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From Theory to Practice 2015

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Gregory Jason Bell
Katarína Nemčoková

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From Theory to Practice 2015

Editors' Note

Gregory Jason Bell and Katarína Nemčoková

The present volume, the seventh in the *Zlín Proceedings in Humanities* book series, contains selected papers from "From Theory to Practice 2015: The Seventh International Conference on Anglophone Studies," hosted on September 3–4, 2015, by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic.

As academic conferences involve human relationships, they are naturally susceptible to what psychologists have referred to as the "seven-year itch," a cyclical appearance of dissatisfaction that often plagues long-term situations or relationships. Our 2015 conference, however, proved immune to this common concern. Over fifty participants representing eight countries gathered together to share their academic insights on various Anglophone studies topics within the fields of linguistics, literature and culture. The resulting proceedings contains twenty-one papers by scholars representing academic institutions in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Austria and Romania.

The editors of this proceedings remain the same as in the previous year. Also as before, this book is published in print, for distribution primarily to libraries, and in electronic form (http://conference.uaa.utb.cz/tp2015). The volume is divided into a literature and cultural studies section and a linguistics section, and each section adheres to the appropriate citation format in the current edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*: papers in the literature and cultural studies section are in the notes-bibliography style, while linguistics papers make use of the author-date style. We are thankful to the conference participants, many of them repeat contributors, and in particular to Lesley Jeffries and Eva Zettelmann, our keynote speakers. Thanks are extended to our reviewers, as well as to our department administrative assistant, 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.

LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Experientiality, Specificity and Embodiment in the Lyric

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Abstract: Narrativity has been elevated to the rank of a trans-medial category, gaining recognition not only as a textual quality inherent in a wide number of literary modes, but also as a fundamental cognitive tool. The lyric is one of the few literary modes perceived to be situated outside the ever-widening narrative realm. While classical approaches to the narrative have rejected the lyric on the grounds of its non-sequentiality and its non-mediation, cognitive theories of narrative have cited the lyric's alleged non-specificity and lack of embodiment as reasons for excluding it from the narrative canon. This paper challenges these assumptions and tests the aptness of the categories of natural narratology for an elucidation of the lyric.

"Despite the proliferation of theory in literary studies since the 1960s, little attention has been paid to the theory of lyric."[1] This claim, from 2015, demonstrates one of the great paradoxes of modern literary theory.[2] Despite the fact that for the last fifty years we have witnessed a proliferation of methodical hermeneutic research, for the lyric (i.e., approximately one-third of the entire textual corpus, if one follows Jonathan Culler in addressing the traditional trio of genres) there is neither a generally-accepted and comprehensive definition nor a differentiated toolkit deriving from this. Analytical categories have barely advanced beyond the sub-divisions of classical rhetoric, the cultural pre-eminence of which has kept lyric theory from accessing more modern conceptualizations of linguistic structure. Anti-rationalist notions of poetic production and reception further complicate any attempt at arriving at a more systematic, text-centred, state-of-the-art model of the lyric. Embroiled in generic preliminaries, lyric theory is still preoccupied with defining the essence of the genre, with listing exclusive and/or typical characteristics, with identifying and correlating textual levels and with setting up demarcations from adjacent modes.

In stark contrast, the theory of narrative, after a phase of intense debate, now rests firmly on a set of received generic notions and categories of analysis. With its analytical precision and structuralist rigour, classical narratology seems ideally suited to shed light on the hetero-referential dimension of the lyric, which has been routinely

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1   Jonathan Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 91.
2   This paper is an extension of Eva Zettelmann, "Poetry, Narratology, Meta-Cognition," in *Current Trends in Narratology*, ed. Greta Olson (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 232–53.

overlooked by traditional poetology. Not many studies on the theory of narrative devote more than a passing glance to the lyric, however, and more often than not this is done with other motives than an elucidation of the lyric in mind.

Within narratology, the lyric has had an important function to fulfil: in a system indebted to the figure of antithetical binarism, lyric poetry has been made to perform the role of the other. Its alleged difference has helped to delimit and sharpen common conceptions of the prototypical narrative. By constructing poetry as an exclusively a-temporal, non-spatial, non-dynamic, unmediated and anti-illusionist mode,[3] narratology has been able to elevate the antitheses of these features into the rank of generic narrative properties.[4] Positioned within a neatly antipodal framework, narrativity is everything that poetry is not: spatial, temporal and kinetic in its make-up, the prototypical narrative features mediation, verisimilitude and the *effet de réel* among its defining characteristics.[5] Conversely, whatever additional features may be attributed to poetry, it is its non-narrativity that is generally regarded as its one essential trait.

Narrativity has come to be viewed as a basic human strategy, as a cognitive scheme fundamental to our coming to terms with process and change.[6] On a narrower scale, the concept of narrative within literary studies has likewise gradually expanded to encompass a wide variety of genres. In this, narrative is subject to the danger of all basic modes of explanation: in becoming a near all-encompassing category, narratology risks losing its poignancy and distinctive character. Poetry is the only genre that can be constructed as an exception to the all-embracing narrative mode. Not only has lyric poetry helped to throw narrativity into relief, therefore, but it is also the sole genre that can give literary narrativity its validation as a classificatory tool.

Constructing the lyric as narrative's antipode, the classical theory of narrative has done little to carry our understanding of the lyric beyond the clichéd notion of poetry as the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."[7] Narratology has long since moved on from its pioneer phase, however, and, on the basis of a widely-approved generic basis, has been able to branch out into diverse promising new directions, embracing the latest developments in the social and cognitive sciences, in linguistics,

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3 Cf. Werner Wolf, "Das Problem der Narrativität in Literatur, bildender Kunst und Musik: Ein Beitrag zu einen intermediären Erzähltheorie," in *Erzähltheorie transgenerisch, intermedial, interdisziplinär*, ed. Vera Nünning and Ansgar Nünning (Trier: WVT, 2002), 96; Manfred Jahn, "Poems, Plays and Prose: A Guide to the Theory of Literary Genres," Universität Köln, http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/ppp. htm.

4 For alternative studies exploring poetry's narrative potential, see Eva Müller-Zettelmann, "Lyrik und Narratologie," in *Erzähltheorie transgenerisch, intermedial, interdisziplinär*, ed. Vera Nünning and Ansgar Nünning (Trier: WVT, 2002); Zettelmann, "Poetry, Narratology, Meta-Cognition;" Peter Hühn, "Plotting the Lyric: Forms of Narration in Poetry," in *Theory into Poetry: New Approaches to the Lyric*, ed. Eva Müller-Zettelmann and Margarete Rubik (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 147–72; Peter Hühn and Jens Kiefer, *The Narratological Analysis of Lyric Poetry* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002).

5 *Effet de réel* is a literary term devised by Roland Barthes, meaning the effect of reality.

6 Cf. Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Marisa Bortolussi and Peter Dixon, *Psychonarratology: Foundations for the Empirical Study of Literary Response* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

7 William Wordsworth, preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, by William Wordsworth and Samuel T. Coleridge, ed. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones (London: Methuen, 1965), 266.

in media studies and cultural theory. Of the many new approaches to the study of narrative, Monika Fludernik's natural narratology is one of the most comprehensive re-conceptualisations to date.[8]

Taking natural (i.e., every-day, authentic) story-telling as a model, Fludernik's theory focusses on real-life perception and on the conceptual schemata that underlie human experience. Narratives exhibit the quality of embodiment: they emulate via linguistic means the specific properties, abilities and strictures of the human body and its apparatus of world apprehension. Experientiality, defined as "the quasi-mimetic evocation of real-life experience,"[9] encompasses intentionality (i.e., a goal-directed trajectory), temporality, specificity (i.e., a particularized anthropomorphic agent involved in a unique experience), and the emotional evaluation of events. While sequentiality, i.e., a dynamic string of events, still figures prominently in this model, it no longer serves as a necessary criterion: "there can […] be narratives without plot, but there cannot be any narratives without a human (anthropomorphic) experiencer of some sort at some narrative level."[10] Instead, the experiential depiction of human consciousness is elevated to the status of a prime narrative criterion. According to Fludernik, narratives emulate the sense of a body anchored in a specific time- and space-frame and project the stylistic, perspectival and evaluative uniqueness of a mind engaged in the activity of processing empirical data.

Obviously, defining the lyric is not one of Fludernik's main concerns, and her monograph mentions poetry only in passing. Sparse as the study's observations on poetry are, however, they still make it clear that the lyric is not to be counted among the narrative modes. It is poetry's non-specificity together with its alleged lack of embodiment that supposedly incapacitate the lyric's narrative potential:

> Where experientiality resolves into words and their music, narrativity also finds its ultimate horizon. Where language has become pure language, disembodied from speaker, context and reference, human experience and narrativization by means of human experience recede into the background. Such texts, instead, foreground thematic issues, images, sounds and rhythms beyond any possible mimetic context.[11]

While Fludernik's reasons for dismissing the lyric are different from those brought forward by more traditional approaches to narrative, the generic model of the lyric underlying this verdict is strikingly similar. Again, the lyric is portrayed as word music and self-referential artefact, a definition that has meant ignoring many, if not the majority of its modes of composition: "The lyric mode […] may perhaps be defined as deploying a pure voice factor for the purposes of an essentially metalinguistic preoccupation with sensibilia."[12] Whatever narratological accounts of the genre may

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8   See Monika Fludernik, *Towards a "Natural" Narratology* (London: Routledge, 1996); and Monika Fludernik, "Natural Narratology and Cognitive Parameters," in *Narrative Theory and the Cognitive Sciences*, ed. David Herman (Stanford: CSLI, 2003), 243–67.

9   Fludernik, *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, 12.

10 Fludernik, *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, 13.

11 Fludernik, *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, 310.

12 Fludernik, *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, 356.

suggest, however, the lyric does in fact command a much broader range of functions than merely capturing an emotion, tone, mood or atmosphere. Roman Jakobson chose the term "*poetic* function" for denoting general formal overstructuring for a reason, of course: the lyric has indeed standardized the use of self-referential formal artifice and routinely establishes an enriched code via modelling non-coded features of the signifying material.[13] It is equally true, however, that with an overwhelming number of lyric poems, our pleasure as readers does not solely derive from a text's captivating rhythm, ingenious similes or elegant turns of phrase.

Rather, when we read, listen to or remember a poem, we "see" something, we construct a cognitive image of the fictional world prompted by the text's signifiers. This "lyric illusion" may include existents, actants, spatial movement, temporal coordinates and instances of mental or physical action.[14] Natural narratology, with its focus on textual world construction and reader collaboration, appears as the approach of choice when it comes to elucidating lyric narrativity and lyric illusion – even if, as we have seen, Fludernik's study places the lyric firmly outside the category of narrative. In what follows, I am going to attempt a narratological analysis of the lyric, using the cognitive parameters introduced by natural narratology to shed light on the lyric's narrative potential. A typical lyrical poem will be used as a test case to determine whether the lyric is amenable to a narratological approach, and whether this alternative angle of analysis can render new insights into the generic make-up of the genre. After a brief application of concepts borrowed from the basic toolkit of classical narratology, the analysis will be opened up to incorporate concepts taken from natural narratology in order to investigate lyric ways of engendering experientiality.

The concept and study of narrative are relevant to the study of poetry in two fundamental ways. The first is concerned with analytical stance and heuristic focus: with its largely haphazard and intuitive approach, poetry theory could greatly profit from narratology. Particularly narratology's aim to provide a comprehensive description of discourse modes and their specific textual features would lend theoretical vigour to poetry analysis. Lyric theory would also benefit from narratology's practice of probing the relation between story and discourse and between text-based stimuli and their cognitive representations. Such basic heuristic devices can be applied even to the analysis of lyric texts that are non-narrative in character. Many poems do make use of narrative strategies, however, and it is with these that a narratological analysis of poetry should principally be concerned.

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13   Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in *Style in Language*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), 356.

14   Cf. Kendall L. Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundation of the Representational Arts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); Marie-Laurie Ryan, *Narrative as Virtual Reality: Immersion and Interactivity in Literature and Electronic Media* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Werner Wolf, "Illusion (Aesthetic)," in *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/illusion-aesthetic.

Christina Rossetti, "An End" (1862)

1.   Love, strong as Death, is dead.
2.   Come, let us make his bed
3.   Among the dying flowers:
4.   A green turf at his head;
5.   And a stone at his feet,
6.   Whereon we may sit
7.   In the quiet evening hours.

8.   He was born in the Spring,
9.   And died before the harvesting:
10.   On the last warm Summer day
11.   He left us; he would not stay
12.   For Autumn twilight cold and gray.
13.   Sit we by his grave, and sing
14.   He is gone away.

15.   To few chords and sad and low
16.   Sing we so:
17.   Be our eyes fixed on the grass
18.   Shadow-veiled as the years pass,
19.   While we think of all that was
20.   In the long ago.[15]

Rossetti's "An End" is a post-love love-poem, a poem which focuses on a pair of lovers and their (possible) future life after the mutual feeling of love has died. This less than cheerful text displays all the characteristics of the lyric: Rossetti's poem is short, it is uttered by a single, anonymous voice and it is highly wrought in its verbal organisation, most notably its imagery. At first glance, there is no action, very little dynamism, and not much circumstantial detail which would flesh out the fictional world and give it verisimilitude and illusionist credibility. The spatial and temporal coordinates of the utterance are not given; both the speaker and the addressee are almost exclusively defined by their communicative functions. Even that most basic trait of personal identity, their respective sex, is left indeterminate.

    Traditional poetry theory would probably set about analysing stanza form (irregular), metre (irregular) and rhyme scheme (irregular) and would trace the poem's intricate pattern of images and its manifold implications. It would have no difficulty in determining the speaker's identity (the author's) and would be quick to establish a connection between the inner-fictional persona's lament and Rossetti's unhappy love life.

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15 Christina Rossetti, "An End," in *The Complete Poems*, ed. Ronald W. Crump (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001), 32. Line numbers mine.

While the supra-segmental and semantic elements certainly have their place within a narratological reading of a poem, they are not given the same status they hold within traditional poetry analysis. A narratological reading views the textual stratum as a world-procuring and meaning-producing engine, the precise mechanism and function of which can only be gauged by assessing the text's interrelation with its projected fictional world. In other words, it is the basic story-discourse divide and its operational value that poetry theory needs to acknowledge if it wants to escape the formalist and biographical impasse in which it has been trapped for so long. Only if there is a strict analytical division between techniques that project and the contents of that textual projection can what is special about lyric narrativity be ascertained. In defence of poetry theory, contrary to narrative fiction, where recounting the story level is simply routine, reconstructing a poem's story-level is a far less straightforward operation.

Paradoxically, it is poetry's brevity that is responsible for much of the difficulty involved in recounting the lyric *histoire*. Less textual material means less information on the communicative constituents and less information on the syntagmatic and paradigmatic elements that make up the fictional universe. The resulting vagueness and sparseness renders the reconstruction of the poem's story level a matter of combining Spartan textual detail with cautious text-induced conjecture. Accessing the lyric *histoire* is further complicated by poetry's heightened use of artifice: in order to make up for its horizontal constrictions and lack of epic breadth, poetry utilizes language's typographic and acoustic strata on its vertical axis to establish an enriched "space-saving" code.

Despite the poem's self-imposed textual limitations, the reader can in most cases still make the leap from the lexical to the fictional. This is due to the existence of cognitive units of semantic integration – of cognitive frames.[16] Since the link between the single semantic unit and its contextualising real-life script does not need to take place at the textual level but can be supplied in the mind of the reader, it is possible, in principle, for a lyric text to create a complex fictional world, even within its quantitatively restricted framework. What is primarily fragmented, therefore, is the textual surface, while this sparsity does not necessarily affect the reader's imagined world to the same degree.

Still, the lyric's typical reduction of world-constituting detail increases a text's semantic gaps and requires particular activity from readers, who need to relate the briefly-sketched suggestions to a consistent and meaningful whole. Lyric brevity is therefore associated with (1) an increased use of self-referential patterning, (2) heightened aesthetic complexity, (3) increased indeterminacy of meaning, (4) a certain vagueness and sparseness of the projected world, (5) heightened reader activation and (6) increased divergence between readers' individual reconstructions. These factors unite to significantly complicate the reconstruction of the lyric *histoire*.

In addition to the techniques mentioned, poetry tends to employ metaphor as a device

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16 For general frame theory, see Roger C. Schank and Robert P. Abelson, *Scripts, Plans, Goals and Understanding: An Inquiry into Human Knowledge Structures* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1977); for the use of schema theory in literary analysis, see Perry W. Thorndyke, *Cognitive Structures in Human Story: Comprehension and Memory* (Santa Monica: Rand, 1975).

to achieve maximum semantic density within minimal textual space. In its function as a meaning-constituting device, a poem's metaphor is part of the discourse. Yet, a metaphor's target and blend belong by rights to a poem's story level. This analytical split between device and function, between surface meaning and deep semantics, implies a massive structural and procedural complication. While within narrative fiction, assembling a text's *histoire* is a non-interpretative act, which in most cases is fairly straightforward and easy to perform, for the scholar of poetry the reconstruction of the lyric *histoire* requires a substantial hermeneutic effort. The frequent use of extended metaphor in poetry thus makes it necessary that interpretation precede description. It is this upheaval of the time-hallowed order of the exegetic sequence and the untimely onset of interpretation that have kept poetry theory from including the story/discourse dichotomy among its analytical tools.

In Rossetti's "An End", nearly the entire *histoire* is acted out on a metaphorical plane. Determining its events, protagonists and spatio-temporal frame implies submitting the text's innovative conceptual blends to a process of "de-innovation". When the text's original blends are relegated to more conventional conceptual spaces, the poem's story-level emerges: "An End" focuses on a pair of lovers whose love has recently come to an end. The speaker briefly looks back to the beginnings of that love, gives a reason for its termination and calls upon the addressee to spend the remaining years reminiscing about a happier past.

Classical narratology ties the notion of narrativity to dynamism and change. Metaphor has been described as exclusively belonging to the paradigmatic (and thus static) axis of language. Hence, figurative language use and story-telling are often understood to be mutually exclusive.[17] Three factors contest this assumption, however, all of which are to do with a narrative sequentiality of an oblique and what appears to be typically "lyric" kind.

Firstly, metaphors need not be pictorial or of a consistently-static nature. Extended vehicles may contain a sequential structure and be inherently dynamic. Secondly, if we agree that a script is made up of kinetic and non-kinetic elements, and if we further agree that a single prototypical element representative of a script may be used to project that script, it follows that a poem's dynamism may not necessarily show on the textual surface, and that there may in fact be implied dynamism – a fact which holds for a poem's metaphoric script as much as it does for a non-figurative one. And thirdly, the lyric speaker's venture of grafting one concept onto another is a (cognitive and linguistic) action in its own right.

Rossetti's poem uses the sequence entailed in its metaphoric source domain (i.e., the "death of a beloved child"-script) as its organising principle. By taking over the structures of another frame, by borrowing from its inherent dynamics, procedures, rites, and routines of cognitive and emotional response, the intangible and disorientating

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17 See the differentiation between selection/substitution (i.e., metaphor) and combination/contexture (i.e., narrativity) in Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances," in *On Language*, ed. Linda R. Waughn and Monique Monville-Burston (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 115–33.

is placed in a ready-made semiotic-performative system. The dynamism inherent in this script is triggered by a limited number of textual stimuli and actualised through supplementation by the reader. Providing the speaker with interpretative and procedural guidelines, the text's eventfulness lies in its two acts of semantic redistribution and concomitant self-stabilisation performed by and given to a speaker *in extremis*.

After reviewing classical narratology's construction of the lyric as a non-dynamic and non-sequential mode, I would now like to turn to the more recent model of natural narratology and its rejection of the lyric on the grounds of the poetry's alleged lack of specificity and embodiment. For Fludernik, the lyric's concern is allegorical. When introducing a narrative sequence, a lyric text does so merely to lend colour and interest to a philosophical observation stating an abstract and universal truth: "Much that *appears* to be narrative poetry does not actually qualify as such because it does not concern specific fictional *personae* but posits a hypothetical or allegorical scenario."[18] Poetry, in Fludernik's view, does not project individualized speakers, characters or cogitators, nor does it create specified fictional worlds. Its main interest lies in offering detachable apothegms, formally wrought nuggets of truth meant to be contemplated, memorized and taken on board by the reader.

This systematic down-playing of lyric's world-projecting dimension does not do justice to the all-encompassing richness and versatility of the genre, however. The lyric has developed an impressive array of specificity-inducing techniques; among other ploys, it foregrounds the act of narration and uses its own materiality to project a sense of experiential uniqueness.

In Rossetti's "An End", the stereotypical sequence implied in the "death of a beloved child"-script (erecting a tomb, bemoaning the loss, sitting at the grave, thinking back to a happier past) is put forward as a potential future scenario, as a "possible world" in Marie-Laure Ryan's sense of the term.[19] The speaker-character tentatively ascribes this story to her situation to see whether its hypothetical quality can be made into an actuality. What we have here, then, is not the recounting of a completed story after its conclusion. Rather, this is a story in progress, a story the gist of which is emphatically placed in the here and now.

In many lyric poems, the act of using language, of ascribing stories and attributing meaning, is central to the poem's *histoire*. In such poems, the aspect of "somebody says" (or "somebody writes") is rarely lost sight of. Poetry, then, is the genre that has made *narration*, the act of telling a story, of giving it words, one of its prime foci of attention.[20] It centres on the process of meaning production; it textualizes a becoming rather than a result; it concentrates on the struggle for, the pursuit of, and the inquiry into. This is why in poetry we so often find ourselves *in medias res*.[21] Lyric poetry places the speaker – and thus us – in the thick of things. In witnessing the speaker, we

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18 Fludernik, *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, 354.
19 Marie-Laurie Ryan, *Possible Worlds, Artificial Intelligence and Narrative Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).
20 Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 27.
21 Latin for "in the middle of things," or "in the midst of action."

witness the fundamental human endeavour to use language, story-telling and world projection for the purposes of creating meaning.

Viewed from the angle of cognitive science, what lies behind the struggle to find the "right" word, i.e., the innovative and liberating one, is an attempt to remodel experience on a cognitive level. Not only does poetry self-reflexively foreground linguistic texture and lyric artifice, but, maybe even more importantly, it also concentrates on the phenomenon of cognitive mapping. It foregrounds the human endeavour of mentally representing and conceptualizing the world. In this view, poetry is not only a meta-linguistic and meta-poetic, but also a prototypically meta-cognitive mode. At the same time, creating an idiosyncratic code to capture an idiosyncratic experience is a singularly powerful way of suggesting specificity, i.e., the individuality of a speaker and the uniqueness of that speaker's world.

In Rossetti's poem, the act of projecting an alien frame onto the given perspectivizes the described scenario and marks out the speaker as a highly-individualized voice. The poem's overarching blend lends stability and orientation to a subject who finds herself in a radically altered situation. Adopting the death-of-a-child-script entails the subject's bypassing a painful search for the reasons why love has failed. This is done by stylizing love into a self-determined, possibly self-willed agent. The consoling effect of transferring responsibility and exteriorizing blame is heightened by the poem's suggestion that a causal link exists between love's "decision to leave" and the natural decline of the dying year: "On the last warm summer day/He left us; he would not stay/ For autumn twilight cold and grey" (10–12). Presenting the end of love as "An End," as a natural event that foreshadows other equally natural, equally inescapable ends to come, is not a neutral account, but suggests a certain preference on the part of the speaker. To put this in more general terms, a certain affinity exists between a focus on narration, i.e., on verbalizing an experience, and rhetoricity, i.e., the use of language for the purposes of manipulation.

Many lyric texts are performative: they use language as a mode of action.[22] Performative poems are unmediated utterances that target a specific addressee and have a specific aim in mind. The focus on construction, potentiality and change provides a link between the foregrounding of *narration* and textual performativity. As readers, we witness a story in the making; we witness someone who employs her verbal skills to fashion the world and influence the future course of her own story.

In the case of Rossetti's "An End", the speaker's ponderings discursivize a bifurcation in the poem's possible plot, but do so not through a balanced weighing of alternatives. In fact, the rejected option (i.e., the couple's separation) is not verbalized and remains a conspicuous semantic gap in the text. By appropriating a script whose implicit elements are advantageous to the persona's purposes, the speaker presents a wish-world as an

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22 For a general study on performativity, see John L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); for lyric performativity, see Manfred Pfister, "'As an Unperfect Actor on the Stage': Notes towards a Definition of Performance and Performativity in Shakespeare's Sonnets," in *Theory Into Poetry: New Approaches to the Lyrics*, ed. Eva Müller-Zettelmann and Margarete Rubik (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 207–28.

obligatory world. A preferred future scenario (i.e., the couple's staying together) is marketed as a customary routine, as a default course of action bound to follow on the heels of the text-triggering event. The act of articulation thus takes a decisive role in the very story it articulates: the utterance is not only part of, but takes operative part in what it relates.

In unmediated poetry, embodiment, i.e., the sense of a physical body situated in a time-space-frame, emerges as an effect of performativity. Where there is direction, we assume a source and a goal; where there is a purpose of speech, we construct an agent who embraces that purpose; where there is language suggesting emotion, there is a body feeling and expressing that emotion. Deictic devices project a strong sense of a body immersed in a specific communicative situation – phrases like "Come, let us" (2); "Sit we […] and sing" (13); "Sing we so" (16); "Be our eyes fixed" (17) in Rossetti's poem all express an impulse and a purpose. They are linguistic counterparts to a prompting wave of the hand, the raising of an eyebrow, or an added emphasis through hortative intonation.

The lyric cannot in any way provide lengthy descriptions of somebody's physique or elaborate on the effect a speaker's emotional state has on his or her gesture, posture and body movement. In poetry, meaning-making has to occur economically. What better way, then, to install the sense of a body than by drawing on a physicality that is already present. Poetry, after all, is the genre that has broadened its store of potential aesthetic elements to include the *physis* of signs, including their acoustic (and visual) properties. While I do not dispute the auto-referential dimension of phonetic, supra-segmental and typographical patterning, I would still like to suggest that a poem's materiality can help to create the effect of embodiment. Stress patterns, sound clusters, and rhyme scheme can take on a quasi-iconic quality. This occurs through the uniqueness of their combination: they only exist in and through one single poem. A text's distinctive assortment of sound elements imitates the specificity of the speaker's body and its properties. When reciting a poem, readers transform this virtual corporeality into an actual one. Using their own body, articulating a text's sounds with their own vocal cords, filling a poem's words with their own breath, readers achieve a level of proximity to the fictional speaker unlikely to be equalled by narrative fiction.

While traditional narratology has excluded the lyric on the grounds of its alleged lack of eventfulness and mediation, more recent cognitive approaches have dismissed poetry as non-narrative because of its universality and its alleged hypothetical or allegorical nature. This, I have argued, is a misrepresentation. The evidence of this essay suggests the reverse: poetry is highly experiential. Especially in those lyric poems that centre on the act of narration and construct an illocutionary slant, the impression produced is one of subjectivity and uniqueness. Poetry has often been called the most subjective and emotional of genres. In performative lyric poetry, the impression of subjectivity is largely due to the illocutionary trajectory which, almost single-handedly, produces the impression of perspectivity, specificity, and embodiment, and thus creates the quasi-mimetic projection of real-life experience, of "experientiality."

A narratological approach to poetry has revealed the lyric to be an intrinsically

heterogeneous mode, which lends itself readily to an application of both classical and cognitive narratological concepts. It has also corroborated the relevance of narrativity as a structural feature that holds an exceptionally wide scope of validity. Ultimately, a narratological approach to poetry as outlined in this paper may lead to a redefinition of the lyric and its position within a flexible, multi-levelled model of genre and discourse type. Intergeneric comparison is rarely one-sided, however, so that an analysis of poetry applying the tools of natural narratology not only brings neglected aspects of the lyric into focus but may eventually feed back into a refined view of the specific properties of narrative. It seems, then, that none of the major literary genres is so alien and the conditions of its discourse so removed, divergent and incommensurable that it would not figure in the cardinal trans-medial category of narrativity, and that its analysis might not profit from theories originally developed for the explication of another literary mode.

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Introductions and Identification Chains in Ian McEwan's Novels

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Abstract: Ian McEwan's manner of introducing and keeping track of the characters in his novels varies from novel to novel, sometimes even from character to character. Three novels in particular – *Amsterdam* (1998), *Atonement* (2001) and *Sweet Tooth* (2013) – were chosen as texts to analyse. This paper explores mainly the initial points of the characters' introductions and identification chains in the stories as well as what follows them, and examines why they may have been used and what may be their effect on the text and its comprehension and perception by the reader.

Keywords: strategy; introduction; identification chains; characters; information, Ian McEwan

Each story, when read for the first time, is entirely new to the reader, which means that each character/object/notion/institution that arises for the first time in the text must be introduced. The term introduction, as defined by Robert E. Longacre, "is a notional structure in which existence is predicated of something or someone and then a further predication is immediately made about that existent."[1] Therefore, introduction does not involve only the introduction of characters but also inanimate objects or institutions. According to J. R. Martin and David Rose, "in order to make sense of the discourse, one thing we need is to be able to keep track of who or what is being talked about at any point."[2] What is important is the manner in which the characters (and inanimate objects) are introduced to the reader in the text (as well as to the characters themselves, to each other in their discourse). "Whenever the identity of a participant is presumed, the identity has to be recovered. This can be done in various ways depending where the relevant information is."[3] English novelist Ian McEwan's manner of identifying (mainly) the characters to the reader and providing information about them is different in various novels. It could be argued, of course, that one can only obtain a fully-fledged identification of a fictitious character after reading the entire story, since whatever the characters do, what happens to them, how they behave, all of these factors shape them and contribute to the overall picture. This is a fact, but let us explore mainly the initial points of these identification chains, what follows them and how the author manages to find creative ways of not boring the reader by not using the same pattern all the time. McEwan's strategies in this respect could be classified into three larger categories: the strategy of gradual revealing, the unifying elements strategy, and the

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1   Robert Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse* (New York: Plenum Press, 1996), 84.
2   J. R. Martin and David Rose, *Working with Discourse: Meaning beyond the Clause* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 145.
3   Martin and Rose, *Working with Discourse*, 145.

immediate detailed identification strategy.

The assumption is that the author intends to maintain the reader's interest throughout. The strategies also provide a way to help the reader identify with the individual characters, although they are not black or white, but rather resemble real people with their strengths and weaknesses. It can also be assumed that the strategies help the reader even become a part of the story development. Rather than reading a report of what happened, they are enabled to be a witness to the events of the story. Of the three McEwan novels chosen for this study, *Amsterdam* (1998) and *Atonement* (2001) are third person point of view narratives, while *Sweet Tooth* (2013) is told from the point of view of the main character, Serena, in first person. This influences the way and frequency with which the strategies are distributed and used within the three novels. The first two strategies are applied mostly in *Amsterdam* and *Atonement*, whereas the last one, the immediate detailed identification strategy, occurs most frequently in *Sweet Tooth*.

The strategy of gradual revealing initially gives the reader not much more than a name and title. Usually there are a few facts that can be inferred from the way the story unfolds or the way the scene is described. However, there is no immediate explanation or introduction and no further identification or information about how the named person or item relates to the story. The information that the author owes the reader is only revealed gradually, along with the development of the plot. In other words, it requires more effort on the part of the reader to find what Martin and Rose call relevant information (not to mention that older information must be kept in mind until more information is revealed).

One of the reasons McEwan takes advantage of this arrangement may be that such a strategy enables him to create suspense. Since the reader is partially kept in the dark, there is no other way to find out more than by reading. It could also contribute to the overall inclusion of the reader in the story rather than just merely stating some facts of what happened at a given time and place. The assumption is that such a pattern offers flexibility and freedom to form first impressions of the characters and inanimate objects. The author reveals little, but in doing so he creates immense space for imagination, guessing and curiosity. In other words, such a strategy may make the narrative neutral in tone while, at the same time, making it possible for the reader (by witnessing whatever happens in the story) to see the action from some of the characters' points of view and, logically, either sympathize with them or oppose them.

Anna De Fina describes positioning devices as useful tools for creating images of self as "linguistic elements that are used by narrators as privileged tools to convey and build images of themselves. These can go from the choice of words to refer to self and others (what characters are called and how they are described), to particular verbs of saying (for example, using "admit" instead of "reply"), to reported speech as a way to emphasize self or other characterizations."[4]

The intervals between the pieces of information vary considerably. Some gaps may

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4   Anna De Fina, "The Negotiation of Identities," in *Interpersonal Pragmatics*, ed. Miriam A. Locher and Sage Graham (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 241.

stretch over tens of pages while others are almost non-existent. An example from *Atonement* includes one of the key characters, Cecilia's younger sister Briony Tallis:

(1)   "The play – for which Briony had designed the posters, programmes and tickets, constructed the sales booth out of a folding screen tipped on its side, and lined the collection box in red crepe paper – was written by her in a two-day tempest of composition, causing her to miss a breakfast and lunch."[5]

These first lines of *Atonement* (1) give the reader the name of a character (Briony) without any further information, perhaps except that Briony is a female who wrote a play. In addition, the hasty and immature way of staging it may imply that Briony is a child. What follows this section is a detailed description of Briony staging her play, *The Trials of Arabella* (including its plot further in the text). Only then is the character of Briony expanded upon: she is Emily Tallis's young child.

(2)   "Mrs Tallis read the seven pages of *The Trials of Arabella* in her bedroom, with the author's arm around her shoulder the whole while. Briony studied her mother's face for every trace of shifting emotion, and Emily Tallis obliged with looks of alarm, snickers of glee and, at the end, grateful smiles and wise, affirming nods."[6]

It is hardly surprising that the beginning of the novel is, of course, heavily filled with new names and characters to be introduced and identified. While the author remains loyal to his strategy of only providing a little to the reader immediately (and the rest later on), it is typical for the beginning (not only) of this novel that the gaps between the identification material pieces are considerably shorter when compared to those that occur later in the story.

While there are cases where the gaps are fairly small, there are also cases in which the size of the gaps is significantly larger. Some even reach the extremes. As an illustration, take the following example (a conversation between Vernon and his subordinate Frank Dibben) in *Amsterdam*:

(3)   "'Look, Vernon,' Frank said from where he stood at the urinal. 'I'm sorry about this morning. You're absolutely right about Garmony. I was completely out of order. … I mean, you're absolutely right about not giving him too much space.' Cassius is hungry, Vernon thought. He'll head his department, then he'll want my job."[7]

In this section of the text, an unexpected name arises – Cassius. From the conversation between the characters it follows that Vernon calls Frank Cassius in his mind – again, nothing but a nickname at this time, no explanation as to why he would call him that,

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5   Ian McEwan, *Atonement* (London: Vintage, 2007), 3.
6   McEwan, *Atonement*, 4.
7   Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam* (London: Vintage, 1998), 38–39.

it is not even explicitly said that he is referring to him. The reader only knows what the characters are thinking and/or saying. The second (and only) time Dibben's nickname is mentioned is 72 pages later:

(4)   "Frank had become deputy foreign editor on his twenty-eighth birthday. Four
       years and three editors later, he was still there and rumored to be restless. They
       called him Cassius for his lean and hungry look, but this was unfair: his eyes
       were dark, his face long and pale, his stubble heavy, giving him the appearance
       of a police cell interrogator, but his manner was courteous, though a little
       withdrawn, and he had an attractive, wry intelligence."[8]

The author explains why they called him Cassius by using a direct quotation from Shakespeare ("the lean and hungry look"). Once he does that, the reader belatedly comprehends the meaning behind the nickname.

The strategy can also be observed in the sections of *Atonement* in which Paul Marshall, Leon Tallis's friend, is introduced – to the reader as well as to the other characters themselves simultaneously. This man's introduction and further identification is particularly interesting. His name first arises in a private conversation between Cecilia and Robbie Turner, her father's protégé and later in the story, her lover:

(5)   "Instead she said, 'Leon's coming today, did you know?'
       'I heard a rumour. That's marvellous.'
       He's bringing a friend, this man Paul Marshall.'
       'The chocolate millionaire. Oh no! And you're giving him flowers!'"[9]

Paul Marshall gets introduced to the reader for the first time in a dialogue that demonstrates that both participants, Cecilia and Robbie, know his name and are familiar with him. The reader, however, is only informed at first what they are saying to each other – that Paul Marshall is a man, a friend of Leon's and (whatever it means) also a "chocolate millionaire." Further information can be obtained only when both men finally come to the Tallis household:

(6)   "As she reached the broad landing that dominated the hallway, Leon was showing
       Paul Marshall through the wide-open front entrance. […] The men had removed
       their hats and stood waiting for her, smiling. […] Paul Marshall shook her hand
       and made a faint bow. There was something comically brooding about his face.
       His opener was conventionally dull.
       'I've heard an awful lot about you.'
       'And me you.' What she could remember was a telephone conversation with her
       brother some months before, during which they had discussed whether they had

8   McEwan, *Amsterdam*, 105.
9   McEwan, *Atonement*, 26.

ever eaten, or would ever eat, and Amo bar."[10]

Further pieces of information about Paul Marshall come 21 pages later, and everything that is revealed about him at this point is mostly negative (his bow is faint, his face is comically brooding, his opener is dull, he is not exceedingly memorable …). This brings us to a realization that (although it is a third-person narrative), he is being viewed through Cecilia's eyes, who apparently does not like him much upon their first meeting. This may seem insignificant, but when later in the story the reader stumbles upon Marshall's shameful act of raping Lola Quincey, it is quite consistent with Cecilia's first negative impression, which the reader may have adopted. Marshall's character continues to be belittled and ridiculed through Cecilia's eyes:

(7)   "From his position between Leon and Cecilia, Marshall took control of the
        conversation with a ten-minute monologue." (*Atonement*, 49)

This time even instead of Paul Marshall, only the surname appears in the text. His monologue is not in direct speech (perhaps to illustrate how tiresome it may have been), but it finally reveals what "chocolate millionaire" and "Amo bar" meant – Marshall produces chocolate bars for the army. Marshall himself obviously considers this one of the defining features of his personality, as can be inferred from his dialogue with Lola and the twins:

(8)   "'Ah well,' Paul Marshall said, patting his pocket, 'I've got something to show
        you if you can guess what I do for a living.'
        […]
        Jackson interrupted. 'You make chocolates in a factory.'"[11]

After the incident at the Tallis's house, Paul Marshall is only brought up again once in the story – when he marries Lola, the very person he raped, after many years.

Thus, the strategy of gradual revealing involves giving a name, some kind of setting/scene/situation/particular conversation (from which usually several facts can be inferred or observed) and then, with more or less extensive gaps, other pieces of identification. The strategy's effect in the creation of tension is apparent, as is the question of including the reader in the story. The way the author pulls the reader into individual scenes could be compared to a movie – frequently the viewer knows little or nothing, and occasionally the viewer is even less informed than the characters themselves, which creates the impression of the story happening in front of the viewer's eyes.

Questions of what other effects the strategy could possibly have and whether it makes the text incoherent may arise here. According to Jarmila Tárnyiková, "coherence is not a state, it is a process, a kind of a co-operative achievement (depending on the speaker's

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10 McEwan, *Atonement*, 47.
11 McEwan, *Atonement*, 58–61.

and/or hearer's willingness to negotiate meaning)."[12] Much of the text, therefore, may only make sense depending on how much a reader is able to infer. By mentioning almost nothing but a name, the author gives space to them. This strategy enables the otherwise objective, detached, third-person narrative to become partial to one of the characters while seemingly preserving the narrator's objectivity and detachment. The narrator and the story remain separate and independent, and the readers feel their own importance in developing the story. Moreover, as De Fina puts it, "there is no single, coherent identity but rather identities are related to the kinds of social situations and discursive practices in which people are involved."[13] Circumstances repeatedly change, and recovering pieces of the characters' identities is subject to the changes. The author is skilled in giving the reader the impression of being part of the story, connected with the characters, an impression that it is not the author who dictates what happens in the story, but that he (as well as the reader) is just a detached witness to events within it.

While one strategy consists of mentioning a name first and gradually providing pieces of identification material, another strategy involves the assumption that some information already should be apparent to the reader. According to Joseph van Grimes, zero or implicit identification "helps to bridge the gap between identification and reference. There are many cases where the hearer is expected to know who the participants are by deducing it from the context; he is not told by any overt linguistic signal."[14] Before the characters (and/or other things) are introduced by name, sometimes the readers have already retrieved some amount of information either from the preceding sections of the story, or from what could be called general world knowledge.

In the novels that tell stories of numerous characters (and things), it is largely impossible to introduce and identify each of them independently, without a reference to another. By mentioning a character or an object for the first time (and then more times further on in the story), the author often creates another opportunity for himself to bring pieces of the identification together.

The assumption is that these have the role of what could be called unifying elements – characters or things in the stories that are not active or significantly important for the overall plot of the story themselves, but are in it nevertheless and operate as something that the characters have in common and can be thus used as means of introduction and identification. An example of the unifying elements strategy comes from *Amsterdam*:

(9)   "Two former lovers of Molly Lane stood waiting outside the crematorium chapel with their backs to the February chill."[15]

With nothing but a name, it may be inferred that Molly Lane is a female who had two lovers. The word *former*, as well as *crematorium chapel*, indicate that she may be dead,

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12 Jarmila Tárnyiková, *From Text to Texture: An Introduction to Processing Strategies* (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého, 2009), 56.

13 De Fina, "The Negotiation of Identities," 212.

14 Joseph E. Grimes, *The Thread of Discourse* (The Hague: Mouton, 1984), 50.

15 McEwan, *Amsterdam*, 3.

which is confirmed later:

(10)   "'When she did it was too late.'
        'Rapid onset.'
        'Poor Molly.'"[16]

The dialogue reveals that Molly died of some disease – she is dead, therefore not of much importance to the story anymore (as she cannot actively participate in it), but still it is her who is the topic of this portion of the text – no doubt to give the reader something that will unite the two men (her former lovers) in their mind. In fact she brings together not only Clive and Vernon (who happen to be best friends), but other characters as well.

It seems not only the references within the scope of the story are important as a device of introduction. The author frequently introduces unifying elements into the story (either characters or things), which are not in any way active themselves but rather help introduce, identify and unite major characters of the story as well as demonstrate the relationships between them. Since this strategy also makes it possible to include the unifying elements in the process of gradual unveiling of information, it can also help bring the pieces of identification together,thus proving that the strategy of gradual revealing as well as the unifying elements strategy can both be used simultaneously.

The last strategy to be discussed seems to differ considerably from the previous two. While in *Amsterdam* and *Atonement*, the author in the majority of cases strictly and carefully adheres to the pattern of postponing or the gradual uncovering of information about the characters, *Sweet Tooth* appears to be full of introductions of, so to speak, the opposite kind – once the name occurs in the text, it is immediately (or almost immediately) followed by a more or less detailed summary of either personal or biographical facts and/or a summary of the particular character's relation to the story of the novel, which, of course, includes the link to the main character of the story – Serena Frome.

The story is told in first person, from the point of view of Serena, which means that there are some significant differences between this strategy and the previous two. While the strategy of gradual revealing and the unifying elements strategy (used extensively in *Amsterdam* and *Atonement*, which are both third person narratives) make it possible to see the scene from the perspectives of different characters, in fact through their eyes – thus unconsciously acquiring their opinions and feelings and adopting them as our own – the strategy of immediate detailed summary of identification pieces requires Serena to present them. This inevitably means that the reader can only identify with her, adopt her opinions and see things through her eyes.

Serena uses the pattern of summarizing the characters' personal or biographical facts mostly to introduce to the readers people in her life who were of (some) significance,

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16 McEwan, *Amsterdam*, 3.

but hardly ever or never occur in the story after this initial introduction. This is probably partly the reason why the introduction is so detailed – these characters are only given limited space within the extent of the story, and yet they somehow contribute to it – it is only reasonable to make their quick entrance (which, at the same time, is often also their exit) sufficient. One of these characters is Serena's lover, Professor Tony Canning. His introduction and identification also belongs to this subcategory. Although his love affair with Serena is part of the story and she remembers him several times during the course of it, even much later, everything that was significant about his character (his past, his characteristics, his achievements, etc.) is briefly summarized in one paragraph at the beginning, the first time he is mentioned:

(11)   "Suddenly, from out of an alley, there appeared before us under the inadequate street lighting Jeremy's history tutor, Tony Canning. When we were introduced he shook my hand, and held on it far too lingeringly, I thought. He was in his early fifties – about my father's age – and I knew only what Jeremy had already told me. He was a professor, a one-time friend of the Home Secretary, Reggie Maudling, who had been to dine in his college. The two men had fallen out one drunken evening over the policy of internment without trial in Northern Ireland. Professor Canning had chaired a commission on historical sites, sat on various advisory boards, was a trustee of the British Museum and had written a highly regarded book about the Congress of Vienna."[17]

Up to this point, Serena introduces Tony Canning almost neutrally by stating simple facts about his life and his current situation as well as the connection to Jeremy. However, she continues about Canning later and adds, in fact, a plot summary, which categorizes the rest of the excerpt about him into the next subcategory – summary of the characters' connection to the plot (or a part of it).

The characters' connection to or their role in the plot of the novel are by no means a less important part of their identity. Their acts and their behavior contribute to the complete picture. Professor Canning breaks off his affair with Serena before she is even hired by MI5, so he is one of the characters whose significance does not consist in their presence in the story. His introduction continues by a summary of everything he did in connection to Serena:

(12)   "And though it was strictly true that Tony Canning ended up recruiting me for MI5, his motives were complicated and he had no official sanction. […] Professor Canning, an old MI5 hand himself, thought he was making them a gift in the spirit of expiation. His case was more complex and sadder than anyone knew. He would change my life and behave with selfless cruelty as he prepared to set out on a journey with no hope of return. If I know so little about him even now, it's because I accompanied him only a very small part of the way."[18]

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17 Ian McEwan, *Sweet Tooth* (London: Vintage, 2013), 13.
18 McEwan, *Sweet Tooth*, 13–17.

In a short summary, Serena practically discloses everything that the reader finds out later in detail – the professor's role in her life and how things ended up for him.

While the previously-mentioned pattern of providing descriptive or biographical facts enables the readers to form certain images of the characters for themselves, giving them summaries of large parts of the story is more manipulative. Not only do the readers adopt the opinions and impressions of Serena (who is telling the story), but they are also immediately offered their entire story, however briefly, often including the information about how they will end up. This pattern makes it possible to continue reading the story with a formed picture in the readers' minds, which provides space for surprise and makes the impact even more extensive, if it occurs.

It may seem that this pattern is only used for characters who appear in the story briefly and never return again. This, however, is not true – a similar pattern occurs in the first sentence of the novel, for example. It contains Serena's introduction of herself and in fact summarizes the story of *Sweet Tooth* in a few words:

(13)   "My name is Serena Frome (rhymes with plume) and almost forty years ago I was sent on a secret mission for the British security service. I didn't return safely. Within eighteen months of joining I was sacked, having disgraced myself and ruined my lover, though he certainly had a hand in his own undoing."[19]

By being provided larger chunks of personal/biographical information or information related to the plot of the story at the initial introduction of characters, the reader gains a sense of being thoroughly informed of everything significant. This enables the author to greatly impact the reader with potential surprise. By making the story a first-person narrative, the author does not give the reader as much feeling of inclusion as with the previous two strategies, but on the other hand, he enables the reader to identify and empathize with one person who is telling the story – Serena.

Although each of the analyzed categories differs from the others, they all help create more tension in the story – either by postponing the due information, separating and providing it gradually, or by condensing the most important parts of it. The structuring of the characters' discourse allows the reader to be part of the development, while the author remains nearly invisible. This helps involve the readers more deeply in the story, maintaining their interest and attention until the very end. In fact, the author seems to be playing with the text's cohesion and coherence in order to provoke the readers' ability to infer information (as well as remember and recognize it when it is finally revealed). To be, so to speak, kept in the dark about certain pieces of crucial information (or the explanation thereof) until certain points in the text requires the reader to work harder to complete the full picture.

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19 McEwan, *Sweet Tooth*, 1.

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Going Backwards?: The Welfare Agenda
of David Cameron's Government
from a Historical Perspective

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Abstract: Despite its overall wealth, Britain has struggled with the persistent problem of poverty for much of its history. The individual measures applied to tackle the phenomenon have been based on the contemporary understanding of its prevalent causes. This paper discusses the parallels between past attitudes to poverty, as embedded in the pre-twentieth century Poor Laws, and the present approach to the phenomenon as manifested in the welfare reform of the Conservative government led by David Cameron. Dovetailing with the Conservative government's austerity agenda, the morally-charged approach to poverty, characteristic of the Poor Laws, is shown to be undergoing a renaissance.

Keywords: poverty; David Cameron; welfare; underclass; Poor Laws; benefit sanctions

1. Introduction

The history of the poor, as argued by Jeremy Seabrook, is largely the history of attitudes towards the poor, since the voices of those living in material hardship and obscurity have generally gone unheard throughout centuries or have been subject to ideological reinterpretation.[1] In addition to creating historical narratives, attitudes to the poor have consistently informed social policies of governments at different periods, thus having a tangible impact on the lives of the poor themselves. In 2010, Conservative leader David Cameron took office as Britain's prime minister, marking the end of the thirteen-year New Labour rule. In a swift departure from his original programme of compassionate, progressive Conservatism, his government adopted a social agenda informed by technocratic neoliberalism, culminating in an austerity-based welfare reform.[2] The neoliberal switchover has widely coincided with rising poverty levels as a growing number of British households have faced debt, homelessness or food bank dependency.[3] This paper draws parallels between the poverty-related assumptions underlying the Cameronite welfare reform and historical attitudes to poverty as manifested in the pre-

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1   Jeremy Seabrook, *Pauperland: Poverty and the Poor in Britain* (London: Hurst and Company, 2013), 1.

2   Mark I. Vail, "Between One-Nation Toryism and Neoliberalism: The Dilemmas of British Conservatism and Britain's Evolving Place in Europe," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 53, no. 1 (2015): 110. doi: 10.1111/jcms.12206.

3   Stewart Lansley and Joanna Mack, *Breadline Britain: The Rise of Poverty* (London: One World Publications, 2015), 39.

twentieth century Poor Law relief system. Three fundamental poverty-related beliefs with traceable historical roots are identified as present in Cameron's view of society, and the resulting policies are critically addressed. This paper does not aim to track the most immediate sources of Cameronite social thought.[4] Instead, it purports to show that the pre-twentieth century paternalist view of the poor is experiencing a revival as Cameron's government seeks to substantiate the sweeping spending cuts forming part of its welfare reform.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Contrary to its modern perception as an acute social problem, the presence of the poor in medieval times was generally accepted as an inevitable, even natural, phenomenon in an organic, hierarchical, God-ordained society. It was the arrival of the early modern era with its radical economic and social transformations that brought a major change to the concept of poverty and the status of the poor. With monasteries, traditional centres of poor relief, dissolved by Henry VIII's administration and with the early capitalist economy delivering Britain's first mass unemployment due to the loosening of feudal bonds and greater efficiency of production, the number of people in need rose rapidly. The Tudor state, now in charge of welfare provision with no monasteries to perform the service, responded with legislation widely referred to as the Poor Laws (a term remaining in use until the nineteenth century).[5]

While providing basics of poor relief, the Poor Laws took a harsh attitude towards the poor, blaming them to a considerable extent for their own plight. No longer understood as a natural human condition, poverty was re-framed as a social problem, not least because of the burden placed by its alleviation on state finances. Despite brief periods of relaxation of the Poor Laws, such as the Speenhamland System in the late-eighteenth century, the restrictive character of welfare provision, based on the concept of individual moral deficiency, persisted until the late Victorian period.[6]

It was only at the turn of the twentieth century that poverty began to be understood as a structural phenomenon, shaped by forces beyond the scope of individual conduct. The new, systemic understanding of poverty played a major part in the creation of the British welfare state, with its ambition to provide for British people from the cradle to the grave. Since the 1980s, however, it has faced numerous challenges as neoliberal policies, spearheaded by Margaret Thatcher and her successors (including Cameron), have upheld a more individualized view of society, with poverty, yet again, seen as a behavioural rather than structural matter.

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4   Jack Newman, "What Ontological Assumptions Underpin David Cameron's 'Modernisation' of Conservative Party Welfare Policy?" *Polis Journal* 12 (2014): 240–76.

5   Paul Slack, *English Poor Law 1531—1782* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 9.

6   Seabrook, *Pauperland*, 81.

3. From the Poor Laws to Cameron's Welfare Reform

This section analyses three basic assumptions about poverty that underpin both the old Poor Law legislation and the current welfare policy of Cameron's government.

