, science and academic*. Each of them received a 32.3 percent share.

Another part of the inquiry into what is translated inversely into English was the question whether Slovak A → B English translators do literary translation. The respondents were asked whether they had ever accepted a commission to translate a complete work of fiction such as a novel, short story, poem, or other form of literature. The overall majority of the Slovak translators of English across all the categories polled had never accepted a literary translation (87.4 percent). In other words, literary translation into English is not commonly taken on by inverse translators in Slovakia. Concerning the motivation of those who had done literary translation, several inferences can be made. The market pressure appears to be the strongest incentive in the translator's decision to accept an A → B literary translation. The survey showed that 57 percent of those who had translated fiction were full-time translators, while the rest of them were part-timers. Interestingly, professional education in translation studies appears to be the strongest inhibitor when it comes to the decision to accept literary translation. None of the qualified translators polled had ever accepted a commission to translate a literary text. This is indeed remarkable, given that some of

6. The following is a complete list of the areas of translation according to subject: 1. *advertising and marketing*, 2. *automotive industry*, 3. *engineering and construction*, 4. *energy, gas and oil*, 5. *information technologies and electronics*, 6. *other technical areas*, 7. *agriculture*, 8. *state, regional and local government*, 9. *military, police and security*, 10. *law and legal advice*, 11. *real estate*, 12. *financial and banking*, 13. *multimedia localization*, 14. *the media and public relations*, 15. *tourism, historical and cultural heritage*, 16. *art, entertainment and culture*, 17. *environment and conservation*, 18. *health care, medicine and pharmaceuticals*, 19. *education, science and academia*.

7. Some of the full-time translators did not indicate their answers for all the 19 areas of translation. Of those who did so for *law and legal advice*, 91.6 percent chose FREQUENTLY as their answer.

these translators are also full-timers.⁸ The most likely producers of Slovak-to-English literary translations are non-qualified translators (18.5 percent).

In researching the question of how Slovak A → B translators went about translating into English as a foreign language, the survey mainly focused on two important issues. The first was the translation process and its phases; the second was the role of the native speaker in A → B translation. To investigate the former, the respondents were offered three choices, each describing the whole of the translation process from the comprehension to the re-expression phase. A fourth option in the form of an open-ended question was added for the respondents to describe their own translation process if it differed from the first, second or the third option. The three separate translation processes were graded incrementally according to the amount of time and care devoted to them by the translator. The first option represented *the idealist's approach* – a meticulous translator who (1) allows for several readings of the source text, (2) holds a consultation with a specialist if necessary (dealing with the vocabulary), (3) translates and (4) has a native speaker look over the target text. The third choice represented the opposite – *the minimalist approach* – a busy translator who, scaling the comprehension stage drastically down, (1) translates the source text straight away, dealing with the vocabulary as they go, and (2) might ask a native speaker to look over the target text at the end of the process. The middle choice characterized *the compromise approach*, combining the features of both the idealist and the minimalist approach in about equal measure. As expected, Slovak A → B translators of English tended to reduce the comprehension stage to a manageable minimum. The majority of them (37.8 percent) took the compromise approach, taking just a cursory glance at the source text, moving hastily into the translation phase, and looking up problematic vocabulary as they went. More alarmingly, the survey revealed that the second most frequent translation process adopted was the minimalist approach. Evaluated as one group, both full-time and part-time translators were inclined to translate without even giving a preliminary glance at the source text, dealing with problematic vocabulary on an ad-hoc basis (26.4 percent). Apparently chafing under the relentless forces of the translation market, the full-time translators, in contrast to other categories of translators, favored the compromise approach to the greatest extent (48 percent), but also the minimalist one (32.4 percent). As far as the qualified translators were concerned, the majority of them took the compromise approach. What is perhaps more encouraging is the fact that as many as 31.5 percent of the qualified translators preferred the idealist approach, a figure not repeated in any of the other translator categories. The assumption that translation studies graduates make more meticulous translators was reinforced by the finding that only a relatively small number of them favored the minimalist approach (15 percent).

The second part of the investigation into how Slovak A → B translators go about translating into English focused on determining the extent and nature of native-speaker involvement in the process of inverse translation. To find out, two questions were

8. 18.4 percent of the full-time translators who participated in the survey were holders of a university degree in translation studies.

posed to the respondents. The first one inquired about the frequency of cooperation with native speakers of English. Five pre-defined choices were offered, ranging from ALWAYS at the top to NEVER at the bottom of the scale, with OFTEN, OCCASIONALLY and RARELY as the more moderate options in between. The survey showed that the majority of Slovak translators of English cooperated with native speakers very little, i.e., either occasionally (38.2 percent) or even rarely (20.9 percent). Although further research is needed to determine why this is the case, it can be safely presumed that the benefits of such cooperation must be more than obvious to all practicing translators. What needs to be investigated, then, is the reason why A → B translators of English so seldom choose to enlist the services of a native speaker as part of their translation process. Here, it appears, the role of the customer as the commissioner of a translation comes into play. This is borne out by the statements of some of the respondents who added their comments in response to the survey question. One of them remarked: "The text is corrected by a native speaker only if the customers wants it and pays for it. It happens most typically with marketing texts. Legal texts are never proofread." The difficulty in shouldering the costs for native speaker participation echoed through several of our respondents' comments. One of them complained: "proofreading by a native speaker is often difficult unless organized by an agency with whom I cooperate only rarely. In court translations this is even more difficult."

Despite the fact that translation into a non-mother tongue used to be opposed by some of the most influential scholars in Western translation theory, the attitudes towards it are now changing, even in the English-speaking world. Today, inverse translation is less frequently branded as ethically "wrong" as more translation studies scholars are beginning to appreciate that directionality is dictated by contextual factors such as political conditions, geographical setting or even the individual abilities of a particular translator. In an English-speaking country, translation into English from lesser-used languages is often provided by immigrant translators. Translating into a non-mother tongue is common in Europe, in large and small languages communities alike. In Slovakia, a country with one of the lesser-used national languages in Europe, it is almost invariably carried out by native Slovaks, who translate into English as a foreign language. The survey conducted in 2012 confirmed that inverse translation in this country is very common. 97 percent of translators are willing to translate out of their mother tongue if the need arises. More than half of the full-time translators polled acknowledged that at least 50 percent of their annual production consists of inverse translation. As a rule, Slovak translators of English translate inversely because the market demands it. They take it as a professional challenge and even enjoy it. Few, even among certified translators, object to it on the grounds of professional ethics. The implications of the growing body of research on the phenomenon are several. First of all, more scholarly research and co-operation is needed into the peculiarities of inverse translation as opposed to translation into a mother tongue. This appears to be a particularly pressing issue in the context of the relatively recent advances in corpus linguistics and their application in computer-assisted translation. Secondly, countries

with lesser-used languages, such as Slovakia, should make necessary adjustments to their translator education programs so that they adequately reflect the extent and challenges of inverse translation.

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SELF-MARKETING IN BRITISH ONLINE PERSONAL ADVERTISEMENTS

DITA TRČKOVÁ

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: trckova@fhs.utb.cz

ABSTRACT: Employing the method of genre analysis, this paper examines self-marketing discursive devices employed in British online personal ads. It is revealed that among the formal devices serving to attract attention, raise interest and incite responses are rhetorical tools typical of advertisements for products and services, the discursive construction of a bond and closeness between the advertiser and the reader, and the adoption of elements typical of spoken face-to-face interaction. As for the content, advertisers not only draw upon a conventional positive self-presentation but also exploit and resist the conventions of the genre by foregrounding their negative characteristics. Overall, a tendency of a shift from an overt discursive self-marketing to an indirect promotion involving the construction of authenticity is traced in the corpus.

KEYWORDS: online personal advertisements; genre analysis; self-marketing; interactiveness; authenticity

1. INTRODUCTION

With the widespread use of the Internet in recent years, online dating websites have become an efficient way of courtship (Ellison, Heino, and Gibbs 2006, 416; Morgan, Richards, and VanNess 2010, 883). They are easy to access, convenient, relatively cheap, with a straightforward goal, and, for many, one of the few opportunities to meet new people and potential partners.

The main goals of online personal advertisements can be compared to the goals of advertisements for goods and services, namely to attract the attention of recipients, arouse recipients' interest (concerning personal ads, it is interest in the advertiser), create a desire, and encourage action (in the case of personal ads, contacting the person who posted the advertisement) (Vestergaard and Schroder 1985, 49). Cameron, Oskamp and Sparks (1977, 30) reveal in their study on heterosexual personal ads in newspapers that "content analysis of the ads showed a pattern of 'offers and bids' suggestive of a heterosexual stock market." This was confirmed by Coupland (1996), who pointed out that dating ads illustrate the late-modern marketization of the self. Resembling selling and buying practices of online shopping, the mate selection process on internet dating websites involves objectification and commodification of the advertisers, which contribute to the perception that such a manner of mate selection is unromantic and unnatural.

Two other key reasons for the unnatural flavor of personal ads are the initial lack of face-to-face interaction and the demand on the advertisers to summarize their

identity in a few lines. This poses a difficult task as identity, a complex, dynamic, multi-dimensional notion (Iedema and Caldas-Coulthard 2008, 2; Lemke 2008, 19), necessarily needs to be simplified and essentialized in the ads. The present study investigates how the marketization of self, the lack of a face-to-face interaction and the necessity of simplifying one's identity affect the internet personal ads genre.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

The present study examines the genre of online personal advertisements, with the main objective of investigating self-marketing discursive devices that function to promote the advertiser, attract recipients' attention and encourage responses. In advance, it was hypothesized that one such device will be an emphasis on positive self-presentation, i.e., advertisers foreground their positive attributes and traits while backgrounding the negative ones. This was confirmed in Cameron, Oskamp and Sparks's study of newspaper advertisements for dates or mates (1977), in which they revealed that "advertisers sought to maximize their profit by presenting a positive image of themselves" (27).

As its methodology, the research employs a genre analysis (Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993, 1996; Martin 2005). Genre is here understood as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes . . . recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute[ing] the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style" (Swales 1990, 58). Concerning online personal ads, their main purpose is usually to find a potential partner. This purpose can further be subclassified into a more specific set of communicative purposes – attract attention, arouse interest, create desire and encourage action. In accordance with genre analysts, these communicative purposes are viewed as "controlling lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal choices" (Bhatia 1996, 47) in online dating ads. Other factors that shape the genre conventions include the context of culture (Corbett 2006, 26), the audience (Martin and Rose 2008, 5) and the mode (Halliday 1978, 33), which, in the present study, is an online written medium.

The corpus of data of the present study consists of 200 personal advertisements collected from an online dating website with a name containing a metaphorical pun *PlentyOfFish* (POF). It is one of the world's leading dating websites, which is free to use. The focus of the analysis is on advertisers ages 25–35 from the U.K. Apart from the age and location, the users of the POF website are required to fill in their gender and the gender of the person they are seeking. To account for gender and sexuality categories equally, out of the 200 advertisements from the corpus, 50 are by females looking for females, 50 by females looking for males, 50 by males looking for males and 50 by males looking for females.

The present study focuses on the headlines and description boxes of the advertisements. The headlines appear in bold at the top of the profiles, while description boxes are reserved for the text of the ad itself, with a minimum length of 100 characters and an unlimited maximum length.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 HEADLINES

Apart from photographs, which are beyond the scope of this study, the first element of the ads that serves to attract others' attention is the headline. There, advertisers incorporate attention-seeking and persuasive elements typical of advertisements promoting goods and services (cf. Vestergaard and Schroder 1985, 120; Cook 1992; Goddard 1998). These include rhetorical devices, mainly alliteration (*live, love, laugh; looking for a cheeky chappy*), rhymes and word puns (*don't be a glancer, be a chancer*), oxymoron (*are there any good guys left for a bad guy like me?*), and equivocal expressions containing a pun on the name of the dating website (*fishing is not my favourite past time*). Another tool employed in the headlines to attract attention and encourage action is direct address, established mainly in questions (*now you've found me, what do you want?; am I your mr right?*), which demand a response as the preferred second part of the adjacency pair and thus involve the reader in the communication process, and commands (*talk to me!; take a chance*), which directly call for an action on the reader's part. Some advertisers promote themselves by attaining originality, as when they exploit conventions of romanticized relationships, which is illustrated in the word pun in example (1).

- (1) Back To Find Mr Left!!

3.2 DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF A BOND

In the text of the personal advertisements itself, one of the main devices to promote advertisers, attract recipients' attention and encourage recipients to respond is the establishment of a bond, mutuality and an intimate relationship between the reader and the advertiser. This is achieved by several strategies, one of which is a dialogic and interactive style of writing. Advertisers commonly start the advert with a salutation (*Hello, Hi*) and finish with a valediction, often directly encouraging the reader to action (*Cheers, look forward to hearing from you.; drop me a message; come say hi; if you want to know more just ask away*). The authors of the ads frequently employ direct address, such as *more i could put but then you would have nothing to ask*, with the interactiveness increased in questions, including rhetorical questions, as in, for instance, *do you know what . . . surprise me!*. Another tool constructing the dialogic character of the ads is the incorporation of comments of and responses to pre-supposed readers' reactions, as can be seen in examples (2) and (3).

- (2) i love to watch boxing, rugby, cage fighting, kick boxing etc etc yeah u got it something with a bit of a bite to it
- (3) I do like to play Playstation, yes, I know, I'm 35 and should grow up, guilty pleasure

The interactive style is also realized by the use of emoticons (:-), :-p) and symbols signifying affection and thus simulating intimacy between the addresser and the addressee, such as xxx.

The sense of mutuality is brought about by the evocation of shared experience and feelings. In example (4), the advertiser draws upon the assumed shared attitude to the 'description text', employing the inclusive pronoun 'we'. Example (5) contains an intertextual reference to a movie; to comprehend the meaning, the reader must share the relevant cultural knowledge with the advertiser. As Nemčoková (2012, 152) points out, "the recipients become co-authors of the intertextual ad messages when they recognize the evoked text and their own past experience of that text reflects in their ad message-processing." To grasp the pun in (5), the reader must know the title of the movie – *Finding Nemo*. At the same time, the reader's associations with the character Nemo, such as cuteness and courage, are transferred to the advertiser herself. Apart from stimulating a mutual construction of meaning by the advertiser and the reader, the intertextual reference thus serves as an effective promotional strategy.

- (4) And here it is . . . the description box . . . dont we just love it?
- (5) AM I UR NEMO

The active involvement of the reader in the meaning construction process is also instigated by the frequent employment of ellipsis, which tends to draw upon mutual knowledge of conventions of online personal ads (*Theatre and eating out. Not too much of a clubber these days.* – the reader will understand this text as referring to the advertiser's 'likes,' as such information is conventionally included in personal ads).

Closeness between the advertiser and the reader is established by the omnipresent use of informal and slang expressions (see examples (7)–(9)), and non-standard spelling (*b4, make some new m8s, something a lil different*), as these are discursive features signaling a close social distance between the addresser and the addressee.

- (7) I'm not gonna jump on "dates" immediately
- (8) Give me a shout if u wanna know more
- (9) I'm a bit of a sucker for a killer smile

Concerning non-standard spelling, three patterns can be distinguished:

1. the use of homophones – either a number or a single letter is used instead of a cluster of letters/a word, or a shorter word is employed
EXAMPLES: 4 (standing for 'for'), n ('and'), r ('are'), no ('know', as in *get to no someone romantically*) and to ('too', as in *don't take life to seriously*)
2. the omission of vowels
EXAMPLES: *ppl, grl, msg* and *txt*
3. the use of a spelling more closely reflecting the pronunciation of the word – commonly involves the omission of silent letters
EXAMPLES: *wot* ('what'), *wud* ('would'), *readin*, *lil* ('little') and *lik* ('like').

The three means of non-standard spelling share a shortening effect. This corresponds to Zipf's Law, which states that "language forms are being constantly condensed, abbreviated, reduced, or eliminated in order to minimize the effort expended to produce and use them" (Danesi 2008, 164). Not only the spelling, but also the writing style of the online personal ads, despite no space limitation or cost constraints, is condensed, with the frequent use of ellipsis and abbreviation, and missing punctuation. Among the rationales behind the use of the condensed style in online dating ads are that it allows the advertiser to provide more information in a few lines and that it contributes to dynamism of the text and thus prevents the reader from losing interest. Concerning the three means of non-standard spelling mentioned above, apart from their shortening effect, they point to the playfulness and creativity of the users. Characteristic of written communication among the young employing the medium of modern technology, they tend to get associated with trendiness. In other words, they constitute a kind of a code language signaling a membership in the group of the young, cool and trendy. The question remains whether they hint at possible future development in English spelling.

On the whole, the highly interactive, dialogic and informal writing style of the online dating ads establishes an illusory close relationship between the advertiser and the reader. This is an effective self-marketing strategy as it predisposes the recipient favourably towards the advertiser. At the same time, it helps the users of online dating combat the unnatural feel of writing about themselves and seeking a potential relationship with a stranger.

3.3 SELF-PRESENTATION

It was hypothesized that one of the discursive tools employed to promote the self would be a positive self-presentation. This has been confirmed in some of the adverts, which include only positive attributes of the advertiser and thus are directly promotional (examples (10) and (11)).

(10) I think I have a lot of strong qualities, ambitious, fun, caring, honest

(11) I am honest, reliable, with a good sense of humour I have a friendly and approachable nature.

Such ads, note Thorne and Coupland, follow the conventions of the genre of dating advertisements, in which "only marketable attributes of 'advertised goods' are referred to and these tend to be restricted to a set of familiar labels and categories" (1998, 235).

Yet, the analysis shows that the advertisers are aware of the negative aspects of a conventional positive self-presentation in personal ads – mainly, that it results in the objectification and commodification of the self and that such a text tends to lack authenticity and substance, as expressed, for instance, in *So im not really sure what to say to sell myself!* and *I'm honest and caring, blabla and so on and so forth*. Two tendencies contesting the convention of a positive self-promotion in dating ads have been detected in the corpus.

The first tendency exploits and subverts the convention by the foregrounding of one's negative characteristics and self-depreciation (see examples (12)–(15)).

- (12) im terrible for forgetting things, i have rubbish directional sense and im crap at keeping secrets [. . .]. Not doing a great job selling myself here am I???????
- (13) I've got a terrible memory and sometimes panic I might have Alzheimer's.
- (14) If you've just found me because you liked my pictures, (test your eyes), [. . .]
- (15) Your perfect woman is here and this is what you can expect (I hope you're excited!):
 I LOVE a good nag and every time I open my mouth all you are likely to hear is something like "I told you . . .", "Why can't you . . ." [. . .]
 I am incredibly jealous and will always assume that you're lusting after other women [. . .]

As this strategy is often combined with irony and exaggeration (see, for instance, hyperbolic expressions *every time*, *all* and *always* in example (15)), and seemingly goes against the objective of personal ads to attract others, it tends to have a humorous effect. Yet, these features, i.e., the employment of humor and the non-conformity to expectations of a positive self-portrayal, with the consequent attainment of originality, make this discursive strategy effective in attracting others' attention and stimulating others' interest. The effectiveness of this tool also stems from the fact that it indirectly endorses characteristics like honesty, openness, modesty and ability not to take oneself too seriously, which are often listed among attributes desired in the other by the authors of the ads from the corpus. At the same time, this discursive strategy combats the ideal of perfection, often conveyed in the personal ads genre.

The second tendency contesting the convention of a positive self-promotion is a refusal to provide any description of the self, as can be seen in examples (16) and (17).

- (16) Not going to try sell myself lol anything you need to know just email.
- (17) I hate this bit talking about me when really i want to talk about you
 come and ask . . . anything you like . . . and i will answer hope to hear
 from you all soon x x x x

There are a number of reasons for adopting such a strategy: a resistance to commodification and objectification of the self (as explicitly stated in *Not going to try sell myself* in example (16)); the difficulty in essentializing such a multiple and complex phenomenon as one's identity; and the absence of the other in the getting-to-know process. That the act of self-presentation is problematic for the users is further confirmed by the fact that 28 advertisements from the corpus (14 percent) contain a comment expressing the advertiser's attitude towards self-description, revealing mainly uncertainty (*Not really sure what to put*), dislike (*I will always hate this part*) and the lack of ability (*Hey not so good at this*).

To summarize, although some of the advertisers conventionally foreground only their positive attributes, selected from a limited set of categories, and thus directly

promote themselves, resisting strategies occur in the corpus as well. These include the tendency to point out one's negative attributes and the tendency to refuse self-description. Nevertheless, even these two strategies serve to promote the advertiser, albeit indirectly, by endorsing authenticity, honesty and originality, and combatting direct commodification of the self, which is negatively perceived by many. Interestingly, no significant differences in the use of these strategies have been traced among the advertisers of different genders and sexuality orientations.

3.4 COMPENSATION FOR THE LACK OF A FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION

A characteristic feature of the ads from the corpus is a compensation for the absence of spoken face-to-face communication in online dating by an adoption of elements typical of such an interaction. This strategy can be considered a promotional strategy as it positively inclines the reader towards the advertiser by simulating a mode of interaction stereotypically regarded as natural for courtship. Some of the adopted elements are mentioned in section 3.3, including the interactive and dialogic styles, the expression of emotions in emoticons, and the adjustment of spelling to reflect pronunciation.

Two other features characteristic of spoken rather than written language (Vachek 1976) that the advertisers draw upon are spontaneity and emotiveness. Devices that add emotiveness to the ads and compensate for the absence of prosodic features and body language in writing include emoticons, interjections (*emmm, wow, oooh, errr, whoops*), multiple use of exclamation and question marks (*One word that describes me???? Have you seen the options!!!*), and a multiplication of letters to symbolize a prolongation of the sound (*Boooooom talk to me!!!; morrrrrning!!!!*). The spontaneous character is conveyed in the ads by the use of fillers (such as *well*) and the expression of hesitations and thoughts (see examples (18) and (19)).

(18) Hmmmm what to say I work in construction and [. . .]

(19) Hi there well what can I say hmmm . . . right I'm a 25 year old young professional [. . .]

These discursive features construct the text as unscripted, and, therefore, more authentic and not overtly aimed at the self-promotion.

4. CONCLUSION

A genre analysis of online personal ads on the website *PlentyOfFish* revealed a number of recurrent patterns in formal features of this genre serving as self-marketing strategies. These include attention-seeking devices, typical of advertisements for products and services, such as rhetorical tools used in headlines. The advertisers adopt a highly interactive and dialogic style, they evoke shared experience and knowledge with the reader, and employ informal, slang expressions and non-standard spelling. These features, by creating a bond, closeness and mutuality between the advertiser and the reader, help to conceal the fact that the participants are strangers. The advertisers also provide their texts with features characteristic of spoken language, such as spontaneity

and emotiveness. All these formal discursive devices are not incidental, but there is a rationale behind their use – they serve to fulfill the communicative purposes of the genre, namely to attract the reader's attention, incite the reader's interest, arouse the reader's desire and encourage the reader to action. At the same time, they simulate a spoken face-to-face interaction, which helps to overcome the unnatural feel to online dating.

Concerning the content of the online dating ads, the analysis reveals that apart from directly 'selling' themselves by foregrounding only their positive attributes and omitting negative ones, the advertisers adopt strategies that resist the conventional positive self-presentation. One of the contesting tendencies exploiting and to a certain degree ridiculing the convention is a focus on one's negative characteristics, often combined with humor, irony, intensifiers and hyperbole. Although it may seem that this strategy goes against the goal to attract others, as Swales (1990) reveals, innovations and exploitations of genre conventions tend to be consistent with its communicative purposes. In this case, the purpose to promote the self is achieved by the originality of the text and the author's apparent honesty, authenticity and sense of humor. Another strategy that challenges the conventional content of the personal ads is a refusal to provide any information about the self. Such advertisers refuse to put their identity on public display and thus return the getting-to-know process into the domain of one-to-one interaction.

The analysis reveals that the genre of online personal ads is not pre-determined and fixed but is dynamic and changes over time, with traditional conventions of positive self-promotion (Cameron, Oskamp and Sparks 1977; Thorne and Coupland 1998) being not only reproduced but also contested, manipulated and resisted. As Bhatia (1996, 51) points out, authors of texts have "considerable tactical freedom . . . to manipulate generic resources and conventions to express private intentions within the framework of socially recognized communicative purposes." The main overall tendencies traced in the corpus are a construction of an illusion of spoken face-to-face interaction between acquaintances and a shift away from an overt marketization of the self to a covert promotion involving a construction of authenticity.

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VOICES IN THE HEADLINES: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF BRITISH WEB-NEWS HEADLINES

BARBORA BLAŽKOVÁ

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: bblazkova@aim.com

ABSTRACT: Influential elite newspapers exercise power over ordinary people as well as other less powerful elites. However, newspapers also need elites whose valued opinions are requested and then presented in the newspaper discourse. It might therefore seem that the social power of a newspaper is decreased by the social power of the elites on whom the newspaper might be financially, politically, or otherwise dependent. Nevertheless, newspapers can also exercise power through the choice of who is given space to express ideas in the newspaper discourse, and who is in/directly silenced. Therefore, an analysis of voices given prominence in the headlines of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* helps to uncover the ideological effects these choices in speech presentation might have. Even though both British papers refer to the immigration issue in relation to the United Kingdom in 2010, the headlines are designed to echo either liberal or conservative ideas. Since the papers report the immigration issue from their own perspectives, they function as influential participants in media communication. Moreover, they play a crucial role in providing the primary information for ordinary people, who might then form their opinions based on the reality described in the newspaper discourse and act accordingly.

KEYWORDS: critical discourse analysis; quality newspapers; web-news headlines; immigrants; expressing others' speech; ideology

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper examines whose speech on the subject of immigration, either elites or ordinary people, is presented in the headlines of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*. As the study works under the presumption that language is socially constructed and reflects a point of view (Fowler 1991, 1), the aim is to reveal what ideology and whose ideas are foregrounded by each medium, thus possibly uncovering the interests and the perspective each newspaper might have on the issue.

The media, here the newspapers, belong to the so-called elite or dominant group. As such, a newspaper can enjoy control over less-powerful participants, generally represented by ordinary people (readers) or other less powerful elites. The main distinction between elites and ordinary people is in their access to socially-valued resources, e.g., force, wealth, income, knowledge, status, but also discourse (van Dijk 1995, 10). A newspaper, having the possibility to not only control its discourse but also the participants active in it, possesses high social status and as such can exercise social power by influencing the minds and consequently the actions of less powerful participants. Ordinary people do not have direct access to this dominant discourse and therefore have no direct influence on news content. Moreover, they usually are not the major actors of news reports, unless, for example, a natural disaster occurs

and their contributions as immediate witnesses are needed. Since institutions or elite groups, represented by politicians, doctors, scholars, etc., are often major news actors questioned by journalists for their opinions, it might be believed that elites quoted in a newspaper are more powerful than the medium itself. However, a newspaper can also control elites' access to its discourse by deciding whose ideas to voice in the headlines and whose to ignore. According to Jeffries, there are dominant groups whose beliefs and ideologies are more likely to be reproduced. These ideologies "are continually reasserted to the point at which they become naturalized and become seen by the population at large as being common sense, and thus in some sense intrinsically true" (2010, 7).

Access to dominant discourse is seen as a means of exercising power, for it enables the powerful participants to express their thoughts and ideas, hence giving them the possibility of influencing the others, ordinary people. As van Dijk suggests, it is important to "explore the implications of the complex question *Who may speak or write to whom, about what, when, and in what context*" (1996, 86). As the social power of a group or institution is proportional to the amount of discourse genres and discourse properties they control, a newspaper might exercise social power by selecting topics, participants, speech acts, choice of language, etc. Furthermore, it can contribute to the distribution of power among the elites (van Dijk 1995, 12). It is hence the aim of this study to analyze to what extent the ideas of certain elite groups are either explicitly or implicitly presented in the headlines of the two elite newspapers. By revealing what elites are voiced and thus foregrounded by each paper, different ideological perspectives to the immigration issue of the papers might be uncovered.

2. APPROACH TO THE CORPUS

The study analyzes 707 headlines downloaded from the internet versions of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* newspapers, which deal with the issue of immigration in the United Kingdom during 2010. In total, 456 headlines published in the "Immigration and Asylum" section of *The Guardian* newspaper and 251 headlines published in the "Law and Order" section of *The Daily Telegraph* newspaper were analyzed.¹ Publishing more or fewer headlines on an issue might also be indicative of each paper's interest in the topic. These two British quality papers were chosen mainly because of their readership, as they, together with *The Times*, belong to the so-called "big three" (most widely read) newspapers in Britain.² As assumed, social power is only operative if the discourse produced by the newspapers is viewed as important or influential. Both papers meet this criterion since they are widely read and are therefore likely to influence a large number of British citizens. For better accessibility, the internet versions of the newspapers were analyzed. In addition, the newspapers differ in their political ideas, as *The Guardian* is believed to identify with center-left

1. Guardian News and Media Limited or its affiliated companies, *Guardian*, www.guardian.co.uk; Telegraph Media Group Limited, *Daily Telegraph*, www.telegraph.co.uk.

2. "The *Guardian* together with *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* is considered one of the 'big three' British quality newspapers." (New World Encyclopedia, 2008)

liberalism, whereas *The Daily Telegraph* is rather conservative.³ Readership and political stance were the major criteria for the selection of the corpus, since readership is seen as a main indicator of the papers' power to influence a large number of British citizens, while political stance can reveal what ideology might be stressed in the discourse of the respective newspaper.

Dealing with power in discourse, or more precisely behind discourse (Fairclough 2003), critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been chosen to focus on the ways these elite newspapers express forms of inequality, reproduce discrimination against immigrants, or otherwise contribute to unfair power relations in their headlines. More precisely, the study aims at analyzing whose speech is likely to be presented by both papers. It is believed that giving space to certain elite institution/s and omitting others enables a newspaper to foreground its own perspective on the issue of immigration, and hence can lead to a possible abuse of power. As power behind discourse is usually exercised implicitly rather than explicitly, ordinary people, the readers, might not notice this built-in ideology as they are not able or trained to "read between the lines." Furthermore, they might not be aware of the ways in which dominance is reproduced by text and talk, and how their social interaction is consequently being shaped. Unaware of the implicit manipulation of their ideas, their beliefs together with knowledge may be changed and their actions affected. It is hence the main aim of this study to determine whether the newspapers behave as "watchdogs" of democracy, providing the readers with an "objective" view of reality, or instead stress their political stances through other elites' voices.

3. IDEOLOGY

Both newspapers have different political stances and hence different ideologies. As van Dijk claims, the concept of ideology first appeared in late-eighteenth-century France and has undergone many transformations. At first, it was mainly assigned with negative connotations, e.g., fascism, communism, etc. This negative view was especially common in the social sciences, where it was put in opposition to true, scientific knowledge (2000, 5–7). Based on this negative concept, it might be assumed that ideology refers to a system of false, misguided, or misleading beliefs. On the contrary, "positive" ideologies,⁴ e.g., feminism, representing opposition to domination and social inequity, can also be found. Therefore, whether ideology is negative or positive is not important. Moreover, Philo describes ideology as "an interest-linked perspective" (2007, 107). In this study, ideology is seen as a set of either positively or negatively socially-valued beliefs on the basis of which a certain group represents reality, thereby voicing its interests.

The differing political viewpoints of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* might not only result in distinct approaches to immigration, but might also influence the way

3. For the political orientations of the big daily papers, see BBC (2009).

4. "Positive" ideologies, I understand as those beliefs which voice the perspectives of less powerful participants in a communication dominated by more powerful participants, e.g., feminist ideas endorse equal rights for women.

reality is reflected in their headlines. Presumably, *The Guardian* would tend to picture immigrants positively in comparison to *The Daily Telegraph*, which might view them rather negatively. Since both newspapers produce elite discourse, their perspectives on the issue are likely to be expressed and thus ideologically voiced. Such a dominant ideology survives as long as there is a dominant medium reproducing it. Exposed to dominant ideology continuously, ordinary people begin to perceive it as “neutral,” taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs and value-systems, which they commonly share. They might not even notice the influence over their thoughts and additionally over their actions. However, ordinary people can also participate in their own domination. As Fergusson claims, ordinary people sometimes behave in a way that does not match their interests in the long run, but which makes life more tolerable in the short run (1998, 44).⁵ Under such circumstances, they might not notice the possible biased discourse produced by a certain medium, and therefore would not feel the need to show opposition.

4. HEADLINES AS A GENRE

This study focuses on the analysis of web-news headlines mainly because of the genre itself. Headlines are the very invitation to a piece of news, as they represent the paper’s first possibility to attract a reader. They are also a newspaper’s chance to present an event in a certain way. As a result, they are commonly written in a catchy style in order to entice a reader. In other words, a headline functions as an advertisement promoting a product – a piece of news. It is thus the headline’s responsibility whether a reader proceeds to the body of the article or skips to another headline. From the promotional perspective, an original headline represents a competitive advantage on an otherwise mass-produced event – a piece of news.

A headline should also summarize a piece of news it is advertising. In Bell’s words, it “is a true abstract of the story” (1991, 188). However, a headline often does not match the content of a piece of news. Bias can occur, for it is not the author of an article who writes the headline, but the editor. As Bell claims, since more people are involved in the news-writing process, there is a greater possibility of miscommunication (1991, 213). Moreover, focusing rather on attracting readers’ attention, the summarizing function of a headline may totally disappear. A newspaper might also want its readers to pay attention to a certain piece of information, therefore designing its headlines accordingly. As particular interests might be foregrounded via a headline, readers’ perceptions of the issue might be influenced and their views of reality consequently altered. In this respect, a newspaper’s ideology often plays a significant role in headline design.

Headlines are also specific in terms of grammar since they often appear in the form of incomplete sentences in which articles and auxiliary verbs are usually omitted. Furthermore, tenses are also used differently in headlines. Halliday refers to headlines as instances of “little texts . . . which tend to have their own grammar” (1985, 373). Together with the limitation of headlines in terms of the layout of a webpage, headlines need

5. For more details, see Gramsci’s notion of “contradictory consciousness” (1971).

to include much information in a limited space. Therefore, vagueness and ambiguity, which may also lead to readers' misunderstandings, can occur (Blažková 2011, 74–101).

The headlines analyzed belong to hard news discourse. In Bell's words, hard news is "reports of accidents, conflicts, crimes, announcements, discoveries and other events which have occurred . . . since the previous issue of their paper or programme" (1991, 14). Such a hard news headline is expected to be objective, compared to a soft news or feature headline, which often includes a writer's opinions and is thus rather subjective (Chovanec 2000, 178). In today's media, the line between hard and soft news is becoming blurred as more emphasis is given to entertainment rather than to factual information. Nevertheless, hard news should take a factual approach – answering the basic journalistic questions of What?, Who?, Where?, and Why?⁶ When referring to serious reports, it is expected that a hard news headline would tend to be objective and impersonal. As van Dijk claims, "news discourse is impersonal because it is not produced and expressed by a single individual but by institutionalized organizations, whether public or private" (1988, 75). Furthermore, impersonality also enables a newspaper to present information as seemingly objective facts. Since objectivity can be realized in discourse by various linguistic means, in Chovanec's view it is related to involvement and/or detachment phenomena (2000, 178). "The pragmatic categories of involvement and detachment can throw light on some aspects of news discourse. In connection with headline conventions, for example, these categories combine with the need for objectification of information and the engagement of the audience" (Chovanec 2000, 176). On the one hand, a hard news headline would aim at objectification of information by means of impersonality. In this respect, "objective" and "impartial" information would create reader detachment. On the other hand, a reader's engagement in the hard news discourse is also desired but cannot be achieved by direct involvement mainly because of the impersonal style of hard news. As Chovanec suggests, other forms of engaging the reader must be adopted. Such forms are mainly the discontinuation of headline conventions and heteroglossia (2000).

5. ANALYSIS

Since both papers are perceived as influential and dominant elite institutions, they are of high social status and as such are read by many. Being the sole producer of its discourse, a newspaper possesses the power to not only create but also influence the content of its headlines. A newspaper may decide what event to publish as a piece of news, whose ideas to voice and what information to suppress or ignore. In this regard, certain elites or possibly ordinary people might be chosen to speak in the paper's discourse to either express ideas a newspaper is in favor of or to behave as examples a newspaper wants to draw attention to.

6. For more information about the distinction between hard and soft news, see Media Awareness Network, (2008).

Due to their perceived social importance, the elites are mostly voiced in the influential discourses. The analysis of others' speech representations is hence believed to be effective, as it makes it possible to focus on the elites whose words are reproduced by a paper, which is consequently able to endorse its own perspective on the issue through the words of others. As such, the ideology put forward by each medium might be made visible. Moreover, in hard news headlines, such as those on immigration, direct or indirect quotes are often used not only to evoke the notion of orality but also to engage the readers, hence involving them in the discourse (Chovanec 2000, 185).

Distinct political stances cause each paper to cover the issue of immigration differently. Of interest is the difference (if any) between the two papers in voicing elites' and/or ordinary people's opinions. Also of interest is whether either paper allows immigrants to express their ideas related to the issue and, if so, in what situations.

As stated, focusing on others' speech in the headlines of a certain newspaper becomes an important device for analyzing the newspaper's perspective on the issue. Moreover, the version of reality pictured in its discourse might influence the public opinion, and hence contribute to the potential abuse of power projected in the headlines. As Jeffries claims, "[t]he power to represent the words and thoughts of others is potentially very manipulative . . . since there is *always* a gap between the original version and any quotation, even if no malice is intended" (2010, 130). More precisely, a newspaper's ability to represent speech of others is seen as an important tool that can not only influence reality but can also assist in introducing, establishing, and further promoting the paper's own view on the issue.

As both newspapers differ in the total number of published headlines, 251 in *The Daily Telegraph* and 456 in *The Guardian*, it is necessary to comment on the percentage of headlines including speech representation. Although varied in number, *The Daily Telegraph* devotes attention to others' speech in 33 percent of its headlines, while *The Guardian* allows others to speak in 29 percent of its headlines. To analyze others' voices, the model of speech representation developed by Leech and Short (2007) and Semino and Short (2004) has been applied to the headlines. The model divides speech presentation into the following categories:

Narrator's report of speech (NRS):	e.g., <i>He spoke.</i>
Narrator's report of speech act (NRSA):	e.g., <i>He apologized.</i>
Indirect speech (IS):	e.g., <i>He said that he was terribly sorry.</i>
Free indirect speech (FIS):	e.g., <i>He was terribly sorry.</i>
Direct speech (DS):	e.g., <i>He said "I'm terribly sorry."</i>
(Jeffries 2010, 132)	

These various forms of others' speech representation also indicate to what extent an original departs from its reproduction. As clearly visible, DS represents the original "*I'm terribly sorry*". The more this utterance is departed from, the bigger the gap between the original and its verbatim. Notice the IS version could be also reproduced as *He said that*

he did not feel good about it. Even though this would not be as faithful a reproduction as the IS itself, it would still be true. To move further from the original, the NRSA version shows that he apologized. This might not be true, as one can also apologize rather formally without being sorry for an action. It can hence be concluded that the more a medium departs from the original, the greater the possibility to misinform its readers. A newspaper is therefore seen as a narrator who might influence the communication between the author of certain words and its audience, thereby manipulating a reader (Jeffries 2010, 133).

Since headlines are specific in terms of grammar, the genre had to be taken into consideration and the model adjusted to the material analyzed. Indirect speech and free indirect speech do not appear often in newspaper discourse, because the information provided should be immediate or at least read by a reader as immediate, i.e., happening right now. Thus, when commenting on past events the present tense is preferred, for it evokes immediacy. Consequently, no instances of indirect or free indirect speech were found in the analyzed headlines. Attention was mainly paid to Direct Speech (DS) and to Narrator's Report of Speech Act (NRSA) since they both allow for apparent attribution. In other words, it is clearly visible whose ideas are being voiced.

5.1 DIRECT SPEECH (DS)

As defined by Jeffries, DS consists of a reporting clause, often accompanied by inverted commas containing verbatim representation of original speech, covering pronouns, present tense verbs, and proximal deictics (2010, 134). In the corpus, 40 headlines (30 percent) in *The Guardian* and 23 headlines (28 percent) in *The Daily Telegraph* provide instances of Direct Speech. Acceptable within the genre of headlines, quotation marks were not always used to note original speech. Other means of indicating Direct Speech were seen, e.g., colons were used in both papers.

- (1) Sir Andrew Green: the public are too polite on immigration (*Daily Telegraph*, February 10)

The Guardian also used a dash “–” instead of quotation marks.

- (2) Border staff humiliate and trick asylum seekers – whistleblower (*Guardian*, February 2)

Papers also mix the techniques of indicating DS; hence headlines like example (3) were also found in the corpus.

- (3) Battleground Bolton – ‘We’re more real about life up here’ (*Guardian*, April 30)

In the majority of the headlines, it was visible that newspapers do not use double quotation marks, but rather prefer single quotes, which reflects the rule for writing headlines. The reason might be connected with the writing style, as in printed versions double quotes require more space than single quotation marks, making them less cost effective. Moreover, double quotes probably produce a cluttered effect, while single

quotation marks do not (Journalism at UCLAN, 2014). Single quotes are also reportedly visible enough and are therefore taken as standard.

As noted, hard news headlines prefer objective information, which also increases audience detachment. To engage a reader in such an impartial discourse, indirect involvement, in which presenting others' speech plays a dominant role, is often adopted. As Chovanec states, "quotes . . . in general enable the use of personal pronouns and go counter to headline conventions by using modals, auxiliaries, unshifted verb forms and articles" (2000, 182). Moreover, instances of DS enable a paper to evoke the oral mode of its discourse with the possible aim of creating an image of conversation, which brings a reader closer to the issue discussed, thus fulfilling engagement. To uncover potential manipulation by both papers, DS was examined to determine if conservative or liberal ideologies could be revealed.

Out of the 40 headlines which included DS, the prominence to voice personal ideas was given by *The Guardian* to Ed Balls, Labour and Co-operative Party politician and an MP since 2010 (three occurrences), and to other MPs (two occurrences).

- (4) Ed Balls: 'They said we were not on their side, that we lost touch' (*Guardian*, May 14)
Immigration cap not the answer to cutting net migration figure, say MPs (*Guardian*, November 3)

On the contrary, *The Daily Telegraph* covering 23 headlines designed as DS, voiced mainly David Cameron⁷ (three occurrences); an adviser, referring to Professor David Metcalf, chairman of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) (two occurrences); and the European Union/ European judges (two occurrences).

- (5) Migration cap could be eased to let in best talent, says David Cameron (*Daily Telegraph*, October 26)
Business can cope with migration cap, says adviser (*Daily Telegraph*, November 19)
Somalian woman with no right to live in the UK must be given a council house, according to EU judges (*Daily Telegraph*, February 24)

The Daily Telegraph repeats David Cameron's words the most. The reason might be his elite position as the current Prime Minister of the UK (two references) and therefore the right to be heard. On the contrary, it can be pointed out that David Cameron is also the leader of the Conservative party. Ideologically linked with conservatism, the newspaper might also have political reasons to give Cameron space in its headlines. Clearly visible is also the *Guardian*'s preference of voicing Ed Balls the most. Since Mr. Balls is a Labor representative, the possible connection between his and the paper's political leanings can also be claimed.

7. David Cameron became the Prime Minister of the UK on 11 May 2010, thus two headlines refer to him as the current PM. One headline was published on April 9 when he did not yet hold the function.

