Scholarship, Inc.

Joseph North, *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History*
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It has become something like accepted wisdom in the US academic humanities that literary studies is unique in possessing no standard, agreed-upon account of itself as a discipline. Sceptics would say that this condition is the product of three or four decades of decline, invoking the "rise of theory," the demolition of the canon, and the decline in the cultural prestige of the humanities. Enthusiasts would counter that the seeming impossibility of policing the borders of the discipline is cause for celebration, testifying to the diversity and richness of the field and of the many adjacent disciplines that literary studies helped to found or renovate. In either case, the multifariousness of literary studies as to its objects, methodologies, standards, and aims is taken as a given.

Joseph North's important and bracing *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History* demonstrates that, however much this consensus describes obvious features of literary studies in the present, the apparent diversity on display—however assessed—masks a deeper and thoroughgoing unity. Histories of the field, such as Gerald Graff's *Professing Literature* (1987), tell us that the central division in literary studies since its incorporation as an academic discipline was that between "critics" (who sought to intervene in culture) and "scholars" (who analysed it). North argues that, for the past four decades or so, scholarship has come to entirely dominate the field, while criticism has been abandoned, mistakenly tied to the conservative politics of figures like F. R. Leavis and the American New Critics. The dominance

of scholarship is expressed in what North terms the "historicist/contextualist paradigm." Despite the ostensibly progressive politics that motivate much work in the field, the total shift to *scholarship*—the production of knowledge about culture—has in fact marked a political retreat that is entirely in accord with neoliberal trends in the Anglo-American university. What has been lost is a *critical* paradigm, originated by leftists and left-liberals like I. A. Richards and William Empson, that at its best sought to tie academic research to secondary and primary school curricula, to address a broad public, and to put into practice "an institutional program of aesthetic education—an attempt to enrich the culture directly by cultivating new ranges of sensibility, new modes of subjectivity, new capacities for experience—using works of literature as a means" (6). North's ultimate aim is the recovery of such a paradigm.

The story of *Literary Criticism* spans the 1920s to the present. It shows how the current state of affairs came to be, traces routes not taken, and sifts the historicist/contextualist paradigm of the present for the seeds of a new, or renewed, critical paradigm. With the proviso that its compass is more limited than it may at first appear, *Literary Criticism* is a remarkable book that, like a key turning a lock, brings into alignment a number of seemingly incommensurable received ideas to produce a compelling "strategic history" (viii) of literary studies past, present and (perhaps) future.

In the standard account, literary studies was founded by Leavis and the New Critics. In that account, they pursued a fundamentally conservative project that developed close reading as a central method only to dissolve in the crucible of the 1960s, giving way to the progressive strands of academic work that characterised the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s: deconstruction, feminism, Black Studies, queer studies, postcolonial critique, New Historicism, and others, united under the term "Theory." (What would come after Theory was a hot question in the early 2000s that never receives a satisfactory answer in this story.) North offers instead a three-part periodisation in which developments in literary studies track developments in Western political economy: first, a period between the world wars in which "the possibility of something like a break with liberalism, and a genuine move to radicalism, is mooted and then disarmed"; then "a period of relative continuity through the mid-century, with the two paradigms of 'criticism' and 'scholarship'"; and finally a crisis in the 1970s which birthed Theory and with it "the . . . dominance of the 'scholar' model in the form of the historicist/contextualist paradigm" (17) under which we still live.

The standard account has always felt somewhat incoherent, particularly in its latter phases, and North's exposition and correction of its shortcomings is revelatory. It entails a revaluation of some major figures, none more so than I. A. Richards, who emerges as this story's hero. The first of the book's four chapters argues that Richards—especially in *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924), rather than the more familiar *Practical Criticism* (1929)—began to develop a materialist aesthetic philosophy and a practical criticism that aimed to intervene in society. (Empson is invoked repeatedly in connection with Richards, but his work does not receive the same attention, presumably because his left sympathies are better-known.) In Richards' program, "criticism" names the progressive attempt "to set literature to work on the aesthetic sensibilities of readers, with the aim of bringing about some larger change in the culture as a whole" (35). In North's account, Leavis, Cleanth Brooks, and John Crowe Ransom (whose 1937 "Criticism, Inc.," it is worth noting, offered a justification) were in fact engaged in the co-optation of Richards' and Empson's works, keeping its close reading method but bolting it onto an elitist and idealist aesthetics, in the service of a conservative political project that the field's founders would have rejected.

The response to criticism's move to the right was what a second chapter terms "The Scholarly Turn." Here the key figure is Raymond Williams. North suggests that Williams shared with Richards and Leavis a commitment to the idea that literary intellectuals should aim to shape culture. But, seeing the aesthetic after Leavis as serving only an obfuscatory and ideological role, Williams aimed explicitly at its debunking in favour of "cultural analysis" (72). It was Williams's fate to set the stage for literary studies' turn to pure scholarship and the evacuation of aesthetic criteria from its program. But it is also in his work that North finds a promise of renewal, in what he terms Williams' two "saving clauses": the first being Williams' affirmation that the *history* of the aesthetic was "in large part a protest against the forcing of all experience into instrumentality ('utility'), and of all things into commodities" (74), and the second, that his own critique of the aesthetic should be understood as a "clearing operation" (79), after which a new materialist aesthetics and a renewed role for criticism might be constructed.[1] The rehabilitation of the aesthetic that would follow on Williams's diagnosis has remained a road not taken.

Instead, in the field's third period, literary studies has settled into a historicist/contextualist paradigm, foregoing the possibility of political intervention in the broader

1 North expanded on his discussion of Williams in an exchange with Francis Mulhern in *New Left Review*. See Mulhern and North 2019.

culture in favour of the production of knowledge *about* culture. What is in fact a neatly bounded scholarly project has proven entirely assimilable to the structure of the university under late capitalism, and despite frequent claims to political relevance and even radicalism, has really constituted a retreat from politics. The first two chapters are mainly historical; in the third North's analysis shifts to the work of prominent figures still active in the field. Having fairly rigorously and at length established the contemporary paradigm as one in which "works of literature are chiefly of interest as diagnostic instruments for determining the state of the cultures in which they were written or read" (1), here at the book's midpoint North allows that paradigm to speak in its own voice, in the form of a long series of excerpts from some twenty works of literary scholarship spanning the last forty years. Having been prepared for it, it is nonetheless arresting to see, in works ranging from Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) to Lauren Berlant's *Cruel Optimism* (2011), the same rhetoric of cultural diagnosis via textual analysis deployed again and again.