3.1   There Are Deserving and Undeserving Poor

A fundamental distinction thoroughly applied by the old Poor Laws was that between the so-called "deserving" and "undeserving" poor, with the implication that only the former group (comprising those afflicted by various misfortunes through no fault of their own, such as orphans, the sick or the aged) was entitled to state relief. The latter group, consisting of able-bodied poor uninvolved in productive work (migrant workers, beggars, individuals driven to crime) was subject to vilification and withdrawal of assistance. Its very existence was framed as a major social threat as well as a burden on the state finances. The following reflection by a seventeenth-century cleric illustrates the dichotomous view:

> Of poor there are two sorts, God's poor and the Devil's; impotent poor and impudent poor. The poor on whom we would exercise our beneficence is the honest labourer and the poor householder … the blinde and maimed, the aged and decrepit, the weak widows or young orphans … these are the principle objects of bounty, and he that is godly and discreet will rather give to them that work and beg not than to them that beg and work not … for there are many sturdy beggars and vagrant Rogues, the blemish of our Government and burthen to the Commonwealth.[7]

In essence, the distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor was a moral one: while the deserving poor were perceived as victims of circumstances and were thus held blameless, the undeserving poor were seen as fundamentally-flawed individuals, wholly responsible for their own misery. The redefinition of poverty as a moral issue was an accompanying phenomenon of Britain's transition from feudalism to capitalism. With the nation's overall wealth growing, the persistence of poverty was a puzzling occurrence to the contemporaries, and in the absence of a structural explanation of poverty, personal traits of individuals tended to be identified as its underlying cause, including, above all, improvidence, tendency to squander livelihood, idleness, addiction to substance and irresponsible breeding.[8] As a result, it was on a moral basis, not on the grounds of real need, that anti-poverty measures were designed and implemented within the Poor Law legislation.

While enjoying a renaissance under the Thatcher administration and surviving in a mitigated form under the Blair years, the morally-charged distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor was only revived in its full scope by Cameronite conservatism, with the paupers of the past reframed as the underclass of the present; a "broken" and parasitic segment of society whose feckless lifestyle of welfare dependence posed a major threat to the country's economic well-being.[9]

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7   Seabrook, *Pauperland*, 53.
8   Seabrook, *Pauperland*, 58.
9   Lisa McKenzie, *Getting By: Estates, Class and Culture in Austerity Britain* (London: Policy Press, 2015), 11.

In contrast to the undeserving underclass, the Cameronite discourse defined a group considered as the deserving poor: the "working families who work hard and want to do the right thing,"[10] i.e., the productive, albeit low-income, individuals adhering to traditional moral values. In his speeches, Cameron has often exploited the differences between both groups, presenting the deserving poor as strivers affected by the unfairness of rampant welfarism:

> We have, in some ways, created a welfare gap in this country between those living long-term in the welfare system and those outside it. Those within it grow up with a series of expectations: you can have a home of your own, the state will support you whatever decisions you make, you will always be able to take out no matter what you put in. This has sent out some incredibly damaging signals. That it pays not to work. That you are owed something for nothing. It gave us millions of working-age people sitting at home on benefits even before the recession hit. It created a culture of entitlement. And it has led to huge resentment amongst those who pay into the system, because they feel that what they're having to work hard for, others are getting without having to put in the effort.[11]

Pitting the deserving poor (those working hard while seeking independence of the welfare state) against the undeserving (those feeling entitled to idle life on state handouts) has enabled Cameron to frame the case for the planned welfare cuts, targeted primarily at the alleged underclass. An important role in the framing has been played by the choice of language, with the undeserving poor referred to on various occasions as "problem families", the "hard-to-reach", "those having no stake in society", "shirkers", "skivers" or even "the stubborn part of the out-of-work group."[12]

While the case for the existence of the undeserving poor has proved politically expedient, a mounting body of social research suggests that it is based on considerable simplification, ignoring phenomena such as the poverty trap or the increasing precarization of labour. Equally, the idea of families and communities "broken" by dysfunctional behaviour has been challenged by a number of researchers, including, among others, Owen Jones, who has analysed the adverse impact of deindustrialization on working-class communities,[13] Lisa McKenzie, who, through researching life on a deprived council estate (St. Ann's in Nottingham), demonstrated a surprising level of social cohesion and community spirit in socially-excluded locations,[14] or Daniel Dorling, who has provided detailed insight into the effects of inequality in Britain.[15]

3.2   Hard Work Is the Pathway out of Poverty

The identification of individuals as the undeserving poor was primarily derived from

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10   "David Cameron's Welfare Speech in Full," *Telegraph*, June 25, 2012. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/9354163/David-Camerons-welfare-speech-in-full.html.

11   "David Cameron's Welfare Speech."

12   Aditya Chakrabortty, "Cameron's Workers v Shirkers Scam Has at Last Exposed the Tory Law of Benefit Cuts," *Guardian*, March 31, 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/31/cameron-workers-shirkers-tory-law-benefit-cuts-deserving-poor.

13   See Owen Jones, *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class* (London: Verso, 2012).

14   See McKenzie, *Getting By*.

15   See Daniel Dorling, *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Persists* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2011).

their economic inactivity, i.e., non-participation in productive work. With the advent of the Modern Age, emphasis on the virtues of paid work (and the vilification of its absence) grew in intensity. This position was significantly influenced by the Puritan ethic perceiving work as an end to itself, even as a form of prayer, with non-work consequently equated with sinfulness.[16] Setting the poor to work became a social priority engendering a variety of schemes, from a few relatively benign projects to a number of fundamentally punitive ones, such as the notorious Victorian workhouse (see 3.3). Few exceptions were to be made in the crusade to engage the lower classes in productive labour; according to the moral philosopher Jeremy Bentham, nearly anyone was capable of performing some degree of work and should, therefore, be compelled to do so: "Not one in a hundred is incapable of all employment. Not the motion of a finger – not a step – not a wink – not a whisper – but ought to be turned to account in the way of profit in a system of such magnitude ... Employment may be afforded to every fragment of ability, however minute."[17] The heightened emphasis on universal engagement in work, however, may have had an additional motive. As argued by the social historian Michael Katz, the redefinition of poverty as a moral condition to which work represented a remedy served a practical purpose: it effectively helped ensure a continuous supply of cheap workforce in an increasingly competitive market.[18] One example out of many was the widespread use of parish apprentices – poor youths, usually orphaned, assigned to perform unpaid work in various manufacturing establishments. During the Industrial Revolution, many factories depended on the toil of parish apprentices, labouring for mere bed and board. In the public debate, however, such exploitation was framed as a key instrument to the youths' moral regeneration.

The emphasis on hard work as a pathway from poverty to prosperity also forms a central component of Cameron's welfare reform, with the planned public spending cuts presented as a long-overdue scheme "helping" to transfer welfare claimants from economic inactivity, principally responsible for their deprivation, to a re-engagement with the labour market, a transition that will lead them to personal independence and a much improved economic status. Cameron's core message is that work will always pay:

> This goes to the heart to the country we are trying to build: One based on the principle of something for nothing. Where those who put in, get out ... where hard work is rewarded – where we make work pay. [...] I want lives to go in the right direction. I believe passionately in reducing poverty. And the best route out of poverty is this: work.[19]

The affinity of this approach to the Puritan-informed attitudes of the eighteenth and

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16 Seabrook, *Pauperland*, 63.
17 Jeremy Bentham, *The Works of Jeremy Bentham, Now First Collected* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1838), 382.
18 Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: America's Enduring Confrontation with Poverty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6.
19 Emilio Casalicchio, "David Cameron Speech: 'Making Work Pay,'" Politics Home, April 22, 2015, https://www.politicshome.com/economy-and-work/articles/news/david-cameron-speech-making-work-pay.

nineteenth centuries is evident. Understood as basically immoral, welfare reliance is believed to be in need of being "cured" by the well-intentioned withdrawal of benefits, an act that will enable individuals to reform themselves through the virtues of employment. By getting off the benefits and joining the paid workforce, the transformation from the parasitic scrounger into the productive striver is accomplished; the job holder will finally have obtained a stake in society.

In a nod to Bentham and his conviction that no element of human labour, however minute, should be wasted in the task of wealth creation, a key ambition of Cameron's welfare reform has been a substantial reduction of disability benefit claimants by means of eligibility reassessment. The forced return to work of thousands of disabled individuals has been promoted as a measure helping them achieve personal independence. The government's positive framing of the reassessments, contracted out to private entities, has sharply contrasted with the angered response from members of the public as well as a number of medical experts and politicians, some of whom referred to the policy as "crude", "inhuman" and causing "considerable distress", with veteran Labour MP Dennis Skinner calling the private assessment company a "cruel, heartless monster."[20]

Another notable similarity between the Poor Laws and the current welfare reform has involved the use of unpaid labour. In a declared effort to cultivate "disciplines and skills associated with sustained employment,"[21] the government designed a 5-billion pound flagship programme of unpaid work placement schemes, popularly referred to as "workfare," involving compulsory community work and unpaid work for private entities, predominantly supermarket chains and high-street retailers. In response to the public outcry accusing the programme of labour exploitation and undercutting wages in the commercial sector, several major participating companies (including Tesco) have withdrawn from the scheme. Overall, the policy has been judged a failure, as only 2.3 percent of the placements have led to permanent employment.[22]

In the period pre-dating the modern welfare state, hard work per se did not constitute an automatic way out of poverty due to low wages, seasonality of work and a volatile market. Today, a similar trend can be observed as increasing numbers of Britons work in the low-wage service sector with precarious forms of employment. The high numbers of food bank users who are actually in paid employment reveals a cost-of-living crisis with clearly structural causes. The flexible, seasonal character of available private-sector jobs makes it difficult for benefit claimants to transfer from welfare dependence into paid work, giving rise to the low pay – no pay cycle of

20 Ian Steadman, "Dennis Skinner Demands Cameron Abolish 'Heartless Monster' Atos," *New Statesman*, October 16, 2013, http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/10/dennis-skinner-demands-cameron-abolish-heartless-monster-atos.

21 James Ball, "Government's Work Experience: What Are the Schemes, and Do They Work?" *Guardian*, May 21, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/global/reality-check-with-polly-curtis/2012/feb/22/unemployment-work-programme-welfare.

22 Christine Murray, "Flagship Work Programme a 'Miserable Failure,'" Reuters, November 28, 2015, http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-work-idUKLNE8AQ00M20121128.

shifting to and from life on benefits.[23] With the phenomenon of working poverty on the rise in Britain, the proclamation of work as an undisputed way to prosperity begs reconsideration.

3.3   PUNISHMENT IS JUSTIFIED WHEN DEALING WITH THE POOR

The emergence of the concept of the undeserving poor in the social discourse of early modern England entailed a hardened attitude to those believed to fall within the category. The lack of sympathy for the able-bodied poor resulted in the adoption of punitive, sometimes draconic, measures aimed at deterring individuals from work avoidance, as seen in the following excerpt from the Poor Law of 1547:

> In light of complaints against idleness and vagabondrie it is therefore enacted that if any man and woman able to work should refuse to labour, and live idly for three days, that he or she, should be branded with a red-hot iron on the breast with the letter V, and should be adjudged the slaves for three years of any person who should inform against the said idler.[24]

A major instrument of eliminating idleness was the establishment of various institutions (so-called houses of industry and houses of correction) where paupers were made to perform the most menial type of work. Throughout the eighteenth century, the use of these institutions, now referred to as workhouses, was becoming increasingly widespread. After 1834, following the passing of the Poor Law Amendment abandoning outdoor relief, the workhouses became the principal instrument of welfare administration. A major influence on the workhouse-based system was Jeremy Bentham's idea that welfare dependence should be as unpleasant an experience as possible in order to discourage potential claimants. Therefore, workhouses were designed as harsh and unwelcoming places, intended to instil shame and guilt in the inmates.[25]

As demonstrated by sociologist Loïc Wacquant, the transfer from the Keynesian redistributive state to the neoliberal-paternalist regime of poverty governance has reinstated punishment as an integral part of welfare policies.[26] Despite Cameron's discourse of motivating and empowering the poor, punitive elements can be clearly identified in some of his welfare reform measures. Possibly the most controversial of these has been a policy officially called "under-occupancy penalty" but popularly labelled as the "bedroom tax."[27] Introduced as an incentive to make council tenants downsize by moving to smaller homes or face penalization, the measures have aroused widespread criticism as an instrument of punishing the society's most vulnerable,

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23 Spencer Thompson, "The Low Pay No-Pay Cycle," Joseph Rowntree Foundation, https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/low-pay-no-pay-cycle.

24 Seabrook, *Pauperland*, 45.

25 Norman Longmate, *The Workhouse* (London: Pimlico, 2003), 122.

26 Loïc Wacquant, *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), xvii.

27 Eileen Alexander, "When I Asked People for Bedroom Tax Stories, the Response Was Shocking," *Guardian*, December 22, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/dec/22/bedroom-tax-my-spare-room.

especially the disabled, on whom the policy had a disproportionate impact. With few smaller-size council or rented homes available to move to, the majority of the affected tenants were forced to stay in their original homes and accept the financial ramifications. The feeling that they were being penalized for being poor was overwhelming, leading to increased levels of anxiety and depression.[28]

Given the high priority placed by Cameron's government on moving people from benefits to paid work, benefit withdrawal has been employed as a tool for ensuring compliance. The policy with the most punitive effect has involved the so-called benefit sanctions, imposed on claimants who have failed to meet the stringent requirements of active jobseeking. Transgressions such as not arriving on time for a job centre interview can currently result in the withholding of benefit payments for up to three years, potentially leaving the claimant destitute.

While defended by the government as a measure balancing rights with responsibilities and encouraging desirable pro-work behaviour, benefit sanctions have come under attack for their severity, especially in the contentious cases when the sanctioned claimants were unable to arrive for a defensible reason, such as having been in hospital, not having enough money to travel to the interview or to commute for work or being given confusing information by the job centre itself.[29] The high occurrence of homeless people among those sanctioned indicates a trend towards punishing those who are already society's victims,[30] a practice carrying distinct Poor Law undertones.

4. CONCLUSION

The comparison between earlier Poor Law-based attitudes to poverty and the approach of Cameron's government to welfare provision has revealed a number of similarities, namely the emphasis on individual (rather than structural) causes of poverty, the assumption of the existence of the undeserving poor, the belief in the redemptive character of work and the acceptance of punitive measures as necessary to induce desirable behaviour. Given the problematic outcome of some of the corresponding measures (the bedroom tax, workfare schemes) and given the rising levels of poverty in the wake of Cameron's reforms, the question arises whether the abandonment of the structural concept of poverty and the embrace of its more antiquated understanding rooted in the Poor Law mentality has been a choice suited to meet the challenges of twenty-first-century British society and its struggles with inequality, low pay and precariousness. The social distress caused by the implementation of Cameron's policies since 2010 is a strong indication of the counter-productivity of such an approach.

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28 Alexander, "When I Asked People."
29 Patrick Butler, "Benefit Sanctions: The 10 Trivial Breaches and Administrative Errors," *Guardian*, March 24, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/mar/24/benefit-sanctions-trivial-breaches-and-administrative-errors.
30 Christina Beatty, et al., *Benefit Sanctions and Homelessness: A Scoping Report* (Sheffield: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, 2015), 14, http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/Sanctions%20Report%202015_FINAL.pdf.

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Entrapment as Status Quo in
A. L. Kennedy's Fiction

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ABSTRACT: The Scottish view of female identity has long seemed to trap potential writers into passivity. As both a woman and a writer, Alison Louise (A. L.) Kennedy seems to be suspended between extremes. She is aware of being a woman writer, and therefore a marginalized minority within an already marginalized literary tradition (the Scottish one), and yet she seems to accept the challenge of potential entrapment by insignificance, only to prove she can overcome it. It is not merely coincidence that her fiction often features individuals suffering from entrapment of various kinds.

KEYWORDS: entrapment; short story; Scottish identity; Caledonian antisyzygy; self-fashioning of identity; underdog; narrative strategies; defamiliarization; contemporary British women writers; A. L. Kennedy

Some time ago and not without good cause, Gavin Wallace remarked on the generally depressing state of Scottish fiction.[1] However, observant readers understand the specific position of Scottish literature — despair and hope are twins, always yoked together, and they rarely stand in the way of creative genius.[2] After all, it may not be perceived as unnatural for a Scottish writer to evolve a dual, often paradoxical identity. As early as a century ago, the term "Caledonian antisyzygy" had already been coined and later popularized by Hugh MacDiarmid,[3] who defined it as the conjunction of opposites, a reflection of contrasts that may be applied to Scottish life and culture in general, because only Scots have such a large capacity for containing, in themselves and their art, elements that contradict each other; in other words, Scottish writers have been of a protean kind, children of the entrapment of their national legacy. Such entrapment in contradiction often develops in the literature of postcolonial nations,[4] balanced between the old and the new, and Scotland can be categorized as a nation colonized both politically and in terms of literature since 1707 and until recently by

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1   Gavin Wallace, "Voices in Empty Houses: The Novel of Damaged Identity," in *The Scottish Novel since the Seventies: New Visions, Old Dreams*, ed. Gavin Wallace and Randall Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), 217–31.
2   See the literary production of Alasdair Gray, one of the Scottish "bards."
3   The term had also been circulated before the Scottish Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s. See Marshall Walker, *Scottish Literature since 1707* (London: Longman, 1996), 15–16.
4   See, e.g., Steve Padley, "Postcolonial Criticism," in *Key Concepts in Contemporary Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 175–77.

the English.[5]

Without doubt, A. L. Kennedy (b. 1965) ranks among those personalities who have widened the Scottish cultural and literary horizon and helped put Scotland back on the literary map. A whole group of contemporary women writers, with Kennedy at the forefront, seem both to despair of the ambivalence of their legacy of entrapment within a system that has failed to nurture their potential and yet still seek to embrace it all the same. On one hand, they perceive themselves as a marginalized minority within an already marginalized literary tradition; on the other hand, they thrive on the very existence of restrictions and walls – any entrapment is to be perceived as a challenge, and walls can be broken down. Moreover, the very protean quality of Scottishness empowers writers by not forcing them to define their identity irreversibly. The ambivalence of being balanced between Scottish and British cultures, writing from the margins while working within a broader British and European context, opened up fertile ground rife with artistic possibilities. Kennedy is a writer of hybridity and ambivalence who reaches out to her readers as much as she tries to remain within the solipsistic universe of her fiction.

A. L. Kennedy ranks among those who made their mark in Scottish as well as British literature despite the walls, having utilized them for her own creative purposes. Here follows an example of her acerbic wit dealing with an important part of the carefully-preserved Scottish "cultural" heritage, the ceilidh:

> The purposes of the ceilidh, a uniquely unsullied flowering of Scottish culture, are many. Among these are the taking of spirituous liquors, the singing of songs, the playing of music, dancing, joking, wynching, fighting, greeting, eating stovies and looking at the moon while contemplating the certainty of death. … As the Israelites had their psalms, so we have the ceilidh. As the Africans transported to Haiti kept their voodoo, so we have the ceilidh. As every languageless, stateless, selfless nation has one last, twisted image of its worst and best, we have the ceilidh. Here we pretend we are Highland, pretend we have mysteries in our work, pretend we have work. We forget our record of atrocities wherever we have been made masters and become comfortable servants again. Our present and our past creep in to change each other and we feel angry and sad and Scottish. Perhaps we feel free.[6]

Obviously, Kennedy is quite slow about re-imagining Scotland in positive terms; on the contrary, she gives it an even more caustic spin. It is a sly comment on the Scottish condition of entrapment, carefully worded, hidden behind a smoke screen of humour. Indirection could be Kennedy's middle name. Sarah M. Dunnigan comments on Kennedy's elusive ways, claiming Kennedy to be "unwilling to be pinned down to any literary philosophy or credo of gender or nationalism."[7] A. L. Kennedy has been said to hold most of those exploiting her work in a quest for grant proposals,

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5   In 1707, the Union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland eradicated Scotland from the political map, and despite ferocious efforts on the part of the Scottish people (e.g., the Jacobite uprisings), Scotland only saw the restoration of its own Parliament as late as 1999.

6   A. L. Kennedy, *Looking for the Possible Dance* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1993), 145–46.

7   Sarah M. Dunnigan, "A. L. Kennedy's Longer Fiction: Articulate Grace," in *Contemporary Scottish Women Writers*, ed. Aileen Christianson and Alison Lumsden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 145.

curricula, teaching posts, etc., in abysmal disregard.[8] At the same time, she seemingly understands full well the ways of the literary world and knows that her work (and she herself) will always be open to scrutiny:

> I have a problem. I am a woman. I am heterosexual, I am more Scottish than anything else and I write … So here is my problem. I have been asked for a personal response on my writing, Scottishness in literature and Scottishness in my work, but my method of making it does not stem from literary or national forms and traditions.[9]

Readers of her fiction become aware that Kennedy's work does stem from national tradition, despite her claims to the contrary. Kennedy has managed to turn entrapment into a favourite topic of her fiction too. This paper makes use of Kennedy's 1990 short story collection, *The Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains*, as an excellent example of her *modus operandi*, as it brings to the fore topics Kennedy has been gravitating toward throughout her writing career — the tenets of communication, the trap of intimacy in relationships, the complexities and contradictions of modern life and contemporary relationships, and explorations of identity in an unequal, hostile, and unforgiving world.

Texts are puzzles that require readers to piece them together.[10] Unreliable narrators often sprinkle the text with possible clues, but these often turn out to be cleverly-engineered manipulations, the answer to be found in the fleeting, the fragmented, in the very silence, the in-between-ness, in the words not uttered, only hinted at, or circled around, or in the silence within a storm of words. Kennedy often lulls the reader into a false sense of security, only to confront them with a shocking epiphany. "The Role of Notable Silences in Scottish History,"[11] a short story that promises much (since Kennedy claims, "Because I love Scotland I will always seek to write about it as enough

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8   To be specific, Christie L. Marsh, Eluned-Summers Bremner, Michael Gardiner, Duncan Petrie, Glenda Norquay, Aileen Christianson, and Matt Maguire have all noted Kennedy's chronic elusiveness.

9   A. L. Kennedy, "Not Changing the World," in *Peripheral Visions: Images of Nationhood in Contemporary British Fiction*, ed. Ian A. Bell (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995), 100.

10 Reader-response critical theory, as formulated by Wolfgang Iser in *The Implied Reader* (1972) and *The Act of Reading* (1976), works with the concepts of the implied reader and narrative gaps. The implied reader fulfils two interrelated functions: that of "a textual structure" and that of "a structured act." The implied reader as a textual structure covers "the reader's point-of-view as found within the text." The reader's point of view is that of his or her own experience, which is the lens through which the reader approaches the text. Individual experience, beliefs, and bias affect how the text is perceived by a particular reader. In the act of reading, the reader forms a set of constantly-evolving expectations, most of which will be frustrated as the text unfolds. The reader as a structured act refers to the expectations that are formulated, thwarted, and reformulated in the process of the negotiation of the text by the reader. The reader's expectations seek to fill in the narrative gaps on the basis of the clues provided by the text. The reader actively interacts with the text and becomes a creator of the text's meanings rather than a passive recipient of pre-existing meanings. Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 35.

11 A. L. Kennedy, "The Role of Notable Silences in Scottish History," in *Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains* (London: Polygon, 1990), 62–72. For more on the meaning of silence and in-between-ness, 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 2012: 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.

of an outsider to see it clearly … I hope to communicate a truth beyond poisonous nationalism or bigotry."),[12] turns out to contain very little about Scotland itself. What is more, by the author's own admission, the entire tale she has been spinning so far in "The Role of Notable Silences in Scottish History" is a lie: "None of this is true, of course, but it is far more interesting than a brown and green glen with rocky grey bits and a couple of sheep … And there is no point in being Scottish if you can't make up your past as you go on. Everyone else does."[13] And instead of her view of silences in the nation's history, the reader is suddenly rebuffed with the notion of another, private silence — death: the one that roars about us, ominous, ever-present, in the knowledge that each of us must join it one day, to become a silenced nonentity. As much as the author loves silence, there is nothing that haunts her as much as the idea of silence.

Venturing into the realm of the Gothic and fantastic, in "Cap O'Rushes" Kennedy presents the reader with a woman who has suffered "imprisonment" in an oppressive family of "goblins," as she terms and perceives them:

> Colin was a goblin because it was obvious he was a goblin, you couldn't think otherwise … If there was something telling that Colin was the Goblin King, then it was probably his shirts. She might as well settle for that. His shirts, even very new shirts, not yet washed, would change when he put them on … Clothing seemed to decompose around him and within hours it would seem he had brought them from the grave. There was something about him rotten. Rotting.[14]

Like the girl in the fairy tale Kennedy references, the woman finally leaves, gets a job, and starts anew, having "shed the cultural baggage that urged her initially to marry the Goblin King,"[15] in other words, a Scottish, probably working-class man of traditional ways.

"The Moving House" also presents a young person trapped in new and hostile circumstances (in a new house with a new stepfather), and as a result of Kennedy's technique of defamiliarization, the story gives an impression of the victim being even more helpless, bullied into silence about her situation:

> Please, Grace. Grace. Fuckun say it. You won tell. You don even think about it. Stupid cunt. Nobody's gonny believe you. Who are you? You're fuckun nuthun. See if they do believe you; they'll say it was your own fault. You. Pretty, Gracie, fuckun you. Just you fuckun sleep on that. You do not tell. Think I couldn make it worse? You do not fuckun tell.[16]

However, there seems no release for Grace, as for many abused, trapped, and silenced characters in Kennedy's fiction. Even though entrapment often features in Kennedy's prose, she hardly ever embeds a homogeneous, clearly distinguishable pattern into

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12 Kennedy, "Not Changing the World," 102.
13 Kennedy, "The Role of Notable Silences in Scottish History," 63–64.
14 A. L. Kennedy, "Cap O'Rushes," in *Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains* (London: Polygon, 1990), 11. Having read the story, one may point out that "goblins" display stereotypical working-class masculine behaviour, ignorant of the needs and cares of the female, who feels trapped by her own family.
15 Christie Leigh March, *Rewriting Scotland: Welsh, McLean, Warner, Banks, Galloway, and Kennedy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 136.
16 A. L. Kennedy, "The Moving House," in *Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains* (London: Polygon, 1990), 41.

her fiction that would boil down to predictability. After many years, Kennedy is still capable of surprising her reader. Each new book testifies to Kennedy's achievement: writing her way out of the entrapment of double marginalization, out of attempts at categorization and ideological enslavement of any kind, be it feminist or Scottish.

There is only one predictable ingredient to the concoction of her fiction: the appearance of "underdogs," small people, losers, psychiatric cases, and victims of hurtful or unrequited love and even killers. Language fits the naivete of the characters, and therefore some experience may be beyond words, silenced, since the character lacks knowledge of what is going on. The task of searching for an explanation is delegated to the reader.

In "Translations," the young Indian boy can hardly explain away his sudden, impulsive drives to violence, since no psychology lesson can provide him with insight into certain aspects of living in a magician's hut:

> When he was old … he still dreamed of the One Handed Man and the nights in his hut. He would wake and remember the hand and the ointment, pushing between his legs, sliding and hot, the other arm around his stomach, gripping, and the ugly pressure of the stump against his thigh. He remembered he was no longer in possession of himself, when he was an empty thing. Most of all he would remember how much he believed it was magic that was pumping into him.[17]

Kennedy is determined that these "insignificant" people suffering entrapment in silence are to be given voices in her stories. Kennedy pays little attention to the public persona of a writer; she willingly reduced her name to initials,[18] rendering her gender invisible and enjoying freedom from being slotted into the category of women writers and the duly-following expectations. In a way, Kennedy has found freedom by continually reducing herself to a series of disembodied voices, each of them having a story to tell. The less attention she pays to herself as the author, the more care she invests in her characters.

Kennedy's early prose already contains most of the elements that characterize her fiction. Since her literary debut, Kennedy's stories have featured the unimportant, common, helpless, and voiceless in precarious situations: victims, loners, and failures — those who suffer entrapment in silence the most. On her pages, at last, they are given a voice and are liberated from the entrapment of silence — by the conscious and caring reader.

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17 A. L. Kennedy, "Translations," in *Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains* (London: Polygon, 1990), 13.

18 "The authors I first loved all had initials — JRR Tolkien, CS Lewis, E Nesbit, ee cummings — and I actively didn't want to know who they were or have them get in the way of my enjoying their story and their voice." Quoted in Geraldine Bedell, "You Can Call Me AL," *Guardian*, March 25, 2007. https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/mar/25/fiction.alkennedy.

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"Might Is Right"?: Colonisation as a Historical Fact and Literary Metaphor in Irvine Welsh's *Marabou Stork Nightmares*

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the theme of colonisation interlocked with a specifically-male desire for power in Irvine Welsh's *Marabou Stork Nightmares* (1995). The novel elaborates in fictional and historical terms on the then Prime Minister John Major's policy on violent crimes in general and juvenile delinquency in particular, encapsulated in his statement used as the book's motto: "We should condemn more and understand less." The novel's narrator/protagonist, Roy Strang, is reduced to an apparent vegetative state after a failed suicide attempt committed as a result of guilt over his active involvement in a brutal gang rape of a young woman. Imprisoned in his unfeeling body, his mind seeks to assume control by conjuring up heroic fantasies of his hunting down and killing a specimen of marabou stork, a symbolic embodiment of evil. Intruding in his fantasy are memories of his time spent as a teenager in South Africa, where he first experienced the sensation of power as a member of the white colonisers, who were by default considered superior to the local black population. In the broader picture of national histories, Roy witnesses the exploited natives revolting and taking revenge on their oppressors, including the killing of Roy's uncle. On the small scale of individual lives, Roy sees the woman whom he raped taking an equally-violent revenge on her tormentors, including Roy himself. While the novel does not profess to offer an alternative solution, it illustrates that revolution does not equal revenge, which merely replaces one form of violence with another.

Keywords: Scottish literature; Irvine Welsh; *Marabou Stork Nightmares*; colonisation; violence

Might is right. You *take* the right.
– Irvine Welsh[1]

The position of Scotland within the British Empire has been a precarious one ever since the Act of Union in 1707, which united the formerly-sovereign kingdoms of England and Scotland into a single political entity. On one hand, the Scots opposed the union as an outcome of what Michael Gardiner calls "a series of bribes and blunders."[2] Two major Jacobite Risings (one in 1715 and another in 1745, both crushed), two devolution referendums (an unsuccessful one in 1979 and another that passed in 1997), an independence referendum in 2014 and recent calls for a new referendum make it clear that Scottish independence remains a subject of heated debate. On the other hand, after the Act of Union, Scotland grasped the opportunity provided by British colonial expansion, taking an active part in British imperialism and profiting

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1   Irvine Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares* (London: Cape, 1995), 260. Italics in the original.
2   Michael Gardiner, *The Cultural Roots of British Devolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 2.

significantly from transatlantic trade. Accordingly, Graeme Macdonald argues that the "acknowledgement of Scottish colonial history is a crucial stage in the necessary realisation and interrogation of the duplicitous, conflicting status of Scotland as both (internal and external) colonising *and* colonised nation."[3]

Irvine Welsh's 1995 novel *Marabou Stork Nightmares* is a multilayered nightmarish fantasy that tackles Scotland's ambivalent heritage of colonialism, broadening the interpretation of colonialism to cover any form of imposition of alien willpower on the subject. At the most obvious level, the dominated subjects in the novel are the native inhabitants of South Africa, exploited in Welsh's story by specifically-Scottish representatives of British imperial power. Furthermore, the subjects of oppression are social groups discriminated against in terms of socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity and sexual preferences: the novel directly depicts as targets of abuse members of the underclass, women, foreigners and homosexuals. In reference to *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, Michael Gardiner observes "that underprivileged Scottish communities have themselves in many ways been neo-colonial" in the sense of using physical power to prey on the weak and vulnerable members of the community.[4]

The novel's protagonist, Roy Strang, combines in himself both the qualities of the oppressor and the oppressed, the coloniser and the colonised. Roy spends the novel withdrawn into the self-declared dubious comforts of his vegetative state, in which he cannot respond to stimuli but can conjure up heroic scenarios of himself eliminating an evil specimen of marabou stork that decimates the flamingo population in Africa. While Roy seeks solace in his flights of imagination and deliberately shrinks from the reality intruding on him from his hospital surroundings, he eventually must confront his oppressive guilt over the harm he had done, especially the horror inflicted on Kirsten, the girl in whose gang rape he participated. Welsh comments on the fragmentary, dissociated nature of his novel: "The text moves all over the place, in and out of different realities, like Roy does in order to suspend the truth. The text is a dislocator, so he can escape the real world of the rape and his confusion. Like the storks are doppelgangers for his fears."[5] Roy is aware of the encroaching external world but tries to immerse himself in the internal world of his own making: "DON'T WANT TO GET CLOSER TO YOUR UGLY WORLD GOT TO GO DEEPER, DEEPER DOWN, GOT TO HUNT THE STORK, TO GET CONTROL," he thinks.[6]

Striving for control acts as a major motif in the novel, since Roy's position relentlessly oscillates between one of power and one of powerlessness. Roy ended up in his paralysed condition as a result of a botched suicide attempt following his overwhelming guilt over his part in Kirsten's brutal violation. Lying helpless on a hospital bed, Roy becomes subjected to various forms of imposition, reaching from mere discomfort to

3   Graeme Macdonald, "Postcolonialism and Scottish Studies," *New Formations* 59 (2006): 118. Italics in the original.

4   Michael Gardiner, ed., introduction to *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives*, ed. Michael Gardiner, Graeme Macdonald and Niall O'Gallagher (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 8.

5   Irvine Welsh, interview by Jenifer Berman, *Bomb Magazine* 56 (1996): 56–61.

6   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 11. Emphasis in the original.

outright violation: he has to endure intrusive medical procedures and even a rape by one of the nurses, harkening back to the physical and mental violation that Kirsten suffered. Sexuality in *Marabou Stork Nightmares* is always violent and forced, and discomforting rape scenes in various configurations reoccur throughout the text. As a young teenager, Roy had been sexually abused by his uncle for over a year, and he learned to make the best use of his situation, however appalling, by extracting favours from his rapist through blackmail. Aside from sexually-motivated violence, Roy had been repeatedly assaulted and bullied in the materially and spiritually-impoverished Muirhouse scheme at the edge of Edinburgh, where his family lived before moving for a short spell to South Africa.

In South Africa, the Strangs stayed with Roy's uncle Gordon, who, besides being a paedophile, was "an unreconstructed pro-apartheid white supremacist" who acted on the perverted belief that South Africa was "a white man's country."[7] It was in this period that Roy experienced his coming of age and, as a white person deemed by default superior to native Africans, he gained for the first time a sense of empowerment and entitlement. Roy came to prefer South Africa to Scotland because his relocation meant to him an instant rise in social status: "Edinburgh to me represented serfdom," Roy contemplates and concludes, "I realised that it was exactly the same situation as Johannesburg; the only difference was that the Kaffirs were white and called schemies or draftpaks."[8] Roy and his family are forced to return to Scotland after the conflicts between the natives and their colonisers escalate in a series of violent acts, one of which is a bomb attack that kills Gordon. Roy's uncle left an enduring imprint on Roy in that he served as a role model of a hard man who takes what he believes to be his right, be it a country or a woman. "We made this beautiful country, now they say they want it back," Gordon complains of the South African struggle for liberation, and when Roy starts to emulate his racist attitudes, Gordon exclaims, delighted, "You're a true Scotsman, Roy! A real Afrikaaner!"[9]

After Roy's begrudging return to Scotland, he embarks on a quest of revenge on those who harmed him but finds power so intoxicating that he soon exercises it for the sheer pleasure of domination. "I always felt alive, so in control," he describes after threatening a girl named Caroline Carson with a knife and violating her, "That was it wi the power, … you just had to take it."[10] Despite numerous cases of individual violence, the book abounds above all in instances of collective violence, including football hooliganism. As Marina Mackay points out, "violence is invariably a communal pursuit, as the gang rape of Kirsty makes clear."[11] This misplaced sense of communality manifested in violent undertakings corresponds to the practice of colonialism as depicted in Welsh's novel, where the flag-waving Scots residing in South Africa unite as a nation against the indigenous population. Welsh intricately interweaves notions

7   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 62, 24.
8   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 80.
9   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 64–65.
10 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 109, 106.
11 Marina Mackay, "*Marabou Stork Nightmares*: Irvine Welsh's Anthropological Vision," *National Identities* 5, no. 3 (2003): 271, doi:10.1080/1460894031000163157.

of colonialism, nationalism and masculinity, and finds all of them inextricably linked by shared violence.

The potentially-violent dimension of patriotic sentiment and the conflation of aggression with masculinity come to the surface in the character of Roy's father, who is portrayed simultaneously as hypermasculine and strangely effeminate. "The only things which seemed to give Dad enjoyment were drinking alcohol and listening to records of Winston Churchill's wartime speeches," Roy recalls. "Pools of tears would well up behind his thick lenses as he was moved by his idol's stirring rhetoric."[12] Roy associates his father with habitual heavy drinking and a global military conflict, yet he also exposes his father's vulnerability by drawing attention to his tears and his glasses, the former indicating a loss of emotional control, the latter pointing to a physical deficiency. The same combination of motifs recurs later in the novel on the occasion of Roy having been acquitted of Kirsten's rape at a court trial that examined the deeds of the victim more rigorously than those of the offenders. Roy's father finds the court's decision reassuring: "British justice! He put on Churchill's victory speeches full blast and after a short while, started to sob … Shaking with emotion, he shouted, raising his glass, – THIS IS STILL THE GREATEST FUCKIN COUNTRY IN THE WORLD!"[13] Mr. Strang's taste for inflated rhetoric and verbal warfare renders him a menacing but ultimately impotent figure: he devotes his days to keeping detailed records of his neighbours' offences, real or imaginary, and churning out letters of complaint, rarely achieving anything and remaining essentially powerless.

Roy's father poses as the "hard man," a classic stereotype in the strongly-masculine tradition of Scottish literature, defined by Christopher Whyte as a "dysfunctional urban male" who "comes from a working class or at most a lower middle-class background, is often represented as unemployed, and is the victim of injustice and discrimination on a class basis."[14] Whyte also comments on the effeminate aspect of this character type, noticing that the hard man's "status as victim and loser makes him the focus of a surprising but persistent pathos, a pathos that oddly 'feminises' a figure who wants to be so resolutely and absolutely masculine."[15] Mr. Strang's achievement as a hard man consists in making himself feared by his neighbours and despised by his family, whom he terrorises – besides Churchill and drinking, he takes pleasure in commanding his unwilling sons to fight against each other in brutal boxing matches, cheering wildly at the sight of blood.[16] Unlike his brother Gordon, who became a moderate success in Johannesburg and to whom he turns for help, Mr. Strang fails to adequately support his family, as required of the hard man proper, which considerably compromises his masculinity. In one of his moments of insight, Roy admits that his father's and his own hard facade are just that: facades set up to conceal the vulnerabilities inside "because a fuckin schemie, a nobody, shouldnae have these feelings because there's fuckin

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12 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 29.
13 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 214. Emphasis in the original.
14 Christopher Whyte, "Masculinities in Contemporary Scottish Fiction," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 34, no. 3 (1998): 274, doi:10.1093/fmls/xxxiv.3.274.
15 Whyte, "Masculinities in Contemporary Scottish Fiction," 174.
16 See Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 29.

naewhair for them tae go, naewhair for them tae be expressed and if you open up every cunt will tear you apart."[17]

Aaron Kelly explains that "the novel maintains a tension throughout as to whether masculinity is a bestial and biological determinant or a social construction" and embodies "conflicting desires to interpret masculinity in relation to a set of socio-cultural and imperial interstices and to position it as a congenital recidivism that nullifies any attempt at analysis."[18] Both interpretations seem equally valid because Welsh combines in the character of Roy a pathological family history with unhealthy formative influences culminating in Roy's stay in the African colony under British rule. Similar to imperial powers in the period of decolonisation, Roy evades responsibility for his actions to start with, but ultimately he recognises that his past will catch up with him. In a confusion of voices, he tries and fails to silence those who force on him the sordid realities of his South African adventure:

> it was paradise
> – the sickening greed and avarice, the front-line of South African exploitation, the playground where the settlers enjoyed the fruits of the wealth they'd ripped off
> SHUT UP YOU FUCKING POOF, IT WISNAE LIKE THAT, IT WAS BRILLIANT[19]

Furthermore, Roy places the bulk of the guilt for the rape of Kirsten on his associate Lexo, whom he at one point identifies with the marabou stork that he is hunting, only to realise at last that the wanted beast is no one but himself.

Mackay contends that Welsh's novel creates a world where "human beings and animals are placed on the same moral level,"[20] which allows for the marabou stork to be represented not merely as an arbitrary, passive bearer of evil but as a deliberately vicious agent aware of and responsible for its actions. This applies to the stork as much as to the Strangs' family dog, Winston, who severely bit Roy when he was a child, permanently damaging his leg, for which Roy years later seeks retribution. Roy refuses the idea that the dog attacked him because it felt threatened and acted on its natural instincts of self-preservation, so he devises a graphic punishment for the creature, akin to lynching, ending in Winston's death. Although Roy briefly considers giving up his revenge when "a robin, that early symbol of Christianity," appears on the scene, he eventually decides that humanity does not apply in an inhumane world: "I thought for a second or two about the meaning of this, about turning the other cheek and Christian forgiveness and all that sort of shite. But nobody believed in that crap anymair. It was you against the world, every cunt knew that: the Government even said it."[21] Roy, as well as other characters in the novel, behaves in a bestial way, which leads Roy to identify a beast rather than a human as the source of evil, which he views as curiously dissociated from himself: "The Stork's the personification of all this badness. If I kill the

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17   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 254.
18   Aaron Kelly, *Irvine Welsh* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 103.
19   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 128. Emphasis and small type in the original.
20   Mackay, "*Marabou Stork Nightmares*," 270.
21   Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 165.

Stork I'll kill the badness in me."[22]

Roy reasons that marabou storks are detested owing to their predatory and scavenger nature, qualities deemed in theory inconsistent with human values, but Roy's experience suggests that human behaviour in practice commonly manifests these very attributes.[23] The novel is punctuated with symbolic incidents depicting various animals' feeding and mating habits, and links are drawn to corresponding situations involving human beings. In the excruciating scene of the rape of Kirsten, Roy compares her expression to that of a wildebeest he saw in a documentary as it was "being eaten from behind while its face seemed to register disbelief, fear, and self-hate at its own impotence."[24] The constellation of power in terms of the sexes is reverted in a surreal encounter in a bar where Roy and his companion come across two women with "predatory smiles," who transform into praying mantises, a species whose females devour their partner after mating, when Roy turns them down.[25] Perhaps the most powerful illustration of the consumptive power of violence, quite literally, appears as Uncle Gordon's body is being consumed by flames following the explosion that kills him, while Roy is thinking "that the smell of Gordon was so sweet I thought that if I hadn't known it was human flesh I would have wanted to taste it; would have enjoyed it."[26]

It is in the conclusion of the novel that Roy finally accepts the consequences of his actions and unflinchingly exposes all forms of violence as self-defeating. Haunted by pictures from posters of the Zero Tolerance campaign against violence on women and children intermingled with images of the suffering he had caused himself, Roy first desperately tries to avoid responsibility by attempting suicide. After two years in a vegetative state, he is tracked down by his victim, Kirsten, who takes her revenge by castrating and mutilating him. Roy embraces Kirsten's action, acknowledges his guilt and understands Kirsten's need to compensate for what he took from her. The novel ends on a note of reconciliation. As Roy is dying, he realises that Kirsten regained the beauty springing from a confident personality rather than an external appearance: "She's looking into my eyes, my lidless eyes and we see each other now. She's beautiful. Thank God. Thank God she's got it back. What we took. I'm trying to smile."[27] Roy reveals himself as the marabou stork, the incorporation of evil, and concludes the novel with his own demise, punctuated by a capital Z, as in Zero Tolerance.

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22 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 9.
23 See Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 55.
24 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 183.
25 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 123.
26 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 85.
27 Welsh, *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, 263.

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Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o's Language(s) of African Literature

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Abstract: One of the most fundamental problems newly emerged national literatures and writers in Africa have had to face in the post-colonial era has been to decide in which language to write in order to appeal to both the native readers in their recently independent countries and to large (international) publishing houses that would foster the sales of their books overseas. An unequivocal decision was difficult to make since, on the one hand, in majority, they wanted to be faithful to family vernacular traditions but, on the other, they wished to disseminate their message to a broader audience in the Western world. This paper, then, attempts to uncover the ideas contained in Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o's *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* ([1981] 2005) and, to a lesser extent, Chinua Achebe's "The African Writer and the English Language" (1975) in regard to these dilemmas.

Keywords: African literature; language; Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o; colonialism; postcolonialism; Chinua Achebe

In endeavouring to examine the ways in which African literature manifested its independence from colonial rule and postulated local languages as the means of artistic impression of the peoples of the continent, one has to downright admit that the postcolonial writer writes in the context of the dominated country and, as a rule, in the language of the former coloniser predominately because the concept of postcoloniality includes only the works that can be understood and included in the Western canon (genres). The English language, among other European languages then, became the bearer of imperialist values, globalisation, capitalism and consumerism – the successor to colonialism – and as such was a hindrance to the real independence and liberation of black Africa. In her *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (1995), Elleke Boehmer formulated her renowned question, "can those who write in European languages claim to speak to and for their own people?",[1] which quickly found substance in her overall assertion that literature is dynamically-engrossed in processes of colonisation, de-colonisation and post-independence national identity formation that involves texts written both in European and vernacular languages. Therefore, language – the material reality of literature – becomes the most important issue, alongside lost cultural heritage, fragmented memory and hybridity, in the lengthy process of transformation from colonialism and post-colonialism to genuine national identity, which will substitute,

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1   Elleke Boehmer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 199.

replace and/or supplement the pre-colonial tribal/communal awareness of being together.

However, the core problem with post-colonial literatures, African in particular, has always been that, as Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o stated explicitly,

> work, any work, even literary creative work, is not the result of an individual genius [like in the West] but the result of a collective effort. There are so many inputs in the actual formation of an image, an idea, a line of argument and even sometimes the formal arrangement. The very words we use are a product of a collective history.[2]

Yet, as he confessed elsewhere, "[m]ost African writers are products of universities: indeed a good number of them still combine academic posts and writing,"[3] thus suggesting, though indirectly, that they had lost touch with the authentic voice of their native communities, tribal traditions and cultural heritage to the advantage of the Western-style thinking, Western-style discourse and genres and fell prey to Western-style institutions, operating like huge capitalist corporations, i.e., universities. Nevertheless, Wa Thiong'o saw academics, as part of an African intellectual elite, in the forefront of the fight against the forces of European imperialism – "still the root cause of many problems in Africa."[4] His assessment of African realities in the later part of the twentieth century has been further explained in his Introduction to *Decolonising the Mind* as "affected by the great struggle between the two mutually opposed forces in Africa today: an imperialist tradition on one hand, and a resistance tradition on the other."[5] As can be easily anticipated, international and neo-colonial bourgeoisie, enforced by police, clergy and judiciary, has maintained the imperialist tradition while resistance has rested upon the shoulders of the working people aided by patriotic students and academics.

Most important, however, is what he believed imperialism unleashed daily against that collective defiance – it was a "cultural bomb," the effect of which was meant "to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their language, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves."[6] And, admittedly, it is postcolonial literature that is supposed to be that territory of defiance and resistance but also, hopefully, of reconciliation and imitation at the same time, thus, in some cases, creating hybrids like Creole or Pidgin, but in most cases trying to preserve the original, genuine, authentic spirit of the characters of black Africans, with their tales, beliefs and traditions, alongside the native environment presented formally in European genres and languages.

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2   Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Oxford: James Curry, 2005), x–xi.
3   Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, ix.
4   Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 1.
5   Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 2.
6   Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 3.

The Power of the (Former) Centre

Postcolonial authors writing in English or any other European imperial languages, like French or Portuguese, risk putting themselves into the position of subject again as they enter the Western cultural space on the terms and conditions established by the academia, media and publishing houses of the former coloniser. Language is the means of unfolding and understanding the world and oneself and, consequently, the use of English in a postcolonial context is a cultural explosive, or a "cultural bomb" as Wa Thiong'o has it, that prolongs the process of eradication of memories, cultures and history and is a way of settling the dominance of different forms of colonialism and/or neo-colonialism.

While postcolonial writers return to the nucleus of imperial relations by subjugating themselves to similar power relations as in the past, authors, apart from a radical move to switch back to their native language like Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o in his Gikuyu novel, *Devil on the Cross* (1980), tend to substitute the language of the coloniser with a local variant in a process called abrogation or appropriation. Abrogation is a refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard or normative or "correct" usage and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning inscribed in the words. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin define it,

> [a]brogation refers to the rejection by postcolonial writers of a normative concept of "correct" or "standard" English used by certain classes or groups, and of the corresponding concepts of inferior "dialects" or "marginal variants". [...] In arguing for the parity of all forms of English, abrogation offers a counter to the theory that use of the colonialist's language inescapably imprisons the colonized within the colonizer's conceptual paradigms.[7]

Thus, abrogation should be regarded as a strong political gesture that post-colonial writers like Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o performed to show a direction in which his people should go in order to revive, restore, rejuvenate the original spirit of the pre-colonial times and the communities of their forefathers. His return to the language of his childhood, the Gikuyu, marks an important – though not completely successful – step towards a solution of the problem signalled at the outset of this paper:

> The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relation to their entire universe. Hence language has always been at the heart of the two contending social forces in the Africa of the twentieth century.[8]

These two forces are, obviously, the European colonial and postcolonial powers that in 1884 divided the continent language-wise among themselves into English-speaking, French-speaking and Portuguese-speaking African countries. On the other hand, after the end of the World War II, there was that inner tendency, particularly among the leftist black academics like Frantz Fanon, Chinua Achebe or Gabriel Okara, to revive

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7 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2013), 3–4.

8 Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 4.

the African local languages like Swahili, Zulu, Gikuyu or Yoruba to make them as literary as English or French.

Gikuyu: The Language of Home

Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o's argument to make Gikuyu a literary language of his people in Kenya was, fundamentally and principally, that it was his first language, through which he not only communicated with his immediate and extended family and the community at large but in which he conceptualised his environment and the world. A narrative – story-telling – was the first genre he experienced as a young boy and he learnt then the power of imagination his home and community language possessed:

> We spoke Gikuyu as we worked in the fields. We spoke Gikuyu in and outside the home. [...] We therefore learnt to value words for their meaning and nuances. Language was not a mere string of words. It had a suggestive power well beyond the immediate and lexical meaning. Our appreciation of the suggestive magical power of language was reinforced by the games we played with words through riddles, proverbs, transposition of syllables, or through nonsensical but musically arranged words. So we learnt the music of our language on top of the content. The language [...] of our community and [...] of our work was one.[9]

Wa Thiong'o discovered the potential Gikuyu had not only to interact with or describe the environment but also to play a language game, qualities most critics today would ascribe to, in the first place, the English language.

The Language of School

Initially, for the first few years at school, he was instructed in his native Gikuyu, which for him was quite natural, and he considered school a harmonious complement to his home experiences, though different and more formal. But then, all changed:

> [O]ne of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment – three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks [...]. The attitude to English was the exact opposite: any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded; prizes, prestige, applause; the ticket to higher realms. English became the measure of intelligence and ability in the arts, the sciences, and all the other branches of learning. English became the determinant of a child's progress up the ladder of formal education.[10]

Wa Thiong'o's experiences with the English language at school taught him some unchanging truths about (post)colonialism: the oppressors' language is the language – the right language: the language of art and learning. All others are doomed to stay local dialects or, at best, family languages.

The very fact, however, that *Decolonising the Mind* has been published in English in three different places in the world (Oxford, Nairobi and Portsmouth, N.H., in the United States) signifies that rather the latter option, signalled at the beginning of this paper

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9   Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 10.
10   Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 11–12.

(an appeal to international audiences), is at work in Wa Thiong'o's (or his agents') motivations than the former (vernacular tradition). Perhaps it would be best to argue that his writings show signs of the post-colonial process of appropriation rather than pure abrogation, since appropriation is the process by which language is made to "bear the burden" of one's own cultural experience, and language is adopted as a tool and utilized to express widely differing experiences. In their *The Empire Writes Back* (2002), Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin argue persuasively that

> [t]hough British imperialism resulted in the spread of a language, English, across the globe, the english of Jamaicans is not the english of Canadians, Maoris or Kenyans. We need to distinguish between what is proposed as a standard code, English (the language of the erstwhile imperial centre), and the linguistic code, english, which has been transformed and subverted into several distinctive varieties throughout the world.[11]

Therefore, what they propose is that by the process of domestication of the standard, imperial English, postcolonial writers create a new linguistic organism: "englishes" – the lower case "e" is intentional since the production of alternative forms of the colonisers' indigenous tongue in the colonial contexts is thus highlighted. As a result, we witness the existence of "english literatures" – the non-standardised alternatives to the legacy of the English literary canon mentioned in this paper's introduction. Though Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's idea has seemed genuine and was likely to introduce some order into literary systematisation in regards to English-language literatures all over the world, it largely back-fired since, it may be believed, this lower case "e" sounded – and indeed looked – inferior to the upper case "E" as is the case in now prominent world literature(s) in English (Elleke Boehmer is currently Professor of World Literature in English at Oxford University, and not of "english Literatures" as they proposed).

