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EDITED BY

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EDITORS' NOTE

GREGORY JASON BELL AND KATARÍNA NEMČOKOVÁ

The present volume, the sixth in the *Zlín Proceedings in Humanities* book series, contains selected papers from "From Theory to Practice 2014: The Sixth International Conference on Anglophone Studies," hosted on September 4–5, 2014, by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic.

The 2014 conference was different from our previous conferences in multiple respects, resulting in a comparatively unique proceedings. There were fewer participants in 2014, but our conference has never been more international, with a record nine countries represented. Whereas in the past, Poland was well represented, in 2014 we had few Polish participants, and no articles by Polish scholars made it into the proceedings. Instead, we for the first time attracted speakers from throughout southeastern Europe, and as a result, this proceedings contains articles not only by Czechs and Slovaks, but by scholars from Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Romania. Moreover, whereas in previous years, our very own Tomas Bata University was the most well represented institution at the conference and in the proceedings, scholars from Palacký University in Olomouc came out in force in 2014, resulting in the publication of five articles from that esteemed institution in this proceedings. Other notable changes are that Katarína Nemčoková has replaced Roman Trušník as series editor, while Martin Mikeska has joined our team as format editor.

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/tp2014>). 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 style, 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 extended to our reviewers, as well as to our department secretary, Olga Hulejová, and our student assistant, Luisa Drobná. Moreover, we wish to thank the conference organizers, our sponsors, and the dean of the Faculty of Humanities.

LINGUISTICS

THE CATEGORIAL STATUS OF INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS IN ENGLISH AND CZECH

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ABSTRACT: This paper analyses characteristics of English “verbal” forms, concentrating first on the similarity of infinitives and gerunds as lexical heads of their phrasal projections. The data shows that both of them can fairly be labelled as verbal categories, if their head properties are considered internally to their phrases. However, this study also sums up the data showing a systematically distinct distribution of the phrases headed by infinitives and gerunds. The contrast demonstrates a categorial distinction between their phrasal labels, signalling the characteristics of DP (for gerunds) and VP (for infinitives). To explain the apparently exocentric nature of the gerundials, the study provides a theoretical explanation of the phenomena in a formal syntactic framework. It thus argues against a concept of a fuzzy categorial system proposing that if a clear distinction is made between the head label and the label of its projection, the categorial system can use clear cut labels and has the potential to predict grammatical characteristics. In the final part of the paper, some Czech equivalents of the English forms are provided to show the contrast between the two languages.

KEYWORDS: English non-finite clause; infinitive; gerund; exocentric phrase; syntactic derivation

1. ENGLISH VERBAL FORMS

According to standard taxonomy, English verbal elements can be divided as follows:

- (1) Verbal forms (in English)
 - a. finite e.g., *helps, helped ... etc.*
 - b. non-finite
 - i. (to-/bare) infinitive e.g., *(to) help*
 - ii. gerund e.g., *helping*
 - iii. others (participles)

This study concentrates on the non-finite forms, namely on infinitives and gerunds. First it summarises the well-known reasons that justify the classification of English infinitives and gerunds, ranking them both as members of the category of verbs. It will concentrate on formal properties which can be attested to in a text, i.e., above all on distribution of co-occurring elements within the closest domain of the infinitival and gerundial head. Section 2 deals with morphology, and Section 3 concentrates on the syntax of the phrasal domain. The data will show that the projections of infinitives and gerunds exhibit the same characteristics, and the parallelism justifies their categorial label “verb.”

2. MORPHO-SYNTAX OF THE VERBAL FORMS

In inflectional languages, the typical characteristic of the finite verbal forms is the presence of some specific morphology related to the high periphery of verbal functional domain and/or to the presence of a structural subject.

In English, the repertory of bound verbal morphemes is rather poor, but at least some past and some present verbal forms do contain a specific morphology of *tense* features and of the features signaling the relation to a structural subject (*agreement* features).¹

- (2) a. *John help-ed Mary with her homework.*
- b. *John help-s Mary with her homework.*

However, these English finite verbal morphemes, *-ed/-s*, are multi-functional, i.e., their forms are homonymous with other functional morphemes, both derivational and inflectional. The presence of these morphemes alone would therefore hardly be a strong argument for a revealing taxonomy.

As for English infinitives, in case they contain the particle *to*, we can consider a sort of morphological signal of the infinitive, but not every infinitive has this morpheme, and English bare infinitives are in fact the English “bare verbal forms” par excellence.

English gerunds, on the other hand, always have a morphology, although it is multi-functional. The *-ing* morpheme signalling gerunds can also be found in English lexicalised derived nominals in productive derivations, and as an inflectional morpheme in a progressive circumfix *be -ing*. The special status of this morpheme will be addressed again in Section 5.2.

To conclude, at least in English, a morphological distinction between finite and infinitive verbal forms cannot serve as a signal of their clear cut finite-non-finite dichotomy. If such a taxonomy makes sense at all, it is more the function of the verbal elements in the syntactic structure that provides a more likely base for the classification of individual verbal forms.

3. VERBAL PREDICATES

3.1 SYNTAX OF THE LEXICAL DOMAIN OF THE V HEAD

In general, the distinction between finite and non-finite verbal forms correlates with the concept of a clausal predicate. A finite verb is a typical predicate of a finite clause, i.e., it enters a relation with the structural subject (and its other arguments) to express proposition. This function plausibly depends on the presence and licensing of the grammatical features in the extended functional domain of the category V (verb) —

1 As the following examples show, the English infinite forms do not lack aspectual morphemes.

i. He must have written the letter himself.	ii. I love writing letters.
He must be finishing the work himself.	I love having finished the work.

e.g., tense, mood.

The merge of a specific head, e.g., tense or complementizer, can result in a mood/tense morphology on the (finite) verb. The feature content of the tense/mood heads may also force or disallow the overt presence of a structural subject in the domain of the relevant verb.² Another signal of the feature content is a possible presence or absence of some kind of adverbials. And finally, the richness and feature content of the functional domain can be also reflected by a kind of verb movement, i.e., the features may trigger the movement to some specific position in the clausal tree.

Defining a part of speech, linguists work with multiple criteria, and individual preferences may lead to distinct taxonomies. Assuming a morpho-syntactic justification of the parts of speech and dealing with a language lacking overt morphological signals of categories, then the main categorial characteristics are provided by the combinatorial properties of a specific lexical entry. In this section, we will consider the close syntactic domain of the lexical entry V (verb) – i.e., the elements in a traditional terminology “subordinated” to the lexical entry – i.e., those that occur inside its *phrase*. For a verbal category, the close domain contains possible arguments of the verbal event, i.e., the realisation of the semantic roles and some complementary modification.

In the structure of a prototypical projection of the verbal category we can observe the categorial specificity in three main domains:

- (3) a. interpretation and formal realisation of the *patient* (*complement* of V),
- b. presence, interpretation and formal realisation of the *agent* (*specifier* of V),
- c. formal realisation of the *complementary conditions* of the event/act expressed with the verbal head.

3.1.1. FINITE (ACTIVE) VERBAL PREDICATES

Observing the semantic/thematic frame of the verb, we will consider both the left side argument (1: agent) and the two right-side arguments (2: patient, 3: recipient) in their unmarked, canonic realisations. Looking at (4) and (5), where a standard finite verb predicate is illustrated, we can see that argument 1 with the interpretation of agent, underlined in (4), is realised as a structural subject of the finite verb, on the left-side of the predicate, and it is marked by a subject case. Arguments 2 and 3 with the interpretations of patient and recipient are realised in standard double-object structures with object case and the “dative” PP, bold in (4) on the right-side of the predicate. (4)(c) gives a schematic constituent order of the above examples. Notice also the form of the modification with respect to some complementary conditions – here the “frequency” of the described action. It takes the form of an *-ly* adverb and its unmarked position is post-verbal, i.e., following the head.

² Given that the classification of the features in the high periphery of a verbal (and clausal) projection is not the topic of this paper, we are not going into detail on this at the moment. We are going to concentrate, instead, on the lower part of the verbal projection, which is a more significant criterion for categorial distinctions.

- (4) a. *John and Mary* wrote each other love letters frequently.
 b. *They/*Them* wrote them/*they love letters frequently.
 c. [*John and Mary/They*]_{SUBJ} wrote [*each other/them*]_{OBJ}
 [*love letters*]_{OBJ} [*frequently*]_{-ly ADV}

In (5), the recipient argument 3 is adjoined to the verb and the patient argument 2 follows it (the V,[NP,PP] pattern).

- (5) a. *John and Mary* wrote letters to their friends frequently.
 b. *They/*Them* wrote them/*they to them/*they frequently.
 c. [*John and Mary/They*]_{SUBJ} wrote [*them*]_{OBJ} [*to them*]_{to-PP} [*frequently*]_{-ly ADV}

The characteristics of the phenomena stated in (3) and illustrated in (4)-(5) are summarised in (6), which provides the properties of the projection of a standard finite active English verb.

- (6) A standard phrasal projection of a finite verb in English

Semantic Θ role	Function	Marking
1: Agent	Structural Subject	Subject Case (NOM)
2: Patient	Object (V-complement)	Object Case (ACC)
3: Recipient	Prepositional Object	to-PP / Object Case
Modification	Adverbial	-ly Adverb

3.1.2. VERBAL INFINITIVE

Examples (7) and (8) show a phrasal projection of the English infinitive together with the simplified description in the (c) examples. Notice that it is identical with the finite verb with the exception of (the left side) argument 1. The agent cannot take a subject case and must be licensed by some alternative method or remain phonetically unrealised.

- (7) a. *We* want (*John and Mary*) to write each other love letters frequently.
We want -- to write each other love letters frequently.
 b. *We* want (*them/*they*) to write them/*they love letters frequently.
 c. ([*Them*]_{OBJ}) to write [*each other/them*]_{OBJ} [*love letters*]_{OBJ} [*frequently*]_{-ly ADV}
- (8) a. *We* want *John and Mary* to write letters to their friends frequently.
We want -- to write letters to their friends frequently.
 b. *We* want (*them/*they*) wrote them/*they to them/*they frequently.
 c. ([*Them*]_{OBJ}) to write [*them*]_{OBJ} [*to them*]_{to-PP} [*frequently*]_{-ly ADV}

Notice that the non-finite (active) verb in English also keeps the variation in the two objects. As for the right-hand side (following) the verbal head, (7) and (8) are identical to (4) and (5) including the adverbial modification. There is only one distinction between the projection of a finite predicate and an infinitive, and this is the realisation of argument 1: agent.

The relevant characteristics can be summarised as follow:

(9) Comparing a finite verb and infinitive in English

Semantic Θ role	Finite Verb		Infinitive	
	Function	Marking	Function	Marking
Agent	Subject	Subject Case (NOM)	“Subject” of INF	Object Case (ACC)
Patient	Object	Object Case (ACC)	Object	Object Case (ACC)
Recipient	Prep. Object	<i>to</i> -PP / Object Case	Prep. Object	<i>to</i> -PP/ Object Case
Modification	Adverbial	<i>-ly</i> Adverb	Adverbial	<i>-ly</i> Adverb (post-V)

3.1.3. GERUNDS

A productive English gerundial form is demonstrated in (10) and (11) together with a simplified structural description in the (c) examples. Notice that apart from the very initial part of the projection (the pre-modifying field), the form of the realisation of the right-side arguments and modification is identical with the finite verb in (4) and (5) and with the infinitives in (7) and (8). As for the agent, with gerunds, the form of argument 1 (agent), if present, can be either object case (like with infinitives) or possessive, with the latter becoming less frequent in modern English. If both object and possessive cases are possible, traditional grammar states the distinction in semantic terms.³

- (10) a. *We hate (?John and Mary) writing each other love letters so frequently.*
 b. *We hate (?them/??their/*they) writing them/*they love letters so frequently.*
 c. - ([them]_{OBJ}) to write [each other/them]_{OBJ} [love letters]_{OBJ} [frequently]_{-ly ADV}
- (11) a. *We hate (?John and Mary) to write letters to their friends so frequently.*
 b. *We hate (?their/??them/*they) writing them/*they to them/*they so frequently.*
 c. - ([them/their]_{OBJ/POSS}) writing [them]_{OBJ} [to them]_{to-PP} [frequently]_{-ly ADV}

The relevant characteristics (all of them are obligatory, if an argument is overt) can be summarised as in (12), which includes (6) for finite verbs and (9) for infinitives.

3 E.g., Biber et al. (1999, 344) state that “when the possessive alternative is used, it focuses attention on the action described in the *ing*-clause ... the regular NP form puts more emphasis on the person doing the action.” We are not going to discuss this here anymore, although we do not believe in this purely semantic distinction. If the only criterion for the choice were semantics, then there would be no reason for a diachronic change in favour of the object case.

(12) Comparing the (non)finite verbs and gerund in English

Semantic Θ role	Finite Verb		Infinitive		Gerund	
	Function	Marking	Function	Marking	Function	Marking
Agent A1	Subject	SUBJ Case	“Subject” of INF	Object Case	“Subject” of GER	OBJ/Poss Case
Patient P2	Object	OBJ Case	Object	OBJ Case	Object	OBJ Case
Recipient A3	Prep. Object	to-PP	Prep. Object	to-PP	Prep. Object	to-PP
Modification	Adverbial	-ly Adverb	Adverbial	-ly Adverb	Adverbial	-ly Adverb

The table in (12) shows that if the English infinitive has a category verb in spite of its lack of Subject Case, the categorial characteristics of the gerund as a verb is fully justified, too.

Considering the interpretation, we can see that in all the examples (4)-(8) the verbal entry can be understood as a lexical predicate, and there is no distinction in the truth values of the individual examples.

3.2. THE FORM OF A NOMINAL PROJECTION

Assuming that among the lexical categories, verbs are a kind of extreme opposite from nouns (i.e., a [+V] category is the opposite of the [+N] category), we will now compare the verbal properties with those of the nouns. The following example shows that the distinctions can be found in all observed characteristics stated in (3).⁴

- (13)
- a.

John’s frequent writing of the letters ... irritates me.
- b.

[_{POSS} John’s]_{SUBJ?}

[frequent]_{ADJ}

writing [_{PP} of love letters]_{OBJ}

The realisation of agent, with the derived nominals, takes the form of a possessive, which makes it similar to the possible gerundial format illustrated in (12). However, the patient is realised in the form of a prepositional phrase (*of*-phrase rather than as a structural object) and the modification takes the form of a prenominal adjective (instead of an adverb). Table (14) summarises the contrast between gerunds and nominals, showing that the characteristics of the right-side complementation distinguish rather clearly the form of the nominal projection from the pattern of the verbal projection.

4 The following discussion has been standard in a formal linguistic framework since Chomsky (1972), who considers precisely these paradigms. The cross-categorial comparison led to the generalised phrase structure projections in Chomsky (1986).

(14) Comparing the gerund and noun in English

Semantic Θ role	Noun		Gerund	
	Function	Marking	Function	Marking
Agent A1	Determiner/Subject	POSS	“Subject” of GER	OBJ/Poss Case
Patient A2	Object	GEN Case	Object	OBJ Case
Modification	Attribute	pre-N Adj	Adverbial	post-V <i>-ly</i> Adverb

4. VERBAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROJECTION

Based on a comparison of the three verbal forms (finite verb, infinitive and gerund) and on the contrast of those elements with the derived nominal pattern, we saw that finite and non-finite verbal forms in English are (close to) identical with respect to the number, kind, and also format of their complements and adjuncts. We take these combinatorial characteristics for the distinctive categorial diagnostics and therefore conclude that both so-called non-finite forms in English – infinitive and gerund – belong to the same category of verbs: they represent verbal heads of their respective phrases. In other words, whichever structure we would choose for the finite verb, we may use the same one for infinitives and gerunds.

In the following simplified scheme (15), we are using a standard endocentric Larsonian shell with the (transitive) verbal heads *v/V* projecting into the respective *v/VP* phrases. The structure captures the formal distinction between finite and non-finite verb in English in terms of the feature set of a head, which is above the verbal projection *v/VP*. More specifically, it is the feature setting of the “clausal” head *T* (or *C*) that enters the agree relation with potential structural subjects (suggested by an arrow in (15)). It is generally understood that a “finite” setting of those clausal head *T+C* features results in the Subject Case marking. The “default” feature of the *T+C* complex forces the realisation as a non-finite verb, with the phonetically-realised agent accepting some alternative licensing.⁵

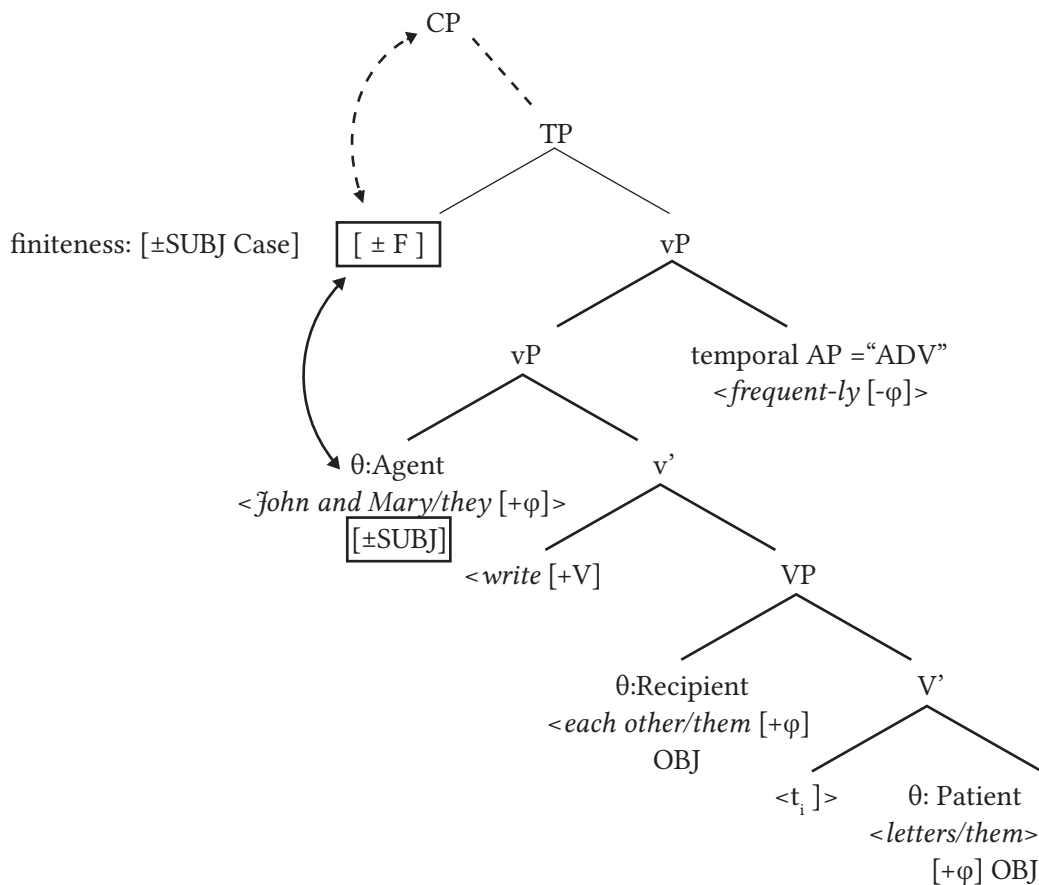
As for the right-side arguments and modifications, the scheme in (15) demonstrates the assumed *v/VP* projection, which is able to license the OBJ complement(s) and (ADV/PP) adjuncts in the same way with both finite and non-finite verbal forms.

⁵ We are not going to deal with this distinction any further. The interested reader can consult, e.g., Wurmbrand (2012; 1998).

(15) Verbal projection v/VP

Cf., Larson (1988), Aoun and Li (1989), Authier and Haegeman (2014).

Mary and John <write> each other love letters frequently.



4.1. TWO DOMAINS FOR CHARACTERIZING DISTRIBUTION

The syntactic domain of a head, i.e., the presence of specific elements inside its *phrasal projection*, the interpretation of these elements and the form they acquire in the process of derivation, gives rise to the standard diagnostics for determining a meaningful categorial status in a lexical entry.⁶ However, syntactic (combinatorial) rules apply on a higher level as well, and both phrasal distribution, i.e., the distribution of the larger constituent headed by a specific category – and the phrase’s *syntagmatic function* – are also part of categorial diagnostics. In Section 5, we are going to compare the wider contexts of the verbal projections by looking more closely at the distribution of the phrases headed by infinitives and gerunds in English.⁷

⁶ We discussed the format of the verbal phrase in Section 3.

⁷ In the following sections, to distinguish the head (infinitive/gerund) from the phrasal constituent, we will label the constituents headed by infinitives as “infinitivals” (notated as $[_{INF}]$) and the constituents headed by gerunds as “gerundials” (marked as $[_{GER}]$). Finite clauses will be labelled as $[_{CP}]$.

5. CATEGORIAL STATUS OF ENGLISH INFINITIVALS AND GERUNDIALS

The fact that the gerund projects as a standard V category was demonstrated in section 3.1.3 and summarised in (12) and (15). The generalised phrase structure principle in formal syntax assumes that the label of the phrase is provided by its head (i.e., X standardly projects into XP). A verbal head V (finite V, infinitive or gerund) should project into VP by definition, and such a label was therefore used in (15).

This trivial assumption about phrasal end centrality seems to be supported by the fact that the distribution (function) of phrasal constituents headed by finite and non-finite verbs in English is widely thought to be the same. Apart from the canonical function of predicate, both finite and non-finite verbs can also appear (to a certain extent and with various restrictions on the classes of verbs that select them) in positions canonically occupied by nominal elements, e.g., they can serve as either *subjects* (16) or *objects* (17).⁸

- (16) a. [_{CP} That we had to use that airport] annoyed us.
 b. [_{INF} To find a well-paying job nearby] would be a pleasant surprise.
 c. [_{GER} Your being able to find a new job nearby] would be surprising.
- (17) a. Ann believed [_{CP} (that) Mary was a foreign agent].
 b. Bill would prefer [_{INF} for Mary to stay a while].
 c. Ann regretted [_{GER} stealing Mary's book].

The choice between infinitivals and gerundials is frequent in Modern English, and the difference between the two forms in the contexts where both are seemingly possible, is usually attributed to some differences in meaning.⁹ Some complements for example differ in, e.g., factivity, as (18)(a), others in some semantic nuance which does not involve truth values as in (18)(b) or (c).¹⁰

- (18) a. Mary forgot / remembered [_{INF} to turn down the heat].
 Mary forgot / remembered [_{GER} turning down the heat].
 b. John started [_{INF} to work on his paper].
 John started [_{GER} working on his paper].
 c. John hates [_{INF} to work on his paper].
 John hates [_{GER} working on his paper].

⁸ English examples and contrasts in this section are adapted from Emonds (2015).

⁹ According to Simeon Potter, the competition between the infinitival and gerundial forms started with the first instances of gerunds and became more frequent in the late Middle English period. He states a bit vaguely that “since Shakespeare’s day, there has been a general drift towards the gerund” (1975, 134). If this is right, it may support a kind of gradual shift of English toward more nominal (= less verbal) characteristics.

¹⁰ We are not going to try to provide every example here as long as we do not propose to explain the distinction in terms of semantics. One can find many examples plus discussion in, e.g., normative English grammars such as Huddleston and Pullum (2002) or Quirk et al. (1985).

There are, however, good reasons to assume that many of the contrasting distributions of infinitive phrases and gerundial phrases are forced not by semantic nuances but by a formal distinction not often noted in earlier sources.

5.1. GERUNDIALS ARE NOMINAL PHRASES

As noted already in Ross (1967) and Rosenbaum (1967), English gerundials seem to have a distribution comparable with nominal phrases. In other words, in spite of the fact that both infinitives and gerunds are verbs, the constituents headed by gerunds show properties of a categorical nature distinct from the constituents headed by (in) finite verbs.

Two arguments by Emonds (1976; 2015) are repeated below. The structure in (19)(a) shows that *coordination*, the most standard test for categorial similarity, is not possible between a noun phrase and an infinitival phrase: the ungrammaticality signals a categorial distinction. (19)(b), moreover, demonstrates that coordination is not possible between infinitival and gerundial phrases either, although, surprisingly, it is possible between nominal phrases (DPs) and gerund-headed constituents in (19)(c).¹¹

(19) Coordination of gerunds with infinitives

- a. * *Mary always liked* [_{DP} hot chocolate] *and* [_{INF} to play volleyball].
 * [_{DP} Too many trips] *and* [_{INF} to sleep very little] *would wear us out.*
- b. * *She always liked* [_{GER} watching television shows] *and* [_{INF} to play volleyball].
 * [_{GER} Eating canned foods] *and* [_{INF} to pitch a tent every day] *would irritate us.*
- c. *She always liked* [_{DP} physical exercise] *and* [_{GER} watching television shows].
 [_{DP} Outdoor bathrooms] *and* [_{GER} pitching a tent every day] *would wear us out.*

Emonds (2015, 15) states a descriptive generalisation in the following words:

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

The DP categorial nature of gerunds is suggested also by the following examples showing that only gerunds can freely occupy a typical DP position following *prepositions* as in (21)(a), in contrast to finite and infinitival clauses (in the (b) examples), which are ungrammatical as objects of prepositions.

- (21) a. *She blamed it on* [_{GER} Bill’s being too strict].
 Because of [_{GER} John’s being old], *Mary gets a pension.*
- b. * *She blamed it on* [_{INF} (Bill) to be too strict].
 * *Because of* [_{INF} (John) to be old], *Mary gets a pension.*

¹¹ The nominal phrase is going to be labelled DP, and the clausal structure is adapted to the scheme in (15).

The English gerund was analysed as a verbal head of its lowest projection in Section 3. Its maximal projection, however, shows characteristics of a nominal phrase. The full English gerund thus seems to be an example of an exocentric phrase, i.e., a phrase (DP) headed by a category distinct from the phrasal label of its head (VP). In the following section, we are going first to show a process which is able to project a verbal head into a nominal projection — the process of syntactic nominalisation. In Section 6, we will provide more data which prove that the DP analysis of the constituents headed by gerunds and a VP analysis of infinitivals is justified with well-attested contrasting paradigms.

5.2. SYNTACTIC NOMINALISATION

Diachronically, the development of the English gerund suggests a kind of verbalisation of the originally nominal category, which gradually acquired more and more verbal properties.¹² As for the synchronic analyses of gerunds, these vary according to frameworks. There are scholars who take the “mixed” properties of English gerunds as an argument in favor of no clear-cut boundaries between categories, which are consequently “fuzzy”. We are not going to accept such a framework because there are analyses that are able to deal with the characteristics of gerunds without the loss of formal precision.

In a generative framework, gerunds are sometimes presented as examples of nominalisations of a verbal stem, i.e., as examples of a standard derivational process. These analyses assume that a verbal category first projects and then gets nominalised to become the head of a DP. The mixed properties of English gerunds are explained referring to specific properties of the English morpheme *-ing*, demonstrated in (22).¹³

The scheme in (22) demonstrates a kind of syntactic derivation via a “nominalising” suffix located in the projection of Determiner as suggested in, e.g., Abney (1987). The morpheme *-ing* is inserted at the very top of a verbal projection (v/VP), and it has a [+D] feature. This feature becomes a head, and therefore the whole complex projects, forming a DP layer above the layer of v/VP. Apart from the categorial change from VP to DP, this analysis also explains the possessive form of licensing the agent, which is discussed previously in Chomsky (1972) and Grimshaw (1990).¹⁴

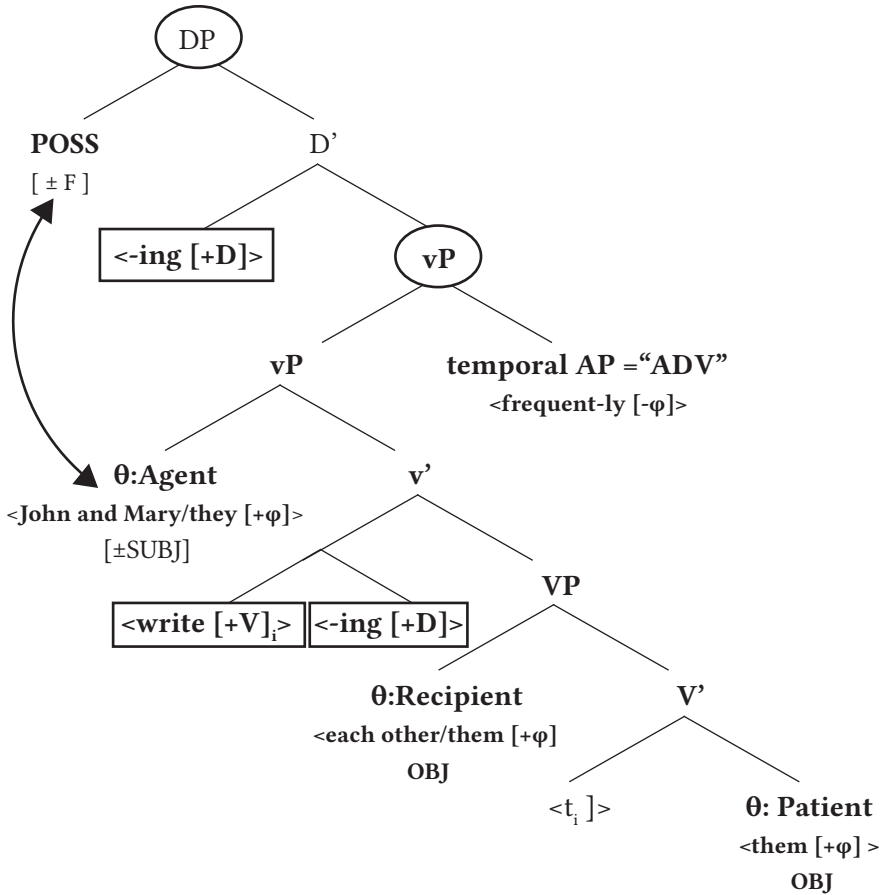
Notice that the linear order between the verbal stem *write* [+V] and the *-ing* [+D] requires the raising of the verb to the suffix, as well as some subsequent reordering or the lowering of the suffix to the verbal stem.

12 The specific properties of English gerunds developed gradually from old verbal substantives, which in OE ended in *-ung* and in Old Norse *-ung* or *-ing*. In Middle English, it acquired the ability to take an NP as its object and to be modified by adverbs that normally modify verbs.

13 A similar analysis of the English nominaliser morpheme *-ing* in the pre-D framework (i.e., as N) is used in Reuland (1983).

14 The same proposal, however, faces the need to explain the selectional property of such a D, which subcategorises for the v/V complement. This question is not discussed in any detail.

(22) Nominalisation of a vP – the English “Gerund”



Other analyses (e.g., Emonds (2000)) do not state explicitly the position of the D feature in the high domain of v/VP but concentrate on the *late* (post-lexical, syntactic) realisation of the *-ing* [+D] morpheme added to the right side of the verbal stem *write* [+V] in its base position. There is no reordering in this analysis, and the right side suffixation is a predictable and standard property of post-lexical morphology. According to this analysis, such a post-lexical *-ing* enters the structure rather late in the process of derivation, which allows the verbal head to realise its verbal potential up to the level of verbal adjuncts (i.e., v/VP). After being inserted, however, the nominaliser *-ing* becomes the head of the complex [NV+N] gerund, and it labels the extended projection as DP. From that point, the structure acts in the derivation as a standard DP as stated in (20). For technical details of derivations, which explain such seemingly anomalous constructions but go beyond the topic of this study, we refer the reader to the cited works.

6. CONTRASTING THE POSITION OF GERUNDIALS AND INFINITIVALS

In this section, we are going to summarise the data contrasting the distribution of gerundials and infinitivals so as to support the claim that the categorial distinction between the two constituents also results in their distinct position in the clausal structure.

6.1. GERUNDIAL AND INFINITIVAL SUBJECTS

Testing by distribution, let us look more closely at the position most typical for DPs – the structural subject position. The examples in (16) suggest that gerunds – as well as infinitival phrases (or finite clauses) – can be found in the position of a subject. Some preceding studies, however, provide lists of diagnostics that challenge the analysis in which the verbal phrases (INF and finite clause “subjects”) are located in the same place as the gerundial (and also nominal) structural subjects. Some of these contrasted examples are repeated in (23-31), with gerundial subjects (GER) in the (a) examples, and infinitivals (INF) or finite clause (CL) equivalents in the unacceptable (b) examples.¹⁵

(23) Subjects of clausal complements to verbs

- a. *She forgets* [_{CP} *how expensive* [_{DP} *the dentist*]/[_{GER} *visiting the dentist*] *is*].
- b. **She forgets* [_{CP} *how expensive* [_{INF} *to visit the dentist*] *is*].

(24) Subjects of clausal complements to adjectives

- a. *Nobody is ready for* [_{INF} [_{GER} *wearing headphones*] *to be legally required*].
- b. **Nobody is ready for* [_{INF} [_{CL} *that one exercise daily*] *to be legally required*].

(25) Subjects of clausal complements to nouns

- a. *We are noticing a tendency for* [_{INF} [_{GER} *smoking tobacco*] *to be criminalised*].
- b. **We are noticing a tendency for* [_{INF} [_{CL} *that we can smoke it*] *to be criminalised*].

(26) Subjects of comparative clauses

- a. *A day at the beach is more fun than* [_{CL} [_{GER} *playing golf*] *can ever be*].
- b. **A day at the beach is more fun than* [_{CL} [_{INF} *to play golf*] *can ever be*].

(27) Subjects of adverbial clauses

- a. *He exercises so rarely that* [_{CL} [_{GER} *lifting those bricks*] *is bad for his heart*].
- b. **He exercises so rarely that* [_{CL} [_{INF} *to lift those bricks*] *is bad for his heart*].

(28) Subjects of relative clauses

- a. *Being a citizen is the reason why* [_{CL} [_{GER} *your having insurance*] *can protect you*].

¹⁵ The examples here are adopted from Emonds (2015). In (23)(a), we also use a DP subject together with the gerundial to show that these behave identically. In the other examples, we use GER only, but the reader can easily replace it with a typical DP. In the (b) examples, we use either an infinitive or finite clause as an example of a verbal constituent.

- b. * *Being a citizen is the reason why* [_{CL} [_{CL} that you have insurance] *protects you*].

(29) Subjects of initial subject clauses

- a. [_{GER} smoking cigars] *bothers the teacher* is quite possible.
 [For [_{GER} repainting the house] *to be so expensive*] *is no surprise*.
- b. * [_{INF} to smoke cigars] *bothers the teacher* is quite possible.
 * [For [_{CL} that we are repainting the house] *to be so expensive*] *is no surprise*.

The following examples point out that only gerundials and not infinitivals or finite clauses undergo inversion and clefting, i.e., transformations targeting canonical DP subjects of a clause:

(30) Subject inversion in questions

- a. *Isn't* [_{GER} reading so many magazines] *a waste of time?*
Why did [_{GER} Mary's liking old records] *irritate him?*
How obvious is [_{CL} Sue's being unqualified]?
- b. * *Isn't* [_{INF} to read so many magazines] *a waste of time?*
 * *Why did* [_{CL} that Mary liked old records] *irritate him?*
 * *How obvious is* [_{CL} that Sue is unqualified]?

(31) Subject inversion in topicalised/focus structures

- a. *Never will* [_{GER} being comfortable] *be a priority in this office.*
A disease like that [_{GER} taking a lot of pills] *won't cure.*
- b. * *Never will* [_{INF} to be comfortable] *be a priority in this office.*
 * *A disease like that* [_{INF} to take a lot of pills] *won't cure.*

The focus position in English cleft sentences is available only to DPs and not to VPs, as demonstrated below in (32).

(32) Clefting

- a. *It was* [_{GER} buying a new hat][_{CL} *that he enjoyed*].
It's [_{GER} driving carelessly][_{CL} *that upsets me*].
- b. * *It was* [_{INF} to buy a new hat][_{CL} *that he wanted*].
 * *It's* [_{INF} for Mary to drive carelessly][_{CL} *that upsets Ann*].

Given these paradigms, Emonds (2015) argues on several grounds that English verbal clauses in fact *never* occur in a subject position, which is reserved for only DP elements. He proposes that when embedded, (in)finite verbal clauses in English occur only

- (i) *topicalised*, in main (= root) clauses, or
- (ii) *extraposed*, at the end of phrases.

According to this analysis, the verbal (CP/INF) constituents are accompanied with empty (= [_{DP} Ø]) expletive subjects when topicalised, and with an overt [DP *it*] expletive when in extraposition.

The proposal is schematically demonstrated in (33) containing the null expletive and (34) with the expletive overt. Notice that the expletives (both overt and zeroed) in the subject position are co-indexed with the CP/INF “subject” which is extraposed or topicalised (adjoined to the root). In contrast, an expletive with gerundial subjects (which are full expansions of the DP subjects) is problematic.¹⁶

(33) Zeroed expletive [_{DP} Ø]

- a. [_{CP} That we have to use that airport]_j [_{TP} [_{DP} Ø]_j [_T *was* [_{VP} *made obvious to us*]]].
- b. [_{INF} To find a job nearby]_j [_{TP} [_{DP} Ø]_j [_T *would*]_j [_{VP} *be a nice surprise*]]].
- c. [_{TP} [_{DP=GER} Your being able to find a job nearby]_j [_T *would*]_j [_{VP} *be surprising*]]].

(34) Overt expletive [_{DP} *it*]

- a. [_{IP} [_{DP} *It*]_j [_I *was*]_j [_{VP} *made obvious to us*]_j [_{CP} that we have to use that airport]_j].
- b. [_{IP} [_{DP} *It*]_j [_I *would*]_j [_{VP} *be a nice surprise*]_j [_{INF} to find a job nearby]_j].
- c. * [_{IP} [_{DP} *It*]_j [_I *would*]_j [_{VP} *be surprising*]_j [_{GER} your being able to find a job]_j].

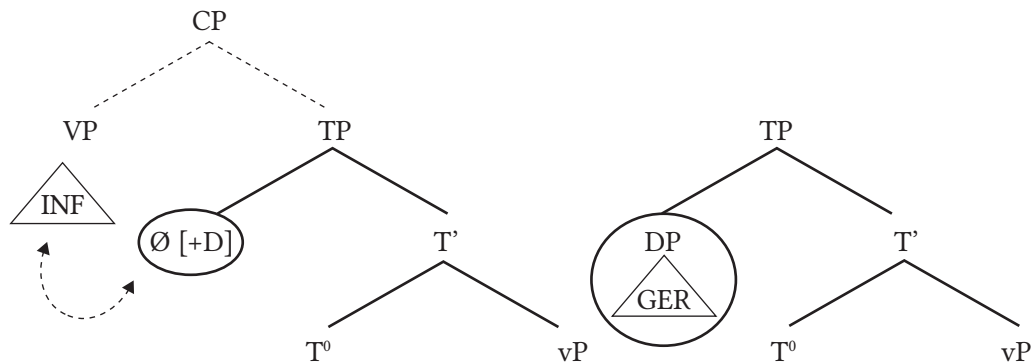
In (35), we provide a schematic description of the above linear analyses.¹⁷ The structural subject position in the SPEC(T) is marked with a circle in the scheme in (35). The triangle shows the proposed position of the constituents headed by an infinitive V (i.e., VP) – those are accompanied by the expletive Ø [+D] in the SPEC(T) position. The gerundials, on the other hand, which are assumed to project to DP, occupy the SPEC(T) position themselves.

16 The normative English grammar by Huddleston and Pullum (2002) states that while infinitivals in the extraposed position are “impeccable,” the gerund-participals are “at best very marginal” and “with an overt subject, especially a non-pronominal one, are particularly resistant to extraposition.” The authors mention only one exception, this being the construction with “It is worth +ing,” but neither does this tolerate an overt subject. Their examples are below (see Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1407).

- i. *It would make things worse* [_{INF} to call the police].
- ii. ? *It would make things worse* [_{GER} calling the police].
- iii. * *It had taken us all by surprise* [_{GER} Kim and Pat getting married].

17 For the options for the position of topicalised and focused constituents see, e.g., Authier and Haegeman (2014) based on Rizzi’s (1997) cartography of the CP domain.

- (35) a. VP “Subject” + \emptyset expletive subject b. DP (=GER) Subject



Emonds (2015) proposes that with infinitivals, the form of the expletive \emptyset [+D] occupying the subject position in the structure (35)(a) depends on the position of the infinitival constituent that binds it. The generalisation is stated as follows:

- (36) Associate-expletive binding (English)
- If an expletive asymmetrically binds (= c-commands) its associate, it must be overt.
 - If an associate (e.g., topicalised) binds an expletive, the expletive is null.

The rule in (36) assumes that the expletive (overt or null) always occupies the argument position while the associate does not, although there are contexts where the distinction is blurred by the surface linear order of the elements.

6.2. SOME MORE RESTRICTIONS ON INFINITIVAL SUBJECTS

In the previous section, we presented examples of preverbal VP (infinitival) subjects as appearing as freely as the extraposed subjects with overt expletives in SPEC(T). The statistical ratio between the two, however, shows that their frequency is far from equal. The following table is taken from the data in Biber et al. (1999), and it demonstrates that the extraposed form of infinitival subjects is ten times more frequent. The same ratio can be found with extraposed versus preverbal finite clause subjects. Biber et al. do not provide any statistics for the ratio with extraposed versus preverbal gerundials, which suggests that the former is synchronically rather rare.¹⁸

¹⁸ For a suggested diachronic perspective with respect to expletives and extraposition in predicative and existential contexts, see Mitchell (1985, 625), and for detail, Los (2005).

(37) Frequency of pre-predicate vs. extraposed variants (Biber et al. 1999, 676, 724)

Infinitive		That clause	
“pre-predicate”	“extraposed”	“pre-predicate”	“extraposed”
30-50 per million words	500 p.m.w.	10-20 p.m.w.	200 p.m.w.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1404) also mention the higher frequency of the extraposed verbal subjects. Referring back to Jakobson (1971), they claim that the extraposed position counts as “unmarked.” Also, Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1404) take the extraposed position for more standard, and they claim that the preverbal position of the verbal subjects requires a “marked” topic interpretation. If this is right, our analysis in (35), which locates VP and DP subjects in English in distinct positions, allows us to contrast the (rather strong) markedness of the pre-subject position of English VP subjects with the unmarked (rather unmarked) topic interpretation of the standard English DP subjects.

Apart from the frequency, it is also the free availability of gerundial (preverbal) subjects which differentiates them from the (preverbal) infinitival ones. Examples (38)-(40) are some of those where the gerundial subject is perfect, while the preverbal infinitival subject is defective. To our knowledge there is no systematic collection of data and valid generalisations concerning such constraints on infinitival subjects. Neither is there any systematic explanation of the contrast. Notice that given the full acceptability of the examples (38)-(40)(c) with extraposed infinitival subjects, the reason for the unacceptability of the examples (38)-(40)(b) cannot be explained by some semantic deviance of the combination.

- (38) a. [_{GER} Living close to work] saved us no money.
 b. ?? [_{INF} To live close to work] saved us no money.
 c. It saved us no money [_{INF} to live close to work].
- (39) a. [_{GER} Finding a new job] is keeping her busy.
 b. * [_{INF} To find a new job] is keeping her busy.
 c. It is keeping her busy [_{INF} to find a new job].
- (40) a. [_{GER} Publishing another book] has merited a raise.
 b. * [_{INF} To publish another book] has merited a raise.
 c. It has merited a raise [_{INF} to publish another book].

Because the infinitival subjects are often long and express a whole proposition, it is tempting to try to explain this contrast by referring to sentence dynamism, which requires long/heavy/rhematic constituents to appear extraposed to the right side of the clause. As for this proposal, consider the following examples. First, in (41) we show that both the gerundial and extraposed infinitival subjects are fully acceptable, no matter

what the format of the predicate, demonstrating that there is no semantic deviance in any of the forms.

- (41) a. [_{GER} *Making such a noise*] would irritate / irritates our neighbors.
 [_{GER} *Skiing in the Alps*] would ruin / ruined our budget.
 b. *It would irritate / irritates our neighbours* [_{INF} *to make such a noise*].
 It would ruin / ruined our budget [_{INF} *to ski in the Alps*].

Using the same infinitival subjects in the preverbal position in (42) is also acceptable, demonstrating that no kind of heavy constituent shift is required here.

- (42) a. [_{INF} *To make such a noise*] would / should / might irritate our neighbors.
 [_{INF} *(For me) To ski in the Alps*] would / might ruin our budget.
 b. * [_{INF} *To make such a noise*] (has) irritated our neighbors.
 * [_{INF} *(For me) To ski in the Alps*] (has) ruined our budget.

Notice, however, that there is a modal (*would, should, might*) in (42)(a). If the modal is not present, the structure with a non-generic interpretation is rather deviant. It is hard to assume any significant influence of a modal on clausal dynamism. We conclude that the explanation referring to the obligatoriness of some variant of a heavy constituent shift cannot be used to explain the deviance of certain preverbal infinitival subjects.

English modals are typically located high in the functional domain of the clause. In a tree like those in (15) or (35), the position of modals would be T. The strong tendency for the modal to co-occur with the preverbal infinitival subjects thus may signal that their distribution depends on licensing processes in addition to the associate-expletive binding required by (36). Empty subjects are not standard in English and the expletive proposed in the above analysis plausibly requires the presence of some lexical entry in the TP domain to license such binding. This claim about the importance of the T domain licensing is also supported by the generic reading, which is often required in structures with preverbal infinitival subjects. However, much must still be done to explain this phenomenon systematically and in detail.

6.3. GERUNDIAL AND INFINITIVAL OBJECTS

According to Biber et al. (1999, 699, 711), the most frequent English verbs selecting infinitival and gerundial phrases as complements are as follows:

- (43) a. V[+VP_{INF}]: *want, try, seem, like, begin, tend, attempt, fail, continue, agree, appear*
 b. V[+VP_{GER}]: *keep, start, see, go stop, begin, hear, come, spend, be used for,*
 remember, think, get, sit, feel, stand, be accused of, involve, be achieved by/with

As for their frequency, the following table puts together the statistics, demonstrating at the same time the idiosyncratic patterns of constituent selection by individual verbs.

(44) Idiosyncratic selection of verbal complements (Biber et al. 1999, 755)

	Selection of	Frequency	Examples
(a)	CP, INF, GER	"a few verbs"	<i>remember, believe (+NP), agree (to/with), warn (NP about)</i>
(b)	CP, INF, *GER	"some verbs"	<i>hope, decide, wish, say, believe, expect (NP)</i>
(c)	CP, *INF, GER	"some verbs"	<i>imagine, mention, report, suggest, admit (to), understand (about)</i>
(d)	*CP, INF, GER	"a large number"	<i>begin, start, like, love, prefer, hate, try, attempt, need, want</i>
(e)	CP, *INF, *GER	"some verbs"	<i>conclude, speculate, guess, argue, assert</i>
(f)	*CP, INF, *GER	"some verbs"	<i>consent, fail, refuse, hesitate</i>
(g)	*CP, *INF, GER	"some verbs"	<i>keep (on), finish, miss, be used for</i>

Table (44) shows that a large number of English verbs – those listed in (d) and (a) select both gerundials and infinitivals for their right hand complements.

In light of the discussion in the preceding section, we are going to compare the gerundial and infinitival objects. The data presented will argue in favor of the analysis suggested for subjects, namely that infinitival and gerundial complements do not occupy the same positions.

First, assuming that only the DP can occupy the position of direct object, they can be followed by another selected PP, including the indirect object *to*-phrase. The following examples show that they are indeed in the DP position. The contrasted unacceptable (b-c) examples show that infinitivals and finite clauses are not in the same position (examples rephrased from Emonds (2015)).

- (45) a. *Bill prefers* [_{GER} riding a bicycle] [_{PP} *to endless hitchhiking*].
 b. **Bill prefers* [_{INF} to ride a bicycle] [_{PP} *to endless hitchhiking*].
 c. **Bill prefers* [_{CP} that she ride a bicycle] [_{PP} *to endless hitchhiking*].

Notice also that a VP and clauses are ungrammatical in the position of the direct object preceding the Recipient PP, which can only be another canonical DP object position.

- (46) a. *You promised* [_{DP} some money] [_{PP} *to Mary*].
 b. **You promised* [_{INF} to be quiet] [_{PP} *to Mary*].
 c. **John said* [_{CP} that she was perfect] [_{PP} *to Mary*].

This data shows that gerunds do appear in standard DP positions of objects (adjoined to V). On the other hand, considering verbal (infinitival and finite) complements, when those are post-verbal, they are not adjacent to verbs, but must be at the end of VPs.

Another argument in favor of the analysis proposed above, i.e., the analysis assuming the distinction between infinitival and gerundial complements with respect to their positions, is a distinction with respect to passivisation. The following examples

demonstrate that the gerundial complement, though not perfect when passivised, is far more acceptable in (47) than the infinitival and finite ones in (48) and (49). The contrast cannot be attributed to semantic or pragmatic reasons because as the examples show, an expletive co-indexed with verbal complements can passivise. Notice that there is no expletive co-indexed with gerunds, as (47) shows.¹⁹

- (47) a. *Jim admitted* [_{GER} reading it].
 b. → ? [_{GER} Reading it] *was admitted by Jim*.
 c. → * *It was admitted* [_{GER} reading it] *by Jim*.
- (48) a. *Jennifer proposed* [_{INF} to read it].
 b. → * [_{INF} To read it] *was proposed by Jennifer*.
 c. → *It was proposed* [_{INF} to read it] *by Jennifer*.
- (49) a. *Bill suggested / shouted / whispered* [_{CP} that such a case exists].
 b. → ?? [_{CP} That such a case exists] *was suggested / shouted by Bill*.
 c. → *It was suggested / shouted / whispered* [_{CP} that such a case exists] *by Bill*.

The analysis of verbal vs. gerundial subjects applied to subjects in the preceding Section 6.1 and illustrated in (35) can therefore be extended to objects and paraphrased as in (50) and (51). The analysis claims that with verbal complements also, only the gerundial occupies the direct object DP position, while the infinitivals and finite clauses are positioned at the very end of the clause, in an extraposed position. Like subject infinitivals (and finite clauses), object infinitivals (and clauses) are also accompanied by a co-indexed expletive [_{DP} Ø].

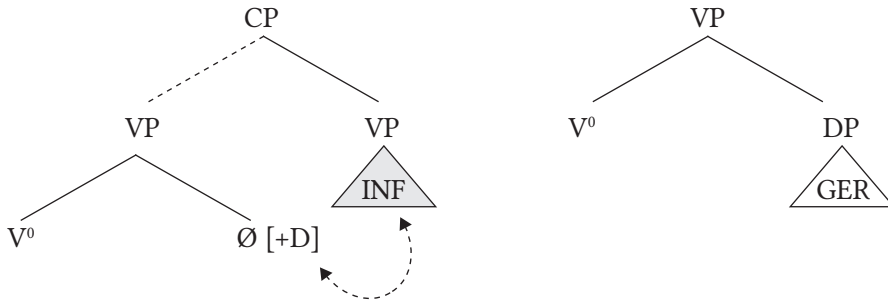
- (50) Compare with (35)
 a. *Ann believed* [_{DP} Ø]_j [_{CP} (that) *Mary was a foreign agent*]_j.
 b. *Bill would prefer* [_{DP} Ø]_j [_{INF} *for Mary to stay a while*]_j.
 c. *Ann regretted* [_{DP=GER} *stealing Mary's book*].
- (51) a. *It was believed* [_{DP} Ø] *by Ann that Mary was a foreign agent*.
 b. *It would be preferred* [_{DP} Ø] *by Bill for Mary to stay a while*.

The trees in (52) provide the schematic structures suggested above. Notice that here too, when the expletive does not co-command the associate, it will not be overt, following the associate-expletive binding rule in (36).

¹⁹ The paradigms as in (47)–(49) are similar to those provided by Stowell (1981) discussing how case relates to infinitives. The author, however, does not make any claim about the presence of expletives.

(52) a. VP “object” + Ø expletive

b. DP (=GER) Object



7. COMPARING THE (DE)VERBAL FORMS WITH CZECH EQUIVALENTS

In the preceding sections we have demonstrated that the minimal domains (lower, right side parts) of the projections of English gerundials show clearly verbal characteristics, especially when compared with the minimal domain of a lexical noun. Gerundials (like infinitives) project their arguments with the Θ role interpretations of finite clauses, their direct objects are in object case and not generated with *of* gerundials (like infinitives) can have double objects, and their AP modifiers have adverbial rather than adjectival forms. Moreover, English gerundials lack articles, plurals and most quantifiers.

7.1. CZECH NOMINALISATIONS

Pedagogic comparative grammars state blatantly that Czech “does not have gerunds,” meaning that there is no Czech lexical entry with properties equal to the English gerund. Considering meaning, the closest formal equivalents to English gerunds are complex event nominals derived with the suffix *-ě/ání*. These are discussed in detail in Karlík (2000) and in a generative framework in Veselovská (2001). These authors agree that the interpretations of English gerunds and Czech derived nominals (complex event nominals, in the sense of Grimshaw 1990) are fully comparable, but even the most verbal of deverbal nouns in Czech do not have the formal properties of a verb, at a level comparable with English gerundials. The contrast is demonstrated below.

The following example (55) shows the noun *přestavování* “rebuilding” derived from the verb *přestavovat* “rebuild”. The standard projection of this finite verb is demonstrated first in (53). Notice that the agent is realised canonically as subject in the nominative, patient as object in the accusative, and the frequency adverbial takes the form of an adverb *často* “often” with the adverbial *-o* suffix.

- (53) *On často přestav-ov-al garáž.*
 he_{NOM} frequently_{adv} rebuilt garage_{ACC}
 “He was frequently rebuilding his garage.”

The example in (54) demonstrates an infinitive, i.e., a non-finite form of the verb. There is no change with respect to (53) as for the accusative marking of the object and adverbial post-modification. The ungrammatical options show that a Czech like an English infinitive does not tolerate nominative or possessive for the format of agent/subject, it does not combine with the genitive case either and it cannot be modified by an adjective: the suffix *-é* on *časté* “often” would signal adjectival agreement.

- (54) *Donutil ho (*jeho) (*časté) přestav-ova-t garáž často / *garáže.*
 he made [_{INF} him (*his)(frequent_{adj}) re-build_{INF} garage_{ACC} frequently_{adv} / *garáže_{GEN}]
 “He made him rebuild the garage frequently.”

The verbal origin of the nominalised counterpart *přestav-ov-ání* “rebuilding” in (55) is supported by the possibility of a verbal aspectual suffix *-ov-*, and the interpretation of its arguments is identical to the verbal projection in (53) and in (54): “he” is the agent of the activity, and “garage” is the affected object. These examples contain a perhaps deficient but still fully nominal suffix *-ání*.²⁰ The exact formal equivalent to the English gerund (with object case and adverbial morphology) is constructed in (55)(b), and it is ungrammatical.

- (55) a. *Líbí se mi jeho časté přestav-ov-ání garáže.*
 I like [_{DP} his frequent_{adj} re-building garage_{GEN}]
 “I like his rebuilding the garage frequently.”
 b. **Líbí se mi jeho přestav-ov-ání garáž často.*
 I like [_{DP} his_j re-building garage_{ACC} frequently_{adv}]
 “I like his rebuilding the garage frequently.”

Notice that:

- The agent must be realised in the form of possessive pronoun *jeho* “his”.
- The case marking of the complement of such a nominalised lexical entry becomes nominal, too: *garáže* “garage” in (55)(a) is marked by a post-nominal genitive, and
- The AP pre-modification *časté* “frequent” must take the agreeing adjectival form and usually the pre-head position of an adjective.

Compare the structures of a Czech complex event nominal and of Czech infinitives in the table (56), which summarizes the categorial distinction between the two. In the right column of the table, the English gerund is added to show that the characteristics of its phrasal projection are closer to Czech infinitives and distinct from Czech complex event nominals.

²⁰ The Czech nominalising suffix *-ání* signals a class of nouns which are neuter and non-countable (incompatible with a plural morpheme). Its case paradigm is highly impoverished. Therefore it is fair to say that the feature set [ϕ] of such a noun is extremely defective. For details, see Veselovská (2001).