Here it is worth emphasising, though, that North's discovery of the surprising homogeneity of the contemporary paradigm also throws into relief the quality and interest of so much of the work produced under that paradigm. *Literary Criticism* is not a debunking, even as its polemic proceeds by means of the kind of close readings to which literary scholarship itself is rarely subjected. North has taken care to offer the strongest version of many positions with which he clearly disagrees, with the result that *Literary Criticism* enables a real appreciation of how this work holds up to scrutiny. (This care with argument heightens the effect of the book's agonistic moments, including a section devoted to Stephen Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher's Introduction to *Practicing New Historicism* [2000] [86–100].) It might be too much to say that the scope and depth of the field's actual achievements are in fact *more* appreciable when those achievements are viewed as products of a shared paradigm, rather than as so many reinventions of the wheel—but only slightly too much. In any case it is not the way we are accustomed to thinking about the underlying story of literary studies, and it is clarifying to be shown the paradigm, even as the aim of *Literary Criticism* is to overturn and replace it.

The book's fourth and final chapter evaluates the extent to which resources for doing so can be found in contemporary critical developments. Organised roughly on the lines of Williams's model of the residual, dominant, and emergent, here North surveys a wide range of work that has tested the limits of the historicist/contextualist paradigm. He looks at attempts to revive an idealist aesthetics in a liberal or left vein

in the (now little-noted) "new aestheticism" of the 1990s and the "new formalism" of the early 2000s. A strongly affirmative reading of the work of Isobel Armstrong is particularly compelling and welcome here. North explores other boundary-pushing forms of the dominant paradigm in Eve Sedgwick, D. A. Miller, and Berlant, drawing out moments in which foundational figures of scholarship edge toward more properly critical interventions: ways of reading and writing about literature that aim to invent or transform different publics. And he looks at inchoate trends breaking down some of the institutional constraints on new kinds of work: world literature, turns to ethics and narrative medicine, and para-academic publications like *n+1*, *nonsite.org*, and *Public Books.* Done right, and brought into contact with social movements outside the university, North's argument goes, these incipient tendencies might propel what Richards himself sought: "a programmatic commitment to using works of literature for the cultivation of aesthetic sensibility, with the goal of more general cultural and political change" (3).

Literary Criticism's verdict, that these tendencies represent at best "partial successes" (193) and the best that can be hoped for under a single dominant paradigm, is compelling as far as it goes, and should not be surprising at this point. Yet that verdict does seem limited if one looks even a short distance outside the bounds of literary studies—really, as readers will have gathered, outside of English specifically. Both the introduction and conclusion to *Literary Criticism* state that its intended audience includes not only academics but also the activist left outside the university, and that one of its goals is to demonstrate these two constituencies' shared interests. North is certainly correct that the two are farther apart than literary academics often seem to think, but viewing them as entirely distinct does require looking past fields like Black Studies and queer theory. Literary scholars have played important roles in these more public-facing fields, and in recent years both have only become more engaged with publics outside of the academy. (Indeed, the three critics that North reads as pushing most powerfully against the constraints of the dominant model could also be considered founding figures of queer theory.) North downplays these fields' significance somewhat, noting fairly enough that "the discipline tends to manage dissent by incorporation and evaporation" (182). And literary studies is, to be sure, a distinct venture. But given the obvious impact of these near-adjacent fields on university curricula (and administration) and on public discourse around race and gender, they seem to demand more attention if one is interested in the cultivation of "new subjectivities and collectivities" (204). Questions the book then raises

include whether literary studies' "partial successes" have already fuelled more substantial interventions outside of literary studies narrowly defined, and what might be gleaned from this about the political stakes of the aesthetic.

This is really to say that while the "political history" of *Literary Criticism's* subtitle is convincing and benefits from the book's restricted scope, that same restriction might make more difficult the attempt to see around present conditions. Fortunately, the book has provoked a great deal of commentary, including forums in various publications and a dedicated roundtable at an MLA convention.[2] One question that these discussions have all addressed—is there "a scenario in which something like criticism is reborn?"—is taken up by North in the book's conclusion, which imagines possibilities aligned with three possible fates of neoliberalism itself: continuation, metamorphosis, or "terminal crisis" (201). It is not yet clear to which of these possibilities recent developments belong, but the now-total collapse of the US market for jobs in academic literary studies will play a role. The historicist/contextualist paradigm, which North's book brilliantly chronicles across the period of its greatest purchase, fit hand-in-glove with the professionalisation of literary studies. Even if they can be restrained, the processes of de-professionalisation that are now underway will (among other, more obviously malign effects) generate new paradigms. Whether those paradigms can then be connected to forces that would help to preserve a field to receive them remains to be seen.

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2 See Mulhern, North 2018 and 2019, and Ryan January 2018 and July 2018.

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New Gorgons, Still Lives

Babies, Ballads, and *Macbeth*

ELIZABETH MAZZOLA

Abstract: Death assumes many faces in Macbeth*, but the variety of corpses and ghosts which tyrannise the play's protagonist signals problems larger than one man's ruthlessness or paranoia. Contemporary ballads often feature similar ontological confusion about where and how life ends, sometimes imagining the dead with the same sense of their vital non-being, moral authority, cunning magic, and important place in the community. Like* Macbeth*, these ballads also powerfully theorise the way offical power reconfigures social space, reconstructing neighborhoods as places of surveillance and households as sites of neglect, streets as settings where poverty spreads, and families as traps where new life gets put out. In fastening their gaze upon dead bodies which subvert rot and defy decay,* Macbeth *and contemporary ballads picture the collective social body as something that sprawls and suffers and moves but does not grow, something that the state keeps alive but also near death.*

> Alas, poor country!
> Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
> Be called our mother, but our grave, where nothing,
> But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
> Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
> Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
> A modern ecstasy. The dead man's knell
> Is there scarce asked for who, and good men's lives
> Expire before the flowers in their caps,
> Dying or ere they sicken
> (*Macbeth* 4.3.164-73).