The main speakers in the DS headlines of both papers are elites. Since these people enjoy high social status as they have the access to valuable social resources, they are labeled influential and voiced. However, it was not expected that the newspapers would repeat the words of ordinary people, including immigrants. The analysis revealed two such DS headlines attributed to a deportee and to asylum seekers.

- (6) Deportee asked for help on flight before dying, witness says (*Guardian*, October 15)
 Deported Iraqi asylum seekers say they were beaten and forced off plane (*Guardian*, September 9)

Both headlines appeared in *The Guardian*. The ideological background of this newspaper is visible, as the idea of equality might cause the newspaper to give space to those it sees as being discriminated against. Moreover, by stressing mainly negative aspects of “their” treatment, a feeling of tolerance in its audience can be invoked.

5.2 NARRATOR’S REPORT OF SPEECH ACT (NRSA)

To further analyze what speech acts prevail in the headlines representing others’ words, the NRSA headlines were focused on in both newspapers. NRSA represents a particular act of speech and the subject-matter of this speech act. In other words, it enables the narrator to be in control of the speech which is reproduced. It has been found that 58 headlines (44 percent) in *The Guardian* and 32 headlines (38 percent) in *The Daily Telegraph* contained a certain type of NRSA. As mentioned, the NRSA headlines were of interest to this study for they depart from the actual utterance the most. In other words, they enable a newspaper to enter the communication as a third party, which might be disrupting to a recipient whom it may mislead and therefore manipulate.

Based on Searle’s taxonomy, the following speech acts can be distinguished:

Assertives:	Statements that can be verified as true or false.
Directives:	Statements that call upon the listener to do something.
Commissives:	Statements that commit a speaker to a course of action.
Expressives:	Statements that express the speaker’s psychological position about a state of affairs.
Declaratives:	Statements that, through their utterance, perform an act.

(Searle 1975)

Firstly, the analysis focused on what type of speech act is preferred by each newspaper when reproducing others’ words. It has been found that both papers mostly commented on others’ speech by directives and expressives. The third most widely used speech act were also assertives, though compared with directives and expressives, it is visible that *The Daily Telegraph* uses this type of NRSA headlines less than *The Guardian* (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS PRESENT IN THE NRSA HEADLINES

	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Directives	31%	37.5%
Expressives	26%	37.5%
Assertives	24%	16%
Commissives	10%	9%
Declaratives	9%	0%

Directives might be given the preference in relation to the issue discussed. Since immigration is very topical in Britain as the country continuously deals with it, directives represent a type of request, possible command, a piece of advice or all together a call for action. In the following examples, the speech act is indicated by *italics*.

- (7) Vince Cable *warns* coalition colleagues over immigration cap (*Guardian*, August 27)
Coalition *demands* population be kept under 70 million (*Daily Telegraph*, January 6)

The second most widely used speech acts were expressives. Since they convey the speaker's attitude and emotions towards a proposition, it might be concluded that they enable the speaker, usually the elites, to express their ideas on the immigration issue and other related problems.

- (8) Immigration inspector *criticises* dawn raids on families facing deportation (*Guardian*, July 27)
Number 10 *attacks* Vince Cable over immigration cap claims (*Daily Telegraph*, September 18)

It was also discovered that four (out of twelve) *Daily Telegraph* headlines containing expressives referred to the opposition, the Labour Party. In terms of possible hidden ideology, the paper apparently tries to convey a rather negative view of the party.

- (9) Gordon Brown *accused* of fiddling immigration figures (*Daily Telegraph*, March 27)
Labour *accused* of pre-election cover up on immigration (*Daily Telegraph*, July 3)
Brown *described* as worst MP ever by Labour candidate (*Daily Telegraph*, May 5)
Labour *changes its tune* over immigration limit as election looms (*Daily Telegraph*, February 10)

As visible in example (9), the first two headlines do not mention the agent, as s/he is not important. What is foregrounded is that Gordon Brown has been accused of providing false information and the party itself of hiding truth. Moreover, Gordon Brown is referred to as "worst MP" in the third headline. This statement is made by a Labour candidate whose name is, for a certain reason, unknown to the reader. Together with the last headline indicating that the Labour Party starts saying something

different as an election approaches, the overall image of the party given to the reader is rather negative. The party is pictured as unreliable, doing everything for the sake of winning the election. Conversely, it has not been observed that *The Guardian* would use expressives to picture the Conservative Party or the Coalition in a similar, thus negative way.

Assertives, which commit the speaker to the truth of the uttered words, were the third type of NRSA headlines used by both papers, though more by *The Guardian*. In total, there are 24 percent assertive NRSA headlines in *The Guardian* and 16 percent in *The Daily Telegraph*.

- (10) Alan Johnson *announces* crackdown on student visas (*Guardian*, February 7)
 Woolas *admits* even his children have suffered from immigration (*Daily Telegraph*, February 25)

It has been observed that the elites were the only actors in the *Daily Telegraph*'s NRSA headlines. The paper, similarly as in its DS headlines, does not give space to ordinary people's voices. On the contrary, *The Guardian* voiced immigrants in four of its NRSA headlines. As seen in example (11), the first two headlines are assertives, while the third headline represents a directive and the fourth one is an expressive.

- (11) Iraqi asylum seekers *claim* they were beaten on flight to Baghdad (*Guardian*, June 18)
 Iranian wrongly deported to Baghdad *claims* he was tortured (*Guardian*, November 21)
 Jimmy Mubenga family *call for* inquiry into deportation system (*Guardian*, November 1)
 Asylum seekers in Ireland *protest* against relocation plan (*Guardian*, July 6)

6. CONCLUSION

The analysis of representation of others' speech in the headlines of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* uncovered not only whose voices are given prominence in these two influential discourses, but also helped to comment on the ideological effects these choices in speech presentation might have. Both papers tend to view the immigration issue from its own perspective, influenced by their ideas and beliefs. Such a conclusion could be drawn as both papers referred to the same events happening in the United Kingdom in 2010, but rather differently.

The Guardian, being identified with center-left liberalism, approaches the issue rather sensitively. It stresses the vulnerability of immigrants, their difficulties when facing life in the United Kingdom and injustices towards them. Even though the dissatisfaction with the current situation and the need for a better immigration policy is mentioned as well, the paper seems to call for "their" integration into "our" society. The paper, as opposed to *The Daily Telegraph*, gives space to "them" by quoting immigrants directly in the DS headlines as well as by presenting their speech with the help of the

speech acts in the NRSA headlines. On the contrary, *The Daily Telegraph* being in favor of conservatism, views the issue rather negatively in its headlines. The right to present ideas is given solely to the elites. Neither ordinary people nor immigrants are asked their opinions. When commenting on the issue, the paper stresses mainly “their” different origin, focusing on the “immense” numbers of “them” coming mostly “illegally” to the UK, thus representing a social as well as economic threat.

Based on the analysis, neither *The Guardian* nor *The Daily Telegraph* provide an objective view of the issue, but rather a view which shapes reality according to the respective newspaper’s ideological background. Even though, it is obvious that the decisions of whose opinions to express are often related not only to ideological but also to a paper’s financial, commercial or political interests, it can be concluded that such decisions definitely influence the discourse produced and might consequently change the reality offered to a reader. Consciously or not, a paper resembles a disrupter with its unique possibility to design its headlines from its own perspective. Irrespective of what issue is being discussed, a paper has the possibility to stress its own view by foregrounding or suppressing certain parts of reality. In this respect, the media are seen as playing a crucial role in providing the primary information for ordinary people who then use this primary information to form their beliefs, ideas and consequently actions. As communications professor Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., claims, because “the media help us to evaluate public policies, they may also provide cues that lead to blaming the victim, rather than revealing the nature and extent of discrimination” (2001). With this in mind, the analysis of others’ speech representation is viewed as a useful tool that might also reveal a possible misuse of power and therefore uncover the sociocultural practice behind discourse.

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INCLUSION AND ROLE ALLOCATION IN THE REPRESENTATION OF THE SOCIAL ACTORS OF THE WELFARE STATE IN CONSERVATIVE BRITISH PRESS (2008–2012)

MAŁGORZATA PAPROTA

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Applied Linguistics,
Sowińskiego 17, 20-041 Lublin, Poland. Email: m.paprota@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This paper briefly identifies the key social actors construed as relating to the welfare state and goes on to outline role allocation in their representations in two conservative British dailies, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*, between 2008 and 2012. Approaching the research material from the perspective of critical discourse analysis and, drawing mainly on van Leeuwen's scheme of representation of social actors (2008), the paper finds that the patterns of agency ascribed to the key social actors of the welfare state (benefit claimants, government, and arguably the welfare state itself) work to delegitimise the welfare state, both directly and indirectly through contributing to a discourse of prejudice stigmatising benefit claimants.

KEYWORDS: welfare state; *Daily Mail*; *Daily Telegraph*; representation of social actors; role allocation

Whether defined broadly, as “a mix of universal and comprehensive policies through which government became more positively responsible for the promotion of individual welfare” (Jones and Lowe 2002, 6), or narrowly, as a system of social security benefits, the complex network of social practices that is the welfare state presupposes a relationship between the state and the individual. This relationship, marked by a power differential, is liable to be recontextualised in times of economic crisis such as the recent one. Part of a wider study of the discursive construction of the welfare state in crisis, this paper briefly identifies the key social actors construed as relating to the welfare state and goes on to outline role allocation in their representation in two conservative British dailies, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*, between 2008 and 2012.

The paper finds that the patterns of agency ascribed to the key social actors of the welfare state, benefit claimants, the government, and arguably the welfare state itself, work to delegitimise the welfare state, both through direct statements and indirectly through contributing to a discourse of prejudice stigmatising benefit claimants. This discourse, analysed in research papers (Baumberg et al. 2012) and popular argumentative writing (Jones 2012) and evident not only in the press but also in popular culture (comedy series from Channel 4's *Shameless* to BBC's *Little Britain* or popular documentaries such as Channel 4's *Benefit Street*), is a recurrent theme in times of economic crisis (Timmins 2001, 2). This paper thus does not seek to prove its existence but rather demonstrates how conservative newspapers perpetuate it.

The timeframe was chosen to at least partly coincide with the economic crisis affecting Britain and the resulting heightened ideological debate on government spending and the role of the state. The press, where much of this debate takes place, both reflects and contributes to forming what counts for public opinion; in particular, the political positioning and readership figures of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* makes them a good source of insight on hegemonic discourses in early twenty-first-century Britain. Politically, both newspapers tend to support conservative policies and Conservative governments; in terms of readership figures, the *Telegraph* remains the most-read quality newspaper (alongside the *Guardian* if digital figures are included), while, in addition to selling some two million copies daily (read by over four million persons, according to National Readership Survey), the *Mail* recorded some two million daily visits to its webpage in 2012 (National Readership Survey 2014).

The corpus was constructed from the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Telegraph* and their Sunday sister papers obtained from the LexisNexis database, divided into two main subcorpora (*Mail* – M and *Telegraph* – T); these were further subdivided by year to trace diachronic change, although the yearly subcorpora are not referenced in the paper because such change was minimal. To ensure topicality, the articles selected for analysis were those with at least one occurrence of the phrase “welfare state” and at least three occurrences of the word “welfare.” Most of the texts in the corpus are feature or comment articles, with news articles accounting for less than 20 percent of all items; again, since the phenomena under analysis occur across genres, the subcorpora were not divided by genre. AntConc (Anthony 2012) concordancer and wMatrix part-of-speech tagger (Rayson 2008) were used to facilitate access to key phrases and to allow some quantitative underpinning of the analysis.

The paper approaches the research material from the perspective of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2010), drawing mainly on Theo van Leeuwen’s scheme of representation of social actors (2008, 23–57). Social actors are defined by van Leeuwen as “a set of participants [of a social practice] in certain roles (principally those of instigator, agent, affected, or beneficiary)” (2008, 7). Parts of his framework for an analysis of the representation of social actors, specifically the inclusion and exclusion of social actors and the allocation of semantic roles, form the basic methodology for this paper. Participant roles will be described with recourse to Halliday and Matthiessen’s framework (2004, 168–303). The roles most frequently referenced here are Actor, Goal, Recipient and Client in a material process; Senser and Phenomenon in a mental process; and Carrier and Attribute in a relational process;¹ however, the present paper will focus on the ideological effects of these roles rather than their technical descriptions.

1. These will be capitalised, following the convention adopted by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004); the names used in the text for the key social actors (Claimants, Government, Welfare State) will also be capitalised to distinguish them from the general concepts denoted by these terms: in the course of the article, “Welfare State” denotes the social actor, while “the welfare state” the general concept.

To identify key participants of the welfare state, a list of the most frequent nouns and nominal adjectives from both subcorpora was obtained from wMatrix; concordance lines were then qualitatively analysed in detail to establish which participants were in fact construed as social actors of the welfare state. Two main social actors were identified in this way; the first is a group based on the list of proper nouns and comprising mostly elite politicians representing the government; these include some now deceased PMs such as Clement Attlee or Margaret Thatcher, as well as (pre-2010 government change) politicians speaking for the prospective government; some government agencies are also included. This social actor will be referred to as Government.

The second, hereafter referred to as Claimants, was formed on the basis of the list of plural common nouns and comprises several partly-overlapping groups: those identified as claiming benefits; those referenced as “the unemployed,” “the jobless” (or “workless”), and less frequently “the poor,” “the workshy,” “the underclass.” These names range from technical to evaluative, and clearly their respective designates may be individuals with nothing in common: a person claiming a benefit may be anything but workshy; not all benefits are out-of-work benefits; a person in paid employment may well be poor. Further, there are formal differences in what these names denote in the British benefits system, for instance the term “unemployed” as used by Office for National Statistics does not include those not actively seeking employment (Clegg 2012); thus, someone may be “jobless” without being “unemployed.” However, little care is taken by either newspaper to preserve those distinctions,² with the blurring of differences more strongly pronounced in the *Daily Mail*; and the specific designations make little difference – which is noted in the course of the analysis – as far as role allocation is concerned.

Notably absent from the list of most frequent plural nouns were groups like doctors (seven tokens in the M subcorpus, none in T), nurses (two in M, none in T), teachers (nine in M, seven in T), or pensioners (seven in M, five in T); social workers were referenced 13 times only in the M subcorpus.

The inclusion of Government and Claimants as frequently-referenced actors of the welfare state and the exclusion of participants relating to education and most social services closely reflects the conceptualisation of the welfare state in conservative discourse as the system of out-of-work benefits, with services such as the health service or education almost always disarticulated from it (Paprotta 2013). It is also consistent with Fairclough’s comment of the inclusions and exclusions in the 1998 Green Paper on welfare. He finds that “the population of the world of welfare [. . .] is a sparse one, consisting essentially of the government and welfare claimants” (Fairclough 2010, 185). Arguably, this construction of the welfare state in the two newspapers already goes some way towards delegitimising it: although the *Daily Mail* is often classified as a tabloid “targeted at an idealized reader of lower socio-economic status” (Conboy

2. Claimants are overwhelmingly represented as a group rather than individuals, an issue worthy of separate analysis.

2006, 15), a National Readership survey (2014) finds that most of the readership of both newspapers is firmly middle-class and unlikely to identify themselves as either part of it or directly assisted by it, especially with the introduction of means testing for some universal benefits such as the child benefit.

Agency, as evident in the roles allocated in this discourse to the principal social actors of the welfare state, has a similar ideological effect. Commenting on the construction of agency in the Green Paper on welfare, Fairclough notes that

The government acts, the claimants are acted upon. Welfare staff rarely act [...] and claimants generally only where their actions are initiated/managed by the government [...] and marginally] as agents in verbal processes and experiences in mental processes [...]. (185–86)

In the corpus analysed, claimants are also predominantly – but by no means exclusively – passivated, i.e., constructed as “being ‘on the receiving end of [an activity]’” (van Leeuwen 2008, 33). The activities by which Claimants are passivated fall into three categories: supportive, coercive, and immobilising; in other words, Claimants are predominantly (though, again, not exclusively) constructed as helped, disciplined and trapped.

The supportive theme, expressed with the verb “help,” its synonyms such as “support,” “assist” and “encourage,” as well as nouns or adjectives deriving from these, often represents Claimants as Goals or Recipients in a material process, such as in the following examples:

- (1) Mr Field is expected to issue a report setting out how Labour’s welfare policies failed to help the poor and to produce guidelines to help the Conservatives to target help to the less well-off more effectively. (Walters, MS160510)
- (2) Anyone claiming for more than 12 months will be put into a Work Programme, getting intensive help to find a job. (Kirkup, DT180211)

Despite the syntactic differences, there is little ideological difference in the construction of agency in these examples – whether Claimants are represented as Goal or cast in the benefactive roles of Recipient or Client, it is clear that Claimants are “on the receiving end” of help. This is hardly surprising, and though it necessarily passivates Claimants, it does not in itself precipitate a discursive delegitimation of the welfare state.

More interesting in terms of ideological effects, however, is which social actors are representing as being “on the sending end” of help. In a plurality of cases when “help” is used, Government is traceable to the role of Actor. However, it is frequently backgrounded, as there are only two cases in the corpus when it is explicitly nominated as “the government” (and one more where the noun “ministers” is used). In 18 cases, agency lies with Government, but political parties, policies, programmes, or institutions are named instead, as in (1), where “Labour” and “Conservatives” denote respectively the then government and the putative prospective government, or in (2), where the entity named is a government programme formally represented as Circumstance. In 10 cases, a business or a charity acting on behalf of or with the government is the Actor. 14 occurrences of “help” see Government as Actor subsumed under the pronoun

“we” – these are in five articles written by or quoting members of the (then or prospective) government of the time and most coincide with policy launches. Thus, though Government is usually the Actor of the material process of helping Claimants, its presence is not always foregrounded, although not difficult to establish.

The second most frequent Actor appearing in the context of the Material process of helping is arguably the Welfare State. Admittedly, it is a complex and partly abstract entity, but van Leeuwen clearly states social actors need not be human;³ indeed, this entity is only slightly less prototypically human than Government. The welfare state might be viewed as an extension of Government, but there seems to be enough evidence to regard it as a social actor in its own right, if only because of the drastically different semantic association or “the connotative and evaluative meanings” acquired from the context (Philip 2011, 61) it carries: in the corpus, Government as a social actor related to the welfare state is almost never evaluated negatively, the welfare state almost always is. In the corpus, Welfare State as Actor with the verb ‘help’ either has a past reference or a boulomaic modality referring to a counterfactual situation; in other words, it *helped* Claimants (but does not do so any more, or helps the wrong ones) or *should be helping* Claimants (but is not, or is helping the wrong ones), such as in (3) and (4) below:

- (3) The truth is that a welfare state should help those who cannot help themselves, not those who simply cannot be bothered to do so. (Heffer, DM241211)
- (4) IT is a great paradox of our age: the welfare state, founded to help the poor, has become the chief cause of poverty and social breakdown in modern Britain. In whole communities, government handouts have crushed the incentive to work, condemning millions to idleness and dependency. (DM220708)

In (4) in particular, agency unquestionably lies with Welfare State, which acts over Claimants. The verb “condemning” here appears closer to a Material process than to a Verbal one, with Claimants rendered as Goal affected by “handouts.” Further, while Government, as noted, is often backgrounded as Actor, Welfare State is not – in the corpus, it is treated as practically a synonym to “a system of benefits” (Paprotta 2013), and so it would be difficult to see phrases such as “handouts” as a backgrounding strategy. Even the few references to social workers (13 in the M subcorpus, none in T) follow the same pattern, with past social workers praised and present ones undermined, as in (5):

- (5) Victorian social workers felt it was their duty to approach the poor as friends and to do what a friend would do guide them away from charity and towards self-reliance. [. . .]

3. The first example he gives of a social actor is in fact television. This is in contrast to Fairclough (2003, 145), who does not seem to allow the possibility of non-human social actors, although his example of participants who are not social actors (“The car hit a rock”) comes from a sentence which hardly describes a social process.

He confirmed the idea many of us have about social workers that they see their main duty as helping the feckless milk the welfare state for every penny, rather than weaning them off dependency. (Heffer, DM120612)

Thus, Welfare State as social actor is openly delegitimised, constructed as not helpful and even positively detrimental to Claimants; this is usually not the case with government, seen as disarticulated from the welfare state. The few exceptions where the welfare state is associated with Government, such as in (4) and in (6), still emphasise the harmful effects of the former:

- (6) In an interview on the BBC's Andrew Marr programme, the Prime Minister said: "[. . .] But on the other hand let us look at the issue of dependency, where we have trapped people in poverty through the extent of welfare that they have." (Winnett, DT041010)

Here, "we" (Government) is the Actor, although welfare remains an indirect participant as the Circumstance expressing cause (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, 262); Welfare State thus bears at least some of the blame. This overall framing is in stark contrast to the notion, referenced also by Fairclough (2010, 187), that welfare is typically conceptualised as helping the disadvantaged. It appears that, in the corpus, it is Government that is helping Claimants harmed by Welfare State.

The second major theme in the corpus where Claimants are passivated is one where they are construed as being disciplined. The theme is especially salient when Claimants are defined as undeserving, for instance by being referred to as "the feckless," but is not restricted to such cases. Government forcibly acts upon Claimants, with the force often being justified solely by their status as benefit claimants. The force is usually expressed with verbs such as "force," "compel," "drive," "make," or, in a milder form, "push" or "move." The passive voice is the typical framing, and Government is (almost always) the suppressed Actor, foregrounding the passivated Goal, or claimants. A representative example is (7):

- (7) THE unemployed will be forced to do voluntary work – including picking up litter and cleaning graffiti – under radical plans to take millions off benefits. Anyone claiming unemployment benefit for more than a year will have to do at least four weeks of unpaid work, while those claiming for more than two years will be compelled to work in the community full-time. (Winnett, DT220708)

In these two sentences, as many as four different verbs express force exerted on claimants, with the verb "forced" starkly contrasting with the adjective "voluntary" (presumably, this is a stylistic variant of "unpaid"), in an ironic if unwitting echo of Karl Marx's comment on "grouped masses of men, who [. . .] are compelled to sell [their labour power] voluntarily" (Marx 1982, 899).

Stronger vocabulary, such as the "crackdown" in (8), is used primarily with respect to those abusing the system of benefits and those otherwise constructed as "undeserving."

This framing is also present in the *Daily Telegraph*, though the use of “crackdown” is exclusive to the *Mail*:

- (8) JOBLESS drug addicts who lie to obtain benefits will be forced to repay the money and could face jail, under a new crackdown on welfare cheats to be unveiled tomorrow. (Walters, MS220708)
- (9) Mr Miliband has voiced concerns about the Coalition’s welfare crackdown. But Lord Reid said: ‘If you can work you should work. The welfare state is not there as an optional choice for those who don’t want to work.’ (Shipman, DM151210)

The justification for the use of “crackdown” is multiple: the designation of individuals as undeserving because of not telling the truth as well as due to their status as addicted to narcotics and, arguably, unemployed. But if the crackdown is restricted to “welfare cheats” in (8), no such restriction operates in (9), with neither the scope nor other details of the crackdown specified in the article. There are other cases when the restriction appears to be overlooked and the force extended on all Claimants, such as in (10) and (11):

- (10) As for welfare policy, James Purnell is talking about tightening up against irresponsible behaviour. But we’ve heard all this before. It looks as if his much-vaunted crackdown will merely boil down to expecting claimants to look for a job or turn up on training courses [. . .] . (Phillips, DM081208)
- (11) WORKSHY TO FACE A THREE-YEAR DOLE BAN
MINISTERS will today unveil a tough new benefits regime designed to drive millions of claimants back into work [. . .] .
Under the Government’s new Work Programme, millions of people on benefits will be forced to make daily efforts to find a job.
Those who refuse to co-operate will have their benefits stopped immediately.
[. . .]
Ministers are believed to be looking at extending the maximum period to three years for the worst offenders. (Groves, DM290610)

The irresponsible behaviour mentioned in the extract is traceable to the poor childcare referenced earlier in the article, but the “claimants” at the “receiving end” of the crackdown are genericised as a group by the omission of the definite article. Similarly, while “repeat benefit cheats” appears semantically and pragmatically correct, as claiming a benefit fraudulently constitutes an offence, the use in (11) of the term “offender,” normally designating those breaking the law, is noteworthy in that it is unclear what the offence might be other than being an uncooperative individual on benefits. It is quite clear here that agency lies with Government, taking disciplinary action against Claimants construed as part of the narrowly-defined welfare state – which is thus indirectly undermined as well.

The last major theme in the corpus that represents Claimants as passivated is one of immobilisation, where Welfare State as Actor entraps the Goal, Claimants, in poverty.

The welfare state is often referred to by name, although references to specific benefits are also frequent, as in (12) and (13):

- (12) The welfare system entrenched in the last decade of Labour government has had two pernicious effects: it has encouraged people not to work; and it has encouraged women to stay single when they have children, because single mothers receive more in benefits than mothers who are married. Result? Our children grow up trapped in the benefit system. (Bailey, DT270610)
- (13) But there is growing evidence of a hidden army of Britons of working age who are not in jobs. They include those stuck on incapacity benefit, lone parents and youngsters not in education or employment (NEETs). (Chapman, DM260809)

In these extracts, as well as in (4), Claimants are deprived of agency, expressed metaphorically as motion, by the narrowly-defined welfare state. In a frequent framing in the corpus, Welfare State is endowed with almost maleficent agency, acting to the detriment of Claimants who are not shown capable of overthrowing its influence on their own, necessitating the help of Government.

An important ideological effect of this theme is that it allows a recontextualisation of the causes of poverty and other social problems in such a way that external or structural causes are glossed over; instead, the welfare state itself is indicated (and indicted) as a main or prominent culprit, such as in (14):

- (14) In the future [incapacity benefit] will carry with it the responsibility to do everything that you can to get back into work and help lift yourself out of the poverty trap that incapacity benefit represents for so many people. (Grayling, ST060108)

Incapacity benefit (phased out as of 2008) was intended for individuals who were deemed too ill or disabled to work. It is noteworthy that in the relational clause in (14), “poverty trap,” which can be seen as an Attribute or a Value, is ascribed to the incapacity benefit itself (Carrier or Token). This framing leads to the complete erasure of illness or disability as a cause of poverty.

While predominantly passive, there are many cases in the corpus where Claimants are activated, although the construction of such agency is often problematic and has interesting ideological effect, such as in (15):

- (15) [T]he problem families in The Scheme constantly slither off into appalling incidents – as when Gordon and Annie hear that their son Brian, having taken some Valium and got drunk, has stumbled into a local Post Office where ‘a racially aggravated incident’ occurred. (Wilson, DM090611)

The verb “slither,” borderline between material process and behavioural process type, is normally associated with non-human Actors (or Sensors); as their capacity to act rationally is clearly severely limited, it would seem justified to view the ideological effect of this choice (an important notion in Functional Grammar) as one which

attenuates the agency of the Actor. Further, the incident Brian causes is not represented directly, but as heard by his parents (Experiencer), while Brian's activity as an Actor in material processes is again weakened by the choice of "stumbled," a verb connoting impaired motor and possibly mental ability, and "got" (drunk), casting him as a Carrier in a Relational process. Thus, a rather rowdy event is represented in a way which slightly backgrounds the agency of Claimants, although it is their capacity to act rationally rather than their agency which is undermined here.

Claimants are relatively frequently cast, as Fairclough has it, as Sayers in Verbal processes and Sensors in Mental processes (2010, 186), although the categorisation of these (or indeed many) processes is not unambiguous (Jeffries 2010, 44–45; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, 174). The extracts below represent Claimants as Sensors in Mental cognition processes (or, arguably, Sayers in Verbalisation processes):

- (16) People refusing to co-operate and find a job will have their benefits "sliced" under the plan to get about 1.4 million people back to work. (Thomson and Sylvester, DT020208)
- (17) Large financial inducements are available to young school-leavers, who choose pregnancy rather than work. The weekly net income of a benefits dependent parent with two children is £262 a week – considerably more than an unqualified girl would earn if she got her job. Have five children, and she'll 'earn' £440 a week. (Oborne, DM020509)
- (18) It is distinctly untrue of those for whom the system [incapacity benefit] has become an alternative to unemployment benefit (more money and nobody pesters you to look for a job) and for whom dependency is a lifestyle choice. (Daley, DT210708)

"[R]efusing" in (16), "choose" in (17) and "choice" in (18), however classified, all imply significant agency on the part of Claimants: the refusal or the choice is constructed as a conscious action having material consequences, which are impacting or will impact the Claimants in a negative way. If, as noted, process types are fuzzy, it would appear that the above processes, especially that in (17), are close to the intersection of mental and material ones.

The agency of Claimants is stressed – as is that of Welfare State – when the causes of social problems are considered, with Claimants often represented as having "chosen" to be in a situation where they are eligible for benefits. It would of course be naive to only assume structural or external causes for social problems; however, the narrowly defined welfare state is the most salient such cause in the corpus, as exemplified by the simple choice presented in (17).

At a time of economic crisis, the pressures the British welfare state has virtually always been subjected to, such as funding problems or public mandate, have become more intense, as British government spending is being cut and as the role of the state in providing public services is being reconsidered. The representation of the main social actors of the welfare state appears to be possibly the strongest factor in the ongoing

discursive delegitimisation of the welfare state. In particular, it is the contradictory representation of the agency of Claimants which contributes to this trend, constructed as they are as the passivated recipients of Government help; subjects of Government's discipline; and victims of the welfare state, but at the same time as people whose conscious choices precipitated their plight. They are thus the very opposite of what Fairclough terms "more autonomous, self-motivating, self ('the self-steering self')," one that is "characterised by the capacity and the will to choose" (Fairclough 1992, 219–20), the default and target self of the neo-liberal conservative discourse. When passivated, they lack the choice-making capacity; when construed as active, this capacity is restored to them, but does not operate in the desired way.

Notably, these themes run virtually unchanged through the yearly sub-corpora. Strikingly, there is very little appreciable diachronic change in the corpus despite the change of government in 2010. Further, the main points of the analysis were a response to Fairclough's insights into a document dating back to 1998. With some differences – he does not note the disciplinarian theme; the managerial one he stresses is not evinced enough to be discussed here; a large corpus of newspaper texts will likely present a more complex picture than a single document – a strong continuation of the (conservative, after all) ideas on welfare reform and social justice in general is in evidence. New Labour's "Third Way," as is well-noted (see Fairclough 2000, 3, or Coxall et al. 2004, 62) was infused with neo-liberal elements, with "[their] conceptualisation of social justice [...] based on a restricted contractarian moral order of 'rights and responsibilities' that prioritised citizens' obligation to participate in paid employment above other values" (Bryson and Fischer 2011, 201); in turn, at the end of the 2000s, (New) Labour and Conservatives showed a "rhetorical convergence on social issues" (Bryson and Fischer 2011, 208). The continuity of these ideas, apparently shared by most (New) Labour and Coalition politicians quoted or writing in the two newspapers, and enmeshed in the discourse of the two newspapers themselves, might well point to a new "age of consensus," at least in the discourses of the welfare state.

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LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

ANGLO-AMERICAN HISTORIANS AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 1918–1989

THOMAS LORMAN

University College London, 16 Taviton Street, London, WC1H 0BW, United Kingdom.
Email: t.lorman@ucl.ac.uk

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the efforts of Anglo-American historians, between 1918 and 1989, to familiarize British and American audiences with the history of Czechoslovakia. Although a broad knowledge of Czechoslovakia and its history was limited by geographic and political factors, and famously denied by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, Czechoslovakia was never *terra incognita* to enquiring minds in the West. Governments and universities recognized the importance of having experts on Czechoslovakia, and the general public had a longstanding eagerness to learn about Czechoslovakia, as the considerable amount of travelogues and other non-scholarly publications that were published on the country and the wider region demonstrates. Anglo-American scholars also produced serious studies of Czechoslovakia during the interwar period and, with greater frequency, after World War II. Although these historians faced considerable challenges in researching the history of Czechoslovakia, this paper argues that they, nevertheless, produced a series of outstanding monographs that continue to be of importance to contemporary scholars.

KEYWORDS: American; Bata Shoe Factory; British; Communist Party; Czechoslovakia; émigrés; historians; Tomáš G. Masaryk; School of Slavonic and East European Studies; universities; Zlín

In September 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain made his infamous declaration in a radio address that Czechoslovakia was a “far away country” inhabited by “people of whom we know nothing.”¹ More than half a century later, British journalists were still insisting that British ignorance of Czechoslovakia had only begun to diminish with the fall of communism in Central Europe, while the *New York Times* felt obliged to provide its educated readership with a potted summary of the key dates in Czechoslovakia’s history as the ‘Velvet Revolution’ captured America’s attention in November 1989.² Nevertheless, in both Britain and America there had been a sustained interest in Czechoslovakia throughout the interwar period and the long decades of communist rule. In particular, British and American scholars, writers, and journalists produced a substantial corpus of publications on the history of Czechoslovakia, and in both Britain and North America there existed a substantial body of informed experts on Czechoslovakia and its history throughout the period up until 1989.

One indication of Anglo-American familiarity with Czechoslovakia can be found in Britain’s links with the city of Zlín and its famous Bata shoe factory. Throughout

1. Steven Kreis, “Neville Chamberlain on Appeasement (1939),” The History Guide, <http://www.historyguide.org/europe/munich.html>.

2. See, for example, “Czechoslovakia: A History of Tumult,” *New York Times*, November 22, 1989; “Clamour in the East; Chronology of Events under Communism in Czechoslovakia,” *New York Times*, November 28, 1989; See also Jasper Rees, “Spring Again – Television,” *Times* (of London), May 29, 1990. See also Andrew Gibbon Williams, “Freedom Briefly Glimpsed – Exhibition,” *Times* (of London), November 30, 1994.

the interwar period, Bata exported hundreds of thousands of pairs of shoes to western countries including Britain and America. Adopting a policy now called outsourcing, at the beginning of the 1930s the Bata shoe company decided to establish another factory in Essex, England, located just east of London. Seeking to train English workers to produce high quality shoes, a hundred local boys from Tilbury took examinations to prove their worth, and the top ten travelled to Zlín for a year to learn their future trade. As a correspondent to the *Times* of London described, “the boys were extremely happy” and in no hurry to return home.³ Throughout the interwar period, the *Times* provided additional reports about the quality of the manufacture and the working conditions in the Bata factory, and the factory’s success was even the subject of a special programme on BBC radio.⁴

The Essex apprentices and their experiences in Zlín constitute part of a hitherto under-researched phenomenon of western travel to Czechoslovakia and Central Europe that took place throughout the interwar period and resumed in 1945. Whether it was British doctors visiting spas, Patrick Leigh Fermor walking from London to Istanbul, the occasional politician stopping by in Prague, occupying American soldiers, left wing activists, trade union delegations, visiting theatre companies, or even holiday makers and sports teams, there was almost always a trickle of British and Americans who came to Czechoslovakia and left with a little more knowledge of the land and its people.⁵ Already in the interwar period, these visitors produced a swathe of publications and pen portraits of Czechoslovakia, with titles such as *The Road through Czechoslovakia*, *Wanderings in Czechoslovakia*, *In Czechoslovakia’s Hinterland* and, rather slavishly, *Czechoslovakia: The Land of an Unconquerable Ideal*, all of which lauded Czechoslovakia as the only democracy in Central Europe.⁶ Elizabeth Wiskemann was an especially ardent and influential propagandist, contrasting Czechoslovakia’s liberal and democratic ideals with the danger posed by German expansionism, but an enduring Anglo-American interest in Czechoslovakia throughout the interwar period is also revealed in Sheila Grant Duff’s *Europe and the Czechs*, which fortuitously appeared in 1938 and sold 180,000 copies in its first three weeks of publication.⁷

3. “British Boys for Bata Factories,” *Times*, November 1, 1932; William Brown, “Tilbury Boot Factory, Letters to the Editor,” *Times*, July 18, 1933.

4. W. M. Russell, “Points from Letters,” *Times*, June 2, 1926; “The Five-Day Week,” *Times*, September 22, 1930; “Shoe Factories for Tilbury,” *Times*, January 24, 1933; “Broadcasting, Home Stations,” *Times*, December 3, 1935.

5. “The Spas of Czechoslovakia: A Medical Visit to Prague,” *British Medical Journal* 1, no. 3464 (1927): 966–68; Patrick Leigh Fermor, *A Time of Gifts: On Foot to Constantinople: From the Hook of Holland to the Middle Danube* (London: Penguin Books, 1977).

6. Dorothy Giles, *The Road through Czechoslovakia* (Philadelphia: Penn, 1930); Gerald Druce, *Wanderings in Czechoslovakia* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1930); Henry Baerlein, *In Czechoslovakia’s Hinterland* (London: Hutchinson, 1938); Jessie Mothersole, *Czechoslovakia: The Land of an Unconquerable Ideal* (London: John Lane, 1926).

7. See Elizabeth Wiskemann, *Czechs and Germans: A Study of the Struggle in the Historic Provinces of Bohemia and Moravia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938); Sheila Grant Duff, *Europe and the Czechs* (London: Penguin Books, 1938); *Times*, April 1, 2004.

These books introduced an Anglo-American readership to Czechoslovakia's culture, traditions and history through anecdotes, pen portraits, and a popular writing style. The origins of a more academic interest in Britain towards the history of the peoples of Czechoslovakia can be traced back to the pre-World War I writings of R. W. Seton-Watson⁸ and Henry Wickham Steed (whose history of the Habsburg Monarchy paid close attention to the Czechs and Slovaks),⁹ and to the establishment of a school at Liverpool University in 1907, which was devoted to the history, language, and culture of Russia, Poland and the Slavic peoples.¹⁰

Academic study of Central Europe properly began in Britain, however, only in 1915 when the future president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš G. Masaryk, was appointed Lecturer in Slavonic History and Sociology at Kings College London. Prior to this, Great Britain did not possess a single academic post devoted to the study of Central Europe. Masaryk's appointment led to the establishment of a department of Slavic Studies that, with the financial assistance of the British, Czechoslovak and other governments, later became the independent School of Slavonic and East European Studies.¹¹

Although Masaryk was not a historian, within the School that he helped found generations of historians of Czechoslovakia were trained, obtained posts, and published their research. During the interwar period, for example, two Czechs served as language teachers until they were eventually replaced by home-grown scholars, notably Paul Selver, who published a substantial biography of Masaryk, and Seton-Watson, who was granted the prestigious position of Masaryk Professor of Central European History, which he held from 1922–1945.¹² It was Seton-Watson who published the first account of the history of the Czech and Slovak peoples in English in 1943, which remains an informative if dated read.¹³ Seton-Watson was succeeded by the scholar of medieval Czechoslovakia, Reginald Betts (whose most important work was still in draft form when it was incinerated during the bombing of London in World II), by Trevor Thomas who educated generations of students in Czechoslovak and Habsburg history until his retirement in 1989, and by Harry Hanák, who was born in Moravia but received his education in Britain and became a lecturer in Internal Relations at the School in 1958. More, Robert Pynsent and David Short instilled students at the School with a knowledge of the Czech and Slovak languages and cultures.

In contrast, the first Hungarian language teacher at the School was not appointed until 1937, and the first historian specializing in Hungarian history was not appointed

8. Robert William Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary* (London: Constable, 1908).

9. Henry Wickham Steed, *The Hapsburg Monarchy* (London: Constable, 1913).

10. Maurice Pearton, "The History of SSEES: The Political Dimension," *SEER* 71, no. 2 (1993): 287.

11. The School of Slavonic and East European Studies became a part of University College London in 2001 but still retains a considerable degree of autonomy within the university.

12. N. B. Jopson, W. J. Rose, and G. H. Bolsover, "The School of Slavonic and East European Studies: The First Fifty Years," *SEER* 44, no. 102 (1966): 3–4; See also Paul Selver, *Masaryk* (London: Michael Joseph, 1940).

13. Robert William Seton-Watson, *A History of the Czechs and Slovaks* (London: Hutchinson, 1943).

until 1963.¹⁴ The School also launched, in the 1920s, the *Slavonic* (later *Slavonic and East European*) *Review*, which remains the foremost British journal specializing on Central and East European as well as Russian history and since its launch has published important works on the history, language and culture of Czechoslovakia.

America also produced some serious academic studies of Czechoslovakia's history in the interwar period. The leading American historian of Czechoslovakia at this time was Robert Kerner who taught at the University of California at Berkeley, whose most important work was a monograph on Bohemia in the eighteenth century.¹⁵ His colleague, James Westfall Thompson, was a prominent historian who could also read Czech and published several serious studies on Czech-German relations in the medieval period.¹⁶ S. Harrison Thompson of the University of Colorado learnt Czech and published several important articles on medieval Czech history.¹⁷ Moreover, a growing number of universities provided courses on 'Slavic' language, culture, and history which, although tending to focus on Russia, occasionally incorporated the smaller Slavic peoples including the Czechs and Slovaks. A department of Czech had been founded at Oberlin College in Georgia prior to the First World War, and during the interwar period the universities of Texas, Nebraska, and Columbia as well as the College of St. Procopius in Illinois provided courses of Czech language instruction.¹⁸

Noticeably, some historians felt able to publish articles on Czech history without any apparent knowledge of the Czech language.¹⁹ Professional historians of Central Europe at this time tended first to learn German, and their mindset and interests were invariably shaped by their initial immersion in German rather than Czech culture.²⁰

Moreover, American research on Czechoslovakia was constrained by the fact that the main wave of Czech and Slovak immigrants to America, who had arrived in the decades around the turn of the century, were still assimilating into American society. The American university system remained a bastion of privilege, with its prestigious 'ivy league' colleges dominated by the so-called WASP establishment of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. It would not be until the post-World War II period that large numbers of lower class Americans, especially veterans, including the second generation of Czech and Slovak immigrants, would enter the universities and produce a new generation of academics interested in Central Europe and Czechoslovakia.

14. I. W. Roberts, *History of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 1915–1990* (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1991), 1–17, 119–24; See also H. Seton-Watson and Joel Hurstfield, "R. R. Betts," *Slavonic and East European Review* 40, no. 94 (1962): 1–2.

15. Robert Joseph Kerner, *Bohemia in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1932).

16. J. W. Thompson, "Medieval German Expansion in Bohemia," *Slavonic Review* 4, no. 12 (1926): 605–28.

17. See, for example, S. Harrison Thomson, "Pre-Hussite Heresy in Bohemia," *English Historical Review* 48, no. 189 (1933): 23–42.

18. A. P. Coleman, "Slavonic Studies in the United States, 1918–1938," *Slavonic and East European Review* 17, no. 50 (1939): 372–88; See Clarence A. Manning, "Slavonic Studies in the United States," *Modern Language Journal* 13, no. 4 (1929): 280–88.

19. See, for example, Frank R. Lewis, "Ottokar II of Bohemia and the Double Election of 1257," *Speculum* 12, no. 4 (1937): 512–15.

20. Neither R. W. Seton-Watson nor his contemporary rival C. A. Macartney were fluent in any of the region's languages except German.