Therefore, the question of the status of literature in English written outside of the Western world remains open. Notwithstanding various, sometimes unclear assessments based on quantitative and qualitative criteria, one has to admit that Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o's literary output is extensive and impressive, demonstrating in a way his failure as a Gikuyu writer to attract a larger readership but a success as a Kenyan man of letters writing in English. Apart from the mentioned *Devil on the Cross*, in 1977 he published in Gikuyu the play, *Ngaahika Ndeenda: Ithaako ria ngerekano (I Will Marry When I Want)*, and a handful of children's stories. The remaining bulk of his novels, short stories, plays and criticism, particularly at the turn of the century, were penned in English, the imperial language he had apparently abandoned, thus proving accurate one of the dogmas of postcolonial theory that the use of the coloniser's language reinforces the dominance of the centre (London) over the periphery/colony (Kenya) even after the end of the colonial rule. In neo/post-colonialism, therefore, one witnesses forms of cultural imperialism exerted by the former centre, which transforms itself into an invisible/unspoken/unnamed centre only vaguely identified by Wa Thiong'o as

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11 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 2002), 8.

"international bourgeoisie."[12] Vernacular languages, like Gikuyu, are then reduced to regional, local and domestic variants, thus proving them unable to challenge the (post) imperial ones in the era of globalisation.

There is yet another aspect to the problem in question, namely, English as a uniting language on the continent where there is a plethora of diverse languages and dialects. Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o saw a great potential in European language to do service to Africa:

> English, like French and Portuguese, was assumed to be the natural language of literary and even political mediation between African people in the same nation and between nations in Africa and other continents. In some instances these European languages were seen as having a capacity to unite African peoples against divisive tendencies inherent in the multiplicity of African languages within the same geographic state.[13]

English and French, willy-nilly, became weapons in the hands of African nationalists who apparently directed them against their native users-turn-oppressors, since practically all criticisms and postcolonial theories have been written in English or French by Africans/Asians who became professors at a variety of (mostly) American universities.

However, there is always in such cases a rising doubt as to the writer's fidelity to and love of the mother tongue and motherland. Chinua Achebe's dramatic 1964 question and the follow-up declaration should now be mentioned: "Is it right that a man should abandon his mother for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me *there is no other choice* [emphasis added]. I have been given the language and I intend to use it."[14] This "guilty feeling" haunted not only the Nigerian writer, but also probably many more, including Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o. To remain faithful to one's mother tongue is one thing, and to be internationally recognised as a writer is another; yet, there is always a positive motivation behind it – to bring a native African colour to the palette of colours the language of the (former) oppressors had before the continent's colonisation; "how best to make the borrowed tongues carry the weight of our African experience by, for instance, making them 'prey' on African proverbs and other peculiarities of African speech and folklore."[15]

Recapitulating, the problem in question as formulated at the start of this paper has been solved by life realities, not by ideologies. Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o's literary and critical output signifies that the English language, with its centuries-long tradition of literacy, still occupies the top position in terms of language preferences by academia, media and publishers in the world. All that non-Africans can do in order to give prominence to the stifled voices of postcolonial black Africa is to write about Africa and Africans, particularly in the time of the migrant crisis Europe faces today.

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12 Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 2.
13 Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 6–7.
14 Chinua Achebe, "The African Writer and the English Language" in *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, 55–62 (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1975), 62.
15 Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 7.

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Creating Identities according to Diana Abu-Jaber's Arab American Literary Recipes

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Abstract: This paper explores Diana Abu-Jaber's literary pursuits by focusing on the motif of storytelling and the motif of food, two recurrent motifs in contemporary Arab American literature. Abu-Jaber, one of the most prominent American writers of Arab origin, creates an original view of placelessness, uprootedness, assimilation, and border-crossing by means of storytelling, which has had a long tradition in the Arab world and which, having been transferred to the American setting, becomes the medium of searching for Arab American identity (or identities). The concept of cultural identification is intensified through the motif of food which, in Abu-Jaber's literary recipes, turns out to be the reflection of both language and culture of Arab immigrants in America. In Abu-Jaber's literary pursuits, the stories of food are both the stories of all-consuming loneliness and the stories of all-consuming belonging to the Arab American community.

Keywords: Diana Abu-Jaber; Crescent; Arab American; literature; storytelling; food; identity

1. Introduction

The notion of food in literary discourse has only recently come under serious academic scrutiny.[1] Literary criticism, as Joan Fitzpatrick suggests, has for a long time considered food "too ordinary an area of investigation," failing to observe that when "authors refer to food they are usually telling the reader something important about narrative, plot, characterization, [and] motives."[2] Interestingly, the notion of identity has often been discussed in terms of various culinary metaphors. The first on the American menu was the idea of a melting pot in which all ingredients were destined to lose their original taste for the sake of a new American meal, a harmonious whole. The next on the menu was a multicultural salad bowl consisting of a myriad of ingredients maintaining their distinct tastes and flavors on the American salad plate. According to Lorna Piatti-Farnell, however, these two metaphors proved to be inadequate for highlighting the notion of identity in American discourse as "both metaphors deny the possibility that individuality and fusion can actually co-exist in a peculiar form of American culinary hybridization."[3]

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1 See Lorna Piatti-Farnell, *Food and Culture in Contemporary American Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 1.
2 Joan Fitzpatrick, "Food and Literature: An Overview," in *Routledge International Handbook of Food Studies*, ed. Ken Albala (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 122.
3 Piatti-Farnell, *Food and Culture*, 3.

Neither the pot nor the bowl satisfied the culinary and literary expectations of Diana Abu-Jaber, an Arab American literary chef, who in her literary cuisine suggests a unique approach to the notion of identity; an approach combining the poetic device of food with the literary technique of storytelling. In her Arab American or, more appropriately, multicultural American literary cuisine, Diana Abu-Jaber creates multilayered, baklava-like,[4] identity dishes combining an all-consuming loneliness with an all-consuming desire for belonging. This new identity is created in the microcosm of Abu-Jaber's Arab American literary kitchen (which Carol Fadda-Conrey refers to as "the ethnic borderland"[5]) through the character of Sirine, an Iraqi-American chef who uses Arab, Iranian, American, and Mexican ingredients and recipes with the aim of offering a new kind of multicultural and multilayered culinary aesthetic experience to the contemporary reader. Her 2003 novel, *Crescent*, in a Scheherazade-like way, tells a story about a multicultural café hosting a myriad of individuals coming from various cultural backgrounds; a story about a thousand-and-one ingredients used in the meals offered on the café's menu; ingredients that tell a thousand-and-one stories with the aim of retaining their identity by being a part of the American whole.

2. The Thousand-and-One Lonely "Selfs" in a Multicultural Café

Abu Jaber's literary recipes are created in the multicultural and multiethnic kitchen of Um-Nadia's café, which serves as a microcosmic reflection of America as a whole. The café, where Sirine prepares her meals, is visited by people of various cultural backgrounds:

> There are Jenoob, Gharb, and Schmaal – engineering students from Egypt; Shark, a math student from Kuwait; Lon Hayden, the chair of Near Eastern Studies; Morris, who owns the newsstand; Raphael-from-New-Jersey; Jay, Ron, and Troy from the Kappa Something Something fraternity house; Odah, the Turkish butcher, and his many sons. There are two American policemen – one white and one black – who come to the café every day, order fava bean dip and lentils fried with rice and onions, and have become totally entranced by the Bedouin soap operas plotlines involving ancient blood feuds, bad children, and tribal honor.[6]

The use of Arabic names of Jenoob (South), Gharb (West), Schmaal (North), and Shark (East) complicates the Orientalist discourse based on the binary opposition or, as Edward Said puts it, "ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'"[7] – a way of "dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[8] According to Waïl S. Hassan, Orientalism left its traces in the writing of contemporary Arab American writers. Using English as their

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4   Baklava is a traditional dessert in the Middle East. Hans Wehr defines it as "pastry made of puff paste with honey and almonds or pistachios." See Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1961), 69.

5   Carol Fadda-Conrey, "Arab American Literature in the Ethnic Borderland: Cultural Intersections in Diana Abu-Jaber's *Crescent*," *Melus* 31, no. 4 (2006): 187.

6   Diana Abu-Jaber, *Crescent* (Rollinsford: Thomas T. Beeler, 2003), 10. Hereafter cited in the text as *C*.

7   Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books), 2.

8   Said, *Orientalism*, 3.

language of expression and living in a place with a long-lasting tradition of Orientalist scholarship, "[they] could not ignore Orientalism"[9] in their literary pursuits. However, as opposed to the first Arab immigrants to America who cooked their identities in a melting pot,[10] Abu-Jaber's negotiation of Arab-American identity results in a more complicated dish. In Abu-Jaber's discourse, the "Orientals" are replaced by Egyptians, Kuwaitis, Iraqis, Lebanese, and Iranians. This complicates the simplistic understanding of the Middle East as a monolithic and homogenous unit. Furthermore, the author challenges the traditional political discourse based on the stereotypical view that equates Arabs with terrorists. What unites all visitors to Um-Nadia's café is not their intention to plot terrorist attacks but their all-consuming desire not to feel lonely. Sirine perceives loneliness as the most distinct feature of her customers; she sometimes "used to scan the room and imagine the word *terrorist.* But her gaze ran over the faces and all that came back to her were words like *lonely*, and *young*" (*C*, 9). All Middle Eastern customers in the café are exiles, either forced or voluntary, seeking to find their place, their home, and their roots in the multiethnic borderland of Sirine's culinary wonderland.

The residents of this *mezzaterra*[11] are not just Arabs. They live side by side with Latino Americans (such as the two other employees of the café, Victor Hernandez from Mexico and Cristobal from El Salvador); Turkish Americans (Odah, the Turkish butcher), Iranian Americans (Khoorosh, the Iranian owner of the local market), etc. As Steven Salaita points out, these diverse characters "create a multinational and multicultural interaction, rendering the café a quintessentially international space."[12] Despite the fact that Iraq and Iran are traditionally perceived as mutual enemies, the Iraqi-American Sirine is always welcomed by Khoroosh, who eventually becomes her close friend. For Carol Fadda-Conrey, *Crescent* thus "constructs interethnic bridges among these traditionally separate ethnic enclaves."[13] This multiethnic character of the book is further stressed by the location of the café, situated in Tehranangeles, an Iranian multicultural neighborhood of Los Angeles, where Iranians co-exist peacefully with Arabs and other Middle Easterners. Amal Talaat Abdelrazek terms the milieu of the café as "the third space,"[14] which is characterized by fluidity, and thus it enables the characters "to mix with both cultures, breaking down all dichotomies between an

9   Waïl S. Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.

10 See Layla al Maleh, ed., "Anglophone Arab Literature: An Overview," in *Arab Voices in Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), 1–64.

11 *Mezzaterra* alludes to the work of Ahdaf Soueif, an Arab British writer who uses the term *mezzaterra* to refer to the life in Egypt in the 1960s; in her understanding, *mezzaterra* is a common ground or a meeting point of many different cultures. Thus, there is an interesting resemblance between Soueif's *mezzaterra* and Um-Nadia's café. See Ahdaf Soueif, *Mezzaterra: Fragments from the Common Ground* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004).

12 Steven Salaita, *Modern Arab American Fiction: A Reader's Guide* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 102.

13 Fadda-Conrey, "Arab American Literature," 193.

14 Amal T. Abdelrazek, *Contemporary Arab American Women Writers: Hyphenated Identities and Border Crossings* (Youngstown: Cambria Press, 2007), 11.

essentialized self and other while retaining and celebrating their differences."[15]

This multicultural setting is stressed by Sirine, an Iraqi-American-Irish cook,[16] who is the novel's protagonist. Her parents died while working as volunteers in Africa, and ever since then, Sirine has lived with her Iraqi uncle in L.A. Before accepting the job in Um-Nadia's café, Sirine worked as a line cook and a sous chef in various "French, Italian, and 'Californian' restaurants" (*C*, 9). In Um-Nadia's café, she returned to Arab cuisine by eventually recollecting her parents' recipes. Her culinary experience is, thus, truly multicultural. When her Iranian friend Khoorosh asks her if she can make his favorite *khoresht fessenjan*,[17] she promises to learn how to make it. Sirine's culinary tactics are based on following her parents' traditional recipes, through which she is able to recollect her childhood memories; simultaneously, Sirine reshapes traditional Arabic recipes by adapting them to the American multicultural milieu; this process of re-creation is usually carried out by "manipulating" the ingredients that she uses in her meals.

3. THE THOUSAND-AND-ONE INGREDIENTS THAT SPEAK

The plot of the novel revolves around Sirine's love affair with Hanif Al Eyad (or Han), an exiled Iraqi professor who teaches linguistics at the local university. Their Iraqi-American encounter is often presented to the reader in the framework of an "interculinary" border-crossing, as Sirine tries to teach Han about America and Han tries to teach Sirine about Iraq through the context of food. Food, which speaks its own language, eventually becomes the most significant poetic device of the book. While Sirine prepares traditional Middle Eastern meals for Han, Han also prepares American meals for Sirine by following an American cookbook, *The Joy of Cooking*. For Han, following American recipes resembles speaking a different language: "Han just seems excited … and intrigued by the new kind of cooking, a shift of ingredients like a move from native tongue into a foreign language: butter instead of olive oil; potatoes instead of rice; beef instead of lamb" (*C*, 72).

The connection of food and language becomes even more obvious in the case of baklava. Sirine prepares it daily as the first activity of the morning, feeling rather "unsettled when she tries to begin breakfast without preparing the baklava first" (*C*, 60). In the text, baklava functions as a bridge connecting Sirine to her past (in the process of baklava-making, Sirine remembers her parents who taught her how to carefully open and unpeel the paper-thin layers of dough and paint them with butter). Simultaneously, baklava serves as a bridge connecting the whole community of Um-Nadia's café. Sirine feels that it cheers the students and brings them closer to their roots. Therefore, baklava could be considered a metaphor of memory, and Sirine "a culinary cultural agent"[18] who awakens past memories through her cooking but at

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15 Abdelrazek, *Contemporary Arab American Women Writers*, 12.
16 Her father was of Iraqi origin, her mother of Irish origin.
17 Walnut and pomegranate stew.
18 Brinda J. Mehta, "The Semiosis of Food in Diana Abu-Jaber's *Crescent*," in *Arab Voices in Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature*, ed. Layla Al Maleh (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2009), 206.

the same time creates new multicultural culinary discourses in the textual cuisine of *Crescent*. On the surface level, however, the role that this traditional Middle Eastern dessert plays in the novel may be misunderstood. *Crescent* is not a traditional cook memoir in which a certain kind of meal evokes nostalgia in the writer by bringing back memories of one's past and highlighting the binary opposition between *now* and *then* or between *here* and *there*. Abu-Jaber, who considers herself "fundamentally a Bedouin"[19] with a tendency to rootlessness and nomadism, does not see the present and the past as fixed and permanent entities. Nor does she view the opposition between here and there within fixed borderlines. Like the thin layers of the *filo*[20] dough of baklava, these territorial lines are paper thin and unstable. The use of baklava is significant as baklava is not an Arabic dessert; it is popular all over the Middle East region, including Greece, Turkey and Iran. In her culinary memoir, *The Language of Baklava*,[21] Diana Abu-Jaber further highlights the multicultural character of this traditional Mediterranean dessert by recollecting a childhood memory of her Jordanian aunt, Aya, who, while visiting her brothers living in America, including Abu-Jaber's father, suggests to Diana that they bake together. Diana agrees on the condition that they do not make Arabic food. As she says, in her teenage "protesting-against-all" manner, "I hate Arabic food" (*LB*, 185). To her surprise, her aunt does not punish her for those words but instead proclaims, "Fine, I'm not so impressed. I hate it, too" (*LB*, 185). That is why Aya suggests that they make baklava while calling it with its Greek name, baklava, instead of the Arabic way *baqlawah* "since [they] both hate Arabic food" (*LB*, 185). For Carol Bardenstein, this vignette from Abu-Jaber's memoir points to what the language of baklava is, "not a univocalizing ethnic or national language, but rather explicit resistance to that kind of mono-glossia, and in its stead, a language that resists its own mythologized origins, and insists on multi-vocality, on polyphony."[22]

This multivocal character of baklava serves as a leitmotif throughout the whole novel. The ingredients that Sirine uses in her meals are multivocal and multicultural and, thus, they serve as reflections of the customers of Um-Nadia's ethnic borderland. Sirine follows both her mother's American and Arab recipes; she shifts between American and Middle Eastern cuisine; uses Iranian spices and Mexican chili peppers. The fluidity of Sirine's meals, which can be viewed as neither American nor Arabic, is highlighted in Sirine's hybrid culinary experiments of Arabic Thanksgiving and not-only-Muslim Ramadan. When preparing the former, Sirine uses "rice and pine nuts and ground lamb in the turkey instead of cornbread, and yogurt sauce instead of cranberries" (*C*, 221). The people enjoying her Ramadan feast are not just Muslims. Even though Um-Nadia, the owner of the café, "claims to have no religion and many

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19 Diana Abu-Jaber, "A Life of Stories," in *Scheherazade's Legacy: Arab and Arab American Women on Writing*, ed. Susan M. Darraj (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 123.
20 *Filo* is a thin dough made of flour, water, oil (or vinegar); it is used for making pastries.
21 Diana Abu-Jaber, *The Language of Baklava* (New York: Anchor Books, 2005). Hereafter cited in the text as *LB*.
22 Carol Bardenstein, "Beyond Univocal Baklava: Deconstructing Food-as-Ethnicity and the Ideology of Homeland in Diana Abu-Jaber's *The Language of Baklava*," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 41, no. 1 (2010): 175.

of their customers are Christians, they all like to eat the traditional foods prepared throughout the Middle East to celebrate the nightly fast-breaking during Ramadan" (*C*, 297). By using ingredients of various ethnic origins and serving them to the customers of heterogeneous religious backgrounds, Abu-Jaber complicates her recipe for identity-making. Like a multilayered and multivocal baklava, the origins of Sirine's meals are hard to trace. Analogically, the identity that Abu-Jaber writes about cannot be viewed in the framework of fixed borderlines. For Nouri Gana, Abu-Jaber's literary restaurant is "a metaphor of Andalusia and the spatial process of food-making and – eating as yet another metaphor for the promotion of cultural understanding."[23] In the process of creating identities in her literary cuisine, Diana Abu-Jaber uses a myriad of ingredients of various cultural backgrounds. As far as the culinary process is concerned, Abu-Jaber employs the narrative technique of storytelling. The food itself tells a story. Brinda J. Mehta asserts that the food in the novel "provides a particular semiology of expression, a specific system of culinary codes and signifiers."[24] The interpretation of these food codes points to various levels of reading (and consuming) Abu-Jaber's textual meal.

4. The Thousand-and-One Stories That Remember

As Abdelfattah Kilito suggests, ever since the first translations of *The Thousand and One Nights* into European languages, the Arabs, have been raised "to the rank of the best storytellers in the world."[25] Storytelling has had a long tradition in the Arab world, and somehow, it has survived until today. Traditional storytellers (often referred to as *rawi* or *hakawati* in Arabic) would, like the beautiful Scheherazade, tell their stories for days, even weeks, stopping at the point of greatest tension so as to provoke their listeners' desire to learn what would come next.[26] Interestingly, *hakawati* has been a frequent character type in the stories written by contemporary Arab American writers, such as Rabih Alameddine whose novel, *The Hakawati*, has achieved wide critical acclaim.[27] The character of a hakawati is, in Abu-Jaber's *Crescent*, represented by Sirine's uncle, her closest relative and mentor ever since her parents' tragic demise. Almost every chapter in the novel begins with a story gradually narrated to Sirine by her storytelling uncle. Similarly to *The Thousand and One Nights*, he interrupts the story in a Scheherazade-like-way and comes back to it when he meets Sirine again, usually at breakfast or dinner time. His plotline evolves around the character of Abdelrahman Salahadin and his travels through centuries and continents, from ancient Arabia to contemporary Hollywood. For

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23 Nouri Gana, ed., "In Search of Andalusia: Reconfiguring Arabness in Diana Abu Jaber's *Crescent*," in *The Edinburgh Companion to the Arab Novel in English: The Politics of Anglo Arab and Arab American Literature and Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 244. Andalusia alludes to the Umayyad caliphate on the Iberian Peninsula (711–1492), known for its multicultural character.

24 Brinda J. Mehta, *Rituals of Memory in Contemporary Arab Women's Writing* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 229.

25 Abdelfattah Kilito, *Arabs and the Art of Storytelling: A Strange Familiarity* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014), xii.

26 See Josepha Sherman, *Storytelling: An Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2008), 32.

27 See Rabih Alameddine, *The Hakawati* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008).

the reader (and for Sirine), the long and complicated narrative about Salahadin might feel like a boring digression or, as Nouri Gana asserts, "an endurance test for the reader's patience."[28] In reality, the two plotlines are not disconnected at all; like the thin layers of the *filo* dough covered with the filling made of walnuts, sugar and spices, which together create the specific taste of baklava, the story of Sirine and the story of Abdelrahman Salahadin highlight Abu-Jaber's baklava-like multiethnic message conveyed to the tasting reader. To understand the complexity of the narration of Sirine's uncle, one needs to understand the two allusions suggested by the name of Abdelrahman Salahadin.

The first name, Abdelrahman, alludes to an Umayyad emir who fled from Damascus to the Iberian Peninsula (known as *al-Andalus* at the time) where he founded a caliphate known for its highly-developed culture, sciences and intense translation activity. Moreover, the caliphate was known for its multicultural character.[29] In *Crescent, al-Andalus* is similarly depicted by Han who, in a conversation with Sirine, refers to it as "a place where the Muslims and the Jews lived together and devised miraculous works of philosophy and architecture" (*C*, 75), but these Andaloussians were finally conquered and scattered as "[t]hey were too much for their time" (*C*, 75).

The second name, Salahadin, refers to one of the most famous Muslim rulers who in 1187 succeeded in re-capturing Jerusalem from the crusaders.[30] What connects these two characters is their tolerance toward different cultures and religious groups. In *Al-Andalus*, different ethnic, racial and religious groups co-exist in mutual harmony. Abdelrahman does not refrain from maintaining close contacts with Europe and supports Arab-European encounters. When Salahadin retakes Jerusalem from the crusaders, he lets the Christians leave in peace. The two characters serve as reflections of Sirine and the ethnic borderland of the café where she works. In the uncle's narration, Abdelrahman Salahadin sells himself to several slaveholders and then escapes by pretending to drown in the sea in an attempt to flee. Once, however, he is abducted by a mermaid who takes him far away, an act that draws Abdelrahman's mother into the story. Aunt Camille, in an attempt to find her son, faces a chain of obstacles that complicate the narration. Towards the end of the novel, Abdelrahman turns out to be Omar Sharif,[31] who plans to take on a role in the theatrical performance of Othello in Egypt. When his mother finds it out, she decides to go to Egypt so as to reunite with her lost and drowned son. According to Jopi Nyman, the diverse forms of the supernatural employed in the novel in a Marquéz-like way "rewrite narratives of history and identity."[32] Through these stories, Sirine layer by layer reconstructs her ethnic past, which is an integral part of her identity. To Sirine's surprise, her uncle ends his narration at this point, refusing to bring the mother and the son to their long-awaited reunion. As a reaction to Sirine's disappointment with the

28 Gana, "In Search of Andalusia," 239.
29 See Ivy A. Corfis, *Al-Andalus, Sepharad and Medieval Iberia: Cultural Contact and Diffusion* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2009), iii–xiv.
30 See Gene W. Heck, *When Worlds Collide: Exploring the Ideological and Political Foundations of the Clash of Civilizations* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), 202.
31 Omar Sharif (1932–2015) was a legendary Egyptian actor who is well-known especially for his appearances in the films *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) and *Doctor Zhivago* (1965).
32 Jopi Nyman, *Home, Identity, and Mobility in Contemporary Diasporic Fiction* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), 193.

resolution, the uncle proclaims,

> Habeebti, here is something you have to understand about stories: They can point you to the right direction but they can't take you all the way there. Stories are crescent moons; they glimmer in the night sky, but they are most exquisite in their incomplete state. Because people crave the beauty of not-knowing, the excitement of suggestion, and the sweet tragedy of mystery. In other words, Habeebti, you must never tell everything. (*C*, 422)

It is only in the last chapter of the novel that the reader discovers the connection between Han and Abdelrahman Salahadin. Despite the fact that Sirine and Han deeply love each other, Han, driven by the forces of his past, decides to go back to Iraq. As his name is on the list of Saddam Hussein's opponents, his decision might be viewed as his implicit consent to die. Analogically to Abdelrahman Saladin who is desperately sought by his mother, now it is Han whose desire to see his dying mother makes him take a suicidal step. By alluding to Saddam Hussein and his authoritarian rule as well as to the Iraqi-Iranian war, Abu-Jaber follows the path of many other American writers of Arab descent who negotiate political discourses in their fictional representations.[33] The timing of the publishing of the novel, in 2003, is therefore significant since it coincided with American military campaign against Hussein's political regime. For two years, Sirine lives with the idea that Han is no longer alive. It is only in the final chapter that Sirine's uncle decides to finally show a bit more of the crescent moon by uniting Abdelrahman Salahadin with his mother. And as they unite, Sirine, by a fortunate accident, finds out that Han is alive when she discovers his photo in an Arabic newspaper. Han adopts the name of Abdelrahman Salahadin so as to flee Iraq. Like Abdelrahman, Han is finally reunited with Sirine, and thus, the story has a happy ending. There is a conspicuous resemblance between Han and the character of Abdelrahman. Both of them are exiles, nomads, whose restlessness prompts them to stay on the move. Both face in-betweenness; thus, they could be viewed as metaphorical reflections of *Crescent's* mermaids – "in-between creatures" that are neither humans nor fish. Furthermore, in both plotlines, the mother represents a resolution of this in-betweeness as she brings her sons back to their roots.

5. Conclusion: The Thousand-and-One Stories about the Thousand-and-One Recipes

Abu-Jaber's literary technique combining a thousand-and-one stories about Abdelrahman and his mother with a thousand-and-one recipes for preparing meals made of multiethnic ingredients proves to be a powerful poetic device creating a fluid, constantly-changing notion of Arabness and ethnic identity in general. This notion is highlighted by a parallel between a recipe and a story. Abu-Jaber in her culinary memoir, *The Language of Baklava*, recollects a memory of her Aunt Aya who prepared the most delicious meals in the family but who never wrote down her recipes, "If you write them, Aya says, they lose their power" (*LB*, 185–86). To compare, when Hanif leaves for Iraq, Sirine continues working

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33 Rebecca Layton, *Arab-American and Muslim Writers* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 10.

at Um-Nadia's café following the same cooking procedures as before, but her meals taste different from how she remembers: "[the] flavors have gotten somehow stranger, darker and larger" (*C*, 422). Moreover, she feels that her meals change her customers, who all "seem more serious than before, more given to brooding, hugging, and thinking" (*C*, 422). In other words, Sirine's sadness is somehow transferred to the meals that she prepares. The taste, like one's identity, lacks fixedness; its fluidity reflects the cook's state of mind as well as the mind of the one who eats.

Every year, Sirine's uncle would give her a special kind of cookbook for her birthday. In an 1892 copy of a Syrian recipe book, which contains her uncle's handwritten and pasted-in translations, Sirine discovers a recipe for a roast chicken that intrigues her. Below the list of ingredients, she observes an anonymous note that her uncle translated for her, "'Praise be to Allah for giving us the light of day. For these creatures with air and flight in their minds if not in their bodies.' Is it a prayer or a recipe? She reads it several more times and can't tell" (*C*, 389). The conspicuous resemblance between the genre of the recipe and that of a prayer points to the metaphysical quality of food and the ritual-like process of its preparation. As in the case of the prayer, when the Muslim needs to adhere to a carefully-ordered system of steps, the process of preparing a certain kind of meal needs to be followed with cautious precision. All those "silly things, like whether you pour hot syrup over cold baklava or cold syrup over hot" (*C*, 62) are by Han referred to as "quite serious [and] metaphysical" (*C*, 62). The final taste is, nevertheless, never quite the same. Once, when Han tastes Sirine's Arabic food, he proclaims that it tastes American because of Sirine. Like stories, recipes are crescent moons, always on the move, changing with the cook, with one's memories – like one's identity or home. Abdelrahman's story is not just a story about fish, slaves, and drowning because, as Han proclaims, the stories about fish "could be [about] anything. Maybe about war or birth. Maybe it's a way to talk about journey, or to reflect on love" (*C*, 44). Similarly, stories about food are not just stories about satisfying the physical need of hunger but could be about anything: baklava, love, exile, loneliness, identity, or home. Identities created according to Diana Abu-Jaber's Arab American literary recipes could also acquire various tastes since Abu-Jaber views these identities as mixtures of Arab (Iraqi, Lebanese, Syrian), American, Iranian, Turkish, Latino, African American, white, Christian, Muslim, and non-religious ingredients, which are prepared neither in a melting pot nor in a salad bowl but in a special kind of pan where, in a baklava-like manner, they retain their individual tastes while fusing into all layers of the multiethnic *filo* dough of the multilayered American baklava.

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Experiencing Immigration and its Economic and Emotional Fallout in Selected Works of Hispanic American Literature

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ABSTRACT: This paper studies the representation of immigration in Hispanic American literature and focuses on Americans of Cuban and Dominican origin as two different sub-cultures of the same ethnic group. Specifically, it analyzes two literary works produced by Hispanic American authors: Cristina García's 1992 novel *Dreaming in Cuban* and Junot Díaz's 1996 short story collection, *Drown*. Their common denominator is the image of the immigrant American Dream and the successes and failures accompanying its pursuit in connection with the immigrant's in/ability to embrace the new culture and adjust to changes. The paper focuses on themes that are common to both works as well as differences in terms of the two examined ethnic groups, i.e., themes of hyphenated identity, assimilation, family relationships, and the absence of a father.

KEYWORDS: Hispanic American literature; immigrant literature; Cristina García; Junot Díaz; identity; family relationships

Authors of Hispanic ancestry have contributed to and shaped the American literary scene, but being part of a rather recent group of immigrants has allowed them to capture the immigrant experience and frame it within a modern lens. At the same time, no single view or perspective exists that could faithfully depict the complexity of the Hispanic-American experience; instead, a number of regional and language differences contribute to a line of literature just as diverse as the individuals creating it. This paper looks at reflections of Hispanic American immigration as a political, economic, and social issue in the works of two prominent authors, namely Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban* and Junot Díaz's *Drown*, and focuses on themes common to both the works, that is the pursuit of the immigrant American dream, as well as different. In the case of *Dreaming in Cuban*, it is the generational differences in the course and attitude towards assimilation, the key theme here being the phenomenon of the so-called "hyphenated identity" and quest for one's true self. As for *Drown*, it examines the struggles and difficulties faced by immigrant Dominican boys and men in New Jersey when assimilating to the new culture as members of the first and second generations of immigrants.

Cristina García was born in 1958 in Havana, Cuba, and fled the Castro regime to the United States with her family when she was a small child. García, a former journalist, now explores issues of her Cuban heritage and childhood in fiction. She has written two critically-acclaimed works expressing what it means to be Cuban American.

Her lyrical first novel, *Dreaming in Cuban* (1992), focuses on three generations of maternally-related Cuban women, each living life differently as a result of the Cuban revolution. Castro's revolution was a watershed moment that left an indelible mark on the fiction of García and other novelists, such as Christine Bell or Virgil Suarez, who are preoccupied with the disruptions caused by this historic event.[1] By most estimates, hundreds of thousands of Cubans left the country between 1959 and 1980 and began new lives in the United States, seeking greater political and economic freedom. García's second novel, *The Agüero Sisters* (1997), traces the lives of two middle-aged siblings – one an electrician in Havana, the other a salesperson in New York City.

Immigrant writers commonly display a proclivity for narrative fragmentation. García too arranges her first book, filled with the magical realism that has become the post-revolutionary signature of contemporary Hispanic American narratives, in the form of sketches that do not follow the standard plot arc of literary fiction.[2] The fragmented narrative jumps back and forth in time, and even incorporates some epistolary chapters. Also the time span covered by the book is quite broad, as the author shifts between Cuba and Brooklyn, capturing moments in time from the perspectives of different characters, from pre-Revolution times up to 1980.

As already suggested, the book can to a great extent be considered autobiographical, and it might be assumed that García is describing her own experiences as a young Cuban-American who, like her alter-ego Pilar Puente, one of the main characters of the book, returned to Cuba as a young woman to meet her grandmother for the first time. Samantha L. McAuliffe positions Cristina Garcia's novel as a text of self-discovery and cultural reconciliation. McAuliffe suggests that "there is evidence that García herself is able to reconcile issues of culture and identity through the writing of the novel."[3] Furthermore, Isabel Borland argues that "Pilar's attempts to bridge two different cultures mirror the task of the ethnic writer" and claims that "as an ethnic writer, García engages the U.S. experience directly and cannot separate herself from it."[4]

Immigrant writers also favor certain themes in their subject matter, such as coming of age, traditional family relationships, assimilation and the pursuit of the American Dream. The focus of this paper is on the themes of identity and generational differences; according to David Cowart, García avoids the clichés of immigrant storytelling, in which the greater freedom that young people enjoy in America proves to be a source of friction with their parents. In *Dreaming in Cuban,*[5] it is the older generation of immigrants, represented by Pilar's mother Lourdes Puente, which is "enjoying a largely

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1   See Gilbert H. Muller, *New Strangers in Paradise: The Immigrant Experience and Contemporary American Fiction* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 106.

2   See David Cowart, *Trailing Clouds: Immigrant Fiction in Contemporary America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 86.

3   Samantha L. McAuliffe, "Autoethnography and García's *Dreaming in Cuban*," *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 13, no. 4 (2011), doi: 10.7771/1481-4374.1874.

4   Isabel A. Borland, "Autobiographical Writing," in *Cuban-American Literature of Exile: From Person to Persona*, 135–84 (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 148.

5   Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban* (New York: Random House, 1992). Hereafter cited in the text as *DIC*.

untrammeled assimilation."[6]

Lourdes Puente is a typical representative of the successful pursuit of the American Dream. The leading "push" factor in the case of Lourdes's family is the transformation of Cuba into a revolutionary socialist state under the leadership of Fidel Castro. Lourdes leaves Cuba with her husband and daughter, dispossessed and violated by the revolution, having suffered the miscarriage of a child when trying to protect their house from soldiers who came to claim it as the property of the revolutionary government. Clearly she despises El Líder and what he has done to Cuba, and she has gradually become super-American. She embraces her new life in America and everything it has to offer, being a strong supporter of capitalism and U.S. patriotism. A successful entrepreneur, owning a bakery chain named the Yankee Doodle Bakery, she sells tricolor cupcakes and Uncle Sam marzipan, relishes the Fourth of July extravaganzas, and usually wears clothes in red, white and blue and color combinations. Extraordinary about Lourdes is her amazing adaptability, which makes her the perfect candidate for the American Dream, typically represented by values such as one's own home, a stable family background, a good job and a desirable lifestyle – attracting people who seek the opportunity to climb the social ladder and achieve the life that the United States promises to anyone who is willing to work hard. Indeed, Shobe et al. explain that the ability of immigrants to achieve the American Dream is directly associated with their ability to build social networks, assimilate into the workforce, and meet their basic economic needs. The American Dream is thus not easily achieved, but requires certain sets of social and personal skills.[7] For Lourdes, exile is the opportunity of a lifetime; as described by García, "Lourdes considers herself lucky. Immigration has redefined her, and she is grateful. She welcomes her adopted language, its possibilities for reinvention. She wants no part of Cuba which Lourdes claims never possessed her" (*DIC*, 73). Moreover, Lourdes openly prides herself on having adapted so well to her new country and the new language, and she often says that she cannot understand how other exiles who resist such change can survive. A certain feeling of superiority over other immigrants is present, when Pilar informs us that her mother "hires real down-and-outs, immigrants from Russia or Pakistan, people who don't speak any English, figuring she can get them cheap," (*DIC*, 31) and goes on to add that "she believes she's doing them a favor by giving them a job and breaking them in to the American life" (*DIC*, 32). Here, García describes a very unsavory aspect of the immigrant ethos, the "exploitation by one's own," which, as Cowart notes, can also be found in the works of Bulosan or Chang-rae Lee.[8] Various instances documents how Lourdes, who has replaced her Cubanness with a decidedly adversarial Americanness, distances herself from the maladjusted immigrants, seeing herself as superior to them, as she is now an American, no longer one of them.

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6   See Cowart, *Trailing Clouds*, 87.

7   See Marcia A. Shobe, Maren J. Coffman, and Jacek Dmochowski, "Achieving the American Dream: Facilitators and Barriers to Health and Mental Health for Latino Immigrants," in *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work* 6, no. 1 (2009), doi: 10.1080/15433710802633601.

8   See Cowart, *Trailing Clouds*, 87.

However, Lourdes's family background is in fact not "stable" at all. First of all, there is her relationship with her far less assimilated husband Rufino, who was a wealthy rancher back in Cuba, but who in the United States is out of his element. While Lourdes lives in the present, Rufino dwells on his memories of Cuba and cannot adapt to the American way of life. At times, Lourdes looks down on him for this, e.g., "there was a part of him that could never leave the finca or the comfort of its cycles, and this diminished him of any other life" (*DIC*, 129). To Lourdes, Rufino's inability to let go of Cuba and what their life was like back there is an obstacle standing in his way towards a better life, a life like the one she is enjoying. Naturally, this immense difference in their ability and willingness to adjust to changes the new life brings creates a gap between the partners, and "these days, Lourdes recognizes her husband's face, his thinning reddish hair, and the pouches under his eyes, but he is a stranger to her" (*DIC*, 131). Another family member with whom Lourdes has a strained relationship is her own daughter, Pilar. Unlike Lourdes, Pilar idealizes and romanticizes her homeland, which she associates with her grandmother. Although the grandmother is physically remote, Pilar seems to be much closer to her than to her own mother; the two of them have so strong a connection that they communicate with each other in their dreams. As Pilar says, "I feel much more connected to Abuela Celia than to Mom, even though I haven't seen my grandmother in seventeen years. She's left me her legacy nonetheless" (*DIC*, 176). Indeed, Lourdes is cognizant of the similarities between Pilar and Celia and often remarks on them, suggesting that Pilar's identification with Celia is not only a close personal tie with her grandmother, but also a strong personal bond with her native Cuban culture.

On the other hand, Pilar displays signs of contempt and dissent when it comes to her mother's values, actions, and generally her way of life. At one point she even says, "I wonder how Mom could be Abuela Celia's daughter. And what I'm doing as my mother's daughter. Something got horribly scrambled along the way" (*DIC*, 178). Pilar continually criticizes her mother, failing to understand Lourdes's motivations and often causing conflicts, suggesting that Lourdes might be trying too hard to fit in with mainstream American culture, at the expense of her Cuban heritage.

Pilar is symbolic of a place where Cuban and American cultures intersect. Through Pilar's eyes, we are able to see the conflict experienced by those with a hybrid identity, as she is living her life trying to make Cuba into a place that fulfils her and sustains her. Although she is a first-generation Cuban-American, Pilar associates herself more with Cuba than with America. She explains that "even though she has been living in Brooklyn all her life, it doesn't feel like home to her. She is not sure Cuba is, but she wants to find out" (*DIC*, 58). Indeed, the development of her identity is a central theme in the novel, which follows her as she struggles with her hyphenated existence and longs to find a way to reconcile the two sides of her life in a way that would help her feel like a unified person. She wants to reclaim her original identity, and she knows that Abuela Celia can help her in this quest. However, she is prevented from doing so by many issues over which she has no control – and she resents this. Pilar feels like the political differences that keep the doors closed are robbing her of a culture and an

identity, and she says, "I resent the hell out of the politicians and the generals who force events on us that structure our lives, that dictate the memories we'll have when we're old" (*DIC*, 138).

For Pilar, Cuba represents a sense of loss; a loss of what might have been, a loss of her childhood, her grandmother, and her access to Cuban culture, which she can only stay in touch with through her parents – or, more precisely, through her father. And even when she turns to her family to shed light on the family's past, her efforts remain largely unsuccessful: "It doesn't help that Mom refuses to talk about Abuela Celia. She gets annoyed every time I ask her and she shuts me up quickly, like I'm prying into top secret information. Dad is more open, but he can't tell me what I really want to know" (*DIC*, 138). Cuba becomes a place of dreaming for Pilar, a place of escape which enables her to deal with the difficulties she faces in her actual life. What triggers this nostalgia in Pilar's case is her idealism, her sense of lost perfection and her hopes to regain it. In fact, it seems that in her image of Cuba, there is no place for any imperfections – no place for the reality of Cuba and its people, with their real problems. Pilar and Lourdes both feel a loss of connection with Cuba. For Lourdes, Cuba represents the loss of a child, of her dignity as a woman, and the loss of property. While Pilar idealizes what might have been had she stayed in Cuba, Lourdes associates it with the most traumatic things that ever happened to her. Consequently, it is no wonder that they do not see eye to eye on the subject.

Towards the end of the book, Lourdes and Pilar set out on a journey to visit Cuba and Abuela Celia, and in the process they both gain a stronger sense of their own identities. It seems that the trip is what finally reconciles them and allows them (especially Pilar) to understand each other better. In Cuba, Pilar moves from a nostalgic dream to an understanding of the traumas of exile and return. She is exposed to the harsh realities of living in Cuba during the political unrest. Finally, she finds, as does her mother, that there is something about Cuba that cannot be embraced or touched by outsiders, which they have both become. There is a grandeur and beauty about Havana, but there is also sadness, poverty and social challenges that keep Cuba isolated and impenetrable. Finally, Pilar acknowledges that she belongs more to the United States than to Cuba, and that she must go back to New York, saying, "sooner or later I'd have to return to New York, I know now it's where I belong – not instead of here, but more than here" (*DIC*, 236). As for Lourdes, visiting the places of her past confirms every negative opinion she has ever had about Cuba. In one scene, Lourdes and Pilar are buying sugarcane from a man on the street. Lourdes takes a bite, then turns to Pilar and says, "Try some, Pilar, but it's not as sweet as I remember" (*DIC*, 219). This may symbolize how the last traces of the nostalgia that Lourdes was experiencing back in the United States are now gone, now that she has seen and confirmed how much the regime has changed her homeland, destroying everything that was once good and worth having.

The second book explored in this paper, a short story collection entitled *Drown* (1996),[9] was written by the Dominican-American writer Junot Díaz, born in 1968 in

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9   Junot Díaz, *Drown* (London: Faber and Faber, 1996). Hereafter cited in the text as *D*.

Villa Juana, one of the suburban neighborhoods of the capital city of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo. In his early childhood, Díaz lived with his mother and grandparents while his father worked in the United States. The family immigrated to New Jersey to be reunited with the father when Díaz was six years old. He currently teaches creative writing at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and works as an editor for the *Boston Review*. Central to Díaz's work is the duality of the immigrant experience, reflected, besides in *Drown*, also in another short story collection entitled *This Is How You Lose Her* (2012) as well as several of his novels. Like *Dreaming in Cuban*, *Drown* also appears to contain autobiographical features, as Díaz shares his experience as a Dominican immigrant in the United States, creating a character named Yunior, who in fact appears in several of his books. The stories focus on the teenage narrator's fatherless youth in the Dominican Republic and his struggle adapting to his new life in New Jersey after joining his father there.

As opposed to García's fiction – characterized by its open spirituality, elements of magical realism, intimate narration of experience and compact poetic expression – Díaz uses raw, vernacular dialogue and spare, unsentimental prose to provide realistic insight into the struggles, frustrations, anger and needs faced by poor immigrant Dominican males, both in the Dominican Republic and in New Jersey. The majority of the stories in the loosely structured collection combine to tell the story of Yunior de las Casas, spanning from his childhood in the impoverished barrios of Santo Domingo to the immigration of his family to the United States, the setting for his troubled adolescence and isolated adulthood. However, some of the stories are ambiguous in that the main characters are unnamed, and could be attributed to other immigrant young men. According to Kevane, Díaz's stories may be divided into "family stories" and "New Jersey stories."[10] Strictly speaking, they may be classified as follows: "Ysrael," "Fiesta, 1980," "Aguantando" and "No Face" are the "family stories," in which Díaz depicts the life of the de las Casas family back in the Dominican Republic. "Drown," "Boyfriend," "Edison, New Jersey," "How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie," "Negocios," and "Nilda" can be included in the set of "New Jersey stories."

Although the stories in *Drown* do not contain nearly as many political references as *Dreaming in Cuban*, throughout his fiction Díaz repeatedly mentions some of the traumatic historical events which unfolded in the Dominican Republic. Mentioned more than any other event is the brutal thirty-year dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, starting in 1930 and ending in 1961 with Trujillo's assassination. With the fall of the regime, large-scale migration from the Dominican Republic to the United States began. Furthermore, the 1980s represented the definitive end of the Dominican sugar industry, resulting in a significant decline in the country's living conditions and a subsequent massive wave of immigration to the United States. In 1989, the United States registered about 900,000 Dominicans living in the country, either legally or illegally.[11] Dominican Americans are currently the fifth largest Hispanic group in the

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10 Bridget Kevane, *Latino Literature in America* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2003), 72.
11 Rubén G. Rumbaut, "Origins and Destinies: Immigration to the United States since World War II," *Sociological Forum* 9, no. 4 (1994): 594, doi:10.1007/BF01466304.

United States, concentrated mainly in New York, New Jersey, Florida, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.[12]

As mentioned, Díaz provides yet another perspective on the life of immigrants and their families both in the United States and back in their homeland, one that is in many respects different from García's. Some of the themes observable in *Drown* overlap with those explored in *Dreaming in Cuban*, as, for example, it seems that through Yunior, Díaz is writing about the conflicting feelings he had regarding his cultural identity as a young man, which he still struggles with today. However, other themes differ significantly and cannot be found in García's novel, providing insight into the complexity of the immigrant experience and its variability even within a single ethnic group. They include the life in ghetto-like immigrant neighborhoods, cultural detachment and isolation, immigrant working conditions, aspects of illegal immigration, single-mother households, families left behind in the homeland, deeply affected (both emotionally and financially) by the absence of the father, the struggle of Dominican immigrants in the United States to achieve the American Dream and its failure – the last two of which are the focus of this paper.

The final story in the collection, "Negocios," is the book's most explicative narration. This is where the immigrant experience takes centre stage, as the story spans the five years during which Ramon, the father, was absent from his family's life, trying to achieve the American Dream and to provide for himself and his family. Díaz proceeds back to the beginnings of the family's history and details Ramon's departure from the Dominican Republic. Ramon de las Casas is introduced to the reader as he is preparing to set out on his journey towards a new, better life in the United States, having been "planning to leave for months, hustling and borrowing from his friends, from anyone he could put the bite on" (*D*, 125). He does not hesitate to accept money from his father-in-law, whom he tells that "all he wants for his family is to take them to the U.S. and give them a better life" (*D*, 126). The notion of the promise of a better life in America is strongly present in the minds of many of the family members when the father-in-law instructs Ramon upon his departure to "make his children proud" (*D*, 128). However, in this story, Díaz foregrounds Ramón's miserable first experiences in the United States, showing that although the American Dream continues to tempt people worldwide with its promise of financial security and freedom, many who arrive in the United States find that the reality rarely matches the dream, especially in the case of illegal immigration. And such is also the case for Ramon, who intends to continue from his first destination, Miami, to New York as soon as he can, picturing it as "the city of jobs, the city that had first called the Cubanos and their cigar industry, then the Bootstrap Puertoricans, and now called him" (*D*, 128). However, he soon becomes disillusioned, as he is working two jobs washing dishes before going home to sleep on the floor of a roach-infested apartment, a space which he shares with three other immigrants. Even so, he manages to send money home to his family while still saving enough to move

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12 Seth Motel and Eileen Patten, "The 10 Largest Hispanic Origin Groups: Characteristics, Rankings, Top Counties," pewhispanic.org, June 27, 2012, http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/06/27/the-10-largest-hispanic-origin-groups-characteristics-rankings-top-counties/.

to "Nueva York," and he leaves Miami in the winter, first taking a bus to Virginia and then walking most of the way. Although he can afford another bus ticket, he prefers to walk three hundred and eighty miles rather than spend any of the money he has so diligently saved, as he has been warned by many other immigrants that "being homeless in Nueva York was to court the worst sort of disaster" (*D*, 135).

Illegal immigration has another severe impact on the life of the immigrants; they live in permanent fear of deportation, which would mean being severed from the opportunity to achieve a better life. Ramon is well aware of the fact that "now that his visa has expired, if caught, he'd go home in chains" (*D*, 135). Moreover, "he'd heard plenty of tales about the North American police from other illegals, how they liked to beat you before they turned you over to la migra and how sometimes they just took your money and tossed you out toothless on an abandoned road" (*D*, 135). It is for these reasons that, after accidentally stopping federal marshals when hitch-hiking on his way up north and yet not being discovered, he "is so relieved not to be in jail that he doesn't mind walking the four hours it takes to summon his nerve to put his thumb out again" (*D*, 137). Upon arriving in New York, Ramon "writes home sporadically," and the pictures of his family are "forgotten in his wallet, lost between old lottery slips" (*D*, 138). Working non-stop for a year, he little by little becomes mentally dislocated from his country of origin, marries another woman to gain citizenship, has a child with her and completely forsakes his first family.

Another of the often-discussed aspects of the immigrant experience relates to the working conditions that foreign-born citizens and illegal immigrants are often forced to endure. The positive qualities often attributed to first-generation Latino immigrant workers include their willingness to work hard, not being too proud to do anything, being ready to follow orders and not complain about anything. It naturally follows that many employers take advantage of the difficult position of immigrants who are willing to withstand all this in their pursuit of a better life; the dark side of the American Dream has, from the country's beginnings to the present day, involved immigrants working menial jobs for long hours at poverty wages, often facing the risk of wage theft, workplace injuries, and hazardous job conditions. One of the central scenes in "Negocios" is when Ramon hurts his back in the factory and cannot get help from any of his co-workers, who are concerned with keeping their own jobs and afraid that taking the time to help him would get them in trouble with the unnamed, unseen boss. Ramon, in his own fear of losing his job, instead of taking any legal action or seeking proper medical help, which would prevent him from working for a long time, keeps swallowing large amounts of painkillers and returns to work only to find out that "the bosses were unanimous in voting down his next raise and demoted him to the rotating shift he'd been on during the first days of the job" (*D*, 160). This is where Díaz strikes deeply into the idea of what it often means to be an immigrant to the United States – to deal with disillusionment, injustice and low wages, long shifts and substandard living conditions.

While "Negocios" is assumingly meant to illustrate the first-hand experience of immigrants and the obstacles encountered on their path towards the American Dream,

in other stories Díaz portrays the family crises caused by immigration – as, in Kevane's words, "the sacrifices of immigration damage the family."[13] A pervasive theme of the entire collection of stories is the absence of the father, with the mother having to bear the burden of bringing up the family on her own. It is not just financial strain that the absence of the father causes; it also results in emotional strain. In the story "Aguantado," Díaz describes the living conditions of Yunior, his older brother Rafa, their mother and grandfather in the Dominican Republic before they left for the United States, and how every member of the family is forced to face the consequences of separation. The wife deals with a challenging emotional situation combined with extreme poverty, and the sons, especially the younger son Yunior, seek various kinds of replacement for the lack of fatherly love. While the older family members gradually become pessimistic and after years of waiting become reconciled to the idea that the father will never return, Yunior, although barely able to remember his father, remains positive, still hoping he will see his father again.

This story presents a clear picture of the family's financial situation during the father's absence: they live under a leaking roof in a dangerous neighborhood, lacking the money to afford proper food, let alone school uniforms. Because Yunior was too young when his father left to remember him clearly, he instead creates an idea of his father from pieces of his life. The memories Yunior has are more or less converted into material and specific items: "he was a cloud of cigar smoke, the traces of which could still be found on the uniforms he'd left behind. He was pieces of my friends' fathers, of the domino players on the corner, pieces of Mami and Abuelo" (*D*, 54). The character of the father is likened to a plastic sandwich bag in which the valuable photographs of Ramón must be hidden because everything that has at least some value must be covered with plastic so that it does not get soaked. Everything else can be affected by the poor-quality roof and the destructive rain, apart from the photographs, which tells us how valuable they are to the mother: "everything we owned was water-stained: our clothes, Mami's Bible, her makeup, whatever food we had, Abuelo's tools, our cheap wooden furniture" (*D*, 53).

In fact, Yunior does more than create an image; he constructs an idealized image of his father that symbolizes the promise of his return, as he is not aware of the previous letters and father's false promises, claiming, "I didn't know him at all, I didn't know he'd abandoned us. That this waiting for him was all a sham" (*D*, 54). On the contrary, Yunior perceives his father as a hero, admiring him while looking at the pictures, expressing a strong desire to know him better and hoping that his eventual return will solve the problems of impoverishment they have had to face. As Kevane puts it, "Yunior clings to this hope, despite his mother and Rafa's experience, both of whom are disillusioned. Yunior, only nine, still believes" (*D*, 76). At the same time, Yunior displays a strong fear of growing distant from or losing any other member of the family. When their financial situation is bad and the mother has no money to feed them, she sends Rafa and Yunior to stay with their relatives. Unlike Rafa, who "doesn't mind going

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13 Kevane, *Latino Literature in America*, 72.

anywhere," Yunior does not want to leave his mother, and any kind of sympathy or consolation from Rafa and his grandfather are absolutely useless, as is the fact that he would eat better there and have a broader scope of things to do. Yunior tells us that he "never wanted to be away from the family." Intuitively, he "knew how easily distance could harden and become permanent" (*D*, 58).