"To Be or not to Be"

Exhibited more than a hundred years after Andrea Mantegna's painting, *Dead Christ* (1470), Shakespeare's representations of corpses similarly invite audiences to see death as something slow, uncertain, and strangely vital. Macbeth is repeatedly surprised by the reappearance of things he believes are dead, for instance, people he thinks are bloody, buried, and abandoned in a ditch, rotten, obscured, and no longer viable. But there are clues about the failure or interruption of putrefaction in *Macbeth*, Ross's account of the sighs and groans and shrieks which rend the air in Scotland supplying just one example of the disorder which prevails when "good men's lives / Expire before the flowers in their caps" (4.3.172–173). "Discomfort swells" sometimes (1.2.28), and apparently one cannot always dismantle a person as easily as Macbeth "unseams" Macdonwald at the opening of the play (1.2.22). Some bodies resist the process, persisting after death, unabsorbed, or left outside or between the lines dividing being from non-being. Many contemporary ballads similarly chronicle this confusion and tally the losses, depicting life and death as occupying parts of a spectrum and sometimes switching places.

As I explore more fully below, *Macbeth* is an especially rich catalog of these uncertainties, and the bodies of Duncan, Banquo, and even the English King Edward symbolise this fog but also orient us inside it.[1] If the Thane of Cawdor takes advantage of such liminal space to reclaim his identity on the execution block, even more unsettling is the way Banquo's ghost challenges Macbeth when Banquo momentarily assumes Macbeth's rightful place at the banquet. Death might simply register another form of existence in *Macbeth*, the *barest* form of life, the toughest hold on flesh. However attenuated, Banquo's presence is obstinate and "rebellious" (4.1.112), his connections to the kingdom confounded but unbroken: if Banquo will "get kings" though he "will be none" (1.3.67), he stays alive by commanding the future, his death unable to deny the power of his blood.

Banquo's powers over death are ones shared more extensively, for nearly every effort to extinguish life in *Macbeth* goes hand in hand with energies to sustain it, like the baby Lady Macbeth inserts in her speech to her husband about murdering their king—its flesh made word, its creation a tool for destruction. The resulting

1 See Eric S. Mallin's exploration of *Macbeth's* reworking of rumors about royal succession and plague (62). Mallin focuses on the spread of such rumors; my emphasis instead is on the way these fears are managed, embodied, and localised in Shakespeare's play.

ambiguities are social and epistemological as well as biological, consequences of competing modes of measuring life and defining being.[2] Macbeth himself notes the ontological upset when, startled by the appearance of Banquo's ghost at the banquet, he comments: "The times has been / That, when the brains were out, the man would die, / And there an end. But now they rise again / With twenty mortal murders on their crowns, / And push us from our stools" (3.4.77–81). Medusa-like, the gruesome face of the unburied corpse is a tyrannical one, and its claims on the living are fierce and draining, reorganising space, affinity, obligation, and political life in a world where some people belong more than others. Some bodies absorb violence but some can repel it, some maintain connections while others stand on shakier ground, and some simply linger longer, their refusal to disintegrate providing radical evidence of belonging.

Macbeth's outburst when he sees Banquo's ghost thus expresses the frustration of the statesman as well as of the murderer: the brutal killer thinks the job is done, the bureaucrat wants the numbers to match up. The anxious wish for a lost world of dead bodies "safely stowed" in *Hamlet* (4.2.1) is underscored in *Macbeth* by a nervous obsession with tabulations that remain untidy. Early-modern demography unfolds as an inexact science, only partly able to do what *Macbeth*'s witches do and "say which grain will grow, / and which will not" (1.3.58–59). But predicting the future is made harder when one has difficulty establishing figures for the present: after all, what does belonging mean when one cannot pinpoint the limits of community or the extent of the claims made by members who might be less visible, less important, maybe less alive?[3] Yet the tenacity of blood to withstand death and the wherewithal of life to pass through walls and keep flowing is a chief part of Shakespeare's stagecraft. If other critics have noticed the playwright's preoccupation with the magic of corpses which can be resurrected or retain their shape—like Juliet, Hermione, Hamlet's father, Desdemona, and Falstaff (so unlike other mortals good enough to toss, ripe for death, food for powder)[4]—what I would emphasise

2 Mallin similarly describes pestilence in *Hamlet* as "epistemological" (73).

3 Dorothy Parker investigates the early modern historical background for some of these questions and their answers (5).

4 For a contemporary investigation of how the reappearance of corpses might be tied to a politics designed to grant and withhold personhood, see Kevin Lewis O'Neill, who looks at the practices of burial and exhumation at Guatemala City's public cemetery for evidence of the "concomitant reconstruction of personhood and of not-belonging (of exile, of marginality, of trash)" (514). Scholars like Valerie Traub point out the way Shakespeare frequently represents female bodies

is that this undecay is both a theatrical achievement and a social product, a hard-won victory in a battle over scarce resources, where belonging has become a commodity in a community whose borders have become unstable.

Those critics who describe the reappearance of the dead on Shakespeare's stage still neglect to consider the larger ramifications for public health and safety in the worlds the dead reoccupy, although these concerns often explicitly animate many early modern broadsides and ballads circulating soon after *Macbeth* is written, when the plague is also in the air. That some things might reject the insults which dead bodies absorb, or merely refuse to stay safely stowed is the subject, for instance, of *The Midwife of Poplar's Sorrowful Confession and Lamentation in Newgate* (1693).[5] Accused of villainy that "would melt a heart of stone," the midwife's confession of the murder of several children in her care is prefaced by a description of her own uncertain being. "My thread of Life is almost spun, / now I'm Condemned to dye," she announces when her crimes are uncovered, her monstrous condition particularly underscored by the frailty and innocence of her victims, those "pritty Murther'd Infants" she destroyed whose remains linger to damn her. The midwife's cruelty is revealed after she leaves a baby in the care of a little boy and girl with only water and cheese for them to eat and drink. The cries of the starving infant arouse the neighbors' attention, and the people storm the midwife's home, to be told by the boy about the bodies of two other babies "in a basket dead, / upon a shelf below." After those remains are recovered, unburied and covered by vermin, the boy directs the neightbors to dig up the cellar floor "where two or three more bodies" are discovered. Although the violence directed against these helpless infants is extensive, it is also incomplete, for when one of the children is discovered

as dead, immobile, or otherwise devitalised; Susan Zimmerman and Andrew Sofer explore how dead characters in the plays are often used as props. Mariko Ichikawa makes the case that the liminal figure of the dead body in Shakespeare's plays straddles the division between actor and prop.