The Second World War and its aftermath revolutionized western academic interest in Czechoslovakia. A belated recognition that Central Europe in general and Czechoslovakia in particular had once again been the crucible of a new global conflict inspired both governments and academics to take the thorny issues of national identity and competing historical narratives seriously. Moreover, the communist takeover of Central Europe encouraged the British and American governments to make a significant investment in academia in order to understand the peoples and countries that now lay directly on the fault line between east and west. The staff at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies almost doubled in size, while in North America, resources were ploughed not only into the leading centres of excellence on Central Europe such as Berkley, Michigan and Columbia universities but also in establishing new departments in places that were less susceptible to suspicious foreign influences.²¹

Thus, Indiana University in Bloomington, located in a small farming town in the American 'mid-west' several hours drive from any large city, was given sufficient funding to establish one of the pre-eminent departments of Central European history. The students who went there, learning the languages, culture and history of Central Europe, were also expected to imbibe traditional American values as they were trained to be the future diplomats, spies, and occasionally historians.

Indeed, after World War II in both Great Britain and North America, almost every university with a serious history department of any significant size felt compelled to appoint at least one academic who dealt with what was normally termed 'Eastern Europe'. Normally these academics were Russian and/or Soviet specialists. The Soviet Union was, after all, the largest country in the region, and the country which both America and Britain were keenest on understanding. Rarely did historians choose to specialize on one of the smaller countries in the East such as Czechoslovakia. Anglo-American historiography in this period was, therefore, partially defined by the attitudes of Russian specialists who tended to dominate both the academic and popular conversation about events east of the Berlin wall. In 1989, outside of the small coterie of universities that possessed Slavic departments, such as Indiana and Columbia, there was not a single historian of Czechoslovakia working at any of the most prestigious American universities.

Knowledge of and interest in Central Europe and Czechoslovakia was, however, bolstered by a new generation of refugees from the region, fleeing the newly established communist regimes. Because there was such demand for specialists on the region, and a shortage of native students with the skills to take up all the new positions, refugees with minimal academic training obtained jobs in British and American universities in the immediate post war period, such as Joseph Kirschbaum, a former member of the wartime Slovak government who obtained a position teaching in Canada on the basis of no academic merit, Joseph Mikuš, a wartime Slovak diplomat in Rome who was then offered a teaching post at New York State University, and Josef Korbel who served in

21. Roberts, *History of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies*, 56–57.

the Czechoslovak 'government in exile' in London during the Second World War and then enjoyed a successful academic career at the University of Denver.²²

This wave of emigration also brought more distinguished scholars to Britain and America including Francis Dvorník who taught at Charles University in Prague before emigrating first to Paris and then to Harvard, and Otakar Odložilík who had published a number of articles in English on Czech history before the war and took up a teaching post in America in 1948.²³

These émigré academics ardently condemned the Soviet takeover of Central Europe and often concentrated on explaining the rise there of the various nationalist movements. Whereas left wing historians concentrated on the series of crises that had repeatedly engulfed Central Europe, the émigré historians regarded the key story of Czech and Slovak history as the struggle for national independence which had been abruptly curtailed in 1945, or 1938, or even 1621.

Also shaping the western historiography of Czechoslovakia was the translation into English of works by Czechoslovak historians. In the immediate post 1948 era, both the translations and the scholarship produced by Czechoslovak historians were abysmal. By the 1960s and 70s however, an increasing number of high quality monographs, carefully selected to appeal to western historians, were being translated. These works were either exceptionally dull, since they concentrated solely on facts and sought to avoid any form of debate and narrative, or they dealt with individuals and episodes that could be unambiguously lauded by academics from all ideological standpoints. National heroes and earlier revolutions were reliable topics for translation. Studies of twentieth century Czechoslovak history were, however, only very rarely translated into English, and not a single western historian of Czechoslovakia had their work translated into Czech or Slovak prior to 1989.²⁴

The conversation between Anglo-American and Czechoslovak historians was, therefore, essentially a one-way conversation. Czechoslovak historians rarely learned English, tended to be reliable members of the Communist Party, and as a rule were less open to the new ideas of Anglo-American historians, although the great Moravian historian and lifelong anglophile Josef Polišenský was a notable and influential exception.²⁵

The student who walked into a British or American university library prior to 1989 in search of works on Czechoslovakia was confronted, therefore, with a

22. University of Denver, "About Our School," Josef Korbel School of International Studies, <http://www.du.edu/korbel/about/history.html>.

23. Stanley B. Winters, "Ottakar Odložilík's American Career: The Uneasy Self-Exile of a Czech Historian, 1948–1973," in *Grossbritannien, die USA und die böhmischen Länder 1848–1938 / Great Britain, the United States, and the Bohemian Lands 1848–1938: Vorträge der Tagung des Collegium Carolinum in Bad Wiessee, 2.-6 November, 1988*, eds. Eva Hahnová and Stanley B. Winters (München: Collegium Carolinum, 1991), 153–69.

24. See, for example, Roundtable discussion on "Uncharted Areas for Research on the History of Slovakia and the Slovaks," *East Central Europe* 7, no. 1 (1980): 49–88, hereafter cited as Roundtable.

25. See R. J. W. Evans, "A Czech Historian in Troubled Times: J. V. Polišenský," *Past and Present* 176, no. 1 (2002): 257–74.

jumble of competing historical narratives: pro-German, pro-Soviet, bombastically nationalist, excessively pessimistic, brazenly or subtly socialist. Unsurprisingly, out of these competing narratives new generations of British and American historians of Czechoslovakia melded together their own interpretations to produce some of the most outstanding scholarship on Czechoslovak history.

Some of these scholars were the children of immigrants who had learnt the language at home, but most began by learning Czech or more rarely Slovak in the few universities where the language was taught. Scholarships, e.g., from the Fulbright Foundation and IREX, could be obtained for further language study in Czechoslovakia, but a visit behind the old iron curtain was intimidating. Prague was the obvious choice because it possessed the national archives and libraries and because of its great charm and beauty, but also because at least there one could be assured of meeting other westerners, often at the embassies which had their own bars and shops. Beyond Prague, the rural hinterland seemed uninviting. The work of western historians on Czechoslovakia tended, therefore, to be Prague, or more broadly, Czech focussed. Slovakia, with a few honourable exceptions, was generally overlooked.²⁶

Access to archives and libraries was relatively simple, but certain collections of documents and books were off limits, the catalogues were frustratingly incomplete, and the archivists and librarians either wonderfully helpful or frustratingly unfriendly. Nevertheless, the inconvenience of having to register with the police, the agonizing search for a photocopying machine, and the challenge of mastering the language, were the badges proudly worn by the small group of adventurous historians who did their research in Czechoslovakia, passing on tips, offering advice, and inspiring their students to follow in their footsteps.

In their work they challenged myths, adopting a genuinely comparative approach, tackling forgotten and overlooked topics, conducting serious research, and attracting the interest of a growing number of readers in America and Britain. To take only the most notable examples of Anglo-American historiography of Czech, Slovak, and Czechoslovak history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Stanley Pech, Bruce Garver and Paul Vyšný produced excellent studies of Czech politics in the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy, Victor Mamatey and Jonathan Zorach produced valuable accounts of politics and diplomacy in the Czechoslovak First Republic, H. Gordon Skilling marked himself out as an expert on the Czechoslovak Communist Party both in opposition and in power, Hillel Kieval and Stanley B. Winters produced some of the best accounts yet written of the history of Czech Jewry, while the writings of Robert Pynsent on the Czech avant garde, Peter Brock on the Slovak national awakening, and Owen Johnson's groundbreaking study of education and the creation of a newly enlarged intelligentsia in interwar Slovakia have all stood the test of time.²⁷

26. Roundtable, 50.

27. See, for example, Stanley Z. Pech, *The Czech Revolution of 1848* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969); Paul Vyšný, *Neo-Slavism and the Czechs, 1898–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton:

As well as these specialist monographs, from the 1960s onwards Anglo-American historians responded to the growing interest in the lands beyond the iron curtain by producing a series of histories of Central and Eastern Europe that placed Czechoslovak history within a regional and transnational context. Notable and influential examples include publications by C. A. Macartney, Michael Kaser, Robert Kann, Joseph Rothschild, Alan Palmer, Raymond Pearson, Hugh Seton-Watson, George Schöpflin, Leslie Tihany, and Donald Treadgold.²⁸

Let me conclude this paper with one further example of an outstanding scholar who mastered the intricacies of Czechoslovak history and challenged the enduring assumption that Czechoslovakia was a 'far away country' about which nothing was known. In the 1970s, a young British historian R. J. W. Evans published two splendid books on early modern Central Europe.²⁹ Among the languages he learnt fluently was Czech, and his mastery of the subject matter along with the brilliance of his writing style provided a new generation of Anglo-American historians with a fresh insight into the history of the Czech lands and Central Europe. Throughout his distinguished career, Evans has always endeavoured to place the history of the Czech and Slovak peoples within its proper Central European or simply European context, and his efforts were rewarded by his appointment as Regius Professor in Modern History at the University of Oxford.

In conclusion, although Czechoslovakia was, prior to 1989, regarded not only by the general public but also by prominent and influential figures in Great Britain and North America as *terra incognita*, there was no shortage of informed and excellent works on Czechoslovakia available for those who were interested. The efforts of these Anglo-American historians who wrote on Czechoslovakia before 1989 may appear to play a minor part in the broader story of Anglo-American relations with Czechoslovakia, but in their effort to shed a fresh light on a "far away country" they formed an intellectual bridge over which many subsequent historians, including the present author, have travelled.

Princeton University Press, 1976); Victor S. Mamatey and Radomír Luža, eds., *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); Hillel J. Kieval, *The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870–1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Stanley B. Winters, *The Jewish Question and Other Aspects of Modern Czechoslovakia* (Irvine, CA: Charles Schlacks, 1983); Bruce M. Garver, *The Young Czech Party 1874–1901 and the Emergence of a Multi-party System* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978); Robert B. Pynsent, *Julius Zeyer: The Path to Decadence* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973); Peter Brock, *The Slovak National Awakening: An Essay in the Intellectual History of East Central Europe* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); Owen V. Johnson, *Slovakia, 1918–1938: Education and the Making of the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

28. C. A. Macartney and A. W. Palmer, *Independent Eastern Europe: A History* (London: Macmillan, 1962); Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918–1941* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1962); Donald W. Treadgold and Peter F. Sugar, eds., *A History of East Central Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974); Leslie C. Tihany, *A History of Middle Europe: From the Earliest Times to the Age of the World Wars* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1976); George Schöpflin, *The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe* (London: Muller, Blond and White, 1986); Raymond Pearson, *Russia and Eastern Europe, 1789–1985: A Bibliographical Guide* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989).

29. R. J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History, 1576–1612* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); R. J. W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700: An Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

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YE MYSTIC KREWE OF HISTORICAL REVISIONISTS: THE ORIGINS OF TAMPA'S GASPARILLA PARADE

GREGORY JASON BELL

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: bell@fhs.utb.cz

ABSTRACT: Ignoring borders, which are constructs, nineteenth-century Tampa was not Southern. Instead, it was home to a polyglot society that survived frontier conditions through cooperation. In the last decade of the century, however, and especially after the Spanish-American War of 1898, Tampa's multicultural coalition gave way to New South pressures. Although whites remained a minority, they had by then acquired the socioeconomic resources to take political control of what was quickly becoming a New South city. In an effort to "sanitize" local history and celebrate their own superiority while appeasing the non-white majority, Tampa's white civic elite devised and actuated the Gasparilla Parade, which is still held annually. Most modern-day parade spectators and participants, however, remain ignorant of the parade's original purposes, a testament to the organizers' successful revision of local history.

KEYWORDS: Florida; Tampa; Cuba; José Gaspar; Gasparilla Parade; Multiculturalism; New South; Southern; White; Hispanic

On Florida's Gulf coast, the Spanish pirate José Gaspar is legendary. From 1783 to 1821, he and the crew of his ship, the *Gasparilla*, reportedly ran amok in local shipping lanes, "attacking merchant ships, killing the crews, and taking women as slaves and concubines."¹ Not until Florida became a U.S. territory in 1821 was the U.S. Navy, resorting to trickery, finally able to locate and overtake the *Gasparilla*. Before he could be arrested, however, Gaspar chose to "die by his own hand and not the enemy's." With his death, pirating on Florida's Gulf coast ended, or so the story goes.² In reality, historians have searched in vain in Spanish, Cuban, and American archives for primary sources that verify the tale. As far as they can determine, José Gaspar, his crew, his ship, and their exploits, were myths.³ Yet Gaspar's memory has lived on and his legend has only grown, thanks in large part to Tampa, Florida's annual Gasparilla Parade. Early

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1. Gary R. Mormino and Anthony P. Pizzo, *Tampa: The Treasure City* (Tulsa: Continental Heritage Press, 1983), 31–32; See Francis B. C. Bradlee, *Piracy in the West Indies and its Suppression* (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1923); André-Marcel d'Ans, "The Legend of Gasparilla: Myth and History on Florida's West Coast," *Tampa Bay History Journal* 2, no. 2 (1980): http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3512&context=flstud_pub; Corinne White Lamme, "The Story of Juan Gomez," Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpa/12040514.html>; Philip T. Meharg, *Jose Gaspar and Other Pirates* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2003), 2–3.
 2. d'Ans, "The Legend of Gasparilla;" JoseGaspar.net, "The Legendary Jose Gaspar," Gasparilla Trading Company, <http://www.josegaspar.net>; Meharg, *Jose Gaspar*, 6–8.
 3. Kevin M. McCarthy, *Twenty Florida Pirates* (Sarasota: Pineapple Press, 1994), 39–41; d'Ans, "The Legend of Gasparilla;" Sherry Johnson, "Dreams of Empire: The Legacies of Contact," in *Myths and Dreams: Exploring the Cultural Legacies of Florida and the Caribbean* (Miami Lakes: Jay I. Kislak Foundation, 1999), 33–34.

each year, approximately 400,000 spectators gather to watch as campy re-enactors of “Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla” ride into Tampa’s harbor on a 165-foot replica pirate ship towed by tugboats. After symbolically conquering the city, they receive its key from the mayor. This ceremony is then followed by a Mardi-Gras style parade down Bayshore Boulevard during which members of various crews throw beads, plastic doubloons, and other cheap bobbles to the cheering crowds. After the parade, the pirates return the key to the mayor and symbolically “return to the sea.”⁴ What most modern-day participants and spectators probably do not know, however, is that the parade originated in 1904 as an inversion ritual designed to celebrate white superiority and to maintain it by placating, one day a year, the non-white majority.

The Gaspar myth that Tampans have so embraced apparently originated with the ramblings of Juan Gomez, a self-proclaimed Don Juan and a specialist in barroom stories. Gomez, reputedly Portuguese by birth and steeped in the machismo of his culture, regaled anyone who would listen with escalating bravadoes of how he fought first in the American Revolutionary War and then for Napoleon before joining Gaspar’s crew in 1818. When the *Gasparilla* was attacked by the U.S. Navy in December 1821, Gomez reportedly jumped ship, swam to shore and escaped, not with Gaspar’s money but with one or more of his concubines. He also told them how he fought under Zachary Taylor during the Second Seminole War and how, during the U.S. Civil War, he successfully ran the blockade before joining it as the pilot of a Federal blockade cutter. One of his favorite tales was how he once “killed for love.” He died in 1900, which, if his yarns are to be believed, would have put him at the ripe old age of at least 130.⁵

As improbable as Gomez’s stories generally were, his tale of Gaspar struck a chord with Tampans, who over the last century have turned a mythical Spanish pirate into the city’s most famous adopted son, “so famous that Tampa’s national identity is somewhat based on him.” Although Zachary Taylor and Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson actually did spend time in the Tampa Bay area during the mid-nineteenth century, their presence is neither well known nor celebrated. Yet, Gaspar, a fictional, outlaw Spaniard, has “survived the facts” and become so realistic that some scholars have been duped into legitimizing him.⁶

The reason can be found in the formation of Tampa’s historical memory. Referencing Gaspar, one writer has suggested that Tampa does not have much of a past, so one has been invented for “amusement.” To argue that Tampans began their Gasparilla Parade as such robs Gaspar of his symbolic importance just as it denies the region a history. Examining the important dates in Gaspar’s life and placing them in historical context offers clues to the symbolism behind Gaspar’s story. As historians Gary Mormino and

4. Gasparilla Pirate Fest, “Gasparilla Media Guide,” <http://gasparillapiratefest.com/media.htm>; Gasparilla Pirate Fest, “History of Gasparilla, Past and Present,” <http://gasparillapiratefest.com/history.shtml>.

5. John Rothchild, *Up for Grabs: A Trip through Time and Space in the Sunshine State* (New York: Viking, 1985), 66–68; Lamme, “The Story of Juan Gomez”; d’Ans, “The Legend of Gasparilla,” Gloria Jahoda, *River of the Golden Ibis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), 154; Anthony P. Pizzo, *Tampa Town, 1824–1886: The Cracker Village with the Latin Accent* (Tampa: Hurricane House, 1968), 50.

6. Mormino and Pizzo, *Tampa*, 31–32; Rothchild, *Up for Grabs*, 66–68.

Tony Pizzo have written, “mythologically rather than historically, the Gaspar legend marks the ‘Americanization’ of Florida.” His pirating career between 1783 and 1821 coincides precisely with the Second Spanish Period in Florida history, and his supposed death in December 1821 occurred just months after Florida’s title was transferred to the United States. Such dates are simply too historically significant to be arbitrary.⁷

Linchpins as they are for Florida’s Spanish historical narrative, Gaspar and his men were neither the sole nor the last vestiges of Latin culture in the Tampa Bay area. In fact, throughout the nineteenth century, the area was inhabited by a fluctuating, polyglot society comprised of not only European and American whites and non-whites, but of Cuban fishermen, Amerindians, Black Amerindians, and *mestizos* (the Spanish word for people of mixed European and Amerindian descent). Still, as historian C. Vann Woodward argued, the American South in the last decades of the nineteenth century saw the rise of a new merchant or professional class that was capitalist, nearly exclusively white and committed to white supremacy.⁸ Turn-of-the-century Tampa society fits nicely into Woodward’s model, as one led by this newly developing white merchant-class, elite at least by Tampa standards, that sought to promote not only the area but its own interests. This group believed that a non-white, non-English speaking founding generation simply would not do. Thus, these Tampans took it upon themselves to sweep the city’s seemingly questionable past under the rug and rewrite its history. To do so, they obscured the facts that the Tampa Bay area was not part of the plantation South, that the Civil War allegiances of Tampans were actually greatly divided and sometimes shifting, and that Cuban immigrants accounted for much of the area’s late nineteenth-century economic development.⁹ Instead, as historian W. Fitzhugh Brundage has noted about Gilded Age whites throughout the South, they began the process of making “Southerner” synonymous with “white Southerner” by instituting Jim Crow racial proscriptions, fully embracing the New South trinity of industrialization, white supremacy, and Lost Cause mythology, and appropriating public spaces for use to assert Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. Monuments, pageants and parades like the Gasparilla Parade all played important roles in this effort.¹⁰

With Gaspar’s symbolic death, the Tampa Bay area historical landscape was cleared so that a New South city might rise unimpeded. White Tampans embraced a white Southern past, creating aspects of it that did not previously exist. Furthermore, early twentieth-century white Tampans gained confidence in their New South identity in part because what they perceived as a Spanish threat in the nearby Caribbean had recently been neutralized. In 1898, Tampa was the staging ground for the U.S. invasion of Cuba during the short-lived Spanish-American War. The island’s Spanish defenders quickly

7. Rothchild, *Up for Grabs*, 66–68; Mormino and Pizzo, *Tampa*, 31–32.

8. See C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877–1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951).

9. See Gregory Jason Bell, “‘An Island in the South’: The Tampa Bay Area as a Cultural Borderland, 1513–1904,” PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2014.

10. William Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2005), 14–15.

succumbed to the invading force, and the resulting treaty forced Spain to divulge itself of its Caribbean colonies, Cuba being the crown jewel among them. With this victory, the United States actuated its Monroe Doctrine (issued just two years after Gaspar supposedly met his fate) by ridding the Caribbean of the general threat that Spain had long posed most specifically to Florida. This threat removed, Floridians were free to celebrate with impunity their Spanish and Cuban connections, and Tampa responded relatively quickly with the Gasparilla Parade.¹¹

Pride in the Tampa Bay area's place in history required considerable historical invention. Anthropologist Andre-Marcel d'Ans once wrote that a legend such as Gaspar's "talks to us like an open book of the society that has given birth to it and keeps it alive." By honoring Gaspar, Tampan's celebrated not only the area's Spanish past, which in their minds spanned some three centuries from Hernando de Soto's visit to the area in 1539 until Gaspar's defeat, but the Americanization of Tampa in 1821 and the ultimate ousting of the Spanish from the American sphere in 1898. By 1904, Tampan's felt safe in celebrating all of these things because Spain's role in the region had been reduced in their minds to a romantic historical episode. A non-threatening Spanish culture thus became appealing in Tampa.¹²

Such commemorations were not unique to Tampa. As detailed by historian Patricia Limerick, this late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century "business of romanticizing the Spanish past" was occurring in many formerly Spanish locales, especially in the American Southwest. It was during these years, writes Limerick, that "the doings of the conquistadores . . . acquired a grandeur and glory denied them" in their own time.¹³ Further, in her study of the historical memory of the California gold rush, historian Susan Johnson has identified "a variant of what has been called 'imperialist nostalgia,' by which agents of colonialism yearn for 'what they themselves have transformed.' Romantic memories of a dashing, but defeated [Hispanic opponent] reflect back on his presumably equally dashing" conqueror.¹⁴ Although an extreme example of this type of nostalgia, such a reflection impelled Adolf Hitler to preserve the Jewish Quarter in Prague's Old Town so that it might be used to celebrate Germanic and Aryan superiority. Likewise, Tampa's controlled celebration of its "colorful and appealing" Spanish past actually served to remind celebrants not only of the superiority of white Americans but of their now seemingly steadfast control over the Tampa Bay area and its future development.¹⁵

When white Tampan's held their first Gasparilla celebration, they were more than simply celebrating the defeat of the Spanish or the Americanization of Tampa. They were whitening local history by revising it to delete or minimize most aspects of the

11. See Woodward, *Origins of the New South*; d'Ans, "The Legend of Gasparilla."

12. d'Ans, "The Legend of Gasparilla."

13. Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1988), 255–56.

14. Susan Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: Norton, 2001), 49.

15. Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest*, 256.

Tampa Bay area's non-white, non-Southern, non-Protestant, un-American, and thus supposedly unsavory, past. As Mormino and Pizzo put it, Gaspar's romantic exit created a more suitable backdrop for the founding of modern Tampa than "the reality of Cuban and half-breed Indian fishermen wrestling a living from the waters off the Florida coast." Along with the elimination of Cubans and *mestizos* from the narrative, they also minimized the importance of Amerindians and *maroons* (the Spanish term for runaway slaves) in the area's history. In short, by design, Tampans generally forgot their history.¹⁶

The tolerant threads of multiculturalism, previously weaved together by frontier necessities and the mutual desire for *Cuba Libre*, then unraveled. By the turn of the century, in the absence of patriotic solidarity, ethnic distinctions hardened into racialized ethnic divisions. Despite the continued multiculturalism of the Tampa Bay area, such external pressures led to increased segregation.¹⁷ Local whites embraced Jim Crow segregation after the war and enforced it with intimidation, violence, and exclusion against their non-white neighbors. Even in Ybor City and West Tampa, Hispanic bastions against Jim Crow, residents gradually bowed to New South segregationist pressures.¹⁸

Politics is destiny, and by it white Americans soon took control of the Bay area. The Spanish-American War, the implementation of Jim Crow, and the coming of age of a post-Civil War generation of native Tampans led to a turn-of-the-century shift in Tampa politics from a multi-ethnic, multi-party, civic elite to a predominantly white, Democrat, civic elite. Although in 1896, Hispanics sat on the Tampa City Council, by 1904 the council was exclusively white American. Echoing the situation throughout the South, Tampa's non-whites had lost political power. Soon, local blacks would lose suffrage rights entirely, even in municipal elections.¹⁹

White Tampans, by 1903 firmly in control of much of the area's wealth and political power, felt secure enough to celebrate and commemorate their superiority through the construction of a historical narrative that incorporated the Bay area's multicultural past while emphasizing a Southernized trope. The invention of this trope for the Tampa Bay area was hastened by the rapid growth of Florida tourism and the lack of physical

16. Mormino and Pizzo, *Tampa*, 31–32.

17. Susan D. Greenbaum, *More than Black: Afro-Cubans in Tampa* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 16–17, 104–5, 111.

18. Philip Durham and Everett L. Jones, *The Negro Cowboys* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 223; Joe Knetsch and Nick Wynne, *Florida in the Spanish American War* (Charleston: History Press, 2011), 132–34; Pam Iorio, "Colorless Primaries: Tampa's White Municipal Party," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (2001): 301; Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 62, 69, 71–72; Robert P. Ingalls, "Lynching and Establishment Violence in Tampa, 1858–1935," *Journal of Southern History* 53, no. 4 (1987): 625; Greenbaum, *More than Black*, 109–10, 120–21, 126.

19. Lucy D. Jones, "Tampa's Lafayette Street Bridge: Building a New South City," (master's thesis, University of South Florida, 2006), 8, 38, n95; Glenda Alice Rabby, David H. Jackson, Jr., and Clarence Taylor, "Forum," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (2001): 392; See Iorio, "Colorless Primaries," 297–318.

reminders of the area's past. The Spanish-American War having rekindled an American nostalgic passion for the era of Spanish New World colonization, travel guide authors noted and local boosters bemoaned the fact that Tampa had little to offer in the form of historical tourism.²⁰ In a successful marketing ploy, the Tampa Bay Hotel's management transformed a stately, ancient, live oak tree on the hotel property into the De Soto Oak. Guests could sip cold drinks and have their photos taken in the shade of the very tree under which Hernando de Soto supposedly (yet erroneously) conversed with Amerindian chiefs almost four centuries prior.²¹ This "spice of romantic adventure," notes historian André-Marcel d'Ans, greatly benefited the hotel but did little to entice guests off the hotel grounds and into the city itself.²²

What the city needed was an event that would attract tourists, permit local whites to celebrate the recent U.S. victory over Spain, celebrate their own social, political, and economic superiority over other races and ethnicities, and yet incorporate the area's multicultural past and appeal to its Hispanic population without challenging the city's new white orthodoxy. The Gasparilla Parade served the purpose. It started in 1904 with organizers envisioning a parade based on "pirates, pillage, and plunder." They then recruited "co-conspirators," all members of Tampa's white elite, who secretly planned and executed it. On May 4, twenty-six mounted and masked "pirates" interrupted a speech by Mayor James McKay, Jr., and demanded the city's surrender. McKay, recognizing some of the men behind the masks, good-naturedly acquiesced, making the first "invasion" a success. Word quickly spread, and the parade became formalized and grew in planning and scope. Tampa's white elite formed a private club they dubbed Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla.²³ Only members could plan and participate in the parade, which they designed, as historian David Goldfield argues, to accomplish "the intersection of history and memory [to] create traditions." White Tampons assembled the Gasparilla Parade to "formalize and institutionalize" local history as posturing a nostalgic event that would celebrate a cultural counter narrative to confirm their power and authority.²⁴ The parade, notes d'Ans, sought "to bridge the social and ethnic gap that split the city." By dressing as Latin pirates and distributing trinkets, the Krewe offered

20. Alpheus Hyatt Verrill, *Romantic and Historic Florida* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1936), 160; Clifton Johnson, *Highways and Byways of Florida* (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 167.

21. Greenbaum, *More than Black*, 98–99; Edward E. Baptist, *Creating an Old South: Middle Florida's Plantation Frontier before the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 260–61; John T. Foster, Jr., and Sarah Whitmer Foster, *Beechers, Stowes, and Yankee Strangers: The Transformation of Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), 93; Stetson Kennedy, *Palmetto Country* (Tallahassee: Florida A&M University Press, 1989), 109; Jonathan Hart, "Haunted by Spain: The Past and Identities in English and French America," <http://www.interamerica.de/volume-4-2/hart/>; Frank Parker Stockbridge and John Holliday Perry, *So This Is Florida* (Jacksonville: John H. Perry Publishing, 1938), 166–74.

22. d'Ans, "The Legend of Gasparilla."

23. Charles Nelson, "Tampa's Ring Tournament," *Tampa Bay History* 26, no. 1 (2012): 26–27; Donald Brenham McKay, ed., *Pioneer Florida* (Tampa: Southern Publishing, 1959), 3:27.

24. David Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War: The American South and Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 3; See Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966); Baptist, *Creating an Old South*, 250, 256.

an inversion ritual that symbolically redistributed wealth to a predominantly non-white population. Celebrating and romanticizing the life of José Gaspar offered an inversion narrative writ large, obscuring the very real marginalization of the Caribbean's human legacy in Tampa – Hispanics and blacks.²⁵

Soon, white Tampanans also used the Gasparilla Parade to create a strong Southern identity for the Bay area based on pillars of white supremacy and Lost Cause mythology. Because Gaspar was reportedly a slave owner, parade organizers deemed it thematically fitting to have floats depicting antebellum plantation life, complete with white owners and happy, smiling slaves. Later, an Uncle Remus float perpetuated the myth of the contented slave until at least the 1950s.²⁶ As a new generation of Tampanans witnessed such spectacles, the seemingly dissatisfying multicultural history of the area was gradually expunged or sanitized, replaced by what journalist Edward Kosner characterized as “fairytale of sleepy time down South.”²⁷ This imagination of an Old South in the Tampa Bay area gave whites a sense of tradition and continuity by creating their history and then using their positions of power to disseminate it. By this, notes Goldfield, “they erected a legend to live by and for.” They also embraced the antebellum South's social order so as to maintain “the social relations implied” in that order.²⁸ This supports historian Christopher Phillips's argument that acts of commemoration became means of dealing with the “racial and ethnic pluralism” that challenged white mastery by providing “a southernized narrative . . . that transcended the immediate celebration . . . to achieve a fuller inclusion: cultural identification with the Old South.”²⁹

The efforts of Tampa's white civic elite to revise history, thereby transforming Tampa into a New South city, proved remarkably successful. Today, many Tampanans believe that their city strongly supported the Confederate cause, and that José Gaspar was a historical figure whose life and death are worth commemorating. However, recognizing that the parade was originally a smokescreen designed to hide the truth that Tampa was founded by a polyglot society that did not generally consider itself Southern might help clear the air and have positive ramifications in a geographic area still struggling to bridge the racial divide that Tampa's turn-of-the-twentieth-century white civic elite helped to increase.³⁰ If anything, modern-day parade participants and spectators should be aware that they are pawns in a game purposely created over a century ago to celebrate and perpetuate white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant superiority.

25. d'Ans, “The Legend of Gasparilla.” For more on inversion rituals, see Wayne K. Durrill, “Routine of Seasons: Labor Regimes and Social Ritual in an Antebellum Plantation Community,” *Slavery and Abolition* 16, no. 2 (1995): 161–87.

26. Gary W. McDonogh, ed., *The Florida Negro: A Federal Writers' Project Legacy* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 60; Baptist, *Creating an Old South*, 250, 256; Florida Department of State, “Uncle Remus,” Division of Historical Resources, <http://fpc.dos.state.fl.us/commerce/c010887.jpg>.

27. Edward Kosner, “Manifest Disney,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 16, 2013, C7.

28. Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, 20–22, 24–25, 42.

29. Christopher Phillips, *The Civil War in the Border South* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2013), 113, 115.

30. See “Race Riots in St. Petersburg, Florida,” *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 14 (Winter 1996–1997): 35–37.

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A STAR-SHAPED CROSSROAD: FROM (COUNTERFACTUAL) HISTORIOGRAPHY TO HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION

VLADIMÍRA FONFÁROVÁ

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: fonfarova@fhs.utb.cz

ABSTRACT: In the 1970s, Hayden White stirred a heated debate about similarities between historiography and fiction. In his monographs *Metahistory* (1973) and *Tropics of Discourse* (1978), he developed a theory that from the discourse perspective, the process of writing a historiographic text and writing fiction is no different as they use the same strategies. Lubomír Doležel, in his *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History: Postmodern Stage* (2010), reacts to this theory and takes the argument further, claiming that the comparison of historiography and fiction has reached a dead end and needs to be researched from a new perspective – that of the possible worlds theory. The debate between White's and Doležel's theories re-establishes the borderline between historiography and fiction but does not provide a fully satisfying answer when it comes to distinguishing between historiography and specific genres of fiction, such as historiographic fiction. Problems also arise when using the possible worlds theory as a tool for differentiating between fiction, historiographic fiction and counterfactual historiography. Concerning the increasingly popular trend of counterfactual historiography, as defined by Niall Ferguson in his introduction to *Virtual History* (1997), this paper notes the insufficiency of Doležel's criteria for the reestablishment of the borderline between historiography and fiction.

KEYWORDS: historiography; historiographic fiction; historiographic metafiction; postmodern challenge; Canadian postmodern fiction; possible worlds; counterfactual historiography; Niall Ferguson; Margaret Atwood; Kate Pullinger; Linda Hutcheon; Lubomír Doležel; Hayden White

In 2007, Doris Lessing published her novel, *The Cleft*, the main theme of which is the fictitious gender history of men and women on Earth. In it, she presents a primitive tribe of primal women, the Females, who record their history by committing the past events to the memory of a selected few members of the community. Those are aptly called the Memories, and their role is to remember the past and transmit it orally to the second generation of the Memories. By including this very process of keeping history alive for the future generations in her novel, Lessing contributes to a decades-long debate concerning the extent to which writing history is an objective process, capable of preserving the past, as it really happened. The narrator in *The Cleft* questions objectivity by saying,

We all know that in the telling and retelling of an event . . . there will be as many accounts as there are tellers. An event should be recorded. Then it must be agreed by whoever's task it is that this version rather than that must be committed to memory . . . Whose version of events is going to be committed to memory by the Memories?¹

1. Doris Lessing, *The Cleft* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 136.

Such scepticism regarding historiography as an objective recording of past events is nothing new in the disciplines of history and literature, and Lessing's novel is just another demonstration of the dispute identified as the postmodern challenge to historiography,² popularized and spread by literary theorist and semiotician Roland Barthes and a historian and philosopher of history, Hayden White, who dealt with the issue extensively in his monograph *Metahistory* (1973) and in a series of lectures, published as *Tropics of Discourse* (1978). Lessing's quote recalls the words of Jacques Barzun:

Whereas there is one natural science, there are many histories, overlapping and contradictory, argumentative and detached, biased and ambiguous. Each viewer remakes a past in keeping with his powers of search and vision, whose defects readily show up in his work: nobody is deceived. [But] the multiplicity of historical versions does not make them all false. Rather it mirrors the character of mankind.³

Barzun subscribes to the postmodern challenge to history and questions the reliability of a historical fact by simply noting the non-existence of one true version of events, similar to what Lessing points out when describing the practice of the Memories.

Regarding the theory of literature, the most valuable contribution of both Barthes and White was a thesis that historiography is similar if not identical in its creation process with the process of writing fiction. This theory gained followers over the last four decades, among them Keith Jenkins and Alun Munslow.⁴ It also has opponents. In the Czech Republic, a notable critic of Hayden White's theory is a well-known narratologist, Lubomír Doležel, who spent a generous part of his academic career developing the semantics of possible worlds, together with Umberto Eco, Thomas G. Pavel and Marie-Laure Ryan.⁵ The main theses of his theory regarding the difference between historiography and fiction are collected in *Possible Worlds in Fiction and History: The Postmodern Stage* (2010), which serves as a main source for this paper. This paper applies Doležel's possible worlds theory to genres associated with the postmodern challenge to history, namely historiography, historiographic fiction, historiographic metafiction and counterfactual historiography,

2. This term is based on concepts described by Edward Hallet Carr in his study *What Is History* (New York: Random House, 1961), which is based on Robin George Collingwood's work *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946). Neither Collingwood nor Carr use the term *postmodern challenge*; however, the concept of it is the same as the one voiced in their works.

3. Jacques Barzun, *Clio and the Doctors: Psycho-History, Quanto-History and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), as quoted in Niall Ferguson, "Virtual History: Towards a 'Chaotic' Theory of the Past," in *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals*, ed. Niall Ferguson (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 65.

4. For further reading on the postmodern challenge to history, see Keith Jenkins, *Why History: Ethics and Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1999); Keith Jenkins, *On 'What Is History?': From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White* (London: Routledge, 1995); Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (London: Routledge, 1997).

5. See Lubomír Doležel, *Fikce a historie v období postmoderny* (Praha: Academia, 2008), 12. Even though this monograph was published both in Czech and English, there was a two-year gap between the publications and the preface and introduction of the two versions differ slightly. What I am paraphrasing here is the Czech version, as the particular reference to Thomas Pavel, Umberto Eco and Marie-Laure Ryan is not present in the English one.

and challenges its supremacy in reestablishing the borderline between historiography and fiction. Doležel's theory only partially covers and resolves the distinction between historiography and fiction when it comes to literary subgenres that have the possibility of mixing historical fact with fiction and also proves insufficient when applied to counterfactual historiography.

Terms such as *historiographic fiction* and *historiographic metafiction* resurfaced repeatedly in the second half of the twentieth century in connection to the postmodern challenge to history and have generated confusion that contributes to the argument of radical followers of Barthes's and White's theory. At the beginning of his 1966 work of structuralist narratology, Roland Barthes claimed that "there are countless forms of narrative in the world . . . ; narrative is present in myth, legend, fables . . . epics, history . . . narrative starts with the very history of mankind,"⁶ meaning that the "narratological imperialism" has transcended the boundaries between genres and deleted also the boundary between fictional narrative and historiographic narrative.⁷ In *The Tropics of Discourse*, Hayden White provides a chronological overview that proves that viewing historiography as a process of an objective record of past events is a relatively new phenomenon, introduced as late as the nineteenth century. In the course of recording history, historians inevitably encounter gaps in the knowledge of a historical event, yet these gaps rarely remain empty. According to White, a "historian must interpret his materials by filling in the gaps in his information on inferential or speculative grounds,"⁸ in other words, fill them with assumptions.⁹ Therefore, interpreting one's material pushes the historiographic text further from being a mere objective record towards narrative.

As for narrative discourse, White claims that historians choose their own style of writing history.¹⁰ He claims "there is no such thing as a single correct view of any object under study but that there are many correct views, each requiring its own style of representation."¹¹ An interpretation of a historical event enables historians to choose a particular narrative style in which to report on that event. To support this claim, White uses an example of French historians and the event of the French Revolution, which was interpreted as a romance by Jules Michelet and as a tragedy by Alexis de Tocqueville.¹² Other examples include Jacob Burckhardt, who writes historical

6. Roland Barthes, "Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative," trans. Lionel Duisit, *New Literary History* 6, no. 2 (1975): 237.

7. See Lubomír Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History: The Postmodern Stage* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 15.

8. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 51.

9. In a historiographic text, these assumptions must be clearly marked, and in order to do so, historians use what Jespersen, later Jakobson and finally Roland Barthes named as "shifters." Shifters are, in linguistic discourse, phrases that express subjectivity and are clear markers that a historian is not on firm ground. For further reading on this issue, see Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 25.

10. See White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 45.

11. White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 47.

12. See White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 59.

texts in satiric mode, and Leopold von Ranke, who writes in the mode of comedy.¹³ Referring to R. G. Collingwood's notion that "the historian was above all a story teller,"¹⁴ White's conclusion is that as far as narrative discourse goes, there is little that would differentiate historiography from fiction.

As popular as White's concept has become, it did attract opposition. Lubomír Doležel opposes White's enthusiastic refusal of borders between historiography and fiction by applying the possible worlds theory. Doležel claims that the postmodern challenge to history has reached a dead end if analyzed from the perspective of narrative discourse: "with regard to . . . the relationship between history and fiction, discourse analysis cannot support any particular answer, or rather, it can support any answer."¹⁵ However, when looking at the relationship between fiction and historiography from the perspective of the possible worlds theory, certain differences emerge, prompting Doležel to attempt to rebuild the border between the two.

HISTORIOGRAPHY VERSUS FICTION: PERSPECTIVE OF THE POSSIBLE WORLDS THEORY

Lubomír Doležel describes possible worlds as "the only worlds that human language is capable of creating or producing."¹⁶ Therefore, it is a world of written text, either fictional or non-fictional, and for the purposes of this article – historiographic. Significant differences exist between the possible world of a historiographic text and the possible world of a fictional text, and based on these differences, Doležel redefines the lost border between the two. First is a functional difference. Fictional worlds are described as "imaginary alternates of the actual world; historical worlds as cognitive models of the actual past"¹⁷ – in other words, a historical world is a reconstruction of the actual past. In his pivotal work on the possible worlds theory, *Heterocosmica* (English version 1998, Czech version 2003), Doležel clarifies the function of fictional worlds as treasure chests of fictionality in the real world and fictional texts as mediums of creating and sharing fictional worlds.¹⁸ However, the most important issue about the first criterion seems to be the cognitive value of the possible world presented; a possible world of historiography possesses cognitive value, while a possible world of fiction does not. In other words, historiography serves the purpose of informing its reader, while fiction has the function poetically described in the above-mentioned quote from *Heterocosmica*.

A second criterion identified by Doležel is basic structural differences. A fictional world can represent any imaginable world, even one that does not respect the physical laws of the actual world, i.e., a fantastic one, while a historical world is strictly limited to the physically possible.¹⁹ A third difference noted by Doležel is agential constellation.

13. See White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 67.

14. White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 83.

15. Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 18.

16. Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 30.

17. See Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 33.

18. See Lubomír Doležel, *Heterocosmica: Fikce a možné světy* (Praha: Karolinum, 2003), 41.

19. See Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 35.

Fictional worlds are peopled by characters who are fictional, i.e., they did not or do not have a counterpart in the actual world, or the actual past. Historical worlds, however, can only be peopled by characters who had or have their counterpart in the actual past.²⁰ The last difference according to Doležel lies in the way fictional and historical worlds deal with their incompleteness. Both historical and fictional worlds are incomplete (as are all possible worlds), since writing a complete possible world of fiction or history would require writing an impossibly long text.²¹ This is reminiscent of Hayden White's concept of gaps in knowledge. Both fictional and historical worlds have gaps. In a fictional world, the gaps are of no importance and are therefore ignored; for example, it is of no importance to the development of the plot to know the colour of Offred's eyes in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985). Gaps in historical worlds are different. They emanate from the limits of human knowledge and cannot be arbitrarily completed, as "the construction of the historical world can proceed only from reliable evidence."²² If there is no existing evidence that something happened, a gap must remain in the historical world that can be filled with an assumption. However, these assumptions must be treated as White described in *The Tropics of Discourse*, i.e., with shifters that clearly mark that the historian is no longer relying on facts but on personal interpretation.

HISTORIOGRAPHY VERSUS HISTORIOGRAPHIC FICTION

When establishing differences between historiography and fiction, Doležel's criteria serve a purpose. However, when taking into consideration a historical world and a possible world of historiographic fiction, certain problems arise. If a fictional world is an imaginary alternative to an actual world and a historical world a cognitive model of an actual past, it is feasible to claim that a possible world of historiographic fiction can just as well be a model of the actual past. The writer and the historian can have the same approach when creating the possible worlds, both of them struggling to create a cognitive model of the actual world that would be as close to conveying a story based on reliable sources as possible. True, the primary function of a historical novel is not a cognitive one, but if the author of such a novel relies on documented facts and well-performed research when creating, it would be wrong to disregard its cognitive value and claim it is non-existent. As for the difference in basic structure, a world of historiographic fiction, just like a historical world, is limited to only the physically possible. If this condition is not fulfilled, such a possible world becomes a world of a different genre than that of historiographic fiction, e.g., fantasy, science fiction, fairy tale, or historiographic metafiction. As for the third criterion, agential constellation, a huge potential exists for historiographic fiction to be different from historiography. Doležel claims that the major difference between the historical world

20. See Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 36. When discussing agential constellation, Doležel does not mention events as agents, only characters.