Another type of family alienation is portrayed in the story "Fiesta, 1980," which is the only story in the collection to show Ramon living with his Dominican family in the United States. While in "Aguantado" the physical distance between the family members appears to be the main obstacle, at least for Yunior, in "Fiesta, 1980" the family are living together in the United States. However, Ramon's presence does not compensate for the missing parental love during the years when Yunior, his mother and his brother were living without the father. The alienation is captured from a psychological point of view; the problems produced by the long-term family separation, the father's arrogant behavior, his extramarital affair and miscommunication; although the family is technically intact, abandonment continues to haunt the characters.

Even though the father is living with the family in this story, he is displayed as a partially-missing element in the family. Ramon's key function is to threaten them and demonstrate who the boss in the family is, and despite the little time he spends with them and his rather reserved communication at home, he does not lose his status of authority; conversely, his authoritative position is strengthened. The atmosphere in the family changes significantly upon Ramon's return from work, as everybody is trying to avoid irritating him by all means. This is best seen on the day when the family is supposed to visit relatives who "finally made it to the United States" (*D*, 17). The mother is at first looking forward to going, telling her sons "she wanted to have a good time at the party." However, as they are waiting for "Papi to finish his shower," she seems "anxious in her usual dispassionate way" (*D*, 18).

It is again Yunior who is placed at the forefront of the story, being the character who is most affected by the tense situation at home. Every time the family travels in the father's Volkswagen van, "brand-new, lime-green and bought to impress" (*D*, 20), he feels nauseous and vomits, so Ramon decides to prevent a possible disaster in the van by not allowing him to eat anything before or at the party, threatening him that otherwise he will be beaten. On other days, Ramon takes Yunior for trips around the city in the van to train his stomach, which actually does not bring any improvements. Surprisingly, although Yunior feels sick every time he is in the van, being made to feel even worse by the father, both physically and mentally, he does not mind those trips: "I looked forward to our trips, even though at the end of each one I'd be sick. These were the only times me and Papi did anything together" (*D*, 27). He supposes that if it were not for his nausea, he would not spend any time with his father at all. In spite of everything, Yunior admits to his hopes that he will eventually win some fatherly love by trying to be a god son: "I still wanted him to love me, something that never seemed strange or contradictory until years later, when he was out of our lives" (*D*, 20).

The story reveals Yunior's deeper anxieties, and his carsickness symbolizes something else. His father, as it turns out, often takes Yunior along in the van when he

visits his Puerto Rican mistress. Not only is Yunior internally exhausted by the awful situation at home, noticing his mother almost shaking when his father shows up, his mental strain is intensified by the looming threat of abandonment and the void left by the father who is never fully with them and who moreover may leave them again for good.

In conclusion, although the situation of the family changes and they are finally living together again in the Promised Land, this does not remedy the sense of alienation that is already embedded within the family. This confirms the words of Kevane, who suggests that immigration is a risk, as not only is part of one's culture lost in the process of assimilation, but it also permanently damages the family.[14] Indeed, Díaz illustrates how the circumstances of long-term impoverishment and the absent male's role determine the core of family disintegration and dysfunction.

Thus, hand in hand with the grouping of these distinct and separate cultures under one term, Hispanic American, comes a certain amount of diversity of experience, point of view and presentation. *Dreaming in Cuban* is primarily a story of dysfunctional relationships made worse by the political separations caused by the isolation of Communist Cuba from the United States. Both the physical separation created between family members after the Cuban revolution and the emotional separation existing between them are presented in a lyrical, haunting and spiritual way. On the other hand, with a writing style that is clear and easy, if a little unconventional, Díaz puts into words the frustrations, pitfalls and experiences of immigrants in a way that is accessible, memorable and strikingly personal, depicting poverty and struggle in a matter-of-fact way. *Drown* does not call for pity or admiration, but there are moments the reader inevitably faces each. All in all, despite the divergence, both the studied works jointly provide a vivid image of the complexity and far-reaching consequences of immigration; how it affects the life of not only those with first-hand experience of what it is like to be an alien, legal or illegal, in a new country, but also the whole family on both economic and emotional levels.

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14 See Kevane, *Latino Literature in America*, 73.

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The Vanished World of Jews: Melvin Jules Bukiet's *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood*

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Abstract: In his short story cycle *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* (1992), Melvin Jules Bukiet describes the vanished world of the *shtetl* Proszowice – his father's home town – with its rituals, superstitions and hopes. The stories are set in the period preceding the wartime cataclysm, seen from the perspective of a nameless Jewish child, and the narrative is inevitably shaped by the course of the devastating events that were to follow. In these interrelated stories, Bukiet explores Jewish identity as seen from the perspective of the second generation of American Holocaust writers. They are written in the best tradition of Isaac Bashevis Singer's and Bernard Malamud's prose, but in the author's employment of an artistic narrator and with their provocative tone, they are reminiscent of another great Jewish American writer – Philip Roth. Although the narrator's childhood is imaginary, its evocation is not solely based on fantasy; it draws on Bukiet's deep knowledge of Jewish history in Europe and the Jewish literary heritage.

Keywords: Melvin Jules Bukiet; short story cycle; initiation; Jewish identity; shtetl; child; imagination; Holocaust

In 2009, I participated in the conference "The Legacy of the Holocaust: Family and the Holocaust," organized by Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. Within its program, I had an opportunity to take a bus tour that traced the history of the vanished *shtetls* east of Krakow. Sadly, little has remained of these once-vibrant Jewish communities. I could only *imagine* their rich life, which was destined to be destroyed in the Holocaust. In visiting five former shtetls – Działoszyce, Pińczów, Chęciny, Chmielnik and Szydłów – I saw merely tiny fragments of the once vibrant Jewish life and culture in Poland. The visit to Działoszyce was particularly distressing, as I saw the ruins of a synagogue, a destroyed Jewish cemetery and a memorial located on the site of the mass graves where approximately 1,500 elderly and sick Jews were murdered in September 1942, while about 10,000 younger and healthier Jews were sent to a concentration camp. But even though synagogues in some other towns survived the war, they no longer served their original purposes because there were no Jews living in these towns.

One of the literary attempts to recreate the vanished world of a shtetl similar to those I visited during the conference can be seen in the book *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* (1992) by Melvin Jules Bukiet. Born in 1953, the son of a Polish Holocaust survivor who immigrated to the United States in 1948, Bukiet represents the second generation of American Holocaust writers. He is particularly known as the author of the novel *After* (1996), in which he depicts the chaotic time immediately after the Holocaust, and *While the Messiah Tarries* (1995), which portrays the life of Orthodox

Jews. As an editor of the anthology *Nothing Makes You Free* (2003), he collected texts written by the children of Holocaust survivors.

Without an immediate experience of the lives of Jews before and during World War II, Bukiet, like many other American post-Holocaust writers, relies to a large extent on his imagination – which enables him to recreate the tragic past of the European Jews. In his short story cycle *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* (1992), he depicts the world of the shtetl Proszowice with its orthodox Jewish community and its rituals, superstitions and hopes. He sets his stories in 1928, when this community could not have suspected the tragedy awaiting it. Proszowice, where Bukiet's father was born, is a small town near Krakow, but today it is a far cry from the shtetl it used to be before World War II. Although Eastern European shtetls were destroyed entirely during the war, they were already experiencing a crisis at the turn of the twentieth century, and the Holocaust merely sealed their destiny.

Bukiet is not the only contemporary American writer who has attempted to portray the life of enclosed communities in shtetls, despite the fact that these writers could rely only on their imagination and knowledge of Jewish history. At least two more writers managed to bring the unique world of these pious communities back to life in their works. Rebecca Goldstein recorded the sleepy and stifling atmosphere of a shtetl, seen from a feminist perspective, in her novel *Mazel* (1995). In her imaginative recreation of Shluftchev, a remote, sleepy and backward village in eastern Poland inhabited by pious people, she accentuated the revolt of two sisters against the limited role of women and their confinements within the patriarchal Jewish orthodox community. Jonathan Safran Foer, in his multilayered novel *Everything is Illuminated* (2002), traced the long pre-Holocaust history of an extinct shtetl named Trachimbrod up to its final destruction in World War II. In his panoramic picture of this history, he employed elements of magical realism as a means to convey the tragedy of the Eastern European Jews.[1] However, neither of these novels focuses entirely on the shtetl setting, unlike Bukiet's book. A major part of Goldstein's novel takes place in the urban setting of Warsaw and in a community of modern orthodox Jews in New Jersey, though the novel's protagonist considers this community to be a shtetl transplanted to America and wittily refers to the "reshtetlization of America."[2] Similarly, the main storyline of Foer's novel is not set in a shtetl but in postwar Ukraine, where a young American Jew arrives to trace the Holocaust history of his ancestor with the assistance of Ukrainian guides.[3]

In terms of genre, *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* is not merely a collection of short stories; similarly to *Elijah Visible* (1996) by Thane Rosenbaum, another American post-Holocaust writer of the second generation, Bukiet's book can be classified as a short story cycle or a novel in stories. The twelve interconnected stories share several

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1   Naturally, Eastern European shtetls appear in the works of the older generation of Jewish American writers, e.g., Bernard Malamud, *The Fixer* (New York: Farraf, Straus and Giroux, 1966), and in Isaac Bashevis Singer's fiction.
2   Rebecca Goldstein, *Mazel* (1995; Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 354.
3   See Jonathan S. Foer, *Everything Is Illuminated* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002).

unifying elements. Their narrator is a nameless Jewish child, and all of the stories are set in Proszowice in 1928. They feature peculiar, even extravagant characters (some of them reminiscent of stock figures in the tradition of Yiddish stories set in shtetls). The most distinctive characters are recurring figures like Isaac the Millionaire, who is actually a pauper, the suspicious Rabbi Tellmann, the overweight village whore Rebecca, the music teacher Mrs. Hemtobble, Zalman the Digger, who turns out to be a great shtetl philosopher, and last but not least, the narrator's parents, the owners of a village store. The literary critic Alan L. Berger notes that "Bukiet's portrayal of the shtetl's artful scoundrels, demons, sexual impulses, and Jewish-Christian (non) relations, reminds one of the works of Isaac Bashevis Singer."[4] However, the stories also display the influence of Sholom Aleichem or Bernard Malamud, and in some parts they are reminiscent of Philip Roth and Sherwood Anderson.

Bukiet's stories can be approached as stories of initiation or coming-of-age, and if we treat them as a novel in stories, we can view the collection as a bildungsroman. The stories reflect the maturation of a twelve-year-old boy who is nearing Bar Mitzvah, the ritual confirming the boy's status of religious duty and responsibility and enabling him to become a fully-fledged member of the community. The boy's maturation is tested in various situations to which he is forced to find an adequate response, be it an uncontrolled sexual impulse or an unexpected manifestation of anti-Semitism. Since the short story cycle is framed by Jewish religious holidays, the narrator is also introduced to various patterns and traditions, often of a ritualistic nature.

As the title of Bukiet's book suggests, imagination plays an important role in his stories. Several of them are about the initiation of the boy into art – to be more specific, into the process of writing. Already in the initial story "The Virtuoso," the narrator admits that he is endowed with exuberant imagination. For example, he imagines forest sprites in a hollow of a willow tree. However, his artistic inclination is misdirected by his parents, who force him to take violin lessons with the music teacher, Mrs. Hemtobble, who sees a future virtuoso in him. In fact, the boy hates these lessons, oscillating between feelings of obligation and a desire for independence. The point is that the old violin, inherited from his ancestors, symbolizes continuity, tradition and Jewishness. According to Andrew Furman, the parents compel their son to play the violin so that he will "accept his place in the continuum of their familial, Jewish history."[5] Being of a rebellious nature, however, the son chooses independence and refuses to attend the lessons. He even desires to destroy the precious musical instrument, yet simultaneously he feels an affinity with his Jewish people, and therefore in the final scene, at the story's close, he hides the violin in a tree hollow for a future genius, passing the tradition on to the following generation. However, it is also the beauty of art and creativity that saves him from a destructive act; eavesdropping accidentally on Mrs. Hemtobble playing music, he is impressed by this almost transcendental moment. He feels that

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4   Alan L. Berger, "Stories of an Imaginary Childhood," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 12, no. 1 (1993): 116, doi:10.1353/sho.1993.0107.

5   Andrew Furman, *Contemporary Jewish American Writers and the Multicultural Dilemma: The Return of the Exiled* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 44.

"[s]he played the song of the Jews, of the remembered past and the redeemable future," and even after the music ceases he realizes that "there was a silence full of presence."[6] Overwhelmed by the beauty of the music and ashamed by his own imperfection, he receives a more important lesson from his teacher – it is art that can fill the emptiness in his life. When he spontaneously starts playing the composition "The Spinning Song," his "awakening to music is an awakening to a forgotten past and to a redeemable future."[7]

In the story "Sincerely Yours," the narrator finds his own artistic potential in writing. The story focuses on one of the most bizarre characters of the cycle, Isaac the Millionaire, who recognizes the boy's writing talent and hires him to write love letters to a woman whom he wants to seduce and eventually to marry. So far his literary talent has been (mis)used by his parents for rather pragmatic purposes – they have utilized his gift in order to advertise the herrings and other goods they sell in their store. Isaac, who is actually an impoverished and indebted man with a weakness for women, believes that the boy's high-flown, florid writing style will help him obtain the woman of his dreams from Krakow. As the narrator confesses, "Isaac made the offer that was to transform me from Proszowice's second greatest liar into a writer" (66). His letters are effective, making a deep impression on the Krakow woman, but more importantly, the whole story is an account of the transformation of a "liar into a writer." This change is catalyzed by his visit to an opera house in Krakow, where Isaac takes the boy to see a Puccini opera. For the boy who knew only the restraints and narrowness of the shtetl, this is a wonderful experience, which greatly enhances his writing. He realizes that "there was more to this world than herring," and thus he wants his words "to sing like those of the sainted Puccini" (71).

The narrator's literary beginnings are the subject of the story "Ventriloquism," which is concerned with his search for his own voice. This voice, as well as his conscience, are impersonated by the supernatural figure of a ventriloquistic rag doll that releases his creative energy. In the context of Bukiet's stories of initiation, in the story "New Words for Old" the boy manifests himself as a maturing poet. He is confronted with the renowned Jewish poet Kimminov, who is to pass through the village in his carriage. Kimminov's stay in Proszowice is unexpectedly prolonged due to an accident, and thus the villagers, excited by the chance to see this literary celebrity, take advantage of this situation and ask him for a public reading of his poems in their *shul*. Although they do not understand poetry at all, they look up at him as an idol because "Jews have a great respect for the written word, so that as it is written it must be read" (131). Obviously the poet's reading is a major event for all inhabitants of the shtetl. However, because Kimminov loses his voice, the boy is instructed to read the poet's verses aloud. He spontaneously starts to "improve" or "remedy" Kimminov's biblical poetry, to substitute new words for old. This urge is reinforced by the fact that he himself feels himself to

6   Melvin J. Bukiet, *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992), 13. Hereafter cited in the text.

7   Efraim Sicher, ed., "The Burden of Memory: The Writing of the Post-Holocaust Generation," in *Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory after Auschwitz* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 51.

be a poet, and the event itself becomes a rare occasion to express his own poetic voice – the voice revolting against the archaism and obsoleteness of Kimminov's poems. The old poet's lines on the expulsion of Adam from the Garden of Eden seem as stale and rancid as his breath. Unlike in Kimminov's original poem, the boy's rebellious Adam willfully bites into an apple and voluntarily abandons Eden. This adaptation becomes a manifestation of the young boy's generational rebellion – an act which is registered only by his father, the suspicious rabbi, and Kimminov himself. In the boy's rebellious voice, Furman detects "the indomitable voice of a Jewish artist as a young man."[8] The transformation of the poem's content reveals that the narrator's rebellion has both aesthetic and religious dimensions.

Another group of Bukiet's stories of initiation is related to the narrator's sexual awakening. They reflect his shift from the platonic concept of love to its physicality. While in the story "Sincerely Yours" the boy romanticizes his affection for Isaac's lady's granddaughter and loves only the idea of love, the story "Virginity" indicates that his approach to women is driven by sexual impulse and has become less innocent. The main storyline takes place during Hanukkah, the festival of lights, commemorating the dedication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem. In this story, Bukiet masterfully merges the secular with the sacred, presenting the conflict of spiritual purity, symbolized by the mikvah, a ritual bath, and temptation resulting in sin. For the narrator, the object of temptation is the village whore Rebecca, to whom he is helplessly attracted. The boy knows that his inner struggle is lost. Seeing women going into and out of the mikvah, he ruminates, "I knew that the purity restored by the ritual bath would never be mine. Instead of its cleansing waters, it was the muck of sin I was immersing myself in. Up to and beyond the neck, I was drowning in sin, and still I pursued it" (157).

Yet even in his lust for Rebecca's body, the boy's sexual desire has a romantic flavor and the charge of chivalric novels. His romanticizing adoration of Rebecca reaches almost religious dimensions, and the romantic imagery through which he depicts the object of his yearning is reminiscent of the protagonist of Joyce's story "Araby" in *Dubliners*: "I might have been a medieval knight, wearing her favor tied to my lance, were it not for the vow of secrecy I had sworn in order to protect her honor," says Bukiet's narrator (155). "I yearned to ride a horse, or shoe one, or do something, anything to impress her and penetrate the barrier that stood between us" (160). Although the village prostitute differs from Mangan's sister in "Araby" both physically and spiritually, the boy attributes the same qualities to her – holiness, romance, religion, erotic challenge (though not hidden, in Bukiet's story), and even innocence. In Joyce's story, the protagonist's imagination is analogously nourished from romances: "I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand."[9]

Eventually, Bukiet's story reaches an unexpected denouement when the protagonist,

8   Furman, *Contemporary Jewish American Writers*, 46.
9   James Joyce, *Dubliners* (New York: Dover Publications, 1991), 16.

like Hemingway's Nick Adams in the story "Indian Camp," is initiated into the mystery of childbirth, assisting at Rebecca's delivery of an illegitimate child at the mikvah. For him, the childbirth becomes a sort of substitute for unrealized sexual intercourse – but also, by referring to *our* child and rocking the newborn baby in his arms, he identifies with the role of the father.

Several stories can be described as narratives of philosophical maturation and intellectual sophistication. In these stories, two persons are of particular importance for the narrator – Zalman the Digger and an adolescent boy named Jacob Lester. Zalman the Digger appears as the central character in the second part of the story with the Chekhovian title "The Woman with a Dog," which may remind the reader of Sherwood Anderson's best stories about great, yet unfulfilled ambitions. In his youth, Zalman was a gifted boy with many possibilities and life choices. However, his life is one of missed chances and wasted opportunities. Although Zalman is regarded as an outsider in the shtetl, having the status of an ordinary gravedigger, living alone, a passive figure, for the boy Zalman is an extraordinary person, a thoughtful philosopher, contemplating the meaning of life and its limitations. This wise man, with his detached attitude towards life, becomes a mentor for the boy, whose eyes are opened by him. Zalman's painful awareness of his wasted love for the girl next door makes his life unbearable. As he says, "One chance for a lifetime of moments traded, for what? for the phantoms of the imagination, the horror, the calling, the spade with which to dig my own grave" (98). He knows that his life consists of unlived moments, and so he begs the boy to end his life.

This seemingly undistinguished man in fact initiates the boy into the philosophy of life, and functions as a memento of emptiness for him. The existential scene in which the narrator meditates among the graves in the presence of the silent Zalman is reminiscent of another American Midwestern writer, the poet Edgar Lee Masters and his *Spoon River Anthology*: "Then I stood in the doorway and looked out over the field of stones and wondered what those who lay beneath them had expected for themselves and whether their expectations had been satisfied" (94). Apart from this rather melancholic tone, "The Woman with a Dog" also depicts the communality of the shtetl, its collectivity, and its resistance to unwanted individualism. We are told that "Proszowice was a town of talkers. Rhapsodic, romantic, pedantic, crooning or kvetching, crying or kibitzing, everyone was endlessly engaged in this one pursuit" (89).

The multilayered story "The Blue-Eyed Jew" deals with the clash between modernity and tradition and the penetration of Western culture into Jewish Eastern European communities. Modernity is embodied by "the blue-eyed Jew" Jacob Lester, another character in the shtetl who has a deep impact on the protagonist. For the boy, he is "our enlightenment" (119). Jacob represents a rebel who scorns the orthodox rigidity of the local rabbis, the defenders of traditional values. Instead he admires America, the country of progress and modern technology, to which he intends to emigrate. He becomes a heretic, fascinated by modernity, whereas the Reb Tellman represents the past. Their different world views cause frequent conflicts between them, as the

following dialogue shows:

> "There was an age for prophecy. There was an age for interpretation. Now is an age for obedience," the Rabbi said.
> "Now is the age for electricity," Jacob replied, although there was none for fifty miles.
> "Since when doesn't a candle give light?" (119)

The free-thinking Jacob criticizes the fixed order of the shtetl, including the inferior position of women in its patriarchal hierarchy. He is bothered that "in Proszowice, the women wore ragged dresses topped with old shirts covered by raveling sweaters and, usually, a shawl. While their husbands studied, they did the work of the oxen they resembled" (120). He tends to defy established authorities, and this is exactly what attracts the narrator to him. However, despite the boy's admiration of Jacob, he does not share his older friend's fondness for modern technology. Since he is a budding artist, he believes in the imagination instead. In his abundant fantasy, he imagines old inscriptions of "ancient writings of primitive peoples" (125) carved on the stone walls of the village well. As he wants to explore them, he asks Jacob to lower him into the well in the bucket; however, they both accidentally fall to the bottom of the well. The descent is symbolic, representing the descent to their ancestors and traditions, in contrast to Jacob's America with its modern technology. Yet, in this extreme situation, the boy realizes that Jacob's fascination with the New World is in fact merely a mask that conceals his deep devotion to the past. Facing a real danger in the well, he learns from Jacob that "ten tribes live there [in America]. Someone should help them. Someone should tell them to return to the paths of their ancestors" (128). The apparent parallel between Jews and Native Americans makes this story universal and fulfils a similar function to the parallel between Jews and blacks in Malamud's fiction.

At the story's close, the narrator carves his initials and his "first message to the world, [his] first poem, into the stone at the bottom of the well: 'In Proszowice … is America'" (129). Like the violin hidden in the willow hollow, this is a message for the future generations, and it is also a manifestation of the reconciliation of two worlds – the world of the legacy of the past, which should be treasured, and the world of modernity.

The narrator's revolt is primarily directed against the backwardness and stagnation of the shtetl; however, his rebellious spirit is also accompanied by the effort to preserve his Jewish identity. On the one hand he is sick of his life in Proszowice, while on the other hand he retains his respect for Jewishness. All of Bukiet's stories are accounts of his protagonist's struggle to integrate these two opposing forces, which together form the boy's personality. If in "The Blue-Eyed Jew" the narrator is longing for a descent, in the story "Levitation" his yearning pulls him in the opposite direction. Here he reaffirms his independence through his religious disobedience during the high holidays on Rosh Hashanah, when he revolts against the established ritualistic customs. Whereas the inhabitants of Proszowice purify themselves from their sins in the river, the restless boy instead decides to levitate. "My body, like bread, like breath, shall rise" (23), he says to himself, referring to the customary Jewish ritual in which

villagers throw small pieces of bread into the flowing water in order to repudiate their sins.[10] However, during his attempt to fly, in a state of ecstasy he almost drowns in the river. His near-martyrdom might bring to mind Philip Roth's famous story "The Conversion of the Jews," though, unlike Roth, instead of humor Bukiet employs lyrical descriptions of nature and the boy's mental state, through which he conveys the boy's transcendence of the restricting reality of the shtetl. His desire is nourished not only by his imagination; it is also the result of his doubts about God and religious dogmas and his desire for freedom, expressed through his striving for levitation. Sanford Pinsker calls Bukiet's fiction "theofiction" and claims that "taken together, Bukiet's fictions are a protracted quarrel with God."[11] In Furman's view, "his [narrator's] desire to levitate represents not a rejection of Judaism per se, but a rejection of the traditional modes of religious expression. [...] Bukiet depicts the emergence of the narrator's creative, independent consciousness against a backdrop of powerful familial love and religious ardor."[12]

In the story "The Quilt and the Bicycle," the protagonist engages in a revolt against the confining narrowness of the shtetl by his attraction to a different ethnic culture – that of Gypsies. A similar motif appears in Rebecca Goldstein's *Mazel*, in which two sisters, Fraydel and Sorel, decide to flee their shtetl in order to find freedom in a Gypsy community. In Bukiet's story, the boy barters a traditional patchwork quilt, a symbol of Jewishness, functioning as protection against the traps of this world, for a bicycle which belongs to a Gypsy boy. This transaction proves to be unlucky; the boy has an accident and damages the bicycle, which he had identified with mobility and freedom and which had helped him to earn the respect of others. Moreover, he fails in his attempt to befriend the Gypsies, as he is not accepted by their community. The scene in which he is allowed to take the quilt back symbolizes his return to Jewish traditions and a regaining of his Jewish identity. The narrator's final sentence, "[w]rapped in my legacy, I walked home" (59), underscores the importance of these traditions, and conveys the message that cultural/ethnic identity cannot be bartered, as it is profoundly conditioned by its past.

Bukiet's stories take place on the eve of the Holocaust, and this influences their content. The temporal setting explains why some stories foreground the theme of anti-Semitism. This is the case of the story "The Apprentice," in which the narrator, as in the story "Virginity," struggles with temptation during another high holiday – this time Yom Kippur. While he is fasting (though, being a boy before Bar Mitzvah, it is not his duty to do so), he is tempted to eat groceries displayed on the shelves or in the display case of his parents' store. Paradoxically, anti-Semitic remarks made by an arrogant and boorish Polish gentile customer help him not to succumb to the gastronomic temptation, as they cause him to forget his hunger. This story offers an insight into the complicated co-existence between Jews and Christians in Poland.

10　This purification ceremony is called *Tashlich*. This ritual also includes the recitation of verses from the Bible and praying.

11　Sanford Pinsker, "Revisiting the Grand Inquisitor: Melvin Jules Bukiet and Theofiction," *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 19 (2000): 50.

12　Furman, *Contemporary Jewish American Writers*, 45.

In the story "Nurseries," the narrator confesses that the entire shtetl "Proszowice was the nursery in which we matured" (170). However, this process of maturation occurs in an environment permeated by anti-Semitism, which profoundly affects his life. He is exposed to this hatred from his early childhood, listening to racist nursery rhymes:

> "Tell me now, my little fellow,
> Have you bumped off many men?"
> "Just three of them were Christians
> Plus one hundred Yids and ten."
> "For the Yids we shall forgive you.
> For the Christians we shall not.
> Thus at dawn tomorrow morning,
> In the courtyard, you'll be shot." (177)

At the end of the story, the boy accidently sets a greenhouse on fire, ultimately destroying the whole structure. Alan L. Berger comments on this final scene as follows: "'Nurseries' is a metaphor describing Jewish innocence on the eve of the *Shoah*. The chaos of fire and destruction which engulfs the shtetl's greenhouse is a prefiguration of the much greater and far more destructive inferno which would destroy the Jews of Europe."[13]

The most fantastic story of Bukiet's cycle is "Torquemada," named after the Spanish Dominican inquisitor who was one of the most fervent proponents of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. Here the narrator has hallucinations in which he assumes the identity of Torquemada as well as other enemies of the Jews, e.g., Pharaoh, Haman or Chmielnicki. His nightmare corresponds to Jewish self-hate, an important motif of this story. He adopts anti-Semitic rhetoric, and in his diatribes against his own people he ideologically equals the Nazis and de facto precedes the Holocaust. His speech, imbued with the worst racial stereotypes, could have been made by Hitler: "Your [Jewish] minority is a rag-ridden, flea-bitten race of whorish, usurious, inbreeding Christ-killers and should be exterminated. [...] Rid forever of the Jewish contagion, it shall be a day of universal thanksgiving and universal belief in the one true God" (190). When the boy awakes from his hallucination, he hears his father's pacifying words: "It's all OK. Maybe the Messiah's been a little late, maybe he'll be a little later, but Torquemada's gone, and we don't have to worry. We have each other and it's the twentieth century of civilized man. There, there. What harm could possibly come to us in 1928?" (197). Considering the chain of historical events that would happen in the following decade, the collection *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* acquires an ironic conclusion.

All in all, Bukiet's book contains powerful stories about people who, in their innocence, do not know and cannot possibly know what the reader knows – that their fate is already sealed. It is an account of the author's travel through time to the place of his ancestors, using his imagination and knowledge. His stories mirror his attempt to recreate the vanished world of Eastern European Jews in the period preceding their

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13   Berger, "Stories of an Imaginary Childhood," 117.

annihilation. In this short story cycle, Bukiet has created a memorial to Proszowice – just one of hundreds of shtetls that were destroyed during World War II. At the same time, it is a memorial to his father's childhood, and perhaps to his own unlived alternative childhood, an imaginary childhood that he might have partly experienced had it not been for the violently broken continuity of Jewish life.

Acknowledgement

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The Role of Nature
in Willa Cather's *My Ántonia*

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Abstract: This paper examines the significant role played by nature in the 1918 novel *My Ántonia* by Willa Cather. The author draws on her own memories of Nebraska, its landscape, life on a farm, and the experiences of European immigrants and their struggles to make a better life in the wilderness, emphasizing the importance of nature in their attempts to achieve the American dream. On one hand, the prairie represents toil and hardship for the immigrants, who are greatly challenged by the harsh landscape in their attempts to cultivate the soil. On the other hand, the land sustains people if they know how to cultivate it. The landscape of Nebraska tests the immigrants' endurance and presents an obstacle to prosperity and even survival itself. However, the immigrants – led by the main character Ántonia Shimerda, originally from Bohemia – show a good deal of determination to succeed.

Keywords: Willa Cather; Nebraska prairies; nature; European immigrants; Bohemia; American dream

The U.S. immigration experience is not always positive. Whether it is failure to succeed, an identity crisis caused by contrastive cultures, or simply bad luck, numerous literary works document negative stories of incoming foreigners, among them Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906), John Okada's *No-No Boy* (1957), Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones* (1959), Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street* (1984), Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* (1989), or Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* (1990). Willa Cather's *My Ántonia* (1918), on the other hand, depicts Bohemian immigrants whose unlucky beginnings in an unfamiliar country led to a rather promising future. One might have thought the "poor" people from Bohemia would never make it in the Promised Land; however, sometimes it is not luck but rather skill and determination that determines success. Set in the harsh environment of the American frontier, Cather's *My Ántonia* suggests that it was the strength and persistence of European immigrants that not only helped them to prevail over initial difficulties but which ultimately gave shape to the American character.

The inspiration for the works of Willa Cather, with their pervasive theme of the American frontier, stemmed from her childhood memories of life in Red Cloud, Nebraska,[1] which was surrounded by the prairie. Red Cloud was home to a diverse populace, with varied customs and traditions. It was a crossroads for immigrants from Eastern Europe, a base from which they set out into the surrounding land. Growing

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1   See Donald McQuade, et al., *The Harper American Literature*, vol. 2 (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 960.

up in the Great Plains, Cather witnessed the lives and struggles of Eastern European immigrants and pioneers, whom she befriended. Those friendships provided her with firsthand observations of their quest for a better life. Cather witnessed and later recorded the struggles and aspirations of various people (not only immigrants) on the frontier as they tried to achieve the American dream – not only in the novel *My Ántonia*, discussed here, but also in works such as *O Pioneers* (1913) and *The Song of the Lark* (1915).[2]

The novel *My Ántonia* focuses mainly on immigrants from Bohemia, centered on the figure of Ántonia Shimerda. It evokes the ways in which the harsh prairie environment and the prejudices of the locals influenced society. The immigrants often travelled to America to achieve the American dream; they moved to a country where land was freely available and success was achievable, either in order to become rich or simply to secure better lives, as Ántonia explains to Jim: "America big country, much money, much land for my boys, much husband for my girls."[3] Even though *My Ántonia* portrays both the fortunes and misfortunes of European immigrants, Cather generally characterizes the immigrants as strong in both body and spirit, with an admirable determination to succeed; these qualities are clearly exemplified in the protagonist, Ántonia.

Bohemian characters were evidently appealing to Cather. Besides *My Ántonia*, there are several more examples of such figures in her works, such as the characters in her short stories "The Bohemian Girl" (1912) and "Neighbor Rosicky" (1930), or in *O Pioneers*.[4] Therefore, it may be deduced that Cather encountered Czech immigrants on the prairies who would later become an inspiration for her fiction; for example, Tim Prchal notes that a girl Cather met during her childhood, Annie Sadilek, "is regularly named as the author's model for Ántonia Shimerda."[5]

Immigration from the Czech lands (comprised of the historical regions of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) began in the mid-nineteenth century. The roots of this immigration can be traced back to the Homestead Act of 1862,[6] as well as to an immigration treaty between the United States and Austria-Hungary, which opened the door to immigrants from Eastern Europe.[7] Due to a shortage of available land, the farms of Czech peasants were often too small to be profitable. They therefore dreamed of owning a sizeable amount of land, and an ideal place to make this dream come true

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2   See Emory Elliot, et al., *American Literature: A Prentice Hall Anthology* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1991), 1585.

3   Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (New York: Dover Publications, 1994), 45. Hereafter cited in the text as *MA*.

4   See Tim Prchal, "The Bohemian Paradox: *My Ántonia* and Popular Images of Czech Immigrants," *Melus* 29, no. 2 (2014): 4, doi:10.2307/4141817.

5   See Prchal, "The Bohemian Paradox," 4.

6   The Homestead Act of 1862 granted 160 acres of land to settlers in order to cultivate uninhabited land. The settlers were obliged to stay on the property and work the land for at least five years, at which time they could apply for ownership. See Hannah L. Anderson, "That Settles It: The Debate and Consequences of the Homestead Act of 1862," *History Teacher* 45, no. 1 (2011): 117–19.

7   See Josef Opatrný, "Problems in the History of Czech Immigration to America in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Nebraska History* 74, no. 3/4 (1993): 120.

was America. Consequently, multitudes left their homes in a quest for opportunities. The first Czech immigrants settled primarily in Nebraska, Illinois, Texas and New York, and they mainly became farmers – as is depicted in *My Ántonia.*

Every place has its own characteristic natural features, and Nebraska during the second half of the nineteenth century was characterized by its flat steppe grasslands. Nebraska, which became a state in 1867 shortly before the immigrants arrived, had little to offer but large expanses of unused land, but it was precisely this emptiness that represented the strongest "pull" factor for the immigrants. An aggressive sales campaign was mounted in an effort to sell off an enormous amount of land then owned by the federal and local governments as well as the Burlington Railroad. The campaign involved the European distribution of thousands of pamphlets – in multiple languages – in order to attract people to Nebraska. It proved successful, swelling the state's population. The immigrants were granted a certain amount of land, but they were obliged to cultivate it if they wanted to keep it.[8]

That the novel is set in empty prairies makes the role of nature profound; it functions as another protagonist. It is the most important factor that shapes the lives of the characters, influencing key events such as the suicide of Mr. Shimerda, Ántonia's father. Although he had been homesick since their arrival, their first winter, which had not been so hard on the family, proved to be the final straw. Moreover, in *My Ántonia*, nature plays a prominent role because it greatly influences the characters' fortunes and misfortunes; as farmers, they were immensely dependent on nature. It was nature, far more than people, society or institutions, which shaped their lives. Taking possession of the land was relatively easy, so one of the few factors that might have prevented the immigrant pioneers from achieving the American dream was nature itself; adapting their farming techniques and taming the land itself were real challenges.

Cather depicts nature both realistically and romantically. Claudia Yukman points out that Cather "has been considered a romantic rather than a realistic novelist,"[9] but that realism in Cather's works is visible in the language she uses, which shows oppositions such as social vs. pastoral. Even so, the romantic visions of the Nebraska landscape tend to play a deeper role in Cather's writing than the realistic descriptions of farm work. Cather's work contains numerous aesthetic depictions of nature, embodied in the beauty of Nebraska's landscape. Each season is also portrayed both realistically and romantically; Cather contrasts harshness and difficulty (realistic) with aesthetic beauty (romantic). Realistically, she writes of great heat, fierce winds, a lack of water, prairie fires, crop diseases and crop-damaging insect infestations. The harsh winter particularly bothered the Shimerdas, forcing them to stay inside (*MA* 36) and threatening their food supply (*MA* 38).

In addition, the quality of the soil also played a key role in determining the farmers' fates. Even though the Bohemian immigrants had been farmers in their native country,

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8   See Kurt E. Kinbacher and William G. Thomas, III, "Shaping Nebraska: An Analysis of Railroad and Land Sales, 1870–1880," *Great Plains Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (2008): 191–96.

9   Claudia Yukman, "Frontier Relationships in Willa Cather's *My Ántonia*," *Pacific Coast Philology* 23, no. 1/2 (1988): 94, doi:10.2307/1316689.

the conditions in their new home were markedly different; much of the flat land of Nebraska was covered in grassland and steppe, so the farmers had to perform the grueling work of removing the surface layer of vegetation before they could start the actual tasks of farming, i.e., cultivating the soil and planting crops. They used axes and hand plows, making for back-breaking labor. The novel depicts the contrast between the situation of the newcomers and the established settlers who had come to Nebraska previously, and who therefore enjoyed certain advantages, as they were already used to the land, had overcome the initial difficulties, and were already achieving successful harvests.

The newcomers often sought advice and assistance from the established settlers, and generally received it. Mrs. Shimerda asked "a great many questions about what our men were doing in the fields. She seemed to think that my elders withheld helpful information, and that from me she might get valuable secrets. On this occasion she asked me very craftily when grandfather expected to begin planting corn" (*MA* 60). And, Jim's grandparents, although prejudiced against Europeans, were actually generous to the Shimerda family, giving them some provisions, offering them small gifts, and writing off the debt for a cow that Mrs. Shimerda owed to them.

Cather offers the reader a different view of nature through the perspective of Jim, the narrator of the story; this view represents a bridge from a rather negative view of nature towards a more positive one. At the beginning, when arriving at his grandparents' farm, the natural world of Nebraska besets him with a feeling of solitude. The country seems overly plain to him, with nothing to capture his attention and distract him from his sadness: "There seemed to be nothing to see; no fences, no creeks or trees, no hills or fields [...] There was nothing but land: not a country at all [...] I had the feeling that the world was left behind, that we had got over the edge of it, and were outside man's jurisdiction" (*MA* 7). Yet, Jim's view soon changes. He starts to see Nebraska as a beautiful place with unspoiled scenery, brimming with life. Once he actually steps outside the house and explores his surroundings, he experiences new sensations: "I felt motion in the landscape; in the fresh, easy-blowing morning wind, and in the earth itself" (*MA* 12). Later, he sits down and notes that "all about me giant grasshoppers, twice as big as any I had ever seen, were doing acrobatic feats [...] I could hear [the wind] singing its humming tune up on the level, and I could see the tall grass wave." This experience leaves him feeling "entirely happy" (*MA* 12). Jim also grows fonder of Nebraska's empty prairies because he feels an absolute freedom of action and movement there, as he expresses while riding his horse: "The new country lay open before me: there were no fences in those days, and I could choose my own way over the grass uplands [...] sometimes I followed the sunflower-bordered roads [...] I used to love to drift along the pale yellow cornfield [...] sometimes I rode north to the big prairie-dog town to watch the brown earth-owls fly home" (*MA* 17). Jim's view clearly evolved over time. The landscape that once seemed plain, simple and even dull to the narrator now seems increasingly fascinating and alive as he explores it.

In this change, Cather draws from her own experience of coming to Nebraska and her own feelings, which mirrored those of Jim. In an interview, she describes her early

times in Nebraska as follows: "I was a little homesick and lonely […] so the country and I had it out together and by the end of the first autumn the shaggy grass country had gripped me with passion that I have never been able to shake. It has been the happiness and the curse of my life."[10] Throughout the novel, Cather depicts her admiration and respect for the landscape of Nebraska. She wanted to give the reader a glimpse of it, at least in the imagination.

In the course of the novel, Cather presents the aesthetic side of the prairie environment. She uses symbolic words and associations in combination with personification or attribution of colors to her descriptions in order to express the beauty of the landscape and imbue the scene with emotion. The novel contains numerous passages providing romantic descriptions of the landscape, weather, flora and fauna. Cather vividly depicts the natural world of Nebraska, along with the relationship between the land and its human inhabitants. These descriptions portray the positive effects of Nebraska's nature on the settlers – including feelings of hope, potential success, freedom, timelessness, and a sense of endurance and unlimited opportunities. Even though the settlers are initially unable to overcome droughts, frost, snow, and hard sod, the beauty and peace of the landscape – with only nature, flowers, and animals, devoid of factories and machinery – gives them the strength to overcome their initial hardships. The novel contains several romantic descriptions of the landscape, such as the following: "As I looked about me I felt that the grass was the country, as the water is the sea. The red of the grass made all the great prairie the color of wine-strains, or of certain seaweeds when they are first washed up. And there was so much motion in it; the whole country seemed, somehow, to be running" (*MA* 10).

My Ántonia shows that once they had adapted to the environment, the farmers were indeed able to achieve prosperity and even respect. Success was possible in the American Midwest. Whether fact or fiction, Cather also depicts the situation when the farmers, despite their initial suffering, eventually emerge as "winners" over the townspeople, as some of the immigrants ultimately achieve greater prosperity than their urban neighbors. The hierarchical division between the townsfolk and the farmers is described in the section entitled "The Hired Girls." As there is a certain general distinction between the rural and urban worlds, there is also a form of rivalry between the people from such opposite environments. Even though it is not applicable to all immigrants, the text mentions an unexpected reversal of roles within the hierarchical division between the town-dwellers and country folk: "and the girls who once worked in […] kitchens are to-day managing big farms […] their children are better off than the children of town women they used to serve" (*MA* 97–98). An important element in the distinction between the townspeople and the farmers is that the immigrants gain not only strength but, as Yukman notes, "a degree of extra-social value" from working outdoors.[11] Conquering nature also increases social value. For instance, Ántonia initially feels superior to Jim. However, once he kills a rattlesnake, that changes. "You is just like big mans" (*MA* 25), said Ántonia, which led Jim to realize, "I had killed a big

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10 Mildred R. Bennett, *The World of Willa Cather* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1951), xi.
11 Yukman, "Frontier Relationships," 97.

snake – I was now a big fellow" (*MA* 27).

The character of Ántonia is herself a symbolic presence. As mentioned, Cather was fond of portraying immigrants who were strong in both body and mind, and Ántonia is a clear example of this prototype. She is the embodiment of physical strength already at the age of fourteen. She is also mentally strong, which is a crucial feature of her character. Although an adolescent, she is mature beyond her years, and she is fiercely determined to succeed in America. Ántonia is aware that her mother decided to move to a foreign country for the sake of the children, and she does all she possibly can to ensure they thrive, even though she is not responsible for the family. The death of her father only deepens her determination. In his absence, Ántonia becomes a pillar of the Shimerda family. She helps with the farm, and in the end, possesses the strength of a man as far as the fieldwork is concerned. Her persistence pays off. The Shimerdas obtained land, owned a good house, and fulfilled their basic needs.

Moreover, Ántonia stands for the fertility of both the land and of women; she is a mother of over ten children. This is closely related to another symbolic vision of her as an earth goddess, because the mother earth is fertile. To the Burdens, her eyes were like the sun, (*MA* 14) and "her skin was brown … rich, [and] dark" like the soil. For Jim, Ántonia "seemed to us the country, the conditions, the whole adventure" (*MA* 2).

The novel also portrays the seasons. For many, seasons influence mood; for example, winter carries largely negative connotations, as a melancholic period with gloomy days. For farmers, whose labor is cyclical, each season stands for a certain set of tasks. For example, in the farmer's calendar, spring is the season for resuming work in the fields after the winter, tilling the soil and planting crops. Each season thus has a huge influence over the farmers' lives and actions. For them, unlike for others, winter may have positive connotations – such as peace and rest, a break from labor. Cather places the cyclical course of the seasons – the reality – in opposition to her colorful depictions of the varied seasons of the year – her romantic visions.

Symbolism is connected to each season. As James E. Miller, Jr., notes, "the story of the Shimerdas […] introduces from the start the drama of time in the vivid accounts of the shifting seasons […] Almost every detail in 'The Shimerdas' is calculated to shrink the significance of the human drama in contrast with the drama of the seasons, the drama of nature, the drama of the land and sky."[12] The first part of *My Ántonia*, entitled "The Shimerdas," covers one year of the family's life, marking their arrival to Nebraska in the fall. This season marks a transition between the summer, when the harvest is over, and the winter, in which the farmers take a break from their labors and hope they have stored enough supplies for the wintertime. A certain melancholy inherent in the fall season is also depicted through the fate of the immigrants. The Shimerdas settle in a house which offers poor living conditions, resembling a cave rather than a proper dwelling. There they attempt to familiarize themselves with and adjust to the conditions in their new country, as they face numerous obstacles. They are unfamiliar with their new environment and unaware of how they should prepare

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12 James E. Miller, Jr., "*My Ántonia*: A Frontier Drama of Time," *American Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (1958): 478, doi:10.2307/2710588.

for colder days, such as how to stock up on supplies. They are also at a disadvantage due to the language barrier, so they merely observe and wait to see what the season will bring. On the other hand there is Jim, with his romantic view of the fall season; he calls it "glorious," (*MA* 17) noting the aesthetically-pleasing cornfields and sunflowers, and the huge range of animal life.

As winter approaches, the established settlers are well supplied and as ready as possible to face it; the Bohemians are not. Cather portrays their struggle for existence; they are "scared of cold, and stuck in the hole in the bank like badgers" (*MA* 36), with a limited amount of food. They run out of some supplies rapidly; their potatoes are frozen and their "feet tied up in rags" (*MA* 38) as they were not able to properly heat their dwelling. A link to the symbolic view of winter as a dark season is made through the suicide of Mr. Shimerda, who was not able to face the suffering of his family or his separation from his native country.

Naturally, the season of spring brings with it a certain glimmer of hope for the Shimerdas. Even though they have lost the head of the family, the melting snow and the awakening of nature suggest a rebirth. The symbol of rebirth or awakening is reinforced here as the family builds a new log house with a windmill and purchases some poultry. However, their first struggle with the soil begins in the spring. While the established farmers were burning stubble on the pastures so that the land would be fresh and ready for the growing season, the immigrant family was trying to learn how to actually start farming. They were not aware of how to clear the wild grass and make the land arable, though they tried to gain some information from the Burdens. On the other hand, the text also expresses a romantic image of spring: "There was only – spring itself; the throb of it, the light restlessness, the vital essence of it everywhere; in the sky, in the swift clouds, in the pale sunshine, and in the warm, high wind – rising suddenly, impulsive and playful like a big puppy" (*MA* 59).

The final season – the summer – is described in terms of promise and the hope for a good harvest; this gives the farmers strength to withstand the fierce summer heat while working in the fields. Summer is portrayed as a time of "burning sun" and excessive heat (*MA* 68). Despite the immigrant newcomers' efforts, they are unable to achieve a sizeable harvest in the first year, which is understandable as they are still familiarizing themselves with the conditions of their new home. However, their neighbors help them to pull through; Ántonia assisted Mrs. Burden in the kitchen during the harvest days, while her brother helped Mr. Burden in the fields; with the money they earned from this labor, they could purchase food if their own supplies proved inadequate later in the wintertime. Moreover, Ambrosch was also able to learn harvesting techniques, which were implemented on the family's own farm in the following year.

To conclude, Nebraska in the late-nineteenth century did not only signify "plain" countryside; it was also closely associated with European immigrants. Cather in *My Ántonia* juxtaposes depictions of nature with the lives of the immigrants who were so deeply dependent on it and influenced by it. Not only did the immigrants contribute to the creation of the good and prosperous land which Nebraska became, but they also contributed their own threads to the colorful tapestry of the American population.

They shaped nature, and nature shaped their spirit and character. Cather, who was deeply fond of the Nebraskan landscape, depicts it both realistically and romantically.

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The Concept of "Station" in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Headsman*

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Abstract: This paper analyzes James Fenimore Cooper's concept of "station" and its relation to nature and the principle of equality through the prism of his third "European" novel, *The Headsman* (1833). Cooper's novels open up the possibility of "natural" social mobility but their resolutions, surprisingly, close this possibility down and reaffirm the social hierarchy. This tendency is most evident in the marriage policies. While this is a hard fact in the fictional world, it is necessary to interpret such endings as a critique of a system fundamentally opposed to social mobility rather than to interpret these resolutions as affirmations of social hierarchy.

Keywords: James Fenimore Cooper; *The Headsman*; social mobility; social hierarchy; Cooper's European novels; republic; democracy

James Fenimore Cooper's novels are full of strange contradictions. On one hand they seem to call for social mobility, personal freedom and independence of judgement and movement, while on the other hand they seem to advocate a need for social and cultural hierarchy and stability. This is also evident in his little-known novel *The Headsman; or, The Abbaye des Vignerons: A Tale* (1833).[1] The novel seems to open up the prospect of a socially-unequal marriage, but its resolution forecloses this prospect by reconfiguring the marriage as a bonding of social peers. Such an end is usually interpreted as a conservative confirmation of the segregated class system, an expression of Cooper's own social vision of a republican society in which one should know one's place. Most of the critics who analyzed the novel understand the final resolution of the plot as a contradiction of the social and political commentary presented elsewhere in the novel in the narrator's discourse. That Cooper's plot contradicts and compromises his social and political agenda and unwittingly and unconsciously reflects his own deep-set conservative social beliefs in social stratification is debatable. To see the issue in its full complexity and without elegant simplifications, it is necessary to disentangle the various strands and layers of Cooper's fictional world and his thinking, to take into consideration the pressures of genre conventions and Cooper's representation of the particular social and natural space and place, and analyze the issue in its several stages of development. Only in doing so does it become clear that Cooper is defending adherence to social and natural stations.

Cooper's resolutions are tricky and require close reading. As John McWilliams

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1   James F. Cooper, *The Headsman; or, The Abbaye des Vignerons: A Tale* (New York: W. A. Townsend, 1860). Hereafter cited in the text as *Headsman*.

explains in his study of Cooper's most famous novel, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), the reader is easily seduced to a broad generalization suggested by the title and the death of Uncas, the brilliant young Native American chief, the last of the Mohicans. His death is usually interpreted as a synecdoche of the doom of all the Native Americans as the Vanishing Americans. But as McWilliams points out, the novel does not in fact support such a pessimistic prospect; the last words are reserved for Tamenund, the Lenape (Delaware) patriarch and prophet, and he does not forecast any extinction of his tribe. He just acknowledges that their restoration is postponed to the indeterminate future, which, as the reader may guess, will be linked to the apocalyptic doom of the white men.[2]

The Headsman is one of the three so-called European novels conceived and written by Cooper during his six-year stay in Europe, along with *The Bravo: A Tale* (1831) and *The Heidenmauer; or, The Benedictines: A Legend of the Rhine* (1832). These three political novels were intended as critiques of the European political system, including those states that professed to be republics, such as the Republic of Venice or the Canton of Bern. For Cooper, they were only pseudo-republics because they were controlled by "aristocratic oligarchy,"[3] which is a form of government where a privileged few rule and guard the access to power.

The Headsman is set in Switzerland, and the plot is constructed as a journey of a small group of travelers with several extended stops. The plot opens in Geneva, on the shore of Lake Leman (Lake Geneva), where a small group of travelers, together with a crowd of local passengers, boards a large and heavily-overloaded boat bound for Vevey. The small traveling party consists of Baron de Willading, his daughter Adelheid, accompanied by Sigismund, a young athletic Swiss soldier, and the Italian aristocrat Signore Grimaldi, an old friend of Baron de Willading. At the social periphery of this group hovers a group of lower-class minor characters, who occasionally become agents of the plot and conflict. The boat is caught in a storm and is saved only by luck and the skills of Masso, a tough adventurer. The dramatic episode proves Cooper's mastery of scenes in which men are pitted against nature's sublime fury. In Vevey, the travelers attend the local harvest festivities. The last stop on their journey to Italy is a Bernardine monastery, serving as a refuge for travelers on their way across a high mountain pass in the Alps.

Each new place brings out some secret, some surprising sensational discovery. Before embarking, the passengers learn that the feared and hated executioner from Bern is among them, but they fail to discover him. On the deck of the boat, in a conversation with the two traveling aristocrats, a mild, polite, decent, elderly man confesses that he is the hated executioner. At Vevey, Sigismund (the young Swiss soldier) reveals his identity, or more accurately, what he believes is his identity. In the Bernardine monastery, the mystery of his true origin is finally disentangled and a happy ending is reached.

2   John P. McWilliams, *The Last of the Mohicans: The Civil Savagery and Savage Civility* (New York: Twayne, 1993), 106.
3   John P. McWilliams, *Political Justice in a Republic: James Fenimore Cooper's America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 143.