5 *The Midwife of Poplar's Sorrowful Confession and Lamentation in Newgate*. Reproduced in *The English Broadside Ballad Archive*. Pepys Ballads 2.192. Downloaded 3 January 2019. Subsequent references to the ballads collected in this archive will be abbreviated *EBBA*. This ballad is also cited by Caitlin Scott. Other treatments of ballads about infanticide include Frances E. Dolan (*Dangerous Familiars*) and Laura Gowing. Patricia Fumerton studies ballads as evidence for some of the causes for childhood mortality, such as widespread unemployment and recurrent food shortages, and Dolan, in "Mopsa's Method," offers details about the lower-class audiences for these works; for additional details about ballad audiences and their expectations, see Paxton Hehmeyer.

to still be alive but starving, it is given to a nurse who, undressing it, removes some linens and finds that "[t]he very Ears were rotted off."

The details in *The Midwife of Poplar* are grotesque, the violence awful, the misery abounding, but the emphasis has special effects, and the rot a set of consequences. A number of other seventeenth-century ballads highlight this same ontological fuzziness, and they raise the spectre of a crisis over knowing where being begins and ends—a worrying and insidious confusion which endangers people who are invisible and lowly exactly because they are invisible and lowly. If Lady Macbeth's elegy is a confession, her confession is part of a recovery effort. But the needs and status of victims like her baby continue to be unclear, and many early modern ballads about the casualties of such a crisis share *Macbeth's* concern with deciphering what is owed people who hover at the limits of life. An army of decayed souls can be dangerous, as we are reminded in Shakespeare's play when the captain tells *Macbeth*'s Duncan about the "terrible numbers" of men commanded by the Norwegian Lord. Where these supplies come from or how large the pool is from which they are drawn are unstated, but the threat seems enormous and difficult to manage. Orphaned, silent, wounded, starving, some lives only get counted when they fall apart or bleed. In repeatedly telling us that even living things can rot, early modern ballads and *Macbeth* also toy with new models of authority, punishment, redemption, and incorporation. Transforming pictures of household space and communal limits, they unveil settings like the "poor country" over which Ross mourns, where a failure to love or to see can convert a safe spot into a grave or a battlefield.

Freaks and Fascists

If *Macbeth* and contemporary ballads uncover what Kevin Lewis O'Neill calls a "shifiting rapport" between the dead and the living, we can also detect in such artifacts the outlines of a new dynamic between the state and its members, such that some people stay hidden or scattered, at least until death reduces them to waste, dust, or mud.[6] We learn, for instance, that the Midwife of Poplar's household lacks proper surveillance: children are left in charge there, hunger rages, decay seeps in, and vermin creep about bodies that have been left unburied. Accurate headcounts become impossible in a home overrun with spoiling fleshy things, and the meat and cheese

6 Drew Gilpin Faust describes how civil violence "violates prevailing assumptions about life's proper end about who should die, when and where, and under what circumstances" (4; qtd. in O'Neill 513).

we hear about alongside predatory rats and tiny children are all part of the mess stuffed inside the Midwife's wretched household. The imprecision in knowing whether there are "two or three" other bodies in the Midwife's cellar signals carelessness as well as power, the disarray collapsing animals and people, confusing appetites, and reclaiming what had been discarded as garbage. Ultimately, though, the casual violence serves a purpose: we can trust that the things inside the home will fade away slowly and quietly, and cruelty can hide its purposes and effects, its terror and its reach. The "bare life" Giorgio Agamben describes has its double in "bare death" according to O'Neill, because forgotten beings also die unseen, the meager information about their ends a match for the silence surrounding their lives.[7]

Shakespeare invites his audience to consider the means by which power promotes "bare life" and "bare death" by putting together the image of the baby Lady Macbeth lovingly cradles and then destroys alongside the grouping of broken twigs and subjects Malcolm employs to win back Scotland's throne. Sovereign power can bring life into being as a way to sustain itself, and it can even revive dead or dying things, although such beings remain harmless, fractured, and noiseless. Macbeth's butchery is unable to stay their approach or detect their secret advances, but Shakespeare's staging gives non-being a place, a history, and a clear fate.

Lady Macbeth's dead baby is thus just one early example, a strangely vital and carefully expunged one. Indeed, the expectant image of the innocent child (what Lee Edelman calls the "fascism of the baby's face" [*No Future* 75]) is subjected to repeated assault in *Macbeth*, where children are left for dead in ditches, murdered while trying to run away, brought into view only long enough to be held to the breast before their brains are dashed out (1.7.58) or, like Siward's son, allowed to ripen and then die in service to the state.[8] There is no future here, no healthy picture of generativity in the play, Malcolm's beguiling performance as next-in-line another version of a younger generation mostly left with the unhappy choice not to pretend to be alive. Edelman's model needs revision, however, for alongside the dejected baby's face is the curious face of non-being catalogued by the range of dead and dying things

7 O'Neill's ideas about "bare death" are drawn from the model of "bare life" supplied by Giorgio Agamben (2003).

8 That society sometimes orchestrates this kind of collapse of the future is explored in *No Future* by Lee Edelman; in "Against Survival," Edelman discusses the ways children and death are linked rather than opposed in *Hamlet*. For broader considerations of the state's role in prescribing the divisions between viable beings and nonviable ones—legal versus illegal members of society, aliens versus citizens—see Roberto Esposito.

in *Macbeth*, an inertia variegated in its outlines as living things in Shakespeare's play are made to gradually expire or waste away. When creatures die in *Macbeth* they do not disappear; if they rot they also continue to exert a hold on other living things around them. "What bloody man is that?" Duncan asks at the outset of *Macbeth* (1.2.1), and his question signals a pervasive curiosity about bodies which crowd around the living and take their power from their proximity to the grave. "Who would have thought [Duncan] to have had so much blood in him?" Lady Macbeth finally wonders, because the king's hold on her imagination is tied to his extended withdrawal, his almost endlessly protracted ending.