(56) Comparing the Czech derived nominal and infinitive with the English gerund

Semantic Θ role	Czech derived noun		Czech infinitive		English gerund	
	Function	Marking	Function	Marking	Function	Marking
Agent	Attribute pre-N	Possessive Agreement	“Subject” of INF	ACC	“Subject” of GER	Object/ Poss Case
Patient	Attribute post-N	Genitive Case	Object	ACC	Object	ACC/Object Case
Modification	Adjectival	Agreeing AP (adjective)	Adverbial	AP Adverb	Adverbial	AP Adverb

To conclude, apart from interpretation, which makes (55) equivalent to Grimshaw’s complex event nominals and the morphology *-ov-* signalling an aspectual feature, there is no sign of a verbal category in either the minimal (approximately the right-hand side) or the maximal (approximately the left-hand side) domain of the projection of Czech-derived nominals. The conclusion (in terms of the analysis presented in section 5.2) is that the lexical item *přestavování* “rebuilding” enters the syntactic derivation as a noun, and it projects to a more or less standard DP. In other words, Czech does not have a morpheme equivalent to the English post-lexical, syntactic *-ing*, and therefore it does not have gerunds.

7.2. SYNTAX OF CZECH-DERIVED NOMINAL AND INFINITIVAL CONSTITUENTS

Recall that apart from claiming a categorial contrast between internal (VP) and external (DP) projections of English gerunds, we were also able to claim a distinct position of the arguments having the form of VP in clausal structure. The proposed topicalised or extraposed positions (accompanied with overt or zeroed expletives) are demonstrated in (35) and (52). Recall also that these positions do not tolerate English DPs, including gerundials, although in many contexts the infinitives and gerundials superficially look like optional alternatives. In the following sections, we are going to compare the English data with Czech examples to see whether the same analysis might apply to Czech.

As for the distribution of Czech infinitivals and nominal phrases, the examples in (57) show a situation that is similar to English — they apparently share distribution in the functions of subject and object.

- (57) a. *Psaní dopisů / Číst knihy je nudná záležitost.*
 [_{DP} writing letters] / [_{INF} to read books] is a boring affair
- b. *Nesnáším psaní dopisů / číst knihy.*
 I hate [_{DP} writing letters] / [_{INF} to read books]

As for the *VP objects*, Svozilová, Prouzová and Jirsová (1997) list valencies of Czech

verbs, noting that an infinitive is the only possible complement of some 35-40 verbs, including modals and inchoatives but also verbs of movement and others. These verbs V, [+__VP_{INF}] do not share any clear semantic features which would explain their selectional characteristics.

The same study lists about 60 verbs with the frame [+__DP/VP_{INF}], i.e., those which allow complementation in the form of DP or INF. As for the complex transitives, i.e., verbs selecting NP *plus* infinitives (V, [+__DP^VP_{INF}]) the study lists 15 Czech entries.

When both DP and VP are possible, the distinction between nominal and verbal constituents is then a distinction between a more verbal vs. more nominal interpretation of the act(ion) expressed in the complement. If infinitival complements of verbs were merely a sub-type of object DPs, as traditional grammar often assumes, we would expect that many more transitive verbs could have infinitival complements. However, the selectional properties (subcategorization) of many individual verbs strictly divide the options between infinitival and nominal objects, indicating they are *not* of the same type. In these cases, the speaker has choice, and no assumed semantic distinction can be expressed or reflected in the syntax.

As for the *verbal subjects*, the number of Czech verbs which allow an infinitive as a subject seems to be restricted. The only examples given in grammar manuals are copula-like predicates, e.g., “impersonal structures” and some psych-verbs.

- (58) a. *(To) Je možné / jisté / vhodné udělat to teď.*
 (it) is possible / sure / appropriate [_{INF} do it now]
 “It is possible / sure / appropriate to do it now.”
 b. *Hrát na piáno, (to) se mi líbí.*
 [_{INF} to play piano] (it) REFL me_{DAT} like
 “I like to play piano.”

Other psych-verbs, however, realise the experiencer as a subject and either the nominal or infinitival constituent becomes the object. To our knowledge, nobody has studied the conditions on infinitival subjects in Czech in more detail, and we leave this interesting topic for further research.

7.3. COMPARING POSITIONS OF CZECH DP AND VP ARGUMENTS

Looking more closely at the Czech examples of verbs selecting both DP and VP_{INF}, we can see that the categorial characteristics of the two complement types are clearly distinct. The examples below repeat the most standard constituent test with co-ordination, demonstrated for English in (19). The parallel example (59) shows that Czech derived nominal phrases (including the most “verbal” ones, i.e., those headed by complex event nominals with the nominaliser *-ání*) and verbal infinitivals are not of identical categories. Therefore, the labels DP vs. INF (i.e., VP_{INF}) capture the distinction correctly.

- (59) a. * *Psaní dopisů a číst knihy je nudná záležitost.*
 [_{DP} writing letters] and [_{INF} to read books] is a boring affair
 b. * *Já nenávidím psaní dopisů a číst knihy.*
 I hate [_{DP} writing letters] and [_{INF} to read books]

The categorial status of the contrasted forms – DP vs. VP – is further supported by the fact that only nominals can follow prepositions but not infinitivals as in (60) – parallel to the English restrictions in (21).

- (60) *Těším se na psaní dopisů / *číst knihy.*
 I am looking forward [_{PP} to [_{NP} writing letters] / * [_{INF} to read books]]

A categorial distinction is also signaled in the cleft structures in (61) and (62). As discussed for English in (32), only nominal phrases in Czech can be clefted, not infinitivals.

- (61) a. *Bylo to nakupování nových věcí co ji bavilo nejvíce.*
 it was [_{DP} buying new things] [that she liked most]
 b. **Bylo to nakupovat nové věci co ji bavilo nejvíce.*
 * it was [_{INF} to buy new things] [that she liked most]
- (62) a. *Je to řízení pod vlivem alkoholu co zakázali jako první.*
 it is [_{DP} driving under the influence of alcohol] [that they prohibited first]
 b. **Bylo to řídít pod vlivem alkoholu co zakázali jako první.*
 it is [_{INF} to drive under the influence of alcohol] [that they prohibited first]

Whether the expletive analysis proposed for the English VP constituents in (35) and (52) can be extended to Czech is not easy to decide. As for the counterpart of the English overt expletive *it*, any corresponding Czech examples can contain a pronominal *to* ‘it’, as in (58); however, its presence is only optional and is analyzable as a kind of emphatic marker.

Some of the contrasts mentioned for English in Section 5 cannot be directly applied to Czech. However, some of the diagnostics do have Czech counterparts. As the following examples show, Czech VP subjects (infinitivals) in embedded adverbial clauses, in clausal complements to nouns, and in comparative and relative clauses also seem to be unacceptable when compared with (derived) nominals.

- (63) Subjects of adverbial clauses in Czech (see (23) for English)
 a. *Cvičí tak málo, že zvedání těch cihel může uškodit jeho srdci.*
 he exercises so little [_{CL} that [_{DP} lifting the bricks] can harm his heart]
 b. ?? *Cvičí tak málo, že zvedat ty cihly může uškodit jeho srdci.*
 ?? he exercises so little [_{CL} that [_{INF} to lift the bricks] can harm his heart]

- (64) Subjects of clausal complements to Nouns in Czech (see (25) for English)
- Objevují se názory, že kouření tabáku je zbytečně kriminalizováno.*
there appear opinions [_{CL} that [_{DP} smoking tobacco] is unnecessarily criminalised]
 - *Objevují se názory, že kouřit tabák je zbytečně kriminalizováno.*
*there appear opinions [_{CL} that [_{INF} to smoke tobacco] is unnecessarily criminalised]
- (65) Subjects of comparative clauses in Czech (see (26) for English)
- Den na pláži je lepší než kdy může být hraní golfu.*
a day on the beach is better than [_{CL} ever can be [_{DP} playing golf]]
 - *Den na pláži je lepší než kdy může být hrát golf.*
a day on the beach is better than [_{CL} ever can be [_{INF} to play golf]]
- (66) Subjects of relative clauses in Czech (see (28) for English)
- Zaplatit včas je způsob jak vás vaše pojistka může ochránit nejlépe.*
to pay in time is a way [_{CL} how [_{DP} your insurance] can protect you best]
 - Zaplatit včas je způsob jak vás [_{INF} být pojistěný] může ochránit nejlépe.*
to pay in time is a way [_{CL} how [_{DP} to be ensured] can protect you best]

In addition, the following examples of the verbal right-side complementation show that although the ordering of verbal complements tends to be very free in Czech, there are still restrictions indicating that the VP complements are not located in the canonical position immediately following the verb.²¹

- (67) VP interpreted as object in the clause final position (not adjacent to V)
- *Bill upřednostňuje [_{INF} jezdit na kole] [_{PP} před autostopem].*
*Bill prefers [_{DP} to ride a bicycle] [_{PP} to hitchhiking]
 - *Slíbili, že to udělají / udělat to naší Maruše.*
they promised [_{CL} that they do it] / [_{INF} to do it] [_{DP} our Mary_{DAT}]

In contrast, Czech complex event nominals, as expected of DPs, can be just after the V.

- (68) *Bill upřednostňuje ježdění na kole před autostopem.*
Bill prefers [_{DP} riding the bicycle] [_{PP} to hitchhiking]

As for the transformations typical for a canonical structural subject of a clause, those signaled by word order are never obligatory in Czech. For this reason, the diagnostics applied to English in (30) and (31) do not provide any contrast in Czech. Even the examples of passivisation, which sometimes provide in Czech a kind of contrast

²¹ When the very final constituent in the (b) examples is contrastively stressed, the reading is more acceptable. We assume that such a specific interpretation signals another position at the top periphery of a CP domain and so for this discussion is irrelevant.

stronger than in English, do not fully exclude especially clausal subjects of passive verbs. Nonetheless (69)(b) is less acceptable when compared with (69)(c).

- (69) a. *Všichni sledovali pád meteoritu / jak padá meteorit.*
 everybody watched [_{DP} the fall of a meteorite] / [_{CP} how a meteorite fell]
- b. *Pád meteoritu byl sledován na celém světě.*
 [_{DP} the fall of a meteorite] was watched all over the world
- c. ? *Jak padá meteorit bylo sledováno na celém světě.*
 ? [_{CP} how a meteorite fell] was watched all over the world

It may be premature to claim the same analysis for the Czech infinitival subjects and objects as in Emonds (2015) for English, as outlined in (35) and (52). The data, however, suggest that a categorial distinction between a phrasal projection of nominal and verbal complexes may correlate with distinct positions in Czech clausal structure, too. More research is needed to make this claim more precise. Above all, some more principled analysis of the expletives in Czech is required, to the extent the *to* “it” pronoun is clearly multifunctional and has a covert counterpart.

8. ECONOMY OF THE LANGUAGE SYSTEM

This paper has demonstrated how English gerunds contrast with infinitivals, by showing that at the level of minimal phrasal projection (the right-hand side of the gerundial and infinitival phrases) they show identical, i.e., verbal characteristics. However, the full phrasal constituents headed by these forms show distinct categorial status. Contrary to infinitival phrases, which behave like VPs, English gerundials have systematically a distribution of the most standard DPs.

To explain the specific properties of the English gerund, we discussed both the structure (22) derived from Reuland (1983) and Emonds (2000), which changes the VP projection into a DP in the process of syntactic derivation. The crucial condition for this kind of transformation is the existence of the post-lexical but still syntactically active suffix (here *-ing*), which can appear in the context of a V head that selects DPs.

This concept of lexical entries (morphemes) inserted between syntactic and morphological (post-syntactic) components allows us to consider an aspect of language economy not often discussed. Considering the amount of individual morphemes in separate components/ modules, the size of an open-class lexicon plausibly varies with respect to individual speakers. In other words, the amount of items in the lexicon does not reflect any specific typological characteristics of a language. On the other hand, accepting the so-called Borer’s Conjecture (1984), typological distinctions between languages can be restricted to distinctions among lexicons of grammatical morphemes. Based on language acquisition data, a synchronic language system does not plausibly contain an unrestricted number of grammatical morphemes (case endings, tenses, etc.).

The storage of grammatical morphemes, which Emonds (2000) calls the syntacticon, is a part of the generative system, and it is plausibly subject to some economy criterion. We can expect that the total number of grammatical morphemes – both derivational (bound and free) and inflectional (both bound and free) – is not very different in distinct languages. If so, then a relatively large amount of inflectional morphemes (i.e., post-syntactic morphemes) in Czech may restrict the number of its syntactically-active morphemes, which may explain why there is no equivalent of the English gerundial *-ing* in the Czech syntacticon.

The analysis of nominal and verbal constituents in Czech and in English (as it has been presented), proposes that the attested distinction can be reduced to the morphological repertory of grammatical forms, supporting thus the concept of a language system which from a limited and finite number of elements is able to generate an infinite number of structures and meanings.

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THE DEGREE EXPRESSIONS *LITTLE* AND *LESS* IN THE ADJECTIVAL/ADVERBIAL DOMAIN

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ABSTRACT: The paucal degree expressions *little* and *less* show distributional asymmetries in the adjectival/adverbial domain. While *little* still exhibits the grammatical properties of a lexical word and belongs to the category of adverbs of degree, its comparative form *less* is fully grammaticalized and has the status of a morpheme in the adjectival/adverbial domain, except when it occurs in the pseudo-comparative phrase “*less than AP/AdvP*.” The investigation of the distributional asymmetries of these two expressions in the adjectival and adverbial domain also reveals that the entire class of degree expressions modifying adjectives/adverbs split into two subclasses – lexical degree expressions, i.e., adverbs of degree, and functional degree words. This paper offers some heuristic methods, i.e., criteria and linguistic tests for delimitation of lexical degree modifiers that also include the lexical unit *little*, on the one hand, and the completely grammaticalized functional word units *so/too/as/how* and *less*, on the other.

KEYWORDS: paucal degree; grammaticalization; distributional asymmetry; pseudo-comparative expression; lexical degree expressions

INTRODUCTION

In the process of teaching and learning English as a second language, two mutually relevant levels of study are the lexicon on the one hand and the grammatical system on the other. Since the lexicon provides the input for grammar, the starting point in this process is the lexical inventory. Considering that the lexicon is the continuum comprising lexical words on the one hand and completely grammaticalized elements such as affixes on the other, between these two opposed extremes there are a number of free forms, hereinafter referred to as lexical units that may be closer either to one or the other end of the continuum. Many of them are completely grammaticalized, such as determiners, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, complementizers and the like, which are classified into functional words. Degree words occurring as the modifiers in the adjectival/adverbial domain¹ are traditionally treated as adverbs. However, in contemporary linguistic studies there is a strong tendency to treat degree modifiers as functional words, and therefore their categorial status is vague. The quantifying and degree expression *little* and its comparative form *less* are typically classified in the functional categories and differently labelled depending on their distribution. In

1 Adjectives and adverbs are treated as two subclasses of the same syntactic category occurring in complementary distribution (see Emonds 1976; Baker 2003).

the nominal domain they are quantifying determiners, while in the adjectival and adverbial domain they are labelled degree words or intensifiers whose categorial status is not completely clear in English. The question is whether degree modifiers are lexical words (adverbs), semi-lexical categories or clearly functional words. In addition, this very heterogeneous class of words contains members which exhibit different grammatical features in the grammatical system of English because some are bound to the adjectival/adverbial domain whereas some others can also occur as the modifying elements in other domains. Due to their unclear categorial status, they are classified into different syntactic categories on the basis of a single criterion – their distribution.

This paper identifies the categorial status of the paucal degree expressions *little* and *less* in the adjectival/adverbial domain, and they will be compared with other degree words occurring in the same domain in order to account for the syntactic asymmetries that can be observed in their superficial realization:

- (1) (a) little fat/tall
amazingly/terribly/incredibly/considerably/barely/scarcely/excessively fat/tall
- (2) less fat/tall
so/too/as/how fat/tall
- (3) (a) little fatter/taller
amazingly/terribly/incredibly/considerably/barely/scarcely/excessively fatter/taller
- (4) *less fatter/taller
*so/too/as/how fatter/taller

Hypothesis: *little* is still a lexical word that exhibits the grammatical properties typical of adjectives in the nominal and adverbs in the adjectival/adverbial domain. Its comparative form *less* shares the grammatical properties with *little* in all the domains except when it occurs in an adjective or adverb phrase, where it is a fully-grammaticalized lexical unit. However, when it occurs as the modifying element in the pseudo-comparative expression *less than*, it retains its modifying function.

This analysis will investigate the combinatorial merge abilities of *little* and *less* and present the linguistic evidence showing that degree words occurring as the modifiers in the adjectival/adverbial domain split into two subclasses: the open class degree words derived from adjectives: *abundantly*, *slightly*, *completely*, *partly*, *nearly*, *totally*, *incredibly*, etc., and *little*, which are clearly lexical categories. The other subclass comprises the closed class degree words such as: *so/too/as/how* and *less*, which clearly exhibit the syntactic features typical for a functional category, and hence they are grammaticalized in English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The categorial status of the paucal quantifier/degree word *little* is the subject of disagreement. This is the case not only with the descriptive comprehensive grammars of English (e.g., Quirk et al. 1985; Huddleston and Pullum 2002; Biber et al. 1999) but

also with some theory-based approaches in formal semantics, generative semantics or generative syntax, lexical-functional grammar, etc. (see, e.g., Barwise and Cooper 1981; Abney 1987; Giusti 1990; and Westerståhl 1985).

Since its interpretation or semantic reading is context-dependent, which can hardly be explained by the functional approach, a few linguists hold that the expressions of paucal quantity/degree still share more grammatical characteristics with adjectives than with function words (see, e.g., Milwark 1977; Hoeksema 1983; Partee 1989; Kamp and Ryle 1993; McNally 1998; Kennedy and McNally 2005; Kayne 2007). However, it should be noted that the vast majority of linguistic sources mostly deal with the expressions *few* and *many* in the nominal domain, while *little* and *much*, let alone *less*, which have much more flexible syntactic distribution, have not drawn as much attention, with only a few exceptions (considerations of *much* in, e.g., Abney 1987; Corver 1997; Kayne 2005; Bresnan 1973). Their semantic counterparts *much* and *more* have mostly been the subject of analysis in the nominal domain and, to a much lesser extent, in the adjectival/adverbial domain (e.g., Corver 1997; Kayne 2005, 2007; and Solt 2009). However, the findings for *much* are not very relevant for investigation of the paucal degree word *little* since they do not exhibit the same grammatical properties in the adjectival/adverbial domain.² When *little* and *less* occur as modifiers in the adjectival and adverbial domain, they are classified into the category of degree words (Huddleston and Pullum 2002) or intensifiers (Quirk et al. 1985) or, in more traditional terms, simply into adverbs of degree (Biber et al. 1999).

These labels are widespread in descriptive comprehensive grammars but also in theory-based linguistic studies. What remains very vague in identification and categorization of degree modifiers, generally, is whether they are lexical or functional words. Degree words or intensifiers as the modifiers of adjectives/adverbs are mostly treated as functional elements basically because they fail to contribute the meaning of adjectives/adverbs which they modify. Instead, they only intensify their meaning on the “abstractly conceived intensity scale” (see Quirk et al. 1985, 589; or Paradis 2001). In the contemporary theory-based linguistic approaches, all lexical expressions referring to a degree are treated as function words whether they belong to the open or a closed class (see, e.g., Abney 1987). However, there are some attempts to make the distinction between true intensifiers as semantically relevant modifiers and the expressions that are fully functional (Kennedy and McNally 2005).

In syntactic analyses, with respect to the position in the structure of the adjective/adverb phrase which degree words occupy, there is, again, disagreement among linguists. For some of them, degree expressions are specifiers in AP/AdvP (Pollard and Sag 1994), or they are functional words or heads of DegP in which AP/AdvP is the complement of the degree head (Abney 1987), or they are degree adjuncts (Huddleston and Pullum 2002) or subjuncts (Quirk et al. 1985).

The distinction between functional and lexical or content words has become of

² The word *much* is restricted only to the comparative form while this constraint does not affect *little*. The asymmetries between these two degree words that are an antonymous pair could be the subject of a separate analysis.

great importance in contemporary linguistic theories (for more detailed discussions see Cann 2000, Muysken 2008; or Corver and van Riemsdijk 2001). This distinction is, naturally, highly relevant for L2 learning and teaching since the starting point in such a process is, almost always, the classification of words into different parts of speech.

METHODOLOGY AND MATERIAL

Considering that gradability and quantity are universally relevant semantic concepts, and paucal degree and quantity are expressed by the lexical units *little* and *less*, these two expressions will be observed at all levels of linguistic analysis: morphological, syntactic and semantic. This analysis is theory-neutral and will investigate the interaction between the meaning and its grammatical realization in order to identify the categorial status of the degree expression *little* and analyse why it exhibits certain grammatical differences with its comparative form *less* in the adjectival/adverbial domain.

In order to account for the distributional asymmetries between the paucal degree expressions *little* and *less* in the adjectival/adverbial domain, this paper offers some heuristic methods, i.e., criteria and linguistic tests for delimitation of lexical degree modifiers that also include the lexical unit *little*, on the one hand, and the completely grammaticalized functional word units *so/too/as/how* and *less*, on the other.

The following criteria, based on the differences between lexical and functional categories,³ are established for the purpose of identifying the categorial status of the lexical units that are the subject of this analysis:

Criterion 1: Semantics. Sense relations and polysemy;

Criterion 2: Morphology. Morphological processes of derivation and inflection;

Criterion 3: Syntax

- a. Functions and categorial status outside AP/AdvP;
- b. Coordination with adjectives;
- c. Structure dependency and the fragment test;
- d. Selection;
- e. Morphemic status of *less* in AP/AdvP;
- f. *Less* in pseudo-comparative phrases.

The investigation was carried out on examples collected from the following corpora: Collins Cobuild Wordbanks Online; Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCAE); British National Corpus and TIME Magazine Corpus of American English. Some of the examples have been adapted for the purpose of this paper, and some proposed syntactic combinations have been attested to by a native speaker.

³ For a detailed discussion about the grammatical differences between lexical and function words, see Cann (2000), Hudson (2000), Corver (2009), or Muysken (2008).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gradability is understood as a property not only of adjectives and adverbs but also of nouns, verbs and even prepositions (see, e.g., Bolinger 1972; Doetjes 1997; Kennedy and McNally 2005; Paradis 2001). Lexical units expressing the paucal quantity *little* and *less* in the nominal domain indicate an unspecified relative quantity smaller than the one contextually expected (Partee 1989) and thus, they are context dependent. When the same expressions occur as the modifiers in the adjectival/adverbial domain they indicate “a point on the abstractly conceived intensity scale” (Quirk et al. 1985, 589). The point indicated is relatively low. Thus, both concepts – quantity and degree – belong to the same semantic category whatever label is assigned to the words expressing them. As such, both are universally relevant semantic notions and therefore, it is not surprising that the lexical units *little* and *less*, which indicate either a small quantity or a low degree, can be found as the words modifying or quantifying all syntactic categories in English:

- (5) (a) NP: (a) *little time/money/justice*
 less time/money/justice
- (b) VP: It *costs very little*.
 Iraqis *talk less* about being Iraqi, they talk more about being Shiite or Sunni or Kurd, and can be quite disparaging about the other groups.
- (c) AP: ... and her reluctance seemed *a little strange*.
 He became *less pompous*, more honest – in his pictures at least.
- (d) AdvP: Only maybe he'd treat her *a little differently* ...
 They work more but *less effectively*.
- (e) PP: (a) *little after midnight*

In these distributions they convey the same meaning of a small quantity or a low degree. However, since functional words are syntactically highly constrained it is confusing that the same lexical units with the same meaning in all the above distributions are differently labelled and most often classified into different functional categories.

From the aspect of etymology, *little* was originally an adjective. However, except when it refers to the small size, *little*, as a quantifying and degree expression, is mostly treated as a function word, i.e., a grammaticalized lexical unit. This is the fact in spite of much evidence proving that the expression *little* still shares more grammatical properties with adjectives/adverbs than with functional categories into which it is classified.

Since functional words are grammaticalized lexical units, grammaticalization is understood as a slow and gradual historical unidirectional process during which “single items” undergo the change into polysemy (considered to be “pragmatic enrichment”) and further into homonymy (understood as “bleaching”) (Hopper and Traugott 2003, 94–103).

However, a thorough synchronic analysis demonstrates that the lexical unit *little*

shares a number of morphological, syntactic and semantic properties with adjectives proper and hence adverbs as well, and, therefore, fails to meet the previously-stated conditions for reanalysis.

CRITERION 1: SEMANTICS

The only purpose of function words is to participate in grammatical structuring in a language. They generally do not have any semantic content. One of the fundamental distinctions between lexical and function words is that only content/lexical expressions can enter into sense relations with other words in a lexicon of a language, and only content/lexical words can develop polysemy. Sense relations and polysemous meanings are a good indicator that an expression is a content/lexical word.

The expression *little* enters into the sense relations of synonymy and antonymy (compare the pairs: *few/little*, and *little/much*). However, as the expressions *few* and *much* are also considered to be functional lexical units, yet another semantic criterion seems to be necessary. Since it also expresses relative quantity/relative degree, its full sense and meaning arises from the semantic relations with some other quantifying expressions (NP: *little < a little < some < much* or AP/AdvP: *little < a little < very < considerably < extremely*). As stated, a lexical unit is not fully grammaticalized if it develops polysemy, which is exactly the case with the expression *little*.

In the nominal domain, the pragmatic enrichment is typical for *little*. Apart from referring to size and quantity, it can also convey meanings such as short, inferior, secret, cunning, obscure and the like. These subtle shifts in meaning must be interpreted in the context. Just for illustration, here are a few examples conveying meanings such as short, weak, secret, harmless, cunning, etc:

- (6) I sensed that her *little monologue* was not over yet.
- (7) Sam yelled and brandished Sting, but his *little voice* was drowned in the tumult. No one heeded him.
- (8) And I couldn't say anything, because he's firmly convinced no one knows about his *little arrangement*.
- (9) I must suffer Pedar and his *little tortures*.
- (10) He's just pissed off that his *little game* might not work.

When *little* occurs in the verbal domain it develops polysemy expressing frequency, duration or quantity.⁴

Contrary to the word *little*, and the open class degree words, the degree expressions *so/too/as/how* do not exhibit any of these semantic features.

⁴ Verbal domain is excluded from this analysis because it is the only distribution in which the expressions *little* and *less* are treated as typical adverbs. For a detailed discussion, see Quirk et al. (1985).

CRITERION 2: MORPHOLOGY

Derivational morphological processes are possible only with content/lexical words. One productive derivational suffix, *-ness*, is attached to adjectives, which results in a number of deadjectival nouns (*happiness, loneliness, carelessness*, etc.). The same suffix may be attached to *little*, and the corpora offer a certain number of examples with this noun. However, this noun can also be interpreted in a number of ways and develops meanings similar to the ones illustrated by the examples from (6) to (10) when *little* is used as an attribute in the nominal domain.

On the other hand, *less* occurs as the derivational morpheme attached to nouns in the process of derivation of denominal adjectives expressing the absence of the property denoted by a noun (*hopeless, careless, useless, harmless*, etc.). However, suffixes have the status of grammaticalized elements, and it is not quite clear whether the quantifying and degree word *less* is related to this derivational suffix.

Only content/lexical words can participate in the derivation of compounds. The expression *little* usually occurs in compounds with participial adjectives (*little-remembered; little-known; little-disrupting*, etc.), and it also occurs in idiomatic expressions such as *too little too late, little by little*, and the like.

Syncretism is a property of function words (Muysken 2008, 36). The full inflectional paradigm of the expression *little* is typical for adjectives, the only difference being its partly suppletive form (compare the continuum which involves regular form, partly-suppletive form, and suppletive form: *big – bigger – biggest* vs. *far – further – furthest* and *little – less – least* vs. *good – better – best*). It is clear that, from the morphological aspect, this lexical unit shares the features typical of adjectives and adverbs. Open class degree words also have the regular, though periphrastically-formed, comparative paradigm.

However, although *so/too/as/how* are also degree modifiers and select gradable adjectives/adverbs, they themselves are unable to be graded and they share none of the above-stated morphological features with the degree word *little*.

CRITERION 3: SYNTAX

A. FUNCTIONS AND CATEGORIAL STATUS OUTSIDE AP/AdvP

The most convincing evidence proving the adjectival status of the lexical units *little* and *less* is:

- occurrence of the quantifying expression *little* in the post-attributive position:⁵

- (11) Like Tanzi Lea and the Shark 20, the Sea Hawk made it back with *precious little fuel* left in the tanks but plenty of sea salt around the engines.

⁵ Quantifiers as a subclass of determiners may occur only at the left periphery of the NP preceding the attributive adjectives: Determiner > Number > Adjective > Noun (see Greenberg 1963; Cinque 2010).

- predicative function of *little* and *less* in the copulative constructions:

(12) ... the payments were *too little to buy adequate food*.

(13) Indeed, often, depending on which term the intern is undertaking, the hours are *considerably less*.

- and verbless/small clauses.⁶ The following examples are adapted for the purpose of this paper and attested to by a native speaker:

(14) Peter considered *the half-full tank of fuel (too) little for such a long distance*.

(15) I consider *2 million dollars too little for the reconstruction of this tunnel*.

All the previously stated semantic, morphological and syntactic evidence clearly shows the adjectival status of the lexical units *little* and *less*. They share yet another important distribution, which can also be realized by other adverbs functioning as degree words/intensifiers in the AP and AdvP. It is

- the adverbial modification in the VPs:

(16) He has changed *completely*. / cf., *He has changed *so/too/as/how*.

(17) They hate me a *little* for it too. / cf., *They hate me *so/too/as/how* for it too.

(18) Within the bounds of a safe metaphor the story lets the child explore why she is loved *less*.

cf., *Within the bounds of a safe metaphor the story lets the child explore why she is loved *so/too/as/how*.

Other open class degree words also occur outside the adjectival and adverbial domain, functioning as the modifiers in the verbal domain:

(19) (a) The codes for five cities have changed *completely/partly*.

cf., *The codes for five cities have changed *so/too/as/how*.

(b) ... but her condition suddenly improved *amazingly/incredibly*.

cf., *but her condition suddenly improved *so/too/as/how*.

(c) I guess I just don't *entirely/completely/fully* understand what the three of you have in common.

cf., *I guess I just don't *so/too/as/how* understand what the three of you have in common.

⁶ Jackendoff (1977) states that while *many* and *few* may occur as predicate expressions, *much* and *little* cannot occur in that function. It is true that these two expressions are restricted in copulative constructions, but if they are modified by some degree expression, whether from the open or closed class, they can freely occur as predicate expressions in constructions expressing quantity. Compare: *Half a pint of milk is *little*. vs. Half a pint of milk is *too/fairly/extremely/very little*.

The expressions *so/too/as/how* may appear only as subordinate elements, i.e., modifiers of the open class degree adverbs functioning as the modifiers in the VP:

- (20) (a) Sir John spoke *too eagerly* and *too prematurely* ... / cf. *Sir John spoke *too* and *too*
 (b) Harry Smith spoke *so slowly* ... / cf., *Harry Smith spoke *so* ...

These examples illustrate that *little* and *less* as well as open class degree words are not strictly bound to the adjectival domain, contrary to the lexical units *so/too/as/how*, which are genuine representatives of functional words firmly bound to AP/AdvP.

B. COORDINATION

Coordination is one in a series of constituency tests (see Carnie 2008) because only constituents may be coordinated. Function words cannot be coordinated with content/lexical words. Only lexical units belonging to the same syntactic category/word class can be coordinated (nouns with nouns, adjectives with adjectives and the like). Open class degree adverbs can be coordinated with all other adverbs, whether expressing degree or some other concept:

- (21) Everything looked *incredibly and totally* normal – ...

and so can the degree expressions *little* and *less*:

- (22) You should take special care if you are fair-haired or have a skin which always burns in the sun or tans *little and slowly*.
 (23) Within the bounds of a safe metaphor the story lets the child explore why she is loved *less and differently* than she wishes ...

However, within the AP and AdvP degree words, *so/too/as/how* including *less* neither occur coordinated with open class degree adverbs nor with each other, but only as the subordinate elements within the coordinated adverbial phrases. This test is a good indicator that open class degree words and functional degree words have different syntactic status in the adjectival/adverbial domain:

- (24) (a) Because he represented the age's fantasies *so fully and so openly* ...
 cf., *Because he represented the age's fantasies *so fully and so* ...
 (b) She knew what it was to love *recklessly and too well* ...
 cf., *She knew what it was to love *recklessly and too* ...
 (c) Human rights legislation tends to require perpetual clarification, meaning that it can accommodate compromises that would not be possible if rights were treated *more absolutely and less ambiguously*.
 cf., *Human rights legislation tends to require perpetual clarification,

meaning that it can accommodate compromises that would not be possible if rights were treated *more absolutely and less ...*

The above analysis shows that, despite a flexible distribution in English, *less* exhibits certain constraints only in the adjectival/adverbial domain, where it shares properties with the closed class degree words *so/too/as/how*.

C. STRUCTURE DEPENDENCY AND THE FRAGMENT TEST

Functional words are structurally dependent and may occur only followed by the category which they select. The fragment test can be a good indicator of the categorial status of a lexical unit. Lexical words such as adjectives and adverbs can achieve their maximal projection and have the status of a constituent without being accompanied by the modifying elements. In the case of degree modifiers, a fragment test can show the syntactic differences between the open class degree adverbs which include *little* as hypothesized, and *so/too/as/how* including *less*:

- (25) Some critics said his writings were *too/so/less simple* and lacked depth.

Question: How simple did the critics say his writings were?

Answer: **too/*so/*less*

cf., *too simple/so simple/less simple*

- (26) Yesterday the routine was *a little/entirely/slightly/completely different*.

Question: How different was the routine yesterday?

Answer: *a little/entirely/slightly/completely*

These examples show the obvious categorial difference between the two subclasses of degree expressions in the adjectival/adverbial domain. They split into the functional and structurally-dependent elements on the one hand, and the degree adverbs as lexical/content words on the other. While functional words cannot achieve the status of a constituent and are syntactically dependent, lexical degree words, which also include the expression *little*, pass this constituency test.

D. SELECTION

Selectional properties of a lexical unit may reveal whether it is a functional or a lexical word. Lexical words usually select to collocate with other expressions on a semantic basis. However, functional words have only a very strict categorial selection and are typically bound to a specific syntactic domain (Cook and Newson 1996). It has been illustrated that the lexical unit *little* occurs in all the syntactic domains in English as long as the word which it modifies has a gradable semantic structure. If it were a functional element, it would occur only in a single, strictly defined, syntactic domain which is, apparently, not the case. The same refers to its comparative form *less* which shares all the distributions with its positive form. However, only in the adjectival domain do these two lexical units exhibit selectional differences. While *little* occurs

with both the positive and comparative forms of an adjective/adverb which it modifies, *less*, along with *so/too/as/how*, selects only adjectives and adverbs not marked for the comparative:

- (27) (a) little old/little older
 (b) less old/*less older
 (c) so/too/as/how old/*so/too/as/how older

This constraint can be eliminated only if the pleonastic expression *much* (Corver 1997), which binds the comparative morpheme, is inserted between the functional degree word and the adjective/adverb:

- (28) (a) It was *so clear* and I could read the pain in it.
 cf., (a1) *It was *so clear-er* and I could read the pain in it.
 (a2) It was *so much clear-er* and I could read the pain in it.
 (b) Everything had happened *so quickly*.
 cf., (b1) *Everything had happened *so more quickly*.
 (b2) Everything had happened *so much [more quickly]*.

However, the presence of the comparative morpheme does not impose any restriction on the lexical unit *little* or any other degree word from the open class:

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------|------|-----------------|
| (29) | (a) *too old-er | cf., | too old |
| | (b) little old-er | | little too old |
| | (c) *too fast-er | | too fast |
| | (d) little fast-er | | little too fast |

The same positions are occupied by other degree expressions:

- (30) (a) *too/so/as/how/less old-er cf., too/so/as/how/less old
 (b) remarkably/incredibly old-er cf., remarkably/incredibly too/so/less old

The distribution illustrated in (29) and (30) shows that, contrary to the open class degree words which also include *little*, degree expressions *so/too/as/how* and *less* are morphosyntactically bound and must occur between the modifying element (which include open class degree expressions and the paucal degree word *little*) and the adjective/adverb. The fact they cannot co-occur with the comparative morpheme reveals that they occupy the same position in the internal structure of the AP/AdvP and, as clearly functional elements, exclude each other from the same position.

Then, the gap test can confirm the following subcategorical frame for these functional elements:

- (31) (a) so/too/as/how/less [____AP/AdvP]

- (b) so/too/as/how/less *slow/slowly*
- (c) so/too/as/how/less *clear/clearly*
- (d) so/too/as/how/less *hard/hard*
- (e) so/too/as/how/*less⁷ *little/little*⁸.

However, to specify the more precise subcategorical frame for the above functional elements in the adjectival domain, this morphosyntactic feature that constrains their occurrence with the comparative form should also be specified:

- (32) so/too/as/how/less [____AP/AdvP_{+deg/-comp}]

Since the degree word *little*, along with other open class degree words, is not morphosyntactically bound and selects adjectives and adverbs as long as they have a gradable semantic structure, no morphosyntactic features of the selected adjective/adverb need to be specified.

E. MORPHEMIC STATUS OF LESS IN AP/ADV P

Although the analysis has revealed almost complete syntactic symmetry between the functional degree words *so/too/as/how* and *less*, it should be noted that while the restriction imposed on *so/too/as/how* can be eliminated by inserting the pleonastic expression *much*:

- (33) (a) *so easier/better/more obvious cf., so *much* easier/better/more obvious
 (b) *too easier/better/more obvious cf., too *much* easier/better/more obvious
 (c) *as easier/better/more obvious cf., as *much* easier/better/more obvious
 (d) *how easier/better/more obvious cf., how *much* easier/better/more obvious

the same constraint is completely impossible to eliminate in the case of *less*:

- (34) (a) *less easier/better/more obvious
 (b) *less *much* easier/better/more obvious
 (c) *much* less easy/good/obvious.

The asymmetry between *so/too/as/how* on the one hand and *less* on the other can be explained by the following fact:

- *so/too/as/how* are functional elements that bind the covert zero morpheme for

7 Only *less* cannot premodify its positive form. While the combination *little less clear* is possible, *less little clear* is obviously not. This phenomenon requires further research.

8 A certain number of adjectives/adverbs have the same form i.e., their adverbs are not derived by the suffix *-ly*. If it is added, there is a shift in the meaning (compare *late*, *fast*, *high*, *near*, and it seems that *little* belongs to this small set of such adjectives/adverbs that have the same form in both functions).

the positive form of the adjective/adverb;

- *less* does not bind this morpheme because it is the morpheme itself.

F. PSEUDO-COMPARATIVE USE OF LESS

The only distribution in which *less* is not a grammatical word but a modifying element in the adjectival/adverbial domain is when it occurs in the pseudo-comparative phrase *less than* AP/AdvP. The lexical unit *less* accompanied by the functional word *than* usually participates in the formation of comparative constructions. The categorial status of the word *than* is also very vague because if it introduces the nominal expression it is classified into prepositions and when it introduces the second element of comparison it is classified into correlative conjunctions (Quirk et al. 1985, 337, 661, 999, 1128). Considering that, in combination with the nominal expression, it is often, but not necessarily, followed by a numerically-determined noun (*less than 200 boxes*) it is sometimes labelled a “differential quantifier” (see Solt 2009). When the elements of comparison are adjectives and adverbs, the string *less than* is discontinued and AP/AdvP as the element of comparison interferes so that the internal structure of the comparative construction is

(35) *less AP/AdvP than, i.e., less ... than*

(36) (a) His accent was *slightly less obvious than* the others.

(b) He behaved *less honourably than* I’d expected.

In a pseudo-comparative phrase, however, there is no comparison, and the lexical units *less* and *than* are not discontinued, so that the phrase has the following internal structure:

(37) *less than AP/AdvP*

(38) (a) Not all such diets are harmful, but many are *less than adequate ...*

(b) The Rangers were disorganized, lazy and undisciplined; *less than professional*.

(c) The whole place depressed her, and there was a smell which was *less than fresh*.

(d) My return to the office was *less than triumphal*.

The difference between the comparative construction and pseudo-comparative phrase:

(39) (a) He behaved *less honourably than* I’d expected. – comparative construction

(b) He behaved *less than honourably*. – pseudo-comparative phrase

Sometimes this pseudo-comparative expression also occurs as the modifying element of degree adverbs:

(40) (a) Simon uses the notion of bounded rationality to argue that the limited cognitive capacities of actors imply that their decisions are often *less than*

fully rational.

- (b) If the dreamer were *less than completely successful* in securing the desired dream ...
- (c) Constantly we are presented with problems where a response that is *less than wholly honest* is the easiest response.

Since the string *less than* cannot be used as the fragment answer to the question,

- (41) ... he found this *less than* amusing.

Question: Did he find this amusing?

Answer: **less than*

these two elements are not a single constituent and cannot be considered as a petrified phrase. Such phrases have their internal structure in which the functional element is the word *than* whereas the modifying element is the degree expression *less* where it does not have the status of a comparative morpheme, i.e., a grammaticalized lexical unit, as discussed in the previous sections, but the status of a modifying degree adverb. Its use is pragmatically motivated, and its sole function is to attenuate the negative property that would be expressed if the utterance were realized with the antonymous counterpart of the adjective/adverb.

CONCLUSION

This paper, which investigated the categorial status of the paucal degree expressions *little* and *less*, has revealed that in the adjectival/adverbial domain two subclasses of degree words may be recognized – the subclass of degree adverbs which includes open class degree words including *little*, on the one hand, and functional degree words *so/too/as/how* including *less* on the other. The members of the former subclass, which includes the paucal degree expression *little*, exhibit the properties of lexical words and therefore should be categorized as adverbs of degree. The latter subclass has the properties of functional words since they are morphosyntactically bound to the positive form of the adjective/adverb modified. Their inability to co-occur with the comparative form of the adjective/adverb which they modify may be accounted for by the presence of another grammatical element – the comparative morpheme. Since the functional position in English cannot be doubly filled, this is a good indicator that, being morphosyntactically bound to a specific form, the degree words *so/too/as/how* and *less* have the status of a functional, not a lexical, category and share the same syntactic position within the phrase. In addition, the fact that the lexical unit *less* cannot be used with the comparative form even in the presence of the pleonastic expression *much*, which enables the lexical units *so/too/as/how* to co-occur with the comparative form, proves the morphemic status of the word *less*. Although *little* and *less* are forms belonging to the same inflectional paradigm, in the adjectival/adverbial domain they have a completely different grammatical status. While *little* is still a lexical

expression in English and belongs to the lexicon of content words, its comparative form *less* is fully grammaticalized and reduced to the status of a morpheme only in the adjectival/adverbial domain. The only distribution in this domain in which *less* still functions as the modifier is the pseudo-comparative phrase *less than AP/AdvP*, which is pragmatically motivated and the purpose of which is to attenuate the non-desired negative connotations of the utterance.

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TO-INFINITIVE CLAUSES IN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE: THEIR USE AND CLASSIFICATION

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the use of non-finite clauses, more specifically to-infinitive clauses, in written academic discourse and the application of their syntactic and semantic properties in a selected corpus. Based on Quirk et al.'s (1985) subdivision, they can be viewed as formal means of text formation and may have nominal, relative and adverbial meanings. This functional classification resembles to some extent that of subclausal units such as noun phrases and adverbs. The presented analysis focuses on subordinate to-infinitive clauses in selected papers found in *Topics in Linguistics*, an international scientific journal published by Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia.

KEYWORDS: non-finite to-infinitive clauses; nominal to-infinitive clauses; corpus; stance; research papers

THE CONCEPT OF THE TO-INFINITIVE CLAUSE

The last few years have witnessed an explosion of research on academic prose. Professional research writing has been conceptualized as a formal type of academic writing, the grammatical features of which are different from those of other types of discourse. Apart from some other grammatical devices, grammatical compression in academic discourse may be expressed with the use of non-finite to-infinitive clauses, which are the main focus of this paper. As far as terminology is concerned, to-infinitive clauses are viewed as subtypes of non-finite subordinate clauses. For Quirk et al. (1985, 1062), these are valuable sources of compression possessing nominal, adverbial and relative functions. In their nominal function they often indicate that the proposition they express is viewed as a possibility or a proposal rather than something already fulfilled. Similarly, Huddleston and Pullum (2005, 212–22) deal with the wide range of functions and uses of to-infinitivals with extra reference to interrogative infinitivals and simple versus complex catenative constructions. Alexander (1988, 303) comments on some common uses of to-infinitive clauses: those of purpose with *in order to* and *so as to* (1); the latter event in a sequence – an event which is unexpected or sometimes unwelcomed (2); and finally the to-infinitive (with verbs like *hope*, *intend*, *mean* and *would like to*) referring to the future or to an imaginary past (3).

- (1) *She was sent to England so as to be educated.*

- (2) *She left home, never to be seen again.*
- (3) *I would have liked to see it.*

The concept of the to-infinitive across registers has been intensively discussed by Biber et al. (2002, 328) who go further in their classification, since apart from the main syntactic functions of infinitives as subject, extraposed subject, subject predicative, direct object, object predicative, adverbial, noun complement, noun postmodifier and part of an adjective phrase, they refer to their semantics: "Infinitive clauses are more common in the written registers than in conversations. They report speech and mental states, and they are also used to report intentions, desires, efforts, perceptions, and other general actions." To sum up, to-infinitive clauses have been discussed by different authors in their grammar books (e.g., Quirk et al. 1985, Burton-Roberts 1992, Huddleston and Pullum 2005, Leech and Svartvik 1994) in connection with some other types of non-finite dependent clauses such as bare infinitives, -ing clauses and -ed participle clauses. More on their semantic aspects can be found predominantly in Biber et al. (2002), Biber (2006), and Biber and Gray (2010), who describe the range of grammatical features of academic prose in comparison to fiction, newspaper writing and conversation. As these findings indicate, to-clauses are actually one of the major linguistic devices used for giving directives, and their specific forms vary across sub-genres of academic discourse. Moreover, these authors comment on the expression of stance in the university register through different grammatical markers and view to-infinitives as one of them (stance verbs in connection with to-infinitive clauses will be discussed later in this article).

Based on Quirk et al.'s subdivision, to-clauses can be viewed as formal means of text formation and have nominal, relative and adverbial meaning. This functional classification resembles to some extent that of subclausal units such as noun phrases and adverbs. As complement (or nominal) clauses they may function as subject (including extraposed subject), direct object, subject complement, appositive and adjective complement (1985, 1061). Biber et al. (2002, 259) add the function of object predicative. As far as terminology is concerned, there has been a sort of discrepancy. While Quirk et al. (1985) think of postmodification by infinitive clauses, hence their classification as relative clauses, while Biber et al. (2002) take them as noun clauses. In my view, an infinitival clause can be considered as an economical and transparent grammatical construction with various syntactic and semantic functions. Since academic discourse is characterized by an explicit organization and a high level of informativeness, I believe to-infinitive clauses are used for informative, descriptive and interpretive purposes.

RESEARCH AIMS AND RESULTS

The present paper deals with infinitival clauses, more specifically to-infinitives in academic prose, particularly in research articles related to linguistics. As stated

by Marcinkowski, “research articles have become increasingly important for the communication of findings in the sciences and establishing membership of the scientific discourse community” (2009, 47). The material under investigation is taken from an international scientific journal published by Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia entitled *Topics in Linguistics*. The research corpus comprises ten research articles of similar length, and the texts for this study were selected randomly. The length of the research corpus was estimated to be 56,734 words. The research articles were published between 2007 and 2012. In all of the research articles, the structure contains clearly identifiable sections such as “Introduction”, “Method”, “Results and Discussion” and “Possible Applications” (Hall 1982, quoted in Swales 1990, 134). Three objectives have been stated in connection with to-infinitives in the selected corpus. Firstly, to show the proportion of to-infinitive clauses in the corpus based on the major categories of subordinate clauses as proposed by Quirk et al. (1985, 1047): nominal, relative and adverbial; secondly, to compare the possible functions of complement clauses and finally to compare the expression of stance in research articles via to-infinitive clauses.

As can be observed in Table 1, the number of nominal clauses is higher than the number of the other dependent clauses in the selected corpus.

TABLE 1: TYPES OF TO-INFINITIVE CLAUSES IN THE SELECTED CORPUS

NOMINAL	221 (60.08%)
RELATIVE	88 (24.24 %)
ADVERBIAL	54 (14.87%)

Even though my expectation was that non-finite to-infinitive clauses mainly in their nominal function would be predominantly found in the introductory parts of the research articles where the aims, methods and objectives were stated, the results differed. As the following examples illustrate, nominal clauses in the corpus refer mainly to post predicative functions having suggested and intentional meaning and occurring in all parts of the research articles.

- (4) *This would seem to be clarified by the second precept.* [method]
- (5) *Its aims, it follows, are to identify the political and social inequalities existing in society.* [results]

Taking into an account the second major type of to-infinitive clause – the defining relative clause – in the analysed sample, its antecedent is typically abstract and merely understood.

- (6) *... while making use of historical-comparative methods to trace their origin and development.*

- (7) *Despite the problematic nature of attempts to define the term, there are some points of general agreement.*
- (8) *Much of the research into discourse analysis tends to focus on the researcher's ability to identify patterns ...*

In addition, adverbial to-infinitive clauses express mainly purpose meanings, as the first clause of the sentence and quite unexpectedly, no to-infinitive comment clause has been found in the above-mentioned sample.

- (9) *It is named international English in order to distinguish it from the American variety.*

Biber (2006, 84) claims that to-complement clauses are the most common in the directive registers, and thus the main functions of these clauses are quite predictable. Even though, Biber et al. did not fully analyse the main functions of complement clauses in academic discourse, they proposed a detailed analysis of the semantic categories of verbs, such as verbs of cognition, perception, intention, etc., in post predicative to-clauses (Biber et al. 2002, 332–33). Returning to my own research, I expected the function of subject complement and object to be the most prevalent. As demonstrated in Table 2, my expectations have been proved with the subject complement as the most common in my research material. However, the most common function is that of direct object (45.7 percent), typical for explanations and suggestions in the analysed material, e.g.:

- (10) *Exploring in more detail contextual, pragmatic and cognitive aspects in text analysis for the purpose of translation enables us to understand how we read and translate what goes beyond the actual words.*

In their subject complement function, the most common verbs that control the to-clause in the selected corpus are the copula verbs *to seem*, *to appear* and *to be*, suggesting planned intended meaning in some cases with future reference (9).

- (11) *The conception of cognitive stylistics, which suggests viewing context as a cognitive entity, seems to be addressing the main concerns of translation.*
- (12) *This is not to criticize the kind of textual analysis that has been carried out so extensively in corpus linguistics over recent year.*
- (13) *The aim of this study will be ...*

TABLE 2: FUNCTIONS OF TO-INFINITIVE CLAUSES IN THE CORPUS

SUBJECT	23 (10.40%)
OBJECT	101 (45.70 %)
SUBJECT COMPLEMENT	79 (35.74%)
APPOSITION	4 (1.81%)
COMPLEMENT OF OBJECT	9 (4.07%)
COMPLEMENT OF ADJECTIVE	5 (2.26%)

Of all these functions, the one of subject was not the main one, but when used, there was observed a considerable number of extraposed subject clauses with evaluative adjectives (difficult, crucial, important, relevant, etc.), e.g.:

(14) *It is not difficult to define openly slanted or biased expressions of political nature.*

(15) *It is crucial for the translator to pay close attention to these aspects of the source text.*

This more or less shows that even though academic writing is praised for highly formal and impersonal language, the use of appropriate terminology, clear arguments and straightforward text organization (Kozáčíková 2010, 28), it is quite common to use extraposed subject to-infinitive clauses in order to show the author's stance and personal attitudes towards the discussed subject matter.

THE EXPRESSIONS OF STANCE AND THE TO-INFINITIVE CLAUSE

The role of stance in academic writing has already been outlined by different authors who refer to stance as evaluation (Hunston 1994), evidentiality (Chafe and Nichols 1986) or hedging (Hyland 1998). By allowing writers to express their uncertainty over the factuality of their statements or to indicate deference to their readers, stance and its formal and semantic realization has become a significant characteristic of academic prose. According to Biber (2006, 87) stance expressions convey many different kinds of personal feelings and assessments, including attitudes that a speaker has about information, how certain they are about its veracity, how they obtained access to the information, and what perspective they are taking. The analysis presented here focuses on the grammatical expression of stance through to-infinitive complement clauses, inspired by Biber's classification (2006, 92–93) on stance clauses controlled by verbs, adjectives and nouns. In my research, I investigated the main aspects of nominal to-clauses as stance markers in two patterns – stance verb + to-infinitive clause and stance adjective + to-infinitive clause in both corpora – native and non native scientific research article writing. Biber's third category of noun has been excluded since it can be classified under the heading of relative clause. The extensive research carried out by Biber (2006, 95–131) comprises the expression of stance in university registers, specifically in spoken academic registers (classroom teaching, class management, labs,

office hours, study groups, service encounters) and written university registers, such as textbooks, course packs, syllabi and institutional writing. Surprisingly, the concept of scientific research writing is not included in his research, and there is an attempt to fill this gap in the presented research. Table 3 presents the occurrence of stance in the selected research papers.

TABLE 3: NOMINAL TO-CLAUSES IN THE CORPUS

The number of nominal to-clauses	221
Stance	135 (61.08%)
a.Stance verb + to-clause	103
b.Stance adjective + to-clause	32
No stance	86 (38.91%)

The results demonstrate an observable tendency for stance in connection with to-infinitive clauses in the selected discourse. Nominal to-infinitive clauses are connected mainly with stance verbs such as verbs of desire, causation-effort, mental verbs, probability verbs and communication verbs. Let me illustrate with examples taken from my research material:

- (16) *Students are expected to reflect on the course ...* . [stance verb-mental verb plus to-infinitive]
- (17) *This would seem to be clarified by the second precept ...* . [nominal, Cs stance verb – probability plus to-infinitive]
- (18) *Norman Fairclough, in his work *Language and Power* (1989) wishes to examine how the ways in which we communicate are constrained ...* . [stance verb (verb of desire) plus to infinitive]
- (19) *They also help to accommodate target text factors ...* . [nominal, O stance verb – verb of causation-effort plus to-clause]

Referring back to Biber's classification of *stance verbs* + to-clauses, he claims that verbs of desire are the most common class-controlling to-clauses, especially in the spoken academic register. Based on his findings (2006, 108), verbs of causation-effort are relatively common in written and spoken registers. Mental verbs (e.g., *is assumed*, *is believed*) and probability verbs (e.g., *seem*, *tend*) are less frequent overall in both registers. On the contrary, in the corpus presented here (as not analysed by Biber) – scientific research papers from the field of linguistics – verbs of causation-effort (*as to help*, *to try*, *to seek*, *to intend*, etc.) were found to be the most common class connected with writers' attempts to present their research outcomes or possible implications of their research (see Table 4).

- (20) *Here are some comments on Anton Chekhov's story "The Lady with the Little Dog" based on an approach which I aim to develop in future work.*
- (21) *This post-task data analysis activity was intended to heighten their awareness of the aforementioned forms and to give students an overview of specific academic discourse found throughout their course book.*
- (22) *Understanding particular inferences can help us to understand how*

As presented in Table 4, the categories of mental verbs and verbs of desire are quite common. These verbs typically refer to mental states or events, and in the analysed corpus they are used to protect writers from possible criticism and disagreement (examples 22-24). Moreover, the same aim is achieved through probability verbs and refers to lessening the risk of a face-threatening act (examples 25, 26).