The journey is conceived as a symbolic romantic journey with social and spiritual dimensions. In its social meaning, it is a journey from a social space with a rigid social hierarchy to a more egalitarian natural space, in which physical nature takes a dominant role and true qualities are distinguished. It also marks a passage from ignorance and secrets to knowledge and truth, as the facts of true identity are revealed in the sharp mountain light. At the same time, the vertical spatial orientation of the journey from the lowlands to the mountaintops can be interpreted as a spiritual journey from the social space of material confusion and misguided prejudices and passion to the spiritual heights, compassion and clarity.[4]

The social and political theme is formulated somewhat later in the novel, in chapter five, when the narrator expresses his intentions to tell a story of the abuse of social privileges – "to delineate some of the wrongs that spring from the abuses of the privileged and powerful" (*Headsman*, 78). The authorial narrator suggests that the rule of aristocratic oligarchy obstructs social mobility and freedom of choice: "the world, in its practices, its theories, and its conventional standards of right and wrong, is in a condition of constant change, which it should be the business of the wise and good to favor …" (*Headsman*, 73). The novel demonstrates that this is not the case, as Baron de Willading's comment about the importance of conservative social order demonstrates:

> [W]e of Berne have great respect for ancient usages. He that is born to the Bürgerschaft will die in the exercise of his rights, and he that is born out of its venerable pale must be satisfied to live out of it, unless he has gold or favor. Our institutions are a hint from nature, which leaves men as they are created, preserving the order and harmony of society by venerable and well-defined laws, as is wise and necessary. In nature, he that is born strong remains strong, and he that has little force must be content with his feebleness. (*Headsman*, 95)

Surprisingly, even the upper-middle class is not interested in reforming the system, and they tend to conspire with the old aristocracy, as McWilliams points out.[5]

At first the development of the plot seems to suggest a possibility of crossing the class boundaries in a society that has a republican political system but is socially rather conservative and controlled by ancient prejudices and beliefs. The only daughter of Baron de Willading, Adelheid de Willading, is in love with the noble-minded and noble-looking Swiss soldier, Sigismund. Baron de Willading is willing to give his consent to their marriage for several reasons: as a good father he wants his daughter's happiness – "What are ancestry and wealth to thy happiness?", and as he exclaims, the social inequality can be compensated for by the political equality of the Swiss republic in the concept of citizenship – "they who profess the republican doctrine, should not be too rigid in their construction of privileges" (*Headsman*, 165).

At this stage of the development of the plot, Baron de Willading's benevolence can be taken as an indication of a more general transition of the traditional hierarchical Swiss society into a more fluid and tolerant modern democratic society, even though in the regime this benevolence and tolerance function as an exception to the rule –

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4   For a detailed study of the symbolic role of place in the novel, see Constance A. Denne, "Cooper's Artistry in *The Headsman*," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29, no. 1 (1974): 77–92.

5   McWilliams, *Political Justice*, 176–77.

Sigismund won the consent as a result of his special services: he saved Adelheid's life in the Alps (prior to the events) and Baron de Willading from drowning in a lake during a storm. The status of the exception is further strengthened by the exceptional circumstances in which the consent is given – Baron de Willading is absent from his customary setting at home and finds himself under the benevolent influence of the splendors of nature, a clear mountain climate and his less restrained old friend from Italy, and thus it is easier for him to make an unconventional decision.

The next plot complication puts Baron de Willading's benevolence to a severe test. When Adelheid declares her love for Sigismund, Sigismund, in shock, rejects her marriage proposal, pointing out a colossal obstacle standing in the way – he reveals that he is the son of Bern's executioner. If his true identity comes out, he is bound, by the strict conventions of the Bern canton, to inherit this horrible and shameful job and will become a social outcast. This revelation is almost too much for Adelheid, and definitely unbearable for her father, who changes his mind and sternly opposes any prospect of such a marriage. He gets angry at Sigismund for his cover-up:

> Hath the villain dared to steal into my family circle, concealing this disgusting and disgraceful fact! – Hath he endeavored to engraft the impurity of his source on the untarnished stock of a noble and ancient family! There is something exceeding mere duplicity in this, Signor Grimaldi. There is a dark and meaning crime. (*Headsman*, 216–17)

Sigismund's revelation unsettles most serious readers because it seems too far-fetched, too melodramatic, to fit the rather sober tone of the novel and descriptive, almost realistic tendency. It also seems to fail to support the theme of the clash between culture and nature, social conventions and natural feelings, and the need for social mobility as well as social stability, or social station. If Cooper wanted to criticize the limits of the social mobility of the Swiss society and its tolerance, he should have chosen a less extreme and less exceptional representative of a socially-underprivileged class. There is only one executioner in the canton.

But there are critics who find this sensational identity motif thematically relevant. McWilliams points to the principle of a hereditary office that is the subject of Cooper's criticism:

> At first glance, the fact that the office of executioner in Berne is hereditary, has legally fallen upon a fine man, and has caused him to be ostracized without recourse, seems a slight basis upon which to attack an entire government, let alone the gamut of European aristocracies. The law of hereditary headsmanship gains wide significance, however, because it is a parallel to the law of aristocratic entailment by which the Bürgerschaft perpetuates itself. The civil law fixes lucrative aristocratic privileges upon one burger and the office of headsman upon another.[6]

In spite of the Swiss republican political regime, the classes have become castes, and as a result, not only privileges but also lacks of privileges are inherited without any personal merit or regardless of the disposition of the individual, along with office and profession. Thus, the mayor of Vevey inherits his office from his father even though

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6   See McWilliams, *Political Justice in a Republic*, 175.

he is far from being the most competent person for this office, and the headsman Balthazar marries into a headsman's family and has to take the job even though he is a mild, soft person, poorly qualified for such a job; the social customs give him no other choice.

While this is certainly true, such a thematic development should not hide the fact that in his concern for the sensational and melodramatic attractions, Cooper has, in the middle of the novel, abandoned one important theme, the theme of class mobility and the possibility of social mixing, and instead decided to pursue the related theme of hereditary privileges and the restrained freedom of choice in Europe. If Sigismund is the son of the Bern executioner, he has no choice but to become an executioner. The inherited privileges or social handicaps obstruct the natural course of human life.

The resolution of the complications was much criticized by critics because it removes most of the social obstacles blocking the way to the happy ending in the form of marriage.[7] Sigismund is revealed to be the son of none other than the Doge of Genoa, Signore Grimaldi. As a baby, Sigismund was kidnapped and left with the family of the Bern executioner.

The discovery of the true aristocratic origin of the main hero is the result of Cooper's embrace of chivalric romantic conventions, where the hero has to be of noble origin. So the ending conforms to the conventions of the genre. The critics, however, usually complain about the thematic implications of such an ending, pointing out that Cooper opens the possibility of a socially-unequal marriage, only to close it down at the end. They consider this ending as a confirmation of Cooper's conservative belief in the importance of station, and of social hierarchy. Donald A. Ringe comments that the novel "begins extremely well, but is another which Cooper sadly bungled in its conclusion […] Cooper lacked the courage […] and sacrificed his meaning to a happy ending."[8] Similarly, Geoffrey Sanborn complains that "to all appearances, Cooper loses his nerve."[9] George Dekker declared that "*The Headsman* turns into an argument for a hereditary aristocracy."[10] Ross J. Pudaloff, following John McWilliams's lead,[11] sees this contradiction as a clash between political rights and class privileges and distinctions: "Having created an impediment to marriage between two otherwise deserving young people by pitting political rights against social position, Cooper can finally only elide the problem by revealing at the conclusion" the aristocratic origin of the lower-class young man.[12] In Swiss cantons, the democratic political order assumes a fundamental equality of citizens, while the social order still maintains the traditional social and value hierarchy.

While such a happy ending can be regarded as far-fetched and unrealistic, one

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7   For a summary of such criticism see McWilliams, *Political Justice in a Republic*, 181.

8   Donald A. Ringe, *James Fenimore Cooper* (Boston: Twayne, 1988), 46–47.

9   See Geoffrey Sanborn, "James Fenimore Cooper and the Invention of the Passing Novel," *American Literature* 84, no. 1 (2012): 13.

10 George Dekker, *James Fenimore Cooper, the Novelist* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), 138–40.

11 McWilliams, *Political Justice in a Republic*, 180.

12 Ross J. Pudaloff, "Cooper's Genres and American Problems," *ELH* 50, no. 4 (1983): 719.

can object that such an ending is rather a recognition of the social reality in Europe – a marriage of socially-unequal partners would be highly improbable, and with this kind of plot resolution Cooper only acknowledges the hard facts of the European class system, rigid and rather impermeable. Recall that Cooper writes his European novels with a special objective, which he clearly formulates in the authorial comments – he wants to disclose the limits of democracy even in the states that claim to be republics. Even these so-called republics maintain a system of hereditary privileges that obstruct the flow of the enlightenment-based human freedoms of choice and enterprise.

The narrative motivation demonstrates this thesis quite clearly: in reconstructing the causal sequence of major events in the novel, it becomes clear that at the beginning of misunderstanding and injustice lie the abuse of the power of the privileged class and the suppression of nature. Signor Grimaldi, the Doge of Genoa, married a woman against her will; she loved another man. This rival in love took revenge on Grimaldi by kidnapping his one-year-old son and leaving the child with the executioner in Bern.

While the discovery of Sigismund's aristocratic origin may be regarded as a projection of Cooper's belief in social hierarchy and affirmation of class distinction because suddenly his noble qualities and fine physical appearance are not attributed to nature and physical training but to his social origin, with the unpleasant implication that such noble-minded and noble-looking young persons are not found among the lower classes, the discovery of aristocratic origin can also be explained as a realistic assessment of the state of the European society and thus an implicit critique of the system. In Europe, the novel seems to imply, a wedding between socially-unequal partners is not possible because the class distinctions are too entrenched, and therefore such an upgrade of Sigismund's social origin was absolutely necessary.

But, apart from the political or social perspective, there is still another way of approaching the motif of the hero's social origin. Cooper, through his authorial narrator, gave the reader at least two important cues that formulate his intentions. If one was to "delineate some of the wrongs that spring from the abuses of the privileged and powerful," the other is presented in the author's introduction, a romantic analogy between nature and human nature. It is, however, not just the sublime or picturesque form of nature, but nature as a place given to sudden twists of radically-different moods:

> ... the analogies that exist between inanimate nature and our own wayward inequalities; of the fearful admixture of good and evil of which we are composed; of the manner in which the best betray their submission to the devils, and in which the worst have gleams of that eternal principle of right, by which they have been endowed by God; of those tempests which sometimes lie dormant in our systems, like the slumbering lake in the calm, but which excited, equal its fury when lashed by the winds; of the strength of prejudices; of the worthlessness and changeable character of the most cherished of our opinions, and of that strange, incomprehensible, and yet winning mélange of contradictions, of fallacies, of truths, and of wrongs, which make up the sum of our existence. (*Headsman*, viii)

The reconstructed story (sequence of events) indicates a certain moral logic. Sigismund became the victim of a complicated revenge scheme. Signore Grimaldi, the Doge of Genoa, married a woman of lesser social status who did not love him and was pressed

into marriage by her parents. The baby (Sigismund) born from that relationship (rape?) was kidnapped by Grimaldi's rival in love, who left the baby with the executioner's family to be brought up as a blighted child. Thus, a transgression of natural feelings led to a storm of ill emotions.

A careful study of motivation (the sequence of events of the story) indicates that the agents in the story have made blunders because they violated what Cooper understands as nature, that is, a natural course of feelings. However, as the main protagonists learn from their mistakes and finally follow nature and reason rather than custom and prejudice, they are rewarded, and get more than they dreamed of: the Doge gets an excellent son and Baron De Willading gets as his son-in-law the son of his best friend, and Adelheid gets an honest and virtuous, good, handsome man with a "herculean frame," who even has the right family background.

The nature Cooper has in mind as a model for human conduct is not nature as a landscape. It is, quite obviously, a cultivated nature, an environment. When Masso complains about the lack of support and encouragement, he extends this lack to the more general issue of class tensions:

> If the great, and the powerful, and the honored, would become the friends and monitors of the weak and ignorant, instead of remaining so many watch-dogs to snarl at and bite all that they fear may encroach on their privileges, raising the cry of the wolf each time that they hear the wail of the timid and bleating lamb, the fairest works of God would not be so often defaced. (*Headsman*, 519–20)

The resolution of the novel should not be read only as a reinstatement of naturalized social distinctions and differences, the so-called social station, but also as restoration of natural station, a productive and reproductive mode of life, a vision of human existence as a permeable dynamic hierarchical space, constantly shifting, a space that involves a harmonization of social and natural stations. In this romantic sense, nature can serve as a norm for human life.

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"The Slave-Holders in This Country Are Men of Kind and Humane Tempers": Antebellum Plantation Romances and the Plantation Legend

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Abstract: White-pillared mansions, courtly cavaliers, charming belles and happy slaves – these are some of the best known images associated with the antebellum South. These images were created by the authors of plantation romances, the first literary genre to originate in the South, and they are in sharp contrast to the images presented by slave narratives and abolitionist novels. This paper focuses on John Pendleton Kennedy's *Swallow Barn* (1832) and Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride* (1854) and their contribution to the creation of the Myth of the Old South.

Keywords: antebellum South; plantation novels; chivalry; southern propaganda; slavery

Just as the American Old West has been traditionally perceived as a land of buffaloes, gunfighters and Indians, the Old South has been stereotypically portrayed as a region of prosperous plantations dominated by white-pillared mansions, chivalrous planters and their charming belles and, last but not least, happy and loyal slaves singing in the cotton fields. Such romantic images originated in the 1830s, and they have been reinforced by a great number of novels, films and other fictional sources ever since. This paper discusses the image of the Old South in two antebellum plantation romances, John Pendleton Kennedy's *Swallow Barn* (1832) and Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride* (1854), and examines the authors' treatments of slavery. It portrays the evolution in plantation romances, from Pendleton's nostalgia-ladened celebration of plantation life in the 1830s to Hentz's aggressive defense of slavery in the 1850s, serving as a rebuttal against abolitionist literature.

The vision of Southern plantation life that captivated the imaginations of millions around the world, the vision of honorable conduct among gentlemen, frequent social entertainments and unworried prosperity, existed in a few places but by no means should be considered representative. Approximately 4 million slaves lived in the South at the beginning of the Civil War. According to the 1860 census figures, there were 385,000 slaveholders, but only 45,000 of them met the planter-class definition of owning at least 20 slaves. Slightly more than 2,000 owned 100 slaves or more, and only a handful of the richest slaveholders owned something approaching 500 slaves.[1]

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1 See Frank E. Vandiver, *Blood Brothers: A Short History of the Civil War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993), 31.

Numerically, the largest group in the Southern society was small farmers, yeomen, who owned few if any slaves. Therefore, the image of the antebellum South as wholly composed of large plantations has no basis in reality.

Plantation fiction can be considered a genre of local color and, according to John Grammer, it was once thought of as the South's principal contribution to American literature.[2] Fictional representations of plantations date back to the colonial period, and George Tucker's 1824 novel *The Valley of Shenandoah* is sometimes considered a precursor to the plantation novel, but it is Kennedy's *Swallow Barn, Or, A Sojourn in the Old Dominion* that is categorized as the first example of the genre. *Swallow Barn* planted the seeds for what has been called a plantation legend, in Richard Taylor's definition "a set of popular beliefs about the Southern planter, the plantation family and what was assumed to be the aristocratic social system which existed in the South."[3]

Swallow Barn, the first and most successful of Kennedy's three novels, was published in 1832. Following its publication, nearly forty reviews appeared in the English and American press, which was a remarkable number for a new author. Reviewers appreciated especially Kennedy's native setting, and one particular reviewer compared Kennedy to the most popular author of the period and noted that "there are more Coopers in America than the author of the 'Pilot.'"[4] Modern critics have been puzzled by the almost total absence of plot and consider it either "a long novel, full of reasonably interesting characters and situations, in which virtually nothing happens"[5] or "a novel which is not a novel, an unromantic romance, written by a man who was and was not a southerner, who was and was not even a writer."[6] Kennedy himself characterized it as "a book of episodes, with an occasional digression into the plot."[7]

Swallow Barn's narrator is Mark Littleton, a New Yorker who visits his cousin on a plantation in Tidewater Virginia. Using an outsider narrator enabled Kennedy to distance himself from the plantation society he describes and paint his Southern characters in favorable tones. In the opening chapter, the author introduces an element of plantation fiction that became a staple of the genre in the following decades – the plantation manor itself. Named Swallow Barn, it is "an aristocratical old edifice, that squats, like a brooding hen, on the southern bank of the James River" (*SB* I, 19). The word aristocratical is important here, since the analogy between the life on a plantation and the life in a medieval castle or manor is sustained throughout the novel.[8] Littleton's coming to the plantation is reminiscent of the arrival of a knight in some medieval romance – he arrives at the last moment of dusk, the building with its chimneys looks

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2   See John M. Grammer, "Plantation Fiction," in *A Companion to the Literature and Culture of the American South*, ed. Richard Grey and Owen Robinson (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 60.

3   William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 146.

4   Quoted in Joseph V. Ridgely, *John Pendleton Kennedy* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1966), 43.

5   Grammer, "Plantation Fiction," 63.

6   Lucinda H. MacKethan, introduction to *Swallow Barn; Or, A Sojourn in the Old Dominion*, by John P. Kennedy (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), xi.

7   John P. Kennedy, *Swallow Barn; Or, A Sojourn in the Old Dominion*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1832), vii–viii. Hereafter cited in text as *SB* I.

8   See Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee*, 183.

like a great castle, and he is received by half a dozen dogs and a host of servants (*SB* I, 13).

The following chapters are basically character sketches in which Kennedy introduces the protagonists of the novel. He can be credited with creating stereotypical plantation genre characters. There is Frank Meriwether, the plantation owner who has "the substantial planter look that belongs to a gentleman who lives on his estate, and is not much vexed with the crosses of life" (*SB* I, 25). He is also "a kind master, and considerate towards his dependants, for which reason, although he owns many slaves, they hold him in profound reverence and are very happy under his dominion" (*SB* I, 28). There is Ned Hazard, Littleton's likeable cousin on whose invitation Littleton visits Swallow Barn. Hazard is a typical reckless Southern Cavalier. There is also a Southern belle named Bel Tracy from the neighboring plantation, who expects from life what she had read in Sir Walter Scott's medieval romances. Other characters are, according to Lucinda MacKethan, reminiscent of Scott's and Cooper's galleries of country types.[9] Among them is for example a lawyer named Singleton Oglethorpe Swansdown, a fop that courts two old maids at the same time and serves as a comic foil.

Two plotlines form the narrative backbone of the novel actually make *Swallow Barn* a novel and not just a collection of sketches of plantation life. One of them is a property dispute over a valueless piece of swamp between Frank Meriwether and Bel's father, the master of a neighboring plantation. The second plotline involves a love interest between Ned Hazard and Bel Tracy. Bel, well-versed in medieval romances, expects courting according to her bookish notions of courtship, and Ned tries to do his best to meet her expectations.

As mentioned, Kennedy sustains the analogy between a plantation and a medieval manor and often evokes the feeling of nostalgia for the age of chivalry. Chapter VII is named "Traces of the Feudal System," and in it Kennedy discusses the origins of the "cavalier" Virginia. The Virginia gentlemen are scattered across the state "like chiefs of separate clans," and when they meet, the "business of life is thrown aside for the enjoyment of its pleasures. Their halls are large, and their boards ample" (*SB* I, 76). The names of other chapters such as "Knight Errantry" or "The Last Minstrel" support the analogy. To evoke the times of chivalry even more, towards the end of the novel, Kennedy included a nearly-forty-page essay on Captain John Smith, who is for him a paragon of chivalry, "the exemplar of the chivalric virtues which Virginians have sought to preserve," as Ridgely claims.[10] When bad weather forces Mark Littleton to delay his departure from Swallow Barn, he spends his time in the library where he discovers a seventeenth-century folio depicting the travels of the famous captain. Kennedy in careful detail traces Smith's adventures from youth, through wars against the Turks in Europe and achievements in Jamestown, to his death in 1631. William Taylor suggests that with his evoking of the medieval period, Kennedy catered to the popularity of the chivalric romance and sentimental attachment that Americans felt

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9   See MacKethan, introduction to *Swallow Barn*, xxiv.
10   Ridgely, *John Pendleton Kennedy*, 55.

for the Middle Ages.[11]

As far as the issue of the South's peculiar institution is concerned, Kennedy presents the slaves as "a contented and well-cared-for working class."[12] Meriwether's slaves are never treated harshly, and for the first time, there appears a "happy darky," the stereotype that will repeatedly reappear in plantation fiction. Slaves are passive participants in almost every scene. Besides slaves performing all kinds of work on the plantation, there are scores of black children running around. For Kennedy, a black child is either a "little ape-faced negro" (*SB* I, 116), "untamed monkey"[13] or "strange baboon" (*SB* II, 58). There is one scene meant for comedy, which can be a bit disturbing for a present-day reader, in which Ned Hazard, out of boredom, orders a group of black children to have a race, with a coin serving as the prize:

> In a moment they reached the brook with unchecked speed; and, as the banks were muddy and the dogs had become tangled with the racers in their path, the entire herd were precipitated, one over the other, into the water. This only increased their merriment, and they continued the contest in this new element, by floundering, kicking and splashing about, like a brood of ducks in their first descent upon a pool. These young negroes have wonderfully flat noses, and the most oddly disproportioned mouths, which were now opened to their full dimensions, so as to display their white teeth in striking contrast with their complexions. They are a strange pack of antic and careless animals, and furnish their liveliest picture that is to be found in nature, of that race of swart fairies which, in the old time, were supposed to play their pranks in the forest at moonlight. (*SB* II, 58)

To his entertainment, Hazard encourages both the children and the dogs in the tumult until the kid in ill-fitting trousers appears from the mayhem with a coin in his teeth. Jim Cullen claims that Southern writers found themselves vacillating between two extremes in their depiction of slaves – one was that slaves were animals that required no special sympathy, and the other that they were childlike humans who benefited from the care of their owners.[14] Though Kennedy so often compares black children to monkeys, it is the second extreme he inclines to in the novel.

Towards the end of *Swallow Barn*, Kennedy directly addresses the issue of slavery. In a chapter called "The Quarter," Meriwether gives his visitor a tour of the slave quarters. The slaves live in hovels not far from the plantation house, which form "an exceedingly picturesque landscape" (*SB* II, 223). Since Meriwether is a considerate master, his visits to the quarters are "always hailed with pleasure" (*SB* II, 225). Littleton, as a Northerner with prejudices, is surprised that the slaves are comfortable and with much less vexation than he has observed in other classes of society. This is an interesting observation since later, in the 1850s, the paternalist view of slavery – the notion that slavery was a way of providing security to the laboring class of any society – became one of the dominant theses of proslavery advocates.[15]

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11 See Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee*, 196.

12 Ridgely, *John Pendleton Kennedy*, 58.

13 John P. Kennedy, *Swallow Barn; Or, A Sojourn in the Old Dominion*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1832), 57. Hereafter cited in text as *SB* II.

14 Jim Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture: A Reusable Past* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 15.

15 Carme Manuel Cuenca, "An Angel in the Plantation: The Economics of Slavery and the Politics of Literary Domesticity in Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride*," *Mississippi Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (1997): 91.

In a long monologue, Kennedy expresses his views on slavery through Meriwether: "it is theoretically and morally wrong; and, of course, it may be made to appear wrong in all its modifications. But, surely, if these people are consigned to our care, and put upon our commonwealth, without our agency, the only duty that is left to us is to administer wholesome laws for their government, and to make their servitude as tolerable to them as we can" (*SB* II, 228). Meriwether emphasizes again that slaves are required to do less work than any other workers in the society. He agrees that slaves are punished, but they are punished for the same misdemeanors as dishonest people are punished in all communities. He even suggests some reforms, granting more trustworthy slaves small tracts of land and work as tenant farmers. And finally, Meriwether remarks that the decision concerning the abolition of slavery must come from slave-holding states and not from the federal government, as the slaveholders' fortunes and lives are put in danger by such a decision.

Kennedy never was an ardent defender of slavery, and during the Civil War, he remained loyal to the Union. He began writing the novel in 1829, before several events, as Grammer claims, "dramatically turned up the volume of abolitionist criticism of the South"[16] and before there arose a need in the South to aggressively defend its peculiar institution.

The second novel discussed in this paper was written over two decades later, in an atmosphere significantly different from that of the early 1830s. It was also written with a different motivation than Kennedy's *Swallow Barn.* For, at the beginning of the 1850s, sectional tensions between the two parts of the country were far more serious, and in 1852, one of the most influential novels of American history was published, a novel that caused a tremendous uproar in the South. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was banned in a number of places across the South and inspired a new genre, "Anti-Tom" novels, in which Southern authors tried to rebut the regional portrait created by Stowe. Within two years of the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, at least fifteen novels were written by proslavery authors, among them for example *Aunt Phillis's Cabin; or Southern Life as It Is* (1852) by Mary H. Eastman, *Uncle Robin in his Cabin in Virginia and Tom without One in Boston* (1853) by J.W. Page and, last but not least, *The Planter's Northern Bride* (1854) by Caroline Lee Hentz.

Hentz was one of the most successful American female writers of the 1850s. Though she was born in New England, she spent most of her life in the South, where she wrote eight novels before publishing *The Planter's Northern Bride.* The novel was written in order to correct "the unhappy consequences of that intolerant and fanatical spirit, whose fatal influence we so deeply deplore."[17] The novel is pure pro-slavery propaganda. Already in the preface, Hentz claims that though she lived in North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and Florida, she never witnessed cruelty or oppression towards slaves, "the happiest laboring class on the face of the globe."[18]

The principal character of the novel is not the planter's wife, as the title would

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16 Grammer, "Plantation Fiction," 63.
17 Caroline L. Hentz, preface to *The Planter's Northern Bride* (Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson, 1854), iv.
18 Hentz, preface to *The Planter's Northern Bride*, vi.

suggest, but Russell Moreland, the planter himself. According to MacKethan, he is "a father who mothers his daughter, instructs his wife in housekeeping, puts down a slave insurrection, and politely but firmly refutes northern criticisms of his way of life."[19] He falls in love with Eulalia, his northern bride, who is daughter of a staunch abolitionist, while on a business trip to New England. After the marriage, the couple moves to a plantation in Georgia, where she can correct her prejudices about slavery and the South. Setting the plot in both New England and Georgia enabled Hentz to express her attitudes on the life and work of the lower class in the North on one hand, and the treatment of slaves in the South on the other.

All of the elements of plantation fiction introduced by Kennedy are also present in Hentz's novel. Though the plantation house is no longer at the center of the plot, it is of superior architecture and sits in the middle of rich cotton fields, surrounded by long rows of whitewashed slave cabins. Among the stereotypical characters are Moreland, the kind and caring master of the plantation, Moreland's sister Ildegerte, a charming Southern belle, and Albert, a loyal house slave, one of whose chief delights is to "brush his master's hair, and bathe his temples, when suffering from a sick and aching head."[20]

Though the quotation from the title of this paper is from *Swallow Barn*, Hentz presents the same idea in her novel. She lets Moreland remark that the planters believe their duty towards their slaves is "to take care of them, to make their life of servitude, which seems their present destiny, as much as possible a life of comfort and enjoyment; and, while we reap the benefit of their labour and the fruit of their toil in their day of vigour, to nurse them in sickness, provide for them in old age, and save them from the horrors and miseries of want" (*PNB*, 83). In her frequent authorial comments, Hentz evokes the paternalist view of slavery to a far greater extent than Kennedy when she criticizes free society and constantly brings the image of white workers as abused and exploited laborers. The quotation in which she comments on England's textile workers can be considered representative:

> Thou! on whose magnificent empire the sun never casts in setting ray, turn thy glorious eye to the slaves whose life-blood thou art draining at the threshold of thy own doors. See that pale and ghastly and multitudinous band of females imprisoned within close and narrow walls, most of them in the springtime of life; but oh! what a cold, blighted, barren spring! And it is "stitch, stitch, stitch," from the chill gray, morning twilight, to the dim gray evening twilight, and then, by the light of a dripping candle, they "stitch, stitch, stitch," till long midnight hour; nay, more, till one, two three o'clock of another day, then, crawling into some miserable, crowded, airless hole, lie down to a few feverish, restless, unrefreshing dreams. (*PNB*, 240)

Hentz's portrayal of slaves differs from that in *Swallow Barn*. While all Frank Meriwether's slaves are treated as childlike beings, some of the Moreland's slaves are capable of violence and "exhibit bestial physical power."[21] Moreland takes good

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19 Lucinda H. MacKethan, "Domesticity in Dixie: The Plantation Novel and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" in *Haunted Bodies: Gender and Southern Texts*, ed. Anne G. Jones and Susan V. Donaldson (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 237.

20 Caroline L. Hentz, *The Planter's Northern Bride* (Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson, 1854), 113. Hereafter cited in the text as *PNB*.

21 MacKethan, "Domesticity in Dixie," 237.

care of his slaves, but despite this, some of them are not capable of loyalty. There is the example of Crissy, a female house slave who is lured by an abolitionist couple to run away to the North. After gaining freedom, she finds herself working for a businessman who gives no wages to fugitive slaves. This experience only makes her realize that she was much better treated in the slave society than she is in the free world. After a long journey, she returns to her master ashamed and humiliated. Hentz also incorporated in the plot a threat of a slave uprising. An eloquent Northern preacher arrives at Moreland's plantation, and the kind master allows him to preach to his slaves. Gradually, during secret midnight meetings, the slaves are brainwashed and only a last moment intervention by Moreland prevents a rebellion from erupting. Hentz thus included one of the greatest fears of antebellum plantation masters, that of slave rebellion, in her novel. Although the planter's originally-abolitionist northern bride undergoes a conversion at the end of the novel, Hentz concludes her work with a prophetic vision of the country destroyed by a war, claiming that "the North and the South are branches of the same parent tree, and the lightning bolt that shivers the one, must scorch and wither the other" (*PNB*, 579).

The image of the South in antebellum plantation romances is significantly different from that presented by abolitionist writers. John Pendleton Kennedy created a number of stereotypical plantation fiction characters and can be considered a pioneer of the genre. His *Swallow Barn* is full of nostalgia and represents a celebration of a way of life, which is to disappear. On the other hand, Hentz's novel is an aggressive defense of slavery, written to rebut the image of the South portrayed by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Both works served as an inspiration for the Lost Cause writers of the late-nineteenth century, who turned the plantation novel into one of the South's most powerful propaganda weapons.

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"Strange" Southern Families of Choice in Percival Everett's *Walk Me to the Distance* and Dori Sanders's *Clover: A Novel*

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Abstract: In southern literature, the topic of family has long been both important and common. This essay explores the rather unconventional families and family dynamics in the novels of two contemporary southern writers – Percival Everett's *Walk Me to the Distance* (1985) and Dori Sanders's *Clover: A Novel* (1990). The authors have chosen uniquely-formed interracial families with no biological ties that must overcome their own reservations, fears and also the racial prejudices of their own blood relatives and of the local community. Eventually, they manage to prove to themselves and to others the true southern dedication to one's kin, especially children.

Keywords: Percival Everett; Dori Sanders; contemporary southern fiction; American South; family; interracial families; racism

While it would be unlikely to find a country or culture in which the concept of family does not play a significant role, there are still places and communities where familial ties are more socially influential, the American South being one. Some sociologists, such as Rupert B. Vance, see the reason for this phenomenon deep in the past, tracing it back to the "southern aristocracy": "By tradition and the influence of its governing classes, the family was more important in the South than in [almost] any other section."[1] Directly connected to the importance of one's family is another typical aspect of southern culture – the importance of children. As T. J. Woofter noted, "children occupy a much more important place in southern families than in other regions."[2] It is therefore no wonder that so many southern novels deal with the topic of families, relationships between parents and children, and generally with family dynamics in various ways and styles.

This paper offers a less-conventional literary view of southern families – families that are both interracial and "of choice," meaning that the family members are not actually biologically related. For this purpose, the paper examines *Walk Me to the Distance* (1985) by Percival Everett and *Clover: A Novel* (1990) by Dori Sanders. Both novels were written by authors from the South (specifically South Carolina) in the span of five years, but given the differences in the authors' genders, ages and life experiences, they approach a similar topic in unique ways. *Walk Me to the Distance* is

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1   Rupert B. Vance, "Regional Family Patterns: The Southern Family," *American Journal of Sociology* 53, no. 6 (1948): 426, doi:10.1086/220233.

2   T. J. Woofter, "Southern Children and Family Security," *Social Forces* 23, no. 3 (1945): 366, doi:10.2307/2572301.

a work of a male writer who was twenty-nine when the book was published, and it is a third person narrative with a young man, who is, just like Everett at the time, in his twenties, as the main protagonist. *Clover: A Novel* was penned by a fifty-five-year-old female, and it is narrated in the first person by Clover, a ten-year-old girl. In *Walk Me to the Distance*, the focus family consists of David Larson (the protagonist), his close friend Sixbury – an old lady, her mentally-disabled son and Butch, a seven-year-old Vietnamese girl whom they adopt together. The race of Larson and Sixbury is not disclosed in the novel, but from the various comments that the family receives, it is apparent that neither of them is Asian and that Butch stands out in the town because of her race. *Clover: A Novel* centers on the conflict between a young Caucasian widow, Sara Kate, her stepdaughter, Clover, who is African American, and their respective biological families.

In both cases, the process of adoption itself is not criticized by the other characters in the novel – it is mostly seen in a positive light. However, the fact that the newly-created interracial families cause tension demonstrates that, although the number of married interracial couples in the United States has multiplied almost nine times in the last few decades,[3] with the period even being characterized as having a "biracial baby boom,"[4] it can still cause tension in a small, close-knit community.

Nevertheless, despite interracial marriages becoming more common, interracial families – including those from *Walk Me to the Distance* and *Clover: A Novel* – generally still face extra challenges:

> With arguably more than one cultural tradition and different statuses in the family accompanied by outside social constraints (e.g., social disapproval from relatives, acquaintances, and strangers), interracial couples may experience more family dissonance and racial conflict than monoracial couples (Fu, Tora, and Kendall 2001; Herring 1992). At the same time, though, they may develop a broader and more cosmopolitan view regarding their children's education.[5]

Clearly then, the mixture of not only races but also different cultures is often perceived as "strange" by the other characters in both novels. But before the potential cultural clash can even be explored, it is the surface appearance that first strikes people as odd, and therefore, families from *Walk Me to the Distance* and *Clover: A Novel* are often exposed to racist remarks. In the case of *Walk Me to the Distance*, the racists are those outside of the familial circle – for example, when David Larson takes Sixbury and their adopted daughter to another town and they check into a hotel for the night, he later gets into an argument with one of the hotel employees that ends with the employee stating, "You're a crazy son of a bitch. I knew you were weird when you checked in here with that old bag and that little gook."[6]

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3 "Between 1970 and 2000, the number of interracial marriages has grown dramatically from less than one-half million (.7% of all marriages) to more than 3.7 million (approximately 6%)." See Simon Cheng and Brian Powell, "Under and Beyond Constraints: Resource Allocation to Young Children from Biracial Families," *American Journal of Sociology* 112, no. 4 (2007): 1045, doi:10.1086/508793.

4 Aliya Saperstein and Andrew M. Penner, "Racial Fluidity and Inequality in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology* 118, no. 3 (2012): 667, doi:10.1086/667722.

5 Cheng and Powell, "Under and Beyond Constraints," 1050.

6 Percival L. Everett, *Walk Me to the Distance* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1985), 114.

Clover: A Novel's racist remarks are even more personal and hurtful, because they predominantly come from other family members, not strangers, and are mostly directed towards Sara Kate, the widow. For example, when her two relatives-in-law discuss together why Sarah Kate, a Caucasian lady, had decided to enter a relationship with an African American man, the following debate takes place, marking Sara Kate as somehow faulty for not choosing a white partner:

> "Wonder what's wrong with her?"
> "I don't know, but there is something that's caused her to be rejected by her own men."[7]

Yet, it is not only relatives who are judgmental of Sara Kate's relationship with an African American man. Her own mother refuses to help her with the complicated situation in which Sara Kate finds herself, being a new stepmother and a widow at the same time, telling her daughter that, "from the very beginning, I warned you to take a long hard look at the price you might have to pay for what you called love. Then ask yourself if it was worth it."[8] Sara Kate's reaction to her mother's disapproval is uncompromising – she quietly, but all the more strongly disobeys and defies her elders as she stands her ground, hereby representing not only someone who refuses to conform to the racially-biased norms, but also the new generation of "young [southern] women whose independence is purchased at the price of severed relationships with their mothers."[9]

The issues between relatives in both novels are intensified by several additional factors – one of them being that the biological parents present in the stories have unconventional relationships with their children at the beginning, therefore, it takes time for the family units to start working as they should – both from the inside and as a protective shield against outside influences. In *Walk Me to the Distance*, Sixbury is disappointed with her mentally-disabled son, and the dissatisfaction with her offspring later motivates her to pursue the adoption of Butch, leading to the extension of the family:

> "Look behind you. That's who will survive me. I'll have to worry throughout eternity about him. I'm his mother, but ain't a part of me. Does that sound awful? … I have no children."[10]

In *Clover: A Novel*, Clover calls her father by his first name, and their relationship is strained until his death – also due to the fact that Clover has been brought up by her grandfather, and therefore she has never seen her father as her primary parental figure.

The relationships of the children with their non-biological parents are also affected by an uncommon feature that the novels share – on the contrary to the usual and natural development, the families are created before the individual members can get to know each other. For *Walk Me to the Distance*, it happens because Butch gets purposely

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7   Dori Sanders, *Clover: A Novel* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2013), 41.

8   Sanders, *Clover: A Novel*, 103.

9   Kathryn L. Seidel, "Gail Godwin and Ellen Glasgow: Southern Mothers and Daughters," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 10, no. 2 (1991): 287, doi:10.2307/464019.

10 Everett, *Walk Me to the Distance*, 12.

abandoned by her biological family at a rest stop where Larson works. At first he is only temporarily assigned to take care of her, but after Larson brings Butch home, Sixbury decides to keep the child and they start getting to know each other and also getting used to each other's ways. In Clover's case, the situation is similar. The day her father marries Sara Kate, he dies in a car accident, and Clover, against the wishes of her other relatives, is left in her new stepmother's care. Clover comments on the situation by saying, "She's been my stepmother for almost four days and all I know for sure about her is, she's not a Mexican. I can spot a Mexican a mile away,"[11] proving how surprisingly little she actually knows about her late father's wife.

Against the odds, however, sooner or later the newly-created families become more important for their members than their blood relatives. Sixbury becomes much closer with Butch than she could ever be with her own son, and Larson, too, though at first reluctant to accept his new parental role and responsibilities, changes his mind eventually. When he is asked towards the end of the novel, "Do you have any children?" he nods affirmatively and says that he has "a seven-year-old daughter."[12] The same acknowledgement of the parent-child relationship is mirrored in Clover: A Novel, in which, after living for some time together, Sara Kate states about Clover that "I am her mama now,"[13] and the girl, too, comes to respect the young woman as a parental figure.

Even though the novels share many features when dealing with the topic of families, they still differ in many important aspects, the first being the question of who stands out in the family – meaning who is "the odd one out" from the outsiders' viewpoint. In Walk Me to the Distance, it is Butch, the child, because she is the only Vietnamese child around. In Clover: A Novel, it is the parent, Sara Kate, because she married into an African American family and is considered the strange one among them.

The attitudes of the new parents also diverge significantly – while Larson is not sure that taking care of a child is exactly what he wants at this stage of his life or perhaps ever, Sara Kate embraces the new role immediately, even though she lacks the support of both her own and Clover's family. The outcome of these opposite approaches is then mirrored in the respective parenting strategies. Larson prefers staying in the background and leaving most of the child rearing to Sixbury (as it was her wish to adopt the child in the first place), while Sara Kate takes full charge of Clover's upbringing, and though Clover is allowed to visit her biological relatives, it is still her stepmother who provides her with everything she needs and sets the rules. Similarly, by the end of the novel, Larson starts seeing a young woman, and it is suggested that his new girlfriend and he will become Butch's parents after Sixbury eventually dies. Meanwhile, Sara Kate is, for one thing, still grieving over her husband and for another, wants to focus on creating a strong bond with Clover, so she refuses a potential suitor of by telling him that "loving each other is all Clover and I can handle."[14]

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11   Sanders, Clover: A Novel, 23.
12   Everett, Walk Me to the Distance, 180.
13   Sanders, Clover: A Novel, 150.
14   Sanders, Clover: A Novel, 174.

Regardless of the different characters' approaches, the newly created families in the end fulfill a similar function in the novels. They show the other southern characters something that could be perceived as obvious, but, as is pointed out on multiple occasions by the protagonists, is apparently not at all clear to the families' neighborhood at all – and that is, that even a biracial or multiracial family can function just as well as any other, and that apart from the racial issue, mostly pushed from the outside, they face exactly the same problems and challenges as monoracial families. Also, both the novels reassert the importance of the familial influence when it comes to the matters of race and racism. As Thomas J. Socha and Rhunette C. Diggs note, "in addition to education, the media, and government, the map of U.S. race relations needs to depict families and family relationships as central to matters of race," because this is where the opinions and beliefs of a person are first shaped.[15]

Both Everett and Sanders portray families that are perceived as unconventional, even strange, in the eyes of the other characters in the novels. They have to fight the prejudices of their community, neighbors, and their own relatives, and even prejudices within the nuclear families themselves. They encounter racism, experience doubts and have to withstand substantial criticism. Even so, it is the very southernness of the novels that enables the families to endure the obstacles and injustice, because true to the words of Vance and Woofter, family and children turn out to be the most important and valuable items in the protagonists' lives. Starting out as complete strangers and all of a sudden thrown into the familial life, they, quite understandably, struggle with the new roles, but as they prove to one another inside the family that they want to be together and that they can rely on each other, their relatives and the community start seeing them as a tight-knit unit and, more importantly, start respecting them as such. So even though the families portrayed in *Walk Me to the Distance* and *Clover: A Novel* begin as slightly unconventional, especially for the southern traditional mindset, in their hopeful endings they actually turn out quite conventional, because they illustrate how deeply the respect for family and family values is rooted in southern society and in the minds of southern authors.

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Linguistics

On Bare Infinitives in English

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ABSTRACT: The first part of this paper demonstrates the distribution of English bare infinitives categorized with respect to the selecting main verb. Following Wurmbrand's (2012) more detailed crosslinguistic analysis of the variety of infinitival constructions in English, bare infinitives are defined as an example of a bare v/VP structure. Based on the contrast between two kinds of English passives, e.g., in Emonds (2013), the second part of the paper demonstrates that the verbal passive (contrary to adjectival passives) represents another kind of English bare v/VP structure. The comparison of the two kinds of English bare v/VP structures leads to a proposal about the structural source of the infinitival particle *to*. The study argues that *to* is a morphological signal of Object Raising, which is described as a raising from the base-generated Theta-marked position of agent in SPEC(v) of the infinitive to the position of the structural object of the matrix verb in SPEC(V). The lack of this movement is signalled by the bare infinitive, which is an economically-preferred variety accepted whenever possible, i.e., with late-inserted grammatical verbs in active voice.

KEYWORDS: English modal; bare infinitive; *to*-infinitive; bare VP; adjectival passive; verbal passive; Object Raising

1. INTRODUCTION

In traditional English grammar manuals, some forms of verbs selecting infinitival complements are labelled as "blend" varieties if they select both the *to*-infinitive and bare infinitives (see, e.g., the taxonomy of *dare* and *need* as discussed in Quirk et al. 1985, 138). Proponents of these traditional grammars implicitly assume that the selection of a bare infinitive is simply one of the characteristics of an English modal verb. In this paper I will address three questions: (i) What are the contexts for bare infinitives attested to in the British National Corpus? (ii) What is the structure of the bare infinitive in present-day generative frameworks? (iii) Are there other constructions in English structurally similar to bare infinitives? In answering these questions and in particular comparing bare infinitives (as in Wurmbrand 2012) with verbal passives (as in Emonds 2013), I will propose an analysis of the English infinitival particle *to* as a morphological marker signalling the raising of the agent of the infinitive out of its underlying Theta-marked position to that of the structural object of the matrix verb.

2. CONTEXTS FOR BARE INFINITIVES

First let us consider the contexts in English in which the bare infinitive follows a

non-lexical verb.[1] These verbs are here labelled as lexical or non-lexical according to the so-called NICE properties (i.e., whether or not in appropriate contexts they require *do*-support). The table below summarises all the verbs as they appear (and are taxonomically labelled) in Quirk et al. (1985), Huddleston and Pullum (2002) and Biber et al. (1999). The abbreviation NPI (with *dare*, *need* and *ought*) indicates that the verbs select bare infinitives only when they are negative polarity items.

(1)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">The non-lexical verbs followed by bare infinitives</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>List</td><td>Examples</td></tr>
<tr><td>Central modals</td><td>*can, could, may, might, shall, should, (wi)'ll, (woul)'d, must*</td><td>*The sun will (*to) rise soon.*
*Quido must (*to) sleep.*</td></tr>
<tr><td>Marginal modals</td><td>*dare$_{NPI}$, need$_{NPI}$, ought$_{NPI}$?*</td><td>*He daren't/needn't/oughtn't (*to) come late.*
He ought (to) come late.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Modal idioms</td><td>*(ha)'d better/best*
(woul)'d rather/sooner/as soon</td><td>*You'd better/best (*to) go.*
*I'd rather/sooner/as soon (*to) do it.*</td></tr>
<tr><td>*can(no)'t (help) but*</td><td>*The weather can't but (*to) get better.*
*David can't help but (*to) laugh.*</td></tr>
</table>

The next table provides a list of lexical verbs (i.e., those requiring *do*-support) that select bare infinitives. Notice that apart from marginal modals and *go*, these verbs (of sensory perception and causatives) also select a structural object in addition to the bare infinitive, i.e., they are complex transitives with the frame V, [__NP+VP$_{INF(bare)}$].

(2)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">The lexical verbs followed by bare infinitives</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>List</td><td>Examples</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">V+V$_{INF}$</td><td>"Marginal modal"</td><td>*dare, need, ought*</td><td>*Emma didn't dare (to) come late.*</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Go"</td><td>*go, come*</td><td>*Go (*to) sit at the table!*</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">V+N
P+V$_{INF}$</td><td>V of sensory perception (±)</td><td>*see, watch, feel, notice, (over)hear, observe, know (BrE), find (BrE)*</td><td>*I saw/watched/heard him (to) go.*
John noticed/observed Mary (to) leave.
We know/found her (to) be smart.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Causatives (±)</td><td>*have, let, make, bid, help, force (BrE), oblige (BrE), persuade(BrE)*</td><td>*I have/let my son (*to) clean.*
*I made/bid him (*to) leave.*
*Let's (*to) go!*
I helped him (to) leave.</td></tr>
</table>

The last table (3) provides the contexts where the bare infinitive is used but cannot be directly related to a specific matrix verb. The selecting construction is either a kind of compound/idiom or a special clausal construction. Apart from providing the table in

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1   No English nouns, adjectives, or prepositions select bare infinitives.

(3) for comprehensiveness, I am not going to address these contexts any further in the present paper.

(3)

NON-VERBAL CONTEXTS FOR BARE INFINITIVES

		List	Examples
Other	Compounds with incorporated "*to*"	*gonna, gotta, hafta, usta, oughta, supposta, wanna*	*It's gonna/supposta (*to) rain.*
	Idioms	*try, be sure and …*	*Try (*to) do it now!* *Be sure and (*to) do it soon!*
		do every-/no-/anything but	*You do nothing but (*to) waste my time.*
		rather than	*I want to live rather than (*to) die.*
	Pseudo clefts	Subject VP Complement VP	*(*To) Leave is what I want.* *All he did was (*to) leave.*
	Wh- predicate	*why*	*Why (*to) leave if you want to stay?*

The taxonomy of English verbs introduced in Quirk et al. (1985) defines "modal" verbs first and foremost semantically, i.e., with specific interpretations. The authors recognize several kinds of modal verbs and, as can be seen from the following list (taken from Quirk et al. 1985, 136), not all of these verbs are non-lexical and not all of them obligatorily require a bare infinitive. The tag question after each example illustrates the application of *do*-support, a distinguishing characteristic between English lexical and non-lexical verbs.

(4) a. *He **must** (*to) go, mustn't he?*   ("central modal": non-lexical)
     b. *He **has** */to go, doesn't he?*   ("modal idiom": lexical)

(5) a. *Nobody **dare**$_{NPI}$ (*to) come late, dare he?*   ("marginal modal": both
                                                    lexical and non-lexical)

     b. *He **dares** (to) come late, does he not?*

(6) a. *Nobody **need**$_{NPI}$ (*to) eat such a meal, need he?* ("marginal modal": both
                                                    lexical and non-lexical)

     b. *He **needs** *(to) eat such a meal, doesn't he?*

Because of the mixed behaviour of what Quirk et al. (1985) call "modal verbs," and in light of tables (1–3), the first question presented in the introduction can be answered:

(7)   Q1: Is the presence of a bare infinitive the signal of a "modal verb" in English?
        — No, a bare infinitive complement is neither a necessary nor sufficient
        characteristic of Quirk's "modal verbs."

In other words, and particularly significant in the context of the present discussion, a bare infinitive is not related directly to any specific interpretation. The usage of bare infinitives should therefore be motivated and explained by some other means than by semantic justification.

3. Taxonomy of Modal Auxiliaries Based on the NICE Properties

The taxonomy of verbs in Huddleston and Pullum (2002) is based on the application of the *do*-support. These criteria are not semantic, i.e., they do not assume any specific interpretation related to the lexical versus non-lexical distinction. The authors consider the behaviour of the verbal lexical entry in four to six specific syntactic contexts, which are labelled using the acronym NICE. The examples below illustrate the NICE criteria as they apply to non-lexical verbs. The verbs, which in the same contexts require the use of *do*-support, are then labelled as "lexical."

(8)   The NICE criteria: Lexical vs. non-lexical verbs in English
       a.   N   =   Negation   e.g.,   *The cat **will not hunt** the mouse.*
       b.   I   =   Interrogative Inversion   e.g.,   ***Will** the cat **hunt** the mouse?*
       c.   C   =   Coda/Contrast   e.g.,   *She **will hunt** it, **won't** she.*
       d.   E   =   Ellipsis/Emphasis   e.g.,   *She (****does***) will **hunt** it.*

This formal, syntactic distinction between lexical and non-lexical verbs can thus be reformulated as a distinction between the two distinct functions of the verbal element: the operator and non-operator function, as in Quirk et al. (1985), or as a distinction between two positions in an extended projection of the verbal head, as in the generative approach. In generative analyses, Quirk et al.'s "operator" position is defined as the high functional head position I, which hosts features of verbal finiteness. The non-operator position is that of the v/V head, i.e., the lexical verb position.[2]

     In the following example, *will* is located in the I position while hunt is located in the v/V position, with these positions predicting their behaviour: the higher I position (i) precedes negation (and emphatic affirmation), (ii) inverts in questions, and (iii) licenses VP ellipsis. Thus, each of the NICE characteristics follows from the respective positions of each verbal element.

(9)   [IP *The cat **will** (not)* [$_{vP}$ ***hunt** a mouse*]], *won't he/*huntn't he.*

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2   I am assuming Larsonian verbal projections (Larson 1988), which consist of a lower V head hosting a Theta role argument in its SPEC, and a higher (little-)v position, which licenses the top Theta role to the argument located in its SPEC. Together they form a projection of a "lexical verb." As it is not relevant for the present discussion, the existence of other heads in the lowest parts of such a structure, namely on the (non)categorical root, will not be considered.

Assuming the validity of the above-described structural analysis, all English central modals are non-lexical and have to be defined structurally (functionally) as those verbal lexical entries that are located exclusively in the position of a non-inflecting operator – the I position.[3]

Table (1) shows that all central modals are non-lexical, and at the same time all are followed by a bare infinitive. The presence of a bare infinitive complement thus appears to be a necessary but insufficient characteristic for the verbal element to be located in the I (operator) position.

Wurmbrand (2012) discusses the variety of infinitives in several (mostly Germanic) languages. She argues that infinitives represent several distinct kinds of structures, ranging from the highly complex, equivalents of a finite clause, to minimal verbal phrases. She demonstrates that some combinations of a matrix verb and infinitive are structurally the same as two full predications, i.e., bi-clausal. A number of other infinitives, especially those that appear in so-called restructuring contexts (see Rizzi 1978), are rather simple and form only mono-clausal structures, i.e., they are parts of one complex predicate, which includes the selecting finite (non-lexical) verb and the infinitive of the lexical verb. Modals followed by bare infinitives represent a typical example of such a mono-clausal structure, i.e., they are analysed as parts of one analytic predicate. The modals occupy the high functional I-position in the extended projection of a lexical verb, i.e., of the verb which appears in the form of a bare infinitive following the modals. I accept this analysis here, taking the bare infinitive following modals as only the lower part of a verbal projection, i.e., as consisting of only the ("bare") v/VP level.[4]

Such an analysis of a bare infinitive is apparently simple, but it is not that straightforward for all the bare infinitives, since the bare infinitive also appears after lexical verbs, as demonstrated in Table (2). The lexical verbs selecting bare infinitives are most likely closed class verbs, which may be called in some broad sense grammaticalised. They represent special groups with specific interpretations (verbs of sensory perception and causatives). There is no doubt, however, that with respect to the NICE criteria these closed class verbs cannot be counted among the non-lexical verbs, i.e., as those located in the I-position. This begs the question, can the bare infinitive after lexical verbs be the same as the bare infinitive after modals (i.e., a "bare" vP)?