Dead things are not humbled or abased or abjected, but kept in view in *Macbeth*, forbidden to dissolve completely. Battered but not despised, they hover and sometimes retain their shape, and although they threaten Macbeth as much as the image of the unborn child, the future the baby encapsulates is no match for the spectre of common life which the dead seem to conjure and inhabit. Often there is no need for reanimation, and we are reminded that the boy left in charge in *The Midwife's Lament* does not rescue the babies he knows about but simply keeps track of their whereabouts. "Unstable," "nonteleological," "mongrel" forms of being, like the "restless," "post-human hybrid" or model of "freakish becoming" which Jeffrey Jerome Cohen sees in medieval monsters (20),[9] such fugitive forms of life can persist in settings which have begun to reconfigure walls and bounds and the families inside them. Other architectural tools are provided by disease, poverty, famine, and similar disasters which rob communities without completely destroying them, reestablishing how people live together.

Dying/Rising Gods

"New gorgons" (2.3.74) show their faces alongside old ones in *Macbeth*, Scotland's scenery a patchwork of what Ross calls "[s]trange images of death" (1.3.97), including, Duncan's "drenched" and "spongy" guards (1.7.69, 72)—submerged in "downy sleep," "death's counterfeit" (2.3.78)—Lady Macbeth's remembered murdered baby, as well as, her mourned father, Macbeth's headless corpse, and the witches' "withered" forms, which make them "look not like th' inhabitants o'th'earth" (1.3.29–40).

9 Although the fascinating insights of medievalists who study stones, dreamers, and monsters have not been greatly extended by early modern scholars, Laurie Shannon's posthuman readings of Shakespeare propose important new avenues for investigation.

In addition, there is Macduff's son—an "egg"—who tells his mother about his killing (4.2.88), the traitor who reclaims his life with honour as he awaits execution, and even Duncan's "holy" wife, "oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet," who "[d]ied every day she lived" (4.3.110–111). Meat without sauce (3.4.36), such "quasi-objects," are remains that somehow remain, overlooking infirmity, circumventing ruin.[10]

Mantegna's *Dead Christ* offers a visual analogue to these still lives, its view of a god arrayed on a slab organised by the same perspective that pulls him upright (Figure 1). We can put Mantegna's image next to those of Duncan's corpse, Banquo's ghost, and Edward's unseeen figure in *Macbeth*, each of these images equivocal in its powers to awe and astonish and transform its audience. In Mantegna's painting, Christ's energies seem untapped, yet his stiffening flesh overwhelms the bodies of the mourners gathered around him, their grief a lifeless thing next to the unmoving object of their devotion, the cavernous space they inhabit more empty than the shell encasing a holy ghost. "Christ occupies space differently from the living," Willard Speigelman observes.[11] Such a clash of forms of being can make the viewer wonder: What is the limit of life? Does it ever finally end, or merely fan out? Shakespeare makes us wonder, too. In the absence of brain scans or monitors to detect the faintest of heartbeats, he provides Lear with only a mirror and feather to catch Cordelia's breath. Other than Polonius's smelly carcass, the playwright more typically leaves his audience with a trove of more ambiguous nonbeings, Antony's bloated shape trailing Cleopatra's sympathetic handling, and Desdemona's marble cold, which repels her husband long before he finally kills her. The fledgling projects of early modern demographers and political economists to measure growth, grasp illness, and plan for the future were no doubt thwarted by these lifeless beings who continued to take up space and interrupt renewal, like

10 I borrow the term from Lucinda Cole, who puts sick people and rats together as active carriers of disease and abjected parts of the household in the early modern period.

11 According to Willard Speigelman, "[i]f intended for an altarpiece, we still don't know how, or from what angle, Mantegna might have wished his viewers to see the picture." There is a tradition of paintings of the dead Christ featuring his entombment or the deposition from the cross, and Julia Kristeva provides a psychoanalytic reading of Holbein's *Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* (1520–1522) which links this work with Mantegna's. "Does Holbein forsake us," Kristeva asks, "as Christ, for an instant, had imagined himself forsaken?" "Or does he, on the contrary, invite us to change the Christly tomb into a living tomb, to participate in the painted death and thus include it in our own life, in order to live with it and make it live?" (105).

Malcolm's army of broken branches, a collection of energies that move and can strike, but do not grow.

What is "[f]air is foul, and foul is fair" (1.1.11) in Mantegna's painting, too, where two kinds of being vie for attention. Seventeenth-century ballads often point to similar dismal spectacles which couple life with death and detail conditions where the confusions between the two states can themselves lead to murder, famine, or neglect. If the mourners take up little space in *Dead Christ*, the evidence offered by these ballads just as clearly suggests an emerging contruct of society as comprised by people we cannot always see and whose invisibility is often punishing.[12] Historian Mildred Campbell likewise observes that as the term "population" starts to replace the phrase "numbers of people" at this time, living creatures come into view as objects that can isolated, counted, ejected, transplanted, starved, or fed, while conceptions of the future take shape as dependent on which people are alive right now. Ideas about the social body borrow from notions governing the individual body, too. Macbeth's description of his cruelty in terms of "multitudinous seas incarnadine" (2.2.61) envisions a form of redress in seeing the body's chambers as porous, its bloodstreams pouring into wider channels and ever-enlarging pools. Ideas about the future made possible by this way of mapping being also take their shape from ideas about population control, so that the numbers can stay the same and the balance of the living and the dead remain unchanged.

There is, in other words, a politics of mortification. If Duncan is carefully *split open*, "his silver skin laced with his golden blood" (2.3.114) so that his wounds invite admiration for a luminous ruin, its incongruous beauty is juxtaposed with the crudely *split apart* hands and faces of Duncan's chamberlains, horribly disfigured and "[a]ll badged with blood" (2.3.99). Disfiguration and dismemberment thus rival iconography as a way to illustate and protect a community's allegiances and priorities as well as its decisions about who lives on, who gets disposed of. There is a formula by which death spreads, and in the manipulation of decay, new ideas about public space and political order also take shape. This rethinking of politics, biology, and affect operate in Shakespeare's representations of Duncan, Banquo, and Edward. Their portraits supply evidence of methods for ushering people in and out of collective life, suggesting varieties of "rebirth" and what we might call "redeath" which are as compelling and as damaging as Lady Macbeth's brutalising love.