- (23) *It is assumed to be rather difficult to agree on*
- (24) *Some metaphorical patterns are considered to be universal*
- (25) *All languages in EU are believed to be equal*
- (26) *Two metaphors seem to dominate the text*
- (27) *Its concept seems to be addressing the main concerns of translation.*

TABLE 4: STANCE VERB PLUS TO-CLAUSE

VERBS	103
Verb of desire + to-clause	23 (22.33 %)
Verb of causation- effort + to-clause	32 (31.06%)
Mental verb + to-clause	18 (17.47%)
Probability verb + to-clause	25 (24.27%)
Communication verb + to-clause	5 (4.85%)

An academic research article, as a specific register of academic prose, heavily relies on fact and objective explanations, however a type of professional evaluation and assessment – whether positive or negative – is needed. For these purposes, mainly evaluation adjectives with extraposition occur in the selected corpus. These constructions typically comment on the status of the information provided in the research article as illustrated here:

- (28) *It is important to expose hidden things, since they are not evident for the individuals involved.*

- (29) *But it is very misleading to claim that its description of text uniquely captures the reality of language as experienced by its users.*

CONCLUSION

The present analysis has, of course, its limitations, which mainly include the limited number of texts in the corpora. Despite this limitation, the outcomes of my analysis seem to suggest that to-clauses are frequently used in scientific research articles. The analysis of the corpus seems to reveal similarities and differences, some of which need to be further investigated. It shows that complement nominal to-infinitive clauses are the most dominant, mainly in the function of object and subject complement. This may be interpreted as authors' attempts to communicate facts and develop arguments in a straightforward way (e.g., *her idea is to allow, the message tends to distract, my strategy was to present*, etc.). Considering stance, its importance in academic writing increases as sources of information also increase. Therefore, he or she needs to possess the ability to fully assess and evaluate the status of the data obtained. As noted in Section 3 of this paper, apart from some other expressions that refer to stance, for instance modals and adverbs, to-clauses as stance markers are relatively common in academic prose, specifically in the combination of stance verb of causation and effort plus a to-infinitive clause. This more or less reflects the explanatory and surprisingly persuasive character of scientific research writing. The grammatical descriptions of academic language show that apart from some other grammatical devices, non-finite clauses are common grammatical features in academic discourse and need to be further investigated.

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COMMON MISTAKES IN SCIENTIFIC PROSE-STYLE WRITING

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores the scientific prose style with a special focus on its written form. The notion of style/register is examined along with the features that distinguish the written form of the scientific prose style from the prose style in other discourses. This paper analyzes twelve scientific articles on social sciences, and focuses on those errors, particularly of a linguistic-stylistic nature, which Czech non-native speakers of English often make but should avoid if they want to succeed in having their articles published in prestigious English language academic journals. The paper then identifies effective strategies for non-native speaking academics writing scientific articles.

KEYWORDS: scientific prose style; English; academics; writing; mistakes; analysis

INTRODUCTION

The notion of *style/register* has been extensively researched by many scholars such as Biber, Conrad, and Leech (1999), Crystal and Davy (1969), Gregory and Carroll (1978), Halliday, McIntosh, and Strevens (1964), or Quirk et al. (1985), who perceive register as a variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting. It is made up of three elements: field of discourse (relation between the form and the context), mode of discourse (spoken versus written language) and style of discourse/tenor of discourse (the social relations between the participants in language activity/distinction between formality and informality of discourse).

In the Czech linguistic environment, the term register is commonly presented under the heading style. It was Havránek (1942) who distinguished four functions of standard Czech language: 1. communication; 2. workday technical; 3. theoretical technical and 4. aesthetic. He correlated these functions with four functional dialects: 1. conversational; 2. workday; 3. scientific and 4. poetic language. His theory was later further elaborated by Bečka (1948; 1992), Čechová et al. (1996), Čechová, Krčmová, and Minářová (2008), Hausenblas (1972), Jedlička (1963), Jedlička, Formánková, and Rejmánková (1970), or Jelínek (1996). Workday and scientific functional dialects have been combined into one category, i.e., professional functional dialect/style. The purpose of this study is an analysis of the scientific prose style, which is, according to the mentioned characteristics, part of the professional functional style together with the workday technical style, popular scientific style, teaching style and essayist style.

SCIENTIFIC PROSE-STYLE WRITING AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

The main function of the written scientific prose style is to provide factual and precise information, which must be clear, concise, unambiguous and explicit. There is no space for redundancies, repetition or unimportant information. The target audience is a relatively small group of professionals who are well acquainted with the issue in question (e.g., Hairston 1998). The tone of the scientific text should be formal, impersonal and objective. Only the standard variety of language is used. The whole text is predominantly written in the third person. The only place where the author makes himself heard as an individual expressing an opinion is the conclusion. As regards structure, the text usually consists of introduction/background, argument, conclusion and bibliography. To make the text credible, all the important statements in the text should be supported by references. The hierarchy of the whole text is also given by its organization into chapters, sections and subsections.

It is important to note that many of the features in the preceding paragraph have been recently challenged. Biber and Gray (2010, 18) claim that

Academic writing is certainly complex, elaborated, and explicit, but it does not conform to our stereotypes about these characteristics:

- complex: yes, but not in its use of the traditional measures — see “elaborated” below;
- elaborated:
 - in the use of embedded phrases, especially in noun phrases: yes;
 - in the use of clausal subordination — the traditional measure of elaboration: no;
- explicit:
 - in specifying the identity of referents: yes;
 - in the expression of logical relations among elements in the text: no.

Thus, scientific prose style writing is dramatically different from speech. Rather, it has developed a unique style, characterized especially by the reliance on nominal/phrasal rather than clausal structures. Furthermore, Molle and Prior (2008) report on their genre-based analysis for a graduate course in English for academic purposes at a public U.S. university, and claim that reconceptualization of the concept of the whole academic discourse is needed. In their study they challenge Swales’s (1990) or Bhatia’s (1993) genre analysis of academic texts, since they consider academic genres to function as genre sets and systems that involve process and pedagogical genres as well as genres of disciplinary or academic presentations. Certainly then, academic written genres in the Anglosphere are becoming increasingly multimodal; i.e., different media and modes are employed in the text in order to construct the meaning of the text, but also to make it more comprehensible and attractive to its recipient. Finally, Molle and Prior (2008) claim that academic texts are hybrid in their nature because they do not consist only of

one type of style and discourse (e.g., Frydrychová Klímová 2012).

One example of academic writing is an article for the *Czech Journal of Tourism* which describes an interpretation system model of geoheritage. In creating the article, the author needed to visualize and describe some interpretive panels used, for example, in U.S. national parks. Thus, such a paper consists not only of rigid, traditional academic sections, such as introduction, methods, results, discussion, or conclusion, but also passages with technical data and their illustrations. Therefore, on the one hand, the language becomes more poetic in its form; on the other, more technical or descriptive. Furthermore, the conceptualisation of audience is more flexible since the geosites might interest not only tourists but also, say, potential stakeholders, conservationists or travel agents.

In this way, as Frydrychová Klímová (2012) states, scientific prose style writing is becoming increasingly more heterogeneous and blended in its discourses and mixing of modes. Undoubtedly, this is being caused by a wish to reach ever more heterogeneous and diverse audiences and to fulfill as many goals as is feasible in a piece of writing. Moreover, there is a tendency for authors to write in such a way as to be comprehensible to a wider audience and to put a message across with the help of different media and modes (e.g., Kress and van Leeuwen 2001).

AN ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF COMMON ERRORS IN SCIENTIFIC PROSE-STYLE WRITING

For this article, I proofread and analyzed 12 scientific articles on different issues within tourism such as the management of tourism, sociology of tourism or geotourism. Each article consists of approximately 6,000 words. The level of the authors' English ranges between B2 and C2 according to the Common European Reference Framework for languages. The sample is not large, but my intention is to draw attention to specific language difficulties non-native speaking (NNS) academics experience in writing their articles in formal English. Thus, this analysis reveals the most common error types Czech NNS academics make when they write articles in English and by so doing, to help them eliminate these errors by suggesting a few relevant and effective learning strategies.

In this article the focus is particularly on linguistic-stylistic aspects of the language (i.e., lexis, grammar, text coherence, spelling and punctuation) since the formal aspects can be ignored because the writers of these articles are provided with requirements as to layout, structure and bibliography of their articles by the journal's editorial board. The most common error types for NNS academics are summarized in Table1, below, which shows four major error types: lexical, lexico-grammatical, grammatical and stylistic errors (Chamonikolasová and Stašková 2005).

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF FOUR MAJOR ERROR TYPES IN ACADEMICS' ARTICLES

Lexical errors	Lexico-grammatical errors	Grammatical errors					Stylistic errors		Total
word collocation	preposition	article/determiner	verb form	word order	other	text coherence	punctuation	spelling	
147 (12.1%)	112 (9.2%)	384 (31.7%)	100 (8.2%)	38 (3.1%)	41 (3.4%)	35 (2.9%)	252 (20.8%)	104 (8.6%)	1213 (100%)
147 (12.1%)	112 (9.2%)	563 (46.4%)				391 (32.3%)			1213 (100%)

Table 1 shows that the most problematic area for academics is English grammar. The most difficult is obviously the use of articles and determiners since Czech NN speakers of English rarely use them because there are no determiners in the Czech language. In most of the articles analyzed in this paper there was an absence of definite articles in noun phrases, which has been already referred to (anaphoric reference) (1); in noun phrases with post modification (cataphoric reference) (2); in proper nouns (3); and in ordinal numbers (4).

- (1) *Visit (> *the visit*) is accompanied by impressive sound and light effects.
- (2) *Tasks (> *the tasks*) that are carried out by this unit include ...
- (3) In the destinations of * Liberec region (> *the Liberec region*)
- (4) Preservation of *first (> *the first*) relics of the industrial heritage ...

In addition, academics lacked an indefinite article when they were describing a singular countable thing for the first time (5). Finally, they overused definite articles in phrases with abstract nouns (6); in noun phrases followed by cardinal numbers (7); or where another determiner (e.g., possessive or demonstrative pronoun) would be more appropriate (8).

- (5) ... and may also lead to *increased interest (> *an increased interest*) in these traditional customs.
- (6) In addition, the paper identifies three basic areas of research in *the sociology (> *sociology*) of tourism ...
- (7) As has been indicated in *the Figure 2 (> *Figure 2*), ...
- (8) Moreover, *the research (> *this research*) has shown ...

Errors in verb forms concern mainly tense, aspect and indirect speech. The most typical verb form error was the use of the simple present or simple past instead of the present perfect (9). Another problem was caused by indirect speech/thought. Due to interference from the Czech language where this phenomenon does not exist, this

error is common in Czech NN speakers' writing (10). Surprisingly, there were not many errors in word order. However, they made quite basic errors in the position of frequency adverbials, which in English stand before the lexical verb predicate and after the subject (11).

- (9) On the contrary, practically no important study **was conducted* (> *has been conducted*) on hunting tourism ...
- (10) ... China indicated that the development of experiential tourism **is* (> *was*) of great importance in the promotion of local community involvement ...
- (11) In other countries, gamekeeping **covers always* (> *always covers*) only the animal hunting ...

The second biggest problematic area includes stylistic error types such as punctuation and spelling. Academics mainly missed commas after a subordinate sentence, preceding a main clause (12); and after a word or a group of words which add something to the main part of the sentence, usually the so-called linking words (or discourse markers), e.g., *however*, *for example*, or *on the other hand* (13). On the contrary, they inserted commas before the relative pronoun *that*, particularly in object clauses, which is a serious error in English. This is once again caused by interference from the Czech language where such a comma is a must (14). In addition, there were quite a lot of spelling mistakes, especially in three studies whose authors might not have spellchecked their articles (e.g., **staye* > *stay* or **preformed* > *performed*). They also made errors in writing capital letters in proper nouns (15). Errors in text coherence mainly concern unclear or puzzling statements. In most cases this occurs in the writing of extremely long sentences. Otherwise, academics' articles seem to be written quite logically and rigorously.

- (12) To achieve this* (> *To achieve this*,) geotourism is viewed as being based on the idea that the environment is made up of Abiotic, Biotic and Cultural components.
- (13) However* (> *However*,) efforts to examine the socio-cultural impacts of tourism are rather problematic.
- (14) McLuhan said,* (> *McLuhan said*) that the mass media was about to shorten the distance ...
- (15) To summarize, the **czech* (> *Czech*) environment deals with the following issues ...

The third largest area of error types was lexical aspects such as the use of a wrong word due to interference from the native language such as **realize* which very much resembles the Czech word (> *realizovat*), but which, however, in English has a totally different meaning. Such pairs of words in two languages that look similar, but are different in meaning are called false friends/*faux amis*. These words usually cause difficulties for students learning a foreign language because students are likely to misidentify or misuse them. Another reason for lexical errors might be the wrong

choice of the word from the Czech-English dictionary since the authors might not have checked the right meaning of a selected word (16). Sometimes, the wrong lexical choice is due to its inappropriate register (e.g., **so* > *therefore/thus*). However, as far as academic formalities are concerned, the greatest attention here should be paid to the abbreviation **etc.* This abbreviation was used in almost every analyzed article (17), but in English academic writing, the use of this abbreviation is generally not recommended since academic papers favor explicitness.

- (16) The first one is linked with the sovereign position of game in Czech *kitchen (> *cuisine*) ...
- (17) ... that tourism negatively changed some places (higher traffic, transport and other infrastructure, threat to specific fauna, flora*, etc. (> *threat to specific flora and fauna*).

The last area of errors is the wrong choice of preposition due to either interference or limited knowledge of the English language such as **typical for* > *typical of*; **in average* > *on average* (19).

- (18) This could be **due to* (> *thanks to*) good marketing activities ...

CONCLUSION

Although scientific prose style writing is becoming more diverse and heterogeneous, its language still conforms to the rules of formal academic English. Therefore, if NNS academics want to succeed in having their articles published worldwide, they have to follow these language rules. In particular, they have to pay more careful attention to grammatical rules such as the use of articles/determiners and verb forms, and stylistic rules, such as the use of punctuation in English. In addition, they should closely consult a mono-lingual dictionary, especially a collocations dictionary or a thesaurus, in order to choose the right word form or phrase.

In this respect, teachers of English can help them by suggesting a few effective strategies for their writing. They can introduce NNS academics to corpus linguistics so that academics will be able to discover characteristic language features of their discipline-specific corpora such as collocations. Furthermore, academics might be taught to use consciousness-raising techniques. For example, they can learn how to investigate variability in academic writing by conducting a mini-analysis of a feature in a text in their own discipline and then comparing the results with those of academics from other disciplines. Finally, they could develop their linguistic awareness of the differences between L1 and L2 grammatical structures, and thus counteract such interferences by using a translation method. This strategy can assist them in realizing language structures and patterns they still have not assimilated (e.g., Perkins 1985).

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THE COMPLEX NOUN PHRASE IN ADVANCED STUDENTS' WRITING

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ABSTRACT: This paper presents the results of a comparative analysis of the incidence and structure of the complex noun phrase in native and non-native English texts. The first part offers a theoretical overview of the terminology of the complex noun phrase as introduced in four popular English grammar books, while the second part presents and discusses the results of a quantitative analysis of the writing of advanced Czech learners of English and English native speakers. The conclusion sums up the most essential quantitative differences in the occurrence of selected parameters of the noun phrase.

KEYWORDS: noun phrase; structure; terminology; advanced students; academic writing

INTRODUCTION

The tendency towards economical and efficient communication results in condensed devices, one of which is the complex noun phrase (henceforth NP). Its historical development, as well as its employment in various registers and text types and the comparison of the English noun phrase with its equivalents in other languages, has been a focus of interest for decades (e.g., Aarts 1971; Lightfoot 1981; de Haan 1989; Coppen 1991; Moro 1997; Keizer 2007). Both the theoreticians and linguists who try to apply the theoretical findings in teaching and developing skilful writers aim at a precise description of preferences in the structure of the noun phrase, thus preventing students of English from misidentifying head nouns, getting lost in the density of the text when reading, and from incorrectly producing noun phrases when writing.

The importance of the theoretical background increases when the character of the mother tongue is remarkably different from that of English, and thus difficulties may be expected. The nominal character of English, in comparison with the verbal character of Czech, was described over a century ago by Mathesius (1913). The verb in Czech carries both grammatical and lexical meaning, i.e., it can express grammatical categories and function as the core of lexical meaning in a sentence. In English, the two functions tend to be separated – the verb tends to carry the grammatical meaning, while the lexical meaning is more connected with the noun. This nominal tendency is closely connected with the typological character of the language – English is more analytical, while Czech is more synthetic.

Since Mathesius, many Czech linguists have examined these tendencies related to the analytical and synthetic characters of the two languages (Vachek 1976; Poláčková

1988; Menhard 1993–94; Dušková et al. 2006; Knittlová, Grygová, and Zehnalová 2010). The theoretical findings, however, still do not correspond with the practical language skills possessed by students. In accordance with authors who stress the need to teach noun phrases properly, we noticed that commonly used textbooks for advanced learners do not focus on nominalisation in a way that would seem appropriate. We also noted that the essays that our students write as a part of the final language exam in the final year of their bachelor’s studies do not manifest expected qualities. In order to identify the problem areas, we decided to quantitatively analyse various syntactic structures and observed (Kořínková and Válková 2013) that Czech students use non-finite verb forms less frequently in postmodification than native English speakers. This led us to an analysis of the structure of the noun phrase in general.

THE STRUCTURE AND TERMINOLOGY OF THE NOUN PHRASE

Unlike Czech grammar books, which seem to take a rather homogeneous approach to language description, in English grammar books readers face a plurality of expressions in describing the English language. This also applies to the area of noun phrases: sometimes identical or very similar concepts are labelled differently, while other times one term can cover different concepts. In our paper, we decided to compare the noun phrase terminology employed in four sources commonly used by our students in order to establish a terminological apparatus suitable for our own practical analysis of native and non-native English texts.

The popular English grammar books that we consulted were by the following authors: Quirk and Greenbaum (1990) henceforth noted as Q in the tables; Carter and McCarthy (2006) referred to as C; Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002) referred to as B; and Huddleston and Pullum (2005) referred to as H. As Table 1 demonstrates, these grammar books distinguish a three-part structure of the noun phrase, with the head and some elements before and after the head.

TABLE 1: A SUMMARY OF NOUN PHRASE STRUCTURE

Grammar book			
Q	premodification	head	postmodification
C	determiner premodification	head	complement postmodification
B	determiner premodification	head	postmodification
H	determiner pre-head modification	head	post-head modification

The differences come when we want to identify their constituent elements. While Quirk and Greenbaum (1990) cover everything before the head, including determiners, by the term “premodification”, the others distinguish between determiners and premodifiers, the former being functional words, the latter lexical (although differences can be found

even here: Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002) list the 's genitive among determiners, i.e., among functional words, while in Quirk and Greenbaum (1990) it is listed outside the class of determiners as a specific type of premodification).

The elements that come after the head are marked either as postmodification (in Quirk and Greenbaum 1990; Biber et al. 2002) or subcategorised into postmodifiers and complements. Complements in Carter and McCarthy's understanding are expressions that complete the meaning of the noun phrase in the form of the prepositional phrase, e.g., *a rise in interest rates* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 323). The part *in interest rates* completes the meaning of the noun *rise*, and unlike postmodifiers, complements cannot be transformed into relative clauses. A complement can also be a subordinate clause, e.g., *the claim that they have nuclear weapons*. Complements and postmodifiers can co-occur; in such a case the complement would precede the postmodifier as it is more closely connected with the head, as in *students of astronomy at Cambridge* (*of astronomy* = complement, *at Cambridge* = postmodifier). Biber et al. (2002) do not differentiate between the complement and postmodification; however, they introduce the complement clause (*that-* or *to-*clause) as a type of postmodification. Huddleston and Pullum consider the complement in connection with the morphological relation of the noun to the transitive verb. The complement of the noun corresponds to the object of the transitive verb, as in *Sandy married Pat – Sandy's marriage to Pat* (Huddleston and Pullum 2005, 94) or it can correspond to the subject (e.g., *The premier attacked – an attack by the premier*). Complements can take the form of prepositional phrases or subordinate clauses. In more traditional terminology, the subordinate clauses introduced as complements by Carter and McCarthy (2006) or Huddleston and Pullum (2005) are marked by the term "appositional clauses" (e.g., Quirk and Greenbaum 1990).

TABLE 2: A SUMMARY OF PREMODIFICATION TERMINOLOGY

Q	C	B	H
determiner: articles, possessive, demonstrative pronouns, ordinals, cardinals, quantifiers <i>all, both, half</i>	determiner: articles, demonstrative, possessive pronouns, numbers, quantifiers	determiner: articles, possessive, demonstrative pronouns, quantifiers, numerals, genitive	determiner: determinative (phrase) <i>the city, very few new books</i> genitive NP <i>her income, the senator's young son</i>
adjective <i>delightful cottage</i>	adjective phrase <i>a hastily written request</i>	general adjective <i>a big pillow</i>	adjective phrase <i>a long letter</i>
participle <i>crumbling</i> <i>completed cottage</i>		-ing participle <i>flashing lights</i> -ed participle <i>restricted area</i>	verb phrase <i>a sleeping child,</i> <i>the condemned man</i>
's genitive <i>fisherman's cottage</i>			
noun <i>country cottage</i>	noun phrase <i>a stone wall</i>	noun <i>staff room</i>	nominal <i>a brick wall</i>

adverbial
far-away cottage

adverb
the nearby guards

sentence
*pop-down-for-the
weekend cottage*

TABLE 3: A SUMMARY OF POSTMODIFICATION TERMINOLOGY

Q	C	B	H
relative clause (finite) <i>the boy that we met</i>	full relative clause <i>the newspaper I have always bought</i>	relative clause <i>the car that was going fast</i>	finite clause <i>the guy who spoke first</i>
		appositive noun phrase <i>former secretary of state Jim Baker</i>	appositive noun phrase <i>my wife Lucy</i> non-appositive noun phrase <i>a woman my age</i>
appositive clause/ apposition <i>the belief that no one is infallible</i> appositive <i>the appeal to join the movement</i>	complement <i>the fact that he was calm, the decision to go ahead, your belief in his talent</i>	noun complement clause <i>the fact that it can be done, a chance to do the right thing</i>	complement <i>their belief in God, the claim that he was ill, her ability to complete the task</i>
non-finite clause: -ing participle <i>the student writing on the board</i> -ed participle <i>the car repaired by the mechanic</i> infinitive <i>the man to consult</i>	-ing relative clause <i>the guy running the event</i> -ed relative clause <i>the effort required to lift these weights</i> to- infinitive relative clause <i>an actor to watch out for</i>	non-finite clause: -ing clause <i>young families attending the local clinic</i> -ed clause <i>the assumptions given above</i> to-clause <i>time to try and go</i>	non-finite clause <i>a letter written by his uncle</i>
prepositional phrase <i>the book on grammar</i>	prepositional phrase <i>those piles on the floor</i>	prepositional phrase <i>these kinds of questions</i>	prepositional phrase <i>a hut in the forrest</i>
adverb phrase <i>the road back</i>		adverb <i>a block behind</i>	
postposed adjective <i>something strange</i>	adjective phrase <i>a jacket similar to yours</i>	adjective phrase <i>any way possible</i>	adjective phrase <i>people fond of animals</i>
postposed qualifier <i>veal paprika</i>			

Our intention was not to give an exhaustive list of all the terms and differences between the individual grammar books but rather to show the plurality of views and concepts. Although we hoped that a detailed study of the theoretical background would help us establish criteria for the analysis of our students' materials, it made the situation more complicated, as the previous tables suggest. Finally, we decided to employ the following criteria: in our analysis we distinguish between bare and complex noun

phrases, the former designating a head noun preceded only by a determiner (function word). The determiners were not taken into account or further classified because non-native speakers very often use them incorrectly, especially in the case of articles. Only common nouns were identified as head nouns; proper nouns, as well as pronouns, were excluded from our analysis.

In complex noun phrases we distinguish premodification and postmodification with the following subcategories: premodifiers are adjectives (*a new teacher*) and adjectival nouns (*a language teacher*), adverbs preceding adjectives (*a very good teacher*), *-ed* participles (*an overwhelmed teacher*), and *-ing* participles (*a retiring teacher*). In postmodification we identify finite relative clauses (*the teacher who left*), appositive clauses (*the fact that he knows it*), prepositional phrases (*the teachers of our department*), *-ed* participles (*the teacher asked to examine*), *-ing* participles (*the teacher examining today*), infinitives (*the teacher to consult*), and apposition (*our teacher Mary Finch*). The examples in parentheses, as well as those in Tables 6–8, are our own.

RESEARCH SAMPLES AND FOCUS OF THE ANALYSIS

A total of 30 texts were analysed, 15 written by advanced Czech English speakers and 15 by native English speakers. The latter were selected from advanced English language coursebooks (*Landmark Advanced*, *CAE Result*, *Fast Track to CAE*), where they had been published as examples of good practice in English writing. As for the genre of the texts, only reports and reviews were selected for analysis, as these two genres are primarily descriptive and thus provide rich opportunities for using the complex noun phrase. The native English speakers' (NES) and the Czech English speakers' (CES) samples were quite similar in terms of word count, the former comprising 3,843 words and the latter 3,805.

Our analysis focused on the overall incidence of the complex noun phrase in the two research samples, the length of the complex noun phrase, the proportion of bare and complex noun phrases, the incidence and distribution of premodification and postmodification, and the incidence of selected types of premodification and postmodification.

Prior to the analysis, we expected the Czech students to prefer shorter, less complex noun phrases, premodification over postmodification, and varying proportions of various types of premodification and postmodification.

TABLE 4: NOUN (NP) INCIDENCE

	NES	CES
Total number of NPs	772	621
Number of NPs/1,000 words of sample	199	164
Range of NP incidence in individual texts/1,000 words of text	122-272	119-230

Table 4 shows that the noun phrase is a grammatical structure that is more frequently

used by native English speakers than by Czech English speakers, who seem to rely somewhat more often on finite verbal structures, which are characteristic of their mother tongue. Although the lowest incidence of noun phrases per 1,000 words of an individual text is almost identical in the two research samples, the highest incidence is remarkably higher in the NES sample.

THE LENGTH OF THE COMPLEX NOUN PHRASE

Table 5 shows how noun phrases of various word lengths were represented in the NES and CES samples. Their incidence was calculated per 1,000 noun phrases in the respective samples, so that the results are exactly comparable. We considered a noun phrase bare if it carried no modifications except for a determiner.

TABLE 5: NOUN PHRASE LENGTH

Words	NES	CES	Words	NES	CES
1 (bare NP)	444	526	12	8	6
2	170	200	13	8	3
3	100	63	14	5	0
4	78	66	15	1	3
5	51	34	16	5	0
6	48	27	17	1	6
7	28	21	18	1	2
8	17	13	19	0	0
9	10	11	20	1	3
10	13	5	21	0	2
11	9	5	22	1	3

Quite obviously, Czech users of English favour short one- and two-word noun phrases. While these two types are also the most frequent in the NES sample, native speakers clearly make more frequent use of noun phrases between three and 14 words long. Of interest is the somewhat higher incidence of extra long noun phrases in the CES sample, which were rarely found in the native speakers’ writing, perhaps because noun phrases of such extreme length might prove too difficult to follow and reduce the readability of the text.

TYPES OF MODIFICATION

Table 6 shows the distribution of the basic types of modification in the two research samples. In order to obtain comparable results, the incidence of bare, premodified, postmodified, and both pre- and postmodified noun phrases was calculated per 1,000 noun phrases in the respective samples.

TABLE 6: TYPES OF MODIFICATION

	NES	CES
Bare <i>the teacher</i>	444	526
Premodification only <i>the new teacher</i>	224	246
Postmodification only <i>the teacher we hate</i>	226	137
Both <i>the new teacher we hate</i>	106	90

Apart from the already-mentioned preference for the bare noun phrase in the CES sample, we can observe a slightly higher incidence of premodified noun phrases and slightly lower incidence of both pre- and postmodified ones. What is quite surprising is the remarkably lower incidence of postmodified noun phrases with no premodification.

TYPES OF PREMODIFICATION

Table 7 shows how various selected types of premodification are represented per 1,000 noun phrases in the two research samples.

TABLE 7: TYPES OF PREMODIFICATION

	NES	CES
Adjective total	293	311
1 adjective <i>the new teacher</i>	253	256
2 adjectives <i>the new young teacher</i>	36	50
3 adjectives <i>the new young language teacher</i>	1	5
4 adjectives <i>the new young English language teacher</i>	3	0
Adjectival nouns <i>the language teacher</i>	86	47
Adverbs in premodification <i>a very good teacher</i>	24	10
-ed participle <i>a frustrated teacher</i>	23	11
-ing participle <i>running water</i>	24	13

It should be noted that in our analysis, both general adjectives and nouns in premodification (adjectival nouns) are labelled as adjectives. However, we decided to show the incidence of adjectival nouns in a separate row of the table as we had

supposed that they would be more frequent in the writing of English native speakers. The incidence of adverbs modifying adjectives in premodification was also recorded, as we had likewise supposed that we would find them unequally represented in the two research samples.

Adjectival premodification seems to be slightly more favoured by Czech users of English. However, a remarkable difference was recorded in the incidence of adjectival nouns, which were less frequent in the CES sample, as were adverbs in adjectival premodification.

Present and past participles in nominal premodification are clearly more frequent in the NES sample. This is in agreement with our previous research into syntactic complexity in advanced English students' writing (Kořínková and Válková 2013), where nominal premodification by both *-ed* and *-ing* participles was found to be more than twice as frequent in the writing of native speakers as in the writing of advanced Czech users of English.

TYPES OF POSTMODIFICATION

Table 8 shows the representation of selected types of postmodification per 1,000 noun phrases in the two research samples. These include the two most common types of finite dependent clauses used in premodification (i.e., relative and appositive clauses), prepositional phrases, past and present participles, infinitives, and apposition.

TABLE 8: TYPES OF POSTMODIFICATION

	NES	CES
Finite relative clause <i>the teacher who left</i>	28	68
Appositive clause <i>the fact that he knows it</i>	4	2
Prepositional phrase <i>the teachers in our department</i>	257	142
<i>-ed</i> participle <i>the teacher asked to examine</i>	13	22
<i>-ing</i> participle <i>the teacher examining today</i>	4	8
Infinitive <i>the teacher to consult</i>	22	2
Apposition <i>our teacher Mary Finch</i>	12	3

The incidence of various types of postmodifying structures seems to represent the greatest difference between the two research samples. Czech students tend to overuse the finite relative clause and underuse the prepositional phrase, both of which seem to resonate with the verbal nature of their mother tongue. On the other hand, contrary to premodification, we found both *-ed* and *-ing* participles in their postmodifying

function to be more common in the CES sample. This is a somewhat unexpected result, worth more extensive research. The remarkably higher incidence of infinitives in the NES sample again supports our previous findings (Kořínková and Válková 2013) that infinitives in nominal postmodification tend to be avoided by advanced Czech learners of English.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded, even with our limited research data, that both the incidence and the structure of a complex noun phrase differ in the writing of Czech and native users of the English language. In the Czech advanced students' writings, they are

- less frequent
- less complex
- more frequently premodified then postmodified

while displaying

- fewer adjectival nouns and participle structures in premodification
- fewer infinitives and prepositional phrases in postmodification
- more finite relative clause and participle structures in postmodification.

Although these quantitative differences in the complex noun phrase would not be considered language mistakes, they do contribute to the unnatural or inauthentic impression given by the Czech students' texts. After this pilot study has been fully developed and verified on a larger scale, its outcomes can be utilised in designing specific teaching materials aimed at improving advanced Czech students' understanding of English and their practical writing skills.

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GENDER STRATEGIES IN HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT: This paper serves as a pilot analysis of means used by good-will ambassadors when delivering humanitarian speeches. The means and strategies employed are analysed on the grounds of the notion of im/politeness, e.g., whether or not the speaker respects, imposes or threatens the hearer's face through the choice of discourse. It aims at determining whether there are significant differences between male and female speech communities regarding rhetoric and linguistic strategies employed in an effort to do good, restore social or political balance, report on injustice, raise awareness or prevent the suffering of those deemed in need of aid. To do so, the paper provides a terminological overview, as humanitarian discourse is generally perceived as an inherent part of the broader and largely explored domain of political discourse. At the same time, humanitarian discourse bears unique qualities that are often overlooked, a fact which this paper attempts to rectify. The practical part offers a discourse analysis of selected humanitarian speeches with emphasis on gender distinction using the statistical data processing software SPSS Statistics. It aims to determine whether there are significant differences among male and female speech communities and what phenomena are typically applied by each group.

KEYWORDS: gender; humanitarian discourse; political discourse; male speakers; female speakers; politeness; impoliteness; rhetoric; status; morality; evidence; action; power

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a guide to "social reality". [...] Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. (Sapir 1929, 209)

Since languages differ in their structure, it can be assumed that each language shapes the social reality of the language user differently. In other words, language serves as a communication tool and is used by language users who act as its carriers whose own realities are shaped and modelled while doing so. At the same time, language is at variance with the innate physical ability of an individual to develop speech, i.e., physical and inborn verbal means of communication. Humans typically possess the ability to speak. By the same token, language is acquired and entirely environmentally conditioned, i.e., conditioned by the social environment of an individual, by his/her culture, environment, e.g., social reality. It is therefore a relationship of mutual dependence and influence. Having a language enables us to name and describe our social reality, yet at the same time, the social reality influences one's choice of language.

In this respect, the political/humanitarian situation, as a social reality of those

directly concerned, influences the related discourse, while the choice of discourse does indeed influence how such a situation is perceived by those who are not involved directly in the situation – the audience, the spectator or the reader. Therefore, a language presents itself as a suitable area for planting ideology and exercising power. However, humanitarian speech as one possible form of humanitarian discourse, being an intersection between political discourse and humanitarianism or discourse of compassion, a term used by Nussbaum (2001), naturally bears signs of both exploitation of power and acts of kindness.

I argue that these terms are gender specific. Disregarding the theory of deficit, i.e., that women's language is inadequate (e.g., Jespersen 1922), I base my work on the theory of difference (Fishman 1978; Tannen 1990) and the theory of dominance (Lakoff 2004; Spender 1980; West and Zimmermann 1987).

2. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

To place this study in its proper context, I will now explore the theoretical background pertaining to the area of humanitarian discourse within the limits of im/politeness.

2.1 IM/POLITENESS

When analysing impoliteness, we come to realise that it is a multi-faceted phenomenon not entirely language-conditioned. Apart from its obvious linguistic facet, there are a number of extra-linguistic aspects – psychological, social, and metalinguistic (body language), which are of no lesser importance but are not covered in this study.

Questions have been raised about the occurrence of impoliteness in discourse, yet its thorough analysis has been somewhat disregarded. The existence of impoliteness itself was acknowledged by several recent studies (e.g., Bousfield 2008; Watts 2003; Culpeper 1996; and others). It is politeness that most linguists accentuate, even though impoliteness is much more likely to be noticed and to cause a stir among interlocutors.

Watts (2003) coined the term (im)politeness, which implies that the distinction between what is or is not (im)polite cannot be clearly determined. In fact the same complementing principle is used by the majority of the studies drawing on politeness to demark and delimit impoliteness. In simple terms, the delineation of one enables the defining the other.

Nevertheless, in linguistic settings, one does not exclude the other, and claiming that impoliteness is the counterpart to politeness would be an oversimplification considering the impact of the speaker's utterance or the hearer's inference of what is being said. By breaching the principles of politeness, the speakers border on impoliteness in order to achieve either the mutual or individual communicative goals. In political discourse, of which humanitarian discourse is a part, the distinction becomes rather obscure. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), speech acts or utterances causing damage to the hearer's face are of two types: positive face-threatening acts (e.g., insults, disapproval, accusations, complaints, challenges, signs of disrespect, even topics relating to politics, suffering, race, religion) and negative face-threatening acts (e.g.,

in general applying pressure on the hearer to take action, to perform certain actions, such as orders, suggestions, requests, threats, advice, offers, warnings and promises).

As a linguistic phenomenon, impoliteness forms an inseparable part of social interaction with its undeniable impact on social dynamics. Any political, and thus also humanitarian, speech may therefore be potentially damaging to the hearer, even when redressing or mitigating measures are taken. In opposition to Leech (1983, 105) who argues that “conflictive illocutions tend, thankfully, to be rather marginal to human linguistic behaviour in normal circumstances,” I claim that any interaction or illocution is potentially conflictive, hence potentially damaging and thus impolite, with the hearer’s inference of speaker’s intention being the key variable. As Culpeper (in Bousfield and Locher 2008, 36) aptly puts it, impoliteness “involves communicative behaviour intending to cause the ‘face loss’ of a target or perceived by the target to be so.”

For the purpose of this work, impoliteness will be viewed as any verbal measure taken by the speaker to impose on or change the view of the hearer. The instances of such measures are specified below.

2.2 POWER AND IMPOLITENESS

Power is relational, meaning it is based on a simple presupposition that there is a relationship of some sort between the interactants. Without the participants realising it, a certain power relation is therefore unavoidable, either in an overt or covert form, comprising an interplay of power and relation.

The person in power (usually in the position of the speaker) produces pressure in an attempt to make the hearer react in a certain way. Such behaviour in itself may be classified as potentially impolite. The more prominent the imbalance of power (social, political, formal, legal, personal, etc.), the higher the occurrence of potential impoliteness.

2.3 GENDER AND SEXUAL DICHOTOMY

The notion of sex in language, its perception and interpretation becomes a multifaceted phenomenon opening a dialogue on sex and gender in language. The sexual differences between men and women, i.e., biological categorization producing a biological dichotomy, are, for the most part, given biological determinants. They predetermine an individual to be seen and thus treated and approached by the society as either male or female. For the purpose of this work, the marginal or intersex categories will be omitted.

When discussing sexual distinction in one’s social reality, the term *gender* is widely preferred. Gender is not a biological occurrence, it is not something an individual is born with. Gender is acquired in the same way as language. By the same token, gender is not something that one has, possesses or displays. According to West and Zimmerman (1987), gender is what we do. In more elaborate terms, their notion of gender could be interpreted as one’s actions (or behaviour, verbal and non-verbal) reflecting one’s

own perception of the assigned sex. Gender is often understood as a social construct, i.e., society's way of establishing what is and is not acceptable/appropriate for each gender. Also, Butler (1990) argues that gender is not what the members of society do, but what is done to them by society, via upbringing, acquiring and complying with social roles and norms, frequently termed as *stereotypes*. It is to be understood that there are certain ways (principles, strategies) members of each gender are to use and apply in order to be accepted in the eyes of their community. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003, 15) use the phrase "learning to be gendered." They see the dichotomy of male and female as "the ground upon which we build selves from the moment of birth."

2.4 GENDER AND SPEECH COMMUNITIES

As far as adult speakers or members of a certain speech community (i.e., feminine and masculine speech communities) are concerned, it is only natural to assume that rules and norms imposed on individual speakers by the society and its expectations regarding one's gender and its manifestation have been fully acquired, integrated and internalised in mature individuals.

Feminine and masculine speech communities differ based on their communicative means, strategies, goals and realisations. The issue whether there are significant differences in the male and female use of language has been widely debated. It is generally acknowledged that there is a given heteronormativity applying to language and gender. Historically speaking, the language of men was considered the norm, implying that the language of women is an inferior or a marginal language variety, based on the theory of deficit. Until recently, women had no legally-recognised voice of their own. This fact might serve as an explanation as to why females often employ linguistic means diminishing the message impact on the hearer. However, the struggle towards equality has demonstrated itself in women, even more so in women in/of power, as if to rank themselves among men or in order to be heard or listened to. There has even been a tendency to incorporate feminine rhetoric into male discourse (e.g., Larner 2009) in order to achieve rapport (Tannen 1990), i.e., establishing a relationship. This tendency might be recognised as a sign of emerging gender liberalism. Such beliefs stem from folklinguistics, where men are believed to talk in order to do, i.e., *report talk* whereas for women, talking encompasses establishing and maintaining connections, and it is the aim itself, i.e., *rapport talk* (Tannen 1990, 31).

2.5 GENDER SPECIFICS IN RHETORICS

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the first female senators enter the political scene, gradually introducing feminine rhetoric into the male-dominated political discourse. This gave rise to the issue of the influence of feminine over male rhetoric. Based on the theories of difference and dominance, I am to determine whether feminine-style rhetoric played any role in male political discourse, whether male speakers are aware of female rhetoric devices and whether they apply feminine rhetoric in order to establish unity and maintain relationships and by comparison, whether men use fewer

female rhetoric devices when displaying superiority, etc.

A few areas of gender variation in rhetoric emerge when considering gender differences: information processing (men often place more importance on facts and status, while women value relationships and sharing information), power imbalance (women might still assume a non-dominant position, often diminishing and negating the impact of their words, either as a sign of inferiority or from the position of empathy, avoiding imposition on the hearer), and societal perception and interpretation of gender behaviour (typical male speech is often inferred as forthright while a woman using the same language or manner may be seen as unfeminine).

Kearney and Plax (1996) offer another classification of rhetoric styles:

- evidence of claims: female speakers are comfortable using subjective evidence (personal experience, stories, and examples for evidence, rather than the objective evidence used by masculine public speakers);
- organizational patterns: female speakers often use a narrative organisation in their speeches, rather than the masculine linear organization;
- value orientation: women value interpersonal relationships and human connections; a priority of the feminine speaker is mutual understanding and relationship building during a speech.

Boltanski (quoted in Höijer 2004, 522) claims that in women there is no search for a perpetrator to accuse, which directly applies to female rhetoric. Instead, female attention is focused on the victim and a benefactor. Women also react with compassion more often than men. Female speakers also more often identify themselves with the situation of the victims, whereas men display outrages. There are obvious social reasons for this:

- historically and culturally conditioned – the position of women in society;
- the feeling of solidarity with the victim in contradiction with the male notion of speaking equals doing.

The notion of female solidarity or *moral voice* is used by Gilligan (1982, 73) who suggests that women's moral judgement focuses on care while men's moral judgement focuses on justice. A female perspective thus calls attention to the pain or suffering as something wrong and morally problematic. On the other hand, Gilligan (1982) claims that men perceive the moral problem from the perspective of justice and taking measures (doing, taking action). From a justice point of view, in men, violence could even be accepted under certain conditions, namely when it is used to rectify or to avenge a previous injustice. In this perspective, the suffering is often backgrounded.

2.6 HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE

Humanitarian discourse partly overlaps with political discourse in its basic principles

such as exercising power (whether political or social) to pursue one's goals. However, the scope of humanitarian discourse is inevitably broader in the sense that it encompasses other discursive domains such as education, medicine, the social sphere, or biology. It is a direct reflection of the areas of interest of humanitarians or so-called good-will ambassadors, and its primary goal is humanity and its prosperity and human well-being.

2.7 THE PROPERTIES OF HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE

These are primarily described from the perspective of political discourse as well as from the humanitarian discourse perspective, as its inherent part:

THE DOMAIN OF POLITICS

Van Dijk (1997, 15) states that "the whole discipline of political science is the answer to such a question. [...] politics may thus not only include all official or unofficial political actors, events, encounters, settings, actions and discourses." As for humanitarian discourse, this field naturally includes all the above mentioned categories. The actors in humanitarian discourse however may be politicians, ambassadors, individuals, activists, groups or organisations. Regarding actions in humanitarian discourse, they range from public speeches, interventions, appeals, peace talks, etc.

POLITICAL VALUES

Political values can be identified as direct or ulterior, based on the strategy of their manifestation or revelation. Values are generally defined as priorities an individual holds as important. In political or more precisely humanitarian discourse, values are human-oriented. In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the values accentuated in this field are human well-being, well-fare, standard of living, justice, non-discrimination, equal rights, education, etc. In the majority of cases, values are mutually interchangeable with goals, as it is assumed that actors in a political discursive situation act in the name of moral good, following their values and beliefs.

POLITICAL RELATIONS

Van Dijk (1997, 15) lists the following relations identified in the field of politics: power, power abuse, hegemony, oppression, tolerance, equality and inequality, among others. In humanitarian discourse, the relations involved are primarily the same. Nevertheless, I would add several others to the list based on the scope of humanitarian discourse and the fact that others occurred in the pilot study: justice, injustice, freedom, guilt, possibility, righteousness, principle, alliance and solidarity.

POLITICAL ACTIONS

In terms of political discourse, taking an action means taking measures in order to

communicate the message, thus achieving the goals of communication while applying various communication strategies. Persuasion, discussion, negotiation, threatening, enticing, propaganda, manipulation, etc., are only a few of many possible political actions. In humanitarian discourse, the actions would also involve more subtle varieties such as debates, persuasion, enticing, raising awareness, alerting, alarming, warning and negotiating.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE AS POLITICAL ACTION / HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE AS HUMANITARIAN ACTION

In accordance with Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) and their notion of speech acts, it might be deduced that saying is doing. Hence, utterances in political discourse may be seen as taking actions. Seen through the same prism, we are to speak of performatives, of which van Dijk (1997, 36–37) lists the following types: assertions (declaration), directives (orders, commands, advice), accusation, denials, counter-accusation, apologies, promises, inquiry, etc. His theory partially overlaps with the research of this paper, as some of the performatives form a part of the observed criteria.

2.8 DISCOURSE AND MANIPULATION

The general principle of ideology, either political or humanitarian, lies in the belief that any discursive message is to be inferred, interpreted and understood by the message receiver/hearer or addressee. As in general discourse, the message may be encoded or hidden using various linguistic means. Such alteration to the meaning may be deliberate or incidental. It may occur among both parties of interlocutors, i.e., on the part of the sender/speaker or on the part of the message receiver while decoding or inferring the message (correctly or incorrectly).

Montgomery (1986) operates with the terms *represent* and *transform*. In his interpretation, *representation* stands for how language is used in different ways to represent what we can know, believe and think. In other words, if others are to believe you, or do what you want them to do or view the world in the most favourable way for your goals, you need to manipulate or *transform*.

Regarding humanitarian discourse, in consistence with its goals and ideology, such practices are supposed to be less common, however extant. For example, van Dijk distinguishes between manipulation and persuasion as follows:

The crucial difference in this case is that in persuasion the interlocutors are free to believe or act as they please, depending on whether or not they accept the arguments of the persuader, whereas in manipulation recipients are typically assigned a more passive role: they are victims of manipulation. This negative consequence of manipulative discourse typically occurs when the recipients are unable to understand the real intentions or to see the full consequences of the beliefs or actions advocated by the manipulation. (2009, 361)

Naturally there is a fine line between legitimate efforts to make the hearer perceive the reality through the speaker's prism, i.e., persuasion, and between altering their view completely based on one's superior power or knowledge, i.e., manipulation.

2.9 DISCOURSE OF COMPASSION

Nussbaum (2001, 301) believes that compassion is “a painful emotion occasioned by the awareness of another person’s undeserved misfortune.” She regards compassion as a complex emotion including such cognitive beliefs as that the suffering of the other is serious, and that the suffering person does not deserve it. Following Nussbaum, I conclude that compassion is both an affective (emotional) and a cognitive (mental) reaction. Boltanski (1999, 6) distinguishes between compassion and pity. To him, compassion is local and specific and linked to a particular individual, while pity is more political and “generalises and integrates the dimension of distance.”

This chapter has summarized the overlapping areas of humanitarian discourse pointing out that its position within the field is rather specific, being an inherent part of political discourse as a larger unit, and at the same time encompassing the discourse of manipulation and compassion.

3. CORPUS

The objective of this study is to analyse a situation-bound type of discourse, i.e., humanitarian speeches. Being a part of political discourse, humanitarian discourse shares certain features inherent to the former, such as persuasion, propaganda, agitation, etc. Even though its spontaneity is somewhat diminished by the fact that such speeches are in most cases written, thus increasing the degree of stylisation, it is to be assumed that in order to achieve its communicative goal and make an impact on the hearer (i.e., making the speech believable and thus persuasive) the speech is to bear signs and properties inherent to the personality of the speaker, such as gender, status, role, power (comprising the speaker’s identity) as well as extra-personal features, such as the discourse situation, the relationship among the interactants (tenor), etc.

The work analyses speeches delivered by male and female speakers of a similar status and position who act as good-will ambassadors, defending or fighting for a good cause. The social actors in humanitarian discourse are frequently politicians, but also humanitarian workers, social workers, educators, healthcare workers and in recent years various personalities enjoying VIP status in a given society based on their knowledge, interest, power, popularity and influence.

For the purpose of this study, five male and five female-delivered humanitarian speeches were analysed in order to see whether there are any significant differences among the typical rhetorical figures of male and female speech communities and their usage by both, male and female speakers. The corpus sources are listed at the end of the paper. The speakers are well-established ambassadors of good-will: Hillary Clinton, Diana the Princess of Wales, Benazir Bhutto, Queen Elizabeth II, Bella Abzug, David Cameron, Barack Obama, Elie Wiesel, and Oscar Arias Sanchez. Male speakers are referred to by M (M1 to M5), while female speakers are referred to by F (F1 to F5).

4. METHODOLOGY

This paper seeks to identify differences in strategies employed by each of the sexes while trying to communicate the message. In accordance with the grounded theory above and the theory of difference and dominance assuming that men and women communicate differently and achieve their communicative goals in different manners, the following areas were selected containing the phenomena expected to emerge in men and women respectively: status, morality, evidence, action and power.

TABLE 1: CRITERIA OBSERVED IN BOTH SEXES

MALE SPEECH GROUP CRITERIA		SELECTED AREAS	FEMALE SPEECH GROUP CRITERIA	
CM1	exclusion (I, they), leadership, superiority, compliments	STATUS	CF1	togetherness, sisterhood, inclusion, thank yous
CM2	revenge, justice, fairness, blaming, search for perpetrator	MORALITY	CF2	nurturance, care, moral obligation, empathy
CM3	truth, facts, logic, rationality, deduction, achievements	EVIDENCE	CF3	narratives, personal anecdotes, induction, hypotheticals, questions
CM4	must, rise to occasion, agitation	ACTION	CF4	raising awareness, prevention, questions
CM5	power over, threatening, promises,	POWER	CF5	power to/with/within

C stands for criteria, CM for typically-male criteria and CF for typically-female criteria.

The following research questions have been formed:

- (1) CM criteria are considered to be predominantly male, based on the established theory of difference and dominance. However, they will be analysed in female speakers as well to determine whether women apply them and in what areas.
- (2) CF criteria are considered to be predominantly female, based on the established theory of difference and dominance. However, they will be analysed in male speakers as well to determine whether men apply them and in what areas.

Supposedly typical male and female criteria were analysed within each area of status, morality, evidence, action and power as manifested in Table 1.

The corpus material was acquired online. The statistical tool IBM SPSS Statistics 21 was used. Further, both speech groups were compared using t-test comparing the usage of typically-male rhetoric (CM1–5) and typically-female rhetoric (CF1–5) in order to see whether there are certain preferences among male and female speakers regarding the given criteria. In other words, to confirm whether men prefer their own rhetoric to female rhetoric and vice versa.

Prior to the t-test, Levene's test of homogeneity was used to assess the equality of

variances for the selected variables. If the resulting P-value (probability) is $p>0.05$, then there are significant differences among the two sample groups (see Table 2).

5. RESULTS

Table 2 shows whether there are significant differences in both speech groups in applying their own strategies or those typical for the opposite sex. The original assumption here, based on the theory of difference and dominance is that women prefer typically-female strategies (CF1–CF5) and men prefer the strategies typically associated with their speech group (CM1–CM5). It has been determined that there are indeed significant differences in the male speech group ($p=0.04$) while no significant differences were detected in the female speech group ($p>0.05$).

Based on the t-test, we may also assume that men do indeed tend to prefer using typically-male rhetoric (CM mean value=8.08) to female rhetoric (CM mean value=2.96), while women tend to venture into male rhetoric (CF mean=5.08) almost as much as they use their own rhetoric (CF mean=7.48).

TABLE 2: MEAN VALUES IN BOTH SPEECH GROUPS

Mean	Gender		
	F	M	Total
CM mean	2.96	8.08*	5.52
CF mean	7.48	5.08	6.28

* $p=0.04$, there are significant differences among the two sample groups

Having confirmed that there are significant differences between male and female speech communities, the differences among each criteria were measured. The t-test showed that both speech groups applied their “characteristic” means of expression (as listed in Table 1). However, both groups of speakers also tended to incorporate means that proved to be typically associated and used by the opposite speech community, as shown in Tables 3 and 5.

TABLE 3: CM IN BOTH SPEECH GROUPS

Mean	Gender		
	F	M	Total
CM1 STATUS	4.80	9.60*	7.20
CM2 MORALITY	2.80	1.60	2.20
CM3 EVIDENCE	3.20	10.20*	6.70
CM4 ACTION	3.20	10.00	6.60
CM5 POWER	.80	9.00	4.90

* $P\text{-value}>0.05$

Table 3 demonstrates the differences in typically male criteria CM (CM1–CM5) found in

both speech groups. Significant differences were found in the male speakers regarding the usage of the typically-male features within the areas of *status* (CM1, i.e., exclusion, leadership, superiority, compliments) (P-value=0.015) and *evidence* (CM3 truth, facts, logic, rationality, deduction, achievements) (P-value=0.036). As suggested, the criteria associated with the area of compassion or *morality* (CM2 revenge, justice, fairness, blaming, search for perpetrator) showed a somewhat weaker presence within the male speech group, hinting at subtle differences among the male and female participants.

Table 4 offers an overview of means of expressions found in the male speech group within each category.

TABLE 4: MEANS OF EXPRESSION FOUND IN THE MALE SPEECH GROUP

MALE SPEECH GROUP CRITERIA		SELECTED AREAS	EXAMPLES
CM1	exclusion (I, they), leadership, superiority, compliments	STATUS	<i>I want to start by talking about ... (M1)</i> <i>Keep fighting ... (M2)</i> <i>Even in suffering? Even in suffering. (M3)</i> <i>But I tell you this ... (M4)</i> <i>Nor do I believe (M5)</i>
			<i>So they can see how their governments spend that money ... (M1)</i> <i>So that they have the chance to give birth ... (M2)</i> <i>Why did some of America's largest corporations continue to do business with Hitler's Germany ... ? (M3)</i> <i>For it is the responsibility of governments to look at ... (M4)</i> <i>It is an insult to human reason ... (M5)</i>
CM2	revenge, justice, fairness, blaming, search for perpetrator	MORALITY	<i>... and it is absolutely right that as Britain ... (M1)</i> <i>That's 2 million more people than our original goal ... (M2)</i> <i>It has been suggested, and it was documented, that ... (M3)</i> <i>This gives me an unfortunate first-hand knowledge ... (M4)</i> <i>The world is more stable than it was 5 years ago. (M5)</i>
			<i>We are here to respond. (M1)</i> <i>... America must continue to lead. (M2)</i> <i>... to be indifferent to that suffering is what makes the human being inhuman. (M3)</i> <i>... we must begin with those around us ... (M4)</i> <i>... I urge all nations here to step up ... (M5)</i>
CM3	truth, facts, logic, rationality, deduction, achievements	EVIDENCE	<i>... we have earned the right to say ... (M1)</i> <i>So this fight is not over. (M2)</i> <i>This time, we intervene. (M3)</i> <i>If the Bush administration forges ahead ... (M4)</i> <i>But when it is necessary ... we will take direct action. (M5)</i>
CM4	must, rise to occasion, agitation	ACTION	
CM5	power over, threatening, promises,	POWER	

Table 5 provides the results showing mean values of individual typically-female criteria CF (CF1–CF5) in both speech groups. No statistically-significant differences were detected regarding the differences in applying CF by male and female speakers. However it can be interpreted that women tend to exceed men in the frequency of using certain typically-female associated criteria in the following areas: *morality* (CF2 nurturance, care, moral obligation, empathy), *evidence* (CF3 narratives, personal anecdotes, induction, hypotheticals, questions) and *power* (CF5 power to/with/within).

However, the results also suggest a stronger inclination of the male speech group to engage in applying typically-female criteria in the following areas: *status* (CF1 togetherness, sisterhood, inclusion, thank yous) and *action* (CF4 raising awareness, prevention, questions), which can be justified by the domain of this research, i.e., humanitarian discourse.