4. Constraints on Bare Infinitives

Let us reconsider the context for the bare infinitive after lexical verbs as shown in (2) not simply as a possibility, but with respect to the constraints that apply to allow a bare infinitive. Several characteristics can be listed. Those that seem to allow (or at least

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3   Machová (2016) rejects the categorical label of verb for English central modals, showing that those lexical elements do not share a single formal characteristic of an English verb and therefore should be given their own categorical label: she uses the label modal. Taxonomy will not be referred to again in the present discussion.

4   Because the position of the infinitival particle *to* is in complementary distribution with the modal, this particle is in standard generative literature located in the same position as modals, i.e., it is an I-head as well. If so, the bare infinitive lacks I and is located in v/VP.

support) the presence of a bare infinitive are:

(10)   a. negative polarity, which is demonstrated with the so-called "blend/marginal
            modals" *dare*, *need*, and *ought*,
       b. the agentive interpretation of NP in front of the bare infinitive with *help*, and
       c. the prohibition of a passive verb followed by bare infinitive.

I have no explanation for the NPI characteristics in (10a), which seem to correlate with
the lack of the *to*-particle with these "blend/marginal" modals. Here I will concentrate
on the most robust characteristics of the lexical verbs followed by bare infinitives – the
fact that (although transitive) they cannot appear in a passive form. This property is
well known and is illustrated in (11) for verbs of sensory perception and in (12) for
causatives.[5]

(11)   a. *We saw/heard/noticed Mary [$_{v/P}$ (*to) water the flowers].*
       b. **Mary was seen/heard/noticed [$_{v/VP}$ water the flowers].*
       c. *Mary was seen/heard/noticed [to water the flowers].*
       d. *Mary was seen/heard/noticed [water**ing** the flowers].*

(12)   a. *They let/made/helped Hugo [$_{v/VP}$ (*to) drive to the hospital].*
       b. **Hugo was let/made/helped [$_{v/VP}$ drive to the hospital].*
       c. *Hugo was made/helped [**to** drive to the hospital].*

As examples (11) and (12) show, the prohibition on passivation cannot be attributed as
a general characteristic of the matrix verbs themselves, as these verbs can be passivised
easily if their complement is a *to*-infinitive or gerundial -*ing* form (I do not stipulate
any label for these constituents here since this would require more detailed analysis).
The restriction on passivation clearly correlates with the presence and absence of the
to-particle.
    At this point, I now suspend the discussion related to bare infinitives, simply
formulating for them the following generalization:

(13)   * V1 $_{PASS}$ [+__ V2$_{bare\ infinitive}$]

In the next section, I am going to introduce another candidate for the bare v/VP structure

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5   To my knowledge, the only exception to the restriction on passivisation is the verb *let*, which can be
    found in the BNC in the passive and still be followed by a bare INF(initive). This is probably because of
    the particle characteristics of the lexical entry of *let*, also attested in its usage in analytic imperatives.
    Moreover, these structures are possible only with certain NP complements of the infinitive verb and
    are always unacceptable with PP complements. I have no explanation for these properties.
        i.   *We let Robert climb the tree. He was let go.*
        ii.   **Robert was let (to) climb the tree.*
        iii.   *Robert was let (*to go) into the room.*

in English, and I will show that the constraint stated in (13) is not only limited to bare infinitives, but applies to the verbal passive as well.

5. English Verbal Passives

The analytic passive verbal form is formed in English with an auxiliary and a passive participle. The passive construction allows several auxiliaries; example (14) illustrates the bold auxiliaries *be/get* followed by an underlined *-en/-ed* participle as a canonical version of the English passive.

(14)   *Mary **was/got** <u>arrest-ed</u> (by the police).*

However, the next example (15) demonstrates that the passive participle can be found after several other English verbs, namely after the verbs *have*, *get*, *want*, *need*, *see*, *hear*, *watch*. All these verbs are transitive, i.e., they at the same time select noun phrase objects.

(15)   a. *They **had/got/wanted** Mary <u>arrest-ed</u>.*
        b. *They **saw/heard/watched** Mary <u>being arrest-ed</u>.*

Emonds (2013) has discussed the distinction between the verbal and adjectival passive in English, i.e., between the forms that are morphologically identical but still exhibit several distinct syntactic characteristics and can have two distinct interpretations (stative versus agentive). He argues that both verbal and adjectival passive participles contain the same suffix $[_A$-*en*$]$, i.e., a suffix of the category A (adjective). Because of the right hand position in a word of the A suffix, both the participles (containing verbal stems) are categorially adjectival APs.

The selectional property of the verbs selecting passive participles is therefore defined not with respect to a "V" complement but more likely using the category A, as suggested in (16). In (16), the V1 represents the matrix verb selecting the participle, which is labelled as A*. This label indicates an "A-headed phrase at the point of selection." For the English *be* and optionally for *get*, there is no overt NP.

(16) V_1, [+__(NP) + A*]

Recall, however, that this A* (in the passives) always contains a V stem that hosts the adjectival suffix *-en*, and their structure is thus a $[[V]_V$ -*en*$]_A$.

According to Emonds (2013), the distinction between the adjectival and verbal passives is the result of the characteristics of the English suffix $[_A$-*en*$]$. When the $[_A$-*en*$]$ suffix is derivational, it is inserted during the syntactic derivation, and it changes the categorical label of the complex verb phrase into an AP. The participle therefore goes to both the interpretative (LF) and the phonetic (PF) interfaces with the label AP. Such AP participles show all the characteristics of the so-called adjectival passive (e.g., they

are interpreted as stative; they are selected by verbs that select APs, etc.).

On the other hand, if the suffix [$_A$-*en*] is inflectional, it is inserted postsyntactically, only at the morphological level PF. To the interpretative interface LF, the participle comes without the suffix and is interpreted as a verbal phrase, not as an AP. This structure represents the so-called verbal passive, and such a form is syntactically a v/VP projection, even though postsyntactically it is an AP. I will label this kind of structure A*P.

In discussing the properties that distinguish the verbal (VP) and adjectival (AP) passive participles, Emonds (2013) states that one of the distinctions concerns a paradigm for passivisation demonstrated in (17). Notice that an object NP preceding a standard AP complement can be passivised as in (17a) and thus can exist in (17b), which shows the passivisation of the NP preceding the adjectival passive participle AP derived from a verb. The examples below thus demonstrate that the AP passive is equivalent to the standard AP.

(17)   a.   *The light made Quido*   [$_{AP}$ *more beautiful/happier*].
                                     [$_{AP}$ *more*[[**satisfi**]$_V$ **ed**]$_A$ *(with his toys)*].
       b.   *Quido was made*   [$_{AP}$ *more beautiful/happier*].
                                     [$_{AP}$ *more* [[**satisfi**]$_V$ **ed**]$_A$ *(with his toys)*].

Contrary to the adjectival passive A(P) illustrated above, the NP preceding a post-syntactic verbal passive, i.e., a post-syntactic A*P, cannot be passivised. The contrast between (17b) and (18b) is rather sharp.

(18)   a.   *They saw/heard/had/got/needed/wanted Quido*
                          [$_{A*P}$ **examined** *(by a doctor) before the trip*].
       b.   **Quido was seen/heard/wanted/gotten/needed*
                          [$_{A*P}$ **examined** *(by a doctor)*].

This paradigm above cannot be explained by some constraint on the passivisation of the verbs selecting the NP object. Such an object can be easily passivised, but the structure cannot be complemented by a succeeding verbal passive – it must be complemented only by a *to*-infinitive or a gerundial -*ing* form.

(19)   a.   *Quido was seen/heard/noticed [being examined (by the doctor)].*
       b.   *Quido was seen/heard/noticed [to be examined (by the doctor)].*

The same contrast can also be found in the following examples, except that some grammatical verbs (*need*, *get*), unlike verbs of sensory perception, can select *to*-infinitives but not gerundial -*ing* forms. Other transitive grammatical verbs (*have, want*) simply reject being passivised.

(20)   a.   *They needed/got Mary [$_{A*P}$ driven to the hospital].*
       b.   * *Mary was needed/gotten [$_{A*P}$ driven to the hospital].*
       c.   *Mary was needed/?gotten [to drive to the hospital].*[6]

The distinction itself is pointed out in Emonds (2013), but he does not provide any explanation for the constraint against passivisation of objects preceding verbal passive complements. On the other hand, Emonds clearly states that the categorial label of the verbal passive during the syntactic process is VP, which in terms of this paper is the same as the label attributed to the bare infinitive above v/VP.

The similarity between the bare infinitive and verbal passives is shown below. In (21) it is evident that the verb *hear* selects either a verbal passive (A*P) or a bare infinitive (v/VP).

(21)   *We heard Matilda*   [$_{A*P}$ *spoken about].*
                                   [$_{v/VP}$ *speak with Mary].*

However, with both these complements the object of the verb *hear* cannot be passivised.

(22)   *Matilda was heard*   * [$_{A*P}$ *spoken about].*
                                   * [$_{v/VP}$ *speak with Mary].*

This constraint on passivisation cannot be attributed to the characteristics of a verb such as *hear*, given that its object can generally be passivised. When an auxiliary is added to the complement, or when there is an *-ing* particle or an infinitive with a *to* particle, the structures remain fully acceptable.

(23)   *Matilda was heard*   *[being spoken about].*
                                   [speaking with Mary].
                                   [to be widely talked about].
                                   [to talk with Mary].

The labels A*P and v/VP are in the syntactic stage of derivation in fact the same, i.e., they represent a minimal (low) phrasal projection of the lexical verb v/V, so the constraint on passivisation in (13) can be made more general so as to cover both bare infinitives and verbal passives.

(24)   * V$_{1\,PASS}$ [+__v/VP]

In the next section, I will explain this constraint on passivisation in structures with bare v/VPs as a result of the interplay of the standard structure of the predicate, a theory of Theta role assignment, and an application of Economy of Derivation.

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6   A native speaker might accept the example with *gotten* in the sense of "persuaded."

6. An Analysis of *to*: Structural Reasoning

To analyse the constraints on passivisation, let us first consider which kind of structure can be attributed to the complex of a grammatical verb (here labelled as V1) followed by an object and another verb (bare infinitive and/or verbal passive participle, labelled as V2), i.e., the structure for V1 [+__ NP+ V2].

In current generative frameworks – see Larson (1988), Hale and Keyser (1993) and Harley (2010, 2013) – the Theta roles (Ө) agent and patient are autonomous syntactic notions related to specific verbal heads and the position in their SPEC. The role of agent (the top Ө1) is licensed in the SPEC(v) of a relevant verb, and the role of patient (the second Ө2) in the SPEC(V) or some alternative to it inside VP.

Standard lexical (i.e., semantically specified and more diverse) verbs do not allow complements to the bare infinitive or bare verbal passive. The verbs rather combine with another predication structure to form a bi-clausal complex. In (25), the matrix verb is labelled V1 and the selected verbal complement I2, i.e., a functional projection IP related to V2,[7] structurally equivalent to a finite clause. The complex thus consists of two predications/clauses. Notice again that in such bi-clausal structures, passivisation in the higher clause is acceptable.

(25)   a.   *They [$_{V1P}$ **persuaded** Quido [$_{I2P}$ **to**/*Ø fall asleep right away].*
       b.   *Quido [$_{V1P}$ **was persuaded** ~~Quido~~ [$_{I2P}$ **to**/*Ø fall asleep right away].*

Moreover, notice that the position of *Quido* especially in (25a) is not uncontroversial. It expresses two Theta roles: the roles of agent of the lower V2 *fall asleep* and of patient of the higher V1 *persuade*. The uniqueness of the Theta role assignment requires that *Quido* be represented twice in the structure (25a): once in SPEC(v2) and once in SPEC(V1). I propose that in structures like (25a) the Theta role assignment may require a process traditionally called Object Raising, one which moves the nominal complex *Quido* from SPEC(v2) to the position of a V1 complement, plausibly SPEC(V1).[8]

Because the verbal projection vP is a derivational phase, in the biclausal structures with selecting lexical verbs, the lower verbal (clausal) domain must be closed, i.e., labelled and sent to the LF interface before the higher domain is formed. Within the lower domain, the element interpreted as its agent, i.e., here *Quido*, must be present at LF to provide the agent of the infinitive *fall asleep*. At the same time, however, the same element, i.e., *Quido*, has to again be present for the matrix verb in the higher domain.

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7   I will not argue here for any specific label of *to*-infinitives in English. The IP notation follows Wurmbrand (TP in her terminology) and the traditional label "biclausal." For the discussion here, it is important that such a structure is larger than the bare v/VP.

8   The so-called "Raising to Object" is a phrasal movement forming a complement of V, i.e., a raising of the subject of the lower verb into a higher VP. The movement was proposed by Rosenbaum (1967), defended by Postal (1974) and re-introduced into the minimalistic framework in Chomsky (2008). In passive structures, the complement of V moves further on to become the subject of the passive V1. I make no commitment regarding the number of Theta roles that one chain (series of copies) of a movement can carry (for a discussion, see Hale and Keyser 1993).

Therefore, *Quido* must be raised from the edge of the lower domain vP. I claim that only in this (higher) position can it also be taken for a candidate for later passivisation. I propose that an infinitival *to* is a sign of Object Raising, which is a necessary prerequisite to passivisation in the higher vP. In the tree in (26), the movement from SPEC(v2) to SPEC(V1) is marked by an arrow.

(26)
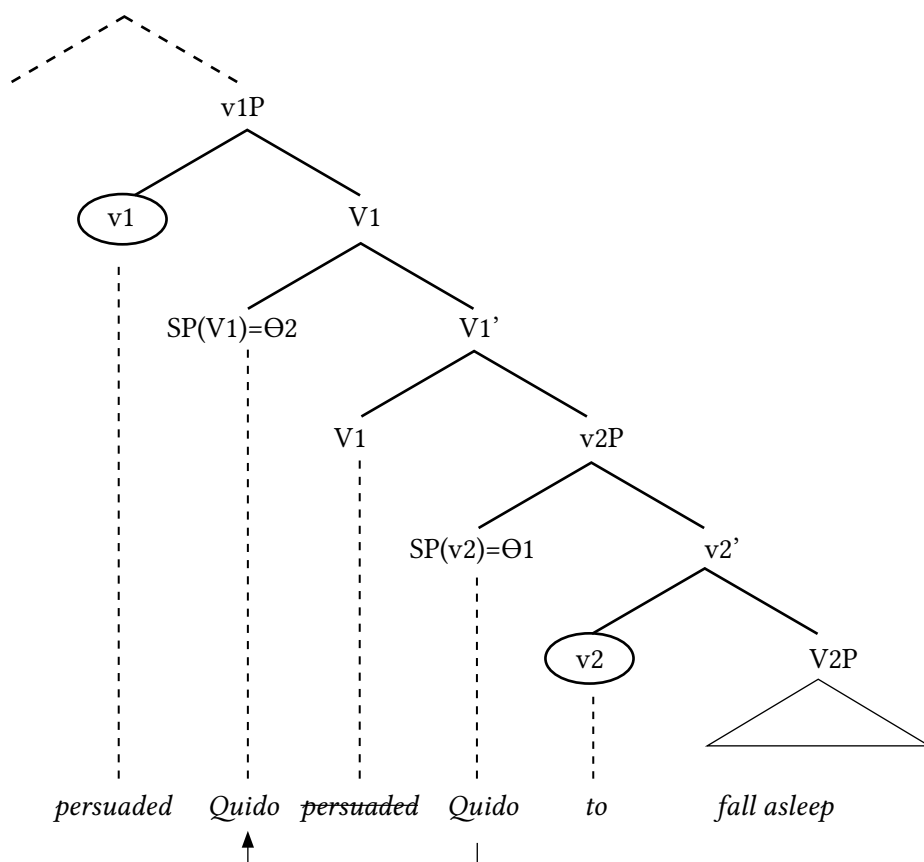
Recall that all the verbs (few in number) selecting bare infinitives and verbal passives are closed class verbs; these are listed in the grammatical section of the vocabulary of Emonds's *Syntacticon* (2000), according to which these "grammatical verbs" have the following properties:

(27)   a.   Grammatical lexical items are closed class (listed) lexical entries;[9]

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9   According to Emonds (2000), the repertory of English grammatical verbs includes, e.g., *be, have, do, get, go, come, let, make, say, see, hear, order, watch, want, need* and *help*. All these verbs display idiosyncratic behaviors, and several of them select bare infinitives and/or verbal passives.

    b. Due to their unique feature sets, each has a unique syntactic behaviour;

    c   They are the grammatical core of the language;

    d. Their insertion can be late in a phase, i.e., syntactic or even post-syntactic.[10]

As stated in (27d), the insertion of grammatical verbs into a structure can be delayed. In their absence, no lower v-headed phase is established, and no need remains for a closure of the lower domain, which includes a SPEC(v). This results in the structure being seen as transparent, with this process of insertion often labelled restructuring. At the same time, there is no agreed-upon label for the lower v2P and no movement needed for the agent of the infinitive to the higher position (i.e., the Object Raising already discussed). I thus propose that the lack of this movement is signalled by the lack of the *to* particle in v2 for the infinitive.

The late insertion of a verb is in fact more economical, and thus this option is preferred whenever possible. Object Raising represents a step in a derivation, which is avoided if not required. Passivisation of the higher verb, however, does require it. I have proposed that such a movement is morphologically represented by a *to* particle, and therefore even late inserted grammatical verbs, which in their active form select bare infinitives, must be followed by a *to*-infinitive if they are to be passivised.[11]

To conclude, this paper has demonstrated that a bare infinitive complement in English is neither a necessary nor sufficient characteristic of modal verbs, especially when those verbs are defined as a separate category. The contexts for bare infinitives suggest that they are a realization of a reduced or "bare" verbal structure. Comparing bare infinitives with another verbal structure – verbal passives – I have attempted to demonstrate that both constructions are barred if the matrix verb is passivised. This shared property is the basis for my claim that the *to* particle with infinitives signals the presence of a thematic element in the SPEC(v) of the infinitive as well as its movement to the higher domain of the matrix verb. A movement termed Object Raising is necessary for passivisation, and therefore all passive structures require a complement to be a *to*-infinitive.

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10 For the distinction between syntactic and postsyntactic morphology, see also Veselovská and Emonds (2016).

11 No passives in English move over two main verbs at once, as is the case with the so-called long passives that some other languages (like German) exhibit. Therefore, if two vPs are present, one inside the other, then there are also two main verbs. In this case the higher one can be passivized only if some NP is already in the SPEC of the lower one. Nevertheless, bare vP complements and verbal passive complements have no NP in their SPEC(vP), so no passive of the verb that selects them is possible.

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Exponents of the Third Person Singular Present Tense Morpheme in English: A Case Study of Jonathan Swift

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Abstract: This paper discusses the 3rd person singular present tense ending -s, which today is one of the few surviving markers of subject-predicate agreement in English. The first part of the paper examines its origins, revealing there was not always just one single marker of the person in question, but that there used to be two – an interdental and an alveolar fricative. This phenomenon was at first unique to Old Northumbrian, an Old English dialect. In the second part of the paper, results of a case study on selected writings of Jonathan Swift suggest that the use of these markers reflected two groups of verbs with distinct syntactic characteristics – the auxiliaries DO + HAVE and lexical verbs. If present in an English predicate, DO + HAVE occur in the T position. During the great reanalysis of the English verbal system that culminated in the sixteenth century, however, lexical verbs lost the ability to occur there and became restricted to the V domain.

1. Introduction

Present-day English has only one marker of agreement between subject and predicate, and that is the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ spelled -(e)s. The ending marks the 3rd person singular present tense indicative form of lexical verbs and of DO + HAVE as in *Sarah cooks*, *It stands*, *He has lived*, *She doesn't know*, etc. However, diachronically this was not always the case. As early as in the tenth century, there existed two such markers in the Northumbrian dialect – an interdental and an alveolar fricative. The alveolar fricative gradually outnumbered the use of the interdental one, however as late as the eighteenth century, both endings could still be found. Using a case study of selected writings of Jonathan Swift, this paper will identify the morphological reflection of the categorical reanalysis of the English verbal system that culminated in the sixteenth century and which gave rise to two syntactically-distinct groups of English verbs, auxiliary and lexical. In other words, it will prove that both auxiliary and lexical verbs took a different ending to mark the third person singular.

2. Historical Development of Today's 3rd Person Singular Ending -s

The development of the ending had already begun in Proto-Indo-European (PIE), the common ancestor of Indo-European languages, spoken approximately 4,000–3,000 BC.

PIE marked the 3rd person singular with the -(e)ti[1] ending as in *bhereti* (*he bears*).[2] Gradually, Proto-Germanic (PG, the ancestor of Germanic languages) evolved from PIE, along with other proto-languages, e.g., Proto-Slavic (the ancestor of Slavic languages).[3] The development was accompanied by sound changes, therefore in PG the -ti ending cannot be found, as the voiceless alveolar stop /t/ changed into a voiceless interdental fricative /θ/, commonly spelled Þ. The PG ending marking 3rd person singular was -(i) Þi. Old English (OE, 449–1100 AD), the oldest form of English, developed as one of the dialects of PG and derived its inflectional morphemes from the PG ones.[4] The voiceless interdental fricative thus still can be found in OE in the 3rd person singular ending -(e) ð/-að. However, in the Northumbrian dialect (the northern dialect of OE) spoken in the Kingdom of Northumbria,[5] the inherited voiceless interdental fricative -ð started to be supplanted by the voiceless alveolar fricative -s. Cole (2014, 24) points out that "by the mid-tenth century, suffixal -s and -ð coexisted in the northern dialect," which is visible in a number of variant forms with which the Northumbrian dialect used to mark the 3rd person singular:

(1)　　a.　strong verbs: -að, -eð, -as, -es
　　　　b.　weak verbs: -að, -eð, -as, -es, -igas, -iges, igeð, -igað

The alveolar variant gradually spread throughout England; the Midlands dialects were affected by the innovation first, southern dialects displayed the new form as late as in the fifteenth/sixteenth century, and East Anglia even a century later. Gries and Hilpert claim that after 1681, "the alveolar suffix had largely ousted its former competitor" (2010, 293).

Although the replacement of the interdental fricative by the alveolar one was in the beginning unique to the north, its origin has not yet been properly explained. Cole (2014) discusses three possible ways the new form could have come into existence. She mentions that the alveolar fricative could have emerged either due to phonological and phonetic factors (phonetic reduction, sound change or articulatory/phonological preference of one sound over another), analogical leveling or Scandinavian influence. The following subsections discuss each of the possible causes.

2.1　Phonological and Phonetic Factors

Phonetic reduction affects the acoustic quality of vowels such as their sonority, articulation, duration, etc. Most often the process centralizes the vowel in question, which thus becomes shorter and weaker. Cole (2014) mentions that the alveolar variant

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1　The e in the brackets marks the thematic form of the ending.
2　Algeo and Pyles 2005, 73.
3　West-Germanic, North-Germanic, and East-Germanic.
4　The others are Old Saxon and Old High German representing West Germanic, Old Norse representing North Germanic, and Gothic representing East Germanic.
5　The Kingdom of Northumbria was an Anglian Kingdom in what is now northern England and south-eastern Scotland.

might have occurred due to the weakening and neutralization of previously disctinct but phonologically similar affixes: -að, -eð, -iað, -is → -s.

Sound change, however, could also explain the /θ/-/s/ change. In general, there is a tendency for a weak, acoustically less perceivable consonant occurring in a weak phonotactic position (i.e., medially or in unstressed codas) to either get lost completely or to get replaced by a phonotactically more stable consonant agreeing with the former in place or manner of articulation. Since /θ/ and /s/ are both fricatives, the alveolar one could replace the interdental one.

The last phonetic/phonological suggestion is that the alveolar fricative could have replaced the interdental one because it is much easier articulated. The Northumbrian speakers thus might have started to prefer it to the interdental one. Even from the phonotactic point of view, it seems that the alveolar variant forms English consonant clusters more easily than the interdental one. It appears in syllable onsets as well as in codas: /*straɪk*/, /*spreɪ*/, /*skrɪm*/, /*slaɪ*/, /*teksts*/, /*lɪst*/, /*krɪsp*/, etc. The interdental fricative rarely occurs with another consonant, and if it does, then in combination with the rhotic approximant as in /*θrɪl*/, /*θrɛt*/.

2.2   Analogic Leveling

Apart from phonetic and phonological factors, also analogical, or morphological, leveling has been suggested as the cause for the /θ/-/s/ change. Morphological leveling means that a specific form generalizes across a paradigm, such as when African American English speakers use one present indicative verbal form in all persons singular and plural, i.e., the marking of agreement in the 3rd person singular is lost: *I come, you come, he **come**, we come, you come, they come.*

For the present case, it has been proposed that the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ occurring in OE in the 2nd person singular present tense ending -(e)st/-ast spread first to the 2nd person plural, from there to all persons in plural,[6] and eventually to the 3rd person singular. However, there seem to be two problems with this suggestion. First, according to Cole's data, the 2nd person and later other persons in plural could not have been affected by the leveling before the 3rd person singular was. The second problem is why such leveling occurred only in the Northumbrian dialect and not in other OE dialects as well.

2.3   Scandinavian Influence

The most widely-accepted explanation for the origin of the alveolar fricative in the 3rd person singular is that it emerged due to Scandinavian influence, more precisely due to the influence of Old Norse.[7] Old Norse (ON) was brought to the British Isles by the Vikings, Germanic inhabitants of the Scandinavian peninsula and today's Denmark,

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6   The OE endings for all persons in plural were -að/-iað.
7   Old Norse is the common ancestor of today's Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Faroese and Icelandic.

in the eighth century AD. The daring sea rovers "began a series of attacks upon all the lands adjacent to the North Sea and the Baltic" (Baugh and Cable 2002, 83) and also colonized parts of the British Isles. Extensive Scandinavian settlements existed in the north-western and eastern parts of England, resulting in two peoples speaking two different languages living side by side in the same region. Due to everyday contact and frequent intermarriage, Old Norse affected English not only with respect to its lexicon, but also with respect to its grammar. The alveolar fricative thus could have emerged due to contact phenomena between the two peoples.

Regarding the ON verbal inflection for the present tense, Faarlund (2004, 49) states that "In the 2nd and 3rd person singular the suffix -r is added to the stem." The same ON suffix for both persons thus could have served as a model for analogical leveling in Old Northumbrian, resulting in the alveolar fricative spreading from the 2nd person singular to the 3rd person singular and later also to the plural environment.

3. REANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH VERBAL SYSTEM

As mentioned, in the sixteenth century the voiceless alveolar fricative was commonly used in most parts of England as a marker of the 3rd person singular. The sixteenth century, however, is also notable – the great categorial reanalysis of English verbs then culminating. The result was two groups of verbs with different syntactic behaviors, the lexical and auxiliary ones, just as we know them today. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 93) give four diagnostics by which auxiliaries (DO, HAVE, BE) and modals (can, may, must, shall, will, etc.) can be recognized.[8] First, auxiliaries and modals combine with the negative particle not, while lexical verbs do not.

(2)   He **has not** seen it.
(3)   *He **saw not** it.

Next, auxiliaries and modals invert with the subject in questions, while lexical verbs do not.

(4)   **Has** he seen it?
(5)   ***Saw** he it?

In contrast to lexical verbs, auxiliaries and modals appear in code.

(6)   He saw it and I **did** too.
(7)   *He saw it and I **saw** too.

Finally, auxiliaries and modals can also be used to express emphasis, while lexical verbs cannot:

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8   These diagnostics are known as NICE rules, with each capital letter referring to a certain phenomenon: N = negation ((2), (3)), I = inversion ((4), (5)), C = coda ((6), (7)), and E = emphasis ((8), (9)).

(8)   *They don't think he saw it but he **did** see it!*

(9)   **They don't think he saw it but he **saw**!*

As the following examples demonstrate, inversion and the combination of a lexical verb with the negative particle *not* were common for lexical verbs before the reanalysis.

(10)   *What **menythe** this pryste?*
       what means   this priest

(11)   *Wepyng and teres **comforteth not** dissolute laghers.*
       weeping and tears comfort   not dissolute laughers

This shows that during the reanalysis, lexical verbs lost their ability to appear in the T position in the English predicate, which after the reanalysis could and still can be occupied exclusively by BE, DO, HAVE or by modals.[9] The question is whether such a syntactic novelty could be reflected morphologically, i.e., whether "T-verbs" took a different agreement ending than "V-verbs".

The following section introduces a case study motivated by Jonathan Swift's (1712) essay *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue*, in which he uses two 3rd person singular agreement markers as shown in the following examples:

(12)   *La Bruyere, a late celebrated Writer among them, make**s** use of many new*
       Terms which are not to be found in any of the common Dictionaries before
       his Time.

(13)   *[…] yet I cannot help thinking, that since they have been left out of all Meetings,*
       except Parties at Play, or where worse Designs are carried on, our Conversation
       *ha**th** very much degenerated.*

The aim of the analysis thus is to confirm the hypothesis that Swift systematically uses different 3rd person singular endings for T-verbs and V-verbs.

4. A Case Study: Jonathan Swift
4.1   Works under Analysis

To collect data for the analysis, nine other works by the Anglo-Irish author Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) were selected. They are given below and with the exception of *Gulliver's Travels*, all of them represent formal writings:
- "A Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome" (1701)
- "An Argument against Abolishing Christianity in England" (1708)

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9   *Be*, *do*, and *have* have a double status in English, as they can be used as both auxiliary and lexical verbs.

- The Examiner: Contribution No. 13 (1710), No. 24 (1710) and No. 40 (1710)
- "A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue" (1712)
- "The Public Spirit of the Whigs" (1714)
- "The Preface to Pope and Swift's Miscellanies" (1727)
- "A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland, from Being a Burden on Their Parents or Country, and for Making Them Beneficial to the Public" (1729)
- *Gulliver's Travels* – "A Voyage to Laputa" (1726)

4.2   Results

After having examined all verbs excerpted from the ten works above and following the NICE diagnostics (Note 9), it turned out that Swift does not use any morphology for modals (*could*, *would*, *shall*, etc.) at all.[10]

Table 1: Total number of verbs in the corpus: 611

Type of verb	Number of tokens	-th/-s
Modals (T-verb)	0	none
DO, HAVE (T-verb)	165	-th in 66%
Lexical verbs (V-verb)	446	-s in 95.5%

Concerning lexical verbs, the alveolar fricative -s occurred in 95.5% of them, which totally outnumbered the interdental variant. The remaining 4.5% were the following cases:

(14)   *reproacheth, reacheth, ariseth, approacheth, reacheth, addresseth, professeth, produceth, vanisheth, pleaseth, advanceth, deduceth, proposeth, chargeth*
(15)   *knoweth, saith*
(16)   *happeneth*

The verbs in (14) share a common feature – all end in a sibilant, and indeed, Gries and Hilpert mention that in "the first half of the seventeenth century … the overall probability of -(e)th decreases considerably, but especially strongly for verbs that have no stem-final sibilant" (2010, 310).

The verbs in (15) also share a feature – both end in a diphthong. The verb in (16), however, is a single representative of another possible group of verbs sharing the feature of ending in a syllabic nasal. One thing that is common to all these verbs (except *saith* and *happeneth*) is that the ending always comes after a stressed syllable.

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10 That is why they were not included in the total number of 611 verbs, which were analyzed with respect to the overt 3rd person singular ending.

All things considered, it seems that the -(e)th ending could have been preserved due to phonological factors, at least for (14). Because the number of representatives in (15) and (16) are so low, I consider them relics.

As for DO and HAVE,[11] 165 tokens out of all 611 analyzed verbs were attested for them. From the total, 66% took the -th ending.[12] Gries and Hilpert (2010, 294) explain this by saying that DO and HAVE "lag behind other verbs in their occurrence with the new alveolar suffix," because regarding the innovation, they are "highly frequent items [and as such] tend to be conservative."[13]

The findings thus reveal that Swift systematically uses a different 3rd person singular ending for two syntactically distinct groups of verbs. Lexical verbs, which after the reanalysis cannot appear in the T position and are restricted to the V position, appear 95.5 % of the time with the alveolar fricative, whereas two-thirds of the auxiliary DO and HAVE as verbs, which can appear in T, take the interdental fricative.

5. Conclusion

This paper related two phenomena in English, the great reanalysis of the English verbal system and the existence of two 3rd person singular present tense endings – one interdental and the other alveolar. The reanalysis gave rise to two syntactically-distinct groups of verbs – the so called T-verbs being able to occupy the T (= operator) position, i.e., English modals and auxiliary DO, HAVE (and BE), and (lexical) V-verbs, which lost this ability. The analysis of collected data from ten selected works by Jonathan Swift revealed that he did not only distinguish between T-verbs and V-verbs syntactically, but he also distinguished them morphologically. The data show that he systematically used the alveolar fricative with lexical verbs (95.5%), whereas the interdental fricative was reserved for two-thirds of auxiliary HAVE and DO. Modals did not show any morphology. Thus, the situation regarding lexical verbs seems quite stable for Swift. On the other hand, DO and HAVE, which can be both lexical or auxiliary verbs in English, tend to be marked by a different ending reflecting their particular use. It will be a matter of further research to determine when the alveolar ending started to invade the auxiliary environment as well.

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11 As well as modals, the 3rd person singular form of BE was excluded from the analysis as it has not changed its form since OE.

12 The 165 auxiliary tokens included only 12 occurrences of DO, which in my view are not representative enough to draw conclusions from. One would need a larger corpus to measure the frequency of -th/-s with DO in the 3rd person singular.

13 In other words, he explains the phenomenon with another one, namely lexical diffusion, whereby some words are affected by a change more rapidly or slowly than others.

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The Syntax and Polarity Sensitivity of "Degree" Pseudo-partitive Constructions in Romanian: *Oleacă de/un pic de*

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ABSTRACT: This paper investigates pseudo-partitive constructions in English and Romanian and argues that these constructions can be split into two categories from the point of view of their pragma-semantic inferences. In English, partitive constructions are understood as expressions such as *a group of the students*, *a bottle of the wine*, while pseudo-partitive constructions in English are *a group of students*, *a bottle of wine*. Pseudo-partitives are expressions that refer to an amount of some substance rather than to a part/subset of a superset. The difference between partitives and pseudo-partitives is observable in many natural languages. Romanian exhibits a class of pseudo-partitive constructions known as "standard" pseudo-partitives, the underlying sense of which is amount; these encode the superset-subset relation. The second class of pseudo-partitive constructions is that of "degree" pseudo-partitives, the underlying sense of which is degree; based on the quantitative feature minimizers and maximizers can be distinguished. This syntactic analysis of Romanian pseudo-partitives starts from the assumption that the order N1 *de* N2 is base-generated, a feature which turns the pseudo-partitive construction into a single double-headed extended projection with a semi-lexical head – N1, which acts as a classifier, and a lexical head – N2.

KEYWORDS: pseudo-partitive constructions; minimizers; maximizers; polarity sensitivity; Romanian

1. Introduction

Germanic languages have developed two main types of constructions, which replace combinations with genitives: analytical constructions (generally restricted to proper partitives: *ett glas av det goda vinett* in Swedish [a glass of the good wine]) and juxtaposition (for pseudo-partitives: *ett glas vin* [a glass of wine]); this loss of genitive marking is likely due to the general collapse of case systems in Germanic and the subsequent reorganization of the genitive domain. Romance languages show preference for analytical pseudo-partitives (*un verre de vin* in French, *una copa de vino* in Spanish [a glass of wine]), i.e., employing the preposition *de*, probably because of the identification of the partitive and genitive value (*un frère de Jacques* in French [a brother of Jacques]; *un hermano de Juan* in Spanish [a brother of Juan]). Syntactically, in Romance languages, standard partitives contain two nominals, the second of which is introduced by a partitive preposition, the first nominal being either a determiner or

a pronoun. In English, the partitive preposition is *of* (*two of the students*), the equivalent of which in Romance is *de*. One exception is Romanian, where *de* is a pseudo-partitive preposition.

This paper offers an account of "standard" pseudo-partitives, represented here in (1), which qualify as expressions of amount and encode the superset-subset relation, and to contrast these with "degree" pseudo-partitives, represented here in (2), which encode expressions of a lower degree, i.e., act as minimizers, as in (2a) or, conversely, encode a higher high degree, i.e., act as maximizers as in (2b):

(1)   *o bucată de pâine*   *o sticlă de vin*   *un pahar de apă*
       a piece of bread   a bottle of wine   a glass of water

(2)   (a) *oleacă de răbdare*   *o țâră de apă*   *un pic de frumusețe*
           a little of patience   a little of water   a little of beauty
       (b) *o grămadă de timp*   *o sumedenie de rude*   *un puhoi de apă*
           a lot of time   a lot of relatives   a lot of water

One assumption made is that the syntactic analysis of Romanian pseudo-partitives starts from the assumption that the order N1 *de* N2 is base-generated, a supposition which turns the pseudo-partitive construction into a single double-headed extended projection with a semi-lexical head – N1, which acts as a classifier, and a lexical head – N2 (see Tănase-Dogaru 2009; 2012).

A second assumption is that by virtue of their inherent meaning pseudo-partitive constructions in Romanian can be subsumed to the class of scalar operators, which are sensitive to the polarity of a sentence. Polarity items express certain pragmatic functions and become legitimate whenever they demonstrate their pragmatic functions. As previously argued in the literature on polarity, these items are forms that denote an element within a scalar ordering, with polarity-sensitive items conventionally used for particular rhetorical effects. Thus, as proposed by Israel (1996), the scalar component of polarity items is linked to the roles they exhibit within a larger propositional structure. Arguably, these roles determine if and when a minimal or a maximal amount can add emphasis or attenuate a proposition. In other words, we understand that polarity sensitivity can be interpreted as a grammatical consequence of the ways speakers make use of their ability to reason in terms of scales and evaluate the respective item with respect to a particular scale and eventually to make inferences based on the meaning of this scalar item.

This paper first presents a syntactic account of pseudo-partitive constructions and then provides a pragma-semantic account analyzing these expressions as scalar operators sensitive to the polarity of a sentence and which can be used to attenuate or emphasize a proposition.

2. A Syntactic Account of Pseudo-partitive Constructions

Regular partitives refer to a subpart of a whole or a subset of a previously established set. Pseudo-partitives refer to a portion of some substance, collection, or kind. In a pseudo-partitive, the first nominal establishes the unit of measurement, and the second nominal designates the type of substance or entity that is being measured.

In this section, we provide a syntactic account of pseudo-partitive constructions in Romanian and claim that the order N1 *de* N2 is base-generated, which turns the pseudo-partitive construction into a single double-headed extended projection with a semi-lexical head – N1, which acts as a classifier, and a lexical head – N2, as shown in the following example (see Tănase-Dogaru 2009, 2012):
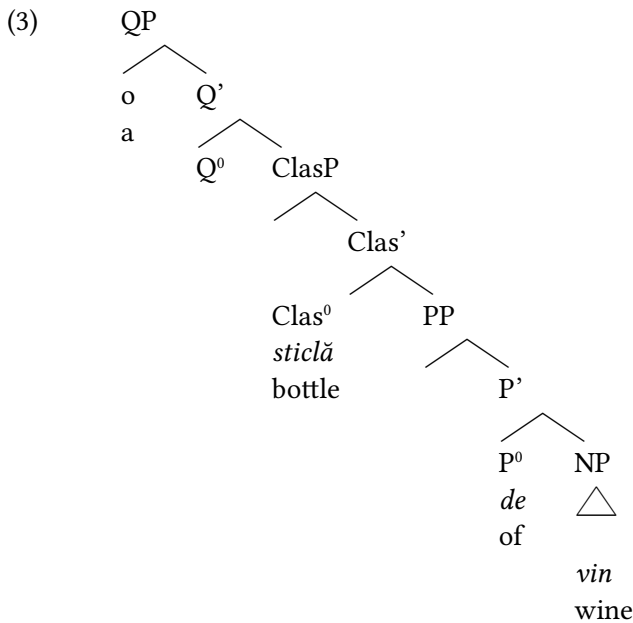
(3)

```
        QP
       /  \
      o    Q'
      a   /  \
        Q⁰   ClasP
              /  \
            Clas'
            /  \
        Clas⁰   PP
        sticlă  / \
        bottle    P'
                 /  \
               P⁰    NP
               de    △
               of
                     vin
                     wine
```

We claim that the syntactic structure of a "standard" pseudo-partitive involves a classifier – noun sequence (3), the structure of a "degree" pseudo-partitive involves a degree expression – noun sequence (4).

(4)   [D o [Clas sticlă [P de [N vin]]]]
       [D a [Clas bottle [P of [N wine]]]]

(5)   [D un [Deg pic [P de [N frumusețe]]]]
       [D a [Deg little [P of [N beauty]]]]

In both cases, the role of *de* is to assign the (abstract) genitive case to N2, a by-product of the analysis being that "degree" pseudo-partitives are shown to be grammaticalized "standard" partitives. N1 *o țâră* [a little] no longer shows a delimited amount – as is the

case with *un pahar* [a glass] – but a very little degree.

(6)   DP
       ╱╲
     Un   D'
      a   ╱╲
         D⁰   DegP
              ╱╲
             Deg'
             ╱╲
          Deg⁰   PP
          pic ╱╲
          little P'
                 ╱╲
               P⁰   NP
               de △
               of
                   frumusete
                   beauty
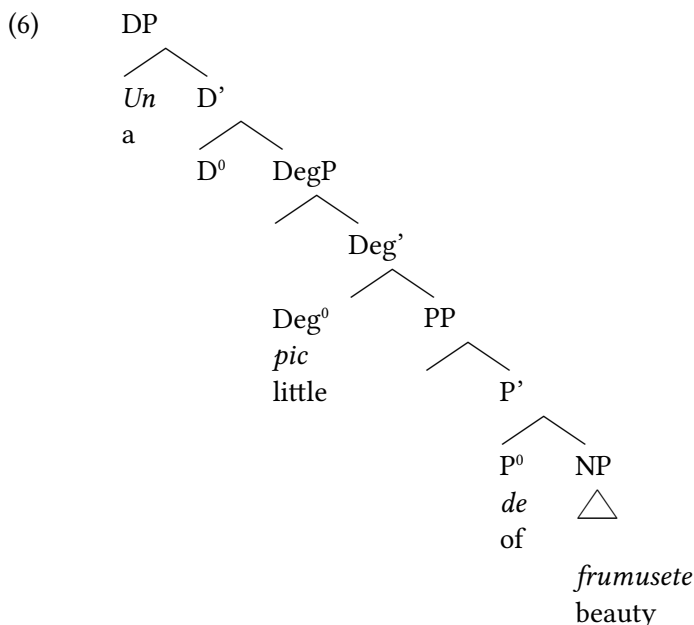
In summary, this section discussed the syntax of pseudo-partitive constructions in Romanian and demonstrated that the syntactic structure of a "standard" pseudo-partitive involves a classifier – noun sequence, the structure of a "degree" pseudo-partitive involves a degree expression – noun sequence, and the role of *de* is to assign the (abstract) genitive case to N2.

3. THE BEHAVIOR OF MINIMIZERS IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN

In this section we investigate the scalar properties of degree pseudo-partitive constructions and describe their rhetoric effects.

    In English the expression *an inch* in the following sentence is a minimizer that denotes some minimal quantity or extent:

(7)   *Lucy did not budge an inch.*

The following examples qualify as minimizers as they denote minimal quantities: *not a tittle, not worth a feather's down/a straw; He does not care a cherrystone for it; (not) a splinter, a shred, a shiver, an atom.* Similar examples can be enumerated:
   a. expressions pertaining to the culinary domain (*not a cherrystone, a chestnut, a crumb, an egg, a fava, a fig, a garlic, a grain, a leek, a lobster, an oyster, a parsnip, a pea*);
   b. expressions showing a small material worth/monetary value (*not a dinero, sou, two deniers* [not a red cent, plugged nickel, thin dime]);

   c. expressions denoting animals and body parts (*not a cat's tail*, *a hair*, *a mosquito*, *a lobster*, *a sparrow*);

   d. other objects of little value (*not an accent*, *an atom*, *an iota*, *a jot*, *a nail*, *a pinecone*, *a point*).[1]

According to Horn (1989, 400), when these elements "occur in negative contexts, the negation denotes the absence of a minimal quantity, and hence the presence of no quantity at all." Thus, in negative contexts, whenever minimizers are used, negation is reinforced. The following expressions, *a red cent*, *a word*, and *a clue*, are typical examples of minimizers, which when used in a negative context, reinforce negation, as shown in the following examples, taken from Horn (1989):

(8)   a. *She didn't say a word.* [She didn't say anything (at all)].
      b. *I don't have a red cent.* [I don't have any money (at all)].
      c. *He doesn't have a clue.* [He doesn't have any idea].

The expressions *not say a word*, *not have a red cent*, and *not have a clue* are discussed by Bolinger (1972, 120–21) who describes them by using the name of "partially stereotyped equivalents of *any*" and who argues that *a bit* and *a little* have a similar meaning in a positive context but have a different behavior and meaning whenever they occur in a negative environment (see also Horn 1989).

(9)   a. *I'm a bit/a little tired.* MINIMIZER (positive)
      b. *I'm not a bit tired.* [I'm not at all tired.] MINIMIZER (negative)
      c. *I'm not a little tired.* [I'm pretty tired.] DIMINISHER

In (9a), both *a bit* and *a little* have the same interpretation, being minimizers, expressions denoting a very small amount. However, a similar interpretation is not inferred when these items occur in a negative environment. While (9b) means "I am not at all tired," (9c) means "I am pretty tired." The expression *a little* in (9c) is used as a metalinguistic negation (Horn 1989, 401).

    One claim that this paper makes is that in standard Romanian, degree pseudo-partitive constructions behave like polarity items, be they either minimizers, i.e., viewed as referencing scale minima, or maximizers, viewed as referencing scale maxima. Following the work of Israel (1996), we adopt the hypothesis that polarity items are specified for two semantic features: quantitative value and informative value, with the interaction of these two features in a single lexical form creating the effect of polarity sensitivity.

    The following diagram, borrowed from Israel (1996), shows a classification of polarity-sensitive items in English and Romanian. The diagram facilitates distinguishing between negative and positive polarity items; with respect to the two semantic features

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1   As found in Horn (1989).

incorporated within a polarity-sensitive item, we understand that polarity items are split into categories depending on the type of scalar value they denote, be it high or low, as well as depending on the effect they create, adding emphasis or attenuating a proposition, thus representing the attitude of the speaker towards the constructed utterance.

(10)

Figure 1: English and Romanian polarity items in a scalar model of polarity

Attenuating NPIs	high	Emphatic PPIs
nu-i mare brânză/scofală	↑	*tone* [tons], *ingrozitor* [insanely]
[no great shakes/not much]		
	n	
Emphatic NPIs		Attenuating PPIs
n-a închis un ochi/pus geană pe geană		*oleacă* [a little bit], *cam* [sorta]
[not sleep a wink]		*nițel* [rather]
n-a mișcat un deget		
[not lift a finger]		
n-a spus o iotă		
[not say a word]	low	
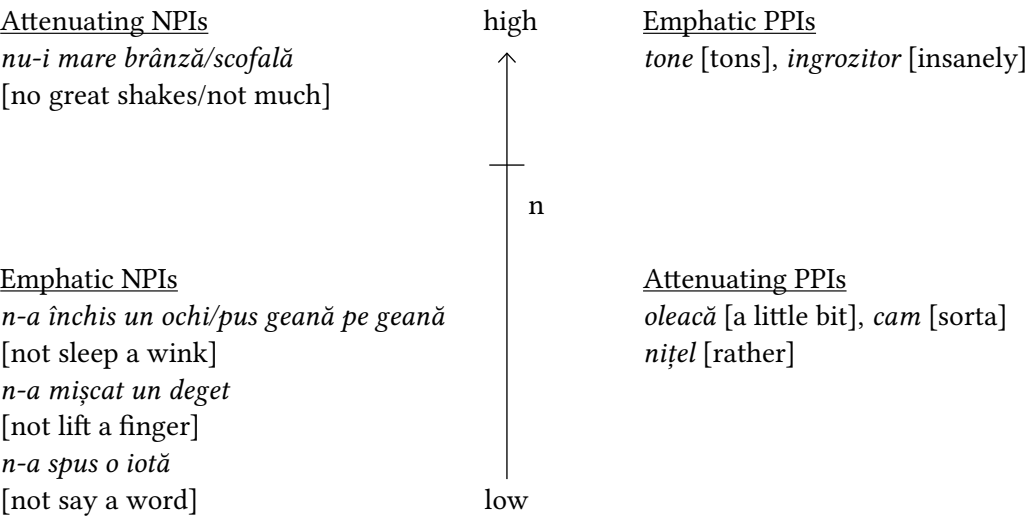
Attenuating negative polarity items denote a high scalar value and attenuate the force of an utterance, as in (11c) and (11d), while emphatic negative polarity items denote low scalar values, as in (11a) and (11b), but create an emphatic rhetoric effect. The situation of positive polarity items is quite the reverse. Emphatic polarity items denote high scalar values and create an emphatic effect, as in (11f) and (11g), while attenuating forms denote low to mid scalar values and attenuate the force of an utterance, as in (11h) and (11i).

(11)   (a) *Maria n- a   spus   o iotă.*
            Maria not have-3rd.p., sg   said   an iota.
            [Maria didn't say a word.]
       (b) *I didn't sleep a wink.*
       (c) *Maria n- a   vorbit   mult.*
            Maria not   have-3rd.p., sg   spoken   much.
            [Mary didn't say much.]
       (d) *Her job is not all that complicated.*
       (e) **Maria a   spus   o iotă.*
            Maria have-3rd p., sg   said   an iota.
            [*Maria said a word.]

(f) *Bradley Wiggins (*nu) a câştigat o grămadă de bani în Turul Franţei.*
[ES1]

Bradley Wiggins (*not) have-3rd p., sg. won a bunch of money-pl. in
Tour-the France-Gen.

[Bradley Wiggins won tons of money at the Tour de France.]

(g) *Tom was rude as hell to John.*

(h) *[...] din   şirul   de ceaiuri [...] cel care   pare a   fi mai   cu*
[...] from series-the DE tea-pl. [...] the which seem-3rd p., sg. to be more with

moţ (*nu) este un ceai de afine   cu olecuţă de   scorţişoară. [ES2]
forelock (*not) is   a tea DE blackberry-pl. with a little DE cinnamon.

[From all the types of tea one can think of [...], the best type of tea seems to be
the blackberry tea with a little cinnamon.]

(i) *Betty was sorta rude to her sister.* [*sic*]

Sentence (11a) makes a strong claim by denying that Maria even said the smallest
amount imaginable, while sentence (11c) makes a weak claim by denying only that
Maria talked for a long time. So, *o iotă* marks a low, minimal quantitative value and
produces an emphatic sentence, and *mult* marks a high quantitative value and produces
an understatement. An expression like *spune o iotă* [say a word], expresses a minimal
amount of conversation and contrasts with all the expressions that denote a great
amount of conversation, like *vorbeşte ca o moară stricată* [to gabble/talk nineteen to
the dozen]. *Spune o iotă* [say a word] is an emphatic NPI and contributes to a strong
proposition. These expressions can only be used in contexts where inferences run from
lower amounts of conversation to greater amounts of conversation. The example (11a),
in contrast to the example (11e), is grammatical because we can license the inference
that "I don't talk much."

Example (11f) constitutes an emphatic assertion to the effect that the cyclist, Bradley
Wiggins won a very large quantity of money, while example (11h) asserts only that the
tea contains a bit of cinnamon. O *grămadă/tone* [scads] defines a very high quantity
and produces an emphatic sentence, while *olecuţă/niscaiva* [a little bit] defines a small
quantity and produces an understatement.

This section investigated the two semantic features encoded by polarity sensitive
degree pseudo-partitive constructions. With respect to the scalar values they encode,
high or low, they can be characterized as maximizers or minimizers. With respect
to their pragmatic nature, as attenuation or emphasis are pragmatic notions, they
strengthen or weaken the rhetoric force of an utterance. Due to reasons of space, the
following sections will focus solely on the polarity sensitivity of particular degree
pseudo-partitives.

3.1   Polarity Sensitivity of *o fărâmă/o droaie/o iota de*

In this section we analyze the behavior of the degree pseudo-partitive constructions *o
fărâmă* [a bit of] and *o droaie de* [a heap of] with respect to different types of negation.

This analysis relies on the proposals of Zwarts (1998), who refers to different degrees of negativity, and of van der Wouden (1997), who classifies polarity items with respect to the negative environments where they occur.