12 For a recent parallel presented by American President Donald Trump's immigration policies, see Miriam Jordan.

We might counterpose Mantegna's radiant corpse with Shakespeare's mangy picture of disorderly and disinterred dead, for the ghostly presence of these figures in *Macbeth* permits Shakespeare's audience not only to see how bodies come together but also to grasp how they uneasily, perilously stay together. Relationships in the play are denoted by ever-changing conditions of safety and suspicion, corruption, loyalty, silence, and sterility, and protected by specific laws of increase, transmission, and ruin. The masque of kings descending from Banquo is matched by the spectacle of Siward's heirs expanded exponentially, and in both cases the states's strength is doubled by its numbers, its hold on the future calculated by how many individual members are willing to die in its service (5.7.78–79). Humanity is encoded and guaranteed by such bloodsharing and bloodshedding. Judith Butler notes that the state receives its army from the family, even as the family meets its dissolution in the state (36). But the state is also a being in flux, contingent, and subject to ebb and flow: the baby Lady Macbeth summons to life quickly returns to formlessless, and Duncan's reprieve from death—given his resemblance to her sleeping father—only briefly spares him from a more permanent rest. Discussing Sophocles' *Antigone*, Butler proposes that "'bloodshed' [is] that which must be remaindered for authoritarian states to be maintained." Antigone's predicament, Butler explains, makes us wonder "which social arrangements can be recognised as legitimate love, and which human losses can be explicitly grieved as real and consequential loss?" (24).

Yet we might also ask what it means to die if one's powers continue to feed the state or nourish the polity? A revised way of experiencing and calculating the losses Butler describes becomes obvious when we put *The Midwife's Lament* next to a picture of infanticide supplied in a 1633 ballad *No naturall Mother, but a Monster*, where the narrator, a young woman hung for her crimes, offers a confession from beyond the grave and a warning to her readers. Her beginnings, she first relates, promised good things: loving parents, beauty and favor—her appearance "in every part / made completely"—but wildness and wilfulness lead her to sin. Pregnant and abandoned by the child's father, the narrator secretly delivers a child and strangles it to avoid suspicion, seeing the unwanted baby as a "fault" and "foule fact." Notably, the young woman's mistress only notices her shrunken belly, not the pregant one; the baby is a surplus thing not meriting much attention and discounted not once but three times in this ballad, the first time by the mother who

kills it, the second time by the woman who only comments on the absence, and the third time by the song itself, which only considers its existence in passing, more interested in the young woman's plight and the varieties of shame she undergoes. This narrator compares herself negatively to "Savage creatures" like snakes and tygers who take better care of their young: the female snake protecting her children by hiding them in her belly, making herself pregnant a second time, while the "Tyger," "though by kind, truculent, truculent," is "wondrous tender" to her young. Unlike these animal examples, the narrator has defied the laws of God and of nature, and she remains an aberration before and after her crime, even when she uses her lament to warn other "Sweet Maidens" to "take heed" and avoid her mistakes. She is an exception to the rules which arrange and elevate life, as much an outcast or lost cause as the infant she murders.

The same aberrations organise social relations in the *Midwife's Lament*, however, because the Midwife is apparently only one of many strangers in Poplar. Although she provides no information about her crimes, her confession in the ballad notwithstanding, she has been overlooked for thirty years, during which time she has been permitted to fashion her household as a place of deliberate cruelty. This place is secret and disconnected, and only the voice of children—the baby's cries, the boy's directions—point out, explain, and ultimately correct the foul situation. The adult world is negligent, hard of hearing, slow to act and insensitive to pain, almost dead to the face of the future. The loathing of new life is profected onto the Midwife's horrible figure, while new life is at the same time rendered animal-like, weak, defenceless, and sickly. The Midwife is as bad or spoiled as the babies under her watch, but life tends to waste and, left on its own, nature spoils the things in its care. The state then assumes its power through outrage at carnage and garbage, as a refuge from, rather than an antidote to the ravages of the home.

Nowadays, such decay can be grasped in terms of a scientific language which specifies how diseases mutate and germs invade and atoms recombine; but even lacking such a vocabulary, early modern flesh still slowly rots, meat spoils, blood drains, and wounds sparkle. If cries and pain bring people together, the drab in a ditch in *Macbeth* seems as much a victim as the strangled baby beside her, the afterlife of her image portending no real future, either. In a 1630 woodcut (Figure 2) illustrating "Runaways Fleeing From the Plague," three skeletons encircle a group of townspeople fleeing the plague, the dead helpfully escorting the living out of the infected area. Like Mantegna's *Dead Christ*, there is nothing linking the living and the dead,

no shared touch or viewpoint, but there is nothing really separating them from each other either. The skeletons are prominent, not hidden or even lurking, and they are the same size and shape as living people, all of them equally denizens of the place. Appointed with an hourglass, one of the skeletons invites us to consider whether they are blocking the household or heralding the creation of a new setting. Decay happens, and this region has room for it.

Some early modern historians describe a "shift" from "epidemic to endemic" causes of death in an increasingly urbanised London, so that the end of life becomes inevitable rather than accidental or unpredictable, the result of living in a household, a necessary outcome which happens, as *No naturall Mother* explains, because animals are able to protect their young while humans sadly, miserably cannot. The increasing privacy of the family magnifies the contrast, allowing disease to be contained in and by separate households rather than spread across them, such that "everyday violence" might erupt within and be caused by domestic space.[13] Close ties become ones that strangle or starve, and intimate settings are ones that deplete and conceal. Even worse is what happens when someone is completely obscured by the household. "Truculent, truculent," the maid in *No naturall Mother* is more cruel than "Savage creatures" as well as an early and unmourned casualty. In contrast, the Midwife of Poplar has her own household and is only exposed when she goes outside.