TABLE 5: CF IN BOTH SPEECH GROUPS

Mean	Gender		
	F	M	Total
CM1 STATUS	8.00	9.80	8.90
CM2 MORALITY	7.60	2.60	5.10
CM3 EVIDENCE	11.60	4.40	8.00
CM4 ACTION	7.40	8.20	7.80
CM5 POWER	2.80	.40	1.60

Table 6 presents an overview of typical means of expression applied by the female speech community within each category.

TABLE 6: MEANS OF EXPRESSION FOUND IN THE FEMALE SPEECH GROUP

FEMALE SPEECH GROUP CRITERIA		SELECTED AREAS	EXAMPLES
CF1	togetherness, sisterhood, inclusion, thank yous	STATUS	<i>... our talk turns to our children and our families ... (F1)</i> <i>... would have us believe ... (F2)</i> <i>... that we women had each other for strength and support ... (F3)</i> <i>... look back on us ... (F4)</i> <i>I thank the UN and my sisters ... (F5)</i>
CF2	nurturance, care, moral obligation, empathy	MORALITY	<i>Speaking to you today, I speak for them ... (F1)</i> <i>Those who've so often been condemned and ignored ... (F2)</i> <i>... women are not forgotten, that the world cares. (F3)</i> <i>... determination to do the right thing ... (F4)</i> <i>In the face of so much pain ... (F5)</i>
CF3	narratives, personal anecdotes, induction, hypotheticals, questions	EVIDENCE	<i>Let them listen to the voices ... (F1)</i> <i>Yet common sense and the testimonies of ... (F2)</i> <i>When I was growing up, women in my extended family remained behind closed walls ... (F3)</i> <i>I have also witnessed ... (F4)</i> <i>The world went on, in its downward spiral we all know all too well. (F5)</i>
CF4	raising awareness, prevention, questions	ACTION	<i>... we may help bring dignity ... (F1)</i> <i>... perhaps we can find the best way of helping these children ... (F2)</i> <i>Let us translate this vision into reality ... (F3)</i> <i>... of we are truly to be United Nations. (F4)</i> <i>It is an agenda for change ... of a better world for all. (F5)</i>

CF5	power to/ with/within	POWER	<i>No one should be forced to remain silent ... (F1)</i>
			<i>Perhaps we may play a small part ... (F2)</i>
			<i>Where we are equal partners in peace ... (F3)</i>
			<i>... prosperity and dignity of our fellow human beings. (F4)</i>
			<i>... we will still be looking at our governments, closely, critically, urgently and hopefully to ensure ... (F5)</i>

Considering proportional representation (in percentage) of the usage of typical means of expression in their own speech community as well as in the opposite speech group, the results were as follows:

- a) When applying typical female criteria (CFs), men seem to exceed women in applying typically-female rhetoric in the areas of *status* (CF1 togetherness, sisterhood, inclusion, thank you – men 15.61%, women 12.74%) and *action* (CF4 raising awareness, prevention, questions – men 13.06%, women 11.78%). In all the other areas, *morality* CF2 (men 4.14%, women 12.10%), *evidence* CF3 (men 7.01%, women 18.47%), and *power* CF5 (men 0.54%, women 4.46%), women exceed men in applying their own, i.e., female rhetoric. In other words, women tend to stick to their own means.
- b) When applying typical male criteria (CMs), men seem to exceed women in terms of using their own, male rhetoric in the majority of areas, such as *status* (CM1 exclusion , leadership, superiority, compliments – men 17.39%, women 8.70%), *evidence* (CM3 truth, facts, logic, rationality, deduction, achievements – men 18.48%, women 5.80%), *action* (CM4 must, rise to occasion, agitation – men 18.12%, women 5.80%) and *power* (CM5 power over, threatening, promises – men 16.30%, women 1.45%). However, women seem to have adopted a typically-male rhetoric style in the area of *morality* (CM2 revenge, justice, fairness, blaming, and search for perpetrator – men 2.90%, women 5.07%), hinting at the need to seek justice, revenge and fairness as previously associated with men, while still honouring the ideas of nurturance, care, moral obligation, empathy as found in the area of *morality* CF2 as a typically female criterion.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The paper aimed at determining whether there are significant differences between male and female humanitarian speakers, i.e., whether they apply the same or different communicative strategies. The study conducted in this rather uncharted territory of discourse (from the perspective of statistics) has shown that the selected areas of differences indeed match the grounded theory of gender dichotomy, i.e., men and women differ in pursuing their own discourse strategies. Following the theory of difference and dominance, I assumed that there are differences between male and female speakers regarding the usage of the selected criteria: *status*, *morality*, *evidence*, *action*, and *power*.

While women tend to stick to their guns, fronting the notion of care and nurturance,

men venture into the female speech community rather often, adopting female strategies while delivering humanitarian speeches. More precisely, men seem to exceed women when applying typically female rhetoric in the areas of *status* (CF1 togetherness, sisterhood, inclusion, thank you) and *action* (CF4 raising awareness, prevention, questions). The reason might be the very nature of humanitarian discourse, requiring a distinctive approach from political discourse, which is a clearly male-dominant specialty. Hence for male speakers to “be heard”, i.e., to reach the objectives of their speech, they must accommodate to the field of humanitarian discourse, which appears to be more of a female world. However, women seem to have adopted a typically male rhetoric style in the area of *morality* (CM2 revenge, justice, fairness, blaming, and search for perpetrator), hinting at the need to seek justice, revenge and fairness as associated with men.

To conclude, there are significant differences between male and female humanitarian speakers. Men and women tend to explore the territory typically associated with the opposite sex while at the same time applying their own linguistic strategies. The reason for the two seemingly different rhetoric styles to overlap is the nature of the selected field, i.e., humanitarian discourse with its unique properties incorporating political discourse and the discourse of compassion.

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GENDERED TALK: CONVERSATIONAL DOMINANCE AND COOPERATION IN ONLINE CHATS

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the means of conversational dominance and cooperation in online chats to determine if face-to-face conversation strategies can be applied to and hold true in computer-mediated communication. The theoretical part offers a summary of research into the means of conversational dominance and cooperation both in face-to-face communication and different Internet environments with respect to gender. The analytical part provides an enumeration of the topics which the males and females in the corpus introduced into discussion, distinguishing between the topics that were developed by other users and those which proved non-productive. The study also looks into the issue of giving minimal responses and posing questions as means of conversational cooperation.

KEYWORDS: face-to-face communication; computer-mediated communication; internet relay chat; online chat; gender; dominance; cooperation

CONVERSATIONAL DOMINANCE AND COOPERATION IN FTF COMMUNICATION

Studies on gender and conversation strategies do not focus only on the choice of topics in conversation and the time spent discussing them, but also include analyses of topic initiating, i.e., who controls the choice of topics and the direction of a conversation, and topic following, i.e., who develops the topics introduced by others. Researchers examine how certain conversation strategies, such as floor holding, interruptions, minimal responses, or the use of silence can be used to determine hierarchy and achieve dominance in conversation. Research indicates that it is not the number of topics introduced that signifies dominance in conversation, but the number of topics that get picked up by others. Therefore, a speaker who introduces fewer topics in the conversation can still be the dominant participant when their topics are the ones that get responded to and developed.

Pamela Fishman (1978, 397–406) examined fifty-two daily conversations of three male-female couples: young, middle-class Americans. The conversations were recorded by the couples themselves in their homes. Fishman describes conversational strategies used by the men and women in the study and explores the patterns of male-female hierarchy in everyday interaction to report that the distribution of work done by men and women in conversations is unequal, with women being those who do the ‘dirty work’ in conversations. In her survey, 62 percent of conversation topics in the discussions were raised by women, compared to 38 topics introduced by men. Fishman

reports that while 28 out of 29 of the topics introduced by men were adopted, only 17 out of the 47 topics raised by women were successfully turned into conversations.

Victoria DeFrancisco (1998, 176–84) employed the same method as Fishman on a larger and more varied scale and extended the method by interviewing the participants to find out their opinions on conversational dominance. The participants in DeFrancisco's study were seven Anglo-American couples, aged 21 to 63, who had lived together for between 2 to 35 years. The women in the study raised 236 topics (63 percent), while the men introduced 140 topics (37 percent). Like in Fishman's study, although they talked more and introduced more topics, women were less successful in having their topics adopted. 156 (66 percent) of the topics brought up by women were successfully established, while 106 (76 percent) of the topics raised by men were taken up.

In her study of mixed-talk conversations, Jennifer Coates (2004, 113–15) explores strategies that lead to dominance in conversation. She points out that it is not only interrupting that allows a speaker to gain the upper hand. Interlocutors violate the rules of turn-taking that allow only one speaker at a time, and call for speakers to give a chance to others to have their say in the conversation as well. The third violation of the turn-taking rules is non-cooperative behaviour when the interlocutor says too little, which may lead to a breakdown of a conversation.

In Zimmerman and West's (1975, 105–129) study on interruptions and silences in conversations, men were responsible for 46 interruptions and 9 overlaps in mixed-sex conversations, while women interrupted twice and did not overlap. Interestingly, in same-sex conversations, the ratio of overlapping and interruptions was almost the same for both genders. The results suggest that while men are concerned with not interrupting other men, they interrupt women abundantly, and they do so without evident repercussion. Women, on the other hand, overlap with other women, but wait for men to finish their turn. Coates (2004, 157) points out that interruptions are a way of controlling the choice of topic.

Despite the widespread folklinguistic belief that under all circumstances women are markedly more verbose than men (e.g., Coates 2004; Sunderland 2006), research unambiguously proves that in public sphere, mixed-sex conversations, men are the ones who "hog the floor," speaking more often and taking longer turns than women (e.g., James and Drakich 1993; Litosseliti 2006; Spender 1998). The situation is different in the private sphere, where women are the ones who talk longer and bring up more topics (DeFrancisco 1998; Fishman 1978). However, the amount of talk does not equal dominance in conversations, but may in fact suggest less power and more conversational labour.

When they accounted for the variable of context in their comprehensive study of conversational strategies, Leaper and Ayres (2007, 328–63) found out that the amount of talk as produced by men and women depends on the immediate interactive context, and that is not only the gender of their interlocutor, but also the type of activity people are engaged in, the setting, or the familiarity of the speakers.

The study confirms that in mixed-sex conversations men are more talkative than women, and they talk more in a situation when they need to assert dominance and

achieve goals. Leaper and Ayres (2007) argue that this could be the result of men traditionally being socialised to be superior and dominant, to be in control. In her book *Communicating Gender*, Romaine (1999, 157–65) arrived at the same conclusion, explaining that the folklinguistic myth of the loquacious woman and the silent man has, in fact, arisen as a result of different expectations we have of men and women. Women are expected to be silent, and therefore virtually any amount of talk produced by women is perceived as excessive even in situations when women talk markedly less than men. Men, on the other hand, are expected and accordingly brought up to dominate conversations. Women in the Leaper and Ayres (2007, 362) study talked more in affiliative situations when they talked about themselves, or working with children, which according to Leaper and Ayres is a result of women being socialised to be more comfortable talking about their feelings. Leaper and Ayres (2007, 363) conclude that gender is only one of the variables that influence the amount of talk, and although they find a slight propensity for men to talk more than women, the stereotype that one gender always talks more than the other is far too simplistic.

CONVERSATIONAL DOMINANCE AND COOPERATION IN CMC

With the emergence of a new media, the question of gender and interaction styles on the Internet was soon addressed. Researchers were interested to see if there would be any changes in the character and number of initiated and followed topics in an environment that in many aspects resembles spoken interaction but lacks some of the features of FTF communication, such as standard adjacency pair, overlaps, and interruptions, not to mention eye-contact and non-verbal cues.

In her study on gender and democracy in computer-mediated communication (CMC), Susan Herring (1993, 1–17) followed two academic discussion boards, Linguist and Megabyte University (MBU), over the course of one year in order to explore the patterns of male and female participation. Later on, Herring added a corpus of postings sent to the Women's Studies list (WMST). The principal differences that arose from the analysis concerned the amount, topic, and manner of participation.

Regarding the amount of participation, Herring (1993) discovered that women, who constituted 36 percent of subscribers in Linguist and 42 percent in MBU, sent fewer messages than would correspond to their numerical representation; men sent over 85 percent of all messages. The women's contributions were also shorter than the men's. On the WMST list, women constituted 88 percent of the subscribers, and they participated in the discussion at a rate equal to their numerical representation.

Charles Soukup's (1999, 169–76) study of chat interaction confirms another of Herring's finding that even in female-based forums, men still manage to dominate the conversations. Soukup also found out that Internet Relay Chat (IRC) male participants were aggressive, argumentative, and power-oriented, whereas women sought intimacy and nurtured relationships. Interestingly, masculine-based interaction resembling locker-room talk and humour of sexual nature dominated both the male- and the female-based chat rooms.

In her study of instant messaging, Baron (2004, 397–423) reports that in single-sex conversations women “talked” longer and took longer turns. They also dwelled longer on the topic of closing. While in a male-to-male conversation it took an average of 4.3 contributions (16.3 seconds) to end the conversations, women needed 9.8 turns (41.0 seconds) to say their goodbyes. As instant messaging represents a type of personal interaction environment, Baron’s finding is in concord with those studies that report that women talk more in private and men dominate in public interactions.

However, not all findings in the research of gender and topics in CMC are in concordance with the reported offline distinctions. Li’s (2002) analysis of discussion board messages sent by 22 pupils (11 males and 11 females) from an elementary school indicates that male students took more turns than females students, which is aligned with other research. But in contrast with previous studies, there was little gender difference in topic initiating and developing. McConnell’s (1997, 345–63) survey into educational computer conferences also suggests a decrease in gender differences in the number of turns and length of messages.

In 2010, Herring revisited Edelsky’s (1981, 383–421) theory of two types of floor in FTF interaction: F1, which is linear, hierarchical, argumentative, and has single thematic focus is participated in mostly be men, and F2, which has widely-distributed participation, is collaborative, egalitarian, may have multiple themes, and consists of shorter turns, is favoured by women. Analysing postings sent to three academic message boards, Herring found that to some extent the discussions resemble Edelsky’s floor types, especially male-based discussions, but that female-based discussions diverge from Edelsky’s F2 type by exhibiting an F1 hierarchical order of discussions. Herring proposes that “floor types are inherently power-based, and that they map conventionally onto gender in ways that associate more powerful discourse management strategies with male communication” (Herring 2010, 22).

Summarising the available studies on the role of gender in online interactions, Armentor-Cota (2010, 9) states that

online gendered interactions also show characteristics of traditional gender norms regardless of the gender population of the setting. Even on women’s sites, men continued to dominate interactions and women accepted and contributed to the dominance. In some cases, women would sanction men for negative behavior, but dominance would continue. Despite the potential for challenging traditional gender norms, both women and men users continued to perpetuate and support these norms.

CORPUS

The language material for the present study was recorded on a moderated chat site, Just Chat (<http://www.justchat.co.uk>), which presents itself as “the online community of adults” and the main purpose of which is to offer a platform for synchronous CMC. The site offers three forums free of charge, each with a number of rooms, one VIP (paid) room, and a video chat room. The number of participants simultaneously chatting in one room is limited by the system. By keeping the number of users in one room limited and by inviting people to participate in the conversation on the main screens of the

forums, Just Chat purposely creates and maintains the feeling of a community that offers a different experience than popular large chat sites.

The corpus was recorded in 62 sessions in the most frequented forum – Forum 1, room Lobby, and it comprises over 145,000 entries (670,000 words). In the first step of the analysis, I extracted the most actively participating users and coded their language for gender. The corpus that was used for the present analysis comprises 15,000 postings (74,196 words) sent by 30 users (500 postings per user). 15 users unequivocally identified themselves and were recognised by others as males, 15 presented themselves and were treated by others as females. The male part of the corpus contains 35,851 words, the female part comprises 38,345 words.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In FTF communication, when a larger group of people gather and talk in an informal setting, what may originally start as one conversation invariably breaks into more separate conversations that take place simultaneously. The size of groups and their number is not constant, the participants freely regroup and change topics, and sometimes the conversations flow into one and then scatter again. In this aspect, FTF and IRC conversations bear a resemblance to each other. What differs is the number of co-occurring conversations in which people participate. In FTF communication, people typically follow one thread, only occasionally contributing to one more conversation, and then they go back to their main conversation or change teams.

Thanks to the semi-permanent character of IRC that allows the users to go back to what has been written, chat participants are able to follow more topics and quite comfortably juggle a number of conversations. Combined with the ever-changing number of participants and a high turnover rate, topics are introduced, picked up, and then dropped at a remarkably high rate. The users jump from one topic to another, sometimes unexpectedly coming back to a topic that seemed to have been dropped. At other times users introduce a topic or pose a question, but get distracted by another conversation and fail to develop the topic they themselves introduced, or bring up a topic and do not notice that their interlocutor has left the room and cannot respond. During busy times, a topic often gets dropped suddenly or goes unnoticed because it is overlooked in the incessant stream of contributions appearing on the screen. Sometimes a conversation is interrupted or brought to an abrupt end not because the interlocutor is no longer interested and wishes to end the discussion, but because they dropped out of the room due to technical problems.

The first part of the analysis looked at the number of topics initiated by the males and females in the corpus. I made a distinction between productive topics, i.e., topics that were picked up and developed by other users, and non-productive topics, which are those left unnoticed. In this part of the analysis I also marked the turns in which males and females followed the topics introduced by others.

TABLE 1: TOPICS INITIATED AND FOLLOWED BY MEN

User	Topic		
	Initiated		Followed
	Productive	Non-productive	
davidvip	13	7	43
Daymo	37	5	41
dezbolton	28	17	64
fugster	36	15	61
FUNKY_MONKEY	27	4	40
gambit	32	2	30
JD1	22	4	28
Jimmy	29	15	70
Murphy	29	4	66
Paddy	23	2	53
s3x_g0d	22	5	49
sparky	28	5	74
swoosh	18	4	44
vegeta	19	2	29
WkDbLuE	28	7	51
Total	391	98	743
	489		
Average	26.1	6.5	49.5
	32.6		

TABLE 2: TOPICS INITIATED AND FOLLOWED BY WOMEN

User	Topic		
	Initiated		Followed
	Productive	Non-productive	
allieabdn	10	6	57
becks	31	7	62
Blah	41	10	35
Clown	28	6	62
daisy	18	5	62
Fraggle	33	9	68
jojo	16	13	96
keke	19	6	50
LilyAnna	19	6	93

mauve	32	7	77
Miss_Mint	27	12	71
pAtZ	13	1	70
RedDevilF	33	7	72
suze	14	5	78
zara	26	9	90
<hr/>			
Total	360	109	1043
	469		
<hr/>			
Average	24.0	7.3	69.5
	31.3		

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate no significant differences in the number of topics initiated by men and women, both productive and non-productive. Men successfully initiated a change of topic in 391 instances; that is an average of 26.1 topics that were picked up and developed by other users. The least active user in the male part of the corpus raised 13 topics, while the most productive user initiated a new topic of discussion 37 times. 9 out of the 15 users introduced a new topic between 20 to 30 times. Together, women successfully raised 360 topics, with an average of 24.0 productive topics. The most active user changed the course of discussion 41 times, the least active 10 times. Seven female users initiated a topic change in fewer than 20 instances.

The difference between the male and female participants was similarly small in the case of non-productive topics. Women's topics were not picked up in 109 instances (an average of 7.3 topics), while male-initiated topics were left undeveloped in 98 cases (an average of 6.5 topics). The least successful male user raised 17 topics, the majority (12 users) unsuccessfully initiated a change of topic in fewer than 10 instances. All but three female users raised between 5 to 10 non-productive topics. The situation is rather different in the case of topics that men and women followed. While women picked up 1,043 topics (an average of 69.5 topics) raised by other users, men responded to 743 topics (an average of 49.5 topics).

In Herring's (1993) study, men sent longer contributions to discussion boards than women. Herring interprets this as a sign of conversational dominance. IRC, however, works differently. Because they take long to type and long to read, lengthy messages are unwelcome in a chat room. Considering how quickly the topics of discussion change in chat, in the time that it takes for a wordy contribution to appear on the screen, the participants are likely to have already moved on to a new topic and the message is no longer relevant. To keep the conversation flowing, experienced users make their postings short and send new contributions without waiting for the reply to the questions they posed.¹ Therefore, the length of contributions does not signify dominance, and neither does the number of messages the user sends as this is influenced

¹ Men in the corpus wrote an average of 4.8 words per contribution, while women wrote 5.1 words per contribution.

by how busy the chat room is at a given moment, as well as by the participants' typing skills.

Since interruptions are not possible in IRC, the organisation of conversation into adjacent pairs is frequently violated, and the standard rules of turn-taking do not apply, there is also no such thing as talking too much and hogging the floor in chat. The greater the choice of topics, the more varied and entertaining the conversation can become. The more contributions that appear on the screen, the livelier the conversation becomes, and the less time participants spend idly waiting for new incentives. Therefore, chattiness is a desirable quality in online chats. The only exception to the rule is the practice of spamming, as its purpose is not to contribute to a conversation but to disrupt it with an excessive number of turns, making normal communication impossible. Spammers are soon put on ignore.

As the principal objective of IRC is to talk to people and have them talk back, gaining dominance by either being silent or silencing others would not only be counterproductive in chatting, but due to a lack of visual contact, downright impossible. Moreover, even in FTF communication when talking in a room full of participants, dominance usually cannot be gained by being quiet.² As soon as they stop contributing, interlocutors are left out of the conversation.

Just as in FTF communication, much of the conversation in IRC contains minimal responses that are employed to show the interlocutors' interest and support in a conversation. In chat, the role that body language and words like *mhm*, *oh*, *yeah*, *right*, or *really* carry out in FTF conversations is played by acronyms. Table 3 presents the frequency with which men and women utilised acronyms as a means of back-channelling. The most frequently used acronyms that signify attention were: *lol* = laughing out loud, *lm(f)ao* = laughing my (fucking) ass off, and *pm(s)l* = pissing myself laughing.

TABLE 3: MINIMAL RESPONSES BY GENDER

Acronym	Males	Females
lol	539	937
lm(f)ao	137	221
pm(s)l	39	63
Total	715	1221

The analysis shows that women employed all three acronyms more often than men, using the total of 1,221 acronyms (63.1 percent) to signal attention, while men wrote altogether 715 acronyms (36.9 percent). For both men and women, the most popular acronym used to demonstrate attention was *lol*, followed by *lm(f)ao*, and *pm(s)l*. The result confirms Fishman's (1978) findings from FTF communication that in conversations, women are more responsive and give more encouragement and support than men. Together with following interlocutors' topics, giving minimal responses is

² The only time when the technique of being non-responsive and silent is used to dominate in chat is when the users wish to get rid of an aggressive interlocutor.

another means of signalling cooperation.

Another way to promote discussion is posing questions. Women in the corpus asked 832 questions, for an average of 55.5 questions per user; men asked 727 questions, an average of 48.5 questions per user. Although a difference exists between the genders, it is not as significant as in Fishman's (1978) study where women asked three times as many questions as men. The results suggest that both men and women in Just Chat used questions equally in order to further conversation.

Applying the theory of two types of interaction floors (Edelsky 1981), the multiple topics, widely-distributed participation, and short contributions that are characteristic of chat communication point to floor type F2, which is ascribed to female interaction. The assertive and argumentative nature of many of the conversations bears resemblance to the male F1 style. While the conversations in asynchronous discussion forums as reported by Herring (2010) resembled the male linear and hierarchical type F1 of interaction whether the forum was male or female-based, the analysed IRC discussions exhibit a combination of F1 and F2 features.

INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The male and female IRC users in the corpus did not differ in the number of topics they raised in conversations. Both men and women were equally successful in having their topics followed by other users and introduced the same amount of topics that received no response. Therefore, in contrast with DeFranciso's (1998), Herring's (1993), or Soukup's (1999) findings, in Just Chat neither gender had the upper hand when it came to raising productive topics, nor were either men or women less successful in having their topics followed.

A partial reason for this result may be the relative facelessness of online chat. Leaper and Ayres (2007, 363) assert that it is not the topic itself but the gender of the speaker that decides if a topic gets followed or not. Since a considerable number of nicknames are gender-silent and the IRC participants habitually question the gender of their interlocutors even when the nicknames are unequivocally gender-salient, in chat, gender is taken out of the equation as a possible variable that plays a role in deciding whether a topic gets followed or not.³ Whether a topic gets picked up or remains unnoticed often seems to depend on how busy the forum is and how many co-occurring conversations are taking place at a given moment. The busier the room, the bigger the chance that a topic gets overlooked. People come to chat rooms to interact, and unless they came with the intent to chat with a member of a particular sex, the gender of the person who introduced the topic is of little consequence. There is nothing drearier than a faltering chat conversation. As a result, any topic – whether it is brought to the discussion by a man or a woman – is welcome.

The only significant difference in terms of the number of topics is evident in the quantity of threads women and men followed in the discussions. While men preferred to discuss fewer topics in greater detail, women proved more willing to change topics

3 In the present analysis, one-third of nicknames were gender neutral.

readily and respond to other users' initiatives. Women also followed more threads at the same time, participating in a number of co-occurring conversations. In this sense, women can be considered better at multi-tasking. However, this explanation would be too simplistic. As men more often than women commented on their being simultaneously engaged in both public and private conversations (6 men, 3 women) or participating in other forums (2 men), we may assume that men in the corpus were as able to follow several co-occurring threads as women, only they did so elsewhere. This conclusion is also supported by the fact that when I had gathered the language material and started to excerpt the contributions of regular participants whose language I would analyse, I found over two times more regular female users who sent more than 500 contributions in the discussions than participants who identified themselves as males. This does not mean that Just Chat is a female-dominated chat site, only that men spend more time forum-hopping and engaging in private conversations. It may therefore be that in the time they spent in the main room, rather than asking other participants to fill them in about what was being discussed, or scrolling up the screen to pick up the threads, men opted to initiate new topics.

On the other hand, even the men who did not mention private messaging in their contributions preferred to bring up new topics and spent a longer time discussing them, and followed fewer topics than women. Naturally, users can be involved in private chats without informing other participants, and as the same can be said about women, who still managed to react to a number of topics brought up by others, we can conclude that men and women had the same opportunity to follow the topics introduced by other users. The apparent propensity to be in charge of the course of interaction rather than supporting the conversations of others is in accordance with the male linear style of interaction and may be caused by the male urge to dominate, as suggested by Herring (1993) or Spender (1998).

In accordance with the results of research in FTF communication, women in the corpus proved to be the more cooperative users not only in responding to other participants' topics, but also in providing more minimal responses, which signalled their attention and encouraged their interlocutors to continue. In chat, back-channelling is most commonly realised in the form of acronyms. In contrast with findings from FTF communication, men and women were equally cooperative in promoting conversations with questions. This result too can be explained by the nature of chat communication. Both men and women come to chat rooms to talk to other people, hence both genders help advance the conversations by posing questions.

The present analysis showed that the specifics of IRC communication defy the traditional means of attaining dominance in conversation, whether it is hogging the floor, violating the turn-taking rules, interrupting, or gaining dominance by being non-responsive or silent. Because of the technical constrictions, such FTF principles do not apply in IRC. With users coming and going at a rapid rate, the topics change perpetually, and anyone is welcome to join in and have their say, irrespective of their gender.

In conclusion, the male and female conversational styles in IRC proved comparable

in the number of productive and non-productive topics raised in the discussions. There was also little difference in the number of questions men and women posed in chat. Men and women in Just Chat differed in the frequency with which they initiated conversations on individual topics; women followed more topics and sent more minimal responses. The results indicate that online chat communication challenges traditional gender norms without men and women losing their distinct conversational styles.

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ROLE DOMINANCE IN AMERICAN LATE NIGHT TALK SHOWS

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ABSTRACT: This paper presents a case study of role dominance in American late night talk show discourse. The semi-institutional character of the talk show discourse as defined by Cornelia Ilie is discussed in connection with the role of the host and their individual hosting approach. The results of an analysis performed on six celebrity interview segments are then presented with the aim of comparing the discursive strategies of six different hosts. The conversation-analytic concepts such as turn-taking and adjacency pairs are used to examine the extent to which the talk produced in an institutional setting may approximate casual conversation.

KEYWORDS: talk show; broadcast talk; semi-institutional discourse; conversational features; institutional features; turn-taking

This paper explores some of the speech features produced on American late night talk shows using the methodology of conversation analysis. Traditionally, one of the segments on the show is the celebrity interview, in which the talk show host assumes the role of an interviewer. The complexity of such a role will be discussed, and a case study will be presented where some of the possible discourse strategies of the host in the role of an interviewer will be examined. The paper argues that the host's dominant role pre-allocated to them in the institutional setting of a TV studio gives them the power to control the turn-taking frequency, length of turns and the character of turns, which influences the form of discourse produced within the conventions of the given TV program genre.

In the *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, 2nd Edition, talk shows are introduced as “a highly confrontational discursive genre, a widely influential media phenomenon, as well as a politically and morally controversial form of entertainment” (Ilie 2006, 489). They produce one of the various forms of broadcast talk where a number of participants are involved – the host, the guests, the audience in the studio, and the TV viewers. As a result, there are several levels on which various forms of interaction occur. The host and the guest engage in a conversation, which is simultaneously received by the audience in the studio. The role of the audience is rather passive, but a certain amount of contribution such as applause or laughter is common and expected. The most physically removed from the interaction are the viewers, who receive the talk in an environment outside of the TV studio. Though not immediately present, however, the viewers and their reactions to the broadcast are crucial for the producers

of the program due to the commercial nature of television. Thus, the viewers have a significant influence on the interaction in the studio as “in general, audience and programmes operate within a fairly predictable framework of mutual expectations, for example, a framework of known genre conventions” (Livingstone and Lunt 1994, 6). Talk shows are the result of such expectations, and as a genre they are subject to certain conventions.

According to Cornelia Ilie, specific features of a talk show “pertain partly to conversational, i.e., non-institutional discourse, and partly to institutional discourse [...]; the semi-institutional nature of this double dependency is what characterizes talk show interaction” (2006, 490). It is precisely the semi-institutional character of the discourse produced on talk shows that is important when considering the role of the host. In the following paragraphs, both the institutional and the conversational features of talk shows will be discussed.

The fact that talk shows take place in a TV studio classifies the talk they produce as institutional discourse. Being an institution, broadcasting “can define the terms of social interaction in its own domain by pre-allocating social roles and statuses, and by controlling the content, style and duration of its events” (Scannell 1991, 2). Specifically in the case of talk shows, at the top of the hierarchy of the pre-allocated roles is the host, who initiates, controls and concludes the talk. Institutional discourse has been the focus of many conversation-analytic studies, and the premise has been that “the basic forms of mundane talk constitute a kind of bench-mark against which other more formal or ‘institutional’ types of interaction are recognized and experienced” (Heritage 1989, 33–34). Thus, compared to the mundane or everyday conversation, the discourse produced on talk shows has been determined by Ilie to have the following institutional features:

1. Particular talk-framing patterns
2. Role-related openings and closings performed by the show host
3. Formal and semi-formal introductions of the participants by the show host
4. Monitored speaker-selection and turn-assignment
5. Deliberate use of performative utterances for institutional goals
6. Asymmetrical question-asking roles
7. Institutionally-framed questions
8. Evaluatively used non-answer eliciting questions; audience-oriented questions
9. Audience-oriented repetitions (2001, 243)

The role of the host entails monitoring the whole interaction with the guest from the moment they enter the stage until the host formally closes the interview. It is the host who introduces and welcomes the guest and then proceeds to select the topics to be discussed (though these tend to be pre-agreed on). Furthermore, the host is expected to control the sequence of turn-taking and form such questions that meet the goals of the program. The presence of the audience is then acknowledged by repetitions or questions formed purely for the audience’s sake.

These features constitute the conventions of the talk show as a type of broadcast talk. However, the talk show bears some of the features of conversational talk as well.

Since “we have come a long way from the days when interviewers simply confined their activities to ‘probing’ the interviewee on behalf of the audience” (Tolson 1991, 190), the host has the power to sway the talk towards something closely resembling casual conversation as long as they stay within the limitations of the genre conventions. As a result, the talk show discourse might acquire the following features classified by Ilie as conversational:

1. No particular talk-framing patterns
2. No particular role-related openings and closings
3. Informal introductions of and by the participants
4. Non-monitored speaker-selection and turn-taking
5. No deliberate use of performative utterances for institutional goals
6. Fairly symmetrical question-asking roles
7. Conversationally-framed questions
8. Argumentatively used non-answer eliciting questions
9. Interlocutor-oriented repetitions (2001, 243)

The conversational and institutional features of talk show discourse delineate the sphere within which a talk show host has the opportunity to leave their own trace. As Ilie notes, “talk shows (in contrast to most interviews) are always marked by the personal touch of the show host” (2001, 219). This paper intends to examine some of the ways in which that happens.

The case study presented in this paper was carried out using six celebrity interviews conducted by six different talk show hosts. For the unique discursive strategies of the hosts to immerge, interviews conducted with the same guest were selected. Following the criteria of talk show typology, the talks shows from which the six interviews were extracted were narrowed down to American (country of origin) late night (time of day) celebrity (participants) talk shows. The focus of the case study was the ratio of host/guest verbal participation, the frequency of turn-taking, and the length and character of individual turns. In the following paragraphs, the conversation-analytic concepts used for the analysis of the data will be explained.

Turn is the basic unit of all speech-exchange systems, and as such it may consist of “lengthy utterances, phrases, clauses or even single words” (Wooffitt 2005, 8). A high number of short turns has been recorded in some of the analyzed interviews, and these will be paid special attention to as “even a minimal turn consisting of one word can signal the speaker’s understanding of the on-going interaction, and thereby facilitate or constraint the range of possible next turns other speakers may produce” (Wooffitt 2005, 12).

Turns have been further recognized to occur within adjacency pairs. An adjacency pair has been defined by Wooffitt as “a sequence of two utterances which are adjacent, produced by different speakers, ordered as a first part and second part and typed, so that a first part requires a particular second, or range of second parts” (2005, 32). In an interview, the most frequent type of adjacency pair is the question-answer sequence, where the interviewer is predominantly expected to ask questions and the interviewee is expected to provide answers. Such organization of discourse relates to

the institutional feature of a talk show interview where asymmetrical question-asking roles are allocated.

Various types of turns have been identified and classified in conversation-analytic studies. The category of response tokens has been examined and discovered to be “exceptionally prevalent in ordinary conversational interaction (though, interestingly, less so in talk in many institutional settings [...])” (Heritage 1989, 29). It includes non-lexical utterances such as “oh” or “huh”. Non-vocal conduct has also been researched, and the findings suggest that “speakers may solicit non-vocal activities (such as nods and head-shakes) which appear to function in similar ways to vocal acknowledgement tokens such as ‘mm hm’ and ‘really’”(Heritage 1989, 32).

Conversation-analytic research insists on examining naturally occurring data that need to be recorded in order for a detailed analysis to be possible. Since talk shows are recorded and broadcast, they constitute excellent material for linguistic research. In terms of methodology, Hutchby argues that “it is inadequate to view broadcast talk in the simplistic sense of media analyses that focus on the mediation of ‘message’ between the ‘encoding’ institutions of broadcasting and the ‘decoding’ or receiving audience at home” (Hutchby 2006, 166). He continues to suggest that we should study the talk itself since “we have repeatedly seen [...] that conversational resources that are used in other interactional arenas come to be used in specialized ways in the arena of media talk” (Hutchby 2006, 166). It is with this view in mind that this study is presented.

The examined corpus comprises extracts from the six different American late night talk shows listed in Table 1. The interviewee in all six cases was a well-known American actor, Matthew McConaughey. This particular celebrity was selected on the premise that an experienced professional would maintain their chosen public image and thus provide a relatively constant common denominator.

TABLE 1: CORPUS

Host	Talk show	TV network
George Lopez	Lopez Tonight	TBS
Jimmy Kimmel	Jimmy Kimmel Live!	ABC
Jimmy Fallon	Late Night with Jimmy Fallon	NBC
Conan O’Brien	Late Night with Conan O’Brien	NBC
David Letterman	Late Show with David Letterman	CBS
Craig Ferguson	The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson	CBS

Each interview was transcribed, and the following figures were obtained from the transcripts for the purposes of the subsequent quantitative analysis: the total time the participants spent talking to each other (in seconds), the number of turns they took, and the number of words they used.

TABLE 2: FIGURES OBTAINED FROM THE TRANSCRIPTS

Talk show	Total time (s)	Host's turns	Guest's turns	Host's words	Guest's words
Lopez	567	31	33	211	1179
Kimmel	363	42	41	469	858
Fallon	424	49	47	538	1054
O'Brien	520	77	76	808	1042
Letterman	558	78	76	870	929
Ferguson	507	87	86	965	778

The transcripts were created specifically for the purpose of the analysis presented in this paper and thus have the following features:

1. Overlapping speech is not noted in the transcript.
2. Repetition of words as a means of obtaining time to think is noted in full.
3. All non-lexical utterances which have their standardized orthographic representation are noted (oh, ah, etc.).
4. Indistinguishable words are signaled by an underscored gap in the transcript. The number of such instances does not have a significant impact on the final figures.
5. Contracted forms are preserved and counted as single words.

Example (1) is an extract from the interview conducted by Craig Ferguson (CF) and serves as a visual demonstration of some of the points listed above. The number of words in (1) is 26.

- (1) CF: yeah the whole time the whole time yeah no it's it's it's crazy zone defense after that
MM: you got an eight-year-old
CF: huh
MM: you got an eight-year-old

Table 3 gives in figures the character of the speakers' participation in each interview. The figures in the second column show how many words were uttered by each speaker during the interview in percentage. The average turn-taking interval was calculated from the total talking time and the total number of turns. The average talking speed for each interview (words per second) was calculated from the total talking time and the total number of words.

TABLE 3: CALCULATED FIGURES

Talk show	Host/guest verbal participation (%)	Turn-taking interval (s)	Words per second
Lopez	15/85	8.86	2.45
Kimmel	34/66	4.37	3.66
Fallon	34/66	4.42	3.75
O'Brien	44/56	3.39	3.56
Letterman	48/52	3.62	3.22
Ferguson	55/45	2.93	3.44

The figures show that the host’s participation may vary from 15 percent to 55 percent in terms of the number of words uttered. This would suggest two extremes that mark the boundaries of the host’s participation in an interview. At one end, the host predominantly joins the audience in playing the role of a listener, while at the other end, the host shares the talking time more or less equally with the guest. This also reflects in the average turn-taking interval, which grows as the verbal participation of the host lessens. The relation between the host’s participation and the overall talking speed would have to be supported by a larger amount of data. Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice that in George Lopez’s interview, where the host’s verbal presence is extremely low, the talking speed is also the lowest. One hypothesis might be that as the host steps back and provides more space in the interaction for the guest, the guest relaxes and speaks more slowly. However, when both speakers participate equally, they intuit less time they are likely to have for each turn and their speech becomes faster. Furthermore, the fact that the overall talking speed in the other five interviews is very similar suggests that there might be a pace of interaction generally maintained in talk show interviews.

A difference among some of the hosts in relation to their vocal and non-vocal activities was immediately noticeable, especially in their usage of response tokens and their non-vocal counterparts such as nods or raised eyebrows. In order to identify the higher or lower tendency of the hosts to use relatively short responses, turns shorter than five words were counted and the final figures are given in Table 4:

TABLE 4: SHORT TURNS

Talk show	Host (%)	Guest (s)
Lopez	70	37.5
Kimmel	29.3	45
Fallon	30.6	40.4
O'Brien	44.2	34.2
Letterman	29.9	44.6
Ferguson	31	51.2

George Lopez and Craig Ferguson seem to represent two opposite extremes in the role of an interviewer on a celebrity talk show. George Lopez's verbal participation in the interaction is only 15 percent, leaving 85 percent of all talk to the guest. Moreover, 70 percent of all his turns are shorter than five words, which means that his participation predominantly takes the form of brief contributions. A closer examination of his turns reveals that they can be mostly classified as evaluation of ("I love it") or agreement with ("yes") the content of the guest's turns, or they serve to acknowledge and encourage the guest to continue speaking ("yeah yeah yeah"). However, it is important to note that Lopez compensates for his moderate verbal interaction by including frequent non-vocal activities such as pronounced changes of facial expressions in relation to the guest's talk. Non-vocal conduct is a prominent feature that deserves further examination.

Craig Ferguson, on the other hand, participates more than equally (55 percent) in the verbal interaction with the guest (45 percent). In comparison with George Lopez, he uses far fewer short turns (31 percent). As a result, the guest's turns shorten, thus approximating the forms of talk produced by the host and the guest. Ferguson rarely uses non-vocal activities to replace vocal response tokens, which leads, among other things, to a higher occurrence of overlapping speech.

The case study presented in this paper examined some of the ways in which the host of a talk show influences the form of discourse produced within the conventions of the TV program genre. Given the dominant role that is pre-allocated to the host in the institutional setting of a TV studio, the host is expected to fulfill the traditional task of an interviewer, i.e., to ask questions, but also to add a personal touch that would ensure the audience's preference of their show to someone else's. The limits within which the host may operate have been defined in terms of the institutional and conversational features of talk shows, and the host's options as far as turn-taking frequency, length of turns and the character of turns have been investigated. The findings show that these features of interaction alone ensure the host various degrees of verbal presence and visibility. More balanced contributions of the talk show speakers, i.e., the host and the guest, tip the scale in favor of conversational talk. This may be the reason why Craig Ferguson is considered to have "made the show feel intimate even when nothing intimate was being shared" (Lloyd 2014). In contrast with that, the host's minimizing their contributions and offering more talking time to the guest meets the institutional requirements of this particular TV genre as well as the expectations of the audience.

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APPROACHING TRANSLATION EQUIVALENTS: FROM REFERENTIAL ANALYSES TO A WORD-FIELD THEORY CLASSIFICATION (IN CZECH AND ENGLISH)

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ABSTRACT: The cross-linguistic perspective in the analysis of the semantic structure of words is a well-established procedure. Recently, a strict differentiation between referentially-based semantic analyses and purely language-immanent classifications has been blurred in pragmatic, communicative and cognitive approaches. The resulting extensive definitions, while relevant for contrastive linguistic analysis, language teaching and historical semantics, are lacking in applicable generalizations. This critical analysis of the referential approaches to lexical and semantic definitions, in comparison with the results of the word-field theory classification, demonstrates that, despite the recent mainstream methods, there is still space for profitable language-immanent classification.

KEYWORDS: translation equivalents; English; Czech; referential analysis; word-field theory classification

FROM LANGUAGE-IMMANENT TO REFERENTIAL ANALYSES AND THE WORD-FIELD THEORY CLASSIFICATION

The significance of translation equivalents for an analysis of the semantic structure of words has not been disputed. Lyons closes the chapter on the hierarchical structure of vocabulary by stating that “at the present time semantic theory can do little more than appeal to the bilingual speaker for intuitive judgments of equivalence in the area of ‘cultural overlap’” (1971, 458). His opinion is echoed by Aijmer, who admits the linguistic relevance of translation equivalents when stressing that they are “more accessible and reliable as sources of meaning and uses than native informants since they are produced by trained translators without any theoretical concerns in mind” (2004, 58).

While Aijmer applies the cross-linguistic perspective to the analysis of modal verbs, Lyons considers the vocabulary which is organized in the specific language by the structure of the culture; the vocabulary is therefore anthropocentric as well as culture-bound. The resulting anisomorphism allows for identifying “the hyponyms of a certain term in one language without being able to find an equivalent for the superordinate term” (Lyons 1971, 457). This observation was later fruitfully applied by Lipka (2002) in his word-field theory classification of lexical fields.

Lyons adheres to the methodological principle that “sense is not held invariant in

translation (so there is no synonymy between the words of different languages) but a greater or lesser degree of equivalence in the ‘application’ of words” (1971, 458). This pragmatic reliance on the skills of translators has led to the defining of semantic fields as “simply denoting that the adverbs of modal certainty belong together semantically, without specifying in what way they relate” (Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer 2007, 23).

Although the hierarchical structures of nouns may be easier to define than those of adverbs, Lyons believes that all the words in the same semantic field are definable in terms of the structural relations that they contract with one another. These relations can be described by a componential analysis which is based on the emphasis on languages as relational structures (1977, 107). However, translation equivalents continue to be a cornerstone of Simon-Vandenberg’s and Aijmer’s (2007) linguistic analysis when they consider the semantic field of modal certainty in a corpus-based study of English adverbs. Instead of applying a componential analysis, they emphasize the method of cross-linguistic studies. Their aim is to construct a semantic field of certainty citing as the principle the method of translations and back translations between as many languages as possible, which would result in “a network of relations between expression and meaning” (Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer 2007, 1).

Their claim that a picture of semantic properties can be obtained by looking at their translations may have been relevant in the 1970s when semantic theory had to appeal to the bilingual speaker for a judgment of equivalence. However, even then Lyons stressed that a semantic field is a lexical category, a synonym for the term “lexical field” which includes all the words semantically related in any sense. Again, Lyons relates semantic field theory directly to differences in sociocultural meaning systems. (1977, 253).

Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer’s (2007) method is based on the belief that translations can contribute to the identification of the multiple senses of words in the source language. Instead of comparing the relational structures of different languages, they explore a larger number of different dimensions including syntax, pragmatics and genre, applying an extensive definition, a definition by examples. This approach was tested in a study by Řeřicha (2014), only to conclude once again that an analysis of the translation equivalents in the target language (TL) makes evident the structural anisomorphism with the different TL translation equivalents, signifying differences in the lexical and grammatical structures of the source language (SL) and TL.

An important step in the search for semantic relation within lexical fields has been taken by Lipka, who strictly differentiated referential semantics and a purely language-immanent approach including Hjelmslev’s componential analysis. Lipka has recorded in length the decomposition of lexemes into semantic elements based on the observation that a specific series of words have certain meaning components in common citing, cf., “male female > (adult) x non-adult” (2002, 116–17). This decomposition has been primarily used with nouns, although Lipka applies lexical decomposition to verb-particle constructions as well, concluding that “it was found useful to employ certain very general semantic features and components which are probably universal. Apart

from the formators CAUSE, BE, and HAVE, these are: +Deg, ±Dynamic, ± Inside, +NegEv, ±Prox, ±Vert, and Remove” (1972, 228).

Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer (2007) define semantic decomposition as an approach to specify “the features on several parameters distinguishing between adverbs ... to establish similarities and differences between elements in a semantic field and has the direct aim to answer the question why an element fulfils certain functions and not others.” Their features include the position in the clause, modal status, discourse function, indexical stance, register, connecting features and translations. Lexical items and patterns are “also crucial in the study of modal adverbs, the patterning considers superordinate relations and hyponymy and their syntagmatic relationships” (Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer 2007, 15–21). However, the paradigmatic relations in their analysis of epistemic adverbs are not further considered.

Lipka as early as 2002 observed that “the focus of mainstream linguistics has definitely changed and the interest, especially in semantics, has shifted from highly formalized theories to pragmatic, communicative and cognitive approaches” (2002, 121). The approach of Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer (2007), although briefly referring to componential analysis and patterns of hyponymy, is an example of this shift in interest.

Such different approaches to semantic decomposition with the support of translation equivalents result either in a list of general semantic features and components, or in extensive definition, a definition by examples.

An earlier attempt by Řeřicha (2014) to adapt translation equivalents for a mainstream semantic analysis of the grammaticalized modal *to be able to* similarly resulted in an extensive definition, with the Czech translation equivalents confirming the predominant grammatical function of *to be able to* as a sort of analytical marker of the perfective aspect. The closest approach made by Řeřicha’s analysis of the TL translation equivalents to any general semantic features was the suggestion of the importance of several generic contexts which are marked by the presence or absence of an obstacle (2014, 120).

Translation equivalents can be a useful tool in semantic analysis in as much as they will often explicitly express the meanings implicit in a specific source language lexical unit. The shortcoming of this method is its descriptiveness, extensive definitions, if not followed by a language-immanent interpretation as evidenced in the results of the semantic analysis of the grammaticalized modal *to be able to*. It still remains to be established to what extent the componential analysis, hitherto successful in the hierarchical structures of nouns, is applicable to other parts of speech.

Later, some approaches to the semantic structure of words, supported by Czech-English translation equivalents applied by Řeřicha and Livingstone (2012), will be critically considered and compared to the results obtained from Lipka’s language-immanent word-field theory classification adapted for this aim.

The very presupposition of semantic complexity determines the approaches limiting the scope of analysis. The analysis by Řeřicha and Livingstone (2012) is a case study of a dozen Czech words and collocations that are frequently translated into English but

the English translation equivalents of which acquire additional semantic components in the specific context of the informative and promotional style. Their approach aims for an extensive definition, a definition by examples, focusing on a description of the English translation equivalents. The aim is a further analysis of the English translation equivalents of the SL lexical units, which translato­logists would classify as culture-specific in way of explanation.

The English equivalents of the semantically-complex SL lexical units obviously cause some legibility issues when they are a case of the hyponyms of a certain term in one language without a superordinate equivalent. However, Řeřicha and Livingstone (2012) do not approach the legibility issues of TL translation equivalents as the case of a neglected lexical analysis in the respective languages. The approach of their case study is an empirical one noting that the English equivalents of the complex SL lexical units are in many cases more specific than the SL lexical units, they seem to have an added modality and they are often in the wrong register. The approach also presupposes a high level of semantic complexity, combining translato­logy and stylistics. Such a translato­logical approach limits the interpretation possibilities and, reflecting Baker (1992, 22–23), the study concludes that the source language Czech is semantically complex with the TL equivalents differing in expressive meaning (Řeřicha and Livingstone 2012, 70).

A REFERENTIAL APPROACH TO LEXICAL SEMANTICS

The limits of Řeřicha's and Livingstone's (2012) and similar approaches based on the three levels previously described, 1) a culture-specific, 2) stylistic and 3) componential classifications, will be illustrated with the following analysis of the translation equivalents of the SL lexeme *chata*.

The classifications comparing Czech → English translation equivalents based on the applied concept of the semantic field rely on a shared segment of reality or a common general phenomenon, on objectively verifiable extralinguistic relationships, and therefore means applying a referential approach to lexical semantics. In both cases a theoretically grounded language-immanent approach, e.g., in Lyons's definition of the semantic field as a lexical category, is missing (Lyons 1977, 107).

The Czech SL lexical unit *chata*¹ has the semantic components *simple, roughly built, low, wooden, recreational*. The English *chalet* shares with the Czech *chata* the semantic components of *small, wooden, dwelling for holiday-makers*. The English *chalet*, however, has additional meanings missing in the SL, i.e., *a house or villa built in the style of a Swiss cottage* with the Czech equivalent *luxusní švýcarská horská chata*.

Of additional significance are the shared semantic components of a *holiday camp chalet* where the Czech *chata* or its diminutive *chatka* would be used in the same context.

1 The semantic components and definitions of the TL translation equivalents of *chata* and the prepositional phrase *u nás/k nám* analysed in this article were suggested by David Livingstone during detailed consultations drawing on his long-term experience with Czech-English translations. The available bilingual dictionary entries and corpora did not seem to provide adequate details for this specific analysis.

The English term *hut* has a military or shepherding connotation and does not have the semantic component *recreational purpose*. The English term *lodge* has several shared collocations. Both *lovecká chata*, *hunting lodge*, for example, refer to *a house as a temporary abode in the hunting season*.

Cottage as a translation equivalent to *chalupa* and *chata* (as *a second home*) may have in British English the prevailing connotations of idyllic luxury. Translating it as *weekend house* would be even more problematic as it would imply a level of prosperity wherein the owner would be able to afford not only *a weekday house*, but also *a weekend house*. *Summer house* or *chalet* might also be a suitable compromise for *chata* with the term being particularly common in Scandinavia and sharing many of the connotations with the Czech *chata*.

The English translation equivalents of *chata* → *chalet* and *summer house* have the common semantic components *simple*, *roughly built*, *low*, *wooden*, *recreational*. When their denotations differ, adjectives are added specifying the purpose, *lovecký*, *švýcarský*, *horský*, or a diminutive describing the size is used, *chatka*. As noted, the shortcoming of this method is its descriptiveness, extensive definitions, if not followed by a language-immanent interpretation. However, Lipka noted that the referential analysis considering semantic features is useful for a contrastive linguistic analysis, language teaching and historical semantics (2002, 133).

SPECIFICATION AND GENERALIZATION GAPS (A WORD-FIELD THEORY CLASSIFICATION)

The theoretical assumptions resulting from Lyons's (1971) notes on anisomorphism, which acknowledge that there may be hyponyms in one language without an equivalent for the superordinate term in another, was developed by Lipka (2002). What has been so far presented as an issue concerning a selection from TL translation equivalents, which can however be objectified by a comparison of the SL lexical item and its TL translation equivalents, may be considered as different hierarchical relations of meaning between SL and TL. Lipka suggests that there is a difference between the lexical field (consisting of simple or complex lexemes) and the word-field (exclusively containing morphologically simple items).

Each item of the word-field must be in direct opposition in the same syntactic slot, i.e., belong to the same word class; it must have at least one specific component common with all the other items of the same word-field; and field membership must be established by objective procedures (2002, 168).

If anisomorphism occurs and a hyponym is missing on any level, this is a specification gap, while the lack of an archilexeme may be termed a generalization gap. The analysis focuses on morphologically-simple lexical items, as the lexical (specification or generalization) gap can only be proved to exist with simple words. If complex items entered a word-field, it would be possible to close the gaps at any time.

The word-field theory classification will now be illustrated by an analysis of the SL *chata* and its translation equivalents *chalet*, *summer house*, *lodge*, *cottage* ... to provide a comparison with the referential analysis of *chata*. The classification of the word-field

of the translation equivalent of the SL *chata* is one-directional only, not considering the generalization or specification gaps in Czech.

The word-field classification has the following structure:

chata → ∅ (a missing archilexeme)

chata → *chalet*

chata → *summer house*

chata → *summer chalet*

chata → *weekend cottage*

lovecká chata → *hunting lodge*

turistická chata → *hiking lodge*

horská chata → *mountain cabin*

There is not a corresponding TL archilexeme for the SL *chata* unless we consider the complex lexical unit *a small wooden dwelling for recreational purposes*, confirming Lipka's rule that a complex lexeme can always close the generalization gap. The translation equivalents *house*, *cottage*, *lodge* and *cabin* are not in a hyponymic relationship. They have logical relations between them but constitute a lexical set, based possibly on an objectively verifiable extralinguistic relationship.

REFERENTIAL AND WORD-FIELD THEORY ANALYSIS OF OTHER PARTS OF SPEECH THAN NOUNS

For an analysis of the translation equivalents, other parts of speech must be considered. The referential lexical and semantic analysis of the SL and the word-field theory classification are applied to the SL genitive of the Czech 1st person pl. *my* in the prepositional phrase *k nám/u nás* to test the potential of a comparison of hierarchical structures in SL and TL languages.

The referential approach to lexical semantics confirms that the prepositional phrase *u nás/k nám* does not translate into English because of its specific meaning emphasizing the environment where the speaker lives, while in English it implies *physical proximity*, cf., *come to us* may be an order or a promise of help. However, the possible compensation with the possessive pronoun *our* suggests *a family run business*, cf., *u nás na farmě najdete* → *you will have the opportunity to see ... on our farm* (implies family ownership). The environment denotation may be stressed: *tady u nás se budete mít dobře* → *you will have a great time here*, *posadte se u nás a ochutnejte* → *stop by/check out our restaurant and sample ...*

In examples such as *léčí se u nás* → *are treated in our hospital*, the possessive pronoun *our* does not necessarily express private ownership, but implies a sense of belonging.

The word-field theory classifying the anisomorphism of the SL phrase *u nás/k nám* and its TL equivalents illustrates a TL generalization gap, cf.,

u nás (+environment of the speaker) → ∅ (a missing archilexeme)

→ *here* (+ location/environment)

- *stop by our (restaurant)* (+ ownership)
- *in our (hospital)* (+ sense of belonging)
- *on our (farm)* (+ family ownership)
- k nám* (+environment of the speaker) → ∅ (a missing archilexeme)
- *to us* (+ promise, order + physical proximity)

These equivalents do not constitute a logically-ordered hierarchy. The resulting lexical set may consist of → *here* and → ∅ only as the other TL equivalents are complex lexemes.