21. See Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 37.

22. Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 39.

and the world of historiographic fiction is that even though both of them include characters that are the counterparts of real people from the past, historiographic fiction has the liberty of peopling its world also with fictional characters. He even goes as far as calling it a “defining feature of this genre.”²³ The historical world does not have this option – it must be strictly peopled only by representations of people who existed in the actual past. However, if historiographic fiction decides to ignore this possibility and create a possible world of historiographic fiction peopled only by characters who have their counterparts in the actual past, such an act itself would not make such writing automatically historiography, as is suggested by the following example. Canadian postmodern novelist Kate Pullinger wrote *A Mistress of Nothing* (2009), drawing its inspiration from a segment of life of a celebrated Victorian writer and traveller, Lucie Duff Gordon, author of *Letters from Egypt* (1865). In the novel, Pullinger did not allow the mixing of real characters with fictional ones, and her novel is peopled only by characters who are representatives of those existing in the actual past, centering the story around Lucie’s maid, Sally Naldrett. Yet, this alone does not make her novel less of a historiographic fiction. In addition, the author willingly admits in an “Author’s Note” that she has altered the timescale to suit her purposes and has telescoped three years, 1863–1865, down to one, and reduced Lucie Duff Gordon’s two trips home to one.²⁴ This playing with the timescale and adjustment of the events might just as well form a basis for another criterion helpful in distinguishing a possible world of historiography and a possible world of historiographic fiction – a constellation of events. Naturally, historiographic fiction disposes of unlimited freedom regarding the inclusion of events that do not have a counterpart in the actual past or are not documented by any reliable sources. Many of these are the tissue with which the author chooses to fill the gaps and therefore are material for the fourth criterion – incompleteness. However, if the author decides to use only the events that have counterparts in the actual past and change those to serve aesthetic purpose, it is not a violation of Doležel’s third criterion of agential constellation; yet such writing cannot be called historiography. Certainly, the constellation of events can then be regarded as a helpful criterion with establishing the line between historiography and historiographic fiction.

The last criterion that, according to Doležel, reestablishes the boundary between fiction and history is incompleteness. As stated, possible worlds are inevitably incomplete, containing gaps. The gaps in a possible world of fiction are different from those in a possible world of history. Doležel claims that, similarly to the freedom authors have when it comes to agential constellation, writers of historiographic fiction have freedom to complete the gaps created by the limits of human knowledge with fabrication, while a historian cannot go further than using assumptions that are properly acknowledged in a historiographic text.²⁵ This is the same manner of filling the gaps that White described, and as for a proper marking of such an assumption in a

23. Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 36.

24. See Kate Pullinger, *Mistress of Nothing* (Toronto: McArthur, 2009), 250.

25. See Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 39.

historiographic text, White used the term *shifters*. However, authors of historiographic fiction can also use assumptions, based on their research, similarly to historians, although they are not obliged to use shifters. Authors therefore can weave their text seamlessly, mixing a proven fact with an assumption, or a fabrication. In case an author decides not to use a fabrication, the difference between historiography and historiographic fiction seems to be rather a formal one. Thus, when Doležel's criteria are applied to historiographic fiction, they tend to lose their clarity.

HISTORIOGRAPHY VERSUS HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new, postmodern, approach to historiographic fiction. This trend embraced the possibility to "fictionalize history, but by doing so [postmodern authors] imply that history itself may be a form of fiction."²⁶ Doležel adds that as a part of this trend, postmodernists "cultivate a radically nonessentialist semantics, which allows them to change even the most fundamental, individuating properties of historical persons, events, settings."²⁷ Where historiographic fiction strives to avoid contradictions between their versions of historical figures and the familiar facts of history, postmodern historiographic fiction tactlessly contradicts them.²⁸ This postmodern trend of creating a contradictory historiographic fiction was defined and described by a Canadian critic, Linda Hutcheon, in her monograph *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988). There she operates with a specific term to be applied to such writing, historiographic metafiction, which, according to her, is postmodern fiction that deconstructs the myth of objectivity of history, by implying that history itself is a human construct, a discourse.²⁹ Doležel understands the genre in a more specific way. According to him, a perfect example of such a genre is a novel that reconstructs fictional history, a historical event or events that have absolutely no counterpart in the actual history. As an example he identifies Antonia Susan Byatt's *Possession*, a novel reconstructing the history of two fictional Victorian poets.³⁰ In this paper I would apply the wider definition designed by Linda Hutcheon, as it enables the inclusion in the genre of a wide range of postmodern novels that are based on events from the actual past, but enrich the possible world by adding counterfactual or fantastic elements to emphasize the difference between its possible world and the historical world. It would be misleading not to include into the genre of historiographic metafiction novels such as Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* (1996), which is based on a true story of an Irish immigrant to Canada, Grace Marks, an infamous person in Canadian history – a convicted murderess. Although based on real events, the novel is extremely playful and deconstructive when it comes to the reliability of historical facts it presents.

26. Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2004), 96.

27. Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 87.

28. See McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, 17.

29. See Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988), 92–93.

30. See Doležel, *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, 99.

The application of Doležel's criteria to historiographic metafiction, a genre whose authors do not care about the cognitive value of the facts they present and therefore they deliberately break the rules of truthful representation of historical events (or the illusion of it), looks as follows. As for the functional difference, a possible world of historiographic metafiction has a similar function to a fictional world; its main purpose is to create an imaginary alternative to the world of the actual past and to add certain twists and turns in order to play with the material. It is not possible to generalize to such an extent, but most probably, the cognitive function of a possible world of historiographic metafiction would be extremely limited, if existent at all. When it comes to the difference in basic structure, historiographic metafiction is allowed more freedom in comparison to historiographic fiction or historiography. Given that authors of such fiction do not attempt to create a possible world similar or identical to a historical world, this criterion is truly viable – the authors of historiographic metafiction often use the possibility of undermining the reliability and truthfulness of historical facts by creating a possible world with fantastic elements. A good example of such is *Alias Grace*, which features a ghost taking events into her transparent hands by possessing the narrator's body and committing the murder of which the historical Grace Marks was accused.

Regarding the agential constellation, since historiographic metafiction is in its nature and function practically identical with the actual fiction, this criterion is again a viable one, as historiographic metafiction demonstrates a strong tendency to include characters that do not have counterparts in history. However, similarly to criteria demonstrating the difference between historiography and historiographic fiction, agential constellation should not be limited only to characters that inhabit the possible world. An additional criterion of a constellation of events might be added. This criterion would cover the intentional changes to events that have counterparts in the actual past and would serve as an additional possibility to establish the difference between historiography and genres of fiction. As for the last criterion, incompleteness, when filling in the existing gaps in human knowledge, historiographic metafiction has a strong tendency to play with them and fill them in any possible way, often unrealistic, fantastic or deliberately historically impossible. Authors of historiographic metafiction invent events that could have never happened, embed them in an otherwise reliable possible world and as such emphasize their ironic treatment of the historical facts.

HISTORIOGRAPHY VERSUS ALTERNATIVE HISTORIOGRAPHY

When it comes to alternative, or counterfactual, historiography, there are many opposing views. The majority of voices disregards this field as unimportant, or downright redundant. As Michael Oakeshott claimed, "history is never what . . . might have taken place, but solely what the evidence obliges us to conclude did take place."³¹ On the other hand, Niall Ferguson tries to determine the rules for alternative historiography that would distance it from the realm of pure fiction and give it a

31. Michael Oakeshott, *Experience and Its Modes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 139.

solid scientific background. In his introduction to *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (1997), he successfully describes why alternative history should be taken seriously, claiming that “not everything in *If . . .* is devoid of historical value.”³² Discrediting historical evidence with the words of R. G. Collingwood (“all historical evidence is merely a reflection of ‘thought’”³³) and Patrick Joyce (“history is never present to us in anything but a discursive form”³⁴), Ferguson partially revives, partially complements Hayden White’s argumentation with the thought that “the most the historian could . . . do was to ‘reconstruct’ or ‘re-enact’ past thoughts, under the inevitable influence of his own unique experience.”³⁵ Adding the problem of bias in the picture, Ferguson claims that since objectivity of historical knowledge is a myth, why not take seriously also what could well have happened and what was well possible as a future development at a particular moment in history. Of course, it is possible to write counterfactual history as a fantastic tale and build upon, for example, the question, “what would have happened if, during the battle of Waterloo, the cannons shot confetti instead of canon balls.” However, Ferguson dismisses this treatment of alternative history and strictly limits the questions to be explored to those both relevant and plausible. He takes the limits for what should be considered the relevant counterfactual history even further and thus also defeats the arguments of those who claimed that alternative history should not be ever considered a relevant field:

We should consider as plausible or probable *only those alternatives which we can show on the basis of contemporary evidence that contemporaries actually considered.*

. . . [W]hat we call the past was once the future; and the people of the past no more knew what their future would be than we can know our own. . . . [P]eople in the past have tended to consider more than one possible future. And although no more than one of these actually has come about, at the moment before it came about it was no more real . . . than the others. . . . [I]f all history is the history of (recorded) thought, . . . we must attach equal significance to *all* the outcomes thought about.³⁶

When applying Doležel’s theory of the possible worlds to Ferguson’s concept of counterfactual history, the analysis looks as follows. Taking into consideration Doležel’s first criterion of functional difference, a possible world of counterfactual historiography cannot be called a cognitive model of the actual past, since it is describing a situation that never came to be. More suiting would be to define it as an imaginary alternative of an actual past, and therefore an intersection between the definition of a possible world of fiction and that of historiography. As for the second criterion of basic structural differences, a possible world of counterfactual historiography (as defined by Ferguson) is bound by the same limitations as a possible

32. Ferguson, “Virtual History,” 11.

33. Robin George Collingwood, “The Nature and Aims of a Philosophy of History,” in *Essays in the Philosophy of History*, by Robin George Collingwood, edited by William Debbins (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965), quoted in Niall Ferguson, “Virtual History,” 48.

34. Patrick Joyce, “History and Postmodernism,” *Past and Present*, no. 133 (1991): 204–13, quoted in Ferguson, “Virtual History,” 65.

35. Ferguson, “Virtual History,” 48–49.

36. Ferguson, “Virtual History,” 86. Italics in the original.

world of historiography. Therefore, it must abide by the physical laws of the actual world, which disallows cannons shooting confetti during a battle. However, as stated, a possible world of historiographic fiction is also bound by the same limitations.

As for the third criterion, agential constellation, the situation of counterfactual historiography is the same as that of historiography: both possible worlds can be peopled only by characters that have their counterparts in the actual past. Even though a possible world of counterfactual historiography is not a cognitive model of an actual past, it cannot include characters for whom there is no actual evidence. Taking into consideration incompleteness, the fourth criterion of Doležel's theory, a possible world of counterfactual historiography equals those possible worlds of fiction and of historiography – it is incomplete. Yet, since it includes events that could well have happened, but in fact did not, a possible world of such historiography is much closer to a possible world of fiction or historiographic metafiction. The use of shifters would be problematic, as we could only hardly use a phrase that points to an assumption in the text, while the whole text is an assumption. Therefore, it seems that if Doležel's theory is applied to a possible world of a counterfactual historiography, such an historiography moves closer to fiction.

CONCLUSION

A possible world of historiography can be created only by such events and characters that have their representative in the actual past. In contrast, in historiographic fiction the authors have more liberty in dealing with the gaps in human knowledge about the past and can make any assumptions or fabrications they please and sell them as real. In historiographic metafiction, authors flamboyantly abandon the attempts to make reliable assumptions, which would be based on painstaking research, and as a result they embrace the scope of possibilities and the ultimate freedom with which the genre provides them. Finally, in a possible world of counterfactual historiography, the author constructs an imaginary alternative to a development in the past. However, this particular development in the past never happened.

When applying Doležel's theory of possible worlds to historiography, fiction, historiographic fiction, historiographic metafiction and counterfactual historiography, certain differences appear. The original four criteria work when applied to historiography vs. fiction and historiography vs. historiographic metafiction. Nevertheless, with historiographic fiction, the difference between such fiction and historiography is not necessarily an obvious one. Considering there are historiographic novels that do attempt to reconstruct the actual past as closely and precisely as possible, using extensive research and accepting the limitations that a historian must accept, the four criteria do not build a reliable borderline between the two types of possible worlds. In such a case, the difference between historiography and historiographic fiction is rather a formal one – historiography uses shifters when filling the gaps in human knowledge with an historian's assumptions; historiographic fiction does not and embeds the assumptions seamlessly. When it comes to a specific treatment of historical

knowledge – counterfactual historiography, as defined by Niall Ferguson – Doležel's criteria also lose their clarity. When taking into consideration Ferguson's rather strict definition, counterfactual historiography cannot be simply considered a history-inspired fairy tale answering a countless amount of "what if" questions. Applying Ferguson's limitations, counterfactual historiography explores one of the few possible outcomes of the past events that were plausible and possible at a certain moment in the past and therefore, regarding its cognitive value, it cannot be put in the same position as fiction. However, when applying Doležel's criteria to such historiography, a possible world of counterfactual historiography is much closer to fiction.

Doležel's careful reconstruction of the borderline between historiography and fiction, which Hayden White and his followers shattered several decades ago, is for sure sufficient for the distinction between historiography and fiction, historiographic metafiction and such historical novels that fully use the potential of fiction and mix fictional characters with characters with counterparts in the actual past. It is also sufficient for such counterfactual historiography that does not respect Niall Ferguson's limitations. Nevertheless, it becomes insufficient with such borderline genres as carefully-researched historical novels that accept the limitations of the accessibility of historical documents and Ferguson's carefully outlined counterfactual historiography.

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ANTEBELLUM URBAN AMERICA AND SENSATIONAL NOVELS

JOZEF PECINA

University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies, Nám. J. Herdu 2, 917 01 Trnava, Slovak Republic. Email: jozef.pecina@ucm.sk

ABSTRACT: Between 1800 and 1850, American cities grew at a remarkable pace. But since the cities' public service departments were not yet sufficiently organized, this rapid urbanization was accompanied by a number of negative phenomena such as increases in prostitution, crime, and riots of various kinds, as well as an increase in the disparity of wealth. The city streets were dirty and mean, rife with strange characters with strange intentions. Among the first to depict the evils of urbanization in American literature were George Lippard and George Thompson, authors of sensational novels in the 1840s. This article examines the depictions and roles of various urban phenomena in their works.

KEYWORDS: American literature; urbanization; sensational novels; city mysteries; crime; prostitution; ethnic diversity

The first half of the nineteenth century brought immense changes to the United States. The growth of cities, the transportation revolution, the boom in factory production, a widespread increase in literacy or the birth of mass media resulted in an antebellum America markedly different from its colonial predecessor. This paper explores the literary treatment of various phenomena of rapid urbanization by American authors of sensational novels, George Lippard and George Thompson.

Towns and cities emerged quite early during the colonial period, but they tended to be small and many of them performed only limited urban functions. Only by the end of the eighteenth century did the two largest American cities, New York and Philadelphia, surpass 60,000 in population. Most Americans still inhabited rural settings.¹ However, urbanization on an unprecedented scale occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century, fueled not only by Americans migrating to cities in search of work, but by European immigrants. Ethnic, racial and religious diversity became commonplace in large American cities, not only along the east coast but in the interior, especially along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. By the start of the Civil War, New York, the largest metropolis on the continent, had a population of 800,000, while Philadelphia surpassed half a million. Seven more American cities contained at least 100,000 residents.²

Existing resources and infrastructure proved no match for such sizeable and quick growth. Antebellum cities tended to be disorderly and unplanned. The housing resources

1. See Gary B. Nash, "The Social Evolution of Preindustrial American Cities, 1700–1820," in *The Making of Urban America*, ed. Raymond A. Mohl (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997), 15.

2. See Raymond A. Mohl, introduction to *The Making of Urban America*, ed. Raymond A. Mohl (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997), 95.

were limited and under constant pressure from tens of thousands of newly arriving immigrants who occupied densely packed tenements. Already at the beginning of the century in poor neighborhoods of Philadelphia, there were families living “in rooms with shattered furniture, in tenements almost in ruins, laying on the straw with a few rags to cover them.”³ The cities grew in size and for the first time, citizens lost physical contact with each other. As David Reynolds notes, “the city was suddenly an overwhelming place, filled with hidden horrors and savage struggles as fascinating as they were appalling.”⁴ Public sanitation was almost non-existent, and virtually every large city experienced regular outbreaks of various diseases resulting from unsanitary living. According to Martin Melosi, even as late as 1860, “Washingtonians dumped garbage and slop into alleys and streets. Pigs roamed freely, slaughterhouses spewed noxious fumes and effluent, and vermin infested dwellings – including the White House.”⁵ Furthermore, growing cities were dangerous places to live, since crime and violence were widespread. Murders, thefts, rapes and riots were rampant, and police forces were not yet properly organized. Those who were expected to solve such ills of urbanization – the municipal authorities – proved outmanned and largely ineffective.⁶ Therefore, the negative urban phenomena usually associated with American cities in the last few decades of the nineteenth century were already an essential part of the urban landscape before the Civil War.

In the first half of the century, themes of urbanization were largely absent from the literary works of American authors. The first to reflect on these new phenomena were authors of sensational novels in 1840s, and the American city became the principal setting for their works. The first novels of the sensational sub-genre, referred to by various scholars either as “city mysteries” or “urban exposé novels,” appeared in Europe at the beginning of the decade, when Eugene Sue’s *Mystères de Paris* (1842) and G. M. W. Reynolds’s *The Mysteries of London* (1844) were published. Such European literature quickly inspired a great number of American authors, and by the 1850s city mysteries had become the most popular genre in the country. Leading the way was George Lippard’s *The Quaker City; or, The Monks of Monk Hall: A Romance of Philadelphia Life, Mysteries, and Crime* (1845) which sold 60,000 copies within the first year, becoming America’s most popular novel until eclipsed by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in 1852.

Since city mystery novels were cheap, they were widely available and were embraced by the increasingly educated working classes. Their authors often took the side of the oppressed and poor, exposing what was seen as the decadence of the city elites. The most popular settings were New York and Philadelphia, the two largest cities in the country,

3. Nash, “The Social Evolution of Preindustrial American Cities,” 22.

4. David Reynolds, *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 82.

5. Martin V. Melosi, *The Sanitary City: The Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008), 12.

6. See Mohl, introduction, 9.

though by the end of the 1840s, nearly every American city had its own mysteries.⁷ Besides Lippard, other popular writers of city mysteries were George Thompson, Ned Buntline and George Foster.⁸

Best-selling author George Lippard was a remarkable figure. Besides being a successful writer he was a social reformer who founded the Brotherhood of Union, one of the first labor organizations in the country. He also wrote what he called “legends” of the American Revolution, fictionalized accounts of revolutionary events that glorified important figures of the era. One particular legend had a cultural impact that even Lippard could not have foretold. Nearly every visitor of Philadelphia’s Independence Hall believes that on the Fourth of July 1776, the Liberty Bell was rung after a small boy running from the Hall gave signal to an old man in the bell tower to celebrate the signing of America’s most important document. The story is a myth fabricated by Lippard, but it made the Liberty Bell one of the most revered American historical artifacts.

The plot of Lippard’s *The Quaker City* is based on an actual incident when Philadelphian Singleton Mercer killed a man who seduced his sister on a promise of marriage. Leslie Fiedler succinctly summarizes the plot: “the archetypal bugaboos of the popular mind – malicious hunchbacks, sinister Jews, hulking deaf and dumb Negroes, corrupt clergymen and bloated bankers – murder, rape, carouse, and collapse finally into drunken stupors inside or beneath a gothic whorehouse, whose lowest level is a stagnant sewer.”⁹ The Monk Hall from the title of the novel is this “gothic whorehouse” where much of the action of the novel takes place. It is a six-story mansion (three stories being below ground) originally located in the outskirts of the city but soon swallowed by it:

with a printing office on one side and a stereotype foundry on the other, while on the opposite side of the way, a mass of miserable frame houses seemed about to commit suicide and fling themselves madly into the gutter, and in the distance a long line of dwellings, offices, and factories looming in broken perspective looked as if they wanted to shake hands across the narrow street.¹⁰

Monk Hall mirrors the society of Philadelphia, and social relations between the city elites and lower classes are condensed here into a single house.¹¹ In the upper stories, the wealthy gather for their drunken revelries. Bankers, lawyers, newspaper owners, even clergymen or, “the monks of the Monk Hall” meet here in a “club room” every night at

7. Since sensational novels were printed on cheap paper and intended for rapid reading and disposal, a great number of them disappeared. Those which survived are often available only in rare books rooms of American libraries. Only in recent decades have Lippard’s *The Quaker City* and George Thompson’s *Venus in Boston* and *City Crimes* been reprinted.

8. Sensational novels, and later pulp stories, inspired comic strips which eventually led to the development of comics in the following century. See Michaela Weiss, “From Superman to Maus: Jews in American Comics,” in *Theories and Practices: Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Anglophone Studies, September 7–8, 2011*, ed. Roman Tručník, Katarína Nemčoková, and Gregory Jason Bell (Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, 2012), 274.

9. Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (London: Paladin, 1970), 228.

10. George Lippard, *The Quaker City; or, The Monks of Monk Hall: A Romance of Philadelphia Life, Mystery, and Crime* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 48.

11. See Michael Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (London: Verso, 1987), 92.

banquets where they drink and gamble. In the rooms above all kinds of perversities are carried out. On the other hand, in the subterranean levels, in the Dead Vault, the Outcasts of the Quaker City have their residence. The motley crowd of thieves, murderers and prostitutes clothed in filthy rags rests here during the day but when the night comes, they leave through the secret passage for the streets of Philadelphia to beg, steal or murder. One of them (in urban vagabond slang) describes a typical day of the Quaker City's scum:

[A] party of us one Sunday arternoon, had nothin' to do, so we got up a nigger riot. We have them in Phil'delphy, once or twice a year, you know? I helped to burn a nigger church, two orphan's asylums and a school-house. And happenin' to have a pump-handle in my hand, I aksedentially hit an old nigger on the head. Konsekance wos he died. That's why they call me Pump-Handle.¹²

Besides the city's underbelly, Lippard also depicts the ineffectiveness of the local police, when a trap is to be set to prevent a theft and a murder of an old widow but twelve policemen arrive too late and find only the old lady's corpse. By describing such evils, Lippard in his novel presents his own vision of urban life. He portrays Philadelphia as being filled with horrors and populated by depraved aristocrats engaged in scandalous activities. *The Quaker City* and other city mystery novels reflected the fears and fantasies of America's lower classes, which had to face rapid industrialization and urbanization.¹³

Another author of city mysteries, George Thompson, was not as successful as Lippard (in terms of sales) but was extremely prolific. Over a period of fifteen years he wrote more than one hundred novels, most of them with urban settings. *City Crimes* (1849) is one of a handful of his works available for the present-day reader. A large part of the novel is set in New York and through the eyes of the novel's protagonist, Frank Sydney, who roams the streets by night in various disguises, the reader becomes intimately acquainted with the bleak urban landscape. At the novel's start, Sydney faces a robbery attempt by a desperate and filthy man. A moment later he is addressed by a young girl who turns out to be a prostitute. And, since Sydney is "a young man of an ardent and impulsive temperament," it is no surprise that he falls victim to the "exposed beauties of her swelling bosom."¹⁴ In the antebellum period, prostitution became a rather regular alternative to manual labor for working-class women, and such women did not necessarily become social outcasts. Their prostitution was often understood to be a temporary means of survival and adaptation. According to Timothy J. Gilfoyle, between 1820 and 1840, prostitutes were the best-paid workers in the nineteenth century city.¹⁵

In the chapters to follow Frank encounters all kinds of people belonging to the lowest levels of New York's society. A representative sample is to be found among the residents of one particular tenement run by an Irish ruffian, including "old prostitutes, young

12. Lippard, *The Quaker City*, 482.

13. See Reynolds, *Beneath the American Renaissance*, 82.

14. George Thompson, *City Crimes*, in *Venus in Boston and Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century City Life*, ed. David S. Reynolds and Kimberly R. Gladman (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 111.

15. See Timothy J. Gilfoyle, "Strumpets and Misogynists: Brothel 'Riots' and the Transformation of Prostitution in Antebellum New York City," in *The Making of Urban America*, ed. Raymond A. Mohl (Wilmingon, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997), 43.

thieves, negro chimney sweeps, and many others whom it would be difficult to classify.”¹⁶ Many locations Thompson chose as a setting for his novel correspond to actual places in New York. Sydney visits the most dangerous part of the metropolis, New York’s center of vice and debauchery, the infamous Five Points district with narrow and crooked streets, and squalid watering holes.¹⁷ Through a cellar he enters the Dark Vaults, a network of subterranean tunnels, a place not different from the Dead Vault of Lippard’s *The Quaker City*:

Myriads of men and women dwelt in this awful place, where the sun never shone; here they festered with corruption, and died of starvation and wretchedness – those who were poor; and here also the fugitive murderer, the branded outlaw, the hunted thief, and the successful robber, laden with his booty, found a safe asylum, where justice dared not to follow them – here they gloried in the remembrance of past crimes and anticipated future enormities.¹⁸

Here he meets all kinds of freaks and sees disgusting monstrosities such as heap of men, women, children and pigs laying together on the floor. Before regulated trash collection, garbage was freely thrown from the windows to the streets and various scavenging animals including pigs were widely accepted as useful means of waste disposal.¹⁹ The tunnels under the Five Points slum actually existed throughout the nineteenth century and from time to time, pigs entered the sewers and unable to find a way back, they served as food for the wretched inhabitants of these places.

Both Lippard and Thompson addressed the increasing ethnic and racial diversity of antebellum cities. In *The Quaker City* there are two black brutes, Glow-worm and Mosquito, who serve as the “police” of the Monk Hall, the dead old widow had an Irish maid, and among the vagabonds is a Jewish swindler named Gabriel von Gelt. However, their roles in the novel are marginal and the depictions of them are stereotypical of the antebellum period. Both blacks are portrayed as having flat noses, fat lips and large rolling eyes and von Gelt speaks with a strong German accent, is hump-backed, with “Jew written on his face clearly and distinctly as though he had fallen asleep at the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, in the days of Solomon . . . and after a nap of three thousand years, had waked up in the Quaker City, in a state of perfect and Hebraic preservation.”²⁰ *City Crimes* includes Bloody Mike and Pat Mulligan, Irish owners of “cribs,” where particularly the latter is a stereotypical Irish bully. The only exception from stereotypical portrayal of ethnic or racial characters is Nero, a black servant who is involved in a sexual relationship with Frank Sydney’s bride-to-be, an upper-class white woman. This case goes against traditional antebellum race relations.²¹ It might be attributed to the fact that depiction of miscegenation and breaking the racial taboos were very popular devices used by the sensational writers.

16. Thompson, *City Crimes*, 194.

17. Forty years later, Stephen Crane will set his urban novel *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* in the neighboring Bowery district.

18. Thompson, *City Crimes*, 132.

19. See Melosi, *The Sanitary City*, 12.

20. Lippard, *The Quaker City*, 175.

21. See David Reynolds, introduction to *Venus in Boston and Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century City Life*, by George Thompson (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), xlii.

In comparing both sensational authors, both focused on the evils of the city and portrayed the urban environment as a scene of crime and sin. Thompson used the urban landscape to a greater extent than Lippard. Setting his plot in the slum area of a huge metropolis enabled him to depict all the negative urban phenomena that plagued large antebellum cities. However, his descriptions of vices and evils of urban life are often hyperbolic and usually serve as grounds for the presentation of sensational images. To portray the city as a jungle where one struggles for survival in a Darwinian contest, American literature had to wait for Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair and other naturalists at the turn of the century.

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SUBURBAN HUMOR IN THE POETRY OF BILLY COLLINS

JIRÍ FLAJSAR

Palacký University, Olomouc, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic. Email: jiriflajsar@centrum.cz

ABSTRACT: Billy Collins represents the genteel side of contemporary middle-class American suburbia. His poems mix humor, irony, and sadness in an exploration of literature, music, art, and autobiography. Collins uses ordinary situations, themes, and emotions to create moments of bittersweet insight. The barking of a neighbor's dog may change into the sound of a musical instrument in a Beethoven symphony. Adopting the perspective of a male seducer of a famous nineteenth-century female poet, Collins mocks literary pretension, snobbery, and communication that remains inadequate in private situations. This paper surveys a sample of Collins's poems, characterizing him as a mediator between the highbrow and lowbrow elements of American suburban culture.

KEYWORDS: American poetry; contemporary; suburban; Billy Collins; humor

Recent American poetry has largely avoided comedy and humor. Tony Hoagland sums up the mainstream American poem as humorless writing in which "irony and conceptual whimsy, various styles of verbal wit, and 44 flavors of self-consciousness prevail."¹ Ronald Wallace explains that the predominant lack of "serious" comic poetry in American literary culture may be caused by the stereotypical association of humor with light verse whereas "serious poetry has been equated with solemnity, humorlessness, and intellectual difficulty."² Still, there is perhaps no better candidate for the title of the quintessential contemporary American comic poet than Billy Collins. A former American Poet Laureate (in 2001–3), Collins is a popular writer of middle-class American suburbia who sells well.³ His poetry mixes humor, irony, and realism in deceptively simple, likeable lyrics that weave together elements of American culture, especially literature, music, art, philosophy, and autobiography. William Logan has called Collins "that rarity among American poets, one with popular appeal, easy to read as a billboard, genial as a Sunday golfer, and not so awful you want to cut your throat after reading him."⁴ Adam Kirsch similarly praises Collins for being "funny, in an accessible and immediately familiar way."⁵

1. Tony Hoagland, "Cast Swine before Pearls: Comedy, Shamanic Rage, and Poetry," *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research* 22, no. 3 (2009): 374.

2. Ronald Wallace, *God Be with the Clown: Humor in American Poetry* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 4.

3. For more information on the tenure by Collins in this prestigious and honorary position, see Library of Congress, "Past Poets Laureate: 2001–2010," Poetry and Literature Center at the Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/laureate-2001-2010.html>. For an account of the exceptional success of Collins in terms of the sales of his poetry books, see for example Adam Kirsch, "Over Easy," *New Republic*, October 29, 2001, 38.

4. William Logan, "Out on the Lawn," *New Criterion* 22, no. 4 (2003): 85.

5. Kirsch, "Over Easy," 38.

This article surveys a selection of suburban poems by Billy Collins in order to define his poetics of the comic poem. While the tonal range of the postwar American poetry situated in the suburbs has been diverse, featuring important poetry by Richard Wilbur, Louis Simpson, Carolyn Kizer, and Adrienne Rich, not much attention has been paid to the element of humor in their poems.⁶ Fiction by major postwar authors such as John Updike, Richard Yates, Philip Roth, and John Cheever examines American middle-class suburbia as a place where repression, disillusionment, violence, madness, and absurdity reign supreme, yet it is my intention to show how Collins as a representative suburban American poet of recent and contemporary prominence has used a comic approach to the suburban experience. The traditional approach of American poets, however, is to portray the suburb as a dead, conformist, stifling place that is inimical to the creative existence of any serious artist.⁷

“Another Reason Why I Don’t Keep a Gun in the House” is an early Collins poem about life in a suburban community. The dramatic potential of the title raises questions about the nature of the situation that the speaker-protagonist of the poem faces. The introductory lines of the poem quickly deflate the expectation of a violent showdown as one learns what the real problem is: “The neighbors’ dog will not stop barking. / He is barking the same high, rhythmic bark / that he barks every time they leave the house.”⁸ The comic element here lies in the mock-serious dramatization of a banal situation that has plagued many a suburban middle-class professional who happens to spend a day at home while his nine-to-five neighbors have left their pets unattended. The situation develops into a conflict between the poet and animal as Collins tries to fight the barking with loud classical music: “I close all the windows in the house / and put on a Beethoven symphony full blast.”⁹ The humor is caused by the incongruity of the auditory battle – the down-to-earth, physical performance of the barking dog is challenged by the poet’s playback of the highbrow music genre, the performance of which is not to be distinguished by abnormal loudness. The poem next presents a ludicrous metamorphosis of the animal – from an outside nuisance heard by the poet it becomes an imagined orchestra musician who co-performs the music piece played on the poet’s stereo, “as if Beethoven / had included a part for barking dog.”¹⁰ The poem thus chronicles the futile attempt by the poet to drown out the sound of the barking while the dog, by now elevated to the status of a member of the orchestra, sits in the

6. See Wallace, *God Be with the Clown*, 4.

7. For an early yet still relevant treatment of the suburb as a locus of postwar American poetry, see the final chapter in Robert von Hallberg, *American Poetry and Culture, 1945–1980* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 228–44. For a survey of postwar poetry that criticizes the conformity and consumerist nature of life in the middle-class American suburb, see also Jiří Flajšar, “Poetry of the American Suburbs: A Postwar Exercise in Non-Conformity,” in *Conformity and Resistance in America*, ed. Jacek Gutorow and Tomasz Lebiecki (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2007), 89–95.

8. Billy Collins, “Another Reason Why I Don’t Keep a Gun in the House,” in *Sailing Alone around the Room: New and Selected Poems* (New York: Random House, 2001), 3.

9. Collins, “Another Reason Why I Don’t Keep a Gun in the House,” 3.

10. Collins, “Another Reason Why I Don’t Keep a Gun in the House,” 3.

orchestra even after the music has died out, set on “the famous barking solo, / that endless coda.”¹¹

A problem with a neighbor’s dog, a trivial matter whose significance is blown out of proportion for the self-centered suburbanite, has long been a staple theme for American poets. In “Suburban,” a 1970s take on a similar subject of neighborly skirmishing, John Ciardi explores the comic potential of a call from Mrs. Friar, a well-bred neighbor who, embarrassed yet adamant, phones the poet and asks him to remove “a large repulsive object in my petunias,” excrement which she assumes was produced by the poet’s dog.¹² While the poet knows that the dog in question was away with his son during the time of the presumed action, he removes the object from Mrs. Friar’s flowerbed to save her dignity as well as his own. As the final act of the suburban mock-drama, Ciardi deposits the smelly object in his own flowerbed, waxing ironic about the social dictum to keep good relationships with one’s neighbors “till the glorious resurrection // when even these suburbs shall give up their dead.”¹³

In “Osso Bucco,” Collins portrays the quiet domestic evening atmosphere that follows a feast, an Italian dish made by his wife. The suburb is hailed as a haven of peace where the evils and tragedies of the world are blocked out as the poet reclines, “tilted back on his chair, a creature with a full stomach— / something you don’t hear much about in poetry.”¹⁴ The mockery is directed at the stereotype of the poet as a tortured soul whose suffering should be a primary inspiration for his writing, “that sanctuary of hunger and deprivation.”¹⁵ In the rest of the poem, Collins develops a parallel story as he traces the further development of a suburban evening that he spends with his wife with whom he will later “slip below the surface of the night . . . into the marrow of the only place we know” while somewhere else, the tortured figure of the poet is involved in the Sisyphean task of “crawling up a rocky hillside / on bleeding knees and palms.”¹⁶ The juxtaposition of desire fulfilled (first, good meal, then good sex) in the case of the suburban husband is juxtaposed with the eternal frustration of the other poet who is sentenced to “carrying the stone of the world in his stomach.”¹⁷ The appeal of “Osso Bucco” is, as Kirch explains, in the ironic reversal of values as Collins celebrates “being lazy, tired, and well-fed” in an effort to mock the suffering, anti-bourgeois, pretension of

11. Collins, “Another Reason Why I Don’t Keep a Gun in the House,” 3.

12. John Ciardi, “Suburban,” in *For Instance* (New York: Norton, 1979), 33.

13. Ciardi, “Suburban,” 33.

14. Billy Collins, “Osso Bucco,” in *Sailing Alone around the Room: New and Selected Poems* (New York: Random House, 2001), 49.

15. Collins, “Osso Bucco,” 49.

16. Collins, “Osso Bucco,” 50. Of course, a classic poem about the task of the poet is “Yet Do I Marvel” by Countee Cullen. The theme of Cullen’s poem, however, differs from its use by Collins as Cullen focuses on the difficulty of the African American poet in the 1920s of being recognized on literary merit alone: “Yet do I marvel at this curious thing: / To make a poet black, and bid him sing!” Countee Cullen, “Yet Do I Marvel,” in *My Soul’s High Song: The Collected Writings of Countee Cullen, Voice of the Harlem Renaissance*, ed. Gerard Early (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 79.

17. Collins, “Osso Bucco,” 50.

the modern poet whose vain attempt to sustain the attention of the audience is likened to the eternal punishment of Sisyphus.¹⁸

In an effort to come to terms with what Kirsch calls “a guilty impatience with the demands of [literary] culture,”¹⁹ Collins has become a master of the funny allusive poem designed for college-educated audiences who appreciate the literary references in poetry as long as these are served in an accessible manner. In “Taking Off Emily Dickinson’s Clothes,” Collins assumes the comic role of the contemporary seducer of the famous nineteenth-century female poet. The seduction is both physical and literary, for, having first undressed the passive female body of Dickinson, Collins works “like a polar explorer / through clips, clasps, and moorings, / catches, straps, and whalebone stays,”²⁰ then he proceeds to deconstruct some of Dickinson’s best-known poems. Although the poet in this poem is portrayed as a domineering masculine figure who manipulates the woman in a traditional male chauvinist way, Collins salvages the account of Dickinson’s seduction by holding back the intimate details, workshopping his experience instead: “Later, I wrote in a notebook / it was like riding a swan into the night, / but, of course, I cannot tell you everything—.”²¹ After the playful use of a Dickinsonian dash to evoke the poet’s own ambivalence about his role, Collins finishes the poem with a parodic rewriting of Dickinson’s best-known lines. As Dickinson remains a passive object of the male poet’s desire, as one who lets herself be undressed and does not speak or move, her only reaction is a mysterious sigh which resembles “the way some readers sigh when they realize / that Hope has feathers, / that Reason is a plank, / that Life is a loaded gun / that looks right at you with a yellow eye.”²² The success of the poem lies in the reader’s ability to enjoy Collins’s deconstruction of Dickinson’s poems and her cultural status as a private, convention-bound poet of passionate imagination. Collins communicates what Hoagland calls “the exhilarating pleasure of being smart in concert *with* the speaker.”²³ So, arguably, Collins lets the reader/listener in on his ride through his comic world of allusions to high culture, avoiding off-putting smugness and opacity on the one hand, and refraining from the banality of everyday language and content on the other.

Another suburban poem which puts a historical figure in a contemporary suburban setting is “Shoveling Snow with Buddha.” Collins imagines a meeting with the famous sage and spiritual teacher, putting him in the position of an average American suburban husband in winter: “But here we are, working our way down the driveway, / one

18. Kirsch, “Over Easy,” 40.

19. Kirsch, “Over Easy,” 40.

20. Billy Collins, “Taking Off Emily Dickinson’s Clothes,” in *Sailing Alone around the Room: New and Selected Poems* (New York: Random House, 2001), 119.

21. Collins, “Taking Off Emily Dickinson’s Clothes,” 120.

22. Collins, “Taking Off Emily Dickinson’s Clothes,” 120. The original Dickinson poems echoed and parodied in the Collins poem are “I Heard a Fly Buzz—When I Died” (no. 591), “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” (no. 314), “I felt a Funeral, in My Brain” (no. 340), and “My Life Had Stood—A Loaded Gun” (no. 764). See Emily Dickinson, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. R. W. Franklin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999).

23. Tony Hoagland, *Real Sofistikashun: Essays on Poetry and Craft* (Saint Paul, MN: Graywolf, 2006), 67.

shoveful at a time.”²⁴ The shared physical activity gives rise to a ludicrous moment of enlightenment: “Aaah, says the Buddha, lifting his eyes / and leaning for a moment on his shovel / before he drives the thin blade again / deep into the glittering white snow.”²⁵ In the world according to Collins, historical figures like the Buddha function to wake the poet from his suburban routine in a genteel standup comedy portrait of middle-class American life. By making fun of himself and of sacred figures from history such as Dickinson and the Buddha, such comic poetry manages to provide “a weapon against chaos and despair in a world that seems increasingly indifferent and absurd.”²⁶

In his suburban poems, Collins navigates the difficult terrain between authorial intelligence and forced simplicity of expression. As America’s best-known poet of the 1990s and 2000s, Collins “provides welcome comic relief from a poetic culture that takes itself too seriously.”²⁷ By maintaining a clear vision of his world and its comic potential, he manages to write the poetry of an educated jester who avoids radical public gestures, offends no one, yet is able to entertain his audience with easy, but rarely disappointing comic excursions into the heart of American individualism, into a culture that has been defined by traditional art and literature as much as by TV, the Internet, and popular music. In the last couple of decades, the dynamism of America has come to be equated with the charms and pitfalls of middle-class suburbia, of which Collins seems a fitting poetic representative.

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24. Billy Collins, “Shoveling Snow with Buddha,” in *Sailing Alone around the Room: New and Selected Poems* (New York: Random House, 2001), 103.

25. Collins, “Shoveling Snow with Buddha,” 104.

26. Wallace, *God Be with the Clown*, 5.

27. Christina Pugh, “Humor Anxiety,” *Poetry* 189, no. 3 (2006): 228.

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HOW VISUAL POETRY CAN GET: VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ASPECTS IN THE POETRY OF GRACE NICHOLS

PAVLÍNA FLAJŠAROVÁ

Palacký University, Olomouc, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic. Email: pavlina.flajsarova@upol.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the gaps and bridges between the visual and textual aspects of the poetry of Grace Nichols. Based on representative texts from her *Paint Me a Poem* (2004) and *Picasso, I Want My Face Back* (2009), the paper examines the inspiration of the Tate Gallery collection on Nichols, the museum's first poet in residence. The paper further focuses on the ethnic elements that were included in the texts so as to contextualise the poems within British Caribbean diasporic literature. Grace Nichols, born in Guyana but residing in Britain since 1977, incorporates the lyric voice of the immigrant community, paying special attention to the possibilities of Standard English as opposed to Caribbean Creole. Therefore, the paper finally evaluates Nichols's amalgam of art, language and diaspora.