A woodcut from 1655 entitled *Nine Images of the Plague in London* (Figure 3) discloses these new dimensions of London as a site of estrangement and evacuation. Nine panels detail the systematic replacement of the quick with the dead. The only apparent industry is carpentry to build coffins in which to place the dead as well as produce the many carriages and ships which transport the living away. Civil order is clear, but preoccupied with shutting down homes and streets, and carefully separating the living bodies from corpses. In some ways, the image describes the Golden Age Macbeth reminisces about, a world in which the dead can be safely and securely stowed; but the faces of the living are blank, hidden from us, and unimportant. There is no other reason for their living except to take care of the dead, and no motive for authority or use for power, except to guarantee that the dismissal, transport, and shut-down are neatly and completely accomplished.

A 1672 ballad entitled *Bloudy news from Germany* offers another account of the social engineering process whereby weak people are removed by the same process that

13 I draw on the term "everyday violence" from Nancy Scheper-Hughes' study of motherhood in Brazil. For an account of early modern conditions of everyday life, illness, and death, see Paul Griffiths et al.

eliminates the wicked. At the outset of *Bloudy news*, the audience is told that—unlike songs about love or war—the harms recounted here are deliberate, carefully planned, and genocidal. We first hear that a rich Clergy Man wants to convert the beggars who live in his town into fuel to generate "revennue" for him. "[N]ot worth a penny," he claims, these people are instead like "rats and Mice" who "[e]at up all my sustenance / and nothing give to me," so he collects them in a barnyard and burns them to death. Yet God hears the cries of "these harmless men" and afterwards afflicts the Clergy Man with vermin who infest his home and waste his stores; these rats and mice also act like ghosts "haunt[ing] all the rooms about / the Chamber where he lay." There results from this devastation no human justice or human knowledge, however, no new community, no vision, or restoration or renewal or drop of milky human kindness. That retribution is delivered by "vermin" merely suggests that the poor disdained as worthless recover some power but not their humanity in rising up to punish the Clergy Man. Converted first into "fewel" and then by God into lowly creatures, the beggars are neither rescued nor redeemed. There is no trace of human life at the end of the ballad. "[G]naw[ing] his Coat of arms," "and ever where they found his name / Of Letters" leaving "none," the rich Clergy Man's awful purpose is fulfilled, and poor people are eradicated.

Who is blamed, who can heal, who can punish, and who gets rewarded are dramatically reconfigured when life and death assume new guises and different modes of activity. *Bloudy news* does not encourage the audience to think about the victims' names, their thoughts, or their surprises; but the vermin who replace the poor and haunt their killer after their deaths have moral authority and can enjoy success, even if they do not spread beyond the precincts or survive to reproduce themselves. They also have an important role to play as agents of the state, power rearing its head by creeping on the ground and scurrying behind the walls, weaponising pestilence and decay. The ballad makes no call for more food, better oversight, Christian charity, or perhaps a more attentive God who hears people before their deaths. Instead, *Bloudy news* imagines the state as employing the weak to punish the strong without envisioning a way to make the weak less so. That vermin are no longer evil (if still poisonous) is really the only transformation.

Fuzzy math accompanies fuzzy ontology, and the reclassifications at work in these ballads underscore the way that "questions of population were very much on the minds of people in the seventeenth century" (169–170), as Campbell notes. She also cites the reports which circulated in contemporary broadsides detailing

how growing swarms of people threatened order, health, and public safety. In one example we hear: "Our multitudes like too much blood in the body do infect our country with plague and poverty . . . our land hath brought forth, but it hath not milk sufficient in the breast thereof to nourish all those children which it hath brought forth" (174). Similar references to milk and blood in *Macbeth* echo these fears, just as the scriptural allusions in broadsides which Campbell explores can also be linked to Shakespeare's play, one of them even duplicating Malcolm's directions to his makeshift army: "If thou beest much people, get thee up to the woods and cut trees for thyself in the land of the Perezites and of the Giants" (175). The danger posed by the poor as well as their swelling numbers and disguised appearance are what convert the desperation of the masterless men whom Macbeth interviews into a credential; but the wastage sometimes provided political thinkers like John Gaunt and William Petty with reasons, in turn, to reconsider whether a large and growing population was a measure of a society's health or failure.[14] The way that dead things are immune and incorruptible—carriers of disease no longer subject to its ravages—reminds us that those things that make us human have little to do with keeping us alive.

The ballads under review here suggest that this state of rootlessness also characterises the narrow space between the living and the dead, as well as between the human and the inhuman, or the messy forces of pollution and the even hand of justice. A population of uncertain beings was expanding in the seventeenth century, and the numbers of the poor and homeless increasingly included apprentices, servants, prostitutes, and sailors; actually, according to Patricia Fumerton, the percentage of these people who comprised England's population might have been as high as fifty percent (xii–xiv). In Macbeth's interview with the hired men, we learn that the actions of these nameless agents appear random and motiveless, "reckless," and "spite[ful]" (3.1.108–110). Yet their restlessness constitutes a kind of strength, and they can successfully come together to deliver a blow.

At the same time, however, the home assumes a new purpose as a site of anonymity and segregation, a perfect place for discarding unwanted things or losing sight of orphaned creatures. Inside this space, the Midwife of Poplar almost escapes notice, and evidence of her cruelty merely piles up. Pelling's explorations of domestic

14 See Paul Slack, Margaret Pelling, and Graham Hammill, who explores how the state "uses the biological sciences to assert and maintain control of individual bodies, on the one hand, and entire populations, on the other" (86).

settings corroborate this picture, describing the seventeenth-century household as generating a "more precise definition of public areas and instituting separate spaces even under the same roof" (167).[15] The kind of social alienation produced by disease became something the individual household could easily channel or replicate. In another version of the Poplar story called *The Injured children*, the starving boy and girl are the ones crying rather than actively summoning help. The suffering is more widespread, and this ballad even begins with a panoramic condemnation of its audience: "OH! what a wicked Age is this / we Wretches do live in, / How prone we are to Wickedness, and to commit each Sin." The fairy tale figures of Hansel and Gretel do not have to leave home in this story in order to find redress or escape the wicked, but now there are six poor children's carcasses buried in the cellar, and the reason for their deaths is not neglect but a prior arrangement with parents who want to rid themselves of bastards. One of the babies, miraculously, is alive, but no one is there to retrieve it.