The SL genitive of the 1st person pl. *my* has, in the contexts of the database, the additional connotation of *environment of the speaker* with a missing archilexeme in the TL because the SL *u nás/k nám* as the TL equivalent *to us* has the additional connotation of *physical proximity*. The unmarked SL *přijďte k nám* does not have the connotation of *promise/order*. The back-translation of *Come to us*. might be the emphatically marked *Pojď sem!*

The TL unmarked equivalents refer to the location only (+ *here*), while the marked equivalents with the possessive *our* have the additional connotations of

- + *ownership/belonging*,
- + *promise/threat* which are absent in the SL texts.

The TL equivalents with the additional connotations elevated to the place of the TL archilexeme with the intention of an explicit expression of the SL genitive or dative of the 1st person pl. *my* replace the denotations of + *location/environment of the speaker* by the marked connotations + *ownership/belonging* + *promise/threat*.

CONCLUSION

The referential lexical and semantic analysis and the word-field theory classification of the TL translation equivalents of the SL sb *chata* reveal its culture-specificity. However, the reasons for the TL translation equivalent issues may be described as a combination of a missing TL archilexeme and a missing hyponymic structure resulting in the selection of specific TL translation equivalents. The translator's ambition to substitute the missing TL archilexeme with one of the specific equivalents from the lexical set results in legibility issues with the TL translation equivalents.

The word-field theory classification of the prepositional phrase *u nás/k nám* demonstrates its contribution to the translation equivalents issues by defining a missing TL archilexeme and the impact of the attempts at its substitution. The TL translation equivalents – which were in the case of the sb. *chata* differentiated by additional semantic components – are in the case of the prepositional phrase with the pronoun *u nás/k nám* differentiated by the additional connotations of *physical proximity*, *ownership* and *promise/threat*. The translator's ambition to substitute the missing TL archilexeme with a specific equivalent from the lexical set results in the different modality of the TL text.

The presented critical analysis of the referential approaches to lexical and semantic analysis compared to the results of Lipka's (2002) word-field theory classification would seem to prove that, in spite of the mainstream approaches shifting from highly formalized analyses to pragmatic, communicative and cognitive ones, there is still some space for a language-immanent classification.

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LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

NEUROMANCING SINGULARITY: FROM CYBERPUNK TO GNR TECHNOLOGIES

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ABSTRACT: This paper offers an analysis of William Gibson's 1984 cyberpunk classic *Neuromancer* from the perspective of the future as proposed by Ray Kurzweil in his 2005 *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*. Relying upon the developments in 1990s and 2000s technology and science, Kurzweil, a renowned artificial intelligence expert and futurologist, charted future evolutionary development to the point of merging biological and non-biological intelligence, i.e., "singularity." *Neuromancer* was written at a time when the concepts crucial to Kurzweil's vision of the future were practically non-existent. It is therefore remarkable how closely the reality in the novel corresponds to Kurzweil's predictions. In my paper I first present the degree of correspondence between Kurzweil's informed projections and the invented concepts in Gibson's 1984 novel. I then explain the similarities in terms of the hitherto established governing principles of the postmodern epoch.

KEYWORDS: cyberpunk; singularity; genetics; nanotechnology; robotics; hyperreality

INTRODUCTION

In 1975, James Gunn famously stated that "[w]e live, indisputably, in a science fiction world."¹ As apocalyptic and historically determined as the proclamation may sound, similar claims could in all sincerity have been made at any point since the advent of modern science fiction in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, which, in contrast to its predecessors, grounded its visions of the future in the existing technological and scientific discoveries. The rate of development of science and technology over the following century has inevitably turned the world of each coming generation into what would have seemed like science fiction only a decade or two earlier. In this respect, Gunn's statement appears more metaphoric than literal, using the trope of the genre to express fascination with the mid-1970s technological and scientific achievements.

Four decades later, we are still living in a science fiction world. Now, however, the statement seems distinctly more literal than metaphoric: this world is not *like* science fiction, it is a world *of* science fiction. As it indeed should be, one may add, considering the hitherto observable governing principles of the so-called postmodern epoch implicit in the functioning of postindustrial societies and economies after the Second World War. This paper aims at clarifying this point with an example, combining my research into how the postmodern paradigm affects literature with my love of literary cyberpunk and interest in how the theoretical assumptions regarding postmodernity

1 James E. Gunn, *Alternate Worlds: The Illustrated History of Science Fiction* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 13.

materialise in practice.

The investigation which has led to these lines was triggered by a rather trivial event. Halfway through Ray Kurzweil's 2005 futurologist bible *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*, it suddenly struck me that what I was reading is fundamentally a minute explanation, supported with relevant data, of how the world evolved into the one described in William Gibson's 1984 *Neuromancer*, the seminal cyberpunk novel. My astonishment at the realisation was owed to the fact that Kurzweil is an award-winning inventor, a prominent computer and artificial intelligence expert, as well as an influential futurologist, whose assessments and calculations are founded on the existing trends in the development of contemporary technology and science. William Gibson, on the other hand, is a full time writer with a bachelor's degree in English. His name is practically synonymous with the 1980s cyberpunk movement, and rightly so, as his short-story collection *Burning Chrome* (1981) and novel *Neuromancer* provided the blueprint for what were to become the emblems of cyberpunk writing and aesthetics: computers, computerized environments and distinctive stock characters, including artificial intelligences and personality constructs. But even while feeding digital fantasies of a myriad of aspiring computer aficionados, Gibson wrote *Neuromancer* on a typewriter, finding inspiration for his hi-tech literary worlds in Alfred Bester's 1950s fiction, William Burroughs's *Interzone*, and the Velvet Underground's musical renderings of the underbelly of New York.²

Keeping all of these facts on Kurzweil and Gibson in mind, I will be addressing two questions over the following pages: To what extent do Kurzweil's predictions, grounded in technology, research and research trends of the 1990s and 2000s, coincide with Gibson's invented cyberpunk *topoi*? And how is it possible that Gibson's amateur extrapolations of the early 1980s technology so accurately coincide with predictions based predominantly on scientific research trends and technology of the last twenty-five years?

KURZWEIL'S SINGULARITY AND GNR TECHNOLOGIES

Tackling these questions requires a brief clarification of to what the crucial word singularity in the title of Kurzweil's book refers. The term is most commonly used with regard to its meaning in mathematics, where it denotes a value that transcends any final limitation.³ In physics, the concept is generally used with reference to black holes, describing the point in which the curvature of space-time is infinite.⁴ In both cases, singularity marks the locus beyond which existing theoretical models no longer apply. Kurzweil's usage of the term metaphorises each of these common uses and as such relies primarily on information theorist John von Neumann's suggestion that the pace of technological progress seems to be leading to a point of singularity that entails

2 See William Gibson, *Neuromancer* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 318.

3 See Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 22.

4 See Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1988), 46.

that the human race's fate is unpredictable. More specifically, this means that human affairs will be changed beyond our ability to predict or imagine them.⁵ As well, he relies on Vernor Vinge's adoption of the term to describe "the point in history where accelerating technological progress becomes near infinite and thus unknowable."⁶

According to Kurzweil, humanity will reach this point in 2045.⁷ His calculations rely on his theory of the law of accelerating returns, "the inherent acceleration of the rate of evolution, with technological evolution as a continuation of biological evolution."⁸ This means that each subsequent improvement exponentially accelerates the growth to the point where it will be so extreme that technology will seem "to be expanding at infinite speed."⁹ The rate of growth depends on the order and complexity of information patterns, according to which Kurzweil divides the history of evolution into six epochs: from the information patterns emerging in atomic structures (Epoch One), information patterns in DNA (Epoch Two), information in neural patterns (Epoch Three), information in hardware and software designs (Epoch Four), to the point of assimilation of biological principles into the technological base and the subsequent merging of technology and human intelligence, instigating singularity in Epoch Five. Based on the directions the present developments are taking, Kurzweil also speculates on Epoch Six, when the computational potential of matter and energy in the universe will be employed, resulting in an intelligent universe.¹⁰ From that point on, the evolution can no longer be tracked with existing theoretical models.

Kurzweil grounds his predictions and calculations in the discoveries and research trends in the three fastest developing and most generously financed disciplines of the last twenty-five years: genetics, nanotechnology, and robotics. These are, due to their progressive overlapping, commonly referred to as GNR technologies. In terms of genetics and biotechnology in general, Kurzweil primarily relies on the ability to manipulate the genome, an area of research which has been on the rise since the launching of the Human Genome Project in 1990.

Nanotechnology as molecular manufacturing that can turn information into products was first theoretically proposed by Eric Drexler in his doctoral dissertation, published in 1992 as *Nanosystems*.¹¹ In the two decades since, nanotechnology has become the fastest developing scientific discipline. Considering the implications of the ability to transmit instructions from a data store to nano-assemblers, or *nanobots*, constructing what is coded, the attention nanotechnology is receiving is hardly surprising.

Kurzweil's interest in robotics is primarily focused on the development of strong artificial intelligence (AI), which refers to non-biological intelligence that surpasses

5 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 10.

6 Vernor Vinge, "The Coming Technological Singularity: How to Survive in the Post-Human Era," in *Vision-21: Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering in the Era of Cyberspace*, ed. NASA (Cleveland: NASA Lewis Research Center, 1993), 11–12.

7 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 136.

8 Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 7.

9 Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 24.

10 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 15.

11 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 228.

human intelligence. Throughout the past seventy years, various approaches have been employed, with relatively little success. However, the developments in genetics and nanotechnology provided the instruments for what Kurzweil calls the reverse engineering of the human brain,¹² which involves the mapping and coding of the models and processes of human neural system by means of nanobots. The 2013 launching of the highly acclaimed international Human Brain Project, with the objective to decipher the code of the human brain using nanotechnology,¹³ on the one hand justifies the reliance of Kurzweil's predictions on this approach, and, on the other, ultimately corroborates his 2006 vision of future developments in the field.

GNR TECHNOLOGIES AND GIBSON'S *NEUROMANCER*

The publication of *Neuromancer* in 1984 provided the then marginal Movement with a paradigmatic work which elegantly assimilated the tendencies of the Movement into a captivating story, rendered in a fast-paced, MTV-like barrage with images.¹⁴ The combination attracted the attention of the general public, which hailed the Movement and William Gibson, its most prominent author, as the Next Big Thing. The assimilation into the 1980s pop-culture required replacing the rather unremarkable name Movement with the catchier alternative of cyberpunk, provided by Gardner Dozois a few months after the publication of *Neuromancer*.¹⁵

Neuromancer, the first novel of the Sprawl trilogy, clearly reflects cyberpunk's preoccupation with the use of the then most advanced technology, i.e., electronics and computers, to undermine the structures of power, usually represented by multinational corporations. The story essentially follows the efforts of two independent AI's, Wintermute and Neuromancer, to bypass restraining mechanisms and evade human control, merge, and connect with similar entities in the universe, thus achieving the absolute status of a transcendence. In order to achieve this goal, they engage Case, a *console cowboy* whose hacking abilities were compromised by his employers as a punishment for selling their information. Wintermute has him cured, and Case, assisted by operative Molly and ROM construct Dixie Flatline, successfully accomplishes the task.

I will now concentrate on the first task I set out to accomplish, on determining the extent to which Kurzweil's informed predictions coincide with Gibson's invented concepts and motifs. In order to establish the degree of correspondence, I distributed Kurzweil's proposals into seven categories, which coincide with the three disciplines in which they are grounded – biotechnology, nanotechnology and robotics – as well as

12 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 144.

13 Radovan Kozmos, "Prvi milijoni za milijarde nevronov," *Delo*, April 11, 2013, <http://www.delo.si/druzba/znanost/prvi-milijoni-za-milijarde-nevronov.html>.

14 The Movement consisted of a group of young science fiction authors aspiring to subvert the obsolete models of traditional science fiction and to modernize the genre by thematising the overlapping of worlds of cutting-edge technology and a trendised contemporary underground.

15 See Lewis Shiner, "Inside the Movement: Past, Present, and Future," in *Fiction 2000: Cyberpunk and the Future of Narrative*, ed. George Slusser and Tom Shippey (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 17.

their synergies. Such a categorization enabled me to isolate only those concepts which could not have been predicted by extrapolating the early 1980s technological and scientific discoveries. My analysis of the novel in terms of the framework presented resulted in roughly fifty instances of structural or functional correspondence. My hesitance in stating the exact amount is owed to the fact that in some cases it was impossible to determine whether the concepts in the novel conceptually matched Kurzweil's, e.g., the functioning of the holographic cabaret of Mr. Peter Riviera.¹⁶ At any rate, the main concern of my investigation was not the quantity of comparable ideas but the quality of correspondence between Gibson and Kurzweil. In this regard, I will only present one or two qualitative counterparts in each category.

The first category under scrutiny is biotechnology and genetics. The most obvious consequence of the ability to manipulate the cell nuclei is cloning, which was successfully performed on a mammal – Dolly the sheep – for the first time in 1996. Fully aware of the ethical concerns regarding the method, Kurzweil considers its potential primarily in terms of therapeutic cloning. The presence of clones in Gibson, e.g., 3Jane Tessier-Ashpool, is not exactly a *novum* in science fiction, as the motif occurs already in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, for example. However, the method of rejuvenation of 135-year-old Julius Deane, which involves, among other things, re-setting his DNA code every few months,¹⁷ is original, and practically synonymous with Kurzweil's predictions based on the ability to read and eventually manipulate the genome, i.e., life-extension by regulating the expression of degenerate genes.¹⁸

The next category focuses on the functional and structural correspondence in terms of nanotechnology. As mentioned, the theoretical proposal of the possibilities offered by manipulating materials on atomic and molecular levels dates back to the second half of the 1980s, when Drexler was completing his doctoral dissertation. It is therefore somewhat uncanny that one of the characters in *Neuromancer* explains the functioning of the matte black sphere which can be used as a grenade, hand-cuffs, or a sex-toy as "[s]omething to do with the molecules."¹⁹ Twenty years later the development of molecular manufacturing allowed Kurzweil to predict the production of smart fabrics that could adapt to the environment or to any special need of the wearer through molecular alterations of the material.²⁰ Interestingly enough, the clothing made of mimetic polycarbon worn by Molly during one of her illicit exploits functions in much the same way – that is, it adapts to the environment based on its wearer's requirements.²¹

The third category of correspondences pertains to the conceptual similarities with regards to robotics, primarily the development of artificial intelligence. According to Kurzweil, the reverse engineering of the human brain should ultimately result in software capable of electronically enacting all the processes in our brain, including

16 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 166–69.

17 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 20.

18 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 213.

19 Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 255.

20 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 332.

21 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 74.

those involved in learning, and processing experience.²² In other words, the functioning of such AI would rely upon fundamentally human parameters. Human-like AIs are not exactly a novelty in science fiction;²³ however, *Wintermute* and *Neuromancer* are human-like on a whole new level. *Wintermute*, for instance, compares its *compulsion* to merge with something bigger to that of salmon to swim upstream, which implies instinct.²⁴ *Neuromancer*'s assertion, "I create my own personality. Personality is my medium,"²⁵ implies it is capable of learning, experiencing and sensing.

The next four categories comprise the predictable outcomes of the overlapping of genetics, nanotechnology and robotics. As far as foreseeable results of the synergy between genetics and nanotechnology go, the correspondences between Kurzweil and Gibson can be found in the possibility of growing tissues and organs by turning skin cells into other cell types, which would be performed by nanobots.²⁶ In *Neuromancer*, one can find a wide variety of instances which employ the same logic: from vat-grown organs (e.g., Wage's Nikon eyes)²⁷ and people (e.g., ninja assassin)²⁸ to vat-grown steaks.²⁹ Another possibility which also invites consideration in the given context is that of bodily clean-ups and replacements. These would be performed by nanobots injected into the bloodstream, from where they would access target cells and cell-nuclei to repair, re-build, or replace whatever would require an intervention – from blood cells to various tissues, organs and bones.³⁰ The mysterious healing of Case's handicap by blood, spinal fluid and pancreas replacement conceptually fits the description.³¹

The most obvious implications of the synergy between genetics and robotics concern the possibilities of AI diagnostics and therapeutics. Digital tools, which can perform differential diagnostics and suggest possible treatments, already exist,³² and will undoubtedly become only more efficient with further developments in the field. An obvious example of employing AI to solve medical problems in *Neuromancer* is when *Wintermute* provides the instructions to reverse Case's ostensibly irreversible handicap.³³

In the category of the overlapping of nanotechnology and robotics, Kurzweil's proposition of self-organizing swarms of small robots to be used in the military to minimize human casualties (which he has been helping to develop) directly corresponds to the *Wintermute*-controlled robots who assist Case when he is trying to escape the Turing agents.³⁴

22 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 293–95.

23 Two random examples that come to mind are HAL 9000 from Arthur C. Clarke's novel *2001: Space Odyssey* (1968), and MU-TH-UR 6000, a.k.a. Mother, from Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979).

24 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 246.

25 Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 305.

26 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 212.

27 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 33.

28 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 94.

29 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 164.

30 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 253–55.

31 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 44.

32 E.g., Isabel or DiagnosisPro.

33 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 191–92.

34 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 333; See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 195–96.

The most numerous – and also the hardest to rationalize – correspondences are found in the last category, which comprises the probable outcomes of the joint development of the GNR technologies. One of the central motives of not only *Neuromancer* but cyberpunk in general is that of the brain-computer interface, i.e., connecting the brain directly to the matrix. While Case's *jacking in* is enabled by dermatrodes, connecting his neural system to the computer via cable, Kurzweil's interfacing is facilitated by the nanobots in the brain, communicating with the web via wi-fi. The common denominator, i.e., electronic neural stimulation and translation of neural signals into a computer code, is, however, the same. The implication of such interfacing is that our brain will become seamlessly connected with artificial intelligence, and our minds will undergo massive expansion as soon as the early 2030s.³⁵ In *Neuromancer*, the desire of 3Jane's mother to establish such a symbiosis between humans and AIs prompted the construction of Wintermute and Neuromancer.³⁶

The mind expansion that Kurzweil envisions offers several possibilities. The most exciting is perhaps the ability to upload skills and knowledge directly to the brain by sending relevant information from the data store to the nanobots in the brain, which then translate the information received into electronic impulses triggering the processes of learning and memorising in the brain.³⁷ In *Neuromancer*, the electronic stimulation of the processes of learning is facilitated by inserting a microchip into a slot behind the ear.³⁸ As coding and transmission of information work both ways, Kurzweil also envisions the possibility of coding one's personality and uploading it into a virtual environment.³⁹ In *Neuromancer*, there are two instances of comparable personality constructs. Dixie Flatline is a ROM-based electronic reprint of a deceased hacker, whom Case is carrying around on a cassette,⁴⁰ while Armitage's personality was constructed by Wintermute from Colonel Corto's edited memories.⁴¹

The concept of virtual reality (henceforth VR) will also be significantly altered, enabling a wide variety of possibilities. From the perspective of *Neuromancer*, the most interesting one is perhaps the possibility to plug into someone else's sensory-emotional beam.⁴² Just as today we post selfies on Facebook, so we will, according to Kurzweil, share the flows of our sensory experiences. Gibson's *simstim*, allowing Case to follow Molly's action by plugging into her sensorium, functions in exactly the same way.⁴³ Another possibility would be to select the extent of immersion into VR. By shutting the processing of the data from our sensory receptors and relying only on impulses from the VR, we will be able to move to VR completely.⁴⁴ Case, too, spends significant amounts of time in the electronic environments of the matrix, conversing

35 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 316.

36 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 271.

37 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 198–201.

38 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 73.

39 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 200.

40 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 96, 99.

41 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 241.

42 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 316.

43 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 71–72.

44 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 319.

with Wintermute and Neuromancer, while his physical body lies unconscious behind the computer deck.⁴⁵ His tête-à-têtes with Wintermute in the physical reality, where Wintermute manifests itself as junkie Lonny Zane,⁴⁶ on the other hand, bring to mind Kurzweil's description of *foglets*, "nanobots [...] that can connect themselves to replicate any physical structure," conveying "the morphing qualities of virtual reality into real reality."⁴⁷

Let us now turn our attention from our future minds to our future bodies, at least as Kurzweil envisions them. Manipulation of the aging process, which results in biotechnological immortality, seems to be his principal concern. In this respect, he emphasises the potential of AI-controlled nanobots in the bloodstream to replace degenerate or defective genes, tissues and organs, optimize the metabolism and rejuvenate cells by, for example, multiplying telomere beads in the chromosomes.⁴⁸ Our bodies will eventually consist of intelligent cells capable of automatically regrowing human parts and fluids to the point that we will no longer require most of our organs, as their functions will be performed by nanobots.⁴⁹ In *Neuromancer*, Julius Deane is kept alive by a continuous re-setting of his DNA code, while his metabolism is controlled by weekly dosages of hormones and serums.⁵⁰ The biochemical supervision of organ function is also implicit in the Wintermute-instructed conditioning of Case's liver and pancreas that makes them not react to amphetamines.⁵¹ An example of an AI remotely-operated medical intervention employing intelligent cells can be found in Wintermute's programming of Case's brain to emit the enzyme that destroys the toxin sacs in his body.⁵²

The development of GNR technologies will ultimately, in 2045, result in singularity, the seamless merging of biological and non-biological intelligence, from which point the development is unpredictable since the existing theoretical models will no longer apply. A quite similar scenario is implied at the end of *Neuromancer* after the merging of the two AIs, who are at that point everywhere, running "the whole show."⁵³ The details of what actually happened are played out in the last novel of the Sprawl trilogy, *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (1988). There, the events in *Neuromancer*, resulting in the merging of Wintermute and Neuromancer, are referred to as "when it changed,"⁵⁴ that is, when the real world started becoming just one of the (albeit fully permeable) localities in the matrix. And finally, to end the section on correspondences with a bit of trivia: in a 2011 interview, Gibson revealed that *Neuromancer* was set "around 2030,"⁵⁵ which roughly

45 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 276–77.

46 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 172.

47 Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 33.

48 See, Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 218.

49 See Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near*, 306–07.

50 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 20.

51 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 49.

52 See Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 314.

53 Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 316.

54 William Gibson, *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (New York: Bantam, 1988), 127.

55 Chauncey Mabe, "William Gibson's Pattern Recognition Skill is Rooted in 1950s Appalachia," Open Page, The Blog of the Florida Center for the Literary Arts at Miami Dade College, December 13, 2011, accessed October 15, 2014, <http://flcenterlitarts.wordpress.com/2011/12/13/william-gibsons-pattern-recognition-skill-is-rooted-in1950s-appalachia/>.

corresponds to Kurzweil's singularity time-line leading up to 2045.

SCI-FI LIVE

In an interview, Gibson also commented that *Neuromancer* does not foresee the development of wireless transfer of data, saying "I never imagined pay phones would go away. [...] That's the kind of thing you can't get right. We don't know what the impact of new technology will be."⁵⁶

The absence of wireless technologies in *Neuromancer* is rather insignificant given the number of concepts Gibson – at least from the perspective of Kurzweil's predictions – did get right. Virtually every major proposition in *The Singularity Is Near* has a comparable conceptual or functional correspondent in Gibson's novel. Keeping in mind that Gibson created his hi-tech worlds by combining words from computer manuals with stock SF motifs, and the paraphernalia of biker and punk subcultures, it is rather uncanny that he could predict the future so accurately.

But did he really? Considering the effects of the paradigm shift implicit in the functioning of societies, economies and cultures since World War II, indicating the advent of the postmodern epoch, the answer that I propose is rather prosaic: Gibson did not predict the future; he has helped to create it.

The explication of this claim requires a brief investigation of the hitherto discernible governing mechanism of the postmodern epoch. For the sake of brevity and practicality, my explanation of the metaphysical structuring of postmodernity will rely upon the concepts and terminology proposed by Jean Baudrillard, whose notion of hyperreality, in my view, encapsulates the observations of other major theoreticians of postmodernity.⁵⁷

Hyperreality is a reality created from models, a state in which simulation produces its own reality. It is conditioned by our reliance on media-generated information which, due to their ubiquity, has radically altered our perception of the real. Hyperreality therefore refers to the systems of media-generated information, the stability of which depends on their amount and connectivity: the more compatible data we receive on a given issue, the more real it is to us. Edward Fredkin's assertion that "[t]he meaning of information is given by the processes that interpret it" suggests that information itself has no meaning, that it merely carries the possibility of a meaning.⁵⁸ Hence, traditional concepts of the real and the fictional lose their relevance within the framework of postmodern hyperrealities. Since literature, traditionally associated with the fictional, is essentially a medium, it conditions the formation of the hyperreal systems. In other words, it collaborates with other media in the construction of postmodern realities.

According to my research, the process of postmodernisation of literature started with

56 Mabe, "William Gibson's Pattern Recognition Skill Is Rooted in 1950s Appalachia."

57 See Mojca Krevel, "Ghost Busting: The Role of Literary Cyberpunk in the Development of Fiction at the End of the Twentieth Century," *AAA - Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 37, no. 1 (2012): 52.

58 Edward Fredkin, "Informatics and Information Processing vs. Mathematics and Physics," presentation given at the Institute for Creative Technologies, Marina Del Ray, CA, May 25, 2007, quoted in N. Katherine Hayles, "Cognition Everywhere: The Rise of the Cognitive Unconscious and the Costs of Consciousness," *New Literary History* 45, no. 2 (2014): 216.

cyberpunk fiction. Its protagonists and worlds at least technically allow consideration in terms of Baudrillard's simulacra of the third order, whereas its intrinsic, neologism-conditioned style of narration, as well as its reception, already fully coincide with postmodern principles.⁵⁹ Cyberpunk subculture, for example, which emerged in the second half of the 1980s, originated in cyberpunk fiction, employing the vocabulary, behaviour, mentality and attire of its protagonists.

The ways in which Vernor Vinge's 1979 novella *True Names* inspired early developers of the internet are well-recorded. Mark Pesce, a pioneer of virtual reality and co-creator of the protocol for 3D interactive graphics, explained that "people dedicated their professional careers to realize Vinge's vision. I was one of them."⁶⁰ Also among them were AI legend Marvin Minski, who in Vinge's conception of AI recognized his own theories on the functioning of the human mind,⁶¹ Tim May, who collaborates on the development of tools to ensure individual privacy,⁶² and, after all, Ray Kurzweil, to name but a few.

Though Gibson's influence on computer developers is not as minutely recorded as Vinge's, the inventor of the massively parallel supercomputer, Daniel Hillis, advises aspiring developers of virtual worlds to look for inspiration in science fiction, especially the works of Gibson and Vinge.⁶³ Geographer Jeremy Crampton mentions Gibson's cyberspace among the conceptual origins of Google Earth.⁶⁴ Considering Gibson's popularity and cult-like status among computer and AI experts, it is practically inevitable that the inventions and innovations of the generation of scientists who grew up with his books were to some extent inspired by his vision of the future. In other words, their work was guided by the images and concepts planted into their imagination by Gibson, which also explains his persistent presence in articles, essays and books on computer, AI and nanotechnology development. Prominent literary scholar N. Katherine Hayles, who specialises in the impact of digital technologies on literature, similarly asserts that "visions of the future, especially in technologically advanced eras, can dramatically affect present developments."⁶⁵

The statement is just as pertinent to Gibson's extrapolations of the late 1970s and early 1980s social and technological trends as it is to Kurzweil's 2005 predictions based on existing developments in technology and science. I am far from suggesting that Kurzweil's scenario will indeed come true, nor is this in any way relevant to the topic of this article. It makes one wonder, though. Given Kurzweil's popularity, media presence, and connectedness with the present structures of power, and taking

59 See Krevel, "Ghost Busting," 55–65.

60 Mark Pesce, "True Magic," in *True Names and the Opening of the Cyberspace Frontier*, ed. Vernor Vinge (New York: Tor, 1999), 228.

61 Janet Abbate, "True Risks? The Pleasures and Perils of Cyberspace," in *Science Fiction and Computing: Essays on Interlinked Domains*, ed. David L. Ferro and Eric G. Swedin, 189–204 (Jefferson: McFarland, 2011), 195.

62 See Abbate, "True Risks?," 197.

63 See Daniel W. Hillis, "What Is Massively Parallel Computing, and Why Is It Important?," *Daedalus* 121, no. 1 (1992): 15, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20025415>.

64 See Abbate, "True Risks?," 193.

65 N. Katherine Hayles, "Computing the Human," *Theory, Culture and Society* 22, no. 1 (2005): 131.

into account the metaphysical foundation of the nascent epoch, the singularity does seem very near, perhaps nearer than Kurzweil, Gibson or Vinge envisioned it. As per the genre of science fiction, which over the last thirty years all but imploded into a marketing label, it seems, however, to be already here.

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IMMANENT PERFORMANCES IN THE WRITING OF TIM ETHELLS

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ABSTRACT: This paper maps the performative and performance-influenced book *Endland Stories*, written by Tim Etchells, the director of Forced Entertainment. It primarily examines the performativity embedded in the book and the implication to Deleuzoguattarian philosophy. The performative nature of the writing of Etchells, similarly to those of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, is achieved via their provocative and organically-devised structure abounding with vitalistic connections. The reading of both Deleuze's philosophy and Etchells's texts produces an organic, life-like, immanent quality.

KEYWORDS: Immanence; performativity; Gilles Deleuze; Tim Etchells

THE ISSUE OF IMMANENCE AFTER GILLES DELEUZE

[F]reedom exists only within immanence.¹

The philosophy of Gilles Deleuze is a complex and open system whose “anything-goes” or – to borrow Deleuze’s own term – “rhizomatic” – interconnected and interconnectable nature constitutes the chief potential of the theory and its logical implication for many areas of academic discourse. The application of Deleuze’s thought on writing that is performative and performance-influenced thus seems constructive, since art, performance writing and philosophy have transformative capacity via their ability to challenge the territory between the work of art and its recipient through the glimpses of life within; a phenomenon that Deleuze describes as immanence, an ultimate concept of Deleuze’s *oeuvre*.

Throughout his prolific writing career, Deleuze considered his works as pure philosophy, and not criticism, since he pursued the creation of concepts that would equally correspond to those creative artistic practices of painters, filmmakers, musicians and writers. Damian Sutton highlights Deleuzian understanding of philosophy as uncovering life within art, which by analogy becomes a key idea also in the present paper: “the philosopher’s task is to remove the strata to appreciate immanence, the forces of life, so artists must remove the contingent or reliant.”² To remove the strata and experience the forces of life, it is necessary to navigate through the challenging methodological apparatus that stems from the creative collaboration of Gilles Deleuze

1 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 48.

2 Damian Sutton and David Martin-Jones, *Deleuze Reframed: Interpreting Key Thinkers for the Arts* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008), 80.

and Félix Guattari.

The complexity and interconnectedness of Deleuzoguattarian philosophy operates as a *plane*, which, as Miguel de Beistegui acutely observes, “defines neither a surface nor a volume, but a direction, or a manifold of directions.”³ The nature of this multi-directionality and indeed multiplicity is symptomatic of the crucial works of Deleuze and Guattari, most notably in their volumes *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980).⁴ In *What is Philosophy?* (1991), their last joint project, they most univocally elaborate on the concept of philosophy, which “is becoming, not history; it is the coexistence of planes, not the succession of systems.”⁵ The idea of philosophy as a coexisting system of relations and networks is most crucial for this paper.

Philosophy, reading philosophy, like performance witnessing, is a creative, productive and performative experience. When considering *Anti-Oedipus*, Daniel Smith and John Protevi advocate the book’s “performative effect, which attempts to ‘force us to think,’ that is, to fight against a tendency to cliché.”⁶ Smith and Protevi further highlight the book’s subversive and provocative nature and conclude that the performative effect of reading the book is a shocking and unforgettable experience.⁷ As already argued, to approach the complexity of Deleuzoguattarian philosophy, one should not isolate a single phenomenon of their thought, since the work of Deleuze and Guattari is highly interconnected, or to use the term *rhizomatic*, producing performative effects and connections.

Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the rhizome constitutes a pillar of their approach to thinking and writing. It draws from its etymological meaning, where “rhizo” signifies “root,” and the biological term “rhizome,” which describes a form of plant that can extend itself through its underground horizontal tuber-like root system and develop new plants.⁸ In addition, Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhizome as an action of many abstract entities in the world, including music, mathematics, economics, politics, science, art, the ecology and the cosmos. The rhizome conceives how everything and everybody – all aspects of concrete, abstract and virtual entities and activities – can be seen as multiple in their interrelational movements with other things and bodies. The nature of the rhizome is that of a moving matrix, composed of organic and non-organic parts forming symbiotic and parallel connections, according to transitory and as yet undetermined routes.⁹

3 Miguel de Beistegui, *Immanence: Deleuze and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 3.

4 See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (1972; repr., Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992); See Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

5 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 59.

6 *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Gilles Deleuze,” by Daniel Smith and John Protevi, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/deleuze/>.

7 *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Gilles Deleuze.”

8 Adrian Parr, ed., *The Deleuze Dictionary*, rev. ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 232.

9 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 10.

The “multi” and “inter” nature of thinking that stems from some of Deleuze’s early sketched ideas are developed fully in collaboration with Guattari. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari develop new vocabulary that accentuates the connectability of things rather than their being, and tendencies that could evolve in creative mutations rather than a “reality.” Deleuze and Guattari prefer to consider things not as substances, but as assemblages or multiplicities, focusing on things in terms of unfolding and developing forces – “bodies and their powers to affect and be affected – rather than static essences,” as Adrian Parr posits.¹⁰ The path of mutations through the actualisation of connections among bodies that were previously only implicit (or “virtual”) and produce new powers to act and respond is called a “line of flight.”¹¹

Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of a “line of flight” is triggered from the consideration that the work of Antonin Artaud forces us to think differently, to sense anew and be exposed to affects in unpredictable ways. Hence, Parr believes, by generating new percepts and affects, art could be described as an “affective system” of change. The concept of line of flight operates as a disguise to express freedom, or “a life which is lived at another degree of intensity.”¹² In other words, a line of flight is what Deleuze himself started to explore within Kant’s critique of immanence.

The interconnection between life, philosophy and art starts to surface most significantly towards the end of the collaboration between Deleuze and Guattari. In *What is Philosophy?*, they famously compare philosophy to a portrait: “[t]he history of philosophy is comparable to the art of the portrait. It is not a matter of ‘making lifelike,’ that is, of repeating what a philosopher said but rather of producing resemblance by separating out both the plane of immanence he instituted and the new concepts he created.”¹³ The production of resemblances leads to the actual realization of immanent quality in/of life.

Immanence manifests a peak of Deleuzeoguattarian as well as Deleuze’s own philosophy. The issue of immanence is most complexly articulated in the last joint work of Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, and also elaborated on by Deleuze himself in *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*. In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari articulate fully previously inconsistent arguments revolving around Immanuel Kant’s critique¹⁴ and develop Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza’s concept of immanence.¹⁵ To put it simply, immanence represents the quality of being contained, existing or remaining *within*. It thus creates a logical opposition to transcendence, which presupposes existing or coming from outside or beyond. Deleuze’s major point is in the rejection of the binary opposition of life and death, or creation and non-creation. Immanence, or the plane of immanence, contains both life and death, creation and non-

10 Parr, *Deleuze Dictionary*, 147.

11 Parr, *Deleuze Dictionary*, 147.

12 Parr, *Deleuze Dictionary*, 118.

13 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 55.

14 Chiefly treated in Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. J. M. D. Meiklejohn (1781; repr., Project Gutenberg, 2003), <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4280/4280-h/4280-h.htm>.

15 See Baruch Spinoza, *The Ethics*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (1677; repr., Project Gutenberg, 2003), <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3800/3800-h/3800-h.htm>.

creation. Similarly, art and life coexist and should not be separated. Claire Colebrook highlights Deleuze's assertion that "[h]uman life *does* have a power or potential to think, but we can only understand this power, not when life unfolds from itself, but when this power encounters other powers."¹⁶ In other words, Colebrook stresses the general potentiality of connection-making. Life, Deleuze's major preoccupation, is unqualified immersion or embeddedness. An ethics of immanence distances itself from its reference to judgments of good and evil, right and wrong, as a transcendent model would pursue. Deleuze and Guattari argue that immanence is a life rather than 'my' life.¹⁷ The indefinite article suggests that it points to transcendental not transcendence.¹⁸ The concept of immanence perhaps best exemplifies the nature of the relations "in" or "inter." Deleuze's philosophy of immanence, similarly to rhizomes, emphasises connections over forms of separation. But this connection must itself be a connectivity between relations and not between different identities. Therefore in relations with transcendence, immanence cannot oppose it.

Thinking immanently does not eliminate or exclude traces of immanence, because immanence is inclusive. De Beistegui emphasizes entropic tendencies to develop "intensities into extensities: concepts into opinions [...], images into clichés, sensations into perception, etc. Everywhere immanence produces its effects of transcendence."¹⁹ The transformativity and transformation-capacity of immanence is connected with its openness and infinity. Cull points out that immanence is vertiginous "because thinking immanence is never complete."²⁰ Deleuze himself claims that immanence is an open whole, "a whole which changes."²¹ Analogously, Colebrook stresses that "the open whole is the whole of duration; but crucially, it is a poly-rhythmicity rather than a temporal container that would unite and homogenize all differing rhythms of life."²² Deleuze and Guattari repeatedly argue that immanence is not only immanent *to* itself; it is an endless series of relations. Only when immanence is no longer immanent to something other than itself is it possible to speak of a plane of immanence. The plane is "a *radical empiricism*: it does not present a flux of the lived that is immanent to a subject and individualized in that which belongs to a self."²³

The plane of immanence is understood as a section of chaos which acts like a sieve. Chaos is characterized by the infinite speed of determinations which take shape and vanish. Immanence is not a movement from one determination to the other but the

16 Claire Colebrook, *Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2006), 4. Original emphasis.

17 Laura Cull, *Theatres of Immanence: Deleuze and the Ethics of Performance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 10. Original emphasis.

18 Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001), 30.

19 de Beistegui, *Immanence*, 193.

20 Cull, *Theatres of Immanence*, 12.

21 Cited in Cull, *Theatres of Immanence*, 236. Otherwise retrievable in full in Gilles Deleuze, "Ethology: Spinoza and Us," in *The Body: A Reader*, ed. Mariam Fraser and Monica Greco (London: Routledge, 2005), 58–61.

22 Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 2002), 45.

23 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 47. Emphasis added. See also Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 27.

impossibility of a connection between them.²⁴ Deleuze and Guattari understand the plane of immanence as a unifying element in the chaos: “[c]oncepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them.”²⁵ The unifying character is however not of individuation but singularization. In its purest form, immanence “inspires the fewest illusions, bad feelings, and erroneous perceptions.”²⁶ It is impossible to achieve immanence completely in one’s life; only a life – impersonal and anonymous, can achieve immanence as implied by Deleuze’s concept of pure immanence, “A LIFE, and nothing else.”²⁷ The lives of people, arguably artists or philosophers, as de Beistegui suggests with Deleuze, can, however, “indicate the point at which their life becomes a life, and the illusion of transcendence dissolves into pure immanence.”²⁸ In the connection of artistic creation, Deleuze posits immanence beyond good and evil that could be equated to freedom: “[i]t is not immanence to life, but the immanent that is in nothing is itself a life. A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss.”²⁹ The “inter” and “in,” inclusive rather than exclusive nature of immanence, as well as interest in the interrelations, so symptomatic of the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, is equally applicable to performance, to the relationship between the writer, reader and the work itself.

While considering the connection between the work of art and men, in his critique Deleuze departs from the basic presupposition that modernism rejects belief in this world, the world presented to us. Deleuze suggests that to believe in this world invites the possibility to reconnect men to what they see and hear; therefore, he urges this belief to be reconstituted. Lars Tønder elaborates on Deleuze’s statement that “we need to believe in this world,”³⁰ which, as Tønder puts it, means “to perpetuate life, to affirm its cracks and dissonances as sites of undisclosed potentiality. It is, we might say, an immanent enchantment.”³¹ Thus the willingness to believe, the immanent reading of a text/performance, its cracks and dissonances, brings the potentiality of a creative transformative experience, the perception through life in a text, the life of the author, to realize the life of the reader; or to translate into Deleuze’s words, a life within a life – the poetics of immanence. Art and artistic freedom, as Deleuze and Guattari see it, can shape the understanding of life in this world by providing glimpses of immanence, the interrelations located within or in-between, which enables through the work of art to be transformed and see the aspects of humanity, of a life.

24 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 42.

25 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 38.

26 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 60.

27 Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 27.

28 de Beistegui, *Immanence*, 194–95.

29 Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 27.

30 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 172.

31 Lars Tønder, “Spinoza’s Immanence,” *The Immanent Frame* (blog), Social Science Research Council, December 5, 2007, <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2007/12/05/spinozas-immanence/>.

PERFORMATIVITY OF TIM ETCHELLS'S WRITING

It is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts. It breathes, it heats, it eats. It shits and fucks.³²

Tim Etchells is an acclaimed British director, artist and author. Neither the fiction nor non-fiction writings of Tim Etchells can be easily divorced from his theatrical creative praxis. Etchells, now a Professor of Performance at the University of Lancaster, is perfectly aware of mechanisms of theatre and their efficacy. Analogously to theatre, which is based on a two-way exchange of energies between the actor and spectator via theatrically unique language, also in his writing, Etchells attempts to make his written words perform on page. Etchells's task is to create what Ivan Lacko in the connection with community-oriented theatre calls "togetherness" resting "on its members' ability to imagine things and empathize with others."³³ Like in the community-based theatre Lacko is describing, the writings of Tim Etchells aim to create a collaborative bond with the reader, the proximal "intimacy that approaches that of lovers who now no longer bother to close the bathroom door whilst shitting."³⁴

Etchells's techniques are grounded on rhizomatic connections – interrelational hyperlinks, palimpsests, his use of proxemics via the intimate address to the readers/audience as well as devised tacky aesthetics, so symptomatic also of British experimental theatre group Forced Entertainment's performance creative principles. Etchells's texts, like his theatre works, share the same "invitation tools" that produce the elements of sympathy, pointing to the humanness, life within them. Thus the framework of immanence, as treated by Deleuze and Guattari, is applicable to highlighting the interconnectedness, non-linearity and multiplicity of Etchells's work. Reading Etchells is structurally a similar experience to reading Deleuze and Guattari, especially *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. The performativity of the thought expressed in a book is that of a desiring machine, alive – breathing, heating, eating, shitting and fucking.³⁵ Indeed the non-linear rhizomatic connect-ability and immense poetic drive constitute the major conceptualizing approach when dealing with writings of Deleuze with Guattari as well as Etchells.

An award-winning writer and the director of Forced Entertainment, Etchells himself is clear on the issue of writing: "I am a writer but I try not to write. Rather I like to speak and talk..."³⁶ This two-way approach of speaking and talking rather than writing is clearly traceable in the nature of his texts as well as his theatre projects, the open structures of which, rather than creating any fictional world, provoke the reader. It comes as no surprise that as both a writer and director, Etchells highlights the role

32 The infamous opening of *Anti-Oedipus* where Deleuze and Guattari open their comments on "desiring-production," in Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 1.

33 Ivan Lacko, "Imaginative Communities: The Role, Practice and Outreach of Community-Based Theatre," *Ars Aeterna* 6, no. 2 (2014): 26.

34 Tim Etchells, *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment* (London: Routledge, 1999), 54.

35 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 1.

36 Tim Etchells, "Devised Theatre Lecture" (lecture, Prague, Czech Republic, October 29, 2011).

of devising and collective-making; he is “less of an auteur than we would expect,”³⁷ as Alex Mermikides acutely observes after time spent with the company and Etchells, monitoring their creative concept.

Outside his prolific work as Forced Entertainment’s director and writer, Etchells is the author of numerous essays dealing with theatre and its possible variations and bastardizations. His play and non-playwriting style is highly personal, almost confessional, manifestative, provoking and sensitive. His most frequent methods of nonfiction writing include directly addressing the reader, ctrl-pastism, a conceptual approach and certain palimpsesticity – rewritings of his earlier texts, revisitings and reverberations of his own writings so as to create a new theatrical patchwork using traces of their previous shows. The interconnectedness of Etchells’s texts composes a rhizomatic structure which oxymoronically combines platitudes with most intimate confessions. On the formal side, the texts are palimpsestuous collages or footnoted lists, creating a space between the text and its reader. The connection of these elements results into a symbiotic relationship that is creative and performative.

Performativity in and of theatre is embedded in its nature *a priori*. Performativity of the text, however, is achieved in a plethora of highly idiosyncratic ways. The works of Forced Entertainment and Tim Etchells are products of the fecund collaboration between the director and performers; analogously, the texts follow the similar routine of devising, or cataloguing, and consequently lacking linearity or simple logic. Secondly, one of the crucial aspects of Forced Entertainment aesthetics is a conscious awareness of their audience.³⁸ Therefore the writings of Etchells are also distanced or deconstructed, both formally and content-wise. Etchells frequently uses, e.g., the method of blank pages, crossed-out text, fragmentary or self-reflexive remarks on the process of his writings, or estrangement techniques that are disturbing in a most creative fashion. Both his writing for stage and page operates with several creative aspects that are married to his theatrical experience: dark-visual, beyond, cheap, low, ennui, ungraspable, thus performative. Similarly to Deleuze and Guattari, Etchells is also keen to provoke by connecting freely in a transversal way elements the connections of which seem impossible or at least far-fetched. These connections, however, although not linear, carry certain logic, and if this is revealed, the result surfaces into immanent experience illuminating life. All these aspects started to crystalize in Etchells’s first fictional book, *Endland Stories*.

The arguably most formative book of Tim Etchells, entitled *Endland Stories: Or Bad Lives* (1998),³⁹ can be described as a collection of catastrophic stories. The characters are deprived, suffering individuals with very little hope and indeed similar to what Deleuze and Guattari describe as “the adventure of lost characters who no longer know

37 Alex Mermikides, “Forced Entertainment – The Travels (2002): The Anti-theatrical Director” in *Making Contemporary Theatre: International Rehearsal Processes*, ed. Jen Harvie and Andy Lavender (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 118.

38 For further reference to Forced Entertainment and their audience, see Jan Suk, “Seeing the Seeing: Understanding the Spectatorship of Forced Entertainment,” *American and British Studies Annual* 4 (2011): 146–57.

39 Tim Etchells, *Endland Stories: Or Bad Lives* (London: Pulp Faction, 1998).

their name, what they are looking for, or what they are doing, amnesiacs, ataxics, catatonics.”⁴⁰ Not coincidentally, given its date of publication, the aesthetics and amnesiac, ataxic, catatonic characters from the book bring about resonances of the *In-Yer-Face* aesthetics⁴¹ or *blood-and-sperm* theatre⁴² of Sarah Kane or Mark Ravenhill, to name just the prime examples of playwrights. All stories are set in the gloomy landscape of Endland, which naturally mirrors a semi-fictional bitter and sardonic rendering of England, using real geographical allusions, such as Leicester, Hull, etc., and often contain tinged or hystericized events like the execution of Queen Elizabeth II, the castration of Prince of the Wales, etc. The book abounds with bizarre, David Lynch-like details, graffiti tags or messages, full of ominous signs and excessive violence.

Endland book reviewers comment on the surreal quality, unexpected jiffy bags, or Sadean delight of the new realism. Two commentators also reflect upon its cult drive and parallel it with classic giants that echo in the volume: “the scenery is taken straight from a low-budget *Blade Runner*” and the book “reads as if written by one of Anthony Burgess’s more gifted *Clockwork Orange* droogs.”⁴³ The cult classic nature of the around millennium angst and frenzy of England is similarly described by Peter Billingham as

a kind of post-Romantic English sensibility and melancholy [...] radical secular vision [...] the beaten-up urban frontiers of the imagination where one might see William Blake staggering into the late-night store nearest to where you live, knocking back a bottle of imported Albanian vodka and then kicking off with his poetry and painting.⁴⁴

Symptomatically of the mixing and stitching approach of Etchells – visionary and drunk, “William Blake with Albanian Vodka,” Deleuze and Guattari speak of an assemblage whose “only unity is that of co-functioning: it is symbiosis, ‘a sympathy.’”⁴⁵ It is indeed sympathy that is summoned by the typical feature of Etchells and his writing – ghosting and hyperlinking with his other works as well as the conspiracy between the author and his audience, or readership in this case. This rhizomatic interconnection along the elements of self-reflexive metanarrative, palimpsestuous links, devised aspects, mistakes and imperfectness constitute Etchells’s proximity producing elements in his writings.

The first and highly symptomatic tool in Etchells’s writing is apparent in this book: “rhizomatic connections” to his other projects. Etchells performs what many authors

40 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 173.

41 For further treatment, see Aleks Sierz, *In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama Today* (London: Faber, 2001), 3–35.

42 See Ulrich Broisch, “A Theatre of Blood and Sperm: New Trends in British Theatre,” *European Studies* 16 (2001): 207–226.

43 Timetchells.com, “Endland Stories: Or Bad Lives,” <http://www.timetchells.com/projects/publications/endland-stories/>.

44 Peter Billingham, *At the Sharp End: Uncovering the Work of Five Leading Dramatists: Edgar, Etchells, Greig, Gupta and Ravenhill* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 182.

45 Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 69.

describe, including Aleks Sierz, as having a conversation with other plays, or works.⁴⁶ Yet in his stories, Etchells primarily alludes to his own theatrical performances, which create a complex kaleidoscopic web of interpretations and render new layers of understanding. Perhaps better than alludes, Etchells simply but importantly connects both. For instance, in the mythical tale “Who Would Dream That Truth Was Lies,” two twin-Gods, Spatula and Porridge fall in love with Naomi (later it is revealed that her second name is Campbell) and had to duel it out in a game of Quizoola.⁴⁷ It is in fact another project of Forced Entertainment, a quiz in which questions shift “from intimate chat to pub quiz to police interrogation.”⁴⁸ Later in the same story, when Spatula dies, Porridge in his dreams sees images (as if) from Forced Entertainment shows (*Showtime*, similarly to *Quizoola!*, devised also in 1996).

The logical/pragmatic example of interweaving the book with theatrical projects is in its visual side: the pictures accompanying the stories appear as originating from their shows. The photographs are by Hugo Glendinning. They portray Forced Entertainment’s members with their blurred faces, out-of-focus limbs, misty objects, mysterious close-ups, thereby echoing Glendinning’s approach to taking pictures without looking through the camera’s viewfinder for the project *Club of No Regrets* (1993). As such, they mimic the subversive devised approach of the actors and the director. Thereby, the pictures in the book appear hauntingly personal and acutely illustrate the post-apocalyptic touch of the book. Both Etchells and Forced Entertainment pay a great deal of attention to non-linear metawriting producing thereby distancing effects, notoriously known as *Verfremdungseffekt* or alienation.⁴⁹ In *Endland Stories*, particularly in “Carmen by Bizet,” Etchells often includes a reference to his process of writing in parentheses, such as “White noise on the phone. (By accident I am typing white noose or white nose...) 0111 1000 10090100010000101111000110 ...”⁵⁰ A paragraph of binary symbols continues, a trope which again provides a telling example of Etchells’s authorial ignorance/superiority towards the reader, or as Deleuze puts it, an immanent gesture. The proximity interplay challenges the boundaries between the play, the actors and the audience, here again, the text and the reader.

Formally the book abounds with textual deviations and variations of the text, another significant phenomenon of Etchells’s pen. Throughout the book there appear a plethora of copyrighted expressions (beyond belief ©, real virgins ©, restful sleep ©,

46 Aleks Sierz, *Rewriting the Nation: British Theatre Today* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 9.

47 Devised in 1996 by Tim Etchells and Forced Entertainment originally as a 6 hour performance, it has recently been revived as a durational show of 24 hours and broadcast live. See Forced Entertainment, “Quizoola24,” <http://www.forcedentertainment.com/notebook-tag/quizoola24/>.

48 Forced Entertainment, “Quizoola!,” <http://www.forcedentertainment.com/projects/quizoola>.

49 For further treatment of Bertolt Brecht and the distancing effect, see Bertolt Brecht and Eric Bentley, “On Chinese Acting,” trans. Eric Bentley, *Tulane Drama Review* 6, no. 1 (1961): 130–36. Brecht and Forced Entertainment are deeply treated by Hans-Thies Lehmann in his postdramatic theory; see Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. Karen Jürs-Munby (London: Routledge, 2006), 4–5 or most notably Hans-Thies Lehmann, “Shakespeare’s Grin: Remarks on World Theatre of Forced Entertainment,” in *Not Even a Game Anymore: The Theatre of Forced Entertainment*, ed. Judith Helmer and Florian Malzacher (Berlin: Alexander Verlag, 2004), 103–120.

50 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 157.

exacting nature ©, muted desolation ©, or slow bears ©, etc. This copyrighting reminds one of the inverted conceptual strategy of Kenneth Goldsmith, a key conceptual writer famous for his verbatim copying and intended plagiarism.⁵¹ Other idiosyncratic linguistic devices include a rich use of neologisms and intended misspellings such as Endland (sic), cuntry (sic), etc. Additionally, in most mentions of a number, he uses a parenthesised digital reference in a post reference: “thousands (1000s) of people (79), three (3) months passed.”⁵² PC-geekness and sms-speak constitute another repository of tropes: brite nite, abt, dint, olde fashioned Dept Store, agen, tite, tink. The text includes Etchells’s notorious catalogues, indexes, listings (e.g., deaths at the end of the story in “End of First Night” or “Crash Family Robinson.”⁵³

The *Endland* book opens with a direct address: “Kings, lords, liars, usherettes, goal-hangers, gun-men and prostitutes, [...] [b]ear in mind it is not a book for idiots or time-wasters but many of them are wrote about in it. Pax Americana. Death to unbelievers...”⁵⁴ and signed as X. A similar technique – an appeal to the reader – can be found also on the last page of the book, coming full circle. Similar resonances interweaving the theatrical and fiction-writings efficacy having the signature of Tim Etchells appear in the last story of the book, “Arse on Earth,” where a pervasive question runs through the story: Why is modern life rubbish? This query also appears in *Quizoola* as well as creates a crucial question for the worn-out DJ in *Pleasure* (1997).⁵⁵ It indeed is an echo of Blur’s album *Modern Life is Rubbish* (1993),⁵⁶ and its connection with Etchells creates a cultural bridge or reverberation between the mainstream musical pop and subversive theatrical fringe, breeching theatrical and literary boundaries, mirroring high in low. After the final line of the book *Endland Stories*, the question reappears: “Why is modern life rubbish?” There is even an appeal to the reader to provide an answer shorter than 500 words while refraining from swearing. Given the tone of the book, this is of course asking the impossible – to provide an easy answer. This expressed but unexecutable request shows a truly theatrical quality, where no direct reaction from the recipient is wanted, or needed; Etchells and the publishers provide neither space for the comment nor an addressee to whom to send it, which constitutes a typical Etchellsean one-way-ness. This one-way-ness is a crucial tool for both Etchells and Forced Entertainment – an invitation that does not expect a response.

Another decadent element in performance-making aesthetics typical of Etchells is the implementation and testing of the possibilities of silence and disappearance.⁵⁷

51 For further reference, see Kenneth Goldsmith, “Being Boring,” Electronic Poetry Center, http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/goldsmith/goldsmith_boring.html.

52 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 27.

53 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 116.

54 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 1.

55 Forced Entertainment, “Pleasure,” directed by Tim Etchells, DVD (London: ICA, 1997).

56 Blur, *Modern Life is Rubbish*, Food FOODCD 9, 0777 7 89442 2 5, 1993, compact disc.

57 For further treatment of Forced Entertainment and their silence, see Jan Suk and Olga Neprašová, “The Phenomenon of Silence in the Postdramatic Oeuvre of Forced Entertainment in Theory and Practice,” in *From Theory to Practice: Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Anglophone Studies*, September 5–6, 2012, ed. Gregory Jason Bell, Katarína Nemčoková and Bartosz Wójcik (Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, 2013), 289–301.