Zwarts (1993) demonstrates that whether the occurrence of certain polarity-sensitive items in different types of negative contexts is legitimate or not depends on the negative strength of the environment. In other words, polarity-sensitive items may or may not scope below downward-entailing operators, anti-additive operators or antimorphic operators. According to van der Wouden (1997, 130), these conditions are downwardly applicable in the sense that:

- Strong PPIs are incompatible with all monotone decreasing contexts.
- PPIs of medium strength are compatible with downward monotone contexts but incompatible with anti-additive ones.
- Weak PPIs are compatible with downward monotonic and anti-additive contexts, but incompatible with antimorphic ones.
- Weak NPIs are expressions that can felicitously occur in monotone decreasing contexts.
- NPIs of medium strength may be licensed by anti-additive contexts but not by downward monotonic ones.
- Strong NPIs may only be licensed by antimorphic contexts.

The following examples show that *puțini* [few] and *cel mult n* [at most n] are downward entailing operators.[2] As expected, these operators license inferences from sets to subsets. If *few children eat meat* is true, then *few children eat beef* is also true, as *beef* is a subset of the larger category *meat*. If *few people understand the importance of syntactic theory* is true, then *few people understand the importance of the minimalist program* is true, as the *minimalist program* is a subset of the larger class *syntactic theory*. Thus, we can conclude that *puțin* [few] is a downward-entailing operator in Romanian and *few* is a downward-entailing operator in English. The same type of reasoning applies to *cel mult n* (at most n) and if *at most five guests eat pastries* is true, then at *most five guests eat chocolate tart* is also true because *chocolate tart* is a subset of the larger group *pastries*. If *at most five people in this department read books* is true, then *at most five people in this department read science fiction books* is true, as *science fiction books* is a subset of the set *books*.

(12)   (a) ***Puțini*** *copii   mănâncă carne.   →*
         Few   child-pl. eat   meat.
         [Few children eat meat.]
      → ***Puțini*** *copii   mănâncă vită.*
         Few   child-pl. eat   broccoli.
         [Few children eat beef.]

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2   See van der Wouden (1997) for further details, specifically for monotone decreasing f (X ⊆ Y) → f(Y) ⊆ f(X) – *few*, *seldom*, *hardly*.

(b) ***Cel mult*** *5 invitați   au   mâncat prăjituri cu   aluat   franțuzesc.* →
At most 5 guest-pl. have-3ʳᵈ p., pl. eaten   cake-pl. with dough French.
[At most 5 guests eat pastries.]

→ *Cel mult 5 invitați   au   mâncat tartă cu   ciocolată.*
At most 5 guest-pl. have-3ʳᵈ p., pl. eaten   tart with chocolate.
[At most 5 guests eat chocolate tart.]

(c) *Few people understand the importance of syntactic theory.* →
Few people understand the importance of the minimalist program.

(d) *At most five people in this department read books.* →
At most five people in this department read science fiction books.

The following examples show that the partitive construction o *iotă din* in (13a) is a negative polarity item that might occur in the scope of the downward-entailing operator *cel mult* [at most], just as an *iota in* (13d). With respect to the polarity sensitivity of the degree pseudo-partitive constructions in the Romanian minimizer *o fărâmă* [a bit], and the maximizer *o droaie* [a heap], in (13c) and (13b) respectively, it may be noted that just like a heap and *a little bit* in (13d) and (13e) in English, the Romanian constructions are positive polarity items, the occurrence of which in the scope of the downward-entailing operators *puțini* [few] and *cel mult n* [at most n] is legitimate.

(13)   (a) ***Cel mult*** *5 elevi   înțeleg   **o iotă** din   filmul   acesta.*
At most 5 child-pl. understand-3ʳᵈ p., pl.   an iota from film-the this.
[At most 5 children understand an iota from this film.]

(b) ***Puțini*** *moderatori   fac   **o droaie** de gafe.*
Few   presenter-pl. make a bunch of   mistakes.
[Few presenters make tons of mistakes.]

(c) ***Cel mult*** *5 copii   mici   au   **o fărâmă** de   răbdare.*
At most 5 child-pl. young have-3rd p., pl. a crumb   of   patience.
[At most 5 young children have got a bit of patience.]

(d) *At most five sentences had an iota of sense.*

(e) *Few people have already finished reading a heap of books.*

(f) *At most five boys showed a little bit of sympathy.*

A function f is anti-additive if for all x, y such that f(x ∪ y) = f(x) ∩ f(y). In other words, *every [student of mathematics or linguistics] attended the lecture* is equivalent *to every [student of mathematics] and every [student of linguistics] attended the lecture.* The following example shows that *refuză* [refuse] and *fără* [without] in Romanian, just like their English counterparts in (14c) and (14d), are anti-additive operators.[3]

(14)   (a) ***Refuză***   *să   mănânce sau să   doarmă.* ↔
Refuse-3ʳᵈ p., sg. SA   eat   or SA sleep

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3   See van der Wouden (1997): Anti-additive f (XUY) = f (X) ∩ f (Y) – *nobody, never, nothing.*

[He refuses to eat or sleep.]

↔ **Refuză**   să mănânce şi **refuză**   să doarmă. ↔
Refuse-3rd p., sg. SA eat   and refuse-3rd p., sg. SA   sleep
[He refuses to eat and he refuses to sleep.]

(b) *Maria a*   *plecat **fără** bani*   *sau*   *acte.* ↔
Maria have-3rd p., sg. left   without money-pl. or   document-pl.
[Maria left without money or documents.]

↔ *Maria a*   *plecat **fără** bani*   *şi*   *Maria a plecat*
Maria have-3rd p., sg. left without money-pl. and Maria have-3rd p., sg. left

fără   *acte*
without   document-pl.
[Maria left without money and Maria left without documents.]

(c) *John refused to eat or drink.* ↔ *John refused to eat and John refused to drink.*

(d) *Tom left without books or pens.* ↔*Tom left without books and Tom left without pens.*

The next examples demonstrate that the partitive construction o *iotă din* is a negative polarity item that can occur in the scope of anti-additive operators as in (15a) and (15i). The degree pseudo-partitive constructions in Romanian o *fărâmă* [a bit], which is a minimizer, and o *droaie* [a heap], which is a maximizer, qualify as positive polarity items which may scope below anti-additive operators *refuză* [refuse] and *fără* [without] as in (15b, c) and (15g, h).

(15) (a) *Englezoaica*   *a*   *cântat fără*   *să*   *înţeleagă* **o iotă**
British-the.fem. have-3rd p., sg. sung   without SUBJ understand an iota
din melodia   *în* *română.*
from song-the in Romanian.
[The British woman sang without understanding a word of the Romanian song.]

(b) *O conspiraţie* **fără**   **o fărâmă** *de romantism e ca o zeamă* **fără oleacă**
A conspiracy without a crumb of romance is like a soup without a little
de piper. [ES3]
of pepper
[A conspiracy without a little bit of romance is like soup without a little pepper.]

(c) *Potrivit pentru orice buzunar* **fără**   **o droaie** *de opţiuni şi*   *extraopţiuni.*
[ES4].
Suitable for any pocket without a bunch DE options and   extra-options.
[It's suitable for any kind of income, without tons of options and extra-options.]

(d) *The idea of presidential debates seems to survive even without an iota of common sense.* [ES5]

(e) *What is a garden party without a lovely heap of butter on your plate?* [ES6]

(f) *What is life without a little bit of stress?*

(g) *Maria* **refuză** *să*   *mănânce* **o droaie** *de legume.*
Maria refuse SUBJ eat   a   bunch of vegetable-pl.

[Maria refuses to eat a bunch of vegetables.]

(h) *Ion **refuză** să arate **o fărâmă** de bun simt.*
Ion refuses SA show a crumb of good sense.
[Ion refuses to show a bit of decency.]

(i) *Sufletul lui mare **refuză** să creadă **o iotă** din peroraţia ei.*
Soul-the his big refuse-3rd p., sg. SUBJ believe an iota from peroration-the her.
[His generous soul refuses to believe a word of her speech.]

(j) *So while Kayla was inclined to hold her chin high and refuse even an iota of help from Beau.* [ES7]

(k) *He refused to look at the heap of documents I left on his desk.*

(l) *She refuses to accept a little bit of help.*

An operator Op is anti-morphic[4] if and only if Op(A) and Op(B) is equivalent to Op(A or B), and Op(A) or Op(B) is equivalent to Op(A and B). For example, *Tom did not read and Tom did not write* is equivalent to *Tom did not read or write*; and *Tom did not read or Tom did not write* is equivalent to *Tom did not (both) read and write* as in (16a, b). The following example shows that *nu* (not) is an anti-morphic operator in Romanian, in (16c, d).

(16) (a) *Tom did not read and Tom did not write.* ↔ *Tom did not read or write.*

(b) *Tom did not read or Tom did not write.* ↔ *Tom did not (both) read and write.*

(c) *Ioana **nu** a cumpărat haine şi cărţi.* ↔
Ioana not have-3rd p., sg. bought clothes-pl. and books-pl.
[Ioana didn't buy clothes and books.]

↔ *Ioana **nu** a cumpărat haine sau Ioana **nu** a*
Ioana not have-3rd p., sg. bought clothes-pl. or Ioana not have-3rd p., sg.
cumpărat cărţi.
bought book-pl.
[Ioana didn't buy clothes or Ioana didn't buy books.]

(d) *Ioana **nu** a cumpărat haine sau cărţi.* ↔
Ioana not have-3rd p., sg. bought clothes-pl. or book-pl.
[Ioana didn't buy clothes or books.]

↔ *Ioana **nu** a cumpărat haine şi Ioana **nu** a*
Ioana not have-3rd p., sg. bought clothes-pl. and Ioana not have-3rd p., sg.
cumpărat cărţi.
bought book-pl.
[Ioana didn't buy clothes and Ioana didn't buy books.]

The following examples indicate that the partitive construction o *iotă din* is a negative polarity item that can occur in the scope of an antimorphic operator, i.e., in the classical negation *not* as in (17a) in Romanian and in (17d) in English. The degree pseudo-

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4 See van der Wouden (1997) where antimorphic is treated as f (X∩Y) = f (X) U f (Y).

partitive constructions in Romanian, the minimizer *o fărâmă* [a bit] and the maximizer *o droaie* [a heap] behave like positive polarity items; that is, they cannot scope below clausemate negation as in (17b) and (17c), two utterances which are just as strange in Romanian as their English counterparts in (17d) and (17e).

(17) (a) **Nu** *va   trece* **o iotă** *sau o frîntură de slovă din   Lege* [ES8]
          Not will pass an iota or   a smidgen of letter from Law
          [It won't be of any importance any word or bit of teaching from the Bible.]

      (b) **Tomsani, locul   unde* **nu** *s-   a   născut* **o fărâmă**
          Tomsani, place-the where not CL-refl. have-3rd p., sg. born   a crumb
          de veşnicie.
          of eternity.
          [Tomsani is the place where there wasn't born a bit of eternity.]

      (c) * *Soldatul   **nu** a căzut sub   **o droaie** de răni.*
          Soldier-the not have-3rd p., sg. fallen under a heap   of wound-pl.
          [The soldier didn't fall injured by a heap of wounds.]

      (d) *I did not get one iota of encouragement from any of those people.*

      (e) *? There isn't a heap of evidence in his support.*

      (f) *? There isn't a little bit of decency among these people.*

Although PPIs in Romanian cannot scope below clausemate negation, they can nevertheless scope below superordinate negation, which has a similar behavior to *some*-type PPIs in English, as described by Szabolcsi (2004), as well as *un N oarecare* [a/ an N whatsover], as described by Fălăus (2009) . The following examples show that the occurrence *o fărâmă* [a bit/a little] and *o droaie* [a heap] below superordinate negation is felicitous in Romanian just as in the English examples under (18c) and (18d).

(18) (a) **Nu** *cred că i- a   rămas   **o fărâmă** de bun simţ.*
          Not think-1st p., sg. that CL-3rd p., sg. Dat. have-3rd p., sg. left a crumb DE good sense
          [I don't think that he has a bit of decency.]   √ not >[CP/IP o fărâmă]

      (b) **Nu** *cred   că   face   **o droaie** de   prostii.*
          Not think-1st p., sg. that make-3rd p., sg. a bunch of   idiocy-pl.
          [I don't think that s/he does tons of idiocie.]   √ not >[CP/IP o droaie]

      (c) *I don't think that there is a heap of evidence in his support.* √ not >[CP/IP a heap]

      (d) *I don't think that there is a little bit of decency among these people.*
                                                          √ not >[CP/IP a little bit]

Another interesting similarity that PPIs in Romanian display, just like, e.g., *some*-type PPIs in English, as described by Szabolcsi (2004), and *un N oarecare* [a/an N whatsover], as described by Fălăus (2008), *o fărâmă* [a bit/a little] and *o droaie* [a heap] can scope below the negation only if there is another operator, like *fiecare* [every], or *întotdeauna* [always] between the negation and the PPI.

(19) (a) *Ioana **nu** a arătat la **fiecare** dezbatere **o fărâmă** de bun simț.*
Ioana not have-3rd p., sg. shown at every debate a crumb of good sense.
[Ioana didn't show at every debate a bit of decency.] √ not>every>o fărâmă

(b) *Maria **nu** a adus la **fiecare** petrecere **o droaie** de cadouri.*
Maria not have-3rd p., sg. brought at every party a bunch DE present-pl.
[Maria didn't bring at every party tons of gifts.]   √ not>every>o droaie

(c) *Harry didn't break at every party a heap of glasses.* √ not>every>a heap

(d) *Betty didn't always conceal a little bit of evidence.*   √ not>every>a little bit

4. Conclusion

In this paper, the syntactic analysis of Romanian pseudo-partitives began with the assumption that the order N1 *de* N2 is base-generated, a condition that turns the pseudo-partitive construction into a single double-headed extended projection with a semi-lexical head – N1, which acts as a classifier, and a lexical head – N2 (see van Riemsdijk 1998; Vos 1999; Tănase-Dogaru 2012).

   What this paper has demonstrated is that, while the syntactic structure of a "standard" pseudo-partitive involves a classifier-noun sequence (22), the structure of a "degree" pseudo-partitive involves a degree expression-noun sequence (23). In both cases, the role of *de* is to assign the (abstract) genitive case to N2. A supplemental finding of the analysis is that "degree" pseudo-partitives are shown to be grammaticalized "standard" partitives. N1 *o țâră* [a little] no longer shows a delimited amount, unlike the case with *un pahar* [a glass] – but a very little degree.

(20) [D o [Clas sticlă [P de [N vin]]]]
     [D a [Clas bottle [P of [N wine]]]]
(21) [D un [Deg pic [P de [N frumusețe]]]]
     [D a [Deg little [P of [N beauty]]]]

This paper has also shown that partitive and pseudo-partitive constructions can be subsumed into the class of scalar operators, which denote high or low scalar values due to their quantitative semantic features. Whenever they are used in discourse, these items discharge their pragmatic feature and they can help attenuate or emphasize the rhetoric force of an utterance.

   The final part of this paper focused on the partitive construction *o iotă* [an iota/a word] and on two degree pseudo-partitive constructions *o fărâmă* [a little/a bit] and *o droaie de* [a lot/a heap], showing that the latter are, respectively, polarity-sensitive minimizers and maximizers that can scope below downward entailing operators (e.g., *puțini* [few], *cel mult N* [at most N], etc.) and below anti-additive operators (*fără* [without], *neagă* [deny], *refuză* [refuse], etc.). The partitive construction *o iotă* [an iota/a word], which is sensitive to negative polarity, can occur in the immediate scope of clausemate negation, the antimorphic operator *nu* [not]. By contrast, the degree pseudo-partitive constructions *o fărâmă* [a little/a bit] and *o droaie de* [a lot/a heap],

which are sensitive to positive polarity, cannot scope clausemate negation.

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Linking Adverbials in Academic Discourse: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Student Writing and Published English

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Abstract: Recent corpus-based studies on academic language have revealed significant differences between student academic writing (both English L1 and L2) and the language of academic papers written by professionals, especially as far as frequency and distribution of various (groups of) connectors are concerned. This paper investigates the use of adversative and additive linking adverbials in both students' theses on linguistics and translation studies (Czech L1 students of English Philology), and professional articles published in linguistic journals. In line with the previous findings about English L2 academic writing, a higher frequency of these types of linking adverbials in students' academic prose than in texts by professionals is expected, especially in sentence-initial position.

Keywords: academic English; additive linking adverbials; adversative linking adverbials; learner corpora; published English; student writing

1. Introduction

Developments in the field of corpus linguistics have led to an increased interest in language development by learners. This paper compares the frequency and distribution of linking adverbials in non-native student writing and in published English, i.e., professional academic writing. Previous studies suggest significant differences between the use of linking adverbials by English L1 and English L2 speakers (e.g., Granger and Tyson 1996; Bolton, Nelson and Hung 2002; Shaw 2009). It is believed that L2 speakers generally overuse a limited number of linking adverbials in their writing, which results in the underuse of other linking adverbials, as compared to professional academic writing. Individual cases will be discussed, as will the methods employed in this paper and the analysed data. Certain possibilities for future research will then be presented.

2. Theoretical Background
2.1 Previous Research

A number of studies so far have suggested that students of various L1 tend to use certain connectors or linking adverbials more frequently than professional authors, while other expressions tend to be underused or not used at all (e.g., Granger and Tyson 1996; Bolton, Nelson and Hung 2002; Shaw 2009). One of the first corpus-based analyses of learners' use of connectors is Granger and Tyson's article (1996) on English essay writing by French L1 students. They used the French mother-tongue sub-component of

the ICLE[1] corpus and formulated what they called "An Overuse Hypothesis" (Granger and Tyson 1996, 19–20), i.e., that French L1 learners of English overuse connectors in their English essay writing as compared to native speakers. A stylistic, semantic, and syntactic analysis of individual connectors, however, revealed a difference between individual connectors. Specifically, they demonstrate that French learners of English tend to overuse connectors that corroborate the argument (*indeed*), give examples (*for instance*) and add points to the argument (*moreover*), but they underuse connectors that contrast (*however*) and develop (*therefore*) the argument (Granger and Tyson 1996, 20–21). In the same paper, Granger and Tyson (1996, 24) further argue that there is evidence for a tendency among learners to place the connectors sentence-initially, and that this tendency is probably not language-specific.

Bolton, Nelson and Hung (2002) use the data from ICE-HK to analyse essays by Hong Kong undergraduate students (i.e., English L2) and corresponding texts by British students from ICE-GB (i.e., English L1).[2] Both types of data are then compared to the academic writing component of ICE-GB, which is academic writing by professionals. The authors notice that both L1 and L2 students use a considerably smaller range of different connectors than the authors of the texts in the academic writing section of ICE-GB, which leads to their overuse (again compared to the academic writing section of the ICE-GB). The comparison of Hong Kong and British students also indicates that the Hong Kong students actually overuse the connectors to an even greater extent (Bolton, Nelson and Hung 2002, 175–76). It can therefore be argued that while native and non-native student writing differs from professional writing both in frequencies of expressions used and their range, there are also similar differences between native student writing and non-native student writing.

In 2009, Shaw, who also observes a higher frequency of linking adverbials in student writing than in writing by professionals (2009, 225), and their frequent occurrence sentence-initially (2009, 227) hypothesizes that this might be a consequence of certain teaching practices, for example, an excessive emphasis put on *besides*, and of the fact that students tend to connect shorter and simpler ideas (2009, 232).

Furthermore, the use of linking adverbials in the sentence-initial position might be encouraged, for example, by Biber et al. (1999, 890–92) who consider the sentence-initial position of linking adverbials to be the unmarked position, as it accounts for approximately 50 percent of all the cases of their occurrence. Therefore, the fact that students use their linking adverbials frequently sentence-initially is not surprising but actually expected.

There are several reasons for this over-, under- or misuse of the expressions. There is a gap in students' knowledge as to how to use them appropriately. The problem seems to be that students lack the ability to see or understand the stylistic and semantic restrictions, and also do not have enough practice (Granger and Tyson 1996, 24–25).

Although mother tongue might seem to be a reason as well, "there is evidence that

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1　ICLE = International Corpus of Learner English
2　ICE-HK = The International Corpus of English, the Hong Kong component; ICE-GB = The International Corpus of English, the British component

advanced learners of various language backgrounds have similar problems and face similar challenges in their way to near-proficiency" (Callies and Zaytseva 2013, 53), which is supported by the fact that many of the previously mentioned studies analyse texts by students with different mother tongues and come to similar conclusions.

2.2 Linking Adverbials

Terminology first needs to be clarified. In their paper, Granger and Tyson (1996) analyse connectors such as *indeed*, *namely* or *moreover*; however, the final list of 108 connectors which they analyse is not provided. Also Bolton, Nelson and Hung (2002, 173–74) study connectors. They point out that previous studies did not provide a definition or a complete or uncontroversial list of connectors. As their starting point, they analyse the subset of academic writing taken from the ICE-GB corpus, which is how they identify the connectors used in L1 professional academic writing, and provide a list of them.

This paper analyses expressions called *linking adverbials*. According to Biber et al., the primary function of these expressions is "to state the speaker's/writer's perception of the relationship between two units of discourse," and they are used as a means of textual cohesion by connecting the individual parts of the text (1999, 875). They are adverbials that "make semantic connections between spans of discourse of varying length" (Biber et al. 1999, 558). Shaw (2009, 215) defines linking adverbials as "adverbials like *however* and *for example* which perform metadiscoursal functions." Although the groups of connectors and linking adverbials significantly overlap, only a few (if any) studies on connector or linking adverbial usage deal with the same list of expressions, and individual items on the lists may vary. The list of linking adverbials analysed in this paper is based on Biber et al. (1999, 875–92), but it is complemented by certain expressions from two handbooks of academic English (Swales and Feak 1994, 22–25; Bailey 2006, 138–41) in order to determine what is usually suggested for students to use in their academic writing.

In this paper, the linking adverbials have been divided into two groups: additive and adversative linking adverbials. The additive linking adverbials analysed in this paper are *additionally*, *alternatively*, *besides*, *finally*, *first*, *first of all*, *firstly*, *furthermore*, *in addition*, *moreover*, *second*, *secondly*, *similarly*, *third*, and *thirdly*. The adversative linking adverbials are *anyway*, *conversely*, *however*, *in contrast*, *instead*, *nevertheless*, *on the contrary*, *on the other hand*, *though*, *whereas*, and *yet*.

3. This Paper

The aim of this study is to determine the most significant differences in usage of linking adverbials by Czech students who write academic texts in English, when compared to published English, i.e., articles written by professional linguists. It is expected that certain linking adverbials will be overused in the writings of Czech L1 students as compared to published English, while others will be underused. Based on the previously mentioned studies, it is believed that the differences in frequencies apply to individual

linking adverbials rather than the whole groups of either additive or adversative linking adverbials. It is therefore important to determine which linking adverbials are overused and which are underused in academic writing by Czech L1 students as compared to published English. Also, it is expected that the linking adverbials that the students overuse will be placed sentence-initially.

3.1   Method and Data

This analysis is a corpus-based study, for which two corpora were used. Both corpora were created by Anna Boková (2015), a student at the Department of English and American Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University in Olomouc, who used the corpora for an analysis of n-grams in student and professional academic writing as her MA thesis. I was later allowed to access and use the corpora. SketchEngine, an online tool available at www.sketchengine.co.uk, was used to create these corpora. SketchEngine is software as well as an online tool, a corpus manager, which can be used to search large text collections, and as in this case, it can be used to create a new corpus. Once a text is uploaded via this tool, it is morphologically annotated and the user is then able to search for concordances, collocations, word sketches, etc. For the present study, these corpora were used because there are no other publicly available corpora that would fit my needs, especially a corpus of academic writing by L1 Czech students.

As Boková (2015, 30–34) explains, the corpus of student academic writing comprises 15 BA and 16 MA theses by students whose mother tongue is Czech, and who study English Philology. It includes 711,222 tokens (553,005 words). The corpus of research articles is based on articles written in English and published in linguistic journals, i.e., articles written by professional linguists. It contains 50 articles, and the overall size is 679,263 tokens (534,155 words). Boková, however, does not provide a complete list of theses and articles used in the corpora.

The students attained at least the C1 level of English according to the Common European Framework of Languages (CEFR). As far as genre is concerned, the students' theses are comparable to published research articles in that they are not restricted by time limits, as are essays written during a lesson or an exam. Even though the individual texts in each of the two corpora are not of the same length, as for the total size, the corpora are comparable.

The linking adverbials were searched for, ignoring the case, in order to obtain all the cases of the expressions. After having searched for the linking adverbials in the corpora, some manual sorting had to be carried out. First, if an article or thesis was dealing with conjunctions or linkers, etc., and the lists of these expressions were provided there (as in [1[3]]), these cases had to be eliminated from the analysis. Second, examples of the expressions listed in Section 2.2, which were not used as linking adverbials (e.g., *though* [2], *yet* [3], *first*, etc.), were excluded:

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3   Example sentences from the corpus of student academic writing are referred to with "STW" and the file ID number of the relevant text. Sentences from the corpus of published English are labeled with "PUB" and the file ID number.

(1) Sequences such as *on the other hand* and *at the same time* are more psycholinguistically salient than sequences such as *as to do with the*, or *I think it was*, even though their frequency profiles may put them on equivalent lists. [PUB_file2035795]

(2) *Though* some aspects are discussed in the previous sub-chapter, it is suitable to devote some space to the class of verbs itself. [STW_file2035775]

(3) When this action is taken, it is not *yet* known. [STW_file1872561]

4. Analysis

An online tool created by Hardie (2013) was used for counting the significance.[4] Table 1 shows the relative frequencies for both additive and adversative linking adverbials; the frequencies given are relative frequencies, counted per million words. It follows from the table that, in general, Czech L1 students use linking adverbials more frequently than professionals in published English. When having a look at the two groups separately, however, it becomes apparent that it is the group of adversative linking adverbials that is overused by students as compared to published English, while the group of additive linking adverbials is slightly underused. In the following parts of this paper, individual cases of additive and adversative linking adverbials will be discussed.

Table 1: Overall relative frequencies for additive and adversative linking adverbials

	Student writing	Published English	p-value
Additive linking adverbials	1,012	1,172	0.0085
Adversative linking adverbials	2,350	1,870	< 0.0001
Total	3,362	3,042	0.0002

4.1 Additive Linking Adverbials

The overall frequencies for additive linking adverbials suggest that students tend to slightly underuse additive linking adverbials in their academic writing, compared to published English. Table 2 shows the relative frequencies for the individual additive linking adverbials: section (1) shows the linking adverbials that are overused in student writing as compared to published English, section (2) lists the expressions underused by students (again as compared to published English), and section (3) contains the additive linking adverbials the relative frequencies of which are comparable for both student writing and published English.

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4   See Andrew Hardie, "UCREL Significance Test System," Lancaster University, http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/sigtest/.

Table 2: Additive linking adverbials

	Student writing	Published English	p-value
(1) Additive linking adverbials overused by students			
besides	77	21	< 0.0001
first of all	38	10	0.0006
similarly	167	112	0.0044
(2) Additive linking adverbials underused by students			
second	13	96	< 0.0001
third	4	35	< 0.0001
first	67	137	< 0.0001
finally	96	166	0.0003
in addition	156	222	0.0058
(3) Additive linking adverbials relative frequencies of which are comparable in student writing and in published English			
furthermore	139	107	0.0784
alternatively	13	21	0.2586
firstly	38	29	0.3658
moreover	142	152	0.6982
thirdly	7	9	0.7194
secondly	35	32	0.7498
additionally	20	22	0.7801

Table 2 demonstrates that the most frequently overused additive linking adverbial in student writing is *besides*, followed by the phrase *first of all*. Since these two expressions are generally used more frequently by students than by professionals, also the number of occurrences in sentence-initial position is higher than in the published English. This suggests that when students overuse these expressions, they actually have a preference for placing them sentence-initially. The last case of an overused additive linking adverbial by students is *similarly*, where the overuse is not shown for the sentence-initial position but for the medial one.

The additive linking adverbials underused by students are those expressions that may seem to be an easy device for structuring a text. It is therefore fairly surprising that they are more frequent in writing by professionals. To be specific, the expressions concerned are *first*, *second*, *third*, and *finally*. In these cases, the sentence-initial position is significantly underused (which, again, might be the consequence of their overall lower frequencies), while the frequencies for the medial position do not show any

difference. Apart from these expressions, *in addition* is also underused, namely in the medial position, while the frequencies for cases when *in addition* was placed sentence-initially by students and by professionals are comparable.

The remainder of the additive linking adverbials analysed in this paper do not differ in overall frequencies; both the frequencies and the distribution are comparable in student writing and in published English for the majority of the expressions. In the cases of *alternatively* and *finally*, however, the sentence-initial position is in fact underused in texts written by students and, in contrast, in the case of *additionally* it is the medial position that is underused by students.

4.2 Adversative Linking Adverbials

The total number of adversative linking adverbials suggests an overuse by students compared to professionals. See Table 3 for the specific numbers. Similarly to Table 2, Table 3 is divided into three sections: section (1) lists adversative linking adverbials overused in student writing as compared to published English, section (2) presents expressions underused by students, and section (3) provides the list of adversative linking adverbials, the relative frequencies of which do not differ in student writing and in published English.

Table 3: Adversative linking adverbials

	Student writing	Published English	p-value
(1) Adversative linking adverbials overused by students			
nevertheless	240	63	< 0.0001
however	1232	982	< 0.0001
on the other hand	263	159	< 0.0001
on the contrary	44	12	0.0002
though	108	65	0.0047
(2) Adversative linking adverbials underused by students			
in contrast	75	128	0.0020
yet	48	90	0.0031
conversely	4	16	0.0234
whereas	129	177	0.0294
(3) Additive linking adverbials relative frequencies of which are comparable in student writing and in published English			
anyway	15	7	0.1470
instead	191	171	0.3243

The adversative linking adverbial overused the most is *nevertheless*, which also demonstrates great differences in the distribution. It is placed sentence-initially nine times more frequently in student writing than in published English. In the case of *however*, both sentence-initial and sentence-medial positions are overused by students, while there are only three cases of *however* in the final position. In contrast, nineteen cases of *however* are found in the final position in published English.

Apart from *though*, which as a linking adverbial never stands sentence-initially, all the adversative linking adverbials which are overused by students also demonstrate a significant overuse of the sentence-initial position, while the expressions that are underused, apart from *whereas*, which does not show any difference as far as position is concerned, are used sentence-initially in fewer cases by students than by professionals. Generally, it seems that the sentence-initial position tends to be most frequently affected by both the over- or underuse of the expressions.

Instead is a case of an adversative linking adverbial, the overall frequency of which in writing by students and professionals is comparable. However, when comparing the individual numbers for sentence-initial, medial and final positions, certain significant differences can be seen; the sentence-initial position is underused by students, while medial and final positions are occupied more frequently.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Although the overall numbers suggest an overuse of linking adverbials in one group (this being in the present case adversative linking adverbials) and an underuse of the others (additive linking adverbials), it is problematic to simply state that one group of linking adverbials tends to be overused in student writing compared to published English; it is necessary to carry out a more detailed analysis and examine the individual cases. A generalized conclusion concerning the position of the linking adverbials is similarly impossible. Yet, in examining the frequencies of individual linking adverbials as well as their positions, it can be surmised that – out of the given list of expressions – students tend to overuse *besides*, *first of all*, and *similarly*, yet they tend to underuse linking adverbials that also express the order of arguments, i.e., *first*, *second*, *third* and *finally*. As for adversative linking adverbials, students overuse *nevertheless* and *however*, as well as *on the other hand*, *on the contrary* and *though* and underuse *in contrast*, *yet*, *conversely* and *whereas*.

There are several ways the students might improve their writing in order to make it more native-like. First of all, students should not be given a "ready-made" list of expressions. The emphasis should be placed on individual expressions in context. Additionally, an important part of this process is that students work with authentic texts in order to learn words naturally and not in isolation, giving them the opportunity to explore the expressions in their actual usage. As far as the distribution of linking adverbials is concerned, students should also practice placing the linking adverbials into a sentence. Currently, the typical exercise is the so-called fill in the blank, i.e., an exercise in which students are asked to insert a proper expression into a text. Instead

of this, students should be asked to place the linking adverbial in the most appropriate position in the academic text.

As for future research, a longitudinal study in which the development of student writing could be observed might bring interesting results; typical students' mistakes and discrepancies could therefore be prevented if teachers were familiar with the issues and incorporated the findings into the class. They could, for example, provide students with a text (preferably written by a native speaker) from which linking adverbials would be deleted. Students would practice by completing the text with all the possible linking adverbials.

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Conventional and Creative Hyperbolic Expressions in the Language of an American Television Series

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Abstract: This paper presents a case study of hyperbolic expressions in the language of the American television series *How I Met Your Mother*. After introducing hyperbole and justifying the choice of the corpus, the aim of the paper is to determine whether any lines of demarcation (formal, semantic or pragmatic) can be drawn between conventional and creative hyperbolic instances; the former referring to well-established and easily understood examples, the latter describing rather unique instances created for a particular expressive need. It goes without saying that in everyday conversation, creative hyperboles do exist but represent only a fraction of the information load since their unpredictable and innovative nature can lead to misunderstandings. The language of television series, however, relies to a great extent on such a risk, attempting to entertain viewers by means of strikingly innovative, rather than conventional language. It is, therefore, assumed that both hyperbolic instances might be represented evenly and that it would be possible to set up a continuum of hyperbolic expressions in which conventionality and creativity present two different tendencies.

Keywords: hyperbole; conventionality; creativity; lines of demarcation; language of television series; *How I Met Your Mother*

1. Introduction

Existing research (e.g., McCarthy and Carter 2004; Cano Mora 2009; Claridge 2011) shows that hyperbolic expressions are a common feature of everyday speech, although hyperbole is still a largely under-researched area. This paper focuses on the occurrence of hyperbolic instances in the television series *How I Met Your Mother*[1] and tries to establish whether lines of demarcation can be drawn between creative and conventional hyperbolic expressions. The paper first provides necessary definitions; it delimits hyperbole and the criteria adopted for its identification as well as the concepts of creativity and conventionality. Attention is then turned to the particularities of the chosen corpus and a justification for such a choice. The paper then proceeds with a discussion of hyperbole's formal, semantic, and pragmatic properties before establishing a link between hyperbole and the concepts of creativity and conventionality. The paper shows that hyperbole has an inbuilt creative potential, yet displays as well highly conventional features (Carter 2004, 138). A tentative conclusion is then put forth that creativity and conventionality are best understood in degrees and that such degrees are signaled by the interplay of the formal, semantic and pragmatic properties of a given hyperbolic expression.

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1   *How I Met Your Mother* – An American television series that aired from September, 2005, to March, 2014, which follows the lives of four close friends living in Manhattan. The action of each episode represents a part of the frame narrative of the series through which the main character, Ted Mosby, is telling his children the ongoing story of how he met their mother.

2. HYPERBOLE[2]

There is no universal definition of hyperbole, and there is not even agreement on criteria for identification. Walton (2017, 105) understands hyperbole simply as "saying more than one means;" according to Carston and Wearing (2015, 80), hyperbole is "an overt and blatant exaggeration of some property or characteristics" and Cano Mora (2009, 14) sees hyperbole as "a form of extremity, an exaggeration that either magnifies or minimises some real state of affairs." McCarthy and Carter (2004, 151) define hyperbole as "purposeful exaggeration in a specific context with a specific evaluative goal," and Claridge (2011, 37–39) sees hyperbole as a mechanism based on gradability, in which a contrast between a literal expression (what is not said but could have been) and a hyperbolic expression (what is said but clearly does not correspond with the given context) triggers a transferred interpretation.

Common to all definitions is that hyperbole is constituted by a linguistic exaggeration of a given situation or a fact, with the safest cue for identification being the contrast between what is said and what the reality is, the so-called counterfactuality or non-veridicality cue (Cano Mora 2009, 2). This paper presents a multimodal approach to hyperbole; adopting Cano Mora's definition, it discusses hyperbole in terms of its formal, semantic and pragmatic properties, suggesting that the interplay of such properties signals the degree of creativity or conventionality that a hyperbolic expression carries.

3. THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION SERIES

The language of fictional television series lies on the verge of spoken and written language in the sense that it resides in carefully pre-prepared scripts that are consequently presented as authentic and naturally occurring language. Research in this area (e.g., Quaglio 2009; Bednarek 2010) confirms that the core features of the language of fictional television are indeed quite similar to natural conversations, but this does not mean that they are identical. Quaglio compares the scripted language of the television series *Friends* to natural conversations of the selected corpora. Applying the multidimensional analysis of Biber, he reveals striking similarities in terms of the core features of natural conversations (the use of pronouns, private verbs, present tense, hedges and contracted language). His research shows, however, that as opposed to naturally-occurring language, the language of fictional television displays the following characteristics (Quaglio 2009, 139):
- much higher frequencies of features marking emotional and emphatic language;
- much higher frequencies of features marking informality;
- more instances of aesthetic devices, e.g., repetition, rhythm and surprise.

Hyperbole primarily serves the purpose of expressing the attitude of the speaker to

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2   For the purposes of this article, terminological discrepancies between hyperbole, overstatement and exaggeration among different authors will not be dealt with. Exaggeration is used here as the most general term for any amplification; hyperbole is used as the technical term of which overstatement is the more colloquial variant.

the given facts (Claridge 2011, 18) and thus is more likely to occur in a language that is emotional and emphatic rather than descriptive. It is also more likely to occur in an informal environment where the risks of a misunderstanding are reduced to a minimum due to the symmetrical relationships among the participants; the characters in *How I Met Your Mother* are of the same age, come from the same culture and speak the same language, and none of them is in a position of power over others. Carter (2004, 136) confirms this by pointing out that "Hyperbole is common [...] especially in settings which are more intimate and informal." Lastly, as opposed to other figures of speech, hyperbole is never a necessity; it is always a speaker's choice (Claridge 2011, 176). As such, it carries elements of surprise and can be exploited in terms of inventiveness and wordplay. Hyperbole fits the pragmatic particularities of scripted television language and, indeed, the corpus did yield a marked occurrence of hyperbolic expressions.

3.1   Formal Properties of Hyperbolic Expressions

According to Norrick (1982, 170), hyperbole can be found in any word class or lexico-grammatical configuration. Cano Mora (2009, 28) sees hyperboles as residing in grammatical categories (nouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, numerical expressions, quantifiers), in lexico-grammatical strategies (superlative degree, idioms, similes), in whole clauses, polysindeton and in complex modifications. This paper adopts Claridge's classification of hyperbolic forms, which is based purely on syntactic and morphological considerations and is empirically supported by data available from the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English*. Based on her research, Claridge (2011, 48) suggests that hyperbole takes the following forms (the examples provided here are taken from *How I Met Your Mother*, Season 1):

Table 1: Formal realizations of hyperbole

word	*I've had a jar of olives sitting in my fridge **forever**.*	S01E01
numbers	*As I walked up to that door, **a million** thoughts raced through my head.*	S01E01
universal descriptors	***Nobody** is that lame!*	S01E03
phrase	*[...] even **the dumbest single person alive**.*	S01E01
sentence	***Somebody spilled gorgeous all over it**.*	S01E05
comparison	*A week? That is **like a year in a hot girl time**.*	S01E01
repetition	*You are having **fun**. This **much fun**. **Thirty-five thousand feet of fun**.*	S01E03

3.2   Semantic Properties of Hyperbolic Expressions

A hyperbolic interpretation of an expression originates from the semantic contrast between the literal expression, one that is not used but could have been, and the actual

hyperbolic expression (Claridge 2011, 38). Consider the following examples:

(1)　　*I like a very old scotch.*
(2)　　*I love a scotch that is **old enough to order its own scotch**.* (S01E01)

The first example presents the literal expression that was not used in the given situation but that could have been used. The second example is the hyperbolic expression that was actually used and that introduces a contrast between what was said (the emotional truth) and what the reality is (the factual truth). Such a contrast (the fact that a scotch does not order drinks) triggers a third interpretation, should the hearer decide to accept it, and the intended meaning is arrived at – *a very old scotch*.

3.3　Pragmatic Properties of Hyperbolic Expressions

Hyperbole is a context-bound phenomenon; it exists and is interpreted, accepted or denied only in a given context. The notion of context is understood here as "the entirety of circumstances that surround the production of language" (Mey 2001, 39) and encompasses the extralinguistic reality: given cultural, social, political and other norms as well as the participants and their mutual knowledge along with their psychological states and relationships. The same expression may be interpreted as hyperbolic in one context and not in another, as the following example shows:

(3)　　Lily: *Maybe it's **the massive blood loss** talking but I'm starving.*
　　　　Marshall: *Let's go get some dinner.* (S01E08)

The massive blood loss to which Lily refers was the result of a small incident in which her husband injured her with a sword. The context clearly shows that there was no actual blood loss, and Marshall's response shows that he understood the expression as hyperbolic and chose to accept it as such. In another context, e.g., during a surgery, a massive blood loss would have not been interpreted as hyperbolic at all. In connection to this, Norrick (1982) stresses the oddity within an assumed context as a means for the identification of hyperbole. McCarthy and Carter consequently built their research on "whether there is evidence that utterances are constructed and received as at odds or in disjunction with their context and co-text" (2004, 160).

　　To sum up, acknowledging the fact that hyperbole can reside in a variety of forms as well as taking into account both semantic and pragmatic considerations – the counterfactuality cue in particular – the research identified in the corpus a total of 718 hyperbolic expressions in 79,022 words, i.e., an average of 9 hyperboles per 1,000 words.[3] The following table presents an overview of the quantitative analysis of the first series.

3　For comparison, in the compilation of the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English* and the *British National Corpus*, Claridge (2011, 72) identified 1 hyperbole per 1,000 words.

Table 2: Overview of the quantitative analysis of hyperbole in
the tv series *How i met your mother*, season 1, 2005

No. of episode	No. of words	No. of hyperboles	No. of episode	No. of words	No. of hyperboles
1	4,111	37	12	4,094	41
2	3,646	32	13	3,799	27
3	4,022	36	14	3,044	28
4	3,862	41	15	2,862	21
5	3,478	41	16	3,478	43
6	3,837	39	17	3,285	22
7	3,826	31	18	2,981	25
8	4,115	35	19	3,379	32
9	4,075	40	20	3,242	23
10	4,194	42	21	3,316	26
11	3,047	30	22	3,329	26
			Total	79,022	718

4. Creativity and Conventionality

A number of hyperbolic examples identified in the corpus were used repeatedly in exactly the same or similar form and meaning, such as:

(4)   Marshall: *I haven't heard this in **forever**.* (S01E08)
(5)   Barney: *[…] I have to wait at least, like, **forever**.* (S01E13)
(6)   Ted: *So you're going to be mad at me **forever**?* (S01E19)
(7)   Ted: *[…] I'm like **the biggest jerk of all time**.* (S01E16)
(8)   Ted: *Well, that's **the stupidest thing I've ever said**.* (S01E18)
(9)   Marshall: *That is **the greatest story ever**!* (S01E15)
(10) Ted: *I'm going to **kill** you.* (S01E21)
(11) Lily: ***Kill** me now.* (S01E16)

Others were used either sporadically or were unique in the sense that they occurred only once, such as:

(12) Robin: ***I'll bring it so hard the bride's gonna look like a big white bag of crap**.* (S01E11)
(13) Lily: *[…] if I catch you **even so much as breathing the same air as her** […]* (S01E12)
(14) Marshall: *[…] I swear to God **I'll eat that moustache right off of your ugly***

French face. (S01E16)

(15) Marshall: *They played my law review party. They were **found guilty. On three counts of rocking**.* (S01E20)

(16) Marshall: *This is gonna be **a slaughter**.* (S01E06)

Research (e.g., Carter 2004; McCarthy and Carter 2004; Claridge 2011) has established that hyperbole is inextricably related to the concepts of creativity and conventionality[4] and has an in-built potential for both, which brings us back to the focus of this paper. Can a line of demarcation be drawn between cases of creative and conventional hyperboles? In other words, is it possible to say that one utterance is an example of a creative hyperbole and another is an example of a conventional one? Claridge (2011, 98–101) suggests a threefold classification of hyperbolic instances into conventional, semi-creative or semi-conventional, and creative. Conventional types are well-established, repeatedly used expressions that have both literal and hyperbolic meaning; creative types are nonce-usages; semi-creative hyperboles combine conventional and creative components. While this is certainly a valid approach, the present paper puts forth another methodology. Instead of drawing a line of demarcation between creativity and conventionality in the sense that a hyperbolic expression must be either unequivocally one or the other, or if it is neither it falls into the area in between, it is possible to understand creativity and conventionality in terms of degrees. This paper further claims that such a degree can be determined and signaled by the interplay of the formal, semantic and pragmatic properties of a given hyperbolic expression in the following ways.

4.1 Formal Properties

Consider these examples:

(17) *She is **smoking** hot.* (S01E02)

(18) *I **love** it, I **love** it, I **love** it.* (S01E10)

(19) *It's gonna be **legen** [...] **wait for it** [...] **and I hope you're not lactose intolerant cause the second half of that word is dairy**.* (S01E03)

(20) *Plus, here's the **mini-cherry on top of the regular cherry on top of the sundae of awesomeness that is my life**. [...]* (S01E15)

(21) Lily: *So where are you from, Natalya?*
      Barney: *Who knows. **The former Soviet Republic of Drunk-Off-Her-Ass-Istan?*** (S01E11)

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4 It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the concepts of creativity and conventionality in depth. Being aware of their complexity and multi-faceted nature, they are not understood as a yes/no category but rather as a cline, a continuum of which highly-creative and highly-conventional expressions present two extreme points. Both are given here a rather general understanding; creativity as a property of human language to create an infinite number of language choices to fit particular communicative needs (see Chomsky 1966), conventionality as a regularity in behavior in a recurrent situation (see Lewis 1969).

Some hyperbolic expressions are clear-cut in their morphological structure; others are more deviant, being subject to various word-formation processes. Due to their short length and due to the fact that the hyperbole resides in only one word, examples (17) and (18) are quite transparent. The inferred meaning of exaggeration is arrived at immediately and no further processing effort is required. The other examples, on the other hand, are morphologically more deviant, with the deviance, together with the length of the expression, resulting in unpredictable and surprising hyperbolic instances that require a much higher processing effort on the part of the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning. It is suggested, therefore, that it is the length of a hyperbole (in terms of words) together with the transparency of its morphological structure that signal the degree to which that given expression is conventional or creative – the longer and more morphologically deviant an expression is, the higher the processing effort on the part of the hearer and the higher the degree of creativity. A short and morphologically-transparent hyperbolic instance signals, on the other hand, a higher degree of conventionality.

4.2   Semantic Properties

Consider the following examples:

(22)   Lily: *Oh, well you did the right thing. I'm proud of you.*
       Ted: ***I'm bleeding internally****.* (S01E04)
(23)   Lily: *This steak **totally bitch-slapped** my pork chop.*
       Marshall: *That might be true but your rice pilaf **kicked** my spinach **in the crotch so hard it threw up a little bit***. (S01E06)
(24)   [...] *the guy is **like a billionaire**. He **can put his platinum card on a fishing line and reel in 10 chicks hotter than you***. (S01E12)
(25)   Lily: *You're going. That's **awesome**. Oh my God, four days to find a dress?*
       Robin: *I know, **it's a suicide mission***. (S01E12)

What distinguishes these examples in terms of their semantic properties is the nature of the chosen contrast, more concretely whether or not the contrast remains within the same semantic domain. Semantic domains are understood here as "clusters of terms and texts that exhibit a high level of lexical cohesion" (Gliozzo and Strapparava 2009, 13). These can include, for example, dimension, quantity, time, degree, physical property, etc. (Claridge 2011, 75). In example (22), the main character, Ted, was beaten up in a fight which Lily feels that Ted's participation in was justified. When she says that she is proud of him, Ted replies that he is *bleeding internally* to communicate that his whole body hurts. Of course, he is not bleeding internally, and Lily understands and accepts the exaggeration. The contrast between the literal expression and the hyperbolic one stays in the same semantic domain of the body.

The other examples, however, show a shift in semantic domain. In example (23), Lily and Marshall have a conversation in a restaurant about whose meal is better.

The second hyperbolic meaning is triggered by the contrast between the food-area (rice pilaf and spinach) and fighting (kick in the crotch, slap). Two different semantic domains are at work here, resulting in a higher processing effort necessary on the part of the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning. Similarly, in (24) a contrast is built between the domain of being rich and the domain of fishing, in (25) between clothing and a suicide mission. It seems, therefore, that the nature of the contrast itself signals the degree of creativity or conventionality. The bigger the distance between domains (the nature of contrast), the higher the processing effort needed, thus the higher the degree of creativity. A small semantic contrast connected with a small processing effort on the part of the hearer signals, on the other hand, a higher degree of conventionality.

4.3   PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

Consider the following examples:

(26)   *I've had a jar of olives sitting in my fridge **forever**.* (S01E01)
(27)   *Your room must **smell like a monkey cage!*** (S01E14)
(28)   *Terrific. Uh, look, I should run. **I'm getting a brain surgery from some guy who's seen a couple of episodes of E. R.*** (S01E22)
(29)   Barney: *What is she gonna – is she gonna **bat her eyes at you in Morse code***? (S01E01)

Some hyperbolic expressions work on their own, without any provision of further context; others, on the other hand, require further context, which is necessary for their interpretation. Such a provision of context, or the lack of it, seems to work as another factor that determines the degree of conventionality/creativity that a certain expression has. Example (26) is contextually clear, and no further knowledge or information is needed. Both of the other examples, conversely, rely on information that, if missing, prevents the hearer from the putatively-intended interpretation. Example (27) presupposes culture-based knowledge that monkey cages generally exude an offensive odor. Examples (28) and (29) presuppose that the hearer knows what the American television series *E. R.* (1994-2009) and what Morse code are, respectively. If these pieces of information are missing, a hyperbolic interpretation cannot be triggered. Hyperboles that do not need any further context and require subsequently much lower processing effort seem to signal a higher degree of conventionality, whereas those that need further context for their intended interpretation move toward the creative end of the scale.

5. FROM HIGHLY CREATIVE TO HIGHLY CONVENTIONAL HYPERBOLES

Firstly, this paper suggests the possibility of interpreting the relative creativity and conventionality of hyperboles in terms of degrees. Secondly, it claims that such an assessment can be based on the interplay of the formal, semantic and pragmatic

properties of the given hyperbolic expression. It has demonstrated that the formal properties are reflected in the morphological structure as well as in the length of a hyperbolic expression; all the identified examples fall into categories of short (one word) and/or morphologically simple or categories of long and/or morphologically complex variants. The semantic properties were shown as reflected in the nature of domain contrast in a way in which the disparity resides in either the same semantic domain or in a different one. Finally, the pragmatic properties have been presented as residing in the presence or absence of a context necessary for the putatively intended interpretation of a hyperbolic expression. The following table presents an overview of the interplay of these factors.

TABLE 3: OVERVIEW OF THE INTERPLAY OF FORMAL, SEMANTIC AND
PRAGMATIC PROPERTIES OF A HYPERBOLIC EXPRESSION

	highly creative	rather creative			rather conventional			highly conventional
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
formal	L/MC	L/MC	L/MC	S/MS	S/MS	S/MS	L/MC	S/MS
semantic	DSD	DSD	SSD	DSD	DSD	SSD	SSD	SSD
pragmatic	IC	SC	IC	IC	SC	IC	SC	SC

L/MC = long and/or morphologically complex
S/MS = short and/or morphologically simple
DSD = different semantic domain
SSD = same semantic domain
SC = sufficient context
IC = insufficient context

Based on the possible combinations of the formal, semantic and pragmatic properties, eight categories have been identified and classified, with six steps of rather creative and rather conventional properties ranging between the poles of highly creative to highly conventional, based on the degree to which one or the other extreme predominates. Expressions with the highest degree of creativity are long and/or morphologically complex, with the semantic contrast ranging among various semantic domains; the given context is insufficient in that some bridging is required to understand the hyperbole. At the other pole, expressions with the highest degree of conventionality are short and/or morphologically simple, with the semantic contrast falling within the same semantic domain and the provided context being sufficient for the intended interpretation.

In contrast to Claridge's methodology, the present approach is more precise in the sense that it takes into consideration all aspects that can help define hyperbole. It also covers the more concrete usage of each expression, taking into account that the status of the same expression may vary throughout the corpus, e.g., an expression may be in one context considered rather creative and in another rather conventional

or highly conventional. This eventuality is shown through the following examples in which variations on the word legendary are used twice in the same episode, once as rather conventional, once as highly creative.

(30) *Barney: MacLaren's is bore, snore. Ted, tonight we're going to go out. We're going to meet some ladies. It's going to be **legendary.*** (S01E03)

(31) *It's gonna be **legen ... wait for it ... and I hope you're not lactose intolerant cause the second half of that word is dairy**.* (S01E03)

Proposing concrete steps to assess each expression, this approach also imposes no strict lines of demarcation, and therefore reduces the number of fuzzy or disputable borderline cases. The following table provides concrete examples from the corpus that fit each of the eight categories from Table 3.