In still another ballad version, this one called *The Bloody minded Midwife*, we hear more about the discovery of the victims and less about the awful conditions surrounding their deaths. Endowed with a "heart of stone" the audience's ignorance is again represented as a contributing factor: "Full three and Thirty Years ago, / the Midwife did begin, / And ever since, for ought we know, / she has been Murdering." This time, when the young boy and girl alert the neighbors that they are starving, "Officers and other Men/did open straight the door" to discover "six or seven more bodies" buried in the cellar. Neighbors register the shock rather than do families, and mothers merely hover briefly at the beginning of the ballad, their wombs places of birth and separation. Only the state—in the figures of "Officers" and "other Men"—weakly intervenes in processes of decomposition and recomposition. Yet, grouped together, these ballads also indicate how this state slowly evolves and spreads even as it neglects and punishes, uniting people through suffering rather than a shared history or common language. Perhaps these ballads have important consequences, too, helping to transform early modern thinking about

15 Pelling's work uncovers the beginnings of public health initiatives, where interests in recording the numbers of births and deaths are understood as ways of assessing the health of the social body, its ways of engineering growth, prosperity, hope, and the future (166–168). It is not an innocent face of the unborn child which stands for the future, but the Bills of Mortality and provisions for the dead and pictures of unburied things which have more predictive value.

what kind of future to expect from a community intent on uncovering shadows merely in order to spread them.

"Be Safely Thus"

A 1625 woodcut representing *The City as a maiden welcoming back the people who had deserted London during the plague* (Figure 4) seems like a happy counterweight to the pictures of urban decay, widespread loss, and deepening alienation we find in many contemporary ballads. Lady's Macbeth's murderous embrace can be displaced by the expansive caress imagined in this woodcut, the size of the woman in the illustration dwarfing her surroundings, her reach commanding enough to include all of the recovered. Yet this image also imagines London as a collection of gates and doorways, empty of families or neighborhoods, although accessible to all. Such a place has little to offer to those who return, except perhaps for the services of a single church. Like King Edward's touch in Act 4 of *Macbeth*—"Full of grace" and "strange virtue"—the woman's embrace is inviting, but not connective.

Many lowly things become visible and public in seventeenth-century ballads when they sicken or die, and so denying resources might be the most effective way for a town or home or kingdom to secure its borders and flex its values. The growth of a bureaucracy to manage this surveillance is accompanied by the increasingly narrowed focus of the nuclear family. Arthur Kinney makes a similar observation, noting that Macbeth's "cognitive composure" is achieved by sequestration and mathematics as well as by the establishment of borders and curtailment of attentions (26). "To be thus" is "nothing" "but to be safely thus" (3.9.47) when the project of sustaining life becomes aligned with the project of outlawing it, pushing out "derelict" versions.[16] Although the eradication of Macduff's family thus clears the way for a new setting for affiliation in England where King Edward's magic can regenerate an entire kingdom, the people Edward helps are kept alive without really being brought into existence. Rather than being bound together, they have simply been cured of disease: no blood is shared or spilled in this process, and the social body remains a dismembered and disordered thing, with no common language, no linked meanings, and no planned future. Individual subjects take shape in this world without being products of families or traditions; instead, they are collections

16 I take this term from Mitchell (xi).

of sympathies and ailments, bundles of concerns that run close to the surface, victims with needs and pains and fears that only go skin-deep. Only their sufferings are things they hold in common and, of course, the experience of being without. Like the ballad infants buried in the cellar, silent and fearsome, these people are only as alive as a bad dream.

Perhaps the broken twigs Malcolm amasses into an army in Act 5 of *Macbeth* provide a better example of this community, or at least a more positive one: any hole or gap in the arrangement can be easily repaired, after all, so that whatever pulls things apart does so only momentarily. If "an authentic politics" enforces what Roberto Esposito calls "a space of meaning" where "the production of life cannot be opened," nature reasserts itself in the marching mass Malcolm assembles, as Esposito also explains, arguing that "where the materiality of life unfolds," "something like political action can no longer emerge" (150).[17] Shakespeare also reminds us, however, that the "materiality of life" may not only *unfold*: it might crawl or stumble, hide in a corner, or turn itself into a ball. Macbeth's severed head is a rough icon, not a broken one, and babies can be revived so that they can be murdered again. The state that mortifies itself may finally come to resemble another *Dead Christ*, sprawled out in front of us, immune to our sufferings, safely undisturbed by our grief.

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17 Esposito's description of sovereign power seems equally apt: "He who has been freed from communal obligations or who enjoys an originary autonomy or successive freeing from a previously contracted debut enjoys the conditions of *immunitas*, a way of thinking about how we are not only constituted by our relations but dispossessed by them" (xi).

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Figures

Figure 1. *The Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, ca. 1470–1478, by Andrea Mangtegna. Public Domain.

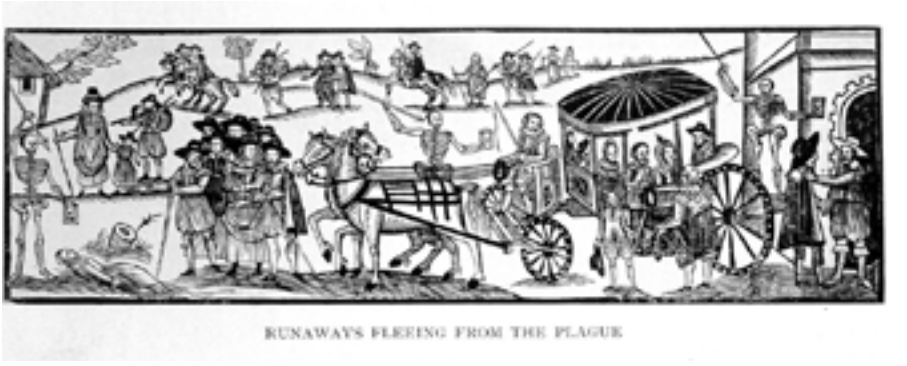

Figure 2. A woodcut from "A looking glasse for City and Countrey," printed by H. Gosson in 1630 and sold by E. Wright. Credit: Wellcome Collection (CC BY 4.0) < https://wellcomecollection.org/works/wuhtpjqa>