This resonance of texts with theatrical projects underpins the previously mentioned dialogue with other plays, as advocated by Sierz. The first story of *Endland* is “About Lisa,” in which the main character through her blasphemous misbehaviour gradually becomes involuntarily invisible until the end where she changes her name into SILENCE and “lives up to her name,”⁵⁸ which again creates a metaphorical dialogue with other pieces such as *Bloody Mess* (2004), *Thrill of It All* (2011) and Etchells’s second book, *The BRoKeN WoRLD* (2009).⁵⁹ Similarly, the main character of the story “Eve and Mary (semi Christian tale)” has a favourite toy called MY LITTLE VOID and keeps staring into it. Mary has a natural talent for healing everybody from all possible troubles, and soon her life was “like one of those gay musical numbers from a big Hollywood production only it was a kind of low budget thing and it was not really a gay.”⁶⁰ This is a typical paradox appearing through Etchells’s *Endland* – slapstick vaudeville gone wrong, in other words, “great, but.” Indeed there is always some “but” embedded in the *oeuvre* of both Tim Etchells and Forced Entertainment.⁶¹

The story “James,” which with thirty pages comprises the longest story of the book, contains another allusion to Forced Entertainment’s theatrical production – when James is asked the question “Who can sing a song to unfrighten me?” This is also the title of their 24-hour durational performance from 1999. The question frames the story because of its fearful opening at a night picnic and at the end when James is hiding under the bed because his father wants to kill him like he killed everybody else, James again asks this question twice. After the third time, his father starts to sing a song called “Serenity,” and later shoots himself. In the same story, during a premiere night, James asks his sister Olivia “which is more alive, a stone or a lizard?” This is a question repetitively appearing in various shows of Forced Entertainment.

The story “James” is indeed a theatre framed story. Its end resembles a stage instruction for the end of a performance: “Final Cue. LX 98. Fade out. Kid walking.”⁶² A similar metatheatrical moment is pervasively present also in many shows, most notably in *Bloody Mess* (2004) where the last words contain a direct description of the set: “this is the last light.”⁶³ Therefore, the story “James” can be read as a highly poetical account of Forced Entertainment’s theatre production. The character of James in “James” is forced to join out-of-normal-schooling-time dramatic “entertainment” (in fact theatre or forced entertainment making), as his schooling in the orphanage

58 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 13.

59 See Forced Entertainment, “Bloody Mess,” directed by Tim Etchells, DVD (London: ICA, 2004); Forced Entertainment, “The Thrill of It All,” directed by Tim Etchells, DVD (Sheffield: Forced Entertainment Education Video, 2011); and Tim Etchells, *The BRoKeN WoRLD* (London: Windmill Books, 2009).

60 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 41.

61 See Forced Entertainment, “Emanuelle Enchanted,” directed by Tim Etchells, DVD (Manchester: Crewe and Alsager Faculty, Manchester Metropolitan University, 1992). See also Etchells, *Certain Fragments*, 152–53. The question was later also used in the Forced Entertainment show *Quizoola!* See *Quizoola!*, by Forced Entertainment, directed by Tim Etchells, Krásný ztráty Café, Prague, Czech Republic, November 27, 2007.

62 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 88.

63 For further analysis of *Bloody Mess* and space in the *oeuvre* of Forced Entertainment, see Jan Suk, “Stepping Off the Empty Stage: Live Art Aspects in *Bloody Mess*,” in *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies* 1, no.1 (2013): 55–62.

was just French and chemistry.⁶⁴ When discussing the meaning of the play they were asked to make, James asks his sister what the play is about, to which she replies: “It is not about something, it is something.”⁶⁵ This meaninglessness is undoubtedly a key to Forced Entertainment’s approach, and also the writing of Tim Etchells, where the process of (play)writing often outweighs the result. It describes, in other words, as Ryan Tacata puts it, Etchells’s “unpoetic necessity”: waiting for nothing to happen, for emptiness and silence.⁶⁶ Etchells’s unpoetics provides a highly potential framework for spectatorial or readers’ imagination.

An analogous approach of quotidian blankness or indifference is further exemplified in the story “Killing of Frank,” which is not really about the killing. The murder is finally executed but is far from being truly crucial. It only frames the story, gives impulse, provides space for imagination, contemplations or departure. Analogously, Etchells describes the strong sense of anticipation and consequently a failing to materialize during which nothing happens.

A Deleuzian understanding of identity always in motion equally corresponds to the identity shape-changing of Etchells. Identity crisis is another pervasive theme in the book. Kaleidoscopic identity, amoebic polymorphy or the hyper-sexlessness of its characters is apparent in the cardboard character swapping in some Forced Entertainment shows, particularly in *12 am: Awake and Looking Down* (a durational show from 1993 in which performers changed cardboard signs with character descriptions, e.g., “MICHAEL LIVING A LIE,” “THE GHOST OF A CHILD KILLED ON TUESDAY,” “PRINCES NOT-SO-BRIGHT,” or “A GOOD COP IN A BAD FILM,”⁶⁷ etc.). In the story “Chaikin Twins,” the main characters – twins – keep their names, Jane and Elizabeth, whereas Chaikin’s name is in each mention spelled differently (e.g., Cheykin, Chaikan, etc.). The other character names are spelled “_____” and followed by parenthetical determination if necessary. This technique also appears in “James,” where several secondary characters are given names like Mrs. _____. Other characters parading through the book include gods, such as Zeus, “Leila, Thor, Hand-Job, Trumpton and Asparagus,”⁶⁸ Franklin, or semigods, Arse, Penis, etc.

Although most stories are illogical and non-linear, some of them are less complex and truly direct. The greatest example is the story “Morton & Kermit,” which is basically limited to a pure plot description, and provokes the reader with its blankness in contrast to the complexity of other stories. The full story reads:

Morton’s main problem was that he could not control his mouth. His brother Kermit was also a bit of a wanker. The town* where they both lived in Endland (sic) chanced to come beneath

64 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 63.

65 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 65.

66 Ryan Tacata uses the phrase “unpoetic necessity” in connection with another project, the collaboration of Hugo Glendinning and Tim Etchells, “Empty Stages” – a series of photographs of empty stages. See Ryan Tacata and Hugo Glendinning, “Empty Stages: Staging a Correspondence on Stages” (paper presented at the PSi – Performance Studies International Conference, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, June 27, 2013).

67 For a full list of characters see Etchells, *Certain Fragments*, 143–46.

68 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 94–95.

emergency military rule of the British Army and the two of them were soon executed by a firing squad.⁶⁹

Such simplicity supports the quotidian effect of oral narratives – the oversimplified narrative shows flatness and absurd causality within an otherwise completely illogical and channel-hopping network of events on other stories. The asterisked town refers to Liverpool in a footnote. A footnoted description in a microstory reads as dada, or a surreal play.

Overall, *Endland Stories* can be most acutely summed up in the words that characterize the performance *Hidden J* (1994), described as “Long ago and far away there was a country and all the people that lived there were a bunch of fucking cunts...”⁷⁰ The first book of Tim Etchells definitely provides stimulating insight into the end-of-millennium British literary and cultural landscape with the rich use of a palimpsestuous patchwork, direct self-reflexive drive and shabby postmodern aesthetics. The non-linear nature and rhizomatic interconnection between the book and Etchells’s theatre projects create a compelling and complex, organically productive, performative reading, a technique that establishes a space for an organic, vitalistic connection with the other projects, thereby creating a performative proximal relationship between the author and the reader.

TOWARD IMMANENT PERFORMATIVITY

So how and why does *Endland Stories* by Tim Etchells function, although its nature is provocative, seditious and subversive, often fostering the aesthetics of every-day mundanity? Arguably, it is the quasi-realistic quotidian element and non-linear openness of rhizomatic nature within its structure, which are the two key factors considered in establishing intimate proximity, which leads to the realization of the reader’s own transient presence. The overall task of the paper has been to highlight the aspect of humanity or life within theatre that Etchells creates: “the desire, really, was for nakedness, defencelessness. An exposure that does not have a name. Something beyond.”⁷¹ The nameless “something beyond” of Tim Etchells with *Forced Entertainment* is, what I call, with the help of Deleuze, the “poetics of immanence” – the ability to reveal what Deleuze calls pure immanence: “A LIFE, and nothing else.”⁷² This paper has demonstrated the idiosyncratic tools that Tim Etchells, the writer and the director, uses to explore the capacities of language and its possible performative effect and affect beyond its textual limits. Etchells’s direct address of the reader/witness, a mixture of cheap aesthetics with a subversive touch, and his poetics of sense withoutness constitute a generous contribution to present day literature. His short

69 Etchells, *Endland Stories*, 109–110.

70 See *Forced Entertainment*, “Hidden J,” <http://www.forcedentertainment.com/project/hidden-j/>.

71 Etchells, *Certain Fragments*, 65.

72 “We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else. [...] A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss.” See Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 27. Original emphasis.

story book appears as an ingenious mixture of exaggerated binaries, an intimate yet highly provocative playful intervention of life into art, on a titanic (both gigantic and cheesy slapstick – oxymoronic poetics) scale to underpin ultimate (artistic) freedom of creation, where the important element becomes the process of creation, with a performative potential achieved by the mutual interconnectedness of the previously mentioned elements.

Endland Stories undeniably shares the major elements of Etchells's theatricks – interruptions, non-linearity, hyperlink aesthetics, catalogues, interest in phenomena such as silence, failure, blankness, testing the borders of language and the endurance of audience/readers. Given the parallel features of both theatrical and literary productions, the present study therefore suggests that, to describe the literary works of Etchells, it proves entertaining as well as highly efficient to borrow his own texts written for the theatre – a technique analogous to the one of Forced Entertainment and the umbilical interconnection between the author, audience and their work. The dramaturgy of non-linearity and architecture of chaos inevitably stem from Etchells's lengthy creative process. The organically appearing result from the collaboration of Etchells with all theatre members inevitably invites the reading of Deleuze and Guattari, who collaborated and devised in a similar way with an analogously challenging output. The open systems of both Deleuze and Guattari and Tim Etchells highlight potentiality and process, rather than a straightforward answer.

The ultimate aspect of Etchells's creative strategy – the palimpsestuous interconnection between texts, theatre, the author and the recipient – contributes to the liminal experience of the in-between. Such an approach, upsetting expectations, challenging the recipient, once again, manifests ultimate authorial freedom. Such is the performative force of the language of Tim Etchells – to rupture the fourth wall: proximity and engagement provoking, vulnerable, exposure of the reader to the nakedness, shitting and fucking, masturbating, eating – organic, alive, immanent.

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IDEOLOGICAL READINGS OF EUGENE O'NEILL'S PLAYS *ANNA CHRISTIE* AND *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS* IN SLOVENE THEATRES BEFORE AND AFTER WORLD WAR II

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ABSTRACT: After the initial fiasco of Eugene O'Neill's plays *Anna Christie* and *Desire Under the Elms* in interbellum Slovenia, the post-war years brought the author a critical and public rehabilitation. However, O'Neill's sudden popularity proved a double-edged sword. The subject-matter of his plays was abused for the promotion of Socialist Realism and the establishment of the post-war Communist regime. Stage directors were compelled to distort the artistic truth and present the idea of each play according to the requirements of the current political agenda. This paper discusses and explains the critical and public reception of these plays in the light of the political, social and literary conditions in Slovenia between 1926 and 1963.

KEYWORDS: Eugene O'Neill; *Anna Christie*; *Desire Under the Elms*; reception in Slovene theatres; ideology; culture; Socialist Realism; Communist regime

Generally speaking, the reception of Eugene O'Neill's plays in Slovenia has not been particularly favourable. While the reasons for this are manifold, this paper shall concentrate chiefly on the circumstances accompanying the two most frequently produced plays, *Anna Christie* (1921) and *Desire Under the Elms* (1924). The frequency of their productions, especially in comparison with the modest staging of the author's other plays,¹ may indeed be due to their relative popularity with theatregoers and/or critics, but in the background lurked the tendency of the post-WWII Communist regime to twist the plays' communication potential and thus strengthen its own authority in the state. The dominant political ideology was imposed on the presentation of the plays so efficiently and with such perfidy that the audiences could not help enjoying themselves while watching this dramatic farce. Stage directors would, either of their own accord or under pressure, distort the artistic truth and present the idea of each play according to the requirements of the current political agenda.

ANNA CHRISTIE AND *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS* BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

Before World War II, when these two plays by O'Neill were first introduced on the

¹ The other plays by Eugene O'Neill produced in the Slovene professional theatres are: *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1957 and 1984); *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (1959); *A Touch of the Poet* (1961); *Hughie* (1963); and *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1967).

Slovene stage, the political, social and cultural circumstances were considerably different, which should have allowed more manoeuvring space in terms of dramatic representation. Nevertheless, stage directors were faced with difficulties stemming from the Slovene critical and public prejudices. *Anna Christie* was in fact the first American play staged in Slovene theatres and was thus expected to pave the way for a different dramatic experience.² Although O'Neill's central orientation was based on the European tradition – Strindberg, Ibsen, and some others – the Slovene *Anna Christie* apparently failed to carry out its mission since the reviews were almost unanimously scathing, but also confusing. Some of them recognised in the play a typical “American signature,” drawing on the sentimental play between “golden hearts and a jovially moving ending,”³ while others searched in vain for any representative American elements in it. What they observed instead was an American attempt to grapple with the elementary issues of human existence which, in the European perception, proved naïve.⁴

Trying to determine the reasons for the play's fiasco, several factors need to be taken into consideration. There had been a decades-long habit among Slovene theatre producers and stage directors to use a cut-up technique or implement severe changes, adaptations and other forms of textual modification:⁵ in our case this would be the introduction of an attempted suicide scene – Mat wrenching a revolver from Anna's hand because she was apparently going to kill herself. The critics tended to interpret this scene as an implication of Anna's definite return to her former indecent profession.⁶

In addition, the Slovene production of *Anna Christie*, its text translated from the German by Oton Župančič, completely neglected a vital aspect of O'Neill's dramatic language, manifested in his skilful employment of racial and cultural dialects, by which he prevents the speech of his time from becoming artificial, dead or unreal. In order to achieve the rhythm and diction of common speech, O'Neill introduces in this play a Swedish dialect of English spoken by Chris, the Irish brogue spoken by Mat, and Anna's variety of colloquial American English. The Slovene version of the text, replacing all these language nuances by common standard Slovene, thus lacked the initial and, indeed, principal dimension of any play – a direct verbal contact with the reader – or spectator – even before the actual performance.

Eugene O'Neill was notoriously pedantic about the choice of theatre design, stage setting, character cast, etc. In this respect, the Slovene productions of his play were definitely more negligent, refusing to follow even the most obvious stage directions. In the 1946 production of *Anna Christie*, for example, the leading actress, Ema Starčeva,

2 *Anna Christie* premiered at the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana, 13 February 1926. It was characteristic of the Slovene theatres in the interbellum period that their repertoires would not extend over the boundaries of Europe. Dušan Moravec, *Slovensko gledališče od vojne do vojne: 1918–1941* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1980), 115.

3 See Miljutin Zarnik, “Premijera v ljubljanski drami: *Ana Christie*,” *Slovenski narod*, February 17, 1926, 2. All quotations from the theatre reviews throughout the text are my translations.

4 France Koblar, “*Ana Christie*,” *Slovenec*, March 21, 1926, 7.

5 The play does consist of four acts, but the Slovene staging reduced it to only three.

6 Fran Govekar, “Premijera dramskega gledališča v Ljubljani,” *Jutro*, February 14, 1926, 4. See also Zarnik, “Premijera v ljubljanski drami: *Ana Christie*.”

was already over forty, when she appeared on the stage as “a tall, blond, fully-developed girl of twenty, handsome after a large, Viking-daughter fashion ...”⁷

One of the leading Slovene stage directors of that time, Bratko Kreft, who was bold and progressive enough to introduce *Desire Under the Elms*, feverishly responded to the negative reception of *Anna Christie* by reproaching Slovene theatres and audiences with entrenched conservatism. He particularly alluded to their fascination with cheap and maudlin plays of the French boulevard adapted for the Slovene stage, which led to the spectators’ reluctance to show proper respect for a play by a more serious author.⁸ Given all these circumstances, it is easy to understand why the first Slovene production of *Anna Christie* ran for only eight performances and then practically fell into oblivion as far as this period was concerned.⁹

As anticipated by Kreft, the 1932 production of *Desire Under the Elms* by the same theatre house met a fate similar to that of *Anna Christie*. The staging was found inadequate in many respects. It apparently either overemphasised the naturalistically-pathetic tone of the play, unduly promoting a “relentlessly explicit and vulgar speech, entirely beyond the Slovene taste,”¹⁰ or it was criticised because of the director’s failure to present the events and characters on the stage with realistic persuasiveness.¹¹ The reviewer Vladimir Bartol, the internationally acclaimed author of the novel *Alamut* (1938), recognised in the allegedly vulgar elements of speech vague poetic metaphors, remote from ordinary language.¹² The productions of O’Neill’s plays gradually became an ideological battleground for those who advocated pure and standard dramatic expression and those who were inclined towards a more lively and down-to-earth

7 Eugene O’Neill, *The Plays of Eugene O’Neill* (New York: Random House, 1967), 13.

8 Bratko Kreft also writes that the Slovene theatre repertoires of the period were assembled so randomly that, even by 1929, the Slovene audience had still had no opportunity to see a play by Wedekind, while Strindberg was already forgotten. Furthermore, Kreft includes a telling remark concerning the habit of cutting texts, which implies that interbellum stage directors extensively revised the texts of foreign playwrights. Bratko Kreft, *Dramaturški fragmenti* (Ljubljana: Knjižnica Mestnega gledališča ljubljanskega, 1965), 31–46.

9 The only exception came in 1929, when a well-known Czech theatre group on a tour stopped in Ljubljana to give a performance of this play. Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain any significant information on this apparently successful event or to determine how and to what extent the Czech staging managed to warm up the Slovene audience.

10 France Koblar, “O’Neill: *Strast pod brestī*,” *Slovenec*, October 15, 1932, 2. Curiously, the critic was disturbed by the language used in the play, even though the theatre bill expressly stated that the production moderated or totally eliminated some vulgar expressions. See Bratko Kreft, “O’Neill: *Strast pod brestī*,” *Gledališki list Narodnega gledališča v Ljubljani* 12, no. 5 (1932/33): 3.

11 Juš Kozak was the only critic who mentioned the fact that several theatres in America performed the play with a different ending: the young couple ran away and Old Ephraim set the house on fire before hanging himself. The critic considered the alternative ending more appropriate as it brought relief to the spectator and also contributed to a more realistic representation of the characters. See Juš Kozak, “O’Neill: *Strast pod brestī*,” *Jutro*, October 16, 1932, 13.

12 Vladimir Bartol, “E. O’Neill: *Strast pod brestī*,” *Modra ptica* (1932/33): 125–26. As it was definitely not part of O’Neill’s concept to provide his characters with some sort of artificial language, but rather the opposite, reasons for the critic’s impression ought to be tracked down to the translator’s/stage director’s inadequate approach to O’Neill’s dramatic language. It is noteworthy that the Slovene translations of both *Anna Christie* (trans. Oton Župančič) and *Desire Under the Elms* (trans. Fran Albreht) were made on the basis of already inaccurate German translations. For an assessment of the German translations of O’Neill’s plays, see Ward B. Lewis, *Eugene O’Neill: The German Reception of America’s First Dramatist* (New York: Peter Lang, 1984).

stage speech. Since the interbellum Slovene theatre was generally perceived as a place reserved for cultivating people's cultural and linguistic taste, it was not difficult to foresee the winner of this battle. The fate of O'Neill's plays, which heavily rely for their effect on the non-standard, true-to-life and sometimes juicy linguistic expressiveness of their characters, was thus sealed, as far as Slovene theatres were concerned.

The Slovene stage directors of this time were growing increasingly inclined towards European Realism and especially Naturalism, and thus perceived the staging of Eugene O'Neill's early plays as an ideal opportunity to promote their literary worldviews. The problem was that the Slovene audiences were not prepared to accept this new approach, all the more because the stagings were, according to the reviews, somewhat ambiguous: they either exaggerated the realistic note or they were excessively naturalistic. But they failed to bring out that inherently O'Neillian touch which makes his early plays classics of American drama and worthy of revivals worldwide: an essentially realist portrayal of the world with an undercurrent of symbolism. While one may speculate why and how the Slovene theatregoers must have been repelled by such inconsistent handlings of O'Neill's novel dramaturgy, the fact remains that the theatre directors who were trying to introduce a new wave into the Slovene theatre simply ignored the possibilities that the audience was not ready for change or that the change was not ready for the audience.

ANNA CHRISTIE AND *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS* AFTER WORLD WAR II

The presentation of Eugene O'Neill's plays certainly underwent a change, but it was not the kind of change anyone would hope for. It all began with the post-WWII revival of *Anna Christie* and *Desire Under the Elms*. The political situation in the country promoted the so-called Socialist construction both in the fields of economics and culture. The dominant cultural discourse was that sphere of social commitment which was perceived by the political authorities as instrumental in securing power. Never before or since has cultural activity received so much attention or significance as during the affirmation of Socialist ideas in the aftermath of World War II. In view of the general tendency to approach life as realistically as possible, O'Neill's dramas, on the surface dealing with the life of the lower classes, served as an ideal opportunity to interpret his plays in a stereotypical manner, that is, as a plain conflict between good and evil, or to be precise, as a conflict between revolutionary and reactionary forces. Above all, the Slovene theatre was supposed to cater to the needs of the working class, where O'Neill again proved convenient, even though the preferred repertory favoured Slovene plays, followed by Yugoslav and Slavonic pieces, while the world's classic and modern dramas came last.¹³

The main elements extrapolated by the post-war theatre and critical reception from *Anna Christie* and *Desire Under the Elms* served either as incentives to promulgate O'Neill's drama, or, paradoxically, to ban it completely from the Slovene stage. These elements may be summed up in the following way: both plays, but especially

13 Fran Albreht, *Gledališke kritike: 1951–1960*, ed. Bojan Štih (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1973), 197.

Anna Christie, which was at one point pronounced a representative of the so-called social drama, provided an ideal opportunity to discard the belated prejudices of the bourgeoisie and replace them with “the unspoilt and crystal-clear proletarian soul.”¹⁴ The theatre reviews of the two plays were often confusing. On the one hand, there were critics and stage directors who made every possible effort to justify the inclusion of Eugene O’Neill in the repertory of Slovene theatres. One of them, France Filipič, wrote in his review of the 1946 production of *Desire Under the Elms*: “We are absolutely obliged to show this play in our present-day situation, since we find in it an attack upon the kulaks who have demonstrated a desperate craving for the land, and, on the other hand, experience the healthy attitude towards the land, which elevates the modern man.”¹⁵ On the other hand were critics who firmly believed that *Desire Under the Elms* was detrimental to the implementation of the agrarian reform on account of its, as one of them put it, “promoting a rapacious thirst for soil, which is foreign to the soul of any Slovene peasant.”¹⁶ This was the 1947 production, which the same reviewer found fairly uneven, at once realistic, then naturalistic, and finally suddenly symbolically enhanced. To judge by the reviewer’s reproach, the stage director, Fran Žizek, apparently came very close to the core of the play, but unfortunately, at the wrong time and in the wrong place.

Anna Christie as well as *Desire Under the Elms* were subjected to severe theatrical and textual modifications such as cutting, expansion, alteration, linguistic and stylistic deviation, and the like. Such a tendency may be, at least to some extent, acceptable for some of O’Neill’s plays that are extraordinarily long (e.g., *Mourning Becomes Electra*), but when it comes to such plays as *Anna Christie* or *Desire Under the Elms*, this approach is intolerable, all the more so if it concerns parts indispensable for a deeper understanding of the play. To point out just one example, the note on which *Anna Christie* ends has been the subject of endless critical speculation along the lines: “Is the ending tragic or happy?” The crucial words seem to be those uttered by Chris just before the fall of the curtain: “Dat ole davil, sea!”¹⁷ The final iconography, with Chris in close-up and the two lovers embracing in the background, intensifies the premonition. The Slovene staging, however, entirely neglected the play’s open-endedness, since Chris’s prophetic words were simply eliminated and replaced by his toast to the forthcoming marriage between his daughter and Mat: “Skoal!”¹⁸ Evidently, the stage director’s endeavour to bring the play closer to the theatregoer backfired – *Anna Christie* was received as an epitome of American soap drama.

In comparison with cutting, expansion occurred far more rarely in the Slovene productions of these plays. Nevertheless, two cases clearly reflect a tendentious representation of the original propositional content. The first one concerns the aforementioned suicide scene towards the end of *Anna Christie*, which is not to be

14 Herbert Grün, “Zapisek o socialni drami,” *Gledališki list Prešernovega gledališča v Kranju* 7, no. 1 (1951/52): 8.

15 France Filipič, “O’Neill: *Strast pod brest*,” *Slovenski poročevalec*, April 11, 1946, 6.

16 Boris Fakin, “O’Neill: *Strast pod brest*,” *Slovenski poročevalec*, March 26, 1947, 3.

17 O’Neill, *The Plays of Eugene O’Neill*, 78.

18 Nordic for “Cheers!”

found in the original. While O'Neill's Anna threatens Mat with a revolver, only to be eventually overwhelmed by his grief and resignation, the Slovene Anna actually uses the revolver to shoot herself in the presence of her lover and father. Thanks to Mat's brisk reaction, she misses, but her attempt at suicide becomes her key to Mat's heart in that he takes her resolution as sufficient proof of her true love for him and her sincere repentance for having led a disgraceful life. Once again, in an attempt to capture and emphasise the essence of the so-called American signature, the Slovene staging resorted to an exaggerated presentation of the revolver scene, and thus alienated a considerable number of critics and audiences. The second case involves an interpolated exclamation by Old Ephraim before the curtain falls: "My farm!", in place of the less straightforward words uttered by the sheriff: "It's a jim-dandy farm, no denyin'. Wished I owned it!"¹⁹ This way of ending the play was characteristic of the post-WWII productions of *Desire Under the Elms*, as it was in perfect tune with the Communist propaganda, justifying the implementation of the agrarian reform.

CONCLUSION

The 1950s and early 1960s brought a considerable progress towards grasping Eugene O'Neill's dramatic genius. The Communist authorities relaxed their ideological supervision, which gave stage directors more leeway in presenting *Anna Christie* and *Desire Under the Elms* in accordance with their intrinsic artistic potential. Moreover, the stagings were no longer obsessed with tracking down some nebulous characteristics of American dramaturgy, which had admittedly never been among O'Neill's priorities, but rather attempted to explore the plays' generic proportions that might stimulate the viewer's concretisation of the issues dealt with. The result was a considerably better response from the critics as well as the audiences. However, these two decades, mainly due to the rising Modernism in Slovenia, also witnessed a loss of interest in *Anna Christie* and *Desire Under the Elms*, since their last productions on the Slovene stage took place in 1954 and 1963, respectively.

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¹⁹ Eugene O'Neill, *Three Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Vintage Books, 1959), 58.

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THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR IN COMICS

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ABSTRACT: The treatment of the American Civil War in comics is virtually unknown among both the general public and academic community. This article discusses how the previously marginalized medium of comics has treated real historical events and the American Civil War in particular. It focuses on two comic books published in the 1950s and 60s – *Two Fisted Tales Special Issue: Civil War* published by EC Comics and Gilberton Company's *Classics Illustrated Special Issue: The War between the States*. The former was published by a company known for its horror titles, and it is focused more on storytelling and artwork, while the latter represents a didactic effort of comic book publishers. Both are characterized by their historical accuracy, depicting the events of the bloody conflict.

KEYWORDS: comic books; American Civil War; Comics Code; Harvey Kurtzmann; historical detail

Much has been written about the American Civil War in every literary genre, and a large number of films have been produced about the war, among them one of the most influential films in history, D.W. Griffith's 1915 epic drama, *The Birth of a Nation*. The war has been deeply rooted in American popular culture, and the aim of the article is to examine whether and how comic book artists have treated this historical event.

According to Petr Vinklár, long gone are the days when comics were just a marginal medium shunned by critics and educated people alike.¹ In the past two decades, a great number of scholarly books and articles were published, and comics became a fancy and somewhat respected topic. Also long gone are the days when the pages of comic books were just the realm of super heroes and heroines saving our planet or battling crime in the mean streets. With pioneering works by Will Eisner and Art Spiegelman in the 1970s and 1980s, historical settings and real-life stories became accepted themes for the medium.²

By World War II, the genre of war comics had become popular. For servicemen, it offered a brief respite from the monotony of military life, and the U.S. military distributed thousands of comic books worldwide in order to entertain troops. The military used its own comic publications to teach soldiers about the proper maintenance of their

1 See Petr Vinklár, "The Interplay of Text and Image in Comics: A Linguistic Interpretation of Will Eisner's 'A Contract with God,'" in *From Theory to Practice 2012: Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Anglophone Studies*, ed. Gregory Jason Bell, Katarína Nemčoková and Bartosz Wójcik (Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, 2013), 135.

2 For a discussion of Eisner's graphic novel, see Michaela Weiss, "Will Eisner's Contract with Comics," *American and British Studies Annual* 4 (2011): 74–83.

equipment or getting along with people in foreign countries. Will Eisner was one of the artists hired for this effort. The 1950s saw an increase of war-themed comics. At the beginning, comic books focused on the Korean War and later on the re-envisioning of World War II. Nonetheless, publishers occasionally paid attention to wars of the more distant past, including the Civil War.³

The first Civil War comic book dealt with in this paper represents this war-themed trend of the 1950s. It was published by EC Comics, a company that became famous as a leader in publishing horror comic books. Ironically, the company was originally called Educational Comics and focused on stories from classic literature and the Bible. It was founded by Max Gaines, a comic book pioneer who sought to uplift the content of comics by introducing more serious educational and religious topics, such as *Picture Stories from the Bible*, which was distributed to thousands of Catholic schools across the country. When Gaines passed away suddenly, his son William inherited the company, changed its name to Entertaining Comics, and hired younger artists such as Al Feldstein and Harvey Kurtzman, changing the direction of the company as well. Among dozens of other horror comic book titles from other publishers, the company series that included *Tales from the Crypt*, *The Vault of Horror* or *The Haunt of Fear* quickly gained prominence for its gore, cruel humor and creepy mystery. These horror titles had a long-lasting effect on teenage audiences and shaped the minds of future icons of the horror realm such as Stephen King, John Romero or Rob Zombie.⁴ In the 1950s, EC became known for its diversity of styles and outrageous content. This rebellious character was well ahead of other mainstream comics. Although the company became known for its horror titles, it has published a number of more serious works that included the war-themed *Two-Fisted Tales* (1950–1955) and *Frontline Combat* (1951–1954), edited by Harvey Kurtzman. These two series are considered to be some of the best war comics of the period, and they were notable for the portrayal of an ordinary soldier in a war.

Horror and war stories published by EC to a great extent contributed to what is seen by many as the end of the golden age of comics. Already in the 1940s, comic books and their publishers became the target of persecution from several organizations that were concerned with the potential harmful content of comics and claimed that they inspired “juvenile delinquency.”⁵ A story was run in *The New York Times* in 1948 about students of St. Patrick’s Parochial School in Binghamton, New York who burned 2,000 objectionable comic books, which inspired comic burnings all over the country.⁶ This anti-comic hysteria led to the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency hearings, which did not endorse any specific legislation, but the public outcry led publishers of comics to take action and institute a self-censorship in order to protect the industry

3 See Robert S. Petersen, *Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels: A History of Graphic Narratives* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011), 154.

4 See Randy Duncan and Matthew Smith, *Icons of the American Comic Book: From Captain America to Wonder Woman* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 224.

5 Michaela Weiss, “From Superman to Maus,” in *Theories and Practices: Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Anglophone Studies*, ed. Roman Trušník, Katarína Nemčoková and Gregory Jason Bell (Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, 2012), 277.

6 See Petersen, *Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels*, 160.

from legal regulation. The result was the creation of the Comics Code Authority, a self-regulatory code of comic book publishers that enforced strict rules as to which themes comics could depict. It prohibited violence, blood, obscenity and profanity. Crime could be portrayed only in a negative light, and it effectively eliminated horror comics since it prohibited also “scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead, torture, vampires and vampirism, ghouls, cannibalism, and were-wolfism.”⁷ No genre was immune from the criticism, since the psychiatrist Frederic Wertham attacked also the Classics Illustrated comics and even funny-animals comic books. In his thinking, all comics were a bad influence on youth because they promoted a culture of violence.⁸

As far as EC’s Civil War comics are concerned, the company originally planned to do a series of comics within its two war titles *Frontline Combat* and *Two-Fisted Tales* that were published alongside its horror, crime and science-fiction titles. The series would cover the entire Civil War in seven issues, four stories per issue. The first issue was *Frontline Combat* No. 9 (Nov.–Dec. 1952), followed by *Two-Fisted Tales* No. 31 (Jan.–Feb. 1953) and No. 35 (Oct. 1953). However, the project was dropped when the success of the humorous *MAD* magazine forced Gaines to discontinue the series and assign Harvey Kurtzman, the man behind the war titles, to edit the magazine.⁹ A total of twelve stories were therefore issued, starting with a story about Abraham Lincoln and ending with the Battle of Chancellorsville.

EC’s comic books were notable for their anti-war stance and adherence to historical detail. Kurtzman was a World War II veteran who had seen his share of suffering, and his stories usually depict the grim realities of combat. In a 1980 interview, Kurtzman said, “[w]hen I thought of doing a war book, the business of what to say about war was very important to me and was uppermost in my mind because I did then feel very strongly about not wanting to say anything glamorous, and everything that went before *Two-Fisted Tales* had glamorized war. Nobody had done anything on the depressing aspects of war, and this, to me, ... was a terrible disservice to the children.”¹⁰ Though maybe not as strongly anti-war as in the World War II or Korean War stories that were more current in the early 1950s, some of the chapters of the Civil War issues focus on suffering of ordinary soldiers and futile deaths. Instead of the overall strategic situation or decisions of commanding generals as in the case of Classics Illustrated comics, Kurtzman concentrates on the lowest ranks, usually a single individual or small group of soldiers. In the chapters “First Shot!”, “Bull Run!”, and “Campaign!”, a character which appears in the opening panels dies by the end of the chapter.

A reader seeking the gore and violence that were trademarks of EC’s horror titles would be disappointed with these war stories. Blood appears only once, in the final three panels of “Fort Sumter.” Kurtzman leaves much of the combat violence to the readers’ imagination. However, with missing blood, the grimaces of dying soldiers are

7 Douglas Wolk, *Reading Comics: How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2007), 318.

8 See Petersen, *Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels*, 161.

9 See Russ Cochran, introduction to *Two-Fisted Tales Special Issue: Civil War!* (West Plains: Russ Cochran, 1985), 1.

10 Duncan and Smith, *Icons of the American Comic Book*, 227.

much more effective in portraying the violence.

The attention to historical authenticity caused uniforms, weapons and other historical details to be carefully researched and precisely drawn. According to Cochran, Kurtzman was not satisfied until the artists had painstakingly drawn each piece of equipment accurately.¹¹ Among some of the interesting historical details is, for example, heavy rain that fell on Fort Sumter on the afternoon of April 12th (both analyzed comic books take note of that rain). The only casualties of the Fort Sumter shelling were the non-combat deaths of two Union troops during an accident at the ceremony after the surrender when a cannon misfired. In EC's chapter "Fort Sumter," the narrative focuses on one of the soldiers who at the end dies in that accident. Most of the soldiers in the comics are anonymous, and the only named characters are prominent Civil War figures such as President Lincoln, or U.S. generals McClellan or Grant. The viewpoint is strictly northern; southern soldiers are featured prominently only in the splash page of "Fort Sumter." Otherwise, they form only a grey line attacking the Union troops.

Typical of Kurtzman's style is the extensive use of exclamation marks which is best seen in the splash panel of every chapter: "The drums are beating the long roll across the country! South Carolina has seceded from the Union...Alabama! Florida! Georgia! Louisiana! Mississippi! South Carolina! Texas! Arkansas! Tennessee! Virginia! All gone South! Missouri, Kentucky and Maryland...Undecided! The drums are beating! The time has come to...CHOOSE SIDES!"¹² From the colloquial language used by the soldiers, it is clear that the series was issued before the Comic Code – because it even prohibited the use of slang in comics, since it was felt that good grammar should be used in comics in order to promote their educational value.¹³ Sound effects, a typical device of the comic book medium, are also used extensively. Besides functioning as words which reproduce sound, they also serve as major design elements in some of the panels. Kurtzman loved using sound effects in his stories, and sometimes they are carried across panels to link the action in the panels.¹⁴

Classics Illustrated, the second series discussed in this paper, was published by the Gilberton Company for almost thirty years. It was best known for comic-book versions of either literary works or popular stories. Twice a year, the company also published Classics Illustrated Special Issues, and one of them was *The War between the States*, an issue dedicated to the Civil War. These comic books were well-researched and handsomely produced. Witek claims that some of the artwork was used to illustrate school textbooks, which was a rare height of respectability for comic-book art.¹⁵

The main difference between the Gilberton and EC comics was that the former represented a didactic strain of comic books, and it was marketed to parents who would buy them for their children. On the other hand, EC comics with their horror, science-

11 See Cochran, introduction, 1.

12 Russ Cochran, ed. *Two-Fisted Tales Special Issue: Civil War!* (West Plains: Russ Cochran, 1985), 16.

13 See Amy K. Nyberg, *Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 113.

14 See Cochran, introduction, 1.

15 See Joseph Witek, *Comic Books as History: The Narrative Art of Jack Jackson, Art Spiegelman and Harvey Pekar* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1989), 14.

fiction and war stories that transgressed “almost every imaginable cultural taboo, including thematic treatments of incest, bondage and sadomasochism, dismemberment and disembowelment, and family murders of every possible combination,”¹⁶ were focused on more adult audiences.

The War between the States was published in June 1961 to commemorate the Civil War Centennial. Among the artists whom the Gilberton Company hired for the issue was Jack Kirby of *Captain America*, *The Incredible Hulk* and *The Fantastic Four* fame. He contributed to four chapters; “Fort Sumter,” the first in the issue, is the most prominent. Instead of the terms “American Civil War” or “Civil War,” “The War between the States” is an expression used mostly in the southern part of the country, in the states of the former Confederacy. The name may suggest a certain bias towards the South, but there is none. The comic book was issued at the beginning of the 1960s, during the Civil Rights Movement, and the readers both in the North and the South would most likely look for signs of either regional or racial bias, so the editor chose to steer as neutral a course as possible.¹⁷ Some preference towards one side or the other would definitely result in alienating large parts of the company’s audience. The chapter “The Causes,” which follows the Fort Sumter chapter, lists some of the problems that plagued the two parts of the country in the antebellum period (tariffs, the national banking system, etc.), but it pays rather limited attention to slavery. It only presents a brief chronology of events related to slavery (the Missouri Compromise, the Dred Scott Decision, and John Brown’s Raid, one event per panel), so the most serious cause of the war is discussed on just two pages. Neither part of the country is explicitly blamed for secession or the start of the war. In addition, no attention at all is paid to the role of African-American soldiers in the war. The chapter called “Reconstruction,” the last in the issue, briefly addresses the legacy of racism, but it blames northern carpetbaggers for the birth of the Ku-Klux Klan. The final panel shows a carpet bag (a symbol of greedy Northerners) in the background, and a hooded Klansman and burning cross in the foreground.

Similarly to *Two-Fisted Tales*, historical accuracy was of critical importance for the editor of the issue, Roberta Strauss. The comics are well researched and every piece of equipment is accurately drawn. The issue covers the entire war, from the first shot at Fort Sumter to General Lee’s capitulation and Reconstruction, including such minor episodes as, for example, the Confederate plot to burn New York City in November 1864. Every few chapters are followed by a “Battle Report,” where four large panels depict the events of other theaters of war. The issue includes also maps, so it sometimes resembles a well-illustrated textbook.

Unlike *Two-Fisted Tales*, almost every panel in *War Between the States* is headed by a yellow boxed segment of text which introduces information crucial for the story such as dates, names or tactical situations. It seems that the pictures are just supplements of the words above. Dialogue balloons are unusually shaped and filled with impersonal mechanical-looking lettering. According to Witek, these devices (boxed text in the

¹⁶ Witek, *Comic Books as History*, 15.

¹⁷ See William B. Jones, Jr., introduction to *The War between the States* (Toronto: Jack Lake Productions, 2007), 1.

upper part of the panel, unusual balloons, and machine lettering) are trademark features of the Gilberton Company intended to establish the tone of legitimacy and authority in accordance with the company's didactic aims.¹⁸ The most striking fact for a comic book fan about *War between the States* is the total absence of sound effects. Sound effects have been one of the features of comic book stories since their early beginnings, but there are none in this story. This refusal to use one of the most typical devices of the comics medium indicates a defense against anti-comic critics. *The War Between the States* issue was published in 1961, seven years after the Comic Code. It is clear that in order to escape persecution from the critics, the company intended to produce a comic book with as little similarity to a typical comic book as possible.

Despite being a crucial event in American history, the Civil War did not often appear on the pages of comic books, even despite the popularity of war comics during the golden age in the early 1950s. EC Comics, a company which produced some of the best war comics ever published, dedicated only three special issues of *Two-Fisted Tales* and *Frontline Combat* to the Civil War. These represent the more sensational pre-Comic Code approach with an emphasis on storytelling and state-of-the-art comic artwork. On the other hand, *The War between the States*, published by a company that specialized in didactic comics, is an educational strain of the medium with a conservative post-Code approach, which lacks certain features of traditional comics and focuses more on facts than on artwork.

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18 See Witek, *Comic Books as History*, 23.

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AFRO-PESSIMISM AND A PROGRESSIVE BLACK SEXUAL POLITICS

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ABSTRACT: In the era of American postracialism, a new theoretical line of thinking has emerged in black studies, drawing attention to the *structural* condition of black existence. Referred to as 'Afro-pessimism,' a term attributed to Frank B. Wilderson, III, this radical position theorizes blackness as being outside the boundaries of humanity, i.e., being antagonistic to it. In this paper, I discuss black feminists' engagement with the theory of Afro-pessimism. First, I analyze its theoretical elaboration in the works of Saidiya V. Hartman and Hortense J. Spillers, two black feminist thinkers who have been categorized as Afro-pessimists. Then I attempt to read Patricia Hill Collins's proposal for a new progressive black sexual politics as a possible means of engagement with the above theory, arguing that despite her focus on liberation, Collins shares some Afro-pessimist insights.

KEYWORDS: Afro-pessimism; black feminist criticism; black sexual politics; Collins; Hartman; humanity; slavery; Spillers; subjectivity; violence

With the election of the first black president, Barack Obama, in 2008, America seemed to be entering a new era of postracialism in which race no longer mattered. This exciting moment created an atmosphere of racial neutrality, encouraging the public to abandon race-specific issues. In the absence of *visible* signs of racial discrimination, the moment fueled public discourse keen on negating the existence of the persistent racial divide and white privilege, positing both as a thing of the past. Yet, for the majority of blacks, reality spoke otherwise. Plagued by educational disparities, high rates of unemployment, incarceration, police violence, and racial profiling, they had no reason to believe in the media-proclaimed racial equality they had been expecting to achieve since the civil rights victories of the 1960s.¹

Within this context, a new theoretical line of thinking has emerged in black studies, drawing attention to the *structural* condition of black existence. Referred to as 'Afro-pessimism,' a term attributed to Frank B. Wilderson, III, this radical position theorizes blackness as being outside the boundaries of humanity, i.e., being antagonistic to it. As summarized by Wilderson: "[A] Black is the very antithesis of a Human subject."² Thus, contrary to previous theories of black subjectivity, Afro-pessimism is not celebratory

1 Postracialism is often associated with the period of Barack Obama's presidency. Yet the tendency to avoid race-specific issues or to make race ambiguous can be traced back to earlier multicultural/multiracialist efforts to move beyond the framework of black and white. For example, Patricia Hill Collins speaks of her fear (and consequences) of the rush to abandon the black/white paradigm in her book *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 12–14.

2 Frank B. Wilderson, III, *Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 9.

or affirmative; instead, it relates blackness to death, ontological and social, pointing out the history of black suffering and the ongoing gratuitous nature of violence against blacks. In this paper, I discuss black feminists' engagement with Afro-pessimist thinking.³ First, I analyze its theoretical elaboration in the works of Saidiya V. Hartman and Hortense J. Spillers, two black feminist thinkers who have often been labeled as or grouped among Afro-pessimists. Then I attempt to read Patricia Hill Collins's black sexual politics as a possible means of engagement with the above theory, arguing that despite her focus on liberation, Collins shares some Afro-pessimist insights.

In 1987, the journal *Diacritics* published a twenty-page essay by Hortense J. Spillers, carrying a rather unusual title – “‘Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe’: An American Grammar Book.” Since then, this essay has been reprinted in many anthologies,⁴ becoming a classic in both American and African American literary scholarship. While it remains an important contribution to literary (and cultural) studies, it can also be seen as one of the founding texts of Afro-pessimism, delineating how the structural suffering of blacks has been foundational to American history, culture, and life in general.

In “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” Spillers argues that to understand blackness in America, we must return to the moment of African enslavement and the Middle Passage and comprehend how the transportation of the human cargo meant not only a total deracination of blacks but also “a *theft of the body* – a willful and violent (and unimaginable from this distance) severing of the captive body from its motive will, its active desire.”⁵ This severing, according to Spillers, constitutes an act of “evisceration of subjectivity of blackness,”⁶ in which the black body becomes an object in the hands of captors – a thing associated with sensuality, sexuality and powerlessness.⁷ As Wilderson elaborates later in his own work: “Africans went into the [slave] ships and came out as Blacks,” doomed to death as slaves.⁸

3 While I situate the birth of Afro-pessimism in the twenty-first century because the term was coined in Frank B. Wilderson’s book *Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid* (New York: South End Press, 2008), one can easily trace the line of Afro-pessimist thinking back to earlier works. Wilderson provides a list of such works on his website, which also summarizes the basic tenets of this line of thinking. See Frank B. Wilderson, III “Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid,” 2008, http://incognegro.org/afro_pessimism.html.

4 See, for example, Angelyn Mitchell, ed., *Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), Joy James and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, eds., *The Black Feminist Reader* (Malden: Blackwell, 2000), Winston Napier, ed., *African American Literary Theory: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2000) and Robyn R. Warhol and Diane P. Herndl, eds., *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010).

5 Hortense J. Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” in *The Black Feminist Reader*, ed. Joy James and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting (Malden: Blackwell, 2000), 60, emphasis in the text.

6 Yumi Pak, “Outside Relationality: Autobiographical Deformations and the Literary Lineage of Afro-Pessimism in 20th and 21st Century African American Literature” (PhD diss., University of California, 2012), 7, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2h76s393>.

7 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 60.

8 Wilderson, *Red, White and Black*, 38. Many scholars, including Wilderson, capitalize the term *Black* when referring to a self-defined racial identity. While I do not capitalize it, my use of the term is meant to be interchangeable with *Black*. Also, the terms blacks and African Americans are used interchangeably in this paper.

Spillers differentiates between “body” and “flesh” to distinguish between captive and liberated subject-positions.⁹ In her words, for blacks the “flesh” represents the “zero degree of social conceptualization [...], a primary narrative with its seared, divided, ripped-apartness,”¹⁰ while markings on the captive body, such as lacerations, punctures, etc., indicate the “scale of structural violence amassed against blackness.”¹¹ Studying reports of incidents of slave-torture, she notices the various “anatomical specifications of rupture of altered human tissues,” which “take on the objective description of laboratory prose,”¹² pointing out that in the hands of the captors, the captive body becomes laboratory material to be scrutinized:

This profitable “atomizing” of the captive body provides another angle on the divided flesh: we lose any hint or suggestion of a dimension of ethics, of relatedness between human personality and its anatomical features, between one human personality and another, between human personality and cultural institutions. To that extent, the procedures adopted for the captive flesh demarcate a total objectification, as the entire captive community becomes a living laboratory.¹³

As Spillers demonstrates, blackness within captivity points to an antagonistic relation between blacks and humanity, in which blacks are placed outside the boundaries of humanity (we lose any hint of human personality) and expelled from subjecthood (by way of total objectification). In Afro-pessimist terms, the slave condition becomes the essential principle of black existence, which is marked by social death – a life of a sentient object without a guaranteed social subjectivity, thus without any positive relationality – and “as an ontological absence in contradistinction to the human *subject’s* presence.”¹⁴ This negative relationality, maintained through structural violence, has remained intact even after the abolition of slavery. Spillers writes:

Even though the captive flesh/body has been “liberated” and no one need pretend that even the quotation marks do not *matter*, dominant symbolic activity [...] remains grounded in the originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation so that it is as if neither time nor history, nor historiography and its topics, shows movement, as *the [black] human subject is “murdered” over and over again* by the passions of a bloodless and anonymous archaism, showing itself in endless disguise. Faulkner’s young Chick Mallison in *The Mansion* calls “it” by other names—“the ancient subterranean atavistic fear ...” (227). And I would call it the Great Long National Shame.¹⁵

Spillers’ reference to “the ancient subterranean atavistic fear” brings to mind not only Toni Morrison’s argument that Africanism, i.e., “a non-white, Africanlike (or Africanist) presence or persona” in literature, “provides a way of contemplating ... [white] desire

9 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 61.

10 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 61.

11 Pak, “Outside Relationality,” 7.

12 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 61.

13 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 62–3.

14 For this summary, I am indebted to R.L. See R.L., “Wanderings of the Slave: Black Life and Social Death,” *Mute*, June 5, 2013, <http://www.metamute.org/search/node/Wanderings%20of%20the%20Slave%20and%20Black%20Life%20and%20Social%20Death>. Frank B. Wilderson puts it in these words: “[T]hrough chattel slavery [...] the Human was born, but not before it murdered the Black, forging a symbiosis between the political ontology of Humanity and the social death of Blacks.” See Wilderson, *Red, White and Black*, 21.

15 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 63, my emphasis.

and *fear*,”¹⁶ but also, and, perhaps more importantly, Frantz Fanon’s description of his experience of racism in France – a traumatic event in which a white child cried out in horror seeing his black (negro) skin. This violent inscription of race on the skin as a marker of deviancy or pathology (as well as social inferiority) represents an essential structural element of New World anti-blackness, or, in Spillers’ words, the Great Long National Shame, whose continuing presence does not allow black “agents buried beneath [negative markers] to come clean.”¹⁷

Spillers articulates the object status of blackness (and the structural violence attached to it in the United States) by tracing what she calls an “American grammar” of suffering, which represents a radical, politicized rewriting of the Lacanian symbolic order beginning with “rupture and a radically different kind of cultural continuation.”¹⁸ Although, as she argues, “there is no absolute point of chronological initiation,”¹⁹ American society has constructed “a grid of associations, from the semantic and iconic folds buried deep in the collective past, that come to surround and signify the captive person.”²⁰ It is from this grid that the contemporary society “borrows its narrative energies”²¹ to negate and/or metaphorically “murder” black subjectivity over and over again, without any need to resort to means of physical violence.²²

Clearly, Spillers’s arguments in “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” lay a solid foundation for the development of the Afro-pessimist theory by disclosing the truths of anti-black racism and violence (both physical and psychological), and of black structural positionality in American society – which has been, historically, that of a slave and object. But unlike male Afro-pessimists, Spillers attempts to move beyond the concept of ungendered blackness. Claiming that in “undressing [...] confluences of meaning, as they appear under the rule of dominance [...], we would gain [...] the potential for gender differentiation as it might express itself along a range of stress points, including human biology in its intersection with the project of culture,”²³ she expresses her desire to reclaim a black gendered *subject*. Rereading what she calls the “American cultural text” through the prism of the American grammar of suffering, Spillers makes an astonishing discovery that the black female, who, under slavery, could not claim her children and whose black male partner was legally removed from the Lacanian concept of the Father’s name (i.e., the privileges attributed to white men), “becomes historically the powerful and shadowy evocation of a cultural synthesis long evaporated – the

16 Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 6–7, my emphasis.

17 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 57. See Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 112.

18 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 63.

19 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 65.

20 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 65.

21 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 65.

22 As Spillers writes in the essay, “We might concede, at the very last, that sticks and bricks might break our bones, but words will most certainly *kill* us.” Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 63, emphasis in the text.

23 Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 58.

law of the Mother.”²⁴ For Spillers, this “female with the potential to ‘name’” represents “the *insurgent* ground as [black] female social subject”²⁵ – a new ur-text of a female empowerment, which *might* become a site from which to counter racial (and sexual) subjection.

In 1997, Oxford University Press published *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*, a groundbreaking work on slavery and its immediate aftermath, by the black feminist cultural historian Saidiya V. Hartman. A major scholarly contribution to historical, cultural, and literary studies, *Scenes of Subjection* has been heralded as a foundational Afro-pessimist text, one which articulates some of the theory’s major tenets. Neither dismissing nor embracing the label, Hartman describes her project as one “try[ing] to bring that position [the position of the unthought that the slave occupies in American society] into view without making it a locus of positive value.”²⁶

Scenes of Subjection opens with a radical reading of Frederick Douglass’s *Narrative*, which positions the slave as simultaneously both subject and object:

The “terrible spectacle” that introduced Frederick Douglass to slavery was the beating of his Aunt Hester. [...] By locating this “horrible exhibition” in the first chapter of his 1845 *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Douglass establishes the centrality of violence to the making of the slave and identifies it as an original generative act equivalent to the statement “I was born”. The passage through the blood-stained gate is an inaugural moment in the formation of the enslaved. In this regard, it is a primal scene. By this I mean that the terrible spectacle dramatizes the origin of the subject and demonstrates that to be a slave is to be under the brutal power and authority of another; this is confirmed by the event’s placement in the opening chapter on genealogy.²⁷

From the start, Hartman establishes that the slave subjectivity is characterized by submission. Moreover, the slave subjectivity is closely tied to violence, which plays a central role in the formation of the enslaved – it gives birth to the slave as a violated object. By its very nature, the object in the hands of the dominant race (legally defined as property) can be put to *any* use by *all* who belong to the dominant race; it is precisely this condition of being vulnerable to the projection of whites’ desires that, according to Hartman, “came to define the identity of the captive and hence the nature of the Negro.”²⁸ In other words, the interracial relations under slavery were defined by whites’ use of the black captive body, as “there was no relation to blackness outside the terms of this use of, entitlement to, and occupation of the captive body, for even the status of free blacks was shaped and compromised by the existence of slavery,” which constituted blackness as “an abject and degraded condition.”²⁹

Making a direct link between possession of slave-property and pleasure, Hartman

²⁴ Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 85.

²⁵ Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” 85, emphasis in the text.

²⁶ Saidiya V. Hartman and Frank B. Wilderson, III, “The Position of the Unthought,” *Qui Parle* 13, no. 2 (2003): 185.

²⁷ Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.

²⁸ Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 25.

²⁹ Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 25, 23.

further articulates the claim that the relation of the dominant race to the enslaved was also defined by enjoyment.³⁰ Tracing “entanglements of terror and enjoyment” in various scenes of subjection throughout the book (the auction block, the minstrel show, and other venues), she argues that “blacks were envisioned fundamentally as vehicles for white enjoyment.”³¹ To this end, she introduces the notion of the fungibility of the slave, a term that will, eventually, become central to Afro-pessimist theorists. Defining fungibility as “replaceability and interchangeability endemic to the commodity,”³² Hartman goes beyond the literal or material replacement of a missing number in the “pile” of accumulated black slave bodies. Instead, she argues that “the fungibility of the commodity makes the captive body an abstract and empty vessel vulnerable to the projection of other’s feelings, ideas, desires, and values,” and thus a source of enjoyment founded upon the conditions of slavery allowing whites “to don, occupy, or possess blackness or the black body.”³³ In both the literal and metaphorical cases, the fungibility of the slave leads to an obliteration or disappearance of the black subjectivity, which is either reduced to a statistical quantity or replaced by the white subject.³⁴

As argued earlier, Hartman describes the slave as both the object and the subject, i.e., as property and subjectivity with circumscribed humanity – “a legal subject formally endowed with limited rights and protections, a submissive, culpable or criminal agent, or one possessing restricted capacities for self-fashioning.”³⁵ Her project, however, is not to argue that blackness is antagonistic to humanity, but rather to show how the dominant race has constantly constricted blacks’ humanity in order to keep them captive. Pointing out a clear “discontinuity between legal emancipation [which conferred on blacks the inalienable rights of man] and substantial freedom,”³⁶ she argues that racial slavery was never annulled, but was instead transformed into another mode of servitude, in which the lives and liberties of black people were regulated and restricted “in the name of the public welfare and the health and prosperity of the [white] population.”³⁷ Analyzing in detail those “entanglements of freedom and slavery,” Hartman concludes that “bound by the vestiges of the past and cast into the legal condition of subjection,” blacks as subjects are “no longer enslaved, but not yet free.”³⁸

As Hartman explained in an interview with Frank B. Wilderson five years after the publication of her work, “the last lines of the book summon up that moment of potentiality between the no longer and the not yet. ‘Not yet free’: that articulation is

30 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 23.