KEYWORDS: British post-war poetry; post-colonial poetry; Caribbean poetry; Grace Nichols; diaspora; Dora Maar; Pablo Picasso; *Paint Me a Poem*; *Picasso, I Want My Face Back*

Grace Nichols has traditionally been associated with representing the Caribbean diaspora in Britain. Her poetry portrays the mentality of the black immigrant of Caribbean British identity while cherishing both Caribbean and British culture. Although her two recent volumes *Paint Me a Poem* (2004) and *Picasso, I Want My Face Back* (2009) are predominantly concerned with the power of visual and textual art, they share the diasporic and feminist features of her previous volumes. In her *I Is a Long-Memored Woman* (1983), Nichols portrayed the suffering of an enslaved woman. *The Fat Black Woman's Poems* (1984) gave voice to a black woman trying to retain her black Caribbean identity within a British society that dictates Western values. A similar discourse on identity is contained in the volume *Lazy Thoughts of a Lazy Woman* (1989). In *Sunris* (1996) Nichols presents her sensitivity to colour symbolism that stands for the different and often competing cultures of the Caribbean and the United Kingdom. Sarah Welsh has rightly argued that in many *Sunris* poems "the speaker contrasts the vital abundance of colour in the Caribbean . . . with the sterile, sluggish, lack of colour in Britain."¹ Nichols ventures into the treatment of colours and its symbolism as a part of her attempt to rediscover all her possible heritages – African, Guyanese, and Caribbean. All her various heritages are closely connected to the symbolism of vivid colours that characterize these cultures. Any reference to the colours within the text of Nichols's poems clearly although sometimes implicitly alludes

1. Sarah Lawson Welsh, *Grace Nichols* (Tavistock: Northcote House, 2007), 90.

to her African-Guyanese-Caribbean identity. If Nichols's poetic speaker associates with British identity, the poems either lack vivid colours altogether or mention only grey, black or white. In addition to her colour symbolism, Nichols during the quest for her roots and ancestral identity repeatedly expresses her interest in the poetic exploration of the psychological effects that European myths have had and continue to have on black people. The poet claims that black women "have to come up with new myths and other images that please us"² because when black women of Caribbean origin live in diaspora in Britain, they have to face the myths of the European continent and cannot utilize in their literary imagination their ancestral myths as these are not so well known among the European population. Therefore, the black women use the images common in the Caribbean but transform them into a modern form that might be pleasing the Europeans but that are also close to their own spirit. Nichols's insights into such transformative mechanisms of ethnic imagination laid the groundwork to her most recent collections.

Nichols, in *Picasso, I Want My Face Back* and in *Paint Me a Poem*, does not abandon the diasporic Caribbean imaginary. However, her focus shifts from speakers that are firmly embedded in the Caribbean culture to speakers coming from different ethnic backgrounds. Even more importantly, Nichols filters the evaluation of culture through visual art. In doing so, she follows a fashionable trend. Elizabeth Bergman Loizeaux argues that "one prominent aspect of twentieth-century poetry [is a] varied and intense involvement with the visual arts."³ As a consequence, ekphrases, i.e., poems about visual art, are more than common in contemporary poetry. Loizeaux further proposes that

at the heart of twentieth-century ekphrasis is [a] growing familiarity of works of art among a broad reading public. . . . Along with the deep pleasure and the sense of excitement and possibility for poetry in being involved with images comes the nagging sense that pictures have something that words do not – and an underlying fear that the power to shape culture is passing from one medium to another.⁴

Nichols does not necessarily fear that textual art will be replaced by visual art, rather she is interested in the interaction of the two. In reviewing *Picasso, I Want My Face Back*, F. S. J. Ledgister notes that Grace Nichols is

a person in between the worlds. . . . Poems [in this collection] are about being a woman, and confronting the world with wisdom, sense, and humour. An Afro-Guyanese woman daring to speak in the voice of a European woman because both are outsiders, both are othered – and comfortable, indeed successful, in doing so. Nichols bridges the Atlantic, with humane laughter that tells us love must be stronger than fear.⁵

Whereas her earlier volumes depended on constant switching between Standard English and Caribbean Creole to show the double identity, in *Paint Me a Poem* and *Picasso, I Want My Face Back*, the author decreased the use of the Caribbean patois.

2. Quoted in Ana Bringas López, "Representations of Black Omen in Grace Nichols's Poetry: From Otherness to Empowerment," *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, no. 16 (2003): 19.

3. Elizabeth Begmann Loizeaux, *Twentieth-Century Poetry and the Visual Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1.

4. Loizeaux, *Twentieth-Century Poetry and the Visual Arts*, 4.

5. F. S. J. Ledgister, "Arrival Poems," *Caribbean Review of Books*, no. 21 (2010): <http://caribbeanreviewofbooks.com/crb-archive/21-may-2010/>.

Even though the linguistic means of expressing otherness are reduced to a minimum, Nichols keeps thematising the land of her childhood. Whereas Britain at times remains a hostile diasporic place, the Caribbean always in the imagination provides images that are familiar and therefore soothing to the troubled soul of the poetic speaker. Therefore, it can still be claimed that all the poetic work of Nichols “explore[s] the legacies of pain, separation and loss . . . [and the] experience of being a black woman in Britain.”⁶

In recent years, Nichols has depicted the British Caribbean diaspora through the description of visual art by authors from various ethnic and geographical backgrounds. This is partly due to her engagement at the Tate Gallery in 1999–2000, where she was the first poet-in-residence. During this period her appreciation of art deepened and was metamorphosed into poetry. Nichols explains: “I’d always been intrigued by painting and how poetry and painting have inspired each other. For me, there is a very loose relationship between the two art forms. In the compositional balance of a painting, one can almost speak of a certain colour ‘rhyming’ with a similar colour.”⁷ The symbiosis of poetry and visual art is made possible by the means of mediation they share. For Nichols, when she observes a painting, she claims that

the relationship between poems and painting is a close one and each can inspire the other. Both come out of a desire to make something new out of the familiar, to capture an experience in a concentrated way with its own inner rhythm. [With the poems] I wanted to celebrate some of the elements that go into a painting such as Line, Light, Shape, Balance and Colour – some of the very elements that a poet explores, using words instead of paints.⁸

Therefore, a poem can be inspired by a painting and vice versa. Both the poet and the painter can profit from the affinity between the two art forms.

Nichols is aware of the English Romantic sensitivity, pantheism and the traditional relationship between visual and textual art. She subscribes to William Wordsworth’s theory that “we are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters.”⁹ Nichols alludes to such an attitude with the title of her poetry collection *Paint Me a Poem*. She also uses the path beaten by the British Pre-Raphaelites and looks anew at their paintings to deliver a modern interpretation. For example, in “Proserpine Thinks about Her Mother,” a poem inspired by a painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Nichols brings across the worries of a mother waiting for a daughter to return. The mother-speaker expresses the motherly instinct to be able to do anything, whatever the cost, in order for her daughter to return safely:

And when by nightfall I hadn’t returned
she set up a wailing on Olympus,
She beat the drums in the assembly places
alerting all the Gods, . . .
She pulled down heaven, my mother

6. Welsh, *Grace Nichols*, 13.

7. Grace Nichols, “Colours That Rhyme,” in *Paint Me a Poem: New Poems Inspired by Art in Tate* (London: A & C Black, 2004), 5.

8. Grace Nichols, “When You Look at a Painting,” in *Paint Me a Poem*, 69.

9. William Wordsworth, “Observations Prefixed to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800),” in *Classic Writings on Poetry*, ed. William Harmon (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 285.

she pulled up earth, my mother
Because I, her Goddess-daughter, am worth it.¹⁰

Nichols engages multiple images from various registers. On the one hand, she alludes to the classic gods on the Greek Olympus. On the other hand, the image of the drums can be associated with the ritual drumming of the shamans who are asking their native gods of Africa and/or the Caribbean for assistance. The poem also puts across the traditional Caribbean attachment between mother and daughter. Such strong maternal relationships with their daughters can be traced back to the slavery period and continue even in the post-colonial era, when many a man went to seek work abroad and only mothers stayed in the homeland. As a result of the historical circumstances, the society in the Caribbean is strongly maternally oriented and the bond between a mother and a daughter is extremely strong.

In another poem, inspired by both Alfred Tennyson's poem "The Lady of Shalott" and by the painting *The Lady of Shalott* by John William Waterhouse displayed in the Tate,¹¹ Nichols projects a happier life outside the shabby and constraining tower of Shalott:

I will not miss you island-tower
I will not miss you days,
seen only through a magic mirror.
My feet have longed to touch
again the grass in summer.¹²

Although Nichols works with Tennyson's paradigm of the Lady of Shalott being a fairy lady who suffers under a curse, she invests her with more earthly desires:

I am to become Death's Bride – a cold treasure.
Goodbye Shalott
Goodbye Shalott . . .
My heart has always longed
to be as a flowing river.¹³

Nichols's Lady is capable of making her own decisions, for which she willingly takes responsibility as she is aware of the curse that hangs over her. Her Lady of Shalott is not just an innocent maid who is in pure love with Lancelot but is longing for true life, with all its pleasures and consequences.

Romantic sensitivity is also evident in the poem "Speak Maistra," which was inspired by the sculpture *Maiastra* by Constantin Brancusi.¹⁴ Nichols uses the pantheistic idea that life is present in every object and that all objects belong to a single universal living

10. Grace Nichols, "Proserpine Thinks about Her Mother," in *Paint Me a Poem*, 30.

11. John William Waterhouse painted two other painting with the theme of the Lady of Shalott, namely "I Am Half-Sick of Shadows," *Said the Lady of Shalott* and *The Lady of Shalott Looking at Lancelot*. These are not on display at the Tate Gallery, but Nichols learned of their existence from the curator.

12. Grace Nichols, "Goodbye Shalott," in *Paint Me a Poem*, 36.

13. Nichols, "Goodbye Shalott," 36.

14. The curator at the Tate Gallery explains the inspirational sources for the sculpture: "While working in Paris Brancusi retained a strong association with the traditions of his native country Romania: . . . *Maiastra* exemplifies this inspiration. The polished form evokes a golden bird with miraculous powers, which featured in Romanian folk tales. The carved bird-like forms of the stone base relate to more

organism.¹⁵ The sculpture on display provokes the mingling of visual and the textual impressions into a single whole:

I am Maistra
Spilling –
my golden song
like a fountain
over this stone-split.¹⁶

Nichols uses the metaphor of the creative process voiced by William Wordsworth who advocated that “all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”¹⁷ The important aspect is the interconnection of the perceptions of the eye and the rhythm of words, “feast your eyes and ears, all / Drink your fill.”¹⁸ The full poetic imagination unfolds only when the visual and the textual work simultaneously. Nichols attempts to enliven the shape and image of the Maistra statue in the textual frame but she also by inserting a photographic reproduction of the art object within the poetry collection enables the reader to consider the tri-dimensional effect of the art object itself. The textual poem about Maistra should be only the starting point to set the reader’s imagination going its own way and to create his/her own interpretation of both the poem and the art object.

In another poem entitled “Seaform” that was inspired by the sculpture *Sea Form* (*Porthmeor*) by Barbara Hepworth, the poetic speaker not only observes the sculpture as a whole but pays attention to the material it is made from. The smoothness of the sculpture’s surface provokes the poet to imagine shapes washed by the sea:

Seaform, Seaform
from where were you born?
From the ebb and flow . . .
From the lip and lap . . .
From the salt and the wind.¹⁹

The effect of the lines is the feeling of the sublime, of the ever-lasting ebb and flow, of the perpetuity of the natural processes that give a stable rhythm to human life. In addition, Nichols by breaking the expectation of the reader by using the word “seaform” instead of the commonly expected “seafoam” initiates a new possible set of images. The seaform can acquire any shape the imagination of the reader wishes and the presence of the eternal ebb and flow washes the seaform into a perfect smoothness. The dark

rustic folk decoration. Emphasising an idealised connection with nature, Brancusi originally set the whole sculpture on a high wooden column in the garden of its first owner, the photographer Edward Steichen.” Nichols chose to distort the spelling a little bit. See Tate, “Constantin Brancusi: *Maiistra*, 1911,” 2004, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/brancusi-maiistra-t01751>.

15. See lectures by Samuel Taylor Coleridge published in his *Biographia Literaria* (1817; London: Orion, 1997) on the mechanism by which pantheism works in poetry. He also explains in this volume the principles of fancy and imagination in the literary process.

16. Grace Nichols, “Speak Maistra,” in *Paint Me a Poem*, 11.

17. Wordsworth, “Observations Prefixed to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800),” 282.

18. Nichols, “Speak Maistra,” 11.

19. Grace Nichols, “Seaform,” in *Paint Me a Poem*, 64. Italics in the original.

smaragd colour of Hepworth's statue also suggests the deep green waters of the sea that have produced the seaform.

In her early volumes, *I Is a Long Memored Woman*, *The Black Woman's Poems*, and *Lazy Thoughts of a Lazy Woman*, Nichols created and established her poetic speaker as embodied by a strong black woman who survives all troubles. The gallery of strong female characters painted by Nichols is further represented by Henriette Theodora Markovitch, alias Dora Maar,²⁰ a personal muse to Pablo Picasso. In this case, the poetic speaker is however, not a black but a white woman. Nichols weaves the story of the love relationship between Dora and Pablo into her poems and shows how it goes hand in hand with the interpretation of Picasso's paintings inspired by Maar. The sequence entitled "Weeping Woman" depicts the power structure in their relationship – Nichols tries to find empathy for the female artist, photographer Dora Maar, who sacrifices her own artistic career in order to be a full time muse to Picasso. The poem works on the intersection of the textual and the visual. The pen of the poet is implicitly compared to the brush of the painter, both of which create images. What may look like a cruel picture for one reader/gallery visitor may be perceived differently by someone else:

They say that instead of a brush
he used a knife on me –
a savage geometry.
But as I say, look again,
this is the closest
anyone has got to the pain.²¹

The psyche of Maar is explored. She is patiently waiting for the call from Picasso to become his muse once again. Although his style is that of savage geometry, i.e., Cubism mixed with surrealism, she understands the principles of such an artistic style, being a surrealist photographer herself. The speaker in the poem admires the possibilities of the fractured style of Cubism, the cuteness of distortion, the relatively conflicting possibilities of Cubist composition. In reviewing the collection by Nichols, Carol Rumens maintained that "the resulting sequence, 20 interlocked monologues of varying shapes, is itself somehow Cubist, in that it depicts many angles and sides of the subject's emotional life."²² The voice of the muse recognises how much Maar has sacrificed for the sake of Picasso:

Lies tricks transformations . . .
swan
into a silly duck
flapping about all day
in case he calls.
In case he needs me to sit still.
Whereas before I would
have gone off . . .

20. Dora Maar (1907–1997) was a photographer of Croatian-French origin. At the time when Picasso lived in Paris, she was a talented poet and aspiring photo-artist practicing surrealism.

21. Grace Nichols, "Dora Maar (Picasso's Weeping Woman)," in *Paint Me a Poem*, 23.

22. Carol Rumens, "Poem of the Week: 'Weeping Woman' by Grace Nichols," *Guardian*, December 14, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2009/dec/14/poem-of-the-week-grace-nichols>.

with an indulgent laugh:
 There goes Dora Maar
 wearing her camera
 like a medallion against her heart.²³

When Maar met Picasso, she was already a recognised photographer, yet she understands that she would not have become so memorable if she had not met the painter, “Dora, Theodora, be reasonable, if it weren’t for Picasso / you’d hardly be remembered at all. / He’s given you an unbelievable shelf-life. / Yes, but who will remember the fruits of my own life?”²⁴ Although Maar might be portrayed as a victimised muse, she is a strong woman who understands that her fame depends on the fame of Pablo Picasso. Her own work would not qualify her as a memorable artist. In Ledgister’s view, “Nichols sees that Picasso, in portraying Dora Maar, has managed to convey the sisterhood of woman across time . . . and across the barriers of culture and race. That’s something that comes across again and again and again in this collection: what it is to be a woman in the world, particularly one who has been displaced.”²⁵ By the end of the sequence, Nichols has shown Maar as a woman who has overcome her suffering and regained her own self-esteem in spite of a diasporic life in a foreign country. Rumens documents this metamorphosis from a subordinate muse to an independent woman artist:

Maar survives her “unrooting” and her goring by the “grappling bull” Picasso, learns to delight in the vibrant colours he has given her, and is finally able to separate herself from the distorting vision that so cruelly exposed her pain: “Picasso’s art is Picasso’s art. / Not one is Dora Maar.” Although “there will always be a weeping woman,” this particular one, intact, walks out of the frame and into freedom.²⁶

Although Maar might sometimes awaken pity, by the end of the poem sequence, she appears as a strong and independent woman.

Nichols is an inquisitive art connoisseur who is never tired of exploring the female psyche tested by the perils of a particular historical era. While looking at the painting *Elizabeth I: The Phoenix Portrait* by Nicholas Hilliard, Nichols contemplated the restrictions under which Elizabeth had to make her public appearances and political decisions. Her poem “The Queen Who Reigned Supreme” thematises the body posture that signifies the queen’s dignity and rigidity. However, Nichols also lets her poetic speaker Elizabeth dream about what would happen if she were free to exercise her free will. To emphasise the contrast between dreams and reality, Nichols employs rhyming quatrains and anaphoric variations of the initial line of the stanzas:

I’d rather be sailing
 than sat here being painted,
 I’d rather be on the high seas
 buccaneering the fleets,
 I’d rather be bandying swords
 with the King of Spain.²⁷

23. Grace Nichols, “Weeping Woman,” in *Picasso, I Want My Face Back* (Tarsset: Bloodaxe Books, 2009), 11.

24. Nichols, “Weeping Woman,” 16.

25. Ledgister, “Arrival Poems.”

26. Rumens, “Poem of the Week.”

27. Grace Nichols, “The Queen Who Reigned Supreme,” in *Paint Me a Poem*, 20.

Instead of her royal duties, she would prefer to be more active. However, the poem closes with a sudden twist from her dreaming visions into austere political reality, which is marked by a sudden change in the established scheme of rhyming quatrains. Nichols follows the three quatrains by a concluding couplet: "But I am queen / I reign supreme."²⁸ In its form the poem builds upon the traditional scheme of a Shakespearean sonnet although it does not follow the usual rhyming pattern. Nichols being well acquainted with the possibilities of different sonnet forms, closes the poem attaching an extra sestet, adopted from the Italian type of sonnet, to the already fourteen lines of the English sonnet type, thus creating an amalgam of the English and Italian form. The additional sestet serves as a kind of coda in which the speaker reflects the political and personal conflict between Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots, "And those who disobey my order / will be shorter – by the head."²⁹ By adding the extra sestet, Nichols provides a second conclusion which resolves the dilemma between the private and political faces of Queen Elizabeth I.

The gallery of poems about distinguished women continues with a tribute to Marilyn Monroe. She represents a modern woman who suffers as a celebrity under the pressure of media observation. Nichols creates her poem around Monroe's portrait caught in a series of images entitled *Marilyn Diptych* by Andy Warhol. On the left hand side of the series, she is portrayed in colour as a sex symbol and film icon, on the other side there is the same series of images in black and white suggesting the darker, sad aspects of a glamorous life that drives Monroe into despair and loneliness:

Never mind the airducts
lifting my skirts. . . .
Every flash bulb
was an X-ray
That inched me
Towards the grave.³⁰

The public image of Monroe was that of a happy person. Yet, this public stance increasingly exhausted her, finally reducing her personality to a mere image, which Nichols summarises as "overexposed."³¹

Apart from her interest in the mutual relationship between poetry and the visual arts, Nichols also thematises the eternal dispute between art/literature critics and the artists themselves. In her "Turner to His Critic," Nichols engages a painter as the speaker in the poem. In his own voice, the painter pokes fun at the art critic who does not understand what it requires to transform a first-hand experience into an impressionistic picture:

Soapsuds and whitewash, Critic? . . .
I was tied in a snowstorm
to the mast of a ship.

28. Nichols, "The Queen Who Reigned Supreme," 20.

29. Nichols, "The Queen Who Reigned Supreme," 20.

30. Grace Nichols, "Marilyn," in *Paint Me a Poem*, 26.

31. Nichols, "Marilyn," 26.

Do you have the foggiest of it?
Do you know what it is to be buffeted?³²

The critic usually does not appreciate the effort that was necessary for the creation of the work of art and the quality of the artistic work as perceived by the author: "this work is a masterpiece. / Soapsuds and whitewash indeed! / If I had my way, you, Sir, would be / soap-sudded to the bottom of the sea."³³ Nichols dismisses the easy judgement of a critic and prefers the critical judgement of the artist himself.

In conclusion, the collections *Paint Me a Poem* and *Picasso, I Want My Face Back* present visual art and poetry as two mutually responsive media. Especially the poems inspired by works on display in the Tate Gallery show the fate of women who are displaced in one way or another. Although displaced, all the female characters appear victorious by the end as they are capable of coming to terms with their situation. Nichols engages in a dialogue between the textual and the visual in order to show their affinity of expression. In the vein of Romantic sensitivity, Nichols deals with the imagery in such a way as to open new possibilities for representing works of art, be it visual or textual. Nichols's sense for detail provides the reader with interesting insights into the realm of literary and visual imagination.

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32. Grace Nichols, "Turner to His Critic," in *Paint Me a Poem*, 59.

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TO LOOK HIGH, LOW, AND BEYOND: SHIFTING THE TEXTUAL TERRAIN OF BLACK FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM

KARLA KOVALOVÁ

University of Ostrava, Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies,
Reální 5, 701 03 Ostrava, Czech Republic. Email: karla.kovalova@osu.cz

ABSTRACT: In her landmark essay, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens” (1974), Alice Walker urges black feminist critics to look both high and low in order to restore an artistic tradition of black women. Two decades later, in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), Toni Morrison shifts the textual terrain of black (feminist) literary criticism beyond the realm of black authors to explore “the Africanist presence” in the fiction of white American canonical authors. Following her lead and Ann DuCille’s recent suggestion that perhaps the time has come for black feminists “to light out for other territories,” this paper offers a black feminist reading of Tomáš Zmeškal’s novel *Životopis černobílého jehněte* [The Biography of the Black-and-White Lamb] (2009) to examine the perception of “the Africanist presence” in Communist Europe.

KEYWORDS: Africanist presence; black feminist criticism; Communism; Czechoslovakia; ideology; Toni Morrison; racism; Tomáš Zmeškal

What renders a given interpretation “feminist” or colors it “black,” and what is the fitting and proper textual terrain of black feminist critical theory?

—Ann DuCille¹

Ruminating over black women’s artistic creativity, in her landmark essay “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens” (1974), Alice Walker contended: “We have constantly looked high, when we should have looked high – and low.”² Rectifying what she saw as a narrow and restrictive definition of art imposed by the white/male elite, she proposed a more inclusive view of artistic work – taking into consideration activities such as quilting, storytelling and gardening – to reclaim her anonymous foremothers whose creative spirit was often warped by the conditions of slavery. In doing so, she not only restored an artistic (literary) tradition of black women but also “pointed to a critical approach.”³ Put in different terms, Walker’s words represent one of the earliest black feminist theoretical statements with regard to the textual terrain, i.e., the subject *proper* of black feminist literary criticism.⁴

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1. Ann DuCille, “The Short Happy Life of Black Feminist Theory,” *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 21, no. 1 (2010): 32.
 2. Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens,” in *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist Prose* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), 239.
 3. Barbara Christian, “The Highs and the Lows of Black Feminist Literary Criticism,” in *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 51.
 4. In this paper, the terms black feminist theory and black feminist criticism are used interchangeably to refer to theoretical essays by black feminist critics.

Born in the 1970s, largely as a response to white/male criticism rendering black women's literary work marginal, black feminist literary criticism, at its inception, had three major goals: (1) to challenge stereotypical literary representations of black women, (2) to excavate forgotten and out-of-print literary works by black women, and (3) to propose new ways of reading black women's texts. Instrumental for its development was Barbara Smith's seminal essay "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism" (1977), which proposed a new method of reading attentive to interlocking factors of race, class, and gender in black women's lives. Arguing that black women writers "constitute an identifiable tradition" and that they "manifest common approaches to the act of creating literature as a direct result of the specific political, social, and economic experience they have been obliged to share,"⁵ Smith urged black feminist critics to explore these "commonalities," while "not try[ing] to graft the ideas or methodology of white/male literary thought upon the precious materials of Black women's art."⁶ Taking her lead, over the years, black feminist literary scholars have succeeded in not only establishing the importance of black women's literature but also restoring the African American women's literary tradition, which remained, for many years, the exclusive and/or primary textual terrain of black feminist literary criticism.

First attempts at redirecting black feminist critics' attention from the exclusive focus on black women's writing can be traced to the 1980s. As early as in 1980, in her essay "New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism," Deborah E. McDowell called for a less "separatist position" of black feminist critics that would take into account black men's writing and examine "parallels between black male and female writers."⁷ While not entirely abandoning the territory of black women's literature, McDowell strived to expand the textual terrain of black feminist literary criticism to avoid "the risk of plunging their [black feminist critics'] work into cliché and triviality if they continue merely to focus on how black men treat black women in literature."⁸

In 1986, in her essay "Some Implications of Womanist Theory," Sherley Anne Williams also addressed the question of the textual terrain of black feminist criticism that she saw as "run[ning] the risk of being narrowly proscriptive rather than broadly analytic."⁹ Inspired by Alice Walker's definition of a womanist (i.e., black feminist),¹⁰ which, to Williams, implied that black feminists "can talk both effectively and productively about men,"¹¹ Williams attempted to expand the textual terrain of

5. Barbara Smith, "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism," in *The Truth that Never Hurts: Writings on Race, Gender, and Freedom* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 10.

6. Barbara Smith, "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism," 11.

7. Deborah E. McDowell, "New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism," in *"The Changing Same": Black Women's Literature, Criticism, and Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 15.

8. McDowell, "New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism," 15.

9. Sherley Anne Williams, "Some Implications of Womanist Theory," *Callaloo* 9, no. 2 (1986): 307.

10. The definition was published in her collection of essays *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*, xi-xii. As part of her definition, Alice Walker argued that a womanist is committed to the well-being of both black men and black women.

11. Williams, "Some Implications of Womanist Theory," 303.

black feminist criticism by proposing that black feminist literary critics examine “male images in the works of black male writers.”¹²

While both McDowell and Williams still grounded their critical work in black literature, Valerie Smith opened up the space for a yet more inclusive and/or expansive black feminist criticism in 1989, in her essay “Black Feminist Theory and the Representation of the ‘Other.’” Suggesting that black feminist theory be understood more broadly as “a way of reading inscriptions of race (particularly but not exclusively blackness), gender (particularly but not exclusively womanhood) and class in modes of cultural expression,”¹³ she implied that *any* cultural expression, black or white, can be considered a proper textual terrain of black feminist criticism, thus shifting its boundaries beyond the realm of black literature.

Smith’s definition resonates in Toni Morrison’s 1992 collection of critical essays *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, which, while not addressing exclusively black feminist critics, challenges the existing American literary scholarship to shift its attention to the study of “the impact of racism on those who perpetuate it.”¹⁴ In *Playing in the Dark*, Morrison examined “the inscriptions of race” in literature written by white Americans, arguing that literature written by white American canonical authors may prove a fruitful territory for exploration of what she calls “the Africanist presence” or “Africanism” – i.e., “denotative and connotative blackness that African peoples have come to signify, as well as the entire range of views, assumptions, readings, and misreadings that accompany Eurocentric learning about these people.”¹⁵ While not explicitly feminist (although her individual literary analyses dealt with gender), her insights provided a fresh new impetus for black feminist critics, challenging them to give up their exclusive textual terrain and to explore (the) other(’s) texts.

In her recent essay, “The Short Happy Life of Black Feminist Theory” (2010), Ann DuCille echoes Morrison’s idea, reasoning that perhaps the time has come for black feminists “to light out for other territories.”¹⁶ Leading black feminist critics away from their stubborn focus on “what can black feminist theory claim as its own,” she urges them to consider a different set of questions: “[W]hat can black feminist theory give to its ‘other’? What does black feminist theory have to offer to that which is not its own?”¹⁷ Following her lead, in this paper I attempt a black feminist reading of the Czech novel *Životopis černobílého jehněte* [The Biography of a Black-and-White Lamb] (2009) by Tomáš Zmeškal – an author of mixed Czech and Congolese origin – to explore how “the Africanist presence,” i.e., blackness, was perceived in communist Czechoslovakia.

12. Williams, “Some Implications of Womanist Theory,” 307.

13. Valerie Smith, “Black Feminist Theory and the Representation of the ‘Other,’” in *Changing Our Own Words: Essays on Criticism, Theory, and Writing by Black Women*, ed. Cheryl Wall (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 39.

14. Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 11.

15. Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 6–7.

16. DuCille, “The Short Happy Life of Black Feminist Theory,” 44.

17. DuCille, “The Short Happy Life of Black Feminist Theory,” 33.

Set in communist Czechoslovakia, *Životopis černobílého jehněte* explores the question of what it means for racially-mixed twins to be growing up in the 1970s and 1980s in a white men's country under the communist regime. Although communism in Czechoslovakia had often been described as "a form of socialism with a human face,"¹⁸ the atmosphere of the 1970s, the so-called normalization years, was one of a hard line communism in which Czechoslovakia became, in a sense, a satellite country of the Soviet Union. Under its dictatorship, it was forced to adopt its politics, including negative attitudes toward capitalism and American imperialism and an abstract rhetoric of racial equality. Ideologically, the society's enemy, i.e., the "other," was anyone who did not support communism, as encapsulated in the communist slogan: "He who is not with us is against us." The far-reaching impact of communist ideology is best summarized in a brief conversation between two doctors who exchange their opinions about Václav Čaisl, one of the twin protagonists, as to whether or not he should have been discharged from a psychiatric ward: "[H]is father was not from an allied communist African country but from a country that supported American imperialism How does this fact change my diagnosis, Mrs. colleague?"¹⁹ Radically, quite radically, and do not address me as Mrs. but Comrade colleague. Think politically, Comrade, po-li-ti-cally."²⁰

As this quote indicates, Václav's fate and his blackness are both viewed against the backdrop of communist ideology, which seems to be colorblind: what determines one's fate is not skin color (or race) but the political stance of one's country of nativity, i.e., its ideology. However, Václav's experience teaches him that in the seemingly colorblind communist ideology, blackness *is* visible and can be potentially dangerous. As he learns from army officials, when refused admission to a representative army musical ensemble, the *visibility* of his blackness is a *political* issue: it could be used by imperialists to weaken the combat-readiness of the Czechoslovak army for it could be seen as American blackness, as a reminder of the country's liberation by American soldiers at the end of World War II.

Don't call us racist given the fact what our country does for Cuba and Angola and the other African allied countries, allied African armies, and for the black comrade Angela Davis, young man! But if you haven't noticed, this country was liberated not only by the big Russian army but also some American troops. And we cannot take chances that someone might think that you're a bastard of some American soldier We've analyzed the situation, boy, and we've got everything under control, nobody will think about our Czechoslovak People's Army that it's a hotbed of American soldiers' bastards. People could think that . . . we live in politically difficult times. (210)

18. The term "socialism with a human face" refers to a political program announced by Alexander Dubček at the Presidium of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in April 1968. The reform program presented a new model of democratic and liberal socialism. Its implementation was, however, never realized because of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, ordered by the Soviet leadership, fearing a loss of control over the country.

19. While a proper way of addressing a woman or a man in Czech culture is by prefacing their names or professions with the appropriate title of "Mrs." or "Mr.," communist ideology demanded that people be addressed as Comrades. Failure to employ the title "Comrade" could have been seen as a subversive act and punished accordingly.

20. Tomáš Zmeškal, *Životopis černobílého jehněte* (Praha: Torst, 2009), 288. The novel has not been translated into English. I have translated all subsequent citations from the original Czech purely for the purposes of this article. Hereafter cited in the text.

Although discriminatory and somehow false-sounding given the temporal distance of two generations away from World War II, for Czech officials there is nothing inherently racist in keeping a black soldier out of representative ranks. They justify their arguments by listing examples of Czechoslovakia's internationalist attitudes and support of black Communists, clear evidence of the country's belief in and practice of racial equality. But the quotation reveals a discrepancy between the communist official rhetoric of racial equality and its exclusionary practice of solely embracing countries and individuals willing to follow the communist path. The mention of Angela Davis, a black American Communist, exposes the fact that when ideologically *useful*, blacks were seen as political allies, despite their association with imperialist America. They were used as token "representatives of all the colored people in the world' for whom . . . 'the humanists in the socialist camp,' were ready to fight . . . to protect [them] from the evils of capitalist exploitation and racial injustice."²¹ In other words, they were exploited for ideological objectives: used in political propaganda against capitalism and bourgeois racism. Since Václav, being a Czech citizen, cannot serve these purposes, visibility of his blackness is, officially, undesirable.

Zmeřkal does not contemplate whether or not Václav's experience could have been different had he become a member of the Communist party, or whether or not his membership could have erased the stain of being an offspring of a father from an ideologically hostile country, a fact highlighted in his file that the two doctors were discussing.²² Instead, he explores how communist ideology affected the lives of racially mixed people who chose not to adhere to it. In doing so, he exposes that vis-à-vis blackness, the abstract rhetoric of communist internationalist propaganda had little, if nothing, to do with lived, experienced reality.

When Václav and his twin sister, Lucie, are born, their father must leave Czechoslovakia and return to the Congo, a country "that wasn't following the right kind of leftist path" (2). The reader is told that their mother lost her job on account of having children with an African, her friends deserted her, and she became subject to racist threats and intimidation. Unable to cope with the situation and to take care of and provide for her children, she suffered a mental breakdown, ending up in a mental asylum. Having internalized ideological hatred toward her husband and, by extension, toward herself, she becomes unable to accept her own children whom she sees as monsters (115). As one of the psychiatrists, Dr. Mikeš, explains to Václav and Lucie, who are shaken by their mother's words, her behavior is a result of a self-defense mechanism preventing her from further pain:

You know when there's a lot of hatred and evil around someone who is very fragile, like your mother, and this person cannot fight back, in order to protect herself from the pain, she gives up the most precious thing she owns. She sacrifices what is most precious to her, and that was you.

21. Josef Jařab, "Race Relations in Europe and America," in *Living with America, 1946–1996*, ed. Cristina Giorcelli and Rob Kroes (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1997), 289.

22. Under Communism, for each person there was a file, which contained an ideological profile of the person. This profile would also contain information about his/her parents, namely whether or not they were members of the Communist party, etc.

People kept hurting her so much that by doing what she did, she tells them, leave me alone, leave me in peace, *I'll be a good girl. I'll never have anything to do with anyone whom you hate.* The society we live in is a weird being, and this being was tormenting your mommy. And she became ill because of that, and because of that she hurt you today. (119, italics mine)

While explicit about the detrimental effect of ideological hatred on and its internalization by the family of the twins, the above quotation exposes a discrepancy in the communist rhetoric of racial equality. Although it does not provide a satisfying explanation as to why the society views the twins' father in a negative light, the novel suggests that this collective hatred is not purely on account of his being a political enemy (i.e., coming from a country following the wrong path). The negative attitude seems to have something to do with his blackness since his wife is fired *on account of having children with an African* and is subject to *racist* threats. But since blackness does not have an *a priori* negative connotation in a country without a history of slavery, in which most people, thanks to communist propaganda and education, either genuinely believe in racial equality or, given the Russian dictatorship, secretly identify themselves with American blacks' struggle for liberation, it would be perhaps more accurate to read blackness in terms of otherness, i.e., a difference which threatens Czechoslovak cultural (and racial) homogeneity. In this light, the twins' mother is punished and subject to harassment not because she married a black person, but because she dared not to conform to the (cultural) norm in a society which considers difference as ideologically suspicious.

The issue of difference or otherness resonates more clearly in the words of Dr. Mikeš who summarizes Václav's *tragedy* by pointing out how his very being defies any categorization: "This young man with his African features, his love for classical music and his unfitting [read Czech] name must have brought complete chaos into the Communist perception of the world. It was just too bad that he did not fit any of their stereotypical categories" (287). These words, reminiscent of Toni Morrison's insight that American Africanism, i.e., blackness "provides a way of contemplating chaos,"²³ reveal that the presence of real, material blackness in communist Czechoslovakia posed a challenge not only because it threatened the cultural homogeneity of the country but also, and perhaps more importantly, because it represented something for which the abstract, colorblind, communist rhetoric of racial equality, in which race is subsumed under the category of class, did not have appropriate terms.²⁴

In the absence of adequate language to describe that which was never thought of beyond the stereotype of an exploited American black or under-developed African black, there could be no way of dealing with blackness other than making it conform or, when this is not possible, disappear from the public where it is too visible – hence Václav's experience of not being able to join the army representative music

23. Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 7.

24. In communist terminology, the meaning of the word *class* differs from the meaning in which it is used by black American feminists (i.e., as a social position, e.g., middle class). In communist ideology, it is understood in terms of two antagonistic groups: bourgeoisie and proletariat. Here I mean that race is subsumed under the category of working class (proletariat).

ensemble and Lucie's experience of not being allowed to teach Roma children (189).²⁵ Although in both of these cases blackness (i.e., its visibility) is the main reason for the discriminatory behavior of Czech officials, these experiences should not be understood as mere instances of racism based on skin color but as instances of discrimination based on conformism to communist ideology, from which many white Czechs citizens were not exempt either.²⁶

Despite these arguments, the novel reveals that the discussion of "the Africanist presence" in communist Czechoslovakia cannot be reduced to a mere ideological view of blackness, but that one must also examine the views held by ordinary Czechs. Naturally, in a country with no black population and closed borders restricting both immigration and emigration, black people are viewed, first and foremost, as foreigners. The twins, living in Prague, are thus mistaken for children of diplomats (58), addressed in a foreign language (308), and complimented on their good knowledge of Czech (108, 196). These observations seem perfectly neutral, just as does the behavior of dozens of people with whom Lucie and Václav come in contact and befriend throughout the novel. However, the twins are also subject to stereotyping (Lucie is told to consider dancing because all blacks are surely good at it [38]), exoticism (Lucie is called "Black Pearl" by the priest who christens her [71]), discrimination (Václav has to put a T-shirt on on the bus while his friend Oleg, also bare-chested, remains unnoticed [155]), and prejudice combined with racism (girls do not want to dance with Václav and one refers to him as a "nigger" [147]).

Zmeškal tries to soften Czechs' negative attitudes to blackness by presenting them as individual cases of behavior that are not representative of the Czech collective consciousness. He does so by always juxtaposing them with examples of positive attitudes – thus, for example, when Václav overhears that he is being referred to as "a nigger," he is soon afterwards addressed as "sir" by another person. Yet it is clear that the twins suffer the consequences of their racial difference. The reader learns that when still small, Václav and Lucie dreamed of having to wear a ribbon with a blue comet, a version of the Jewish yellow star (95–97), and that by the time they are grown up, they have invented their own gesture to substitute for the word "racism" that they often experience: a wrist-rotation, showing the difference between the brown back of the hand and the white palm of the hand (223).

Despite their shared feeling of racism impacting their lives, further underscored by the fact that they can read each other's thoughts (1, 172), Václav's and Lucie's individual experiences of racism differ with respect to gender. While blackness makes Václav, in his adult years,²⁷ undesirable or fearsome in the eyes of strangers who try to avoid his

25. The word *disappear* is used in the sense of *to make less visible*, not in the sense *to exterminate*. Nowhere in the novel does Zmeškal suggest that the twins were subject to violence or intimidation. Instead, he includes individual stories showing that white non-conforming Czechs were often victims of the communist system.

26. Zmeškal talks to this effect in an interview with David Vaughan, "Tomáš Zmeškal: The Biography of a Black-and-White Lamb," *Czech Radio*, February 18, 2012, <http://www.radio.cz/en/article/145660>.

27. When Lucie and Václav are still children, both of them are perceived the same way: as cute foreigners.

presence, Lucie's blackness makes her highly desirable, soliciting unwelcome attention. In both cases, several stereotypes come into play. In Václav's case, it is the fear of the "other" – the unknown, the unfamiliar – which relates to what Zmeškal describes as "a complete lack of knowledge of any foreign culture."²⁸ We can see it at work, for example, when some people hesitate to sit next to Václav on the bus. Second, it is the stereotype of a poor black from an underdeveloped Third World country upheld by communist propaganda, which seems at work when, for example, a girl justifies her refusal to dance with Václav by saying that she has her standards (147). Coupled with these stereotypes, there is also a general disapproval of racial coupling, seen, as explained earlier, as an undesirable threat to the cultural homogeneity of communist Czechoslovakia. This explains why Václav fails to find a summer job because search committees assume that his presence among too many girls would not be "very good" (224). This assumption is based, as Václav deduces, not on the stereotype of a hypersexual black male but on the stereotype of Africans' animal-like fertility (224).

In Lucie's case, blackness operates differently; she is seen, first and foremost, as a beautiful, exotic object with which men can either enhance their own status or through which they can demonstrate their anti-regime liberal thinking (298). Being exotic and female also makes her desirable sexually; she has to face "a never-ending stream of boys who wanted only one thing, which they wanted from every woman but doubly from an exotic one" (299). Her sexual desirability, however, is not predicated upon the stereotype of an immoral black woman, a Jezebel; it is rather related to Czech men's curiosity as to what it is like to have sex with a black woman, what color her genitalia may be (184).

Clearly, Lucie, unlike Václav, experiences being black as inextricably linked to objectification and exploitation (as well as exploration) of her body, which is emphasized in the final episode of the novel in which Lucie dies in a car accident. When Václav comes to the morgue to see his sister's body, he is asked to sign papers to consent with its conservation so it can be used for medical purposes. When he objects to the idea of her sister's body being an exhibit like that of Angelo Soliman,²⁹ he is told that "Czech science cannot let such a beautiful specimen go [and that] the law allows this to be done [even without his consent]" (324). Although he is reassured that Lucie will not be publicly displayed as an attraction, there seems to be a striking parallel to Sarah Baartman's story³⁰ – a need to objectify, posthumously, two black women's bodies in order to satisfy scientific curiosity.

Although in communist Czechoslovakia the society's enemy, i.e., the other, is posited in ideological terms as he who does not conform, both Lucie and Václav feel that by virtue of their skin color, they do not fit in the racially homogenous culture. While their

28. Zmeškal quoted in David Vaughan, "Tomáš Zmeškal."

29. A court Moor posthumously displayed in a Viennese museum as a half-naked savage.

30. Known as the "Hottentot Venus," Sarah Baartman was exhibited as a freak already when alive but after her death, her brain, skeleton and genitals were put on display in a museum. For more on the story of Sarah Baartman see, for example, Clifton Crais and Pamela Scully, *Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus: A Ghost Story and a Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

lives are not affected by specific controlling images created to foster their oppression, they are subject to “otherness” vis-à-vis their visibility from which they cannot escape. At some point in the novel, Václav summarizes his frustration with the debilitating and oppressive situation: “I thought I could have a deal with this devil [Bolshevik]. I thought that if I respected their rules, *I could somehow survive. But I can’t* because they do not respect even their own rules. They are brutes, Lucie. . . . They can always get at us, communists as well as the racist idiots, whenever they want. Here, we are too visible, sis” (224, italics mine).

Václav’s words reveal the extent to which the lives of black people in communist Czechoslovakia are thwarted by oppressive forces they cannot control, suffused with pain and thoughts of death. This inevitable tragic element is underscored by the title of the novel – *Životopis černobílého jehněte* [The Biography of a Black-and-White Lamb] – which, pertinently, implies a sacrifice of a person of mixed race origins. The image of a black-and-white lamb corresponds to a large extent to the American stereotype of the tragic mulatto/mulatta³¹ – a person who, being neither white nor black, fails to fit in the world, often voluntarily ending his/her life. In this light, both Václav and Lucie can be seen as tragic mulattos because they are sacrificed (i.e., given up) by their own mother. The metaphor of the lamb, however, adds an extra layer to the tragedy, for a lamb is an offspring of a sheep, and sheep are known for blindly following the crowd. In this light, part of the twins’ tragedy is the fact that the mother accepted and internalized the society’s hatred of her husband (i.e., followed the crowd), the outcome of which was her sacrifice of her children.