TABLE 4: CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF THE INTERPLAY OF FORMAL, SEMANTIC
AND PRAGMATIC PROPERTIES OF HYPERBOLIC EXPRESSIONS

1	I *love a scotch that is old enough to order its own scotch*.	S01E01	Highly creative
2	You are having *fun*. This *much fun*. *Thirty-five thousand feet of fun*.	S01E03	Rather creative
3	[...] *those Ericksen boys' boys can swim. **They've got two tails and a drill bit for a head***.	S01E09	Rather creative
4	OK. That is my *Barney limit*.	S01E01	Rather creative
5	This is gonna be *a slaughter*.	S01E06	Rather conventional
6	[...] *she just got dumped by her boyfriend so tonight **every guy is the enemy***.	S01E01	Rather conventional
7	That is *like a year in a hot girl time*.	S01E01	Rather conventional
8	I've had a jar of olives sitting in my fridge *forever*.	S01E01	Highly conventional

6. CONCLUSION

The language of the chosen fictional American television series reveals a marked presence of exaggerated and emotional language. In line with the criteria for the identification of a hyperbole, 718 hyperbolic instances were detected in 79,022 words (9 hyperboles per 1,000 words). They have been consequently linked up with the concepts of conventionality and creativity, two contradictory tendencies in language. To draw a strict line between them, however, proves difficult as, like language itself, hyperboles are in their nature both creative and conventional and should be more accurately treated in terms of degrees signaled by the interplay of the formal, semantic, and pragmatic properties of a given hyperbolic expression. Based on the intersections among these three properties, this paper has identified the two extreme poles of highly creative and highly conventional hyperboles, between which a continuum can be

drawn. Across this scale, other hyperbolic expressions can be marked comparatively as rather creative or rather conventional.

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Power and Gender in Humanitarian Discourse

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Abstract: This paper is a follow up to a 2015 pilot analysis of means employed by good-will ambassadors when delivering humanitarian speeches. The pilot study identified the existence of significant differences between male and female speech communities regarding their respective rhetoric and linguistic strategies. While aiming to do good, report on injustice, raise awareness, prevent suffering or call for aid, speakers were observed in the following criteria: *status*, *morality*, *evidence*, *action*, and *power*. Using the statistical data processing software SPSS Statistics, significant differences between male and female speakers were detected in typically-male strategies, namely *status* and *evidence*, which means that strategies typically associated with male speakers are also adopted by female ambassadors. This paper further analyses one of the criteria – *power* – and how its features are applied by each gender.

Keywords: power; gender; humanitarian discourse; political discourse; male speakers; female speakers; rhetoric

1. Introduction

It has been a matter of on-going linguistic discussion whether or not men and women indeed speak differently (e.g., Jespersen 1922; Lakoff 1975; Fishman 1978; Spender 1980; West and Zimmermann 1987; Tannen 1990; Coates 1997). Scholars have questioned if, even when technically speaking the same language, men and women apply different linguistic means or strategies and pursue different communicative goals. Moreover, they have wondered if such differences are pre-programmed (i.e., inborn) or culturally instilled in them at an early age. From the anthropological viewpoint, one's behaviour is always being controlled and navigated in a way deemed appropriate to the current social norms. Learning who one is and how one is perceived by society inevitably influences one's thinking, behaviour, and presentation.

Discourse participants often submit to or even assume the concept others have of them in an attempt to be acknowledged, listened to, heard or even followed. In other words, the way our notion of *self* is formed, and how we perceive ourselves, is conditioned through others' perceptions of us. In socio-linguistic terms, the self is understood as the notion of the *speaker's identity* (e.g., Ochs 1992; Cameron 1997). It is therefore assumed that our self-concept or identity is closely related to our notion of our influence or more precisely *power* and how we choose to exercise it when engaging with others. This paper will analyse what power is and how it manifests itself in both genders in public speaking.

2. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

In order to delineate the context of the study, the following concepts will be explained: *gender*, *humanitarian discourse* and *power*.

2.1   GENDER

Accepting a rather narrow socio-biological view, the basic biological dichotomy of sexes, i.e., male and female, is applied in this study, leaving aside intersex and transsexual categories while acknowledging the growing interest of sociolinguists in these speech groups (e.g., Hall and O'Donovan 1996).

The individual's treatment by society and the attitude of the society are predominantly based on the society's perception of the person's sex, i.e., is the person perceived as a man or a woman? Although sex and gender are often mutually interchangeable, the term *gender* is widely preferred in the area of language disciplines. Unlike sex, gender is not a biological occurrence, which means it is not inborn. As suggested, gender is acquired or learned in the same way as language. In accordance with West and Zimmerman (1987), Butler (1990), and Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), gender is a social construct, formed, established and instilled (e.g., Butler 1990 uses the term "cultural inscription") in the individual by the society via observing particular social norms of appropriateness on both sides, the society and inevitably the individual "being gendered." Gender can be understood as what is done to us by the society (i.e., how the individual is brought up and treated based on their assigned biological sex) and what we do (one's actions and behaviour, verbal and non-verbal, including one's language choices) or as McElhinny (2006, 27) aptly puts it, "suggest[ing] gender is something one continually does is to challenge the idea that gender is something one has."

2.2   GENDER IN LANGUAGE

This study deals with adult speakers or members of certain speech communities, i.e., feminine and masculine speech communities, in which rules and norms imposed by the society are assumed to have been fully acquired, integrated and internalised. Several theories have attempted to explain the relationship between gender and language. However the vast majority of them is based on heteronormativity applied to men and women, i.e., the heterosexual dichotomy serving as a norm. The most prominent and, from the chronological perspective, also original, theory of deficit, regarding women's language as inadequate and male language as the norm, more inventive, vigorous and vivid (Jespersen 1922; Lakoff 1975) was followed by the theory of dominance (Lakoff 2004; Spender 1980; West and Zimmermann 1987) and the theory of difference (Fishman 1978; Tannen 1990; Coates 1997). It is therefore assumed that feminine and masculine speech communities differ regarding their communicative means, strategies, goals and realisations, and yet the model of these relations is a fluid one, conditioned by numerous factors, e.g., culture, situation, status, age, etc.

2.3   Humanitarian Discourse

Humanitarian discourse is a fairly new political phenomenon primarily denoting any kind of war or conflict talk (negotiations, peace talks, speeches) including actions (e.g., interventions). Only more recently has it entered the visual field of linguistics as a part of political discourse and as such bearing mutual principles such as exercising or exploiting power, political or social (Fairclough 1989), manipulation, persuasion (e.g., van Dijk 2009), planting ideology, threatening, propaganda, etc., to pursue one's communicative goals. Yet, humanitarian discourse encompassing many other discursive fields (e.g., education, medicine, sociology, etc.) only partly overlaps with political discourse. Its main area of interest, in the linguistic sense, is language means and strategies applied by humanitarians or good-will ambassadors promoting humanity and the well-being thereof. Therefore, humanitarian speech as a sub-category of humanitarian discourse is an intersection between political discourse and humanitarianism, and discourse of compassion (Nussbaum 2001) and pity (Boltanski 1999). In this paper, humanitarian speech is analysed in regards to gender distinction and how each gender or speech community differs in using the selected language features in the area of power.

2.4   Power

The notion of power is central to political discourse analysis. In sociolinguistics, it is based on the presupposition that power is relational, which means that the participants in every discursive situation find themselves in a certain power relation, with or without realising it – overt or covert power respectively. The following relations may be identified in the field of politics – power, power abuse, hegemony, oppression, tolerance, equality and inequality (e.g., van Dijk 1997, 15). In addition, the pilot study of Čechová (2015) identified other relations occurring in humanitarian discourse: justice, injustice, freedom, guilt, possibility, righteousness, principle, alliance and solidarity.

Power in discourse is most often seen as negative or coercive (using force), manifesting itself in the form of authority or domination. In compliance with the grounded theory of gender difference and dominance, this notion of power may be associated with the male speech group and its manifestation of power – asserting, imposing and manifesting power over. Foucault states that power may also be positive, and that "discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (1978, 101). For the purpose of this paper, the following manifestations of power will be observed:

- *power over*, *threatening*, *promises* – features of the criterion of power associated with men assuming that men possess and display power over, power to make threats and promises from the position of a speaker.
- *power to/with/within* – features of the criterion of power associated with women based on the grounded theory that women do not impose power, they use power to empower others, including themselves, their notion of power is power within and with (e.g., a certain group, usually same gender or humanity).

3. Corpus

A situation-bound type of discourse, i.e., humanitarian speeches delivered by male and female speakers who act as good-will ambassadors, was analysed. The social actors in humanitarian discourse are frequently politicians, but also humanitarian workers, social workers, educators, healthcare workers and celebrity humanitarians. The corpus material consists of ten speeches, five by females and five by males. The corpus contains approximately twenty-thousand words, 40% of them in speeches by females and 60% in speeches by males. The corpus was acquired online, and the sources are listed in the corpus section following the works cited section. The speakers include good-will ambassadors such as Hillary Clinton, Benazir Bhutto, Bella Abzug, David Cameron, Barack Obama, Oscar Arias Sanchez and others. Male speakers are marked as M (M1 to M5), and female speakers as F (F1 to F5). The overall number of speakers is n = 10.

4. Methodology

This paper seeks to elaborate on differences in strategies regarding one of the pilot study criterion – *power* – and the manifestation of its features in both genders. In accordance with the grounded theory, the pilot study analysed differences emerging in men and women regarding the following areas: status, morality, evidence, action and power (Čechová 2015). The statistical tool IBM SPSS Statistics 21 was used. Both speech communities were compared using a t-test regarding their usage of typically-male rhetoric features (CMs) and typically-female rhetoric features (CFs), determining whether men prefer their own rhetoric to female rhetoric and vice versa.

This paper applies the following research strategy:

 (1) CM5 – a criterion of power – *power over*, *threatening*, *promises* is considered to be predominantly male, based on the established theory of difference and dominance; its occurrence will be determined in both speech groups – men and women. The frequency of its occurrence is expressed by mean values; the higher the mean value, the higher the frequency of occurrence of CM5 in each gender.

 (2) CF5 – a criterion of power – *power to/with/within* is considered to be predominantly female, based on the established theory of difference and dominance; its occurrence will be determined in both speech groups – women and men. The frequency of its occurrence is expressed by mean values; the higher the mean value, the higher the frequency of occurrence of CF5 in each gender.

In the pilot study, Levene's test of homogeneity was used to assess the equality of variances for the selected variable – mean values in each gender. The level of significance was set at 0.05. If the resulting p-value (probability) is $p < 0.05$, then there are significant differences among the two sample groups. It was determined that there are indeed overall significant differences in the male speech group ($p = 0.04$), while no

significant differences were detected in the female speech group (p **>** 0.05). The t-test established that, overall, 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).

Regarding the individual criterion of power, the original assumption here, based on the theory of difference and dominance, is that women show preference to the typically-female criterion of power (CF5), and men prefer the criterion (CM5) typically associated with their speech group. However, given the area of humanitarian discourse, typically-female features of the power criterion CF5 are assumed to prevail (*power to/ with/within*) over the typically-male features of the criterion of power CM5 (*power over, threatening, promises*).

5. Results

The results were produced in the pilot study (Čechová 2015), analysing the relation of gender in the areas of the selected criteria. Looking into the individual *criteria of power* (CM5 and CF5), led to the following findings:

5.1 CM5 – A Typically-Male Criterion of Power (*Power over, Threatening, Promises*)

No significant differences have been detected in the usage of the criterion CM5 between the two speech groups (p = 0.077). However, mean values in Table 1 show that differences are borderline, as the p value is slightly over 0.05.

Women show low usage of CM5 (mean = 0.08), which is in accordance with the established theory that women either do not hold the power over or do not feel the need to express it in the field of humanitarian discourse. Men, on the other hand, use CM5 that is considered typical of their speech group (mean = 9). Yet, *the power over, threatening, promises* standard deviation (std. deviation = 7.746) points to the fact that the male speakers are a rather heterogeneous group, suggesting that men vary greatly within their own speech community regarding the use of CM5. The reason for the finding that some male speakers apply the typical male criterion of power (CM5 *power over, threatening, promises*) while others do not might be the fact that some of the speakers are professional politicians or statesmen accustomed to imposing power as a part of their discursive practice and thus possibly differing from celebrity male speakers. Table 1 provides mean values of the use of CM5 in both genders.

TABLE 1: CM5 in both speech groups

Mean			
	Gender		
	F	M	Total
CM5 POWER	0.80	9.00	4.90

Table 2 offers on overview of means of expressions found in the male and female speech groups in the category of typical male features of power CM5.

TABLE 2: Means of expression of CM5 as found in both speech groups
Male criterion

MALE CRITERION power	SELECTED AREAS	EXAMPLES F – female speakers M – male speakers
CM5	power over, threatening, promises,	POWER	*… we have earned the right to say …* (M1) *So this fight is not over.* (M2) *This time, we intervene.* (M3) *If the Bush administration forges ahead …* (M4) *But when it is necessary … we will take direct action.* (M5) *I've seen for myself …* (F2) *The effect … as was brought home to me …* (F2) *… women will not stop …* (F5) *You can be sure … we will still be looking at our government closely, critically, …* (F5)

5.2   CF5 – A Typically-Female Criterion of Power (*Power to/with/within*)

No statistically-significant differences were detected regarding the differences in the use of CF5 by male and female speakers ($p = 0.189$). Both groups show a rather weak presence of CF5 (*power to/with/within* in women, the mean = 2.80, and in men, the mean = 0.40), which is surprising given the nature of the discursive field of humanitarian speech and begs further questioning. Table 3 provides mean values of the typically-female criterion CF5 in both speech groups.

TABLE 3: CF5 in both speech groups

Mean			
	Gender		
	F	M	Total
CF5 POWER	2.80	.40	1.60

Table 4 presents an overview of typical means of expression applied by the female and male speech communities in the category of typical female features of power CF5.

TABLE 4: MEANS OF EXPRESSION OF CF5 AS FOUND IN BOTH SPEECH GROUPS

FEMALE CRITERION

MALE CRITERION power	SELECTED AREAS	EXAMPLES F – female speakers M – male speakers
CF5	power to/ with/within	POWER	*No one should be forced to remain silent ...* (F1) *Perhaps we may play a small part ...* (F2) *Where we are equal partners in peace ...* (F3) *... prosperity and dignity of our fellow human beings.* (F4) *... we will still be looking at our governments, closely, critically, urgently and hopefully to ensure ...* (F5) *That's my commitment to all of you ...* (M2) *We need something more ...* (M2) *We will never beat hunger just by ...* (M2) *We are the kind of people who do ...* (M2) *We are achieving these results ...* (M2)

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

When applying typical female criteria (CF5 *power to/with/within*), women seem to exceed men in applying their own typically-female rhetoric (men 0.54%, women 4.46%), meaning women prefer using their own, i.e., female, rhetoric. In other words, women tend to stick to their own means while men do not feel the urge to incorporate CF5 into their speech.

Applying typical male criteria (CM5 *power over*, *threatening*, *promises*), men seem to greatly exceed women in terms of using their own, typically-male rhetoric (men 16.30%, women 1.45%), which suggests that women either do not feel the need to impose power over the listeners or do not feel they possess such power.

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. A rather virgin territory of humanitarian discourse (from the perspective of statistics) yielded results partly confirming the theory of gender dichotomy, i.e., men and women differ in pursuing their own discourse strategies regarding the criterion of power.

Despite the fact that significant differences regarding gender were not detected in either of the criteria of power (CM5 in men and women; CF5 in men and women), the paper yielded interesting findings regarding both genders, i.e., speech groups. When observing the typically-male criterion of power CM5 – *power over*, *threatening*,

promise – the male speakers showed a rather high heterogeneity, suggesting that some humanitarian speakers indeed show this kind of power and feel the need to impose it while delivering their speech, unlike other male speakers in the sample. Also in accordance with the applied theory of dominance and difference, men greatly exceeded women in manifesting *power over*. Observing the typically-female criterion of power CF5 – *power to/with/within* – female speakers slightly exceeded their male counterparts, yet the results were not as high as previously expected in this type of discourse, based on the initial assumption that the issue of empowering others using the *power to/with/within* is an integral part of humanitarianism and as such should be manifested in humanitarian discourse.

To conclude, the discursive field of humanitarian discourse as a common denominator encompasses humanitarian speakers from all walks of life, i.e., politicians, statesmen, celebrities, etc. (hence the detected heterogeneity in male speakers regarding their use of power), and therefore, delving into the relationship of *status* and *gender* may provide more profound insights.

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F3: Bhutto, Benazir. 1995. "Equality and Partnership Speech." June 15. http://www.emersonkent.com/speeches/equality_and_partnership.htm.

F4: Queen Elizabeth II. 2010. "Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations." June 15. http://www.emersonkent.com/speeches/address_to_the_un_general_assembly_elizabeth_2010.htm.

F5: Abzug, Bella. 1995. "Women Will Not Stop." June 15. http://www.emersonkent.com/speeches/women_will_not_stop.htm.

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Sensing in Interventionist Discourse

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ABSTRACT: This paper deals with the presentation of collective identities in President George W. Bush's discourse after Sept. 11, 2001. The aim of the paper is to observe the presentation of the "Us" and "Them" groups in the speeches delivered by Bush in the period ranging from September 11, 2001 to May 2003. The analytical tool employed in the process of analysis is the system of transitivity, which deals with how reality is presented in language. The analysis of the system of transitivity may indicate how linguistic selections in texts present various actions, events and states, as well as the roles of participants in the processes. The analysis will focus on the mental processes that are employed in the discourse of the speaker.

KEYWORDS: transitivity; mental processes; political speeches; dichotomous representation; United States; George W. Bush; September 11, 2001

1. Introduction

This paper deals with the representation of collective identities in the discourse of President George W. Bush after September 11, 2001. The paper focuses on the ideological clash that took the form of the delimitation of the dichotomous categories of "Us" and "Them" in the discourse of the speaker. The analytical approach employed in the process of analysis draws on the system of transitivity proposed by M. A. K. Halliday. The system of transitivity deals with how reality (including fictional and mental reality) is presented in language. Its main elements are processes in texts and the types of participants and circumstances that are usually identified with them. One of the most important assumptions behind the use of this concept is the notion that transitivity "is concerned with the transmission of ideas" (Simpson 1993, 88). Thus, the analysis of the selections of the patterns of transitivity may also present an effective tool in uncovering various ideological positions in discourse.

In this paper, patterns and participants in mental processes from Bush's discourse will be examined. The aim of the examinations in the selections of the system of transitivity is to explore how these selections construct collective identities and the dichotomy between "Us" and "Them." In the process of analysis, the focus will be placed on mental processes and on the participants in mental processes such as the "Senser" and the "Phenomenon." Generally, the analysis of the system of transitivity in political discourse enables an understanding of how ideologies are created in political discourse. Therefore, analysing the system of transitivity provides insight into how a

linguistic framework of texts constructs particular ideologies, in this case, the creation of the dichotomy between "Us" and "Them."

2. REPRESENTATION OF "US" AND "THEM" IN DISCOURSE

One of the fundamental assumptions of social institutions is a separation into "Us" and "Them" groups. When this separation is established, there is an inherent inclination to portray "Us" as being dominant over "Them." The speaker's discourse was primarily constructed on the basis of the demonization of the "Other," which became an ideological foundation for Bush's rhetorical strategy from Sept. 11, 2001 onwards. The discourse based on this strategy is effective, as it presents the rationale for the claim that "our" world is endangered and thus, efforts to protect it are justified.

Regarding the division between "Us" and "Them," Leudar, Marsland and Nekvapil suggest that "the two categories are a standardized relational pair – using one part of the pair […] invokes the other." As a result, there come into existence two entities or communities, which are separated. Their separation is based on the differences in "social, political and moral terms" (2004, 243). Lazar and Lazar (2004, 227) observe that the construction of the enemies in a speaker's discourse takes the form of "outcasting," which is "a process by which individuals and/or groups are systematically marked and set aside as outcasts." They specify that outcasting is "based upon the dichotomization and mutual antagonism of [an] out-group ('them') and in-group ('us')." In order to deliver this message in discourse, the image of enemies has to be created – and subsequently the enemies must be actively confronted and possibly removed from power. Also, all parts of "our" societies have to be organized against the dangers posed by enemies.

3. POLITICAL SPEECHES DELIVERED BY GEORGE W. BUSH – A GENERAL OVERVIEW

As the manifestations of the official policy of the U.S. government, the speeches delivered by the speaker shaped the approach of the United States towards international affairs after September 11, 2001. The speeches delivered within the period from Sept. 11, 2001 to May 2003 also framed the general scheme adopted with the purpose of formulating the relationship of the United States towards the enemies, dictatorships, and towards the rest of the world in general.

The variation of political speech presented in the corpus may be associated with what Cap calls the "interventionist discourse." He further claims that this type of discourse involves "legitimization of actions which a political speaker/actor chooses to undertake in order to neutralize a threat to his or her geopolitical camp" (Cap 2010, 119). In this type of discourse, political leaders also intend to identify who is "us" and who is "them" – this is an essential aspect and objective of their discourse.

The nature of the speeches delivered by the speaker may be described as "pre-scripted," as they mostly involved a degree of preparedness. Pre-scripted speeches of this type have been chosen for analysis because in them, political actors (and their

teams of writers) are "consciously involved in the organization and selection of each lexical item and each syntactic construction in an effort to achieve the maximum required effect on the audience" (Wilson 1990, 60). Thus, in pre-scripted speeches, there is a particular focus on the choice of the constructions that "strengthen" the effect of speeches and the relationship between the speaker and the audience.

4. Theoretical Framework – The System of Transitivity

Transitivity is an essential element of the ideational metafunction of language.[1] It examines how meaning is present in a clause and how actions, concepts or thoughts are conveyed and communicated. According to Jones and Ventola (2008, 2) the ideational metafunction may present "the most complex and the most challenging of the three metafunctions because it is concerned with the representation of meaning as experience, i.e., where meaning is at its most visible and unstable." Halliday and Webster (2014, 20) suggest that "falling within ideational component is the system of transitivity which specifies the different types of processes that are recognized in language." They distinguish the following types of processes: material, mental, relational (these processes are classified as "major" processes), verbal, behavioural and existential.

The system of transitivity primarily focuses on the types of processes represented in a clause, and on how meaning is present, realized and expressed in a clause. Halliday (1976, 159) argues that the term process is "understood in a very broad sense, to cover all phenomena to which a specification of time may be attached – in English, anything that can be expressed by a verb: event, whether physical or not, state, or relation." The complete representation of processes, on the basis of this statement, includes the relationships between a particular process and the participants included in it. The participant can be seen as a linguistic representation of abstract or inanimate objects, and of human beings as well. The main features and their components (such as participants, processes, circumstances) are essential elements of the ideational meaning.

4.1 Mental Processes – Main Properties and Participants

Mental processes reflect the perception of the world around, or the inner perception of events. Mental processes are associated with verbs such as *know*, *want*, *appreciate*, *believe*, *hate*, *remember*, *like*, *see*, *feel*, *hear*, etc. Butt et al. (2000, 55) note that mental processes "encode the inner world of cognition, perception, inclination or liking/disliking." Two participants are involved in mental processes: the Senser and the Phenomenon. The person (or a group of people) who experiences the process of, e.g., hearing, feeling or believing is called the "Senser" and "must be realised by a human

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1   In Halliday's Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL), there are three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual. These functions "work together to realize meanings" (Young and Fitzgerald 2006, 87).

or at least conscious participant" (Butt et al. 2000, 55). Halliday and Webster (2014, 58) observe that the Senser has "the capacity for thoughts, feelings and perceptions." Therefore, Sensers may realize this capacity to react to an outside stimulus. However, this does not have a significant impact on other participant(s). The Phenomenon has the power to influence the minds of Sensers that are involved in mental processes. Halliday and Matthiessen (1999, 151) note that the Phenomenon "enters into the consciousness of the Senser (or is brought into (mental) existence by the Senser's conscious processing)." It is people, thoughts, concepts or specific matters that may take the role of the Phenomenon. As regards the realization of the Phenomenon, Butt et al. (2000, 55) state that the Phenomenon is realized by "a nominal group or embedded clause summing up what is thought, wanted, perceived or liked/disliked."

5. Data and Analytical Approach

The data for the study consists of political speeches delivered by President George W. Bush. Political speeches delivered by the speaker enact the "interventionist discourse" (Cap 2010, 119) through their articulation of the process of demonization of the enemies and through emphasizing the positive presentation of "Us" and negative presentation of "Them." The analysed texts originate from the speaker who intends to pursue policies and political programs influenced by particular ideological stances – the ideology of a strong polarization into opposing camps. This aspect has provided the rationale for the choice of speeches delivered by the speaker. The speeches present a complex corpus on the events in the aftermath of 9/11 and on the subsequent discursive efforts of the speaker to create a dichotomy between "Us" and "Them."

Transcripts of the speeches that comprise the corpus of this study are available on the official White House website (georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov). The corpus comprises speeches delivered by Bush between September 11, 2001 and the beginning of the Second Iraq War in May 2003. Overall, 27 speeches were analysed, and the nature of the analysis is qualitative.

In order to investigate the representation and construction of collective identities in political speeches with the help of the system of transitivity, I will observe mental processes with the help of which the nature of collective identities such as "Us" and "Them" was created and presented in political speeches. For this purpose, the concepts of the "Senser" and the "Phenomenon" from the system of transitivity are used as analytical tools. In order to analyse the patterns of transitivity in political speeches, the focus will be placed on the clauses from the political speeches that illustrate the presentation of collective identities and their "frame of mind" and inner thoughts (including feelings and perceptions). The initial step in the process of analysis was to collect "schematic representations of transitivity structures in which there are recurrent patterns of one or more of the entities [...] in particular participant roles" (Thompson 2008, 19). The presentation of the clauses with respective participants and mental processes will be followed by a discussion of their representation in the discourse of the speaker.

Table 1: Mental processes in the discourse of George W. Bush – "Them"

EX	DATE	SENSER	MENTAL PROCESS	PHENOMENON
(1)	20/9/01	They	hate	what we see right here in this chamber – a democratically elected government
(2)	20/9/01	They	hate	our freedoms – our freedom of religion, freedom of speech …
(3)	17/10/01	They	want	us to stop our lives
(4)	17/10/01	They	want	us to stop flying
(5)	17/10/01	They	want	us to stop buying
(6)	24/10/01	The terrorists	wanted	our economy to stop
(7)	24/10/01	They	don't understand	America
(8)	24/10/01	They	don't understand	the entrepreneurial spirit of our country
(9)	24/10/01	They	don't understand	the spirit of the working men and women of America
(10)	26/10/01	They	recognize	no barrier of morality
(11)	30/10/01	They	hate	our success
(12)	30/10/01	They	hate	our liberty
(13)	29/11/01	They	can't stand	what America stands for
(14)	7/12/01	The terrorists	despise	creative societies and individual choice
(15)	11/12/01	They	love	only one thing
(16)	11/12/01	They	love	power
(17)	11/12/01	They	hate	progress, and freedom and choice, and culture, and music, and laughter and women, and Christians and Jews and all Muslims …
(18)	29/1/02	These enemies	view	the entire world as a battlefield
(19)	6/2/02	They	don't understand	America
(20)	6/2/02	they	don't understand	us
(21)	11/3/02	The terrorists	despise	other religions
(22)	1/6/02	They	want	the capability to blackmail us, or to harm us, or to harm our friends
(23)	24/6/02	They	didn't understand	our character
(24)	24/6/02	They	really can't stand	the fact that we're not backing down
(25)	24/6/02	they	still hate	the fact that we love freedom
(26)	24/6/02	They	didn't understand	America
(27)	4/10/02	They	hate	everything about us …
(28)	12/11/02	They	just don't understand	America
(29)	12/11/02	They	don't understand	our love for freedom

6. Analysis of Mental Processes and Discussion

With the help of mental processes in his discourse, Bush extends the scope of polarization between "Us" and "Them." The extension of polarization is primarily based on the events of 9/11. As Halliday and Webster (2014, 238) observe, "September 11 was […] etched in the national psyche as a day to remember." Therefore, Bush in his discourse also focused on inner feelings, emotions, and experiences of Americans, especially from the period after the attacks. The speaker also pays attention to the feelings of the enemies towards the United States and to the enemies' attitudes towards the values inherent to the Western world. In the following section, tables with mental processes with respective participants will be presented and discussed.

In the mental processes attributed to the enemy (Table 1), the enemies are presented as the "Sensers." However, the nature of mental processes is mostly negatively evaluated (e.g., *despise*, *can't stand*, *don't understand*), or it presents feelings of hatred, which are associated with the mental process of affection (examples (1), (2), (11), (12), (17), (25)). As the Sensers, the enemies are also involved in mental processes of a "desiderative" type, such as *want* (e.g., examples (3) – (5)).

The polarization between "Us" and "Them" is further manifested in Phenomena of mental processes. Within Phenomena that have an influence on the thinking and mindset of the enemies, the focus is mostly placed on the category of "Us" and the aspects, institutions and pillars connected with "our way of life" – such as "our success" (11), "our liberty" (12), "freedom of religion", "freedom of speech" (2) or "the entrepreneurial spirit of our country" (8). These values and concepts are inherently associated with Western societies, which bears an observation that the enemies, as Sensers, are emotionally disturbed by these values. According to the speaker, the enemies aim their hatred primarily at concepts and moral values that form the basis of the Western societies as can be observed in, e.g., the Phenomenon in (2): "our liberty," the Phenomenon in (17) is presented as follows: "progress, and freedom and choice," etc., the Phenomenon in (14): "creative societies and individual choice", or in (1): "a democratically elected government."

Mental processes that are attributed to the enemy indicate that the emotional hatred of enemies is directed towards the United States, and it may serve as a basis for the transformation of hatred into physical actions. Although being presented as the Sensers, "they" do not represent any "sensitivity" and are not assigned mental processes that would indicate any "human features."

In addition to the material destruction of planes, buildings and humans on 9/11, there was another important emotional impact of these events. The impact is related to the state of the American spirit and psyche, which is presented in mental processes. In the president's presentation of mental processes assigned to the "We" group, the emotions (activated by Phenomena) of Americans present the principal idea.

In the examples presented in Table 2, Americans and the speaker as well (the pronoun "We" can be interpreted inclusively) are presented as the "Sensers" – however, in this case the focus could be also placed on the Phenomena of mental processes,

Table 2: Mental processes in the discourse of George W. Bush – "Us"

EX	DATE	SENSER	MENTAL PROCESS	PHENOMENON
(1)	11/9/01	Our nation	saw	evil, the very worst of human nature
(2)	14/9/01	We	have seen	the images of fire and ashes, and bent steel
(3)	8/10/01	We	have seen	that evil is real
(4)	11/10/01	We	will never forget	all the innocent people killed by the hatred of a few
(5)	11/10/01	We	cannot fully understand	the designs and power of evil
(6)	17/10/01	Our nation	felt	great sorrow
(7)	26/10/01	We	have seen	the horrors terrorists can inflict
(8)	26/10/01	We	have seen	the enemy, and the murder of thousands of innocent, unsuspecting people
(9)	26/10/01	We	have seen	the horrors terrorists can inflict
(10)	6/11/01	We	see	the same intolerance of dissent; the same mad, global ambitions
(11)	6/11/01	We	have seen	the true nature of these terrorists in the nature of their attacks
(12)	6/11/01	We	have also seen	the true nature of these terrorists in the nature of the regime they support in Afghanistan
(13)	8/11/01	We	will never forget	all we lost …
(14)	10/11/01	We	will remember	the fire and ash … the last phone calls … the funerals of the children
(15)	11/11/01	… Americans	have seen	the terrible harm that an enemy can inflict
(16)	11/12/01	We	remember	the cruelty of the murderers and the pain and anguish of the murdered
(17)	29/1/02	We	have seen	the depth of our enemies' hatred in videos
(18)	11/3/02	We	remember	the video images of terrorists who laughed at our loss
(19)	4/9/02	We	will not forget	the events of that terrible morning …
(20)	12/9/02	… we	saw	the destructive intentions of our enemies
(21)	7/10/02	We	have seen	that those who hate America are willing to crash airplanes into buildings full of innocent people
(22)	7/10/02	We	have experienced	the horror of September the 11th
(23)	7/10/02	We	see	a threat whose outlines are far more clearly defined …
(24)	1/5/03	We	have not forgotten	the victims of September the 11th …

which primarily present the consequences of September 11, 2001, and the actions of enemies, which triggered emotions in Sensers. In the clauses, Sensers are exposed to experiencing such Phenomena as, e.g., "evil, the very worst of human nature" (1), "the images of fire and ashes, and bent steel" (2), "horrors terrorists can inflict" (9), or "the horrors of September the 11th" (22).

Phenomena have the potential to affect the Sensers and at the same time, they work as the stimuli or causes of emotions in Sensers, whose minds are occupied by the thoughts of what happened on Sept. 11, 2001 and by the negative actions of the enemies. Most of the clauses that are presented feature the mental process of perception attributed to the "Us" group ("We saw", "We have seen"). In the speaker's discourse, the Phenomena are negatively evaluated, and they realize their power upon Sensers by "influencing" the mind and consciousness of the people living in the United States – and Phenomena that are presented have the potential to influence the minds of Sensers to the degree that they become emotionally affected.

Overall, the employment of mental processes enables the speaker to construct the enemy as an entity whose mind is fully occupied with hatred towards the institutions of the Western world and that does not have any understanding for "Us" and "our way of life." On the other hand, Americans are presented as profoundly affected by the actions of the enemies, and their mindset and thoughts include both the events of Sept. 11, 2001 and their direct consequences.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of the patterns of transitivity in discourse offers a tool for exploring how the organization of texts encodes a certain system of ideas. In this paper, the system of transitivity has been presented as a grammar of processes with a focus on mental processes and on the participants involved in these processes. This paper has also discussed the suitability and relevance of the system of transitivity in the process of uncovering the ideological positions and attitudes of the speaker – more specifically, the ideology of polarization into two opposing camps, "Us" and "Them." The analysis of the representation of collective identities and of particular types of processes connected with them in discourse through the system of transitivity may indicate how political actors in their discourse develop and sustain an ideological picture of the world, which also includes the presentation of inner thoughts and feelings. Employing mental processes on Bush's discourse manifests the essential interests of the speaker – to demonize the enemies, to present their hatred towards the institutions of "Our" world and to present "Our group" as a sensitive entity.

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Corpus

1. September 11, 2001 Presidential Address to the Nation
2. September 14, 2001 President's Speech at National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Ceremony at the National Cathedral
3. September 20, 2001 Presidential Address to a Joint Session of Congress
4. October 26, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech at the Patriot Act Signing Ceremony
5. October 8, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech at the Swearing-in Ceremony for Governor Thomas Ridge
6. October 11, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech at the Department of Defense Service of Remembrance

7. October 17, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech to Military Personnel at Travis Air Force Base

8. October 24, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech to Employees of the Dixie Printing Company

9. October 26, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech at the Patriot Act Signing Ceremony

10. October 30, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech on the "Lessons of Liberty" Initiative

11. November 6, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech to the Warsaw Conference

12. November 8, 2001 Presidential Address to the Nation

13. November 10, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech to the United Nations General Assembly

14. November 11, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech to the Veterans Day Prayer Breakfast

15. November 29, 2001 Remarks by the President from Speech to the U.S. Attorneys Conference

16. December 7, 2001 Remarks by the President from the Speech Commemorating Pearl Harbor Day

17. January 29, 2002 President's State of the Union Address

18. February 6, 2002 Remarks by the President from Speech to New York Police Department Personnel

19. March 11, 2002 Remarks by the President from Speech on the Six-Month Anniversary of the September 11th Attacks

20. June 1, 2002 President Bush Delivers Graduation Speech at West Point

21. June 24, 2002 Remarks by the President from Speech at Ceremony Honoring Port Authority Heroes

22. September 4, 2002 Presidential Proclamation Establishing Patriot Day

23. September 12, 2002 Address to the United Nations General Assembly

24. October 4, 2002 Remarks by the President from Speech at the Massachusetts Victory 2002 Reception

25. October 7, 2002 President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat

26. November 12, 2002 Remarks by the President from Speech at the Metropolitan Police Operation Center

27. May 1, 2003 Remarks by the President from Speech on the USS *Abraham Lincoln* on the Cessation of Combat Operations in Iraq

Technology-Related Neologisms and Their Word-Formation Tendencies

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ABSTRACT: In an evolving, technology-oriented world, technology is aptly reflected in English vocabulary. This paper studies some of the newest lexemes from the area of technology included in English vocabulary since 2014, using the online databases of *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* and *Macmillan Dictionary*. The paper examines which word-formation processes in this area are currently productive, among them, compounding, blending, conversion and derivation. The paper also studies the semantic categories that can be found among technology-related neologisms. Some words describe new devices or new technology-related processes, while many represent people's attitudes towards technology and their interactions with it. Finally, the paper provides an overview of current technology-related words and discusses their word-formation, their subcategories and their sociolinguistic importance.

KEYWORDS: technology; neologism; word formation; online dictionary; vocabulary

1. INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to think of a concept more emblematic of today's world than technology. New gadgets are constantly appearing in shops, designed to help us do our work faster, make our lives easier and entertain us. The world is witnessing important technological changes. This is also evidenced by the fact that there are currently more mobile devices than people in the world (Groupe Speciale Mobile Association). Something as representative of today as technology is bound to exert changes on language. This issue was also tackled by David Crystal, who in his book *Txtng: The Gr8 Db8* discusses how communication via text messages acquires its unique form and imagines the ramifications of language being changed this way (2009). This paper does not study language as a means of communication; rather, it studies how English vocabulary reflects technological progress. The paper analyzes technology-related entries from three online sources between January 2014 and August 2015. It identifies how technology is reflected in the English lexis, what concepts are denoted and what these neologisms say about the culture and lives of English speakers. Its goal is to identify key word-formation tendencies in this area, while also discussing the social meaning and importance of these neologisms.

2. Sources

Due to their very nature, neologisms, i.e., words in the process of entering common usage but not yet accepted into the mainstream language (Malmkjaer 2006, 601), are not an easy subject to monitor and study. The most easily-accessible and available database-like source that captures the elusive nature of neologisms are online dictionaries. Therefore, three online dictionaries were chosen for this study. Neologisms can be categorized between established and lexicalized items (Bauer 1983) and neo-formations. But, this paper does not distinguish between lexicalized items and neo-formations. Rather, it studies the entries available in these dictionaries.

The first source was the quarterly updates of Oxford Dictionaries, an online platform of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which is the joint work of linguists and lexicographers who regularly publish English vocabulary updates. The updates record lexical units deemed sociolinguistically important and comment on their use. Given that these updates are compiled by experts and only contain certain entries seen as crucial, this particular source is likely to be bereft of nonce-formations and occasionalisms. However, Oxford Dictionaries' quarterly updates may also at times include words and entries that have been in use for some time but have only recently caught the linguists' interest. Furthermore, the number of units to study is significantly smaller than in open dictionaries.

The second source was the Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary New Words & Slang. It is an open dictionary platform launched in 2005. Ironically, its first entry was never actually recognized as a proper word by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Böhmerová 2015). This source, unlike Oxford Dictionaries, is often abundant in occasionalisms, nonce-words and as the name says, slang. Many of the words found in this source cannot be found in other dictionaries. This fact, on the one hand, gives the user a glimpse of the linguistic thinking of the speakers of English, but on the other hand, may offer a distorted image of what the English lexicon looks like now.

The last source was Macmillan Dictionary's Open Dictionary database. Open to users to enter their words and definitions and launched four years after Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary, this source brings similar advantages and raises similar issues. Being a British dictionary, it chiefly contains British expressions, while Merriam-Webster's contains Americanisms. Both dictionaries are chronologically ordered, which makes it easier for users to browse and search for words. Both of them are reviewed, yet, as mentioned before, may often contain words, the use and actual "wordhood" of which are debatable.

None of these sources is perfect in its entirety, and all three of them bring a series of problems and questions. These sources provide users with a wide variety of entries available for study and with a lexicon that is rich and varied, albeit not entirely reliable. But given the fleeting and ephemeral nature of neologisms, for the time being these can be considered the best available and organized sources for studying new words in the English language.

3. Methodology

The lexemes under analysis were chosen from the three online databases between January 1, 2014 and August 25, 2015. The units found were analyzed and categorized within the source dictionary from which they came. Entries accidentally repeated within one source, entries listed with alternative spellings and other overlaps were eliminated. The entries were chosen based on whether they pertain to any technology-related area, for example words that denote products and their attributes or words that pertain to human interaction with technology. Next, these words were categorized according to their word-formation processes, observing word-formation trends and tendencies in technology-related vocabulary. The lexemes were also categorized based on their semantics and were put into several semantic groups in order to find out what motivates the appearance of these words.

4. Findings

The three main sources provided a different number of entries. Oxford Dictionaries' quarterly updates included 208 entries in total, out of which 51 were labelled as technology-related. Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary had 975 entries (excluding the entries that appeared twice in this database) in this time frame. Out of these entries, 108 were identified as technology-related. Macmillan Open Dictionaries saw the biggest number of entries during this time, with 1,132 lexemes, and 101 of them belong to the area of technology.

Throughout the research, a clear distinction between the natures of these sources can be observed. Roughly 24% of entries in Oxford Dictionaries pertained to the area of technology. At the same time, technology-related lexemes amounted to 11% of the total number of entries in Merriam-Webster and only to 9% of entries in Macmillan. This may be owing to the fact that the latter two sources are user-based open dictionaries, which tend to include a number of occasionalisms, examples of the user's creativity, less productive words, etc. The creation of these databases is only overlooked by linguists, but not carried out from a lexicographer's perspective. Given that the linguists behind Oxford Dictionaries choose neologisms that they deem important, it can be said that technology-related vocabulary may be an area they find worth discussing. As these sources are varied and diverse, they provided somewhat different results both in terms of word-formation and semantics.

5. Word-Formation

The words found were analyzed in terms of the word formation processes that gave rise to them. Current word-formation tendencies in English were most recently studied by Böhmerová (2014) and previously by Szymanek (2005) and Hickey (2006). The results of this study are compared with these authors' findings to determine whether the word-formation tendencies behind technology-related vocabulary are specific in any

way. The processes are illustrated in Table 1:

	Oxford Dictionaries	Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary	Macmillan Open Dictionary
compounding	27	13	26
derivation	12	45	24
shortening	5	6	22
blending	2	36	17
collocation	3	0	4
conversion	1	4	3
analogical formation	1	0	0
other	0	4	5

These processes are highly varied depending on the source of the entries because different word-formation processes prevailed in different sources. Roughly 53% of the lexemes compiled from Oxford Dictionaries were compounds. Derivation amounted to 24% of entries and shortening to 10%. Derivation, blending and compounding were the dominant processes in Merriam-Webster's technology-related vocabulary, amounting to 42%, 34% and 12% of the entries respectively. The entries from Macmillan Open Dictionary can be categorized mainly among four main word-formation processes. Compounding was the most prominent process, creating 26% of the lexemes under analysis. Derivation was responsible for 24% of the entries. 22% of the analyzed lexemes from this source were created by shortening and 17% by blending.

The strong discrepancy between these sources could again be attributed to the professional nature of Oxford Dictionaries, juxtaposed with the popular nature of entries from Merriam-Webster's and Macmillan's open dictionaries. The latter two sources provided plenty of blends, which rather than real words, are often the results of "leximania," as Böhmerová puts it (2015). However, even the last two sources digress in these tendencies. It is clear that the nature of entries is different depending on the source. Despite the results not being entirely homogeneous, four key word-formation processes can be identified: compounding, derivation, blending and shortening.

Compounding included mainly those neologisms that denote products such as *body camera* (a video-recording device worn on the body, especially by law enforcement officers) or *baby monitor* (a device transmitting sounds from a baby's room to somewhere else). Other examples include words pertaining to the online world such as *troll factory* (a company that pays people to voice certain opinions online while posing as regular Internet users), *sharebait* (a post, the purpose of which is to encourage users to share it), *hate-retweeting* (retweeting a message that you disagree with), *digital footprint* (the information that exists on the Internet as a result of one's online activity), *cyber loaf*

(to spend time surfing the Internet during working hours), or those denoting people such as *keyboard warrior* (a person who makes aggressive posts on the Internet and hides their identity) and *data scientist* (a person employed to analyze complex digital data). Oxford Dictionaries provided the largest number of compounds (27), despite the number of analyzed lexemes from this source amounting to roughly half of those from the other two sources. Compounds were least present in Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary.

Derivation was strongly present in all three sources and was most prominent in Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary. Derivates included *cyberwarrior* (an expert who infiltrates information systems or defends them against outside attack, usually for strategic or military purposes), *cyberspying* (the use of computer networks to obtain confidential information), *bioprinting* (using 3D printing technology with materials that combine living cells), *e-learning* (learning via electronic media, generally online), *e-meet* (meet over e-mail), *wearable* (technology that can be worn on the body), and *driverless* (not requiring a driver).

Blending was strongly present in Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary, but nearly absent from Oxford Dictionaries. Some of the blends found are, e.g., *phablet* (from *phone* and *tablet*, a smartphone with a large screen), *quadcopter* (*quad* and *helicopter*, helicopter with four rotors), *spambot* (*spam* and *robot*, a program that collects e-mail addresses to send spam), *vodcast* (from *video* and *podcast*), *sharenting* (*share* and *parenting*, parents' overuse of social media to share content about their children), and *cyberpath* (*cyber* and *psychopath*, a person who behaves antisocially online). With blending, Ayto specifically mentions technical terminology and biotechnology (2003, 186), but in this study, the majority of blends belong to slang and are rather a result of people's creativity. They often denote human behavior in relation to technology and human interaction with it.

Shortening was little present in Merriam-Webster and Oxford Dictionaries and was, perhaps surprisingly, the least productive of these four processes. Examples include *e-cig* (electronic cigarette), *to vape* (inhale the vapors from an electronic cigarette), *fitspo* (fitspiration, online activity to inspire people to get more fit) and acronyms such as *MMORPG* (massive multimedia online role-playing game), *SMO* (social media optimalization, incorporating social media on a website to make it more attractive for visitors), *FMOI* (follow me on Instagram) or *VPN* (virtual private network).

Examples of conversion include *to brick* (to make an electronic device nonfunctional and beyond repair) or *to body shop* (to recruit IT workers in order to hire them out to other firms on a short-term basis). Collocations include *blue light* (light from electronic devices such as computers and smartphones or from energy-efficient lightbulbs that has been linked to health problems and sleep disruption), and analogical formation was represented by the expression *in silico* (formed analogically to *in vivo* and *in vitro*, conducted or produced by means of computer modelling or computer simulation, used for scientific experiments or research).

The four main processes which were identified could be seen as the current word-formation trends in the area of technology. Overall, Szymanek's claim that the majority

of neologisms are derivational, applies to technology-related vocabulary as well. Some of Szymanek's findings are also true for this area, such as the use of prefixes or pseudo-prefixes, such as cyber- or e- (2005). However, other prefixes listed by him such as hydro-, eco- or electro-, which could appear in this technology-related vocabulary, were not productive. Plus, many other productive processes named by Szymanek, such as back-formation or analogical formation, were marginal, if not entirely absent. Hickey (2006) discusses a number of word-formation tendencies, but perhaps the biggest difference between these findings and Hickey's are the low frequencies of semantic change and conversion, on which he largely concentrates. Finally, Böhmerová (2014) identifies three main word-formation processes in professionally-processed databases, compounding, derivation and collocation, and emphasizes that in open databases, blending is a productive process. In technology-related entries, collocations were marginal, but Böhmerová's observation about blending as a prominent process in open databases is confirmed by the findings in this paper.

6. Semantic Areas

Within the analyzed entries, key semantic areas were identified in order to determine what gives rise to these newly-formed words. Table 2 illustrates the presence of the various identified semantic areas in the three basic sources used.

Table 2: Semantic categories

	Oxford Dictionaries	Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary	Macmillan Open Dictionary
products	14	18	20
human interaction	13	46	22
social media	9	22	33
concepts, phenomena	5	8	17
processes	5	8	6
games	5	6	3

The first and most notable area is products, devices and their attributes. Among these neologisms can be found words clearly denoting new products (or their parts) such as *e-cig*, *phablet*, *nanosat* (nanosatellite), *selfie stick* (an expandable stick to which a camera can be attached for the purpose of taking a self-portrait), and *lock screen* (visual interface displayed on devices before entering a password). Next, there are activities performed using a product or service, such as *remoting* (accessing a device through a remote connection) or *shazaming* (identifying a song via the Shazam app), or adjectives to describe the qualities of a device, app or a program, such as *disruptive* (innovative, groundbreaking), *ebayable* (able to be sold on eBay) or *interactable* (able to be interacted

with). These neologisms were strongly present in Oxford Dictionaries and amounted to 27% of analyzed entries. The most prominent word-formation processes in this group were compounding and derivation. This may be due to the fact that words denoting products are for the most part created by experts working in this area, marketers and brand managers, whose intentions are to come up with a name that is both memorable and easily understood.

The second most prominent semantic group is human interaction with technology, including people's attitudes towards technology, technology's effects on humans, human behavior and professions in relation to technology. Many of these neologisms confirm the infamous negative effects technology has on people such as *cybermyalgia* (pain and stiffness resulting from the overuse of computers), *technostress* (stress or frustration caused by technology) or *netdiction* (internet addiction). Words denoting people, their professions and their attitudes towards technology include *techspert* (technology expert) *techno-igno* (technologically ignorant), *cord cutter* (a person who cancels their television subscription and landline connection in favor of an alternative Internet-based service) or *hacktivist* (a person who gains unauthorized access to computers and networks to further social or political ends). Texting spanned a myriad of neologisms including (especially in Macmillan Open Dictionary) *vext* (to vent over texts), *drext* (to text while drunk), *text neck* (neck pain resulting from excessive texting), and words like *textversation* (conversation over texts) and *textument* (argument over texts). In this semantic group, blending and compounding were highly productive.

The next group contains the words that denote social media-related activities and the online world. Words from this group were plentiful in Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary, and they aptly reflect how people act and communicate online. Again, the overabundance in the open dictionaries can be explained by the presence of occasionalisms and people's creativity when entering words into the database. These words include *statuscation* (talking about one's vacation on social media), *tweleb* (twitter celebrity) and a number of words originating in selfie such as *catfie* (a selfie with a cat), *wefie* (a selfie of "us"), *groupie* (a group selfie), the actual usage of which could be put into question. Other neologisms in this group include *viner* (a person who creates short videos called vines), *upvote* (to click an icon on a post in order to support it), *oversharer* (a person who gives too much personal information on social websites), *subtweet* (subliminal tweet, a negative tweet about someone without directly mentioning them), *afollowgy* (apology on Twitter), *PMHT* (pardon my hashtag), *catfish* (lure someone into a relationship by adopting a fictional online persona) or *dox* (look for private information about someone, especially for illicit purposes).

The remaining groups include fewer words than the previous ones. They are different technology-related concepts and phenomena such as *cryptocurrency* (virtual online currency) or *tech wreck* (a collapse in the price of shares of high-tech industries), games with lexemes such as *respawn* (to reappear after having one's character killed) or *permadeath* (when a character cannot reappear after having been killed) and technological processes as evidenced by words like *fracking* (a process for oil and gas extraction), *cryosurgery* (surgery that uses extreme cold to destroy unwanted tissue) or

PET scan (medical test that produces 3-D images). The occurrence of these words was rather marginal. Interestingly enough, the last group should seemingly include more words, as progress is being made in different areas using technology such as medicine. However, these words are probably seen as professionalisms by the creators of Oxford Dictionaries, who perhaps do not consider them to be relevant enough or as broadly used as to be included in their quarterly updates. Understandably, many of these words evade the general population, which explains why they rarely appear in the two open dictionaries.

7. Conclusions

The major word-formation tendencies in technology-related vocabulary are compounding, derivation (with productive affixes being mostly cyber- and e-), blending and shortening. Blending is a productive process specifically in open dictionaries, perhaps due to the presence of occasionalisms or the products of users' lexical creativity. Compounding and derivation mostly denote official names of products, services, processes, etc. The frequency of these word-formation processes depends on the source of the lexemes and may vary according to the semantic area to which they belong. In terms of semantics, six key groups were identified, with three being the most prominent. In the first group of technology-related neologisms are those that denote new products, services and programs and their use. The second group is represented by those neologisms that denote interaction with technology and people's attitudes towards it. Many of these neologisms reflect the negative effects of technology on our lives. The third largest group contains neologisms that refer to social media and the online world, confirming the growing popularity of social networks and aptly reflecting their strong presence in people's lives. The remaining three areas are games, technological processes and technology-related concepts and phenomena. The words studied in this paper probably adequately reflect the world of technology through the eyes of an average speaker of the English language, both in terms of the social implications of technology they reflect and in terms of the phenomena and things they denote. Despite great strides being made in this area, the sources contain only words that denote technology used by regular people, i.e., devices and products, rather than names of new scientific methods or processes. Even words that have entered mainstream language, are used or recognized by the users of the English language, were absent from some of the sources (e.g., *biprinting* in Merriam-Webster). Given the general nature of the works of Böhmerová, Hickey or Szymanek and the limited number of lexemes analyzed in this study, it is difficult to compare their results with the results of this area-specific study. However, some findings in this paper do confirm the trends indicated by the three authors, such as the high frequency of compounding and derivation, or blending being mainly dominant in open databases. Further research into this area of vocabulary could spawn more findings on the change in word-formation tendencies and trends in this area, as well as on the sociolinguistic reality of English language users.

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