31 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 23.

32 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 21.

33 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 21.

34 As is the case when white people imagine themselves in the shoes of the enslaved, thus becoming the subject of desired empathy. See Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 17–19.

35 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 5. Interestingly, Hartman sees blackness as ungendered, but introduces gender to her discussion of investments in and uses of the body. As she explains vis-à-vis the female gender: “The captive female does not possess gender as much as she is possessed by gender, that is, by way of a particular investment in and use of the body.” See Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 100.

36 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 12.

37 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 198.

38 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 206.

from the space of the twenty-first century, not the nineteenth, and that's the way it's supposed to carry – the same predicament, the same condition."³⁹ Describing her book as an allegory, whose argument is "a history of the present,"⁴⁰ Hartman makes it clear that the workings in contemporary American society are contiguous with slavery, which did not end in the nineteenth century, and that black captivity continues to be central to its coherence. And it is precisely this argument, which resonates in the words of Hortense J. Spillers, that has become one of the central premises of Afro-pessimism: "My country needs me, and if I were not here, I would have to be invented."⁴¹

Unlike Spillers, however, Hartman neither searches for nor offers any remedy to "the predicament" (although she does discuss possibilities for redress and/or forms of resistance that shaped black identity during slavery and its aftermath); this makes her book an Afro-pessimist text *par excellence*. Instead, she problematizes the possibility of empathy (and redress) in today's society, taking note of "the ease with which such scenes [of violence done to blacks] are usually reiterated" and "the casualness with which they are circulated."⁴² Questioning whether we are witnesses or mere voyeurs/spectators, she circles back to the issue of "impossibility" to represent "the sheer unrepresentability of terror" that surrounds the black existence in the United States.⁴³

In 2004, the highly distinguished black feminist theorist Patricia Hill Collins published her third major book, entitled *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. The book won the Distinguished Publication Award from the American Sociological Association, and quickly became acknowledged as a significant contribution to scholarship on race in post-civil rights America. Although it has never been associated with the theory of Afro-pessimism, under close scrutiny Collins's text displays a certain affinity with this line of thinking, mainly with the argument that African Americans continue to be held captive in contemporary American society.

As Collins establishes from the start, although times have changed, "the power relations that administer the theatre of race in America" remain in place, only "far more hidden."⁴⁴ In post-civil rights society, i.e., a society in which black people have been legally granted civil rights, prior forms of racial rule and dominance have metamorphosed into a new racism. Black people continue to be "under assault," and it is "the racial and gender meanings assigned to black bodies as well as the social meanings of black sexuality in American society" that "constitute sites of contestation in an uncivil war against Black people."⁴⁵

As Collins explains, since slavery blacks have been identified as "carriers of 'deviant' [...] sexual practices" in contrast to the "normal" (and normative) sexual practices of

39 Hartman, "The Position of the Unthought," 192.

40 Hartman, "The Position of the Unthought," 190.

41 The argument also resonates in Toni Morrison's claim that the American nation came to understand itself through "a real or fabricated Africanist presence." Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 6.

42 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 3.

43 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 3.

44 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 4.

45 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 51.

whites.⁴⁶ In other words, white normality has become constructed “on the backs of Black deviance.”⁴⁷ The myth of unrestrained black sexuality, both male and female, has given rise to racist stereotypes of black people (that of the rapist and the seductress, respectively), which have become enshrined in the collective mind of Americans. Under the new racism, new controlling images of black femininity and masculinity have been put in place to justify power relations and racial ideologies which, though hidden, remain the same. Thus, in the media, black working-class women are routinely portrayed negatively as emasculating bitches and sexually unrestrained bad mothers,⁴⁸ while black middle-class women are shown as modern mammies, ladies and educated bitches, loyal to the white system. Black working-class men are routinely portrayed as either able athletes or criminals (with links to violence and rape), in juxtaposition with black middle-class men, who appear as sissies and sidekicks in the white man’s world.⁴⁹ As Collins points out, these new images are deliberately “constructed as class opposites” to “explain why poor and working-class Black people are at the bottom of the economic hierarchy and middle-class Black people are not;”⁵⁰ it is through these images that authentic black people are kept under control, “contained and/or denuded of all meaning that threatens [white] elites.”⁵¹

If Afro-pessimists relate black existence in the United States to social death, Collins links it to imprisonment. Arguing that “the metaphor of the prison encapsulates the historical placement of African Americans in the U.S.,”⁵² she traces a direct line between chattel slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and the use of police power in urban ghettos, pointing out how black people have been structurally subjugated for centuries, the former plantation system merely being transformed into the prison system. Statistically, Collins reveals, black men comprise approximately 50 percent of the U.S. prison population (although they constitute only 8 percent of the total U.S. population) and on an average day, one in every four black men aged between 20 and 29 is either in jail or on probation/parole.⁵³ While the incarceration of black men has become a profitable business for those in power, its negative impact is felt in the lives of black men *and* women. Going beyond the economic aspect of the problem, Collins summarizes the detrimental effects on black neighborhoods and families in the following words:

[...] this growing interconnectedness of prison, street, and youth culture, with the importance given to hierarchies of masculinity [...] The valorization of thug life within Black youth culture, the growing misogyny within heterosexual love relationships, and the increased visibility [...] of homophobic violence [...] all seem to be casualties of the incarceration of African American men

46 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 44.

47 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 120.

48 Interestingly, Collins also points out how some black male and female artists, producers, and marketing executives, especially in the hip-hop music industry, participate in reproducing and disseminating these images. She considers black women’s self-representation in these images contradictory. See Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 128, 133.

49 See Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 123–77.

50 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 177.

51 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 178.

52 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 89.

53 See Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 158, 233.

and the ceaseless need to prove one's "manhood."⁵⁴

However, Collins does not satisfy herself with a mere criticism of power relations, reiterating, in line with Afro-pessimists, how American society sanctions new forms of gratuitous violence against blacks, intent on dehumanizing them. Instead, she focuses on how the black community (un)consciously accepts the mentality of prisoners. So while she reveals how black men's experiences with the criminal justice system point to "a convergence of institutionalized rape and institutionalized murder (lynching) as state-sanctioned forms of sexual violence,"⁵⁵ she also points out how black people living in hyper-segregated, inner-city ghettos behave like prisoners, turning against one another. Moreover, and, perhaps more importantly, she exposes how black leaders contribute to policing and victimizing their own people by reinforcing white gender and sexual ideologies (such as the strong man/weak woman paradigm and heterosexuality) which "closet" them.

As Collins explains, prisons in black people's lives are both literal and figurative. Black people may not have the power to destroy literal prisons and fight the racist system, but by adopting a new progressive black sexual politics, i.e., "uncoupling strength from dominance,"⁵⁶ rethinking the strong man/weak woman paradigm, and redefining sexuality "as a source of power rooted in spirituality, expressiveness, and love,"⁵⁷ they can free themselves from the confines of their self-imposed closets. Moreover, they can develop a new understanding of freedom – the antithesis to imprisonment⁵⁸ – in which they can imagine themselves as fully human.

To this end, Collins discusses *The Prisoner's Wife* (1999), a memoir written by Asha Bandele, which "speak[s] from the specificity of African American experience."⁵⁹ A story of a woman who falls in love with a convicted murderer, the memoir proposes what seems to be a radical thought: "For African Americans, *the mark of humanity* [...] *may be* the ability to love fully, to see other people for who they are as fully human beings, *to love within the context of oppression, and to bend or break the rules* [...]."⁶⁰ Rejecting the antagonistic relation between blacks and humanity, the memoir forges life and agency of resistance from within the context of oppression or social death. This idea may not be original (after all, it has been proposed by a host of black writers⁶¹), and it may not improve racial relations in American postracial/postcivil society, but it is a way for black existence in twenty-first-century American society to *be*.

54 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 82. As Collins points out, manhood has historically been denied to black men because hegemonic masculinity in the United States is, *by definition*, a privilege of white (propertied) men, just as hegemonic femininity is a privilege of white women. See Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 190, 193.

55 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 233.

56 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 199.

57 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 51.

58 See Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 305.

59 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 276.

60 Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 277, my emphasis.

61 The first name that comes to my mind is James Baldwin. Tellingly, Collins chooses his words as closing remarks to her book. See Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 307.

Afro-pessimism represents a powerful critique of the existing power relations in the United States. While it offers “a generative means of seeing a long-established structure that continues to be subsumed under the rhetoric of [...] postracial society [...], it refutes a regenerative or recuperative process in the condition of blackness.”⁶² This paper has demonstrated that black feminists’ engagement with this line of thinking tries to imagine such a process. Hortense J. Spillers locates a possible site of rebellion in the black female social subject, while Patricia Hill Collins finds it in loving fully and bending/breaking the rules within the context of oppression. Though perhaps less explicit in its optimism, Saidiya Hartman’s phrase “not yet free” does nevertheless imply a future possibility of freedom. Committed to justice and their black communities, whether writing from the position of the marked black woman (Spillers), from the ungendered position of the unthought (Hartman), or from the gendered position of a sociologist (Collins), these critics offer meaningful, enabling theories, which speak to the experiences and existence of black people in a supposedly postracial America and remain relevant in the wake of the recent cases of gratuitous violence enacted by the state and state representatives on Black life.⁶³

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⁶² Pak, “Outside Relationality,” 12.

⁶³ For the word “enabling,” see Hartman and Wilderson, “The Position of the Unthought,” 185. For the acknowledgment of relevance and “analytical acuity” of scholarship by Afro-pessimist scholars in the wake of “the publicly ritualized Black dying made fungible for politicians, media, and institutions,” see Jason R. Ambrose, and Sabine Broeck, eds., introduction to *Black Knowledges / Black Struggles: Essays in Critical Epistemology*, 1–20 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 17n17. The collection emphasizes “[t]he imperative of coming to terms with and necessarily ending the continued overall systemic dehumanization / invisibilization and correlated institutional and structural subjugation / condemnation of Black peoples globally” (16), putting itself in dialog with contributions from Afro-pessimist scholars, extending their call for a new definition of the human.

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THE SACRED REFLECTED BY THE GOOD: AN EVIL DICHOTOMY IN GIUSEPPE VERDI'S *OTELLO*

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ABSTRACT: Using Giuseppe Verdi's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello*, this paper discusses the importance of the sacred both in the libretto and the musical accompaniment, and the entwinement of the literary language with the musical subtext from this perspective. Verdi's *Otello* was chosen to illustrate this idea, as it represents a particularly demanding creation from the perspective of religious elements. The opera follows in great measure the plot line of the play, with the addition of a more powerfully constructed conflict between good and evil. In this respect, the spiritual constituent is present throughout the entire creation, both in the text and in the musical subtext, binding everything together. Thus, Desdemona illustrates the divine, while Iago represents the demon. The musical accompaniment proves to be a powerful tool in suggesting different characteristics and states of mind, by the choice of instruments, tonality, rhythm, harmony or melody.

KEYWORDS: *Othello*; *Otello*; William Shakespeare; Giuseppe Verdi; Arrigo Boito; opera; libretto; sacred; dichotomy; Desdemona; Iago

Religious elements are scattered throughout William Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603) either in clear form or in more subtly-crafted expressions, without the playwright following a manifest theological course. Nevertheless, in the libretto of Giuseppe Verdi's 1887 opera *Otello*,¹ the sacred, only alluded to in the Shakespearean play, becomes an obvious good-evil dichotomy, with Romantic accents and deep musical references. Thus, the angelic Desdemona and the Mephistophelian Iago become expressions of the divine and the devilish.

Using Verdi's adaptation of Shakespeare's play, this paper considers the importance of the spiritual elements both in the libretto and the musical accompaniment and the entwinement of the literary language with the musical subtext. It also seeks to discuss the resonances of the Shakespearean text in the musical subtext, looking at the religious expressions that were set to music by Verdi's librettist, Arrigo Boito (1842–1918), and which were complemented by some particularities of Verdi's style, which provides musical subtext with a Shakespearean touch.

A number of Shakespearean references were adapted by Boito or set aside or replaced by musical analogies. Hence, the presence of Shakespeare's sacred allusions in the libretto of the opera *Otello* is intertwined with Verdi's musical means of expressing spirituality, such as tonality, choice of voice type, melodic lines, leitmotifs, rhythm, and

¹ A libretto is the text used for an extended musical work, such as an opera.

selection of instruments or orchestration. Following a parallel analysis of the play and the opera libretto, it appears that the sacred, which is only touched upon in Shakespeare, becomes through Verdi a fundamental theme expressed by means of a good – evil duality illustrated by Desdemona and Iago. By bringing them together, in the same spectre of the sacred, and exposing the devilish as a continuous counterbalance to what is holy, Verdi potentiates the image of the divine. This is clearly revealed by the representative arias of the two opposing characters: Desdemona's *Ave Maria*, a widely known prayer that Verdi personalized for the young woman, and Iago's *Credo*, which is in fact a reversal of the Christian profession of faith.

Iago's aria opens the second act of the opera and assembles a series of lines and expressions taken from Shakespeare and adapted by Verdi and Boito. It is suggestive and encompasses the most representative attributes of the character. According to Julian Budden, "Iago is envy. Iago is a villain. Iago is a *critic*. In the cast-list Shakespeare describes him thus: *Iago, a villain*, and adds not a word more. [...] He is an artist in deceit. [...] Iago is the real author of the drama; he it is who fabricates the threads, gathers them up, combines them and weaves them together."² In Verdi's work, he becomes more than a villain: he embodies the forces of evil; he is spiteful, deceitful, and revengeful. According to Matthew Boyden, "Iago is a protean monster, courteous as the occasion demands, but emerging into blazing villainy with his *Credo*, a thrilling malevolent rant."³ He is more devilish than all the other devils in opera (*Mefistofele* – Boito, *Faust* – Gounod, *La Damnation de Faust* – Berlioz, etc.), especially because he is not supposed to be a devil, possessing a "villainous humanity."⁴ He is human, but exerting the utmost malignancy, while devils are Luciferian by definition. As Budden concludes, "if he did not possess great charm and an appearance of honesty he could not be the consummate deceiver that he is."⁵

Moreover, nineteenth-century composers had musical means to describe characters and situations, such as specific melodic lines, great differences in vocal intensity, and extreme vocal expressive nuances, turning music into a language in its own right. According to Liubov Solovtova,

Verdi's melodics with its intonations taken from everyday life and with its rhythmical richness acquires particular dramatic features. The orchestra's theatrical expressivity is also increasing. The voice is given [...] the main role. Contrarily, the orchestra – owing to its laconic, but always appropriate attributes – emphasizes what is important, finishes what hasn't been said completely. Each character has its own circle of intonations which creates vivid musical depictions. [...] Verdi knew how to invest all the characters in his opera, even the secondary ones, with specific personal features.⁶

The composer adds psychological depth to the character framed by the librettist by means of vocal colours and the choice of sonorities. Therefore, Shakespeare's text is

2 Julian Budden, *The Operas of Verdi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 328.

3 Matthew Boyden, *The Rough Guide to Opera* (London: Rough Guides, 2002), 243.

4 Budden, *The Operas of Verdi*, 328.

5 Budden, *The Operas of Verdi*, 328.

6 Liubov Solovtova, *Giuseppe Verdi* (București: Editura Muzicală, 1960), 158. My translation.

enhanced by musical means.

Naseeb Shaheen identifies sixty-two biblical references in *Othello*, out of which forty-four are spoken by Othello and Iago.⁷ Similarly, Gary Schmidgall observes that “*Devil* and its derivatives occur more often (twenty-seven times) than in any other Shakespearean play, and the occurrence of *heaven* forty-nine times also sets the Shakespearean record.”⁸ Interestingly, there are no biblical denotations in Shakespeare’s source text, Cinthio’s *Hecatommithi* (1565).⁹ They are Shakespeare’s invention, but Verdi further developed them.

Three phrases uttered by Iago appear as reversals of biblical expressions. The first one, “I am not what I am” (I.1.65),¹⁰ constitutes the quintessence of his character, his defining phrase conveyed in a veiled form, and is the reversal of the scriptural “I am who I am”, which appears repeatedly in the Bible under different forms.¹¹ This biblical reversal represents Iago’s profession of faith and will govern the entire play. If God is “He that is,”¹² the opposite pertains to the devil. As Schmidgall states, “I do not think Shakespeare worked harder or more elaborately in his entire career than he did to make it pristinely clear that Iago is a Luciferian agent.”¹³

With regard to the musical subtext, in order to underscore and enhance Iago’s association with the devil, Verdi created a descending chromatic line, or *passus duriusculus*, which accompanies him almost every time, indicating his diabolic nature and his ascendancy over the other characters. Furthermore, even when he is not physically present, the occurrence of *his* melody suggests the influence he has over the others or foretells his imminent action. The *passus* appears throughout the opera, starting with the opening storm and ending with the death of Desdemona, and it shows the knavish nature of Iago. In the *Credo*, it suggestively separates the beginning of the sentence, “And I believe man the toy of wicked fate from the germ of the cradle,” from its ending, “to the worm of the grave” (II.46).¹⁴ Iago’s faith is devoted to the forces of the inferno, and both text and music show his descent in the inmost depth of nothingness. This use of a *passus duriusculus* is similar to the one in Boito’s *Mefistofele* (1868), just before the aria *Son lo spirit che nega*, which starts with the revelatory words “I am the Spirit that eternally denies everything: the star, the flower. My mocking laughter and my quarrelling disturb the Creator’s rest” (I.2.52).¹⁵ It also appears in Verdi’s *Requiem* (1874), in the part called *Dies Irae* (which describes the Day of Judgement). Music

7 See Naseeb Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare’s Tragedies* (London: Associated University Presses, 1987), 126.

8 Gary Schmidgall, *Shakespeare and Opera* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 247.

9 Giraldi Cinthio, *Hecatommithi* (1565), trans. J. E. Taylor (1855), Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Harvard University, <http://hutchinscenter.fas.harvard.edu/sites/all/files/Cinthio's%20Tale.pdf>.

10 Quotations from Shakespeare’s *Othello* are taken from William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1996).

11 See, e.g., Ex. 3:14 and I Cor. 15:10. Bible references are taken from the King James Version online, <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org>.

12 Rev. 1:4.

13 Schmidgall, *Shakespeare and Opera*, 247.

14 Quotations from the libretto of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Otello* are taken from DM’s Opera Site, “*Otello* by Giuseppe Verdi Libretto (English),” http://www.murashev.com/opera/Otello_libretto_English.

15 Stanford University, “*Mefistofele*, Arrigo Boito,” Opera Glass, <http://opera.stanford.edu/Boito/Mefistofele/libretto.html>.

proves a reliable subtext in rendering even the most subtle nuances.

The second biblical reversal by Iago is, "You are one of those that will not serve God if the devil bid you" (I.1.108–9). Shaheen sees it as "a reversal of the devil's proposal that Jesus worship him instead of God."¹⁶ The temptation of Jesus is represented in Matthew 4:9. Satan lures Jesus three times, culminating with the utterance reversed in Shakespeare's play: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." It is remarkable how the librettist chose to build the theme of temptation and to illustrate Iago's satanic character starting from the very first verse of Matthew 4: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." In the opera, this instance corresponds to the passage preceding the *Credo*, when Iago reveals his nature: "You are driven by your daemon and I am that daemon, and I am dragged along by mine, the inexorable God in whom I believe" (II.21–25). When tempted by the devil, Jesus is "full of the Holy Ghost" and "led by the Spirit" (Luke 4:1). In *Otello*, Iago commends himself to the cruel and relentless force that he serves fully and becomes the tempter, leading the others astray. The words he addresses to Cassio may be generalised to all the other characters: "You are driven by your demon and I am that demon" (II.21–23). The musical setting of this fragment follows a part that is bright and serene, with pastoral motifs and calm harmonies, in strong contrast with what is to come. The melody carried by the orchestra is unexpectedly altered, so as to better reveal Iago's true self. Verdi introduces a sudden tonal leap from F major to G flat major by means of a modulation, suggesting a breaking of plans, as if, all of a sudden, Iago takes off the mask worn in front of Cassio. The Production Book, or *Disposizione scenica*, gives indications on the behaviour of the interpreter:

"Iago will have followed [Cassio] for two or three paces; then he stops, and following [him] with his eye, immediately changes his expression and mode of utterance. He is no longer the gay and openhearted character of a moment before; he reveals instead the most repulsive cynicism. As he says, 'I am that demon', he turns towards the audience and at the words, 'the inexorable God', comes forward to the footlights and stands in an attitude of sardonic cruelty."¹⁷

The rhythm accelerates, while Verdi adds more powerful instruments in order to express the darkness of Iago's soul in intensities of *forte* and *fortissimo*. This preamble to Iago's aria ends with a triumphant cadence emphasised by the octave leap on the word *God*: "I am dragged along by mine, the inexorable God in whom I believe" (II.24–25).

In Shakespeare's play, Iago's "Divinity of hell! When devils will the blackest sins put on, They do suggest at first with heavenly shows, As I do now" (II.3.251–53), is the third reversal and is closest to Verdi's *Credo*. The biblical phrase that corresponds to this line is in II Corinthians 11:14: "For Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light." Shaheen on one hand explains the "clear overtones of Satan as an angel of light, which Shakespeare refers to several times in his plays."¹⁸ Schmidgall on the other hand points out that "the soliloquies and the *Credo* are vital in throwing into spectacular

16 Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Tragedies*, 126.

17 Quoted in Budden, *The Operas of Verdi*, 357.

18 Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Tragedies*, 113.

relief Iago's many disguises. Both Shakespeare and Boito were careful to circumscribe the villain's eruptions of Satanism; most of the time he is observed as the brilliant actor of various utterly charming roles."¹⁹ Iago's divinity is of a hellish nature and he admits it in front of the audience, beginning with the second act. Moreover, it is during this act that Iago exclaims, "So I will turn her virtue into pitch" (II.3.360), and this phrase could be viewed as reversal in action. Not only does he proclaim he is a devil, but he acts like one, destroying everyone around him by heinous means.

If Shakespeare chose to reverse some lines from the Bible, Verdi's aria presents the reversal of the Christian profession of faith: "We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all that is, seen and unseen,"²⁰ becomes in Iago's words, "I believe in a cruel God, who has created me in his image and whom, in hate, I summon" (II.26–28) while he transforms into the epitome of evil. He commends himself to the cruel and relentless force that he serves fully.

In contrast, Desdemona's prayer late in the opera illustrates her completely pure and angelic character, in total contrast with what has been seen before in Iago, in one of the most beautiful and suggestive denotements of the sacred on the lyrical stage. By means of her purity and innocence, her love for Otello, and her acceptance and sacrifice, she becomes the image of the divine. Shakespeare's Othello calls her a "young and rose lipp'd cherubin" (IV.2.63), while Emilia addressing Othello exclaims, "O, the more angel she, and you the blacker devil!" (V.2.144–45). Verdi opted for the *Ave Maria* prayer as people were largely acquainted with it at the time of his composition and it resonated profoundly with them. *Ave Maria* or *Hail Mary* is a widespread prayer in the Christian tradition and represents the greeting of the Angel Gabriel to Mary, rendered in Luke 1:28. The original prayer as recited by worshippers ("Hail Mary, full of grace, our Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.") was altered by Verdi to suit the character and her emotional state:

Hail Mary, full of grace, blessed amongst wives and maids art thou, and blessed is the fruit, o blessed one, of thy maternal womb, Jesus. Pray for those who kneeling adore thee, pray for the sinner, for the innocent and for the weak oppressed; and to the powerful man, who also grieves, thy sweet compassion show. Pray for him who bows beneath injustice and 'neath the blows of cruel destiny; for us, pray thou for us, pray for us always, and at the hour of our death pray for us, pray for us, pray! (IV.60–69).

His adapted prayer relates to the image Shakespeare created for his character and also has the purpose of emphasising Desdemona's sacrifice and purity by guiding the audience towards a spiritual transcendence. Furthermore, resorting to a religious element that is such an important part of the Christian tradition sends it outside the temporal and spatial borders, conjuring the feeling of a divine energy in the depth of the soul. The delicate, ineffable orchestration suggested by Verdi accomplishes the

19 Schmidgall, *Shakespeare and Opera*, 249.

20 The Holy See, "Catechism of the Catholic Church," http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/credo.htm.

unity with eternity, by suppressing space and time.

From the perspective of the musical subtext, the parallel between the *Credo* and *Ave Maria* has even deeper meanings. Both arias have the same key signature, indicating the A flat major tonality. The use of the same key creates a bridge between the two arias, even if they are placed in two different acts of the opera. The tonality used in this way here is a typical Romantic feature in Verdi: the same key may bring out both the absolute good and the utter evil at the same time, even if in Iago's discourse it is a more underlying constituent and is hard to identify. From the point of view of the ethos of chords and tonalities, the A flat major key suggests gentleness, selflessness or self sacrifice, even eternity; but while Desdemona's aria is consistent in preserving the same major tonal environment throughout the song, Iago switches from one tonality to another, with chromatic leaps and sudden changes that speak of a troubled mind, of a soul emptied of any spirituality. Moreover, parts of his musical discourse are held in F minor, the relative of A flat major. The two relative tonalities have the same key signature and common sonorous material, but one is major and the other one minor. Desdemona's tonality is constantly major, indicating hope and serenity, while Iago's is minor, mirroring her discourse in a mock-prayer. As if to make it even clearer, the composer chose to start both arias on one single note repeated along several bars. Desdemona utters the first words of her prayer on a repeated E, her melody being similar to the Gregorian chant in the Occidental Church, a reminiscence of the music of the Middle Ages. The atmosphere created by these first few sounds is one of complete serenity and peace, inducing a feeling of spiritual energy. Conversely, the first part of Iago's melody has a tenebrous orchestral background, with sonorous brass and string instruments playing a troubling and frightening *tremolo*. With each phrase he utters, both the pitch and the intensity of the sounds rise, indicating the accumulation of tension. Verdi's musical depiction of characters and emotional states is so complex and complete, that in this sense, his accomplishment bears similitudes to Shakespeare's literary one.

Concerning the Shakespearean biblical references related to Desdemona, there is one paragraph uttered by Othello which has deep sacred connotations: "Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe should yawn at alteration" (V.2.100–103). Shaheen considers this "typical of the signs that signify the deaths of outstanding persons, as at Christ's death, the Gospels record an eclipse, an earthquake, the opening of the graves, and the dead coming out of their graves,"²¹ and therefore the use of these lines conveys the divine image of Desdemona. Throughout the whole opera, Desdemona embodies all the positive qualities, everything that is virtuous, righteous, or celestial. Her melodies are harmonious and peaceful, while her appearance suggests a heavenly presence. In the second act of the opera, there is a revelatory moment after Iago places the seed of jealousy in Othello's soul: "O, beware, my lord, of jealousy; it is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on; that cuckold lives in bliss who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger. But, O,

21 Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Tragedies*, 139.

what damned minutes tells he o'er who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!" (III.3.165–70). Boito chose to transfer Shakespeare's words almost without change. Iago utters the last words along with an illustrative musical background. Verdi allows for very few instruments to accompany him, and resorts instead to a choir, which can be heard from afar. The result is that Iago sounds like a priest in the church, uttering, "I speak not yet of proof, but bounteous Otello, look to it, for often natures that are free and noble do not suspect deception: look to it. Observe well Desdemona's speech; a word could restore trust or reaffirm suspicion" (II.120–27). At the same time, the choir utters a hymn addressed to Desdemona, who is venerated as a Madonna: "Whereso'er you turn your gaze light shines, hearts are afire, whereso'er you walk, cascades of blossoms fill the air. Here among lilies and roses, as if to an altar chaste, fathers, children and matrons come with serenades" (II.128–35). After Iago ends his speech, the choir continues: "We proffer lilies, tender flowers, by angels borne to heavenly bowers, which ornament the gleaming mantle and gown of the Madonna gentle and her holy veil. [...] For you these shells and pearls and dyes we culled from caves beneath the brine. Desdemona with our gifts would we bedeck like an image in a shrine" (II.136–49). The indications in the score are as follows: "Desdemona reappears in the garden, on the far side of the great central arch; she is surrounded by women of the island, children and Cypriot and Albanian sailors, who approach to offer flowers, branches of blossom and other gifts. Some accompany their own singing on the 'guzla', a kind of mandolin, others play on small harps which hang around their necks."²² The effect is spectacular; this scene conveys the two poles simultaneously, by means specific to the art of sounds. After professing his mock-Credo, Iago appears as the anti-priest, sowing suspicion in Otello's heart, while appearing concerned and mindful. At the opposite end, Desdemona is worshipped as an icon.

A different device employed by Verdi in order to express this dichotomy, besides the orchestration and the melodic lines typical for each character, is the choice of voice type. The human voice creates the fusion between the poetic universe and the musical one. It represents the instrument that transmits the literary message, and Verdi's choice of voice type is essential in defining the characters and their relationship. As Kent Mitchells notes, "whereas the vocal line of an operatic figure, in its fluctuations, may portray temporary psychological states, the voice type allotted to him represents the continuity of his personality and mirrors constant aspects of his character."²³

Desdemona is a full lyric soprano, a voice type perfectly suited to convey an angelic character, while Iago is a dramatic baritone, well fitted for a devilish impersonation. There are times when words are unnecessary and the human voice has all the resources to convey the message intended by the librettist and the composer. Desdemona's soprano voice, by means of a soft and serene vocality, and a distinct cantability, has that intrinsic power of transcending the linguistic space. The vocal expressivity becomes extremely refined: the harmony created by the orchestral chords is entwined with the

²² Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello: Drame Lyrique en Quatre Actes* (Milano: Ricordi, 1964), 141.

²³ Kent Mitchells, "Operatic Characters and Voice Type," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 97, no. 1 (1970): 47–48.

melodic line and the words, creating thus the multiple dimensions of the thoughts of the character. The purity of harmony, the simplicity of a song or the unworldly character of the music may render the sacred, or stances of reverie and spiritual transcendence, beyond any linguistic means.

Along the same lines, Iago's thespian dexterity and great chameleonic talent are rendered by musical means such as tonalities or rhythmic-melodic structures, but also a great variety of vocal nuances. These are complemented by the vocal colour which may vary in accordance with each situation or conversational partner, indicating an exceptional versatility. Thus, Iago's music is tenebrous, replete with sepulchral low notes, tonal leaps, and descending chromatic lines, while Desdemona's is serene and extremely tuneful with consonant harmonies, this duality being revealed throughout the entire opera. Mitchells explains that both moral and temperamental differences may be illustrated by the contrasting tone qualities of opposing voice types, offering as an example the expression of images relating to Heaven and Hell conveyed by high and low voices, respectively.²⁴

Verdi creates a stark contrast between Iago and Desdemona, and this is also reflected in the requests expressed by the composer and the librettist in the Production Book regarding each character: "a feeling of love, purity, nobility, docility, ingenuousness and resignation should pervade the most chaste and harmonious figure of Desdemona in the highest degree," while Iago is "a mean and spiteful critic; he sees the evil in mankind and in himself [...] he sees evil in Nature, in God. He commits evil for evil's sake. He is an artist in deceit."²⁵

Thus, the sacred represents an important aesthetic constituent of the genre of opera, and its potential has often been overlooked. Many composers have recourse to religious elements in their creations even if these are absent from the original text. The use of such means of artistic expression has a great impact upon the audience, creating a special frame of mind, or raising certain emotions that could not be brought forth otherwise. The present study has pointed out that the religious elements that appear in Shakespeare's *Othello* are enhanced on the Verdian stage by musical means. Moreover, the sacred is emphasized by a good-evil dichotomy illustrated by the pure and radiant Desdemona, and the dark, Mephistophelean Iago.

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²⁴ See Mitchells, "Operatic Characters and Voice Type," 53.

²⁵ Quoted in Budden, *The Operas of Verdi*, 327–28.

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THE *BILDUNGSROMAN* PROBLEM IN JANE AUSTEN'S *NORTHANGER ABBEY*

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ABSTRACT: Jane Austen often manifested concern about the dangerous powers of the Gothic novel, which held sway among Regency readers, and the necessity to return to the path of good sense. Her heroines, including Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey* (1818), follow the predictable pattern of a *bildungsroman*. However, Austen, having paid lip service to the general cliché, went on to sprinkle the text with nonconformist notions, amounting to the suggestion that it is the mentor, not the heroine, who must undergo a transformation.

KEYWORDS: novel; *bildungsroman*; Jane Austen; *Northanger Abbey*; patriarchal society; gendered vision; satire; parody

Jane Austen (1775–1817), a novelist whose fame has survived unabated, was praised for upholding good manners, decorum and traditional values, and yet her readers could perceive her satirical stance, a dark undercurrent of revolt undermining her texts. The author of *Northanger Abbey* (1818) presents a conundrum. In many ways, Austen was born out of time and place; by nature, she was the equal of the finest male satirical spirits of the eighteenth century in both reason and temperament. On the other hand, Austen, as a proper Regency lady, felt equally bound to a sense of duty and responsibility and the continuation of established ways.

Novels by ladies mostly dealt with a young woman's growing up, courtship and marriage, and nearly all of them were deliberately didactic – setting standards of morality and behaviour in a world that wanted them. They were Austen's favourites.¹ Austen's heroines follow in the footsteps of those of her older contemporary, Fanny Burney, who make an entrance into the world. And, as the definition of a *bildungsroman* would have it, the outcome is the development of the protagonist's mind and character through varied experiences – and often through a spiritual crisis – into maturity and the recognition of identity and role.² At the same time, Austen was an ironist who could embrace neither the values of the society in which she lived nor its literary conventions without feeling provoked to respond or even retaliate in her own writings. Obviously, she was trying to maintain a balance and keep a partly amused, partly

1 See Rachel M. Brownstein, "Northanger Abbey, Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, ed. Edward Copeland and Juliet McMaster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 35.

2 M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1993), 132.

ironic distance from both life and fiction.

Jane Austen began her writing in her early teens; from between 1787 and 1792, three volumes of stories and verses survive. Her juvenile texts were written to entertain her family. Soon after this, in 1795 and 1796, "Elinor and Marianne" and *First Impressions* were drafted; Austen completed another novel in her twenties, *Susan*, which was accepted for publication as early as 1803, yet it lay on the shelf for another decade before Austen bought it back for the same fee, changed the title and rewrote the book. It appeared posthumously as *Northanger Abbey* in the same volume as her last completed text, *Persuasion* (1818).

A brief synopsis of *Northanger Abbey* is as follows. Catherine Morland, a teenage daughter of a country clergyman who has never been outside her village, is taken to a fashionable resort town (Bath) by her kind neighbours, the Allens. Here she meets two groups of friends: siblings Henry and Eleanor Tilney and Isabella and John Thorpe. Isabella becomes her confidante and her brother John tries to court her. Catherine, however, is drawn to Henry, a charming young clergyman, and his intelligent sister. Their father, General Tilney, invites Catherine to stay with them at Northanger Abbey. This is not a gesture of kindness – it turns out the Thorpes misinformed the General about Catherine's dowry, and the General has cherished hopes that Catherine may fall in love with Henry during her visit. Catherine has read about abbeys in Gothic novels and therefore quite naturally perceives Northanger and the people who inhabit it through the conventions of Gothic novels. She is even ready to imagine that General Tilney is a Gothic villain who may have murdered (or imprisoned) his wife.³ When confronted with Henry's rebuttal, she is capable of discarding her fanciful notions of what real life is.

So far, *Northanger Abbey* reads as a satisfying *bildungsroman*. Yet the General, finding out that Catherine is not the rich heiress he believed her to be, dismisses her by stagecoach in the middle of the night. Henry, who has fallen for Catherine as much as she did for him, follows her home a few days later to propose to her despite his father's anger. In the end, even the General grudgingly approves of their engagement, because his daughter Eleanor is able to make a brilliant match with a wealthy aristocrat, and because, as it turns out, Catherine was not a pauper after all.

Austen decided to turn the tables on the gullible consumers of the Gothic novel by exposing its clichés through Catherine Morland, an anti-heroine of seventeen, who – against general expectations for heroines in popular fiction – is lacking in beauty and even more so in knowledge, intelligence and common sense. Given her sheltered way of life and incurable tendency to mix fact and fiction,⁴ Catherine meets the sophisticated

3 An immured female was a popular plot device in Ann Radcliffe's novels, which formed the staple of Catherine's intellectual diet.

4 Apparently, Austen took a leaf from the book of Charlotte Lennox, whose *Female Quixote* (1754) features a young lady whose head was turned by reading too much and observing too little. Arabella, its protagonist, grows up in isolation from society with little to read except her mother's store of historical romances, which she mistakes for histories and accepts as guides for her behaviour in society. Unable (or unwilling) to distinguish reality from fantasy, she – like Don Quixote before her – embarks on a series of amusing adventures.

society of Bath and later Northanger in a frame of mind that could be described as eager dread or even a hope of being shocked, scared and mortified. For a long time, she has lacked any antidote to her fancy in the form of a reasonable adult to advise or correct her,⁵ and her first new acquaintances in Bath are of little help. Isabella Thorpe, an avid reader of Gothic fiction herself, even expertly makes things worse. Catherine is easy to dupe because she is partly uninformed (it seems as if the level of education young ladies of her class were given access to prevented them from ever learning anything substantial or useful) and partly misinformed (she has chosen Ann Radcliffe's fiction as her guide and authority on life). As a result, a girl of no experience of the outside world ends up perceiving the daylight, sane rational world as if it followed the same rules as the nightmarish realm of the Gothic world. But then comes Henry Tilney, an Oxford graduate, an intelligent and financially independent young man who has seen the world and who seems to boast an excellent understanding of it, should the topic of conversation stretch from botany to the maintenance of muslin dresses. This alone wins him the trust of Mrs. Allen and Catherine too,⁶ since he displays a charming mixture of sense of humour, lively wit, and simply all of the intellectual attainments befitting a man of his station.

He could also serve as Jane Austen's satirical voice in human form as he concocts a burlesque about Catherine's forthcoming stay at Northanger, compounded of every Gothic cliché thinkable – gloomy passages, an isolated apartment, doors with no fitting keys, a violent storm, a single servant, the old housekeeper Dorothy in charge of the dreary place and possibly a hidden testament of some unfortunate victim named Matilda, who had suffered within the walls of the same building Catherine is about to enter. Catherine gets an invitation to visit Northanger Abbey, the ancestral home of General Tilney and his children, which presents a rather stern test of her intelligence and life experience. Needless to say, she fails. There are some disquieting notions in the conversation of Henry Tilney and Catherine as they approach Northanger. Henry's clever baiting and narratives of the horrors of the Abbey – which inevitably turns out modern, orderly and altogether lacking in mystery – are unmistakably satirical and are to be perceived as such. Catherine, nevertheless, seems more than ready to jump to conclusions and make assumptions.

Even worse, Henry's speech (obviously a parody of novelistic conventions) made Catherine's fantasy run wild because it seemed to confirm that the most improbable incidents from her favourite book and her only guide to life, Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, can happen in present-day England.

Catherine wastes no time in searching her room, looking for an ancient manuscript,

5 Her parents live a circumscribed and self-communing life; they seem as little aware of any dangers as their teenage daughter: "I beg, Catherine, that you will always wrap yourself up very warm about the throat, when you come from the Rooms at night; and I wish you would try to keep some account of the money you spend; I will give you this little book on purpose." Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1818; London: Harper Press, 2010), 9.

6 "Men commonly take so little notice of those things," said she, "I can never get Mr Allen to know one of my gowns from another. You must be a great a comfort to your sister, sir." Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, 18.

hopefully a testament of a poor suffering creature who was once confined within the walls of the Abbey – to find only laundry bills instead. But instead of being cured of her silliness by a touch of real life, Catherine keeps spinning dreadful and fantastic stories about the people in Northanger Abbey.

General Tilney's temper is far from pleasing, and Mrs. Tilney (as Eleanor informed Catherine) died in her children's absence. Aided and abetted by *Udolpho* and other Gothic novels, Catherine spins a horrid tale of the late Mrs. Tilney, apparently an unwanted wife, who was disposed of when the potential witnesses to the crime had departed from home.

Catherine, whose mind is inelastic, seems set on the identification of the world of Northanger Abbey and that of Gothic novels – where General Tilney is cast in the role of the local Bluebeard (a man who, according to ballads, rejoiced in murdering his wives). Having actively searched the place for an immured female or at least some written proof of her existence, Catherine starts harbouring suspicions that General Tilney might have contributed to his late wife's demise and admits her speculations to Henry, who, shocked and disappointed in Catherine, responds:

What have you been judging from? Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians. Consult your own understanding, your own sense of the probable, your own observation of what is passing around you – Does our education prepare us for such atrocities? Do our laws connive at them? Could they be perpetrated without being known, in a country like this, where social and literary intercourse is on such a footing; where every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies?⁷

This presents a turning point. Catherine does not “awaken” to reality and repent the rampant crimes of her imagination until now, and only upon realizing that her accusations would ruin not only a chance of a relationship but also crush any regard Henry might have felt for her. On the surface, Jane Austen advises women not to read silly novels and to rely on the man for guidance and judgment.

Henry's advice is sound, but an appeal to common sense does not always help. In due time, the General does turn out to be a cruel monster in evicting Catherine from his home at night, having discovered he had been mistaken about her dowry. His act of expulsion alone constitutes a fine ironic twist. Much against general expectations, Catherine has been quite right in labelling General Tilney as the villain of the story.⁸ His shocking behaviour to his young female guest, after learning that Catherine was not the heiress he took her for, testifies to the correctness of Catherine's seemingly wild notions about the General, not to Henry's rational arguments. The most horrible evil does not happen. Catherine's life is not consumed by the flame of the General's

⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, 179.

⁸ The very act of sending a young woman away unescorted at night would have been read as shocking, barbarous behaviour towards a female. A woman was defined by her company; if the company was missing, she could have been mistaken for a prostitute, and both Fanny Burney and Eliza Haywood and even Henry Fielding make perfectly clear in their novels that sexual harassment had always been inherent in the social structure and had to be taken for granted. See Eva Simmons, *Augustan Literature: A Guide to Restoration and Eighteenth Century Literature, 1660–1789* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994), 31–38.

hatred, and yet Catherine might thank for it the fact that, as Henry put it, “every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies,” not any kindness on General Tilney’s part. No doubt he would show his true colours somewhere far away from the jurisdiction of civilised England.

Northanger Abbey may have started off as a satire on intoxication by a Gothic worldview, but it slowly morphs into a Gothic novel in its own right, and what is more, a Gothic novel with a political spin. At some point, the Tilneys and Catherine discuss a forthcoming event, described by Catherine as “something very shocking indeed, [that] will soon come out in London.”⁹ Henry feels obliged to set his alarmed sister Eleanor at ease, because she misinterpreted Catherine’s remark and anticipated that a riot would break out on the streets:

My dear Eleanor, the riot is only in your brain. The confusion there is scandalous. Miss Morland has been talking of nothing more dreadful than a new publication which is shortly to come out, in three duodecimo volumes, two hundred and seventy-six pages in each, with a frontispiece to the first, of two tombstones and a lantern — do you understand?¹⁰

However, Henry’s description of the terror in the streets of London might, according to some, be considered a more or less accurate description of the Gordon Riots, uprisings in London that took place in Austen’s adolescence. Throughout the 1790s, the fear of riots was especially appropriate because of the English anxiety about a French invasion.¹¹

Catherine’s instinct identified General Tilney as a Gothic monster and led to a verbal thrashing from Henry. Austen took particular care to drop more hints, revealing the true extent of the General’s nature. Some of them must have made her contemporary readers wince and shudder:

“I have many pamphlets to finish,” said he to Catherine, “before I can close my eyes, and perhaps may be poring over the affairs of the nation for hours after you are asleep. Can either of us be more meekly employed? My eyes will be blinding for the good of others; and yours preparing by rest for future mischief.”¹²

According to Robert Hopkins, the General’s speech contains its own condemnation: it identified him as one of Henry’s “voluntary spies,” who were recruited from among the respectable members of a local parish and were entrusted with questioning arrested strangers and screening their documents for seditious statements.¹³ Hopkins even mentions an incident described by Coleridge in chapter 10 of his *Biographia Literaria* when Wordsworth and Coleridge stayed at Alfoxton in 1797 and fell under suspicion of being French spies: “When local residents reported this suspicion to the Home Office, a government agent named Walsh was sent to investigate to find that according to a

9 Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, 98.

10 Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, 118.

11 See Robert Irvine, *Jane Austen* (London: Routledge, 2005), 35.

12 Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, 187.

13 See Robert Hopkins, “General Tilney and Affairs of State: The Political Gothic of *Northanger Abbey*,” *Philological Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (1978): 213.

neighbour named General Peachy, Wordsworth was still Jacobin at heart.”¹⁴ Needless to say, sedition ranked among the hanging crimes. Indeed, oppressing innocents, men and women alike, would make a very satisfactory pastime for a true monster of a man, should the General be identified as such a man.

Henry Tilney once observed, “No one can think more highly of the understanding of women than I do. In my opinion, nature has given them so much that they never find it necessary to use more than half.”¹⁵ This off-hand statement, used in Catherine’s presence, spells out a puzzling message: most men think that women are silly, and it is better that way. And, since it is men who are in charge, women must rely on them for guidance and judgment anyhow. Both of them, Catherine by instinct, Henry by observation, recognise cruelty in General Tilney’s behaviour for the first time. His stern and haughty behaviour has always been there, but none would suspect him of cruelty equal to evicting his helpless female guest at night. Not even Henry could delude himself about his father’s principles. Catherine returns home unscathed, still innocent and therefore unaware of danger. Her homecoming and contracting herself to Henry a year later do not bring about the intellectual maturity and experienced wisdom usually associated with characters at the end of a *Bildungsroman*. She never has a grown-up debate about the events at Northanger. But Henry achieves maturity, leaves his ancestral home for the parsonage and marries the girl. Now he has become the father of a family, the guardian of societal values. He has completed his journey and accepted his duties. Apparently, one of them constitutes keeping women silent, for all our sakes.

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14 Hopkins, “General Tilney and Affairs of State,” 213.

15 Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, 81.

GEOLOGICAL IMAGINATION IN CALIFORNIA LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the rocky veins in the body of California literature, with a focus on writings that deploy geological phenomena to decenter human agency. It probes deep layers which the authors unearth and cast against the human conception of time. Closely linked with the notion of deep time is the revival of a sense of wonder which had been systematically eroded by positivistic and rationalistic sciences. In the texts examined here, the vanishing sense of wonder is recreated through the imaginative powers of geology-informed literature. It is thus the overall impact of the geopoetic perspective on the dominant anthropocentric outlook that will be analyzed. This paper traces the subversive geopoetic tradition, emphasizing the crucial roles of John Muir, Robinson Jeffers and Gary Snyder.

KEYWORDS: American literature; California; geology; geopoetry; anthropocentrism; John Muir; Robinson Jeffers; Gary Snyder

INTRODUCTION

The (hi)story of California as a separate state is closely associated with geological phenomena. The influx of forty-niners accelerated the declaration of California's statehood in 1850. During the following decade, the lure of gold brought hundreds of thousands of fortune-seekers to California. The monumental rocky formations in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, especially in Yosemite, were soon turned into a commodity, stimulating the advent of the tourist industry on the West Coast. While the wonderful mountain scenery attracted tourists and adventurers, newly discovered oil soon generated similarly wonderful wealth. Some of the most important milestones of the state's history are linked to the unique geological characteristics of this region. Yet, the imprint of geology in California literature is less widely known. It is thus the aim of this paper to examine the rocky veins in the body of California literature and unearth the impact geologically-informed literature had on the worldview of the authors.

EARLY ENCOUNTERS OF GEOLOGY AND LETTERS

In the early stages of geology (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), the perception of mountains was largely shaped by theology. They epitomized a type of wild and unbound nature that posed a threat to civilized societies. As the theologian and geologist Thomas Burnet claims in his highly influential treatise *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1684), "the Face of the Earth before the Deluge was smooth, regular and uniform; without

Mountains.”¹ Mountains were thus viewed as ugly warts on the Earth’s face. They were the most visible sign of God’s punishment: useless, disorderly and infertile.² The ragged mountains offended the prevailing aesthetic taste of the era, which was characterized by symmetry and geometry. It was into this intellectual climate that the Romantic artists brought a new way of looking at mountains and began to challenge the dominant outlook. Many of them drew heavily from Edmund Burke’s aesthetics of the sublime, in which the confrontation with monumental mountains considerably diminished the ontological insignificance of humans. The English poet William Wordsworth ranked foremost among such artists. In his writing, he approached mountains with awe and humility. He portrayed the hills of the Lake District as beautiful, the rugged peaks of the Alps as a sublime landscape. He too applied anatomical metaphors in his descriptions of the mountains, but for him they carried positive connotations (e.g., bones as stones). It was Wordsworth and his followers whom J. R. Higgins had in mind when arguing that “[p]oetry and geology continually intersected throughout the infancy of the science, with geologists admiring the power and importance of poetic truth and perception, and poetry responding to the challenges posed by geologists to the human relation to nature.”³ However, this symbiotic relationship began to dwindle over the course of the nineteenth century – a period which witnessed a palpable shift away from landscape aesthetics and natural theology and towards exact science.⁴

LITERARY GEOLOGY, GEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Geology was vitally important for the economic development of California, and it also offered a host of stimuli to creative artists. Geology was instrumental in surveying and exploiting underground wealth, while the state’s above-ground geological wonders stirred the imagination of painters and writers. These two groups often overlapped, as illustrated by two notable personalities of early California history, Clarence King and William Henry Brewer. Both were leading figures in the geological survey of California as well as being men of letters. King’s *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada* (1872) and Brewer’s *Up and Down California in 1860–1864* (1930) are regarded as classics of California nature writing.⁵ Both of these respected geologists wrote accounts of California’s mountains that were not purely descriptive but also contained an imaginative dimension. Especially King was convinced that “geology represented a fusion of religious, aesthetic, moral, and scientific approaches” and made “continual

1 Thomas Burnet, *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* (London: R. Norton, 1684), 71.

2 Karel Stibral, “Environmentální estetika poprvé česky,” *Ekolist*, 16 February 2012, <http://ekolist.cz/cz/publicistika/eseje/environmentalni-estetika-poprve-cesky>.

3 John R. Higgins, Abstract of “Fossil Poetry, the Birth of Geology, and the Romantic Imagination, 1790–1860” (PhD dissertation, University of South Carolina, 2011), <http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/1073/>.

4 For more on this shift, see Noah Heringman, *Romantic Rocks, Aesthetic Geology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 142–44.

5 Clarence King, *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1872); William H. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860–1864: The Journal of William H. Brewer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930).

attempts to associate the Sierras with the high art of Europe.”⁶ King even aspired to create a distinctively California aesthetic, the source of which lay in the Yosemite Valley. The magnificent rock formations of Yosemite also inspired other notable writers, most importantly John Muir and Gary Snyder.

POETIC ROCKS

In Muir’s writing, the imaginative potential of rocks finds full expression. Physical descriptions of geological phenomena are organically complemented with metaphysical ruminations. Muir attempts to reconcile the facts of science with his philosophy and spirituality; this approach even won him the recognition of U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt, who called for more men with “scientific imagination” and “poetic spirit” like Muir.⁷

Muir also gained the respect of the scientific community and the attention of the public thanks to the debate regarding the origin of the Yosemite Valley, in which he opposed the views of the most prominent geologists of the time (Clarence King, Josiah Whitney, etc.). In this debate, which was reported by national periodicals, Muir was labeled a dilettante and an ignoramus by Whitney. In fact, Muir’s “amateurish” hypotheses turned out to be much more accurate than those of the highly-esteemed authorities in the field. It is true that his findings were not always the result of standard scientific research. He did not keep a detached perspective, and he did not distance himself from the objects of his investigation. On the contrary, he attempted to blend in with the terrain and thus minimize the boundary between the observer and the observed. His method is cogently depicted in a letter to Ezra Carr, Muir’s close friend: “Patient observation and constant brooding above the rocks, lying upon them for years as the ice did, is the way to arrive at the truths which are graven so lavishly upon them.”⁸

Muir’s theory about the glacial origin of the Yosemite Valley not only disproved the claims of scientists who asserted that the valley was born in one cataclysmic event. His theory was also used as a poetic vehicle that manifested the dynamism of what seemed to be a static landscape. Muir viewed glacial studies as a potent interpreter of “[n]ature’s poems carved on tables of stone.”⁹ This appears to be a variation on what was then a popular idea of nature as a (sacred) book. However, Muir conceives of it as a text which was still in the making. Arguably, geology helped Muir grasp nature’s evolution more than Darwinian theory. The implications of this in nineteenth-century America, which was reluctant to accept the newly-postulated theory of evolution, were far-reaching.

6 Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850–1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 180.

7 See Paul Brooks, *Speaking for Nature: How Literary Naturalists from Henry Thoreau to Rachel Carson Have Shaped America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980).

8 John Muir, *The Writings of John Muir*, vol. 1, *The Life and Letters of John Muir*, ed. William Frederick Bade (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1923), 157.

9 John Muir, “The Mountains of California,” in *The Eight Wilderness-Discovery Books* (Seattle: Diadem Books, 1992), 324.

These implications concerned nothing less than the position of humanity on the Earth. The confrontation with what Muir often called the “sublime” vistas in the Sierras often deflated the human ego, both at the individual level and at the level of the species. As he writes in *The Mountains of California*, “[t]he inexperienced observer is oppressed by the incomprehensible grandeur of the peaks.”¹⁰ In this quote, Muir points out the psychological effect of the human encounter with the overwhelming scenery. Even more importantly, his grounding in geology and natural sciences in general stands behind his deeply held conviction that “[t]he world we are told was made for man. A presumption that is totally unsupported by facts.”¹¹ Interestingly, this recurring insight of Muir was echoed by the noted American philosopher George Santayana in his remarkable 1911 lecture at UC Berkeley:

A Californian whom I had recently the pleasure of meeting observed that, if the philosophers had lived among your mountains their systems would have been different from what they are ... for these systems are egotistical; directly or indirectly they are anthropocentric, and inspired by the conceited notion that man ... is the center and the pivot of the universe. That is what the mountains and the woods should make you at least ashamed to assert.¹²

Santayana’s observation can be classified as geographical determinism. However problematic it is in today’s scholarly circles, such non-anthropocentric leanings can be traced in the works of a number of twentieth-century California authors.

Robinson Jeffers ranks among the most important writers forming part of the non-anthropocentric stream in California literature. In the interwar period, his renown among critics and readers could be matched by few American poets. Jeffers labeled his philosophical stance Inhumanism, and described it as “a rational acceptance of the fact that mankind is neither central nor important in the universe.”¹³ Unlike most Romantic and Modernist writers, he rejected the idea that human consciousness is separate from nature: “Among stones and quietness / the mind dissolves without a sound / The flesh drops into the ground.”¹⁴ It is no coincidence that a host of his poems are devoted to Stone Age monuments in his beloved Ireland. His mindset was essentially that of a Paleolithic man, not isolated from the Earth but inseparably tied to it. To reconnect with the Earth, Jeffers also widely used the aesthetic concept of the sublime.¹⁵ It is particularly the Kantian notion of the sublime that Jeffers invokes in his verse. As Immanuel Kant writes in *Critique of the Judgement* (1790), “nature excites the Ideas of the sublime in its chaos or in its wildest and most irregular disorder and desolation,

10 Muir, *The Mountains of California*, 322.

11 Quoted in Stephen Fox, *The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), 115.

12 George Santayana, “The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy,” in *Winds of Doctrine: Studies in Contemporary Opinion* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1926), 214.