But there is another interpretation to consider, for the title of the novel involves just one black-and-white lamb. Given the meaning of the word biography, that is, a life story of a person written by someone else, and the tragic death of Lucie, we are led to believe that the title of the novel refers to her. Indeed, Zmeškal presents Lucie as a black-and-white lamb in two different ways. First, he portrays her as a specifically Czech tragic mulatta – “the suspect suburban foreign African Viktorka” (289)³² – who, young, beautiful, and loved, is sacrificed because she does not know what to do with herself in a world too hostile to her. By invoking the name of Viktorka, a name capturing a thwarted life of a Czech woman, and prefacing it with the word African, Zmeškal creates a specific image of a racially mixed tragic female in Czech culture. This image, moreover, connects Lucie to her mother, whose story – involving a love for a strange man who disappears, giving up her offspring and subsequently becoming mad – parallels that of Viktorka.

While the circumstances under which Lucie dies remain unclear to the reader (we do not know whether she committed suicide although we know that she contemplated the option), there is no doubt that Lucie’s life was tragic; while still alive, she was referred

31. This fictional stereotype of the tragic mulatto/mulatta dates back to the nineteenth century. For more on this stereotype see, for example, Eve Allegra Raimon, *The “Tragic Mulatta” Revisited: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Antislavery Fiction* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004).

32. Viktorka is a tragic character from Božena Němcová’s classic book *Granny* [Babička] (1855), who became mad and drowned her own baby.

to as “the saddest person in the world” (312). It is not incidental that the words are employed by a priest because they are meant as yet another reference to the image of a sacrificial lamb, which is used in Christianity as a metaphor for Jesus Christ the Savior. But while Christ took upon himself the sins of the world and died on the cross to save humanity, in the novel, Lucie takes upon herself the sadness of the world to die a futile death. We are not saved and we do not deserve it. As the priest explains his belief, “When the saddest person in the world appears in our part of the world, we have disappointed our Creator. And this mean[s] that sooner or later, we will, so to speak, experience a loss of hope” (312). With Lucie’s death, Czechs experience a loss of hope in a society in which racial difference can be embraced.

To conclude, employing a black feminist lens in order to examine how “African presence,” i.e., blackness, was perceived in communist Czechoslovakia has proved fruitful for several reasons. It challenges a monolithic notion of Czechness (both in terms of a racially homogenous culture and in terms of the culture’s (non)racist attitudes) and reveals how ideology complicates reading of blackness. It exposes a discrepancy between the communist official rhetoric of racial equality and a lived reality of blacks whose blackness is too visible and ideologically undesirable. It also reveals that while communist ideology had a far-reaching impact on people, forcing them to conform, Czechs had varied views of blackness, some of them based on stereotypical images of blacks. With respect to gender, female blackness has always been linked to objectification and exploitation (and thus desirability) while male blackness was more often perceived as fearsome and undesirable. In both cases, however, Czechs’ negative reactions to blackness contributed to black people’s feeling of oppression. Finally, as groundwork for further explorations of blackness (not only) in communist Czechoslovakia, this analysis gives hope to black feminist literary critics that despite the negative prognosis of the death of African American literature and the end of the zenith of black feminist criticism,³³ there is still work to do – if only they, responding to Ann DuCille’s call, shift their textual terrain.

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33. For more on the death of African American literature see, for example, Kenneth W. Warren, *What Was African American Literature?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). For more on the end of the zenith of black feminist literary criticism see, for example, Ann DuCille, “The Short Happy Life of Black Feminist Theory,” 32–47.

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MULTIVOCALITY, IDENTITY AND TRADITION IN MICHAEL DORRIS'S *A YELLOW RAFT IN BLUE WATER*

ŠÁRKA BUBÍKOVÁ

University of Pardubice, Pardubice, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Department of English and American Studies, Studentská 84, 532 10 Pardubice, Czech Republic. Email: sarka.bubikova@upce.cz

ABSTRACT: This article explores Michael Dorris's 1987 novel *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*, which is worthy of analysis both as a text *per se* and as a novel written by a self-identified Native American attempting to write from within the Native American experience. The novel consists of three deeply intertwined narratives about the lives of three consecutive generations of Native American women. Issues of identity in a bi-cultural (and even multi-cultural) setting as well as the clash between tradition and contemporaneous life as they are depicted in the novel are addressed, and the narrative character of the work is discussed using Gordon E. Slethaug's insightful concept of multivocal narrative.

KEYWORDS: Native American literature; Michael Dorris; *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*; bi-cultural heritage; identity; narrative strategy; multivocal narrative

Michael Dorris's novel *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* consists of three narratives that at first glance seem unconnected but which are in fact deeply intertwined. The narrative structure is described in the last sentence of the book: "the rhythm of three strands, the whispers of coming and going, of twisting and tying and blending, of catching and of letting go, of braiding."¹ Together, the three narrative strands form a novel of three protagonists' life formation, each of a different kind, yet in some ways paralleling and reflecting on the other two. Thus each narrative forms a background and a framework for the other two. Unlike the second and third narratives, the first one covers only a brief period of time, a period when adversity makes the protagonist mature very quickly; in this way, the other two narratives fill in the gaps of the first one. By focusing on three consecutive generations of Native American women, Dorris's three-layered novel also tells the history of the protagonists' community, placing the individual stories in the context of a communal narrative. Gordon E. Slethaug notes on the novel's narrative structure: "Multivocality exposes cultural assumptions underlying traditional modes of narration, and, within such a multivocal text itself, each narrator's view must be positioned against the preceding one so that one voice transgresses, reconsiders, and rewrites another."²

The first narrative relates the formative period in the life of the teenage girl Rayona, the second the childhood of Rayona's mother Christine, and the third the story of Rayona's grandmother, called Aunt Ida, who is the family's matriarch. Each of the

1. Michael Dorris, *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* (New York: Henry Holt, 1987), 343. Hereafter cited in text.

2. Gordon E. Slethaug, "Multivocal Narration and Cultural Negotiation: Dorris's *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* and *Cloud Chamber*," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 11, no. 1 (1999): 19.

protagonists is engaged in a difficult personal struggle: for Rayona it is her dual heritage, for Christine the consequence of her jealous relationship with her brother Lee, and for Ida her decision to take upon herself the responsibility for raising her father's illegitimate child. All three protagonists grow up in variously dysfunctional families. Thus, in presenting the lives of three generations, the novel also uncovers hurtful patterns of behavior – emotional withdrawal, silencing the past, and a lack of effective communication.

All three protagonists, each in her own way, have to negotiate their living in (or in-between) two worlds – that of the Native traditions on the reservation and the white, Christian, English-speaking America surrounding it. All three are bilingual, but while Rayona and Christine mostly use English, Ida speaks her native tongue. At one point Christine comments on Ida's language:

Actually what [Ida] said was sharper than that since she said it in Indian. English is mild in comparison, full of soft sounds that take the punch out of your thoughts. When she did speak English, Aunt Ida pronounced each of her words separately, as if surprised to find her own voice using a language she only heard in church. . . . Her face said she doubted these noises meant anything a person could decipher. . . . Around us she didn't bother with English at all, and in Indian her words poured like thick whiskey that had never seen water. (141)

Although the novel is written in English, in the beginning of Ida's story the protagonist explains that even if she "can speak their English better than they think" she prefers her "own language . . . words that shaped [her] construction of events . . . words that gave [her] power" (273). Dorris thus creates the illusion of presenting an English translation of Ida's story that was also originally Native American linguistically. And by stressing that Ida's "recollections are not tied to white paper" and that she changes the story, "add[s] to it, revise[s], invent[s] the parts [she] forget[s] or never knew" (273), he invokes the orality of the traditional storytelling.

Both Christine and Rayona face occasional difficulties with being bilingual. Thus for example Christine admits that after many years spent away from the reservation, "Indian was strange in my speech and in my ears. Half the time I had to translate to myself" (190). But despite the fact that she raises her daughter in Seattle and speaks mostly English herself, she teaches Rayona "to speak Indian as good as English" (212) in order for Rayona to know who she is. Yet Dorris avoids identifying Rayona's roots with a particular tribe and uses a kind of pan-Indian context instead of a tribal one. In an interview, Dorris and Louise Erdrich openly stated that they intend pan-Indianism as a means of being more universal, presenting Native Americans in a non-stereotypical way.³ The different level of command (or of centrality) of English as it changes from generation to generation reflects the gradual process of assimilation, a process universal among the Native American population. David Cowart suggests that Dorris "may also wish to defer to what remains of tribal integrity; thus the reader sees in his generic

3. See Laura Coltell, *Winged Words: American Indian Writers Speak* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 43.

Indians the necessary diffidence of one whose own tribe, the Modoc, has been largely assimilated.”⁴

The issue of identity is most foregrounded in Rayona’s story of coming-of-age because she is a mixed-blood of Native American and African American origin,⁵ or, as Dorris himself described her, “a combination ethnically.”⁶ As such she is often subject to racial discrimination and ostracism for *both* parts of her heritage. Her mother is Native American and her father black, yet in her identity quest Rayona is not helped much by either of them – her father is mostly absent and her mother, with whom Rayona has a rather tense relationship – is terminally ill. The parents are no longer together and Rayona remembers what her mother used to say to her father: “We’re the wrong color for each other” (9). Aware of the skin color issue, Rayona comments: “Once, in a hardware store, I found each of our exact shades on a paint mix-tone chart. Mom was Almond Joy, Dad was Burnt Clay, and I was Maple Walnut” (9). Already in the opening scene of the narrative when fifteen-year-old Rayona visits her mother in the hospital, her awareness of her unusual heritage is underscored – when her father enters the room Rayona notices the attention they get: “The two other sick women in the room are awake, and as alert and interested as if they were watching TV. . . . I can read their thoughts: *That little Indian woman, I don’t know what tribe, with a big black man. And a child, a too-tall girl. She looks like him.* They are delighted. They have a story to tell” (7; italics in the original).

Throughout the narrative, Rayona makes frequent comments on her skin color, for example: “In the sunlight my skin is the color of pine sap” (54). “The skin of my long arms is brown and smooth, too dark to notice” (67). People often do not know where to place her, either recognizing and/or acknowledging just one part of her heritage (“He didn’t mention you was Black” [71]) or seeing her as neither one, as for example when, due to frequently moving around, she always remains for her classmates “the new kid,” one they see as “too big, too smart, not Black, not Indian, not friendly” (25).

As any child, Rayona longs for a loving and supportive family but unfortunately, she does not really have one. Although she lives with her mother, she also has her experience with foster homes where she was placed whenever her mother was recovering from bouts of excessive drinking. The loneliness makes Rayona mature for her age – as for example when she reflects on the futility of her attempts to keep her father a part of her life: “I have tried things on Dad, too, before I became no fool: tears, good grades, writing letters, getting him presents. At first every one of them seemed to do the trick. He’d smile or send me a postcard or promise to call tomorrow and then weeks would pass” (9). She even wanders around his mail delivery route and dreams of

4. David Cowart, “The Rhythm of Three Strands: Cultural Braiding in Dorris’s *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*,” *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 8, no. 1 (1996): 3.

5. In Dorris’s next novel, *Cloud Chamber*, we learn that Rayona’s father’s family is racially mixed, too – his grandmother is white and Irish. But because there is no such suggestion in *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* and the present paper discusses this novel alone, this fact is not taken into consideration in the analysis.

6. Coltelli, *Winged Words*, 51.

meeting him and sharing lunch with him “and people passing in cars would smile at us, a father and a daughter who looked so much alike, having their lunch . . . just because they enjoyed being together” (9).

Rayona’s sense of abandonment and lack of self worth only increases when her desperate mother takes her to her Native American relatives on a Montana reservation and without a word of explanation leaves Rayona at her grandmother’s. Although Rayona’s grandmother Aunt Ida still speaks the tribal language and knows traditional dancing, she is not really the traditional wise elder – she patterns her life by TV shows. Aunt Ida is not in touch with her family or with her community and therefore cannot be truly helpful in Rayona’s identity quest. It is the priest from the reservation parish Father Tom who tries to engage Rayona with her peers but when he introduces her to a local youth group, she is painfully reminded of what her body signifies: “The two [Indian teenagers] look me up and down. I know what they see. Wrong color, outsider, skinny, friend of the priest” (40). Instead of receiving support from her extended family, Rayona is in fact bullied by a relative, her full-blood cousin Foxy: “You’re the one whose father is a nigger” (41). Thus Rayona’s community refuses her as an outsider, as different, as a lesser member of the community, even an enemy: “Foxy calls me ‘Buffalo Soldier’ after the black men who were cavalry scouts and fought Indians a long time ago. He leaves a note stuck in the Africa section of my geography book. ‘When are you going home?’” (44).

She is surprised and hurt that even another mixed-blood classmate “who has the blond hair and green eyes of his white mother” exhibits the same kind of racist behavior as Foxy: “You sure you ain’t looking for the *Blackfeet* reservation?” (44). Rayona’s position does not improve with time, and the ostracizing continues: “As the days get longer and hotter, Foxy starts in about my Coppertone tan” (47). When drunk, Foxy’s insults get even worse: “I saw this dark patch against the wall and I thought, Foxy, either that’s the biggest piece of horse shit you’ve ever seen or it’s your fucking cousin Rayona” (102). The unhappy and frustrated Rayona concludes: “I haven’t become popular and I haven’t turned invisible” (47). Rayona longs for invisibility so that no one could “read her body,” read the visible signs that mark her as an outsider, as one who does not belong. Foxy and others like him never get beyond Rayona’s physical appearance, never even trying to see the person inside the body.

Father Tom tries to be helpful by acknowledging Rayona’s situation:

“It’s not easy being a young person alone at your age,” Father Tom says, “when you’re different.”
“I’m not different.”

“I mean, your dual heritage,” he says. “Not that you shouldn’t be proud of it.” This is the first time he’s admitted to my skin color, to the shape of my nose, to the stiff fullness of my hair. (51)

However, Father Tom does not make the situation any easier when he finds himself physically attracted to Rayona. While Foxy reduces Rayona to a racial identification, which he finds ugly, Father Tom reduces her to an object of sexual desire: “You have reached the age of puberty and are turning into a young lady. . . . An attractive young lady” (46). He even encourages Rayona to leave the reservation (so that she cannot report his sexual advances) and go back to the city. He suggests that she could find people in Seattle who share her dual heritage, so she “won’t feel so alone, so out

of place" (58). To help her in her identity quest, he offers a cheap would-be Native American piece of jewelry: "Wear this. Then people will know you're an Indian" (58). As Native American literature scholar Louis Owens states, Father Tom makes it sound as if "identity is all surface,"⁷ a mask to be put on or taken off at will: "With the medallion, Rayona may become Native American rather than African American."⁸ The gift of the Indian medallion not only reduces the issue of identity to mere surface, to a generally recognizable icon, it also suggests that Father Tom considers Native American identity somehow privileged or more easily acceptable than African American identity, therefore revealing his own racial prejudices.

Repeatedly abandoned, racially and sexually assaulted, never fully acknowledged as a unique person, Rayona decides to remain in the wilderness, where Father Tom has literally abandoned her. She thus symbolically repeats the "lighting out for the territories" of Huckleberry Finn, who similarly flees from a civilization he fears and distrusts into nature. In this neutral territory, both Huck and Rayona can be who they really are. The raft from the novel's title becomes a site of initiation for Rayona (Father Tom has tried to seduce her on the raft; later she relaxes and meditates on her identity there) as well as it was for Huck Finn. Alone and away from all who betrayed her, Rayona's life begins anew. She finds not only a place to stay and a temporary job at the Bearpaw Lake State Park, but more importantly a young married couple – Evelyn and Sky – who become her surrogate parents. They are both employed at the park – Sky runs a gas station and Evelyn works as a cook. They are friendly and caring people and they accept Rayona regardless of her heritage. She is inspired by Evelyn's strong will and perseverance as well as by Sky's good humor and uncomplicated acceptance of things as they come. Rayona is also immediately accepted into the maintenance crew. Even if she is an oddity there because of both her gender and race, the manager sees this in positive terms: "You know, we've never had anyone of your race to work here before, and we've never had a young lady employed in park maintenance. You are something of a ground breaker, and I expect you to do us proud" (71).

Michael Dorris distinguishes two kinds of belonging which define our identity. On a larger scale, each of us is "a part of a people, of a complex society that defines us – such as being American." But he also speaks of belonging, "if we are fortunate," into "a small, more particular community, defined by ethnicity or kinship, belief system or geography." He concludes that it is "in this intimate circle that we are most 'ourselves.'"⁹ Rayona's case well illustrates this concept. Growing up in the post-civil rights era, she is accepted into the larger community: her belonging as an American is never questioned, her rights as a citizen never compromised. But she is not fortunate enough to belong in the intimate circle of her kin – there she must struggle hard to finally gain acceptance.

7. Louis Owens, *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 221.

8. Owens, *Other Destinies*, 221.

9. Michael Dorris, foreword to *Kinaaldá: A Navajo Girl Grows Up*, by Monty Roessel (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1993), 6–7.

Dorris adds another interesting aspect to the issue of Rayona's identity quest. While cleaning the campsite, Rayona finds a piece of a handwritten letter from parents to their daughter at a summer camp. The warm words of familial support touch her to the point that she saves the letter and in her longing for a loving family assumes the identity of the letter's addressee, i.e., she imagines and on occasions pretends to be the daughter from the letter, a middle-class girl who extends her summer camp experience by taking up a summer job at the state park while her parents travel in Europe. In this way, Rayona tries to patent her own identity but eventually realizes that this is not really who she is, that the adopted identity of a white well-to-do and slightly spoiled girl does not fit her. Although Rayona claims that "[i]t's as though I'm dreaming a lot of lives and I can mix and match the parts into something new each time" (80), she is not really mixing various parts of diverse identities but trying on a completely different one in order to fit in, in fact attempting a form of racial passing.

Finally, Rayona, motivated by Evelyn's ability to stand up for herself, realizes that in order to come to terms with her identity and the things that have happened to her, she must return to the reservation and face her kin. She does so accompanied by Sky and Evelyn who drive her back, taking a day off under the excuse of visiting a rodeo. At the rodeo, Rayona meets Foxy who is too drunk to ride, and he manipulates her to ride a wild horse in his place, dressed in his jacket and hat.¹⁰ Rayona perseveres in her ride and with determination climbs back on the horse every time he throws her down. Disguised as Foxy, her main abuser, Rayona even receives a prize "for the roughest, toughest, clumsiest cowboy" (112). When she steps up to claim it, she reveals her true identity and for her courage and determination is cheered at first by Evelyn and then by the rest of the audience triumphing as a rodeo queen. Masking her gender and ethnicity and for the sake of the rodeo ride "passing" as her full blood male cousin, Rayona challenges the community's assumptions and their stereotypes about racial identification. Rayona not only wins appreciation from her reservation community but at the same time wins over Foxy, turning him into an object of jokes and thus destroying his image of the tough bully.

Nevertheless, throughout her identity quest Rayona is connecting with only one part of her identity, the Indian part, and not with her African American heritage. Thus, rather than mixing different parts of her dual heritage, she makes her either/or choice and claims only one part of her origin.¹¹

Apart from the specifics of three individual lives, by presenting the story of three generations Dorris also depicts the changing historical context. This can be seen not only in the shifting attitude toward the English language but also in the way the characters see and identify themselves as Americans and as Native Americans. Although Rayona's mother Christine grows up on the reservation, she identifies neither

10. The rodeo ride is for men only.

11. In his last novel, *Cloud Chamber*, published in 1997, Dorris narrates Rayona's paternal heritage, which, however, is not fully African American because Rayona's paternal grandmother is Irish. In addition the African American paternal grandfather is absent from the narrative.

as Indian nor Native American, contrary to her brother Lee, who becomes involved in the civil rights movement, finishing high school as “Red Power” (145) and calling himself Native American instead of Indian. While Lee gets involved in politics and tries to connect to his Native American roots (by braiding his hair, taking part in traditional dances and interviewing elders about the way things used to be), Christine sees herself as “American all the way” (146). Until she is disappointed when the expected end of the world does not come, she is a devout Catholic.

Christine even accuses Lee’s mixed-blood friend Dayton of not belonging on the reservation, disregarding the fact that he is “an enrolled member of this Indian nation” (149). She thus commits the same kind of abuse that her daughter will eventually be faced with in returning as a mixed-blood to her mother’s home reservation. To confirm her Americanness, Christine tries hard to manipulate her brother into joining the U.S. Army in Vietnam not only to win him over from Dayton’s influence, but mostly because she believes it is the right thing for him to do as an American. She considers it a heroic act in the “great warrior tradition of Indian people” (170) that will boost his popularity on the reservation and will add to his future political career. Christine echoes the official propaganda that according to Slethaug often used the warrior tradition to commit Native Americans “to a national agenda which need not be theirs.”¹² Slethaug suggests “how Native American causes have often been sacrificed to national agendas and wars.”¹³ When Lee declares that he is “not going to fight a white man’s war” (149), Christine accuses him of being “just a yellow kid who’s scared to defend his country” (150). Paradoxically, in calling Lee “yellow” she echoes the words of Lee’s friend Dayton: “Those Vietnamese ain’t so different from us. . . . Same skin, same hair” (146). Similarly, when Christine accidentally steps into a tavern frequented by African Americans, one of the customers takes her for Chinese. As he relates his mistake to her, he exposes the way he “read her body” in order to identify who she was. “I thought you were Chinese. The bars over in ‘Nam are full of Chinese women. But then I looked closer. You’ve got meat on you, you’re solid” (164).

The unreliability of our tendency to “read bodies” for their racial signs is also illustrated by the example of Father Hurlburt, a local priest of the same generation as Aunt Ida, who is described as “dark-haired and thin, with eyes so blue people wouldn’t look into them” (285). But when he later reveals to Ida that he is part Indian, she “scrutinize[s] him” and concludes: “I could see it” (297). When Ida stops viewing Father Hurlburt as the (racially) other and as an outsider, thus is no longer relying on the superficial reading of his body but moves beyond and tries to see his personality, they are able to form a deep relationship. Ida makes note of this turning point:

There was a sadness about him, a lostness that made me wonder for the first time what he was doing here, an outsider, used but not wanted. I never thought of priests and nuns as living apart from the burdens they put on us. For a flash I saw the man within the priest and it startled me. I forgot to turn away and we looked at each other, curious as two animals who drink from the same stream. (287)

12. Slethaug, “Multivocal Narration,” 25.

13. Slethaug, “Multivocal Narration,” 24.

When Father Hurlburt learns Ida's native language, she notices that he speaks it very well, without a traceable accent and thus judging purely from his speech, he might be considered Native American, or, as Ida puts it, as "one of us" (315). She therefore points to language as another identity signifier.

The characters of Father Hurlburt, Father Tom, and the nuns (both the sisters at the Denver motherhouse where Ida is sent along with her Aunt Clara to await the birth of Clara's illegitimate daughter Christine, as well as the nuns at the missionary school on the reservation) represent the uneasy and often conflicted relationship between Native cultures and the Catholic Church. On one hand, there is Father Hurlburt, the selfless, respectful, devoted humanist, always ready to offer a hand. The attitudes of the nuns in the convent in Denver represent stereotypes and appropriation. Not knowing the real situation, they see Clara as a victim, "an innocent lamb, abused like a martyr by a rampaging beast of a man" (289). Because she so well fits stories "of their saints . . . of virgins pursued by pagan Roman soldiers" (289) they treat her well, as a special guest and a promise. On the other hand, Ida, as just a come-along relative is reduced to a convenient workforce, to an almost invisible presence. When she becomes exhausted from the hard work and lack of sleep, she becomes to represent for the nuns all the stereotypes about the Native American – i.e., she has a bad command of English, is lazy because it is hard to awaken her for work, and is not a good enough Christian for being too tired to kneel upright in the chapel. One can only speculate about whether Ida agreed to take upon herself the shame of being a single mother and of raising a child not her own in order to fulfill the Catholic model of martyrdom in the hopes that this might bring her the respect and gratitude of her family and community. While at first she could have felt manipulated into the agreement by her father, there were other occasions when she could have given the burden up, especially once she began to resent it.

While in Ida's life the presence of the Catholic Church has both negative and positive effects, Rayona's experience with Father Tom has only the negative form of his sexual advances. But the most devastating influence of Catholicism is on young Christine. As one of the sisters at her school is a follower of the cult of Our Lady of Fatima, the nun keeps telling the pupils about a letter supposedly given to a girl by the Virgin Mary at Fatima and which the Pope was supposed to open in 1960. In the nun's belief, the opening of the letter means that the world would come to an end. Christine, then a teenager, meticulously prepares for the end of the world. When nothing happens, she feels deeply betrayed, not only by the fact that the world did not end but also by the nun's elusive answer of "It's a mystery" (135). It is after this experience of being scared for years about the end of the world, of being manipulated into constant penitence, that Christine never returns to the church again. When her youthful devotion is so betrayed, she loses faith completely. In that respect, Christine's spiritual coming-of-age is almost antithetical because instead of awaking to spiritual growth, she suffers a fatal spiritual crisis that results in her turning her back on all the teachings and morals the Catholic

Church promoted, becoming a party goer and a heavy drinker. Later when her brother Lee dies in Vietnam she tries to drown her guilt in alcohol.¹⁴

A Yellow Raft in Blue Water is also a novel about coping with various forms of loss. Some of these are personal – such as the loss of faith or trust, the loss of family or health – but many are communal losses as well. Lee's death in Vietnam is a great loss for the tribe, a loss of the promising future represented by the young man's involvement in civil rights and in keeping tribal traditions alive. Even Ida's withdrawal from the social life of the tribe is a communal loss as, instead of providing the community with memory and over time accumulated wisdom, she focuses her attention on the illusionary world of TV sitcoms and family sagas. Yet she draws from her tribal traditions in order to find strengths and meaning in her life. Although Dorris is not specific as to which tribe the novel presents and thus stays more on a generic pan-Indian level, he nevertheless uses certain motifs and techniques to evoke the Native American world. One of them is a narrative technique which is circular rather than linear – many events and situations are repeated from different characters' points of view. This is reminiscent of oral traditions of storytelling as well as of gossiping.¹⁵ A recurrent motif is that of braiding. The braiding symbolically represents Rayona's maternal heritage – Christine braids Rayona's hair at the novel's opening, Ida braids her hair at the end of the novel, Lee braids his hair as a symbol of his recognition and pride of tribal tradition and of political activism. The braiding further stands for the three narrative strands of the novel. As Slethaug concludes, the braiding is also important as a recognition that "narratives are about 'catching and letting go,' that is, recognizing personal and cultural problems and then letting them go through the act of speaking." At the same time, braiding for him suggests that "something stable and organized emerges from the difficulties of human relationships."¹⁶ Thus in Ida's vague suggestion at the end of the novel that she might reveal all the family secrets to Rayona there is a possibility of a narrative resolution. If Ida relates the complete story to Rayona, the family pattern of silences which have led to withdrawals and consequently to misunderstandings and accusations will be finally interrupted. The three narratives will no longer be only intertwined but will together form one coherent story of Rayona's family life. The braiding refers to a Native American cultural tradition in which families are often formed around maternal lines. It stands for Rayona's cultural and spiritual roots, as she inherits the maternal tradition from the female relatives preceding her. Yet Rayona would need as well to reconcile

14. Although the topic is beyond the scope of this work, several Native American critics, including Gerald Vizenor (in his *Manifest Manners*), accuse Dorris of repeating the received stereotype of the heavy drinking Indian, especially in his nonfiction *The Broken Cord*. However, in *The Yellow Raft in Blue Water* Christine's excessive drinking seems understandable based on her situation.

15. Other narratives that recreate the sense of a closely knit community by using the gossipy nature of storytelling to learn what is happening in the community can be found in the novels of Louise Erdrich (Dorris's spouse), particularly in *Love Medicine*, *Tracks*, *Four Souls* and *The Tales of Burning Love*. Her technique of multivocality, however, has also been seen as simply a postmodern literary device by commenters such as Leslie Marmom Silko. See Nancy J. Peterson, "History, Postmodernism, and Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*," *PMLA* 109, no. 5 (1994): 982.

16. Slethaug, "Multivocal Narration," 26.

with the paternal side of her heritage should her identity quest be completed, but Dorris leaves this out of the frame of the novel.

A Yellow Raft in Blue Water depicts both three individual lives and a family framed by a specific historical context positioned between Native American, white and black cultures. The three women both separately and in their communities experience loss as well as draw strength specifically from this multi-cultural setting. The novel addresses issues of identity, traditions, language, spirituality, and family relationships in the process of the formation of three different characters.

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FREEDOM STUCK IN THE THROAT: YUSSEF EL GUINDI'S *BACK OF THE THROAT* THROUGH THE PRISMS OF AN INDIVIDUAL CONFLICT AND A POLARIZED SOCIETY

IVAN LACKO

Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Arts, Department of British and American Studies,
Gondova 2, 814 99 Bratislava, Slovak Republic. Email: lacko@fphil.uniba.sk

ABSTRACT: This paper uses Yussef El Guindi's theatre play *Back of the Throat* to show how global, social and individual ways of perceiving the context of the 9/11 terrorist attacks are interlinked and how they affect one another. This process gives rise to power relations typical for totalitarian social structures. The context of the post-9/11 imperialist nature of U.S. foreign policy, the global post-colonial power struggles, as well as the potential traps of a multicultural social environment is thus translated into purely personal (intimate) relationships, and vice versa. The context of El Guindi's work is extended not only by enlightenment-based early American political discourse, but also by more broadly conceived notions of the conflict between an individual and the society.

KEYWORDS: 9/11; political theater; ethnic profiling; Yussef El Guindi; *Back of the Throat*

Written in 2004 and first produced in 2005, Yussef El Guindi's theater play *Back of the Throat* is a direct response to the consequences of the events of 9/11. El Guindi, born in Egypt and raised in London, is an American playwright residing in Seattle with more than two dozen theatrical pieces in his portfolio. El Guindi's plays examine ethnic, cultural and political issues, mostly in relation to the lives of Arab-Americans. This paper is an attempt to use El Guindi's play to show how the shifting context of the events of 9/11 affects the perception of the political and social consequences of the attacks, in particular the elements constituting the government's "war on terror." In this case, the shifting context refers to the changing awareness and discernment of the circumstances in which terrorism is dealt with on personal, institutional, and (inter)national levels. The interaction between these levels gives rise to a new set of power relations.

Joe Kelleher posits that the existence of power relations is dependent on the social division thereof: "Power – or powerlessness – is nothing in itself and only ever meaningful in terms of the distribution of power across social relations, among different groups or classes or interests that make up, however momentarily, a social body."¹ *Back of the Throat* draws on the power relations and social structures known in totalitarian societies, and reiterates ideas and concepts characteristic for American discourse during the Enlightenment, particularly the views of Thomas Jefferson and Ralph Waldo Emerson as well as the post-transcendentalist writings of Herman Melville.

1. Joe Kelleher, *Theatre & Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 3.

Back of the Throat is a theatre play that examines the circumstances and the fashion in which facts and truths are manipulated, obscured and (perhaps even) distorted. It discusses the significance of ethnic, racial and religious profiling in the power interaction between those who wield great power and authority and those who are forced to subjugate to that power. It is also a play about the nature of what is considered evil and what good. The play gives new meaning to the perpetual conflict between an individual and society, and extends the discussion about cultural tolerance.

The social and political background to El Guindi's play was set by two pieces of legislation adopted by the Bush administration: the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001, and the Homeland Security Act of 2002. El Guindi's stage directions set the events of the play to take place "[s]ome time after the attacks," and the behavior of the two investigators suggests that the prevention and obstruction of terrorism have priority over civil liberties.² The conflict between civil security and civil liberties (represented in the play by the legal nature of sneak and peek searches) leads to questions about their balance, as well as to the role of government and the rights of an individual in a society. These issues have been profoundly discussed by leading American intellectuals over several centuries, and in different contexts have shaped social conventions and manipulated politics.

The play starts with federal agents, Carl and Bartlett, visiting Khaled, an Arab American (and legal citizen) in his apartment. In a manner reminiscent of Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, the agents are initially very civil, good-humored and jovial. They start their search and questioning almost apologetically, and Khaled is obliging and helpful. The nonchalance and civil humor of the opening scenes climaxes when the agents attempt to pronounce Khaled's name and find it difficult to get it right. "It's that back of the throat thing,"³ says Bartlett. The questioning then takes a more sinister turn when the agents find several items in the apartment that raise suspicion. Khaled owns books like the *Koran* in Arabic (although he says he does not speak it), *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung*, *Theater of the Oppressed*, and *Covering Islam*, as well as books on assassins, titles about religious fundamentalism, and pornographic magazines. The agents gradually manipulate Khaled into a no-way-out situation and present a whole series of nonsensical accusations.

When Khaled demands to be told who gave the agents his name, Carl and Bartlett's coercion takes a more radical turn and the encounter becomes physical. At this point, Khaled asks the agents to leave, but they exercise their legal right to continue with the grilling under the guise of obstructing terrorism and interrogate him as if he were guilty.

BARTLETT: If you have nothing to worry about, then you have nothing to worry about. . . . Don't waste time *trying* to appear innocent if you are. If you're innocent, you're innocent. You don't have to work at it.⁴

2. Yussef El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, in *American Political Plays after 9/11*, ed. Allan Havis (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010), 137.

3. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 139.

4. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 142.

The ominous tone of the agents' lines establishes an atmosphere not dissimilar from the fictional worlds of George Orwell, Franz Kafka and Václav Havel. At the same time, both Bartlett and Carl profile Khaled solely based on his ethnicity and cultural background.

BARTLETT: Your ethnicity has nothing to do with it other than the fact that your background happens to be the place where most of this crap is coming from. So naturally the focus is going to be on you. It's not profiling, it's deduction.⁵

The agents' deduction is based on material evidence and the testimony of several witnesses – Khaled's ex-girlfriend, a librarian, and a stripper. The audience is challenged to consider whether Khaled did or did not meet with a terrorist and whether he is or is not guilty by association. What El Guindi presents here is the interminable conflict between an individual and the larger society, represented by the government. While Khaled demands his rights be observed, the two agents imply that the "higher purpose" of their investigation is national security. The ensuing conflict is a reflection of issues that have long occupied the minds of American thinkers, including Walt Whitman:

One of the problems presented in America these times is, how to combine one's duty and policy as a member of associations, societies, brotherhoods or what not, and one's obligations to the State and Nation, with essential freedom as an individual personality, without which freedom a man cannot grow or expand, or be full, modern, heroic, democratic, American. . . . The problem, I say, is to combine the two, so as not to ignore either.⁶

Whitman wrote this in 1892, and the paradox of not letting personal liberty and national duty cancel one another out has found renewed relevance in a post-9/11 society which, chiefly as a result of the existing security legislation, was becoming increasingly polarized. Yussef El Guindi himself, when asked about his immediate reaction to the government policies following the attacks, admitted that he "felt alienated, and, on a deep level, unplugged from the society" and that his "citizenship was imperilled."⁷ But besides the feeling of estrangement, isolation and social unacceptance, the essential problem, according to El Guindi, lay in the shift of how American minorities perceived freedom: "But people don't quite appreciate to what extent civil liberties were undermined in reaction to those events."⁸

The Bush administration's war on terror thus brought about a state in which concepts and theories of freedom and civil rights gained significance. Quite naturally, some of the ideas of the Founding Fathers were brought to the forefront, such as those of Thomas Jefferson, for example, who claimed that though "rightful liberty is unobstructed action according to our will within limits drawn around us by the equal rights of others" it should not only mean freedom guaranteed by the law since "law is often but the tyrant's will, and always so when it violates the right of an individual."⁹ In

5. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 151.

6. Walt Whitman, "Notes Left Over," in *Specimen Days & Collect* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1995), 338.

7. Misha Berson, "Yussef El Guindi: Are We Being Followed? His Play about Post-9/11 Arab-American Anxiety Strikes a Nerve," *American Theatre* 23, no. 1 (2006): 52.

8. Berson, "Yussef El Guindi," 52.

9. Thomas Jefferson, "III 28 to Isaac H. Tiffany," in *Jefferson: Political Writings*, ed. Joyce Appleby and Terence Ball (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 224–25.

the context of El Guindi's play, the law is both a tool needed to ensure national security and a mechanism abused by a few individuals in order to exercise their newly-gained power over others.

The government's direct involvement in the balancing of control and liberty, first introduced in the *Declaration of Independence*, has been since then reiterated by many American thinkers. Thomas Paine, for example, believed that "governments were necessary only because of the 'inability of moral virtue to govern the world' and that a government's only function was to provide freedom and security for its people."¹⁰ The contradiction in the ability to provide freedom and security at the same time is specifically explored in *Back of the Throat*, relating its twenty-first-century reliance on democratic ideals to the likes of Henry David Thoreau who famously argued that government "is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will" and that, at the same time, it "is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it."¹¹

Perhaps the most articulate commentary on the interplay between government and society (and the role of individual within it) was made by Thomas Jefferson's contemporary James Madison in *The Federalist*, No. 51:

But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.¹²

What El Guindi's play shows is the inability of the government to control itself in terms of humanizing its power over the citizens. Carl and Bartlett are efficient, succinct, thorough government officials who are assigned the important task to ensure national security and to protect American people against terrorism. In the process, however, they disadvantage and abuse a citizen. *Back of the Throat* ends ambiguously, leaving it open for the audience to decide whether Khaled was fully innocent, only partly guilty, or entirely guilty. In El Guindi's politically-charged piece, the spectators cannot fully do what David Mamet refers to as indulging "in a fantasy of power," whereby the audience could identify a clear-cut moral scope in the fictional world of the characters and "decide (with the author) which is correct" in order to be able to eventually "vote with the hero or heroine, rather than with the villain."¹³ This is impossible in *Back of the Throat* because it is deliberately unclear who is the hero and who the villain. If Khaled is associated with terrorists, does that justify Carl and Bartlett's intimidation and violence? Or is their behavior an example of evil let loose in a Machiavellian mechanism in which power endows its carriers with means which fit their purpose?

10. Brian McCartin, *Thomas Paine: Common Sense and Revolutionary Pamphleteering* (New York: PowerPlus Books, 2002), 59.

11. Henry David Thoreau, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* (Rockville, MD: Arc Manor, 2008), 8.

12. Quoted in John Samples, ed., *James Madison and the Future of Limited Government*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 2003), 9.

13. David Mamet, "The Problem Play," in *The American Stage: Writing on Theater from Washington Irving to Tony Kushner*, ed. Laurence Senelick (New York: Library of America, 2010), 807–8.

Nineteenth-century American literature dealt extensively with the concept of evil being an ever-present, though frequently only dormant, element of the human soul. Nathaniel Hawthorne's short stories abound in characters who struggle to accept not only their own sinful nature, but also the sinful nature of their fellow citizens. Herman Melville's story *Billy Budd, Sailor* presents a famous literary case of a clash between an individual and society, an illustrious discrepancy between law and justice. The "professional" meanness of Carl and Bartlett is reminiscent of the pure "evil" of Claggart in *Billy Budd*, the kind of malevolence that manifests itself in what Arthur Schopenhauer called "delight in the suffering of others which does not spring from mere egoism, but is disinterested, and which constitutes wickedness proper, rising to the pitch of cruelty."¹⁴ Bartlett, and especially Carl, display not only disinterest and satisfaction in Khaled's suffering, but also exercise their authority, which confirms that for them "the suffering of others is not a means for the attainment of the ends of its own will, but an end in itself."¹⁵ This becomes evident when, for example, Carl insists they apply physical means for the interrogation:

BARTLETT: You're suggesting what?

CARL: To bring the full weight of our authority to bear on him. With the aim of making him adjust his expectations as to what options are available to him.¹⁶

It is the ambiguity of the ending that makes a case for El Guindi's deep probe into the heart of post-9/11 America – a country torn between its embrace of diversity and multiculturalism, and the political line of defending itself against potential threats at all costs. The intensity of Carl and Bartlett's engagement in Khaled's interrogation has all the qualities of what military terminology recognizes as a pre-emptive strike. The agents adopt a position from which they can make it clear that they are an extended arm of the government and that they are only executing a policy which is intended to protect all of the good citizens. Since Khaled disqualified himself as a good citizen (though on the basis of dubious evidence) the agents are free to employ even non-standard means of interrogation and, at the same time, stereotype Khaled at their will:

CARL: You really give a bad name to immigrants, you know that. Because of you, we have to pass tougher laws that stop people who might actually be *good for us*.¹⁷

Emphasis here is on the concept of a good citizen: since Khaled does not conform to the notion (regardless of whether he is eventually found guilty or not) defined by the agents on the basis of white Christian standards, he is considered a second-rate citizen.

Stuart Carden, director of the 2006 Silk Road Theatre production of *Back of the Throat* summed up the play's political and personal appeal into two questions: "How do you recognize evil?" and "How can we ever know another's heart or see into their

14. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea* (New York: AMS Press, 1977), 469.

15. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, 469.

16. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 170.

17. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 172.

inner thoughts?”¹⁸ These two questions represent the two aspects of the play’s bottom line – the pieces of evidence which implicate (or do not) Khaled are as ambiguous as the statements provided by the witnesses. A librarian, for instance, gives the agents a revealing and indicting description of Khaled and his behavior in a library, but admits that it might all be only because of the suggestive power of hindsight:

You know, how new information about a person suddenly makes you see that person in a different light. I’m sure if you told me he’d saved the lives of a family from a burning house I’d be remembering him differently. . . . How do you recognize evil?¹⁹

This principal question is constantly present on the stage – it nags the audience to question the validity of their own understanding of the role of myth and truth in modern society. Demonstrating his debt to the fictional worlds of Pinter, Orwell and Kafka, El Guindi draws on the “western” experience with totalitarian communities in which fact and myth are interchangeable (*The Birthday Party*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *The Trial*).

The events that unfold in *Back of the Throat* manifest a combination of very personal, social and even global consequences of the transformed international community after 9/11. The personal level is presented by the guilt-innocence ambivalence of Khaled’s character. It is also visible in Carl’s raging hatred when he says to Khaled: “You know what I really resent? . . . What you force us to become. To protect ourselves. We’re a decent bunch and do not want to be dragged down to your level. . . . I personally hate this.”²⁰ The social circumstance becomes apparent in how Carl and Bartlett define themselves as representatives of the people since they are government officials. In their view, this gives them the right to profile Khaled based on ethnicity, religion and social status. The last, global aspect of El Guindi’s scrutiny lies in the irony resulting from the international impact of the war on terror: its immediate objective was to protect the citizens, the country and save the world. In a bitter twist of irony, and *Back of the Throat* reveals this fully, anti-terrorist government policies achieved only a fraction of their objectives. Frighteningly enough, the policies often left American citizens devastated (as in Khaled’s case). Nations, communities and individual countries, as well as the world, are empty and meaningless without critical, engaged and free citizens. Or, like Ralph Waldo Emerson said in “The American Scholar”: “The world is nothing, the man is all.”²¹

18. Jenn Q. Goddu, “A Play That Asks Tough Questions: ‘Throat’ Finds Wisdom through Humor,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 7, 2006, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2006-04-07/entertainment/0604070231_1_humor-fear-and-freedom-playwright.

19. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 159.