13 Robinson Jeffers, *The Double Axe and Other Poems* (New York: Liveright, 1977), 172.

14 Robinson Jeffers, *The Collected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, vol. 2, 1928–1938, ed. Tim Hunt (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 111.

15 According to Robert Zaller, Jeffers is one of the most important writers of the American tradition of the sublime. For more, see Robert Zaller, *Robinson Jeffers and the American Sublime* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

provided size and might are perceived.”¹⁶ Jeffers’ home region, the rugged cliffs and wild coastal mountains of the Big Sur, provided an abundance of these natural scenes. The aesthetics of the sublime in his verse has the potential to dissolve people’s illusions of their own importance, but at the same time it may also help them feel a fundamental unity with the universe. These feelings are generated especially through encounters with the mountains, which surpass people both physically and metaphysically.

Nevertheless, it was natural sciences, especially geology, which formed the bedrock of Jeffers’s worldview. His life and poetry underwent a dramatic change after he began to build his stone house in Carmel, California after World War I. His everyday contact with rocks greatly transformed his verse. His wife Una even talks of Jeffers experiencing a kinship with stone.¹⁷ In the poem “To the House,” Jeffers deploys the following images to describe what others may see as mundane construction work: “I am heaping the bones of the old mother / To build us against the host of the air; / Granite the blood-heat of her youth / Held molten in hot darkness against the heart.”¹⁸ The first line is centered on the anatomical metaphor of the Earth as mother, whose stones are pictured as bones. This imaginative rendering underscores the animate nature of rock – a substance that is generally perceived as dead matter. The final two lines support the notion of the Earth as animate by introducing a reference to geology; after all, even granite was fluid before it became rock-solid. The narrative poem “The Women at Point Sur” (1927) offers an even more remarkable poetic interpretation of geological processes:

... the living mountain
 Dreams exaltation; in the scoriac shell, granites and basalts, the reptile force
 in the continent of rock
 Pushing against the pit of the ocean, unbearable strains and weights,
 inveterate resistances, dreams westward
 The continent, skyward the mountain ... The old fault
 In the steep scarp under the waves
 Melted at the deep edge, the teeth of the fracture ...¹⁹

This passage represents a noteworthy fusion of poetic imagination and scientific expertise. The poem offers an imaginative account of a number of geological processes including seismicity, continental drift and plate tectonics. What is striking is that the theory of plate tectonics only became accepted almost four decades after the poem’s publication. Aaron S. Yoshinobu, a professor of structural geology and tectonics, has detected many other geological motifs in Jeffers’s poetry which paralleled or predated contemporary scientific findings.²⁰

16 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. by J. H. Bernard (1790; repr., New York: Digireads.com, 2010), 63.

17 See Una’s letter to Lawrence Clark Powell in Ann N. Ridgeway, ed., *The Selected Letters of Robinson Jeffers 1897–1962* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968), 213.

18 Robinson Jeffers, *The Collected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, vol. 1, 1920–1928, ed. Tim Hunt (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 5.

19 Jeffers, *The Collected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, vol. 1, 308–309.

20 See for instance “Continent’s End,” “The Inhumanist” and “Invasion.” For a detailed list of the geological phenomena in Jeffers’s verse, see A. S. Yoshinobu, “Robinson Jeffers: Poet, Stone Mason and Earth Sciences,” http://library.ttu.edu/about/facility/face/entries/Yoshinobu_RobinsonJeffers.pdf.

Images of rocks and stones are central to the poetry of another famous California writer, Gary Snyder, whose early work bears undeniable traces of Jeffers's influence. This is most noticeable in his poems, the imagery of which is centered on rocks, such as "Out of the Soil and Rock" and "Geological Mediation." Jeffers's conversion experience was associated with the building of his stone house, and Snyder experienced a similar epiphany while building rock pavements in Yosemite in 1955:

Lay down these words
Before your mind like rocks.
.....
each rock a word
a creek-washed stone
Granite ...²¹

As a proponent and practitioner of place-based literature, Snyder maintains that a real sense of place requires more than knowing the surface, the visible landscape. He believes that one needs to know even what is hidden from sight, what is beneath the surface. Only thus can one be deeply rooted in place. As he admits in *The Real Work* (1980), the geological characteristics of his home place have an impact on the formal characteristics of his poetry: "The rhythm I am drawing on most now is the whole of the landscape of the Sierra Nevada, to feel it all moving underneath. There is the periodicity of ridge, gorge, ridge, gorge, ridge, gorge at the spur ridge and tributary gorges that makes an interlacing network of, oh, 115-million-year-old geological formation rhythms."²² In this passage, Snyder emphasizes not only the fact that the earth under our feet is in constant flux, but also the immense length of time during which geological forces have been at play. In a number of his texts, he contrasts the human conception of time – which operates over years, decades, centuries and millennia – with geological time, which is measured by eons. In *Axe Handles* (1983), this contrast is expressed most succinctly: "As the crickets' soft autumn hum / is to us / so are we to the trees / as are they / to the rocks and the hills."²³ It is no surprise that Snyder uses the prism of geology to lay bare the ontological insignificance of the human race. In the face of geological time, which is measured by the lifespan of mountains, all anthropocentric designs wither, as the poet suggests in "Piute Creek":

Hill beyond hill, folded and twisted
Tough trees crammed
In thin stone fractures
A huge moon on it all, is too much.
The mind wanders. A million
Summers, night air still and the rocks
Warm. Sky over endless mountains.
All the junk that goes with being human

21 Gary Snyder, *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990), 32.

22 Gary Snyder, *The Real Work: Interviews and Talks 1964–1979*, ed. Scott McLean (New York: New Directions, 1980), 48.

23 Gary Snyder, *Axe Handles* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1983), 51.

Drops away, hard rock wavers.²⁴

This geopoetic vision ostensibly undermines the dominant cultural and political constructs of the present day. In the broad picture, Snyder asserts, humanity does not matter as much as people would like to think.

Furthermore, like Jeffers, Snyder frequently uses an analogy between the Earth and the female body. What is more, he devotes special attention to the caves, which he describes as sacred shrines where “animals were ‘conceived’ underground.”²⁵ Snyder’s well-documented interest in prehistoric cave paintings also evidences his broad and serious preoccupation with Neolithic peoples. As the designation of the people suggests, their lives literally revolved around stone.

GEOPOETIC VISION

What are commonly regarded by critics as disparate authorial approaches to rock imagery can actually be viewed as a distinctive current within both California and American literature. The person who recognized this distinctive rocky vein in literature was Harry Hess, a preeminent geologist associated with the theory of plate tectonics. Hess coined the word “geopoetry” – which he viewed as a subgenre that integrates geological scientific expertise and poetic sensibility. Admittedly, the term geopoetry was used rather freely and vaguely by Hess.

Examining the writings of acclaimed California writers can help us identify the essential parts of what constitutes the geopoetic vision. One of the cornerstones of geopoetics is the concept of the sublime – a notion which was already widely explored by Romantic artists. Unlike most Romantic writers, however, Muir, Jeffers and Snyder have a solid knowledge of geology. This scientific erudition disciplines them as they mediate their encounter with the natural elements. They do not get easily carried away by the emotions provoked by the monumental scenery. The focus of their writing does not entirely shift from the perceived objects to the impressions they leave in the human mind. Allan Johnston argues that Jeffers and Snyder “trace the origin of artistic creativity to the natural world, and find the natural world expressed in the self, as opposed to the Romantic tendency to find the self expressed in the world.”²⁶ Don McKay, one of the most accomplished Canadian poets, offers an even more profound insight into the substance of geopoetics as opposed to self-centered Romantic verse:

Geology, or broadly speaking natural history of any kind, brings the rigour of the scientific frame; poetry brings the capacity for astonishment and the power of possibility, or, perhaps more accurately, legitimizes them. Geology inhibits the tendency, most common in romantic poets, to translate the immediate perception into an emotional condition, which is then admired or fetishized in preference to the original phenomenon – fossil, bird, lichen or landform.²⁷

²⁴ Snyder, *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 8.

²⁵ Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild: Essays* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990), 89.

²⁶ Allan Johnston, “Ecology and Aesthetics: Robinson Jeffers and Gary Snyder,” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 8, no. 2 (2001): 21.

²⁷ Don McKay, “Ediacaran and Anthropocene: Poetry as Reader of Deep Time,” *Prairie Fire* 29, no. 4 (2008): 8.

It is evident that awe and petrification, generated in the presence of geological formations, cannot be discussed only within the aesthetic frame of the sublime. In the work of Muir, Jeffers and Snyder, they have a palpable philosophical dimension. This dimension subverts the Romantic humanism that is typical of most nature writing.

The shift away from anthropocentrism is also achieved through the use of personification. This literary trope has often been dismissed as a pathetic fallacy, but some respected linguists (e.g., George Lakoff and Mark Turner) view personification as a legitimate metaphor because “[i]t permits us to use our knowledge about ourselves to maximal effect, to use insight about ourselves to help us comprehend such things as forces of nature ... and inanimate objects.”²⁸ Like the early geologists, Muir, Jeffers and Snyder portray the Earth as an animate entity and thus consciously sustain the analogy between geology and anatomy. Unlike their Romantic predecessors, they do not anthropomorphize rocks while perpetuating a human-centered worldview. Their manner of personifying the nonhuman world is ecocentric; its ultimate goal is to manifest the fundamental interconnectedness between humans and the natural world.²⁹

CONCLUSION

The combination of erudition in geology with the concept of the sublime and ecocentric personification represents a distinctive poetic vision. This geopoetic vision is quite coherent, at least in the case of the three writers discussed here. The underlying element shared by all of them is an environmentalist agenda that is expressed both implicitly and explicitly in their writings. Muir, Jeffers and Snyder have been champions of the environmental movement which, unsurprisingly, thrives in California more than in any other state of the Union. And, arguably, geopoetics thrives in California more than any other place in the country. After all, it boasts some of the most spectacular natural treasures in North America, formed as a result of the region’s unique geological history. The seismic activity, constant tectonic shifts, and underground processes hidden to human sight all have a rich imaginative potential. It does not come as a surprise that a geology-focused natural history book entitled *Assembling California* (1993), written by Pulitzer Prize laureate John McPhee, has figured on the list of U.S. bestsellers.³⁰ California in particular appears to be a place where geology shapes not only the landscape but also the way the landscape is written about.

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28 Quoted in Bryan L. Moore, *Ecology and Literature: Ecocentric Personification from Antiquity to the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 41.

29 Ecocentric personification is discussed in depth by Moore in *Ecology and Literature*.

30 John McPhee, *Assembling California* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1993).

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“THE MACHINE IN THE GARDEN”: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN STEINBECK’S *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*

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ABSTRACT: Although primarily a social novel rooted in the human suffering and response to the Great Depression, in this paper John Steinbeck’s 1939 novel *The Grapes of Wrath* will be examined from an environmental point of view. To do so, the paper will first identify parallels between Steinbeck’s novel and “the machine in the garden,” a theory postulated by Leo Marx in 1964. It will then analyse themes connected with *The Grapes of Wrath* itself, such as disappearing wilderness in California, or “westerling.” In conclusion, this paper will suggest that *The Grapes of Wrath* foretold of America’s future environmental crisis.

KEYWORDS: agriculture; California; environment; Great Depression; Steinbeck; *The Grapes of Wrath*; “Machine in the Garden”; westerling

STEINBECK AS AN ENVIRONMENTALIST

John Steinbeck is usually associated with social rather than environmental issues. His magnum opus, *The Grapes of Wrath*, is generally considered to be a work focusing on the hard lives of the “Okies” pursuing their American dream – travelling to California, the Promised Land. “*The Grapes of Wrath* [is] a widely read story of heroic resistance to unwanted social circumstances,”¹ claims Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, and other scholars have echoed his observation. However, Steinbeck not only captured the unfortunate destiny of the Joad family, desperately seeking a job in California; he also incorporated various natural motifs. This paper will delve into the environmental layers of Steinbeck’s masterpiece. It will then identify influences on Steinbeck, including his interest in nature, which is reflected in *The Grapes of Wrath*. In conclusion, this paper supports the assertion of other scholars that Steinbeck clearly foresaw an impending environmental crisis in America and foretold of it in his work.²

Steinbeck’s interest in nature and the environment is most cogently expressed in

1 Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, “John Steinbeck on the Political Capacities of Everyday Folk: Moms, Reds, and Ma Joad’s Revolt,” *Polity* 36, no. 4 (2004): 598.

2 For more on Steinbeck and eco-criticism, see, e.g., Kevin M. Bailey, *The Western Flyer: Steinbeck’s Boat, the Sea of Cortez, and the Saga of Pacific Fisheries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); William Conlogue, *Working the Garden: American Writers and the Industrialization of Agriculture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Peter Lisca, *John Steinbeck: Nature and Myth* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1978); Susan F. Beegel, Susan Shillinglaw, and Wesley F. Tiffney, eds., *Steinbeck and the Environment: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997).

his travelogue, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*,³ a book based on his experience on a boat trip he took with his longtime friend, the marine biologist Edward Ricketts – who served as an inspiration for some of the author’s heroes (for example Jim Casy in *The Grapes of Wrath*). Peter Lisca believes that Steinbeck’s “familiarity” with nature “started while he was still a boy working on the farms and ranches surrounding his hometown of Salinas.”⁴ Other scholars state that Steinbeck was strongly influenced by his Western origins. Susan Shillinglaw believes Steinbeck was “different” not only “because he studied biology, evolution, and ecology” but “because he was from the West, a native Californian.”⁵ According to the American writer and environmentalist Wallace Stegner, Steinbeck’s Western origins caused him to have a “transcendent sense of place;”⁶ this is a reference to Steinbeck’s view of California as the Western frontier. Nevertheless, since the terms “environment,” “environmentalist” and “environmental scientist” have changed their meanings with the passage of time, Steinbeck presumably would not have been regarded as an environmentalist during his lifetime, as was pointed out by Wesley F. Tiffney.⁷ To Steinbeck and Ricketts, notes Tiffney, “the environment” would have been associated with “the physical surroundings of living plants and animals – air, water, salinity and temperature. Today, ‘environment’ has come to mean man’s surroundings – flora, fauna, and physical habitat – with particular emphasis on how man has damaged the environment and how he must now set about putting it right.”⁸ Although the term “environmentalist” may seem inexact if applied to Steinbeck today, as the meaning of the word has shifted, he nevertheless was undoubtedly “a friend of the natural world”⁹ – politically active and with an apparent interest in environmental issues. One of the most prominent motifs appearing in Steinbeck’s books is the destruction of the virgin land caused by machines. The transformation from virgin land to destroyed land, and also the reciprocal influence of man and nature, are not unfamiliar topics for many American writers, and one book which deals with such issues is Leo Marx’s 1964 work, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*.

“THE MACHINE IN THE GARDEN”

The Machine in the Garden discusses the impact of nature on the formation of the American national character. As the title suggests, the author explores the image of the idyllic virgin land, the new-found American continent, which is eventually

3 *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* (1951), a book about a boat trip which took place in March–April 1940, was written right after *The Grapes of Wrath* and contains similar thoughts and observations, even though in *The Grapes of Wrath*, these insights are expressed in a more delicate way.

4 Lisca, *John Steinbeck: Nature and Myth*, 89.

5 Susan Shillinglaw, “A Steinbeck Scholar Perspective,” in introduction to *Steinbeck and the Environment*, 20.

6 Wallace E. Stegner, *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West* (New York: Random House, 1992), 149.

7 Wesley F. Tiffney, “A Scientist’s Perspective,” in introduction to *Steinbeck and the Environment*, 3.

8 Tiffney, “A Scientist’s Perspective,” 3.

9 Tiffney, “A Scientist’s Perspective,” 4.

destroyed by new technologies connected with industrialization.¹⁰ Marx depicts the transformation of the American “Garden” throughout various historical periods, using a number of documents, excerpts from books and even lines from plays to provide a context.¹¹

When Europeans first arrived in North America in the sixteenth century, they found “a landscape untouched by history – nature unmixed with art,” something new and unknown – “the Garden.”¹² During the Elizabethan period (1558–1603), people perceived this Garden as a pastoral utopia – a land of leisure, freedom, and a greater harmony of existence.¹³ This view is later reflected in Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on Virginia* (1785), in which “the pastoral ideal had been ‘removed’ from the literary mode to which it traditionally had belonged and applied to reality.”¹⁴ However, this earlier bucolic image could not last forever; Jefferson himself, as a writer of the Enlightenment, did support technical development and was genuinely enthusiastic about, for example, the first mills powered by Boulton and Watt engines which were constructed near London.¹⁵ People were excited about new technologies which would make their lives and jobs easier. Industrialization came to America, powered by machines.

The motif of machines also began to appear in literature. Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden* is perhaps the best example. In this classic, Thoreau states that making “a railroad round the world available to all mankind is equivalent to grading the whole surface of the planet.”¹⁶ A negative impact of industrialization can be seen in Mark Twain’s *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), where Huck is terrified by the image of the “big and scary”¹⁷ steamboat while sailing on the raft with his friend. The steamboat is depicted as some kind of a monster.

Such a “Machine in the Garden” can be also seen in *The Grapes of Wrath*. The Joads, a poor family from Oklahoma, are forced to leave their home, since there is no longer any work for them. The machines are stronger than people and can do work much quicker and much more effectively. At the beginning of their journey, the Joads are truly excited about California; even Grampa, who has spent all his life in Oklahoma, claims, “Jus’ let me go out to California where I can pick me an orange when I want it. Or grapes. There’s a thing I ain’t never had enough of. Get me a whole big bunch of grapes off a bush, or whatever, an’ I’m gonna squash ‘em on my face and let ‘em run offen my chin.”¹⁸ Evidently, the Joads imagine California as a beautiful and innocent

10 Note the resemblance with Steinbeck’s essay *Americans and the Land*, which dealt with the same topics: destruction of the virgin land and “war” with nature. This essay is a part of Steinbeck’s final work, *America and Americans*. See John Steinbeck, *America and Americans* (New York: Viking Press, 1966).

11 For example, William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955).

12 Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and Pastoral Ideal in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 36.

13 Marx, *The Machine and the Garden*, 43.

14 Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 73.

15 Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 146.

16 Henry David Thoreau, *Walden and Civil Disobedience* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), 41.

17 Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1994), 97.

18 John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (New York: Penguin, 1967), 56.

Garden, full of fruit – and opportunities. California represented a Promised Land for immigrants from all over the world, but in reality it was not. The Joads were leaving one destroyed Garden, Oklahoma, where there was no longer any place for small farmers, for California – but as they found out later, the situation there was no better. Poor conditions for workers, destroyed land, everything owned by the omnipotent Bank – that was the real California. And almost all the people there, travelling from place to place to find a job, were basically migrants. In one of the interchapters, Steinbeck states:

There in the Middle – and Southwest had lived a simple agrarian folk who had not changed with industry, who had not farmed with machines or known the power and danger of machines in private hands. They had not grown up in the paradoxes of industry. Their senses were still sharp to the ridiculousness of the industrial life. And then suddenly the machines pushed them out and they swarmed on the highways. The movement changed them; the highways, the camps along the road, the fear of hunger and the hunger itself, changed them. The children without dinner changed them, the endless moving changed them. They were migrants.¹⁹

In this short paragraph, Steinbeck depicts the desperate situation of the people who were suddenly substituted by the machines, and whose lives changed because of the mechanization of industry. Not only did those people lose their jobs, they also lost a certain lifestyle and also the hope they will ever be somewhere at home again.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH – “GRAMPA KILLED INDIANS, PA KILLED SNAKES FOR THE LAND”²⁰

First, it is necessary to note Steinbeck’s intention behind *The Grapes of Wrath* in terms of the reader’s experience. Shillinglaw quotes from Steinbeck’s letter to his editor: “Throughout I’ve tried to make the reader participate in the actuality, what he takes from it will be scaled entirely on his own depth or shallowness. There are five layers in this book, a reader will find as many as he can and he won’t find more than he has in himself.”²¹ The first layer is the connection of humans to place; the second one discusses the significant shift from “I” to “we”, stressing the importance of harmonious wholeness. The third layer describes a tendency to emphasize the importance of knowing the history of the place where we live. The fourth layer “takes readers to universals: cross-cultural, cross-historical accounts of the land use, dispossession, and exile.” The fifth layer represents a call for spiritual awareness.²² Even now it is quite clear that Steinbeck hid some “environmental” message between the lines of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and that he really did intend to incorporate issues connected with nature.

Steinbeck’s attitude toward nature as depicted in *The Grapes of Wrath* may be recognized first and foremost in the juxtaposition of chapters in the book. Repeatedly, the author devotes one chapter to the journey of the Joads, and the following one to the broader context. For example, when Steinbeck writes about the family passing along

¹⁹ Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 293.

²⁰ Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 23.

²¹ Susan Shillinglaw, *On Reading “The Grapes of Wrath”* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), 8.

²² Shillinglaw, *On Reading “The Grapes of Wrath”*, 9–12.

Highway 66, the very next chapter discusses the general existence of the road, providing some extra information about it. Nevertheless, the majority of the “interchapters” deal with the environment of the particular places. The fact that the first chapter does not focus on the family, but describes the Dust Bowl situation in Oklahoma, speaks for itself. According to Tiffney, Steinbeck “recognized the Dust Bowl as a politically-created environmental disaster,”²³ and therefore it can be presumed that the Dust Bowl was a major environmental issue for him. He primarily emphasizes the natural environment and its gradual destruction by modern technologies and their role in the inconsiderate treatment of the land; this is followed by a description of the destiny of the population in Oklahoma, which is shown in connection with the environmental situation.²⁴

In this regard, Steinbeck was distinctly different from other authors. In comparison with Ernest Hemingway, for whom nature is more or less a background, a place his characters can run to, Steinbeck also treats nature as a character, something his heroes can identify with. In the ninth chapter of *The Grapes of Wrath*, the characters think about their journey to California, considering how to deal with their unknown surroundings. “How it’ll be not to know what land’s outside the door? How if you wake up in the night and know – and know the willow tree’s not there? Can you live without the willow tree? Well, no, you can’t. The willow tree is you.”²⁵ Such an attitude resembles Ralph Waldo Emerson’s metaphor of the “transparent eye-ball,” where a person becomes one with nature.²⁶

This identification with nature is connected with another topic addressed by *The Grapes of Wrath*. Because of increasing mobility (another consequence of industrialization – besides using the railroad, people could also afford to buy cars, which of course makes travelling easy), people are not able to make a connection with the land. In the thirteenth chapter, Al Joad is driving a car and is “one with his engine, every nerve listening for weaknesses, for the thumps or squeals, hums and chattering that indicate a change that may cause a breakdown. He had become the soul of the car.”²⁷ He belongs to the generation which does not mind travelling all the time, living in different places, constantly being on the move. Jim Casy, the former preacher accompanying the family on their journey, claims:

What we comin’ to? Seems to me we don’t never come to nothin’. Always on the way. Always goin’ and goin’. Why don’t folks think about that? They’s movement now. People moving. We know why, an’ we know how. Movin’ ‘cause they got to. That’s why folks always move. Movin’ ‘cause they want somepin’ better’n what they got. An’ that’s the on’y way they’ll ever git it. Wantin’ it an’ needin’ it, they’ll go out and git it. It’s bein’ hurt that makes folks mad to fightin’.²⁸

23 Tiffney, “A Scientist’s Perspective,” 3.

24 The fact that Steinbeck was concerned about droughts, mechanical industry and soil treatment is quite noticeable in his 1966 collection of essays, *America and Americans*. His deep ecological sensibility is obvious in this book, too.

25 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 59.

26 The “transparent eye-ball” was first introduced in the first chapter of Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature: Addresses and Lectures* (Boston: James Munroe, 1849).

27 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 82.

28 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 85.

On the other hand, Grampa, the oldest member of the Joad family, dies even before crossing the Oklahoma state line. Casy, who was asked to say some words in tribute to him, is sure that “Grampa an’ the old place, they was jus’ the same thing. ... I think he knowed it. [An’] Grampa didn’t die tonight. He died the minute you took ‘im off the place. (...) He was breathin’, but he was dead. He was the place, an’ he knowed it.”²⁹

This is one of the possible explanations why people do not hesitate to treat nature in a cruel way – since they are mobile (and essentially migrants) and have no connection with their home land, they are not able to identify or empathize with it. The land is just a business, a commodity to trade with, a source of money. The land is not owned by the small farmers, who understand the fields and know how to handle them; it is owned by big companies both in Oklahoma and California (“ever’thing in California is owned”³⁰). It is no wonder, then, that the Bank (a monster which cannot be tamed) allows cotton to be sown on the land, even though it “robs it, sucks all the blood out of it.”³¹ Ruthless men in tractors are hired to plow the soil with their strong machines, to *surge* across it, as if it were a human body.

Behind the tractor rolled the shining disks, cutting the earth with blades – not plowing but surgery, pushing the cut earth to the right where the second row of disks cut it and pushed it to the left; slicing blades shining, polished by the cut earth. And pulled behind the disks, the harrows combining with iron teeth so that the little clods broke up and the earth lay smooth. Behind the harrows, the long seeders – twelve curved iron penes erected in the foundry, orgasms set by gears, raping methodically, raping without passion.³²

The land is not only operated on, but also “raped” here; humiliated, overwhelmed, depicted as an abused woman’s body.

The majority of studies dealing with this topic (the violent abuse of the land) take such a view,³³ but Sigridur Gudmarsdottir is not particularly convinced about the earth having a female body,³⁴ a comparison which she claims places women in a passive, easily victimized position. Gudmarsdottir further develops her view on the “raped land” as depicted in *The Grapes of Wrath*, and also juxtaposes Steinbeck’s perception of the technical raping of the earth as “passionless and calculative”³⁵ with Susan Griffin’s interpretation, when “the male hunt of female wilderness [is] a quest that is both terrifying and fascinating.”³⁶ William R. Burch discusses an even more fundamental issue – whether injustice to men and injustice to the earth are separate matters, and if we should therefore treat nature and man in the same way.³⁷ Steinbeck’s personification

29 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 98.

30 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 139.

31 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 22.

32 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 24.

33 See for example, Richard Astro and Tetsumaro Hayashi, *Steinbeck: The Man and His Work* (Corvallis: Oregon State University, 1971). On page 17 of “A Steinbeck Scholar Perspective,” part of the introduction to *Steinbeck and the Environment*, Shillinglaw refers to the land as “raped.”

34 Sigridur Gudmarsdottir, “Rapes of Earth and Grapes of Wrath: Steinbeck, Ecofeminism and the Metaphor of Rape,” *Feminist Theology* 18, no. 2 (2010): 207.

35 Gudmarsdottir, “Rapes of Earth and Grapes of Wrath,” 213.

36 Gudmarsdottir, “Rapes of Earth and Grapes of Wrath,” 213.

37 See William R. Burch, Jr., *Daydreams and Nightmares: A Sociological Essay on the American Environment* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).

can thus seem quite conceivable.

Nevertheless, personification is one of the key topics in *The Grapes of Wrath*. For example, the “full green hills” in California are “round and soft as breasts.”³⁸ Moreover, the landscape the Joads are passing through is referred to as “dead,”³⁹ killed by the machines. Interestingly, tractors themselves are not portrayed as necessarily inherently bad things; what is really dangerous is their misuse. “Is a tractor bad? ... If this tractor were ours it would be good. If our tractor turned the long furrows of our land, it would be good. ... We could love that tractor then. ... But this tractor does two things – it turns the land and turns us off the land. There is little difference between this tractor and a tank. The people are driven, intimidated, hurt by both.”⁴⁰ Naturally, tractors are not thinking beings. People are. It is people who control the machines; it is the people who decided to destroy the land.

In addition, the land the Americans are destroying was not previously theirs. Steinbeck describes California as “the land they [the Americans] had stolen” from Mexicans, who were “weak and fled,”⁴¹ unprepared for the conquerors; it almost seems as if the newcomers were ready to do anything to literally subdue the land. This claim is demonstrated in *The Grapes of Wrath* by the cry of the tenants – “Grampa killed Indians, Pa killed snakes for the land. Maybe we can kill banks – they’re worse than Indians and snakes. Maybe we got to fight to keep our land, like Pa and Grampa did.”⁴² The citizens want to keep the land that was formerly violently seized by their ancestors. This concept of so-called “westerling” is described in great detail in another of Steinbeck’s works, *The Red Pony* (1933).

It wasn’t Indians that were important, nor adventures, nor even getting out here. It was a whole bunch of people made into one big crawling beast. And I was the head. It was westerling and westerling. Every man wanted something for himself, but the big beast that was all of them wanted only westerling. I was the leader, but if I hadn’t been there, someone else would have been the head. The thing had to have a head. Under the little bushes the shadows were black at white noonday. When we saw the mountains at last, we cried – all of us. But it wasn’t getting here that mattered, it was movement and westerling.⁴³

After all, it is no wonder that nature eventually takes its toll. Both the scorching droughts in Oklahoma and the destructive floods in California are nothing less than a natural response. Still, the vulnerable tenants see the connection. “This land, this red land, is us; and the flood years and the dust years and the drought years are us.”⁴⁴

38 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 236.

39 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 150.

40 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 101.

41 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 157.

42 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 23.

43 John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony* (New York: Viking Press, 1945), 156.

44 Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 59.

CONCLUSION

After examining *The Grapes of Wrath* and perceiving it from the “environmental” point of view, it is more than obvious that Steinbeck was issuing a warning against the negative side-effects of human progress. Steinbeck was seemingly aware of the ambiguity of progress and therefore was predicting what could possibly happen if we did not stop considering the environment as something inferior. Surprisingly, toward the end of his life, Steinbeck became more optimistic and believed the situation would eventually change: “We are no longer content to destroy our beloved country. We are slow to learn; but we learn ... and we no longer believe that a man, by owning a piece of America, is free to outrage it.”⁴⁵ But we know that in reality, man (in general) still has not learned to treat the environment in the way it deserves, still does not see the way in which we are connected with nature, and still thinks that progress can only bring change for the better.

The Grapes of Wrath also demonstrates that it is possible to create a novel with both social and environmental dimensions; Steinbeck managed to write a book with various layers, which, depending on the reader, can be interpreted in various ways. Steinbeck’s approach to writing was quite unique and progressive in this respect, as he did not separate the social and environmental aspects, but let them go hand in hand. And although *The Grapes of Wrath* refers to many social issues (unemployment, homelessness, alienation of people, importance of family, and the status of elderly people, just to name some), the environmental issues (destruction of the land, westering, war on nature, connection with the homeland, and the rising mobility of people) are also significant and worthy of consideration. It is this multidimensionality which makes *The Grapes of Wrath* a real masterpiece; Steinbeck wrote a novel concerning a number of pressing issues that remain relevant even five decades later.

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⁴⁵ Steinbeck, *America and Americans*, 92–93.

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BEYOND THE IVORY TOWER: CONFRONTING THE WORLD OUTSIDE ACADEMIA IN DON DELILLO'S *WHITE NOISE* AND DAVID LODGE'S *NICE WORK*

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ABSTRACT: Two campus novels written in the same decade, Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1985) and David Lodge's *Nice Work* (1988), both feature protagonists who temporarily leave isolated academia to confront the larger world outside. In *White Noise*, Jack Gladney, an American professor of Hitler Studies at a fictional midwestern college, finds himself unprepared to deal with an ecological catastrophe as well as the threat of death. In *Nice Work*, Robyn Penrose, a temporary lecturer in English literature and women's studies at Lodge's fictionalized version of the University of Birmingham, confronts the inconsistencies in her thinking after meeting Vic Wilcox, the manager of an engineering firm. Both academics are satirized for their limited viewpoints and portrayed as benefitting from their experience through the realization that their academic careers have alienated them from the real world.

KEYWORDS: campus novel; academic novel; comic novel; satire; Don DeLillo; David Lodge

The Anglo-American campus novel, sometimes also called the academic novel,¹ emerged after World War II simultaneously in the United Kingdom and the United States, as higher education and careers in academia were becoming available to a wider range of people from various social backgrounds. The first British campus novel, Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* (1954), was a literary sensation. David J. Taylor aptly notes that "*Lucky Jim* manages what might once have seemed an impossible feat: to make a university don, even an uninspired and soon-to-be ex-don, into a post-war Everyman,"² suggesting that many readers must have identified with the protagonist, an insecure temporary lecturer at the history department of an unnamed provincial university. While *Lucky Jim* outlined the genre's emphasis on the protagonists' anxiety about obtaining tenure as well as other topics, such as power and prestige within academia, later campus novels often aimed at an increasingly limited audience. On one hand, the comic or satirical modes,³ as the novels expose various follies and vices of the professoriate, arguably render them fairly accessible; on the other hand, because of the detailed portrayal of teaching, research and academic conferences, the genre has sometimes been characterized as fiction about academics written and read mostly by

1 See, e.g., Elaine Showalter, *Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and Its Discontents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1–4.

2 Quoted in Bruce Robbins, "What the Porter Saw: On the Academic Novel," in *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction*, ed. James F. English (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 251.

3 See Robbins, "What the Porter Saw," 249.

academics.⁴

At first glance, two major campus novels of the 1980s, Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1985) and David Lodge's *Nice Work* (1988), seem rather different. First, while *Nice Work* is the final part of Lodge's loose academic trilogy, along with *Changing Places* (1975) and *Small World* (1984), DeLillo's previous works have little in common with academic fiction. Second, while both texts illustrate many of the issues of their time, the former's emphasis on the over-specialization within American academia and the latter's focus on the financial cuts of the British system of higher education do not suggest many connections. Yet, what the novels share is the theme of bridging the gap between academia and the wider society, as the protagonists of both texts temporarily leave the university to face the world outside. Thus, unlike Amis's Jim Dixon who is painfully aware of his lower-middle class background and deliberately gives up his job at the end of the novel, the protagonists of both *White Noise* and *Nice Work* are forced to realize that their academic careers have separated them from the world beyond the ivory tower.

White Noise, DeLillo's eighth novel and commercial breakthrough, has actually not been characterized primarily as a campus novel, but rather as, in Elaine Showalter's words, a "postmodernist tour de force."⁵ However, Frank Lentricchia argues that *White Noise* can be described as a campus novel, which may answer for its popularity in a "country committed to mass education, even at the higher levels."⁶ The protagonist and narrator, fifty-one-year-old Jack Gladney, is depicted not only as the chairman of the Department of Hitler Studies at the Midwestern College-on-the-Hill in the town of Blacksmith, but also as a husband and father or stepfather of many children from his four marriages. Thus, as Jeffrey J. Williams observes, in the American campus novel, the "academic man became postmodern everyman – at least straight white professional everyman, who goes to the mall and watches TV."⁷ However, the novel also reveals Jack's reliance on his social privilege, as he finds himself unprepared to deal with an ecological catastrophe as well as the threat of death.

Nice Work, on the contrary, reflects the advent of literary theory and women's studies in the 1980s by featuring a female protagonist, Robyn Penrose, a temporary lecturer in English literature at the University of Rummidge, Lodge's fictionalized version of Birmingham. While the thirty-three-year-old Robyn is a prolific scholar and a dedicated teacher, her career is insecure because of the wide ranging cuts in the British university system. As a specialist on the nineteenth-century industrial novel, she is asked to participate in a project aimed at educating academia about the world of industry, and not having much choice, accepts. Like the protagonists of the texts she studies, she learns a great deal about herself in the process. Eventually, both

4 See, e.g., Merritt Moseley, "Introductory: Definitions and Justifications," in *The Academic Novel: New and Classic Essays*, ed. Merritt Moseley (Chester: Chester Academic Press, 2007), 6.

5 Showalter, *Faculty Towers*, 94.

6 Frank Lentricchia, introduction to *New Essays on "White Noise"*, ed. Frank Lentricchia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 7.

7 Jeffrey J. Williams, "The Rise of the Academic Novel," *American Literary History* 24, no. 3 (2012): 567.

Jack Gladney and Robyn Penrose find themselves in places far beyond the campus, in situations they could scarcely imagine. While they are satirized for their limited perception of the world, the reader is also moved by their experiences.

Yet, the opening of *White Noise* seems to foreground the similarities rather than differences between academia and the world outside; while the first scene of the novel takes place on campus, it suggests much about the whole of American society. First, the narrator's description of college students moving back to campus in September strengthens the ties between higher education and consumer culture. As the students take their possessions from their parents' station wagons, the first paragraph of the novel closes with a list of all the objects Jack can see, ranging from "the stereo sets, radios, personal computers; small refrigerators and table ranges" to "the junk food still in shopping bags – onion and garlic chips, nacho thins, peanut creme patties, Waffelos and Kabooms, fruit chews and toffee popcorn; the Dum-Dum pops, the Mystic mints."⁸ In this passage, the idea of obtaining a higher education becomes inseparable from owning the listed objects and moving them into one's college dormitory. Gladney further reinforces this connection by mentioning that he has "witnessed this spectacle for twenty-one years" (WN, 3). Thus, the event has become an annual ritual, which creates a sense of community among the participants.

It is only after this setting of the tone that Jack introduces his academic field: "I invented Hitler studies in North America in March of 1968. ... When I suggested to the chancellor that we might build a whole department around Hitler's life and work, he was quick to see the possibilities. It was an immediate and electrifying success" (WN, 4). This change of theme is important in elaborating on the college's relationship to consumer culture. Not only is the campus a place where various marketed products, from electronics to food, are consumed, but even the study programme needs to be promoted like any of those objects, as economic success is the final measure. As Frank Lentricchia points out, Jack Gladney is a "sharp observer and commentator who at the same time participates – often to the reader's bewilderment – in an action which fatally shapes him,... the less than self-possessed voice of a culture that he would subject to criticism and satire."⁹ Thus, the academia in *White Noise*, Gladney included, has clearly mastered many of the practices of the business world.

Lodge's novel, in contrast, presents academia and the business world as diametrically opposite. While the story proper of *White Noise* provides no exact dates, *Nice Work* opens in January 1986, designated Industry Year by the government in Thatcherite Britain. Even though *Nice Work* is the final part of Lodge's loose trilogy, it differs from its two predecessors by being more grounded in external political circumstances. Bernard Bergonzi emphasizes that *Nice Work* was published in 1988, a year after Lodge left the university after twenty-seven years as a lecturer and professor. Thus, whereas Lodge's earlier campus novels had been confined to the academy, in this one, "like Robyn, he finds a world elsewhere, as he did in real life. The professional writer, unlike

8 Don DeLillo, *White Noise* (New York: Penguin, 1985), 3. Hereafter cited in the text as WN.

9 Lentricchia, "Tales of the Electronic Tribe," in *New Essays on "White Noise,"* 93.

the academic, is a solitary producer and directly dependent on the market; and thus more likely to understand the problems of other kinds of producer.”¹⁰

One of the projects within the Industry Year is the Shadow Scheme, which according to the university’s vice-chancellor is meant to “dispel the prejudice” that “universities are ‘ivory tower’ institutions, whose staff are ignorant of the realities of the modern commercial world.”¹¹ In this programme, Robyn Penrose is to shadow Vic Wilcox, the managing director of an engineering company that supplies parts to the automotive industry. Unlike *White Noise*, which is written in the first person, *Nice Work* features two protagonists, both of whose thoughts are made accessible to the reader through the first person omniscient narrator. As Earl G. Ingersoll aptly notes, “the major difference in *Nice Work* as a representation of academic fiction is its willingness to invest half its production in the world of the other, Victor Wilcox, the representative of the other of Snow’s two cultures.”¹² Thus, the novel demonstrates that Charles Percy Snow’s 1959 lecture “The Two Cultures” about the separation of intellectual life in western society in between the sciences and the humanities has remained relevant even three decades later.

In Elaine Showalter’s words, Lodge’s rendering of Robyn represents “the most detailed, convincing, and upbeat portrait of the feminist academic in the ’80s,”¹³ in spite of the fact that *Nice Work* was written by a man. Robyn was born in Australia, but her family moved to England, as her father did post-doctoral research in nineteenth-century European diplomacy at Oxford. Much of the rest of Robyn’s biography is a history of literary studies in miniature. A bright student, Robyn was urged by her school to apply to Oxbridge, but chose to go to Sussex University because of its modern curriculum focused on literary theory. During her studies, Robyn met Charles, who became her boyfriend, and with whom she later went to Cambridge to earn a Ph.D. By this time, the narrator explains, “structuralism and poststructuralism, semiotics and deconstruction, new mutations and graftings of psychoanalysis and Marxism, linguistics and literary criticism” (NW, 46) have reached Oxbridge. Importantly, the narrator’s treatment of Robyn is ambivalent. While the narrator is mostly sympathetic to Robyn, he satirizes her adherence to literary theory by introducing her as a “character who, rather awkwardly for me, doesn’t herself believe in the concept of character” (NW, 39). Thus, the novel implicitly poses the question of the comprehensibility of literary theory to readers outside academia.

Robyn’s later life echoes the budget crisis at British universities. By the time Robyn finishes her Ph.D., Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has begun cutting higher education and the graduate cannot find a job: “The previously unthinkable prospect of a non-academic career now began to be thought – with fear, dismay and bewilderment on Robyn’s part. Of course she was aware, cognitively, that there was a life outside

10 Bernard Bergonzi, *David Lodge* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1995), 27.

11 David Lodge, *Nice Work* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 85. Hereafter cited in the text as NW.

12 Earl G. Ingersoll, “The Academic Novel with a Difference: David Lodge’s *Nice Work*,” in *Academic Novels as Satire: Critical Studies of an Emerging Genre*, ed. Mark Bosco and Kimberly R. Connor (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 87.

13 Showalter, *Faculty Towers*, 102.

universities, but she knew nothing about it" (NW, 51). Robyn cannot imagine a career outside academia, as for her, university teaching represents the only "nice work" (the novel's title). Finally, in 1984, Professor Philip Swallow, the head of the English Department at Rumbridge, is allowed to appoint a temporary lecturer in English literature, and Robyn gets the job. As she now concentrates on her newly developing career, Robyn does not mind that her relationship with Charles, who now teaches at the University of Suffolk, has evolved into a phase which resembles "a divorce in which the two parties occasionally meet for companionship and sexual pleasure without strings" (NW, 59).

Unlike Robyn, who is convinced about the importance of liberal education, Vic Wilcox is much more sceptical. Vic was born in 1940 and currently lives in a neo-Georgian house in Rumbridge with his wife, Marjorie, and three children. Like Robyn, Vic is satisfied with his job, but his emotional life has gone stale. A graduate of Rumbridge College of Advanced Technology, Vic sees the campus which he passes by every day on his way to and from work as a "small city state, an academic Vatican, from which he keeps his distance, both intimidated by and disapproving of its air of privileged detachment from the vulgar, bustling industrial city in which it is embedded" (NW, 29). Thus, even at a time of wide ranging budget cuts, the university may seem a pastoral world to an outsider.

While Lodge's novel is set in the English department, *White Noise* focuses on Gladney's department of Hitler Studies. Gladney's invention of Hitler Studies stands for certain recent trends in academia which are satirized in the novel. DeLillo himself admitted that "we want to know more about the Nazi era, and Hitler's place in it," but explained that *White Noise* "is just a comment on the kind of super specialization that has entered our culture in the last 15 years or so. Why not an academic specialty devoted to a single individual, if the individual is as important as Hitler?"¹⁴ Thus, while one might expect that academic openness and inclusion of various fields of study is a positive development, DeLillo reveals its dark side.

No other member of Hitler Studies is mentioned in the novel, but the department is located in Centenary Hall, along with the department of popular culture, officially called American Environments. Thus, whereas *Nice Work* reflects the changing attitudes to the traditional humanist field of English literature, *White Noise* illustrates the development of completely new academic programmes. Consequently, film and television, rather than the canonical works of English literature or influential texts of literary theory, form the background of *White Noise*. While Michael Valdez Moses explains that "white noise is literally an artificially produced electronic noise invented to cover over the silence which disturbs workers in modern soundproof office buildings,"¹⁵ the novel's title also refers to the background noises of the televisions or radios that are always on during the conversations in Gladney's home.

Whereas *White Noise* portrays both academia and the larger society as obsessed

¹⁴ Quoted in Showalter, *Faculty Towers*, 96.

¹⁵ Michael Valdez Moses, "Lust Removed from Nature," in *New Essays on "White Noise,"* 81.

with consumerism and the latest commercially-marketed goods, *Nice Work* depicts the university and the factory as separated by an insurmountable gap. Thus, neither Robyn nor Vic are excited about venturing into the unknown, as they learn they have been selected for the Shadow Scheme. Moreover, their initial impressions of each other only confirm their prejudices. Thus, after their first meeting, Vic, whose political preferences are on the right, comments unfavourably on Robyn's world views: "Jesus wept! Not just a lecturer in English Literature, not just a *woman* lecturer in English Literature, but a trendy lefty feminist lecturer in English Literature!" (NW, 116, italics in original). Similarly, Robyn thinks of the factory as "the cultural heart of darkness" (NW, 141), and does not find anything attractive about Vic, a cultural conservative and a supporter of Margaret Thatcher. As Bernard Bergonzi sums up, "Robyn is the heir to a distinguished intellectual tradition of hostility to industrial civilization, which extends from Carlyle to Leavis. Vic presents the opposing position that without national wealth, won in a harsh, competitive world, none of the academic values and quality of life which Robyn takes for granted could be sustained."¹⁶ Therefore, the arguments between Vic and Robyn continue in a constant debate on English culture about the effects of industrialism.

However, eventually, Robyn and Vic overcome the gaps between them, even making one another question what they had always taken for granted. First, when Vic claims that art degrees are a waste of money, Robyn is reluctant to bring up literary theory at all: "If I said we teach students about the perpetual sliding of the signified under the signifier, or the way every text inevitably undermines its own claim to a determinate meaning, [Vic] would laugh in my face" (NW, 218). Nevertheless, at a later point, she tries to lecture him on the difference between metaphor and metonymy and manages to explain to him how to recognize their usage in contemporary advertisements. Thus, Vic becomes increasingly conscious of his own educational limitations and narrow horizons.

Similarly, under Vic's guidance, Robyn becomes aware of the inconsistency between the universities' elitist set-up and her own leftwing principles. While Robyn remains convinced that higher education should be accessible to all able and willing, she comes to realize that building "so many new universities in parks on the outskirts of cathedral cities ... perpetuates the Oxbridge idea of higher education as a version of pastoral, a privileged idyll cut off from ordinary living" (NW, 307). Whereas Robyn no longer idealizes universities, she still cannot imagine leading a happy and satisfied life elsewhere. Nevertheless, because of her participation in the Shadow Scheme, she now finds herself daydreaming of a campus full of not only students and lecturers, but also workers and managers, all of whom have gathered there "to exchange ideas on how the values of the university and the imperatives of commerce might be reconciled and more equitably managed to the benefit of the whole society" (NW, 347). Thus, her experience leads her to perceive the university in relation to the outside world.

If the two topoi in *Nice Work* are the university and the factory, in *White Noise*, it

¹⁶ Bergonzi, *David Lodge*, 25.

is the university and the supermarket, where Gladney often goes with Babette and the four children of various parentage that they are raising. At the college, Gladney wears his gown and heavy-framed black glasses all the time. However, Gladney's impressive image of a successful department head does not carry over from his professional into his personal life. When a colleague meets Gladney and his family at the supermarket, he perceives Jack, without the gown and glasses, in completely different terms, as "a big, harmless, aging, indistinct sort of guy" (WN, 83). Thus, Gladney also appears to be living two lives – one of a recognized college professor and one of a worried family man. Or, his life as a powerful man is, in Thomas J. Ferraro's words, only a "marketed image."¹⁷

In *Nice Work*, Vic Wilcox finds himself in a similar position. On the surface, he seems like an affluent man who can demonstrate his wealth with his five bedroom house. Thus, consumerism is also reflected in Lodge's novel, even though not in relation to academia. In reality, however, Vic's job is as insecure as Robyn's, with the only difference being that she knows her appointment ends after three years. Vic, in contrast, tells Robyn that the Engineering and Foundry Division of Midland Amalgamated which owns J. Pringle and Sons can "get rid of [him] whenever they like" (NW, 135). In fact, this is exactly what happens towards the end of the novel, as Vic is suddenly told that the Board of Midland Amalgamated "did not see Pringle fitting into [their] long-term strategy" (NW, 365). Consequently, they decide to sell the company and make Vic redundant.

However, by the time Vic is dismissed, the relationship between him and Robyn has become more complicated. On the last day of the Shadow Scheme, Robyn accompanies him to a technology convention in Frankfurt, Germany. The narrator precedes the account of the business trip with a flash forward: "It was, perhaps, inevitable, that Victor Wilcox and Robyn Penrose would end up in bed together" (NW, 267). However, having spent the night together, the two protagonists interpret the event in completely different terms. Robyn thinks of it as a one night stand, something she happened to be ready for, as she found out shortly before the trip that Charles had started dating another woman. Vic, on the other hand, is convinced he is in love with Robyn, even claiming that he is going to get a divorce and marry her. To escape from Vic, Robyn spends Easter at her parents' in the south of England, working on her book on the image of women in nineteenth-century fiction, which may help her get a new job, as she was told that the Rummidge faculty's grant is going to be cut by another ten percent.

Worried about her future employment, Robyn is astonished to learn from her parents that she is the sole beneficiary of her Australian uncle's will. Thus, while Robyn will not become Vic's wife, she will support him financially, as he decides to start his own company. In fact, the recent lack of fortune in Vic's professional life is balanced by a positive change in his personal life. Relieved that the reason for Vic's recent absent-mindedness was not a relationship with another woman, Marjorie happily suggests

17 Thomas J. Ferraro, "Whole Families Shopping at Night!" in *New Essays on "White Noise,"* 21.

she could work as a secretary in his new company to save on his expenses. In addition, Marjorie's interest in her husband's independent career revives Vic's erotic interest in his wife. Finally, at the university, Philip Swallow announces that he has discovered he can redirect some resources and keep Robyn.

The serendipitous ending of *Nice Work* echoes the comic rather than satirical literary tradition, as the structures of reconciliation, associated with the comic mode, prevail over the satirical elements of the text. As Bergonzi writes, the closure of the novel "may depend more on convention and genre than on probability, but the work is a comedy, and we expect comedies to end more or less happily."¹⁸ However, whereas Vic's and Marjorie's marriage is restored to order, there is no wedding for Robyn. Even though Charles has broken up with his new girlfriend and asks Robyn to marry him, she rejects the proposal, and maintains her integrity and independence.

While *Nice Work* transgresses the traditional boundaries of academic fiction by an excursion into the industrial world, *White Noise* ventures farther beyond the campus. Frank Lentricchia characterizes the novel as, among other things, "an ecological novel at the dawn of ecological consciousness."¹⁹ Indeed, both Gladney's domestic and professional lives are disrupted by an ecological catastrophe when a chemical spill from a tanker car releases a black billowing cloud not far from Jack's home. The event develops unexpectedly and Gladney tends to undermine its importance until the last moment: "I'm the head of a department. I don't see myself fleeing an airborne toxic event. That's for people who live in mobile homes out in the scrubby parts of the county, where the fish hatcheries are" (WN, 117). Thus, Gladney makes claims that his privileged position in society should guarantee his and his family's protection from such disasters. Moreover, Gladney is not convinced about the seriousness of the situation until a fire captain announces the necessity of evacuation.

When the Gladneys are evacuated into an abandoned Boy Scout camp, Jack finally feels in danger, and misses those attributes that symbolize his social privilege: "I wanted my academic gown and dark glasses" (WN, 142). However, the airborne toxic event transcends social status. In fact, having been exposed to the cloud while refuelling, Gladney has to undergo medical check-ups. As Michael Valdez Moses notes, "the airborne toxic event, though produced by a fully technological society, nevertheless replicates a primal and elementary human situation ... of an authentic existential threat."²⁰

Indeed, the fear of death stands at the very centre of *White Noise*. Both Gladney and Babette cannot help torturing themselves with thoughts as to which of them will die first. One of the reasons why Gladney is attracted to studying Hitler lies, in Valdez Moses's words, "in the apparent power of the carefully staged Nazi rally to ward off an existential confrontation with personal finitude."²¹ In the novel, Gladney describes his feelings when watching the Nazi propaganda films in the following terms: "Crowds

18 Bergonzi, *David Lodge*, 27.

19 Lentricchia, introduction to *New Essays on White Noise*, 7.

20 Valdez Moses, "Lust Removed from Nature," 81.

21 Valdez Moses, "Lust Removed from Nature," 81.

came to form a shield against their own dying. To become a crowd is to keep out death. To break off from the crowd is to risk death as an individual, to face dying alone" (WN, 73). Thus, becoming a spectator of the Nazi propaganda films allows Gladney to temporarily forget about his fear of death.

Babette, on the other hand, tries to alleviate her fear of death by secretly using a fictional experimental drug called Dylar. After she unintentionally reveals this fact to Gladney because of her carelessness in hiding the substance, Babette admits to Jack that she received the drug in exchange for sex from a man she calls Mr. Gray so as not to disclose his identity. Thus, while in *Nice Work*, adultery stands at the centre of the novel, it is only one of the many interrelated themes of *White Noise*. Although Babette claims she let Mr. Gray know on the answering machine that the drug did not work for her and stopped meeting him, Gladney cannot help thinking of the man.

Eventually, Gladney tracks Mr. Gray down and plans to kill him with a gun he obtained from his father-in-law. When Gladney locates Mr. Gray in a deserted motel on the edge of town, the man is an easy target, sitting in front of the TV, under the influence of Dylar. Nevertheless, because of Gladney's inexperience and clumsiness, the event develops differently from his expectations. Having shot the sitting Mr. Gray in his midsection, Gladney proceeds to place the gun in his victim's hand to make the murder look like a suicide; however, Gray manages to pull the trigger and shoot Gladney in his wrist. Looking at the bloodied man, Gladney changes his mind: "I was seeing him for the first time as a person. The old human muddles and quirks were set flowing again. Compassion, remorse, mercy" (WN, 313). Overcome by a sudden feeling of sympathy for his victim, Gladney decides to take Gray to the nearest clinic to save his life. When Gladney finally returns home after his secret adventure, he suddenly realizes how fulfilling his familial life is. Thus, while this subplot provides a satirical exaggeration of Gladney's ineptness at perpetuating violence, it also highlights his tendency to embrace humanity. Moreover, the experience puts a stop to Gladney's excessive worries about death. The closure of *White Noise* consequently echoes the restorative ending of *Nice Work*, typical of the comic mode.

In conclusion, both *Nice Work* and *White Noise* transgress the usual confines of the campus novel by including events that take place outside the university. *Nice Work* enriches the genre with a confrontation between the academic and the industrial world. Set in 1986, the British Industry Year, it features an encounter between Robyn Penrose, a temporary lecturer in English literature at Rummidge, Lodge's fictionalized version of Birmingham, and Victor Wilcox, the manager of an industrial company. As both of them are mildly satirised for their limited views, Lodge assures the reader that the meeting enables both of them to expand their horizons. Towards the end of the text, the comic literary tradition prevails over the novel's satirical features, as the protagonists are rewarded for becoming more open-minded by a restoration of order in their personal and professional lives.

White Noise, on the contrary, does not need to contrast the academy with the industry, as it satirizes a fictional midwestern college for taking over the practices of the business world. At the College-on-the-Hill, academic fields are advertised and

consumed along with goods displayed at the local supermarket. While *Nice Work* leans towards a validation of literary theory that has found its way into the traditional field of English literature, *White Noise* satirizes the narrow specialization within academia by featuring the new academic field of Hitler Studies. The chairman of Hitler Studies is the narrator and protagonist, Jack Gladney, a perceptive critic of consumer society, in which he, nevertheless, actively participates. Apart from satirizing academia, the novel goes far beyond the usual themes of campus novels, dealing with issues as serious as the fear of death. Over the course of the novel, Gladney is forced to realize the limits of his privilege, as he faces an ecological catastrophe and a marital crisis which makes him resort to violence. However, as Gladney condemns violence and embraces humanity, the closure of the text echoes the happy ending of *Nice Work* with its tendency towards the restoration of order associated with the comic literary tradition.

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