20. El Guindi, *Back of the Throat*, 173.

21. Ralph W. Emerson, “The American Scholar,” in *Selections from Ralph Waldo Emerson: An Organic Anthology*, ed. Stephen E. Whicher (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), 79.

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DESTABILIZING ETHNIC STEREOTYPES IN AMERICAN MAINSTREAM TV: LATINO/A REPRESENTATIONS IN *UGLY BETTY*

MAŁGORZATA MARTYNUSKA

University of Rzeszow, Faculty of Philology, Institute of English Studies,
ul. Rejtana 16C, 35-959 Rzeszów, Poland. Email: mmart@ur.edu.pl

ABSTRACT: This article examines the portrayal of Latino/as in the American TV series *Ugly Betty*, which is based on the Colombian *telenovela* format. The show features the Mexican-American character of Betty Suarez as the main protagonist. Although she does not represent the mainstream American beauty standards, the qualities Betty embodies empower Latino viewers. New York City, where the show is set, represents a geographical and cultural context for choosing a Mexican-American family as the archetype of all Latino/as in the United States. Although Mexicans are not the largest Latino group in New York City, they are the fastest growing minority there. The series depicts a diverse world through a multi-racial cast of characters belonging either to the white majority or Latino, Asian and African minorities. The show is an immigrant story giving new perspectives to sensitive issues of illegal immigration and affirmative action. *Ugly Betty* both complements and counters cultural stereotypes concerning Latino/as in the United States.

KEYWORDS: Latino/a; Mexican-Americans; stereotypes; acculturation; ethnic representations; *telenovela*

The United States has been experiencing the rapid growth of the Latino population originating in the Spanish speaking countries of Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Those different nationality groups, known as Hispanics, are often represented as sharing a common identity, which gave rise to the concept of *Latinidad*, defined by Angharad Valdivia as “the process of being, becoming, and/or performing belonging within a Latina/o diaspora.”¹ The great proportion of *Latinos* are Mexicans. The members of the Mexican diaspora have been referred to with five major lexical signifiers: *Mexican* – a person born in Mexico; *Mexican-American* – a U.S. American of Mexican descent, living in the United States; *Chicano/a* – a person of Mexican descent, residing in the United States and positioned socially as a member of an oppressed minority group; *Hispanic* – a person with ancestry from Spanish-speaking countries, living in the United States; *Latino* – a person of Latin American origin, regardless of race, language, or culture, who lives in the United States.² Filmmakers have responded to this population trend, producing films with Latino/a protagonists.

1. Angharad N. Valdivia, “The Gendered Face of Latinidad: Global Circulation of Hybridity,” in *Circuits of Visibility: Gender and Transnational Media Cultures*, ed. Radha S. Hegde (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 53.

2. See Susana Rinderle, “The Mexican Diaspora: A Critical Examination of Signifiers,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 29, no. 4 (2005): 296.

Ugly Betty is a dramatic comedy created by Fernando Gaitán and developed by Silvio Horta. The series was made by the American production company *Venturos* in participation with *Touchstone Television*. The four seasons³ of the show were broadcast by ABC between 2006 and 2010. *Ugly Betty* is based on the Colombian *telenovela* *Yo Soy Betty la Fea* (I Am Betty the Ugly). Madeleine Shufeldt Esch points out that “[w]ithin the increasingly common global trade in television formats, *Ugly Betty* is notable as the first successful U.S. adaptation of the *telenovela* form to a weekly prime-time broadcast format targeted to English-speaking audiences.”⁴ The *telenovela*, as a format and narrative style, producing stories for multi-generational audiences, has been popularized by Latin American television, e.g., *Televista* in Mexico and *Globo* in Brazil. The main reasons behind the development of *Ugly Betty* are the potential international success of *telenovelas* and, notes Hector Amaya, “the growing importance and wide recognition of the size of the Latino market and the mainstreaming of *Latinidad*.”⁵

The success of the show is partly due to the fact that many viewers identify with the main protagonist, and her character serves as the archetype for all Latino/as in the United States. This phenomenon has been explained by Anna López: “Thinking of Hollywood as ethnographer – as co-producer in power of cultural texts – allows us to reformulate its relationship to ethnicity. Hollywood does not represent ethnics and minorities; it creates them and provides its audience with an experience of them.”⁶ The characters that Americans see on television shape their attitudes towards different immigrant groups. With increasingly positive portrayals, television can help break down negative stereotypes concerning ethnic minorities in the United States.

The *Ugly Betty* series depicts a diverse world through a multi-racial cast of characters belonging either to the white majority or Latino, Asian and African minorities. The titular Betty is a hybrid character who, despite her ethnic minority background, enters the American mainstream, proving that *Latinidad* is “a new version of the global other.”⁷ With its complex portrayal of the protagonists, their family lives and work environment, *Ugly Betty* both complements and counters cultural stereotypes concerning Latino/as in America.

THE PROTAGONISTS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

Historically, television has positioned Mexican-Americans in urban *barrios* of California or Texas, but *Ugly Betty* adapts the Colombian narrative of *Yo Soy Betty la Fea* into

3. Season 1 (23 episodes), Season 2 (18 episodes), Season 3 (24 episodes), Season 4 (20 episodes).

4. Madeleine Shufeldt Esch, “Rearticulating Ugliness, Repurposing Content: *Ugly Betty* Finds the Beauty in Ugly,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 34, no. 2 (2010): 171.

5. Hector Amaya, “Citizenship, Diversity, Law and *Ugly Betty*,” *Media, Culture & Society* 32, no. 5 (2010): 811.

6. Ana M. López, “Are All Latins from Manhattan? Hollywood, Ethnography, and Cultural Colonialism,” in *Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema*, ed. Lester D. Friedman (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 405.

7. O. Hugo Benavides, *Drugs, Thugs, and Divas: Telenovelas and Narco-Dramas in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 212.

the ethnically plural environment of New York City. The choice of the city represents a geographical and cultural context for selecting a Mexican-American family as the Latino protagonists of the series. When the show was piloted in 2006, the Puerto Rican diaspora constituted the largest Latino group in New York City (33.8 percent), Dominicans ranked second (26.7 percent) and Mexicans third (11.6 percent). However, demographics show that Mexicans have been the fastest growing Latino group in New York City. Reports from the U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Surveys show that if population growth continues at the same rates as between 2000 and 2007, Dominicans will become the largest group in the City's Latino population in 2020 and Mexicans will become the most numerous Latino group in New York City by 2024.⁸ By choosing Mexicans, not another Hispanic group, to be the main protagonists of the series, *Ugly Betty* not only reflects those demographic changes but also shows the viewers the Latino group they are most familiar with.⁹

The eponymous protagonist, Betty Suarez (America Ferrera), is a twenty-two-year-old Mexican girl who works as an assistant to the editor of *Mode*, a high-fashion magazine. The show portrays Latino characters as well as gay and transgendered protagonists. The main characters who work for *Mode* include the editor – Daniel Meade (Eric Mabius); the African-American creative director – Wilhelmina Slater (Vanessa Williams); a gay character – Marc (Michael Urie), who is Wilhelmina's assistant; and a white, slim blonde receptionist – Amanda (Becki Newton). Betty's family includes her father Ignacio (Tony Plana), who is an illegal immigrant, her sister Hilda (Anna Ortiz), and Hilda's teenage son Justin (Mark Indelicato).

Because Latinas/os are often coded as partly foreign, *Ugly Betty* is referred to as an immigrant story. The Colombian version of the script has been modified by making the main protagonist and her family endure not only the challenges of class but also the challenges of race, ethnicity, nationality and sexuality in the competitive environment of *Mode*, where the concept of beauty is defined by being "white and thin." Although Betty is smart, she does not meet her employer's feminine beauty standards. She wears braces on her teeth, thick glasses and unfashionable clothes. Her look, ethnicity and class make her stand out in the Manhattan publishing office. The dynamics of mainstream beauty standards are shown in the scene when on her first day at work, Betty arrives in her red poncho with "Guadalajara" written on the front, and the receptionist surprised by Betty's appearance asks her whether she is waiting for the photo session. Actually, the poncho was purchased by Ignacio on a trip to Guadalajara, one of the centers of Mexican culture and home to Mariachi music. The garment "crossed national borders as part of migratory movements and diasporic communities journeying (temporarily) back and forth."¹⁰ The show contrasts

8. See Laura Limonic, *The Latino Population of New York City, 2007* (New York: Center for Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies, 2008), 3.

9. See Adriana Katzew, "Shut Up! Representations of the Latino/a Body in *Ugly Betty* and Their Educational Implications," *Latino Studies* 9 (2011): 314.

10. Janet McCabe, "Introduction: 'Oh Betty, You Really Are Beautiful,'" in *TV's Betty Goes Global: From Telenovela to International Brand*, ed. Janet McCabe and Kim Akass (London: I. B. Tauris, 2013), 3.

Betty's physical ugliness with her "beautiful" qualities: loyalty, morality, intelligence and honesty. Antonio Savorelli remarks that "Betty is not ugly when she is in Queens. . . . Her ugliness is relative to Manhattan's standards, and even more so to *Mode's*."¹¹ Betty embodies current problems found in many developed societies, like the pressure to be both attractive and successful in the work place. Many Latina viewers feel empowered by Betty's character, as the qualities she embodies make the audience think that Latino/as can be intelligent, hard-working and determined.

HYBRID *LATINIDAD*

Although Betty counters the common stereotype of a sexy Latina, the show reinforces this image through its representation of another Latina character, Hilda. With the exception of Betty, the Latina women in the show confirm the stereotype of "the oversexed Latina temptress."¹² The two sisters, Betty and Hilda, are positioned differently in the social, educational and economic hierarchy. Whereas Betty is a college graduate, working in the fashion industry in Manhattan, Hilda is a working-class single mother from Queens. The dichotomy of the sisters' depictions also refers to their appearance and personality. Betty, although physically ugly, presents virtues of character and embodies the American myth of meritocracy. She strongly believes that individuals are selected and moved ahead on the basis of their achievement. Betty's skills and hard work make her indispensable to the magazine's success. Hilda is portrayed as an impulsive, emotional and sexy Latina, corresponding to common stereotypes. *Ugly Betty* dichotomizes Latina representations by putting them into different categories. They are either portrayed as intelligent, good and moral but ugly, or uneducated, impulsive but sexy.¹³

The male members of Betty's family, Ignacio and Justin, do not conform to stereotypes of Latinos typically shown on American TV. Justin is portrayed as a boy who has no interest in sports or other typically male activities. Instead, he cares about his weight, fashion, musicals and theatre. His effeminate mannerism makes other characters of the show imply that he is a gay. However, other members of the family accept Justin and do not try to label him. This tolerance manifested by a Mexican family counters the typical notions about the conservatism of Latin Catholics. Ignacio is identified with family, keeping alive Mexican traditions and identity, but he is certainly not a macho patriarchal type. He is often depicted wearing an apron, cooking, ironing, watching *telenovelas*, and performing activities associated with women in Mexican households.¹⁴ As a widower, Ignacio shows love to his daughters and demonstrates roles

11. Antonio Savorelli, *Beyond Sitcom: New Directions in American Television Comedy* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010), 119.

12. Guillermo Avila-Saavedra, "The Latino Trend: Identity, Influence and Transformations in U.S. Television," (PhD diss., Temple University, 2008), 142.

13. See Katzew, "Shut Up!," 305–7.

14. The Spanish-language *telenovela* he watches provides another Latino accent in the series. Its title is *Vidas de Fuego* (Lives of Fire), and Salma Hayek plays the role of the maid, Esmeralda.

typically taken by mothers. He feels comfortable about Justin's effeminate mannerism. On the other hand, Justin's father, Santos, complements the stereotype of Latino lover and macho-type criminal. He often manifests his dissatisfaction with Justin's feminine interests in fashion and musicals, which he considers inappropriate for a "normal boy." He would like his son to play football instead of decorating a Christmas tree.

Although all members of Betty's family represent *Latinidad*, the series depicts their identity formation at different stages of the acculturation process. As Guillermo Avila-Saavedra notes, "Ignacio and Hilda represent a more traditional, old-fashioned take on Latino identity, while Betty and her nephew Justin struggle to assert a more hybrid definition."¹⁵ *Ugly Betty* presents a complex portrayal of Latino-Americans and complicates the common notions concerning Latino/a stereotypes in the United States.

ETHNIC PRIVILEGE AND MARGINALIZATION

Ugly Betty gives a broader perspective on sensitive issues concerning immigrants in the United States by showing individual cases in dramatic context. The problematic areas referred to in the show are undocumented immigration and affirmative action. The former is presented through the character of Ignacio. He has been living in the United States for thirty years, has a family and pays taxes, but it turns out that his social security number belongs to a dead person. When the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement want to deport him, Ignacio tries desperately to find a lawyer but meets only dishonest ones. Moreover, people working for American government agencies dealing with undocumented immigrants are unemotional and treat him like a criminal. The show personalizes the issue of illegal immigration by making the viewers sympathize with Ignacio, who helplessly waits in Mexico for his visa to re-enter the United States. The show makes it clear that some Mexican-Americans, although illegal aliens, identify more with the United States than with their native country. Finally, Ignacio returns and is granted American citizenship.

The complex issue of affirmative action is depicted in the third season when Betty and Marc both apply for training and apprenticeship to the highly competitive YETI programme.¹⁶ During the interview, the applicants have to present their creative skills and market a new magazine. Betty learned about the programme two days before the deadline for applications and prepared her presentation in a hurry. Marc had three months to find sponsors and complete his presentation. However, the judges are more impressed by Betty's idea than Marc's. Because the rules of YETI allow the acceptance of one intern per magazine, Marc's application is rejected and only Betty's project is accepted. Betty is convinced that she deserves the internship as she wanted it more and worked harder for it. Marc is bitter about his loss and has a different explanation about his rejection. He claims that Betty won because her Latin origin helped YETI "meet their quota." He refers to quotas in the meaning of race-based affirmative action

15. Avila-Saavedra, "The Latino Trend," 148.

16. YETI (Young Editors Training Institute).

policies aiming to improve the employment and educational opportunities of ethnic minorities and women. Marc strongly believes himself to be the victim of those “reverse discrimination” practices.

In the next scene Betty’s family appear in the office to celebrate her success with Mexican songs, in this way confirming her status of a Latina working girl. When Betty tells her father about her doubts concerning the reasons behind her acceptance for the internship, he says, “If being Mexican helped this time, take it,” to which she replies, “I wanted to be accepted because I earned it.” Although there is no clear evidence that Betty was accepted due to affirmative action policies, she finally decides to reject the YETI offer claiming that Marc deserves it more and the internship is taken by a gay man instead of a Latina girl. The show does not celebrate a “post-racial” society but examines how race matters in individual lives.¹⁷ Betty’s character counters the stereotypes concerning Latino/as taking advantage of their “minority” status. She is shown as an extremely ambitious working girl who wants to succeed on her merits and not because of her Mexican ancestry.

CONCLUSION

Representations of Latino-American identity in *Ugly Betty* provide evidence of the tension between ethnic otherness and cultural assimilation. Betty lives in an ethnically defined, working class Queens and works in the cosmopolitan Manhattan metropolis. As Antonio Savorelli rightly recognizes, “just as the Queensboro Bridge spans Manhattan and Queens in empiric reality, Betty acts as a textual bridge between these locations.”¹⁸ She is the hybrid character; her ethnic background does not limit her capability of upward mobility and participation in the American mainstream culture. She represents the archetype for all Latino/as in the United States, and many Latino viewers feel empowered by her character.

Overall, *Ugly Betty* portrays a Mexican family from New York City in a positive light. The series both complements and counters cultural stereotypes of Latino/as, often depicted as lazy people, sexy temptresses, or criminal gang members. Instead, the show builds images of a functional and supportive Latino family. This emphasis on family signifies Latinos as cultural others, contrasting them with the people at *Mode* who have cold family relations. The strengths of Latino family and community values stand in opposition to American values of individuality.

Although the Suarez family never shed their ethnic roots, they express their loyalty to the United States. Their Mexican-American identity is expressed by the way of celebrating the American holiday of Thanksgiving. Although the whole family treats seriously this American tradition, they incorporate typically Mexican dishes into their Thanksgiving dinner. That is a cultural example of *Latinidad* entering American

17. See Jennifer Esposito, “What Does Race Have to Do with Ugly Betty? An Analysis of Privilege and Postracial(?) Representations on a Television Sitcom,” *Television & New Media* 10, no. 6 (2009): 527–29.

18. Savorelli, *Beyond Sitcom*, 119.

mainstream. When Ignacio is at risk of being deported, Betty and Hilda are strongly convinced that this cannot happen simply because he pays taxes and belongs to Oprah's book club, which are for them the indicators of his Americanness. As Avila-Saavedra notes, "[t]hese characters assert their Latino identities but unabashedly locate them in a broader U.S. context."¹⁹

Ugly Betty depicts Latino/a individuals who are acculturating to the dominant American culture but at the same time are keeping their ethnic traditions alive. Moreover, by enriching American culture with the elements of their Latino heritage, Hispanics start the process of incorporating *Latinidad* into the American mainstream. Taking into consideration the current demographic changes and rapid growth of the Hispanic diaspora in the United States, the Latin influence on American culture should not be underestimated. As O. Hugo Benavides notes, "*Latinidad* as newfound identity embodies a signification which is central to the contemporary structure of the U.S. nation-state."²⁰

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19. Avila-Saavedra, "The Latino Trend," 148.

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BEAUTY IS THE BEAST: NARCISSISM, IDENTITY AND THE ETHICS OF VIOLENCE IN *INVISIBLE MONSTERS*

ZUZANA STAROVECKÁ

Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Arts, Department of British and American Studies,
Gondova 2, 814 99 Bratislava. Slovak Republic. Email: zuzana.starovecka@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Chuck Palahniuk's 1999 novel *Invisible Monsters* is an unflinching critical commentary on the culture industry's standard of homogenized beauty. The paper attempts to elucidate the ways in which the culture industry's dictate robs the subjects of their individuality and ascribes to them the uniform identities of lifeless products. The explication is based on the premise that postmodern society is devoid of authentic experience. Thus, the characters in Palahniuk's novel, under the unbearable pressure of labels and the powerful cult of homogenized beauty, enact performances of physical disfigurement to escape these and relocate the authentic experience back within themselves. They embrace different degrees of narcissism and desire for attention as means of reasserting their identities. How in this process one's body, as the locus of narcissism, becomes the locus for one's identity search will be explained. Furthermore, the paper attempts to showcase how the novel's ending on the surface seemingly reinforces the narrative's criticism of the culture industry's human replication but under the thin veil of beauty disguises a retaliation against stereotyped gender categories.

KEYWORDS: identity; narcissism; self-destruction; beauty industry; postmodern society; Chuck Palahniuk; *Invisible Monsters*

A former car mechanic, Chuck Palahniuk has managed to turn himself into a bestselling author. With a new book every year and contracts for more, Palahniuk is undeniably prolific. While his work has been hailed by legions of devout readers, in academic circles the frequency with which Palahniuk publishes his novels has led some to criticize the author for recycling his work. Such a critique, however, seems rather magnanimous, for the recurring themes that seem to be the thorn in the side of some of his most avid detractors may be seen as his personal signature, in the same way as, let's say, his penchant for edgy humor or meticulous minimalism.

In his novels, Palahniuk criticizes the postmodern culture industry, yet each of his books is a product of that very same culture. His books have earned him a certain cult status, which consequently marks his work with a tinge of hypocrisy. His books read like grotesque parodies, suffused with abject horrors, pain and suffering. Jesse Kavadlo goes as far as to compare reading Palahniuk to having your eyes rubbed raw with broken glass.¹ However, it is worth looking under the surface. This paper identifies a potential ethical dimension to Palahniuk's seemingly ugly and nihilistic work. In *Invisible Monsters*, Palahniuk criticizes the postmodern cult of beauty and exposes some of the most adverse effects society and the postmodern culture industry have had on

1. Jesse Kavadlo, "The Fiction of Self-Destruction: Chuck Palahniuk, Closet Moralist," in *Stirrings Still: The International Journal of Existential Literature* 2, no. 2 (2005): 3.

the formation and ensuing destruction of one's identity. A psychological analysis of the narrator's narcissism, a personality disorder deeply rooted in her troubled coming-of-age, helps explain why she eventually turns to self-destruction and how her attempt to do away with her addiction to beauty functions as a rebellion against the beauty industry.

FOCUSING ON (IN)AUTHENTICITY

The novel's central themes – modeling, make-up and artifice – suggest that an authentic experience of the world is non-existent. The experience perceived as real bears only a patina of authenticity, while in fact it is merely a semblance designed by popular culture, wrapped in an enticing package for people to desire. Brandy Alexander, the novel's self-appointed Queen Supreme, describes the dilemma of authenticity saying, "Anything we want, we are trained to want," which makes an authentic experience a total impossibility.² In *Invisible Monsters*, Palahniuk's characters rise up against the culture of the homogeneity of experience, which robs them of their chance to live authentic lives. In the process they morph from the bland and empty personalities ascribed to them by popular culture and reassert their own long lost and sought-after identities. Palahniuk's criticism is mainly aimed at the beauty industry and standardized forms of attractiveness, so it is no wonder that it is through performances of physical disfigurement perpetrated on their own bodies that the characters destroy the products they have become.

INCARCERATED IN THE BEAUTY TRAP

Representations of beauty in Western cultures seem to fall within the domains of the "popular," which is heavily perpetrated by mass media, TV productions, glossy lifestyle magazines, advertisements and the world of fashion in general. The sets of precisely defined norms and rules for being beautiful that every culture creates for its members suggest that beauty has become another label, a category (just like sexual orientation, religion or ethnicity), attached to a body meeting all the prescribed criteria. As the narrator, Shannon McFarland, is a model, beauty (the label) is paramount to her and she must constantly seek to maintain its impossible standards. And what is more, in her case beauty's "devoiding" quality makes itself manifest.

The beauty industry has led countless women to change their appearance in accordance with the latest *fashion* or what is currently deemed *beautiful*. Ranging from less painful visits to the gym, body scrubs, manicures, eyelash tinting or waxing to more drastic cosmetic treatments like plastic surgery or bone-cutting jaw realignments, being beautiful has become an expensive and demanding preoccupation. Postmodern society exerts almost constant pressure to conform to and attempt to achieve a homogenized ideal of beauty. However, as Andrew Ng notes, "to desire beauty devoids the self of

2. Chuck Palahniuk, *Invisible Monsters* (New York: Norton, 1999), 259. Hereafter cited in text as *IM*.

an identity.”³ These days, being beautiful necessitates that one meet the impossible standards of the beauty industry. In *Invisible Monsters* Shannon acknowledges this several times by subjugating to the dictates of fashion: she renounces her identity, even negates it. As a model, she is a mere thing, “a walking sex furniture [hired] to wear tight evening dresses all afternoon and entice the television audience into buying” (*IM*, 39). Andrew Ng points out that “[m]odeling entails an identification with an identity constructed by the fantasy worlds of advertisement and the television.”⁴ Such identity is ageless and remains unchanging, inhabiting the liminal space of the TV screen, where the model (Shannon) might be culturally alive, but is in fact dead. While the world of television represents no *real* space, Shannon as a model has nowhere to place herself. In Palahniuk’s narrative, the life of a beautiful model has indeed become “a metaphor for television” (*IM*, 77).

Shannon acknowledges that the world of beauty, in which she is trapped, reduces people to commodities. She opens up her narrative saying: “shotgunning anybody in this room would be the moral equivalent of killing a car, a vacuum cleaner, a Barbie doll. Erasing a computer disk. Burning a book. Probably that goes for killing anybody . . . We’re all such products” (*IM*, 12). In the world of beauty each model is supposed to be similar to the others and come in a beautifully standardized *package* so that “no one thing really stands out. The total being less than the sum of its parts” (*IM*, 54). A beautiful model is “a product of a product of a product . . . about as free to act as a programmed computer . . . about as one-of-a-kind as a dollar bill” (*IM*, 218). Thus, investing oneself into the culture industry means suppressing one’s true identity and getting a new one, i.e., that of a lifeless product. Shannon as a model is a commodity representing an endless array of signifiers, who on her own is worth next to nothing. Palahniuk’s own example of cheap children’s toys serves best to illustrate this point: “[this doll c]omes naked in a plastic bubble pack for a dollar, but her clothes cost a fortune, that’s how realistic she is” (*IM*, 170). The status of humans resembling products is further reinforced by their names. Brandy, who is actually Shannon’s long-lost gay brother Shane, christens herself after a popular brandy-based cocktail and frequently gives Shannon and Manus the names of familiar brand products. Manus is first introduced as Alfa Romeo (*IM*, 24), and is later turned into Hewlett Packard and Harper Collins.

After years spent in the fashion industry, with photographers and fashion designers constantly positioning her body to look *just right* and yelling orders at her, the ethos of the regime of discipline gradually seeps into Shannon’s consciousness. She learns exactly how she is supposed to look at a given moment in order to meet the criteria of the ideal. Consequently, she adopts the voice of the Phantom Photographer, the “policing mechanism of those in power,” into her subconsciousness, which dictates what

3. Andrew Ng, “Destruction and the Discourse of Deformity: *Invisible Monsters* and the Ethics of Atrocity,” in *Reading Chuck Palahniuk: American Monsters and Literary Mayhem*, ed. Cynthia Kuhn and Lance Rubin (New York: Routledge, 2009), 27.

4. Ng, “Destruction and the Discourse of Deformity,” 29.

emotion she is to pretend.⁵ The pervasiveness of the beauty industry as an external source of power and its insistence to exert control over Shannon, rendering her a trained monkey at best, is highly visible:

The fashion photographer inside my head, yelling:
Give me wonder, baby.
Flash.
Give me amazement.
Flash. (*IM*, 45)

As illustrated in this example, Shannon's behavior must be seen as inauthentic because all she does is produce a pose suitable for a specific occasion. As a model she loses the ability to act and feel in a way that would be perceived as uniquely hers.

Although *Invisible Monsters* is predominantly a critique of plastic surgery, the physical modifications of a person need not always be surgical. The models and actors seen in print or on TV would hardly look the same on the street. The final product is almost always modified and refined by an editor or a makeup artist. Wrinkles can be *removed*, highlights added, even the eyes' color can be changed, and all without the physical alteration of the model. Every personal trait is removed and a new copy of an ageless, perfect body with unblemished skin is created to advertise a product that customers are supposed to buy if they want to achieve this ideal of homogenized beauty.

The most symbolic representation of the homogeneity in the beauty standard is an infomercial for the so-called Num Num Snack Factory, a food processor for meat. Shannon describes the infomercial as "one of those television commercials you think is a real program except it's just a thirty-minute pitch" (*IM*, 118). The hyper-reality of the TV studio represents only a semblance of reality, while in fact everything from the appearance of the models to the products they are advertising is an illusion. The most symbolic undertone gets the product itself: "[t]he Num Num Snack Factory takes meat by-products, whatever you have – your tongues or hearts or lips or genitals – chews them up, seasons them, and poops them out in the shape of a spade or a diamond or a club onto your choice of cracker for you to eat yourself" (*IM*, 120). The Num Num Snack Factory represents the beauty industry, which pulls in individuals with all their flaws and imperfections, reshapes them into products of standardized size and shape and presents them as something with supposedly higher value.

NARCISSISM AS A COPING MECHANISM

Shannon is not particularly happy with her career, but only through modeling is she able to supply the daily dose of attention which she craves. Shannon's decision to become a model is closely related to her troubled childhood, which gave root to the development of her personality disorder. The onset of her narcissism may be traced back to a particular incident involving her older brother, whose face was mutilated in

5. Scott Ash, "Going to the Body: The Tension of Freedom/Restraint in Palahniuk's Novels," in *Sacred and Immoral: On the Writings of Chuck Palahniuk*, ed. Jeffrey A. Sartain (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 80.

an explosion. The incident left their parents with feelings of guilt, prompting them to shower him with excessive love and attention while at the same time neglecting their daughter: “you’d think my folks totally forgot they even had a second child” (*IM*, 73). Shannon grows up feeling neglected and unloved, and even wrongly blames herself for her brother’s injury. Shannon clearly misinterprets her parents’ excessive attention to Shane as her fault. Consequently, she comes to hate Shane because she believes he is the source of all her misery. Shannon’s narcissistic quality comes to the foreground some time later, when Shane is diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease and is kicked out of the house by their parents for fear of shame. That night he comes knocking at Shannon’s window; she has the opportunity to save him but opts not to:

He said: “Hey, let me in.”

Give me denial.

He said: “Hey, it’s cold.”

Give me ignorance.

I turned on the bedroom light so I could only see myself in the window. Then I shut the curtains.

I never saw Shane again. (*IM*, 150)

With the chance to become an only child and finally get the desired attention and love, Shannon literally blocked her brother’s image with her own. Therefore, her narcissism led to her abandoning him. Much to Shannon’s dismay, her parents still continued to talk about Shane and expressed regret for kicking him out.

As Shannon failed to get an ample measure of parental affection, she naturally sought a substitute. Shannon’s intense longing for a supply of love/attention then made a modeling career an obvious choice for her. Being a model, she is inevitably known to the public through exposure in the media, which recognize her beauty and come to adore her. Beauty is Shannon’s asset and therefore the object of the public’s attention. She receives daily reassurance that she is indeed beautiful, which makes her adore the object that secures her this attention and recognition, namely her own self, even more. As she lacked all these in her childhood, her thirst for them is all the more intense and she absorbs more than she should, which in turn only strengthens her already present narcissism.

Shannon makes friends with Evie, her transgender fellow model, as they share narcissism and the desire for attention. Shannon includes her in her inner circle, resulting in what Freud termed *narcissistic identification*.⁶ Shannon and Evie would frequently spend their afternoons playing little dramas in the home furnishings department of a department store. With lighting that put them in the spotlight of attention, they would spend hours posing in front of curious customers, who served as an audience for their little *matinée*. “Every afternoon,” Shannon says, “we’d star in our own personal unnatural habitat . . . We’d all soak up attention” (*IM*, 70).

LOVE BY APPEARANCE

Shannon enters the world of modeling to get attention and love from others, especially from her best friend. However, Shannon faces a double disappointment when she finds

6. See Calvin S. Hall, *A Primer of Freudian Psychology* (New York: Meridian, 1999), 74.

out Evie has slept with her boyfriend Manus. Thus, Evie's betrayal reinforces Shannon's childhood feeling that she is not loved. While initially Shannon thought it was love she felt for Manus, she later realizes that she was only using him for his looks: "Jump to Manus watching me do that infomercial. We were so beautiful . . . I thought we were in a real love relationship . . . Almost all the time you tell yourself you are loving somebody when you are just using them" (*IM*, 195). Earlier in the story Shannon points out: "Any woman knows that her best accessory is a beautiful man" (*IM*, 56). Shannon is well aware that two beautiful people will generate more attraction, and since Manus is so handsome, she can use him to attract even more. The narcissistic Shannon desperately lacks the experience of being loved, and what is more, she is also unable to give love in return.

Apart from getting the attention she so desired, Shannon is not particularly happy with her career as a model. When asked what she does for living, she rather says she is a college student so people would not talk to her as if she were a "lower life form" (*IM*, 42). Shannon is aware of her new identity, and with the harsh blows coming from those closest to her, Evie and Manus, who love her only for her looks, she gradually realizes that the kind of attention she gets is only for her appearance.

REGENERATION THROUGH SELF-DESTRUCTION

Towards the end of the novel, Shannon makes the unexpected revelation that she has mutilated her face with a gunshot. However, even more bizarre is the reason that lies behind this irrevocable self-inflicted injury:

The truth is, I was addicted to being beautiful . . . addicted to all that attention, I had to quit cold turkey. I could shave my head, but hair grows back. Even bald, I might still look too good. Bald I might get even more attention. There was the option of getting fat or getting drunk out of control to ruin my looks, but I wanted to be ugly and wanted my health . . . There had to be some way of getting ugly in a flash. I had to deal with my looks in a fast, permanent way or I'd always be tempted to go back. (*IM*, 285–86)

After years spent in the fashion industry, Shannon's narcissism transforms into self-loathing: "I'm so tired of being me. Me beautiful. Me ugly. Blonde. Brunette. A million fucking fashion makeovers that only leave me trapped being me" (*IM*, 224). With new makeup, hairstyle and clothes everyday, Shannon can acquire countless identities; however, none of them expresses her individuality or allows her to grow. According to Andy Johnson, "The constant pressure to be beautiful and the limitations built into the lifestyle of a model leave [Shannon] feeling trapped and emotionally stagnant for its lack of substance."⁷ While beforehand she loved her own beautiful self, an object of her love (her physical appearance) changes into an object of hate. Her face, the greatest asset in contributing to her beauty, now generates dissatisfaction within her. She no longer likes the attention she gets because she is aware of its artificiality, and

7. Andy Johnson, "Bullets and Blades: Narcissism and Violence in *Invisible Monsters*," in *Sacred and Immoral: On the Writings of Chuck Palahniuk*, ed. Jeffrey A. Sartain (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 65.

her commodification leads her to desire to free herself from the culturally prescribed notion of “self.” Therefore, she must walk away from *herself* to be born anew. And while until now she has been characterized by her beauty, self-mutilation seems justified.

Self-destruction can be seen as a recurring motif in Palahniuk’s narratives. Apart from the healing effect it has on an individual, in *Invisible Monsters* it represents a possibility to subvert the culture’s domination and give an individual the chance to reassert identity.⁸ Both Shannon and, as we shall see, Shane perform violence upon their own bodies to escape the culture industry and proclaim their lost identities, thus returning the authentic experience back within themselves. The reason that leads Shannon to self-mutilation might come across as odd but is in fact completely understandable. The beauty industry that satisfied her narcissistic needs started to sicken her as she saw the machinery behind it. Thus, she felt compelled to disfigure her face beyond recognition to reclaim the identity taken from her by the beauty industry.

SHANE À LA BRANDY ALEXANDER

Shane undergoes countless operations to look exactly like a woman. It is important to note here that Shane’s transformation is not an attempt to redesign gender, but to escape labels imposed on him by culture and society. Within the given social categories, Shane has to conform either to being straight, gay or bisexual, which he clearly rejects. He says: “I’m not straight, and I’m not gay . . . I’m not bisexual, I want out of labels. I don’t want my whole life crammed into a single word. I want to find something else, unknowable, some place to be that’s not on the map” (*IM*, 261). Interestingly, the place that is not on the map becomes his very own body, which, according to Andrew Ng, “he transfigures into a cartography of pain and destruction.”⁹ While as a gay he is rejected by his parents, he first burns himself intentionally and then undergoes countless cosmetic operations to achieve “personal transcendence.”¹⁰ These acts are also fundamentally self-disfiguring because, as Virginia Blum remarks, plastic surgery is an act of violence too: “[I]n cosmetic surgery we find harm being done to a healthy body, cuts being made, blood flowing for no known medical reason.”¹¹ Even Brandy herself acknowledges that “sexual reassignment surgery is a miracle for some people, but if you don’t want one, it’s the ultimate form of self-destruction” (*IM*, 259).

Brandy’s body undergoes a total metamorphosis to achieve the ideal worshipped and glorified by the beauty industry. Even though still one operation short of becoming a real woman, she is already “so beautiful you could chop her head off and put it on a blue velvet in the window at Tiffany’s and somebody would buy it for a million dollars” (*IM*, 57). Considering the novel’s criticism it is rather unsurprising that both Brandy and Evie have shaped themselves according to Shannon. This fact further strengthens

8. See Ng, “Destruction and the Discourse of Deformity,” 26.

9. Ng, “Destruction and the Discourse of Deformity,” 26.

10. Ng, “Destruction and the Discourse of Deformity,” 26.

11. Virginia L. Blum, *Flesh Wounds: The Culture of Cosmetic Surgery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 13, quoted in Johnson, “Bullets and Blades,” 62.

Palahniuk's disapproval of the culture industry's practice of recycling individuals into each other's copies. The difference between these characters, however, lies in the way they use their appearance to achieve their personal goals. While Evie's sole goal is to obey the culture industry's dictate and to completely succumb to it, Brandy's purpose is to subvert it. Her choice to become a woman is not to attain the ideal of beauty but to escape labels. Although she might seemingly conform to the ideology of the beauty industry, she secretly liberates herself from its manacles. Through violent transformations performed upon her body in order to become beautiful, she attempts to *proclaim* her identity, whereas through violence Shannon seeks to *reclaim* it from the beauty industry.¹² Beauty as such has completely different meanings for Palahniuk's female/transgender characters: for Evie and Shannon it is a reduction of their identities, while for Brandy beauty is what enables her to experience and assert her identity. This may be illustrated in the names Brandy likes to give to Shannon and Manus on their trip across America, when the two constantly have to assume new identities. Brandy, however, meticulously constructs and guards her identity and is *always* introduced as Princess Brandy Alexander.

Brandy becomes a woman not so much out of desire as out of revolt against the culture industry that forces her to identify with its strict labels and teaches her "not make mistakes" (*IM*, 258). Brandy is seeking a *real* life, which can be translated into a longing for an authentic experience, namely by upsetting the expected order of things. She hopes the bigger the mistake, the better chance she will have to start a *real* life. By becoming a woman she circumvents whatever labels and resists being put into a category. Andrew Slade notes that "Palahniuk and his characters are faithful that beyond mutilation a new horizon for existence will appear, in which an authentic existence, a real life, becomes a reality."¹³ Since becoming a woman "is the biggest mistake [she] could think to make" (*IM*, 258), her sex change is "the path to the greatest discovery" (*IM*, 259).

It might seem baffling at first why Shannon is so attracted to Brandy. However, when Shannon realizes that Brandy is so strikingly similar to her, it becomes obvious: "I know what it is I loved about her. What I love is myself. Brandy Alexander just looks exactly like the way I looked before the accident" (*IM*, 198). This realization in her also suggests that by performing violence against her own body, she has not been cured from her narcissism. This happens only at the end when Shannon and Brandy/Shane reunite and their relationship is restored. That the siblings eventually reconcile is symptomatic of Palahniuk's writings. His characters typically long for human connection and in the end they manage to attain it. Palahniuk himself sees as the central motif of his novels "a lonely person looking for some way to connect with other people."¹⁴ Thus, Shannon

12. See Ng, "Destruction and the Discourse of Deformity," 30–31.

13. Andrew Slade, "On Mutilation: The Sublime Body of Chuck Palahniuk's Fiction," in *Reading Chuck Palahniuk: American Monsters and Literary Mayhem*, ed. Cynthia Kuhn and Lance Rubin (New York: Routledge, 2009), 71.

14. Chuck Palahniuk, *Stranger than Fiction: True Stories* (New York: Anchor Books, 2005), xv.

and Shane need to break away from their narcissism and find a way to each other. As Brandy, Shane takes care of the mutilated Shannon and shows love towards her as she tries to teach her how to live a new life behind her veils. What's more, Brandy's love is unconditional because as she meets Shannon, she is already mutilated. Therefore Brandy cannot love her merely for her appearance. By the end of the novel Shannon finally understands she is loved by her brother, who confesses that he was the one who deliberately put the hairspray in the trash and therefore he could have never hated her for doing it. At this crucial moment she is able to overcome her own hatred towards him: "Me, I just want Shane to be happy," she says, "I'm tired of being me, hateful me" (IM, 291). She makes an unexpected gesture when she resigns her identity to her brother as an act of pure love: "I'm giving you my life to prove myself I can, I really can love somebody . . . Completely and totally, permanently and without hope of reward, just as an act of will, I will love somebody" (IM, 295). Shannon is finally able to receive and give unconditional love and thus cure herself from her narcissism.

CONCLUSION

Shannon urges Brandy: "Be famous. Be a big social experiment in getting what you don't want . . . I'm giving you my life because I want the whole world to know you. I wish the whole world would embrace what it hates" (IM, 294). By passing her identity to Shane, Shannon actually gives him a chance to experience the *real* adventure that he hopes for. On the other hand, by becoming "Shannon," Shane, a transgendered beauty icon and therefore an embodiment of ambiguous beauty, will get to challenge the prejudice and fear of American society towards anything that defies its strictly-defined categories. Shannon invites her former audience to love her twin brother, and unwittingly accept something that it hates, and consequently reconsider the stereotyped gender categories. Beauty's *monstrosity* becomes (*in*)*visible* in serving as a mask, under which a whole new being, free of labels, is capable of living an authentic life. If nothing else, Palahniuk seems to suggest that by resorting to violent, *monstrous* actions an individual may finally win back their identity from a culture overloaded with artificially-fabricated images of *self*.

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BECOMING WHOLE AGAIN: DECONSTRUCTING GENDER DUALITIES IN EMMA TENNANT'S *THE BAD SISTER*

MARKÉTA GREGOROVÁ

Palacký University, Olomouc, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic. Email: marketa.gregorova@upol.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper focuses on the productive ways in which Emma Tennant deconstructs and redefines gendered binary oppositions in her novel *The Bad Sister* (1978) to arrive at the fusion of both male and female qualities into a single androgynous identity. Tennant's novel, steeped in influences of popular culture and a gender-conscious environment, is a modern adaptation of James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), a Scottish classic dealing with the destructive potential of repressive religion. While Hogg's text explores the Satan–saint dichotomy, Tennant challenges the social construct of masculine versus feminine attributes, including the implied oppositions of doer–sufferer, superior–inferior or legitimate–illegitimate, and proposes a non-dualistic alternative to the traditional binary worldview. The surreal flights of Tennant's story enable her also to expose a broader history of social oppression, be it based on gender, class or nationality.

KEYWORDS: Scottish novel; Emma Tennant; *The Bad Sister*; James Hogg; *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*; gender; duality; literary adaptations

Why wasn't James Joyce a woman?
Why are we so narrow in our minds and wide in our hips?
—Emma Tennant¹

Together with Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson, James Hogg forms the triumvirate of classic nineteenth-century Scottish fiction writers who tackle the staple Scottish subjects of history, identity and morality. All are skilfully interwoven into Hogg's novel, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), the formal complexity and narrative ambiguity of which attach it, as Cairns Craig suggests, to the twentieth rather than the nineteenth century.² Hogg's novel proved influential enough to inspire a number of followers and imitators, including Emma Tennant's remarkable re-imagination of the original story retold from a distinctly woman's perspective and featuring female instead of male major characters. Hogg portrays the diabolic possession and subsequent disintegration of the mind of a young man who finds himself pursued by a devilish companion and who is urged to commit grave crimes allegedly in order to testify to the firmness of his antinomian faith. The youth professes rigid Scottish Calvinism and considers himself to be one of the elect, that is, those predestined

1. Emma Tennant, *The Bad Sister*, in *Travesties: The Bad Sister, Two Women of London, Faustine* (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), 72.

2. See Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 38.

to salvation by virtue of God's grace, which cannot be withdrawn from them regardless of their actions on earth. More than a century and a half later, Tennant's novel *The Bad Sister* (1978) replaces Hogg's religious premise with a modern-day vampiric structure, focusing on a young woman manipulated by a fellow female mentor into assisting in the latter's dubious aims while believing that she is setting herself free from those who oppress her.

Both Hogg and Tennant draw heavily on the motif of duality, which is significantly present also in the character constellations of their respective novels. Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* illustrates the pitfalls of crude rationality untempered by simple humanity or, in other words, the failure of reason when unbalanced by emotion. Marshall Walker, commenting on the nature of Hogg's work, observes that "writing against the background of the so-called age of reason, his [Hogg's] repeated message is that people are deprived of reason by perverted religion."³ The novel's protagonist, Robert Wringhim, possesses superior intelligence but suffers from stunted emotional growth, therefore his spiritual friend, Gil Martin, gradually succeeds in persuading Robert by sheer force of argument that it is his duty as one of the elect to persecute the reprobates, which involves, among other violent acts, fratricide followed by patricide. Tennant's protagonist, Jane Wild, offers a useful counterpart to Hogg's Robert Wringhim in that she exemplifies the shortcomings of the opposite extreme, the overreliance on emotion unchecked by reason. In contrast to Robert's strictly rationally motivated conduct, Jane's actions spring from undisciplined passions, among the most prominent of them jealousy. Jane's jealousy targets her half-sister Ishbel Dalzell, the only legitimate child of a wealthy laird, who enjoys the luxuries of landed gentry life while the illegitimate Jane and her mother are merely suffered in a cottage on the laird's property. Tennant here reuses the motif of sibling rivalry from Hogg's original, where Robert Wringhim is the disowned, suspected illegitimate son of a landowning nobleman who acknowledged only the eldest son born in his marriage prior to separation.

The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner conceives of character identity as a fluid rather than fixed concept, which shows in the increasingly obscured distinctions between the characters of Robert Wringhim and Gil Martin. When Robert meets Gil Martin for the first time, this mysterious stranger bears the physical appearance of Robert himself, so that Robert assumes the man to be his twin brother. In his much-quoted preface to the novel, André Gide explains that Gil Martin can be interpreted as "the exteriorized development of our own desires, of our pride, of our most secret thoughts. It consists throughout in the indulgence we accord to our own selves."⁴ According to Gide, then, Gil Martin personifies the lowliest traits of Robert's nature, which is that of a self-righteous individual detached from other human beings and regarding himself as standing above the ordinary course of mankind. Gil Martin

3. Marshall Walker, *Scottish Literature since 1707* (London: Longman, 1996), 144.

4. André Gide, preface to *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, by James Hogg (London: Cresset Press, 1947), xv.

incorporates the devil in religious terms as well as in the general deprecatory use of the word, so when Robert identifies himself with Gil Martin, he is unwittingly identifying himself with Satan. "I am wedded to you so closely that I feel as if I were the same person," Gil Martin finally reveals to Robert. "Our essences are one, our bodies and spirits being united . . . and, wherever you are, there must my presence be with you."⁵ Robert discovers no means of disentangling himself from his oppressive double but by committing one last sin, that of suicide, and leaves behind a testimony of his haunted existence in a journal, whose reprinted text purportedly forms the body of the book.

Tennant's *The Bad Sister* employs characters with even less stable identities than in Hogg's novel and allows some of them to transgress the boundaries of time, space and even gender. The spatio-temporal dimension dissolves as Jane Wild, a film reviewer in the 1970s, metamorphoses into Jeanne, an Irish immigrant maidservant of an unspecified earlier period, unjustly persecuted and discriminated against. Jeanne emerges triumphant when she, with the guidance and assistance of her sister Marie, brutally murders the mistress of the house along with her daughter, who were exploiting their servants and abusing their superior position based on their superior socio-economic circumstances. Another time, Jane lies sick in bed while her mind wanders to what is a fantasy rather than a recollection of herself as a young girl about to be punished for playing where she should not have and drawing a sharp pin in the chest of her hated half-sister Ishbel, who lured her to play there in the first place. Finally, Jane regularly transforms into a young man by night, and her female consciousness transplanted into a male body sets off in search of the "missing male principle" needed to attain spiritual wholeness.⁶ Summarising the motif of metamorphosis in the novel, Monica Germanà concludes that Tennant "addresses the paradox inherent in the Scottish double, building upon and simultaneously eroding binary approaches to identity, cultural belonging, and the strategies to represent these complex issues."⁷ Tennant does not end with merely deconstructing what she seems to perceive as outdated either-or definitions, she also offers an alternative non-binary worldview, albeit in fictional terms.

Tennant's novel makes ample use of the supernatural, particularly of various forms of demonism with a distinctly feminist slant, such as in distinguishing between independent women, who "had been execrated as witches" in history, and dependent women, who had been "elevated to virtuous wives."⁸ At times, Jane attempts to bend to the dominant male discourse and assumes the traditional woman's role as the angel in the house, but she realises that this concession renders her as lifeless as the cardboard cut-outs of shopping women in the windows of a local supermarket. More

5. James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (London: Cresset Press, 1947), 207.

6. Tennant, *The Bad Sister*, 32.

7. Monica Germanà, *Scottish Women's Gothic and Fantastic Writing: Fiction since 1978* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 102.

8. Tennant, *The Bad Sister*, 29.

often, Jane half-mockingly speaks of her desire to get a witch's broomstick and soar above the limitations imposed on her by the conventional conformist society. During her night travels in a man's body, Jane apparently takes on certain devilish qualities, for her clothes smell of sulphur, but she also strikes the sailors in a bar which she enters as a siren, a creature equally tempting and threatening. Out of the series of contending identities that Jane tries on and shakes off again, that of a vampire proves the most satisfactory and empowering: "I am the double, now it's me who's become the shadow," Jane asserts. "Where I was haunted, now I will pursue."⁹ After experiencing her rebirth into a vampire, Jane embarks on a course of uncompromising action, starting symbolically with turning, politely but firmly, her boyfriend's unpleasant mother out of her flat.

Although it does not constitute a major motif in the overall structure of Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, there are readily identifiable misogynist sentiments expressed in the novel by Robert Wringhim, whose abhorrence of the opposite sex seems to spring solely from an irrational fear of the other. Robert views carnal intercourse as repulsive, but he is ironically forced to flee from the law when the slayed corpses of his reported mistress and his mother surface, while he has no memory of either committing the crimes or even keeping the company of the young woman. Similarly, Jane Wild in Tennant's novel faces charges of murdering her father and her half-sister, yet, her otherwise detailed diary, presented as the core of the book, fails to record anything pertaining to these particular acts of violence. It is not Jane but again Jane's mentor, Meg Gil-martin, who articulates misandrist arguments and remarks that the wealthy laird, Jane's father, needs to be ritualistically executed as "a symbol of the father of all women" and as "the incarnation of capitalism."¹⁰ This example illustrates that Tennant's multifaceted narrative not only sets out to explore, as Flora Alexander puts it, "the fragmentation of the female individual which results from pressures placed on women by patriarchal culture," but it is balanced also by openly discussing "the destructiveness of some militant forms of radical feminism."¹¹

Unlike Hogg's tormented self-justified sinner, Tennant's uprooted protagonist finds at least some degree of resolution when she achieves the goal set by Meg, to bring her a young woman named Miranda, whose identity oscillates between Jane's boyfriend's former girl and Jane's half-sister. By disposing of Miranda, Jane relieves herself of what Meg calls a "double female self" and so fulfils the condition necessary to reinstate "the male principle" in her and become a whole person again.¹² In the last entry of her journal, Jane has been released from her restraints and accordingly describes her final journey from a bird's perspective, leaving the place of her confinement and rushing to be united with Gil-martin, her missing male part. A decade later, a body recovered

9. Tennant, *The Bad Sister*, 116.

10. Tennant, *The Bad Sister*, 29.

11. Flora Alexander, "Contemporary Fiction III: The Anglo-Scots," in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 631.

12. Tennant, *The Bad Sister*, 122.

from an unmarked grave is positively identified as Jane, wearing a pair of men's jeans too tight in the hips to fit a female figure and a women's strapless top, combining in its physical appearance both masculine and feminine features into a perfectly androgynous form. In her death, Jane surpasses her mentor Meg and avoids the pitfalls against which Tennant warns in an interview concerning her book: "To pursue the feminist position, to become aware of the loss of the masculine principle in you, and then to murder it . . . is self-defeating, just as in Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* it's self-defeating to go around murdering people in order to be told that you are one of the elect."¹³ The conclusion of *The Bad Sister* decisively overthrows at least one out of the many limiting traditional binary oppositions, that of the male and female, and boldly points towards a new comprehensive androgynous alternative.

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13. Quoted in John Haffenden, *Novelists in Interview* (London: Methuen, 1985), 291.

PRISON AS A QUEER SPACE IN SARAH WATERS'S *AFFINITY*

MICHAELA WEISS

Silesian University in Opava, Institute of Foreign Languages, Department of English and American Studies, Masarykova 37, 746 01 Opava, Czech Republic. Email: michaela.weiss@fpf.slu.cz

ABSTRACT: This paper analyses the significance of the concept of prison as a queer space in the 1999 novel *Affinity* by contemporary British author Sarah Waters. This Neo-Victorian, i.e., post-modern Victorian novel, deals with the topical effects of repression based on suppressed or denied sexual orientation and gender identity. The Victorian and contemporary notions of criminality and sexuality are analyzed in connection with prison, which is interpreted as a place open to transgression of heteronormativity. Suffering from social restrictions, the protagonist discovers and fully develops her personal and sexual identity only within the oppressive, yet at the same time, more permissive space of the female prison that, paradoxically, grants her freedom and independence.

KEYWORDS: Sarah Waters; *Affinity*; lesbian fiction; neo-Victorian fiction; queer space

The contemporary British author Sarah Waters (b. 1966) has become well known for her Neo-Victorian lesbian romances, namely *Tipping The Velvet* (1998), *Affinity*, and *Fingersmith* (2002). The nineteenth century is in many ways relatable and still captivates the interest of modern authors and readers alike. Philosopher Michel Foucault claims that both eras are marked by “multiplication: a dispersion of sexualities, a strengthening of their disparate forms, a multiple implantation of ‘perversions.’”¹ By classifying multiple forms of sexual identities, the Victorians came up with new definitions of identity and sexuality that significantly determined which gender structures would be considered deviant and socially undesirable, and, by implication, also those that would be normative. As Jeffrey Weeks points out, “the concept of heterosexuality was invented (*after* the former [i.e., *after* homosexuality]) to describe, apparently, what we now call bisexuality, and then ‘normality.’”² These new categories of perverse sexualities then became the object of psychiatric and medical classifications and examinations, as Foucault observes: “Homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species.”³ This, however, was true mainly for male homosexuality; women did not face any potential religious or criminal charges, and

1. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 37.

2. Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality and Its Discontents: Meaning, Myths, and Modern Sexualities* (1985; London: Routledge, 2002), 72.

3. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 43.

lesbian relationships tended to be either ignored or bracketed as romantic friendships that commonly included bed sharing, hugging, and mutual physical admiration.⁴

Moreover, it was expected that such behavior would be replaced by the adoption of marital and reproductive duties.⁵ The silence surrounding this issue presents a serious challenge for any portrayal of nineteenth-century queer life, especially due to the lack of reliable sources depicting Victorian sexual and gender behavior. According to feminist historian Leila Rupp, a “problem of evidence” stems from the fact that most records, both artistic and official, were written by men, as women were largely illiterate.⁶

Most theoretical models present nineteenth-century female homosexuality either as masculine identification or romantic friendship, which is, however, understood as asexual. The overly masculine woman was mainly labeled as a hermaphrodite, androgyne, tribade, or “female husband.”⁷ Yet Waters carefully avoids such terminology, applying Foucault’s method, “writing the history of the present,”⁸ i.e., foregrounding the present state within the narrative from the past. *Affinity*, despite its Victorian feel – reached mainly by the literary devices and customs used by such novelists as Charles Dickens (1812–1870), George Eliot (1819–1880) or Wilkie Collins (1824–1889) – qualifies as a Neo-Victorian, or in other words, post-modern Victorian novel contemplating the topical effects of repression based on denied or suppressed identity. Moreover, the text itself constantly communicates with the modern reader, not only because of the topicality and absence of Victorian terminology but also by the frequent use of the term “queer,” which fits the original meaning of “strange” and “odd,” yet at the same time referring to its contemporary understanding.⁹

Moreover, in *Affinity* Waters presents a variety of lesbian relationships, avoiding the already stereotypical image of victimized women whose love is doomed by the hostile environment. At the same time, she challenges the Victorian (and to a certain extent contemporary) view of female homosexuality that was significantly affected by the work of British physician and social reformer Havelock Ellis. In his influential 1897 study, *Sexual Inversion*, he depicted lesbians as masculine women without any interest in traditionally feminine occupations:

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4. For more information on romantic friendships, see Carolyn W. De la L. Oulton, *Romantic Friendship in Victorian Literature* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007).
 5. Though later, due to extensive psychiatric and medical research, women at the beginning of the twentieth century were left with a significantly limited choice of either a heterosexual marriage or social ostracism. See, e.g., the trial and censorship of the lesbian romance *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) by British author Radclyffe Hall, which was proclaimed obscene by a British court.
 6. Leila J. Rupp, *Sapphistries: A Global History of Love between Women* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 4.
 7. For a more detailed genealogy of these terms, see Judith Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 59.
 8. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (1977; New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 31.
 9. To provide just a few examples: One matron noticing Margaret’s frequent visits to one inmate, warns her against making a “protégée” – she pronounced it queerly – of one particular prisoner”; Margaret hopes to find “some queer fact or article of knowledge” about Selina, while she calls her desire for women “queer longings.” Sarah Waters, *Affinity* (London: Virago, 2012), 216, 150, 291. Hereafter cited in text.

When they still retain female garments, these usually show some traits of masculine simplicity, and there is nearly always a disdain for the petty feminine artifices of the toilet. Even when this is not obvious, there are all sorts of instinctive gestures and habits which may suggest to female acquaintances the remark that such a person "ought to have been a man" There is also a dislike and sometimes incapacity for needlework and other domestic occupations, while there is some capacity for athletics.¹⁰

The majority of the nineteenth and early twentieth century theoreticians considered masculine traits in connection with lower class background to be the most significant features of lesbianism. Waters chose to avoid such simplification. The protagonist of *Affinity*, Margaret Prior, is a fragile, over-sensitive, upper middle-class lady without any muscular or athletic traits, though she is not keen on needlework or marriage. Her mental condition deteriorated especially after the death of her father and loss of her lover Helen, who was not willing and able to face disapproval and social isolation, and married Margaret's brother. This strategy is still common, as many lesbians marry to gain social acceptance and financial and other senses of security.¹¹ Such tendencies reflect what gender scholar Patricia Smith called the lesbian panic, "lesbianism frequently lacks a name, much less an acknowledged or acceptable identity. Accordingly, the fear of the loss of identity and value as object of exchange, often combined with the fear of responsibility for one's own sexuality, is a characteristic response."¹²

Helen fears losing her value and position within the patriarchal system and prefers social stability. She tries to embody the Victorian ideal of femininity and becomes a submissive wife adoring her husband and child. The lesbian panic can thus be interpreted as a result of what critic and poet Adrienne Rich called "compulsory heterosexuality."¹³

On the other hand, Margaret cannot be so easily categorized, even by Victorian standards. Her love for Helen and unwillingness to marry and have children presents such a threat to her family's reputation that even several years after the relationship ended she remains under constant supervision. Due to Margaret's social position, her same-sex romance and suicide attempt were both classified as the symptoms of hysteria, and she was prescribed daily doses of drugs to keep her calm and sedated. Still, the issues are never openly discussed in the family, and as such, are treated as non-existent. The silence becomes a powerful tool of repression imposed on Margaret both by her family and Helen.

Her home feels like a guarded prison, and that is why Margaret feels the urge to leave the house as often as possible. Yet to her surprise, she encounters various forms of limitations even in public places, such as in the public library she often visited with her father. When accompanied by a male figure, her presence was generally accepted, yet since his death, the attitude of the librarians and readers alike has significantly changed.

10. Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, vol. 2, *Sexual Inversion* (London: London University Press, 1897), 96–98.

11. See Carren Strock, *Married Women Who Love Women*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 31.

12. Patricia Juliana Smith, *The Lesbian Panic: Homoeroticism in Modern British Women's Fiction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 6.

13. See Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose, 1979–1985* (New York: Norton, 1986), 23–75.

Margaret is suddenly not viewed as someone's daughter but as an old maid: "The others . . . call me 'madam' now, I noticed, instead of 'miss'. I have turned in two years from a girl into a spinster" (58).

Paradoxically, the space where she eventually experiences the desired sense of freedom is the London Millbank Prison, which she frequents as a lady visitor. While Margaret claims that her interest in female inmates is purely scientific and she upholds the legacy of her father, it is obvious that these visits provide her with a meaningful occupation without her mother's supervision. Instead of being the observed and condemned one, she watches other criminalized women without being accused of inappropriate conduct. She even finds the Millbank building fascinating and strangely attractive: "The prison, drawn in outline, has a curious charm to it, the pentagons appearing as petals on a geometric flower. . . . Seen close, of course, Millbank is not charming. Its scale is vast, and its lines and angles . . . seem only wrong or perverse" (8). Still, she enjoys the relative freedom of the confined space as she is treated in a respectable manner due to her high social rank, imagining her history safely locked in a prison cell.

Yet her past even heightens her fascination with the prison, especially because of her suicide attempt, which was considered a crime punishable by institutionalization either in a prison or mental hospital; it was only Margaret's social status that kept her from other punishment than constant monitoring and prescription medication:

'I took morphia . . . and should have died, if they had not found me. It was careless of me to be found, I suppose. But it was nothing to me. . . . Don't you think it queer? That a common coarse-featured woman might drink morphia and be sent to gaol for it, while I am saved and sent to visit her – and all because I am a *lady*?' (255–56)

Another source of Margaret's (subconscious) attraction to Millbank is her inverted sexuality, as prisons are mainly segregated and allow only monitored visiting, thus ruling out the potential for developing heterosexual relationships. It is a secluded space that follows its own rules and as such is ideal for various types of outcasts, including queer identities and sexualities. Only here Margaret starts to feel again the physical and psychological desire for other women, as she feels safely distanced from them. Freed from her mother's supervision, she gains new power, as here she is the one who observes, monitors and is allowed to watch:

Their faces were pale, and their necks, and their wrists and fingers, very slender. I thought of Mr. Shillitoe saying that a prisoner's heart was weak, impressionable, and needed a finer mould to shape it. I thought of it and became aware again of my own heart beating. I imagined of how it would be to have that heart drawn from me, and one of those women's coarse organs pressed into the slippery cavity left at my breast . . . I put my hand to my throat then and felt, before my pulsing heart, my locket. (25–26)

Her voyeurism awakes her need for female closeness and love. Though she distances herself from the women that she views as too coarse, she nevertheless acknowledges her rising agitation and even describes the process of organ interchange as intercourse. This, however, cannot escape the matrons' attention, as female homosocial and

homoerotic¹⁴ behavior was not uncommon in prison: same-sex desires and relationships are acknowledged as a part of the routine at Millbank, and the matrons show a certain pleasure stemming from their power over the inmates' relationships. They would provoke Margaret, sensing her insecurity and noticing her intensive gaze at the prisoners. They warn her not to become involved with the inmates, as some of them would be likely to at least attempt to establish such a relationship with a lady visitor:

White and Jarvis are notorious in the jail as a pair of 'pals', and were 'worse than any sweethearts'. She said I would find the women 'palling up', they did it at every prison she worked at. . . . She herself had seen hard women there turn quite love-sick, because they had taken a fancy to some girl they had seen, and the girl had turned her shoulder on them, or had a pal already that she liked better. 'You must watch that no-one tries to make a pal of *you*, miss. (67)

The imprisoned women are generally considered a lower species, or criminals that engage in dirty activities. Even Margaret is shocked when she realizes the real meaning of the term "pal" in prisons and is horrified that she was so naive as to believe that two prisoners are cousins, and almost became a medium of their "dark passion" (67). Despite that ambiguity, Margaret's description of the female bodies going to shower is very lyrical, detailed and erotic:

The gipsy girl raising her arms, and showing the darkness of her armpits, then turning, with a helpless modesty, as she worked at the hooks of her stays. Miss Ridley leaned nearer to me to ask, 'Will you go in with them ma'am, and watch them bathe?' – and the movement of her breath against my cheek made me blink, and I looked away. I said no, I would not accompany them there, but would go on to the wards. She straightened [Here Waters plays again with the queer terminology], and her mouth twitched, and I thought I caught a flash of something behind her pale, bare gaze – a sour kind of satisfaction, or amusement. (80)

The pleasure derived from the transgression can be observed both from the matrons and the inmates. As Foucault suggests: "The pleasure that comes of exercising a power that questions, monitors, watches, spies, searches out, palpates, brings to light; and on the other hand, the pleasure that kindles at having to evade this power, flee from it, fool it, or travesty."¹⁵ The transgression of heteronormativity is also a source of pleasure for Margaret, who no matter how she disregards the "dark passion" of others, nevertheless seeks it herself.

She soon finds a young inmate who seems different from the rest, a spiritual medium, Selina Dawes. Margaret refuses to relate her attraction to the deviant and coarse "palling-up" she has heard of from the matrons. Rather, she firmly believes she shares a deep spiritual connection with Selina, an affinity of the soul: "And so I looked at her, and felt a rush of pity. And what I thought was: *You are like me*" (82). Such a division between those who consider themselves pure or real lesbians and other groups, including bisexuals, experimental and situational lesbians, has been observed in many prisons. According to gender studies scholar Jessi Lee Jackson, women mainly identified as gay, lesbian, men, or boys. Though some considered lesbianism in prison conditions degrading and used

14. For an explication of these terms, see Roman Trušník, *Podoby amerického homosexuálního románu po roce 1945* (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2011), 17–18.

15. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 45.

the term “players” for those “who engaged in butch/femme, casual sex, or exchanging sex for other resources.”¹⁶

Similar role divisions can be observed in *Affinity*. Margaret falls in love with Selina, yet she soon realizes that her openly expressed desire can put her into danger and she decides to avoid the prison. Being in love with another woman makes her uneasy: “I knew my trips to her had made me strange, not like myself – or worse, that they had made me *too much* myself, like my old self, my naked *Aurora* self. Now, when I tried to be *Margaret* again, I couldn’t” (242).

She soon becomes torn between the seeming freedom and promise of love within the prison walls and her social duties. In the last years she has learned the necessity to hide her romantic feelings for women. In the house she has no power, and her mother constantly reminds of her duties: “Your place is here! . . . not at the prison. And it is time you showed that you know it. Now Priscilla is married, you must take up your proper duties in the house” (252).

Affinity thus draws a parallel between imprisonments at home, in public, and in jail. Both Margaret and Selina are watched and confined as a punishment for behavior that was classified as criminal by society. While Margaret, owing to her high social status, is seemingly better off and free, her social position represents a significant and powerful source of restraint. Trapped by social conventions, she is forced to be social and behave like a lady, almost envying the inmates’ possibility to disregard any social expectations and pressures:

I would rather sit with the prisoners at Millbank than sit with Priscilla now. I would rather talk with Ellen Power, than be chided by Mother. I would rather visit Selina, than go to Garden Court to visit Helen – for Helen is as full of wedding talk as any of them, but Selina they have so removed from ordinary rules and habits, she might be living, cold and graceful, on the surface of the moon. (176)

Margaret tries to avoid the wedding discussions and preparations, as she is well aware that Priscilla is her younger sister and that she is becoming a family burden and will be classified as a spinster. She almost envies Selina that she is so excluded from daily social routines and judgments, as if she lived in another world. It is therefore not surprising that it is the queer space of Millbank that encourages Margaret to break free from the social prison. According to Judith Halberstam, “Queer uses of time and space develop, at least in part, in opposition to the institutions of family, heterosexuality, and reproduction. They also develop according to other logics of location, movement, and identification.”¹⁷ That is why Margaret starts planning to leave for Italy under disguised names. Yet she gradually loses her formerly privileged position at Millbank. The matrons closely observe her and write reports on her conduct. Even Selina, sensing Margaret’s fear, desire and desperate need for affection, starts to test her power over her: “I gave a twitch, as if her fingers had some charge to them. Her eyes widened, and then she smiled” (88). When

16. Jessi Lee Jackson, “Situational Lesbians and the Daddy Tank: Women Prisoners Negotiating Queer Identity and Space, 1970–1980,” *Genders OnLine Journal* 53 (2011): http://www.genders.org/g53/g53_jackson.html.

17. Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 1.

Selina is sure of Margaret's submission to her touch, she keeps her at distance: "No-', for I had taken a step, to be nearer to her. . . . 'You must wait a little'" (299). Moreover, she persuades her lover Ruth to work as a maid for the Prior family, which provides her with access to Margaret's privacy. Both women use their knowledge to manipulate their victim. Margaret thus believes that Selina truly loves her and can ask the spirits to free her anytime she chooses. She hopes that unlike Helen, her spiritual affinity will never leave her, and for this vision of happiness she is willing to sacrifice everything. Margaret withdraws all the money she inherited from her father by cheating her brother Stephen into signing a blank cheque that she manages to hide in her skirts, buys clothes, train tickets and asks for passports for Margaret Prior and Marian Erle (a maid in Elizabeth Browning's novel *Aurora Leigh*, 1857). Yet the morning when Selina is supposed to come to her with the help of the spirits, Margaret wakes up alone. She rushes to Millbank only to find out that her beloved escaped. After coming back home, she finds out that she was misused by both her lover and her maid who stole her possessions and identity, and together they left for Italy. Frustrated, Margaret commits suicide.

Even though such an ending is atypical for heterosexual romances, it is somewhat common in queer fiction.¹⁸ Waters does not use the death of the protagonist to prove the hostility of the outside space to queer relationships,¹⁹ as Selina and Ruth reach Italy and with the money and passports can enjoy a carefree existence. It is therefore not the hostility of the public space that affects the romance but the power distribution within the relationships.

The secluded queer prison space gave Margaret a sense of belonging, a refuge where she could express her love and plan the future she desired, though it had to be done behind bars. Yet what she does not realize is that her home prison is another significantly queered space. Margaret's room served as a hiding place for Helen and herself, and later, Margaret was hiding her rising passion for Selina, while closely watched by her lover Ruth. As can be seen from her prison experience, Margaret disregarded the dark passions of coarse women and therefore failed to notice and rightly interpret the maid's conduct. She ascribed Ruth's care to a maid's affection and understanding. When Selina manages to escape, she and Ruth violate Margaret's privacy, take her possessions and with them the last retreat where she could feel relatively secure and dream of her lover.

Both queer spaces thus become imprisoning, as they no longer offer even an apparitional sense of emotional and physical safety. Experiencing a fit of the lesbian panic, Margaret sees herself as an isolated and non-belonging old maid without any future prospects. Struggling with the fear of isolation and of her own sexual identity, she is neither able nor willing to perform the role of a submissive Victorian wife like Helen. Moreover, she is well aware that after cheating her brother, her fraud would be exposed

18. For the purposes of the paper, queer fiction is used as an umbrella term for all non-heterosexual identities.

19. For more on the function of tragic endings in gay fiction, see Roman Trušník, "The Uses of Tragic Endings in American Gay Fiction," in *Silesian Studies in English 2009: Proceedings of the International Conference of English and American Studies. September 7–8, 2009, Silesian University in Opava, Czech Republic*, ed. Michaela Náhliková and Marie Crhová (Opava: Slezská Univerzita v Opavě, 2010), 384–94.

and she would never be allowed to leave her mother's house without supervision. When her alternative queer spaces collapse, Margaret chooses suicide over lifelong home confinement, as she cannot bear other forms of imprisonment and is not physically and mentally strong enough to confront her family and start living on her own.

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MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

ROMAN TRUŠNÍK

Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
Mostní 5139, 760 01 Zlín, Czech Republic. Email: trusnik@fhs.utb.cz

ABSTRACT: The article explores the reception of Michael Cunningham in the Czech Republic, as seen through Czech afterwords to his novels. While Cunningham started his career as a minor gay writer writing for his friends dying of AIDS, he became an international celebrity after being awarded the Pulitzer Prize and PEN/Faulkner Award for his 1998 novel *The Hours*. This novel was also the first one translated into Czech in 2002, followed by all his novels with the exception of the first one. Cunningham has transcended the limiting category of gay literature and has become a typical post-gay writer, yet he has not renounced his roots but makes use of them in his fiction and proudly brings the experience up whenever he can. Cunningham has thus become the author of (post-)gay literature most translated into Czech. He has also greatly contributed to the fact that homosexuality in contemporary literature seems to be taken for granted, hardly requiring attention.

KEYWORDS: American literature; gay literature; Michael Cunningham; Czech Republic; translations; afterwords

American novelist Michael Cunningham (b. 1952) has become one of the most translated contemporary authors into Czech. With the exception of his first novel, *Golden States* (1984), which the author does not permit to reprint even in English, all of his novels have been translated into Czech and published by the Odeon publishing house. Cunningham's books are regularly reviewed in newspapers and magazines both in print and electronic editions. The author himself visited the Czech Republic twice, in 2006 and 2010, and made numerous appearances on TV and radio shows. A host of bachelor's and master's theses as well as some academic articles have been written about the author and his works.

Indeed, Cunningham's success in the Czech Republic mirrors his world-wide success. His fourth novel, *The Hours* (1998), won the Pulitzer Prize as well as the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction in 1999, propelling him into the ranks of the finest American authors. Yet Cunningham's road to success was a rough one: a graduate of the famous Iowa Writers' Workshop, he published his first novel, *Golden States*, "in order to have finished a novel by the time [he] was thirty." He considers it "not a bad book, but it's not good enough"¹ and does not allow a reissue. By the mid-1990s, he had published two further novels, *A Home at the End of the World* (1990) and *Flesh and Blood* (1995). These novels might be called "gay novels" in the sense that homosexuality featured there as a theme, or at least, as a motif. Indeed, at the time, Cunningham targeted the novels primarily at the gay audience – he remarks in an interview that he was writing for gay men suffering from AIDS who had time to read only a few more novels before their

1. Richard Canning, *Hear Us Out: Conversations with Gay Novelists* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 90–91.

deaths.² Even though the publication and fame of *The Hours* have made Cunningham a celebrated mainstream author, he in no way shuns the gay subculture in which most of his writing, including *The Hours*, is rooted.

Cunningham is a prime example of an author of assimilative fiction who endeavors to bring gay themes into mainstream American culture. According to the American critic Reed Woodhouse, assimilative literature

broke away from the ghetto tradition by placing its gay characters either outside the ghetto or in a hostile relation to it. But the books were also outside of the symbolic, literary ghetto: nothing but their inclusion of a gay character would have made one think these were gay books. Assimilative stories were deliberately integrative and frequently concerned a gay character's coming to terms with his family, living with straight friends (often women), or finding a lover and settling down in a monogamous relationship.³

Cunningham shares the category of an assimilative writer with novelists such as David Leavitt, Christopher Bram or Stephen McCauley, yet his assimilation is rather unique because unlike other authors – namely Leavitt – Cunningham is well acquainted with the gay subculture, or even underworld, whose culture is a significant source for his fiction. Indeed, characters like the drag queen Cassandra in *Flesh and Blood* (1995) who replaces another character's biological mother, are hard to find in other assimilative fiction.⁴

However, as the category of gay literature became increasingly problematic, David Leavitt popularized the term “post-gay fiction,” which he defined in 2005 as “novels and stories whose authors, rather than making a character's homosexuality the fulcrum on which the plot turns, either take it for granted, look at it as part of something larger or ignore it altogether.”⁵

To a great degree, this concept overlaps with Woodhouse's understanding of assimilative gay fiction, yet it may be useful to emphasize the shift in focus in this stream of gay literature. Moreover, Leavitt brought the term to the pages of a mainstream newspaper (*The New York Times*) rather than in a semi-academic book of literary criticism. Thus, either term may be applied to Cunningham's novels, as most of his novels following his breakthrough *The Hours* have a distinct gay tint to them: *Specimen Days* (2005) makes use of Walt Whitman (also a gay icon) to connect three stories, and *By Nightfall* (2010) features a middle-aged art dealer infatuated with his brother-in-law, not to mention *The Snow White* (2014), in which a gay artist is one of the two main protagonists.

Cunningham's road to the Czech Republic was not straightforward either, as can be seen from the chronology of translations, yet he has become the most translated American author of (post-)gay fiction in this central European country. *The Hours* was the first novel to be published in Czech as *Hodiny* (trans. Miroslav Jindra) in 2002, but

2. See Canning, *Hear Us Out*, 92.

3. Reed Woodhouse, *Unlimited Embrace: A Canon of Gay Fiction, 1945–1995* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 3.

4. For more details see Roman Trušník, “A Drag Queen in Your Living Room: Michael Cunningham's Revision of Assimilative Gay Fiction,” *American and British Studies Annual* 1 (2008): 97–103.

5. David Leavitt, “Out of the Closet and Off the Shelf,” *New York Times*, July 17, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/17/books/review/out-of-the-closet-and-off-the-shelf.html>.

this was a safe bet on the publisher's side: *The Hours* was an award-winning novel after all, and a film adaptation directed by Stephen Daldry and starring Meryl Streep, Nicole Kidman, and Julianne Moore was released the same year.

The second novel published in Czech was *A Home at the End of the World* in 2005, released as *Domov na konci světa* (trans. Miroslav Jindra), another safe bet: not only had the author already been introduced to the Czech audience but interest in the book was stimulated by Michael Mayer's film version (2004, starring Colin Farrell, Dallas Roberts, and Robin Wright). Moreover, the existence of the film version also proved that a story from the time when Cunningham was writing primarily for gay readership is indeed accessible to wider audiences.

After the success of the two books (both of them were reprinted), Cunningham was so well established in the country that the rest of his novelistic oeuvre, with the exception of his first novel, followed: *Specimen Days* was published as *Vzorové dny* in 2006, *By Nightfall* was published in Czech as *Za soumraku* (2011), followed by *Flesh and Blood* published as *Tělo a krev* (2014), and the author's last novel to date, *The Snow White*, was published recently as *Sněhová královna* (2015). All four novels were translated by Veronika Volhejnová.

All Czech translations of Cunningham's novels were published by the Odeon publishing house and they include afterwords, which constitute an important part of Czech book culture. Under the communist regime (1948–1989), the vast majority of translations of literary fiction (as opposed to genre fiction) were accompanied by a Czech preface or afterword, introducing the author, placing the author in their literary context, and usually providing an interpretation or a range of interpretations of the translated text. In a way, they also substituted or supplemented histories of literature, which were frequently lacking. The form reached such a high status that even a selection of afterwords was published in 1993,⁶ and it is used not only as a documentary of the times but also frequently by students of literature as a secondary source. After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, when the book market was liberalized, this tradition has gradually been discontinued by many publishers and at present is retained by only the major houses.

A most difficult task faced the author of the afterword to *The Hours*, Hana Ulmanová, who had to introduce a new author to the Czech audience. As an experienced lecturer in American literature, Ulmanová was aware that even Virginia Woolf was not part of the Czech general knowledge, so Woolf and her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) had to be introduced first. By way of introduction, she thus reminded readers that even Edward Albee's play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962) had actually been translated into Czech as *Kdopak by se Kafky bál?* (Who'd Be Afraid of Kafka?) in an attempt to make the title familiar to most Czechs.⁷ And indeed, after commenting on Woolf as a modernist

6. See Martin Hilský and Jan Zelenka, eds., *Od Poea k postmodernismu: Proměny americké prózy* (Praha: Nakladatelství H & H; Praha: Odeon, 1993).

7. See Hana Ulmanová, "Kdo se nebojí Virginie Woolfové," in *Hodiny*, by Michael Cunningham (Praha: Odeon, 2002), 181. All translations from sources in Czech are mine.

writer and her work with time, she noted that Cunningham was perhaps the only author of fiction who was not afraid of (a fictional portrayal of) Virginia Woolf.⁸

The need to contextualize Cunningham for the Czech reader is also apparent in the space Ulmanová devotes to Cunningham's biography: about half a page gives very brief information about Cunningham's life and previous publications and then one whole page follows, detailing the prizes Cunningham was awarded. Indeed, this part (with much name-dropping) makes sure that readers understand that Cunningham is indeed a first-rate writer. Only then does an analysis of the novel, common in afterwords, follow.

While in *The Hours*, bisexuality as well as AIDS are important motifs, they are even more so in *A Home at the End of the World*. Indeed, this is reflected in the afterword to the Czech edition of the novel, again by Ulmanová. She notes that it was critic Leslie A. Fiedler who in his study *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960) identified love in its various forms as a key theme of American literature. In a single, page-long paragraph, Ulmanová places Cunningham in the context of American homosexual literature. She also notes that from Czech translations we know mostly works by Gertrude Stein, Truman Capote, and Tennessee Williams.⁹

Of course, a single paragraph cannot outline the history of gay literature, and thus the information given here is necessarily incomplete and perhaps even misleading.¹⁰ Yet it not only places Cunningham firmly in the realm of gay literature, but also mentions authors virtually unknown to the general public in the Czech Republic (Andrew Holleran, Larry Kramer, Edmund White, and James Purdy). Moreover, it emphasizes the need to focus on the aesthetic dimension of the works, for which Cunningham was often praised.

In addition to *A Home at the End of the World*, Ulmanová comments also on *Flesh and Blood*, a book almost killed by the fierce *New York Times* critic Michiko Kakutani.¹¹ Ulmanová notes, however, that "it is a book full of love, hope, and despair."¹² She also devotes paragraphs to *The Hours*, Cunningham's non-fiction work *Land's End: A Walk in Provincetown* (2002), and the yet-to-be-published *Specimen Days*. In all of these novels, Ulmanová notes the importance of the theme of homosexual love.

Starting with *Specimen Days*, the novels were translated by Veronika Volhejnová instead of Miroslav Jindra, and the afterwords were written by various authors. So as Ulmanová felt it necessary to introduce *The Hours* by introducing Virginia Woolf,

8. See Ulmanová, "Kdo se nebojí Virginie Woolfové," 183.

9. See Hana Ulmanová, "Touha sdílet," in *Domov na konci světa*, by Michael Cunningham (Praha: Odeon, 2005), 392.

10. As my survey revealed, even at the time of writing the afterword many other gay-themed American novels had been published in Czech. See Roman Trušník, "American Gay Fiction as Seen through Czech Translations," in *America in Foreign Media: Proceedings of the 19th International Colloquium of American Studies, September 6–8, 2013, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic*, edited by Michal Peprník and Matthew Sweney (Olomouc: Palacký University Olomouc, 2014), 97–108. For a more thorough overview of American gay literature, Czech readers may consult Roman Trušník, *Podoby amerického homosexuálního románu po roce 1945* (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2011).

11. See Ulmanová, "Touha sdílet," 394.

12. Ulmanová, "Touha sdílet," 394.

Richard Olehla, who wrote the afterword to *Specimen Days*, makes it clear that what Woolf meant for *The Hours*, Walt Whitman means for *Specimen Days*. He naturally devotes several pages to introducing Whitman, though he is arguably better known in the country than the modernist writer. Olehla considers the protagonists of the novel as “failed specimens whose lives have not turned out according to the ideas of the majority society, or who never had a chance to lead normal lives,”¹³ which resonates with the life experience of many LGBTQ people.

However, even Olehla does not avoid the reference to a different sexual orientation, which he considers “the best hidden link between Michael Cunningham and Walt Whitman.”¹⁴ Moreover, as he notes in the same paragraph, some of Whitman’s texts were used in the 1970s by the gay liberation movement, thus in a way, contributing to the acceptance of works of gay authors, including, in the long run, Michael Cunningham. As Olehla notes, “In this sense *Specimen Days* can be considered a certain repayment of the debt which the gay community owes to Whitman.”¹⁵ So, once again, even if Olehla does not spend much space on discussing gay literature, he makes it clear that Cunningham belongs there.

The afterword to *By Nightfall* was authored by Petr Fischer, who considers the novel a conscious variation on Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* (1912; 1924 in English). While Fischer’s afterword is rather esoteric, probably trying to imitate the mood of what he calls “novel-nocturne,” some of his remarks on homosexuality are perhaps the most topical as well as most elusive: “In western Christian culture there is nothing less reasonable than homosexual desire (a small illustration can be found in the transcripts of the lower house of the Czech Parliament about registered partnerships of persons of the same sex). It is just a prototype of unnaturalness and lack of reason and also an example of corruption, moral degeneration.”¹⁶ Fischer continues: “Michael Cunningham as an openly gay writer came to terms with this knowledge earlier; however, in the novel-nocturne *By Nightfall* he makes a problem of it for the first time, it becomes a theme, so that through his writing the author achieves social liberation of homosexual desire, which is suddenly dressed up in the brightness of ‘divine apparition,’ through which a despised vice becomes a recognized and fully-fledged bliss.”¹⁷

The translation of *Flesh and Blood* into Czech may be rather surprising, as it is an older novel, rather lengthy, and, as the Czech readers already knew from Ulmanová’s afterword to *A Home at the End of the World*, not the most successful in Cunningham’s oeuvre. The fact that this novel was published in Czech, even if belatedly, must be taken as proof of Cunningham being established on firm literary ground. The writer and translator Pavla Horáková, who wrote the afterword, understands the novel as one

13. Richard Olehla, “‘Konečně americký básník!’ Chvalozpěv na Walta Whitmana,” in *Vzorové dny*, by Michael Cunningham (Praha: Odeon, 2006), 298.

14. Olehla, “‘Konečně americký básník,’” 300.

15. Olehla, “‘Konečně americký básník,’” 300.

16. Petr Fischer, “Cunninghamovo krásné zjevení,” in *Za soumraku*, by Michael Cunningham (Praha: Odeon, 2011), 217.

17. Fischer, “Cunninghamovo krásné zjevení,” 218.

in which Cunningham confronts blood relations and relations of choice. She notes that Cunningham looks at sexual identity as one of the many issues contemporary families face and notes that Cunningham does not make homosexuality the main theme of his novels.¹⁸ While this 1995 family saga is thus a typical assimilative/post-gay novel, as the focus is on an extended family with all possible variations of relationships, in the character of drag queen Cassandra it is paradoxically deeply indebted to the gay (sub)culture.

And indeed, it is quite possible that Michael Cunningham has reached the status of a post-gay author even in the Czech Republic in his latest novel, *The Snow White*. While one of the two protagonists of the novel is gay, the author of the afterword to the Czech edition, Ladislav Nagy, does not dwell on the issue of sexual orientation of the author or characters at all – homosexuality or bisexuality is mentioned only in a passing in plot summaries, where it is necessary.¹⁹

Michael Cunningham is definitely one of the few authors in whose hands gay literature has come of age and become assimilated into post-gay. Even though Cunningham's books are usually peopled with gay or bisexual protagonists, homosexuality is now taken for granted in the novels and frequently barely mentioned by commentators. As the overview of afterwords to Czech editions of his works demonstrates, he was an author through whom gay themes in American literature entered the Czech bookstores and libraries on a truly massive scale.²⁰ Within a decade, however, such themes have reached a point when they are taken for granted and barely worth mentioning, testifying to a large, if not yet general, acceptance of different sexualities in the present-day Czech society.

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18. See Pavla Horáková, "Pád domu Stassosů," in *Tělo a krev*, by Michael Cunningham (Praha: Odeon, 2014), 420.

19. See Ladislav Nagy, "Sny skryté ve sněhu," in *Sněhová královna*, by Michael Cunningham (Praha: Odeon, 2015), 249–57.

20. Cunningham's published translations which appeared in such a short time greatly outnumber translations of other writers, such as James Baldwin. See Trušník, "American Gay Fiction as Seen through Czech Translations," 97–108.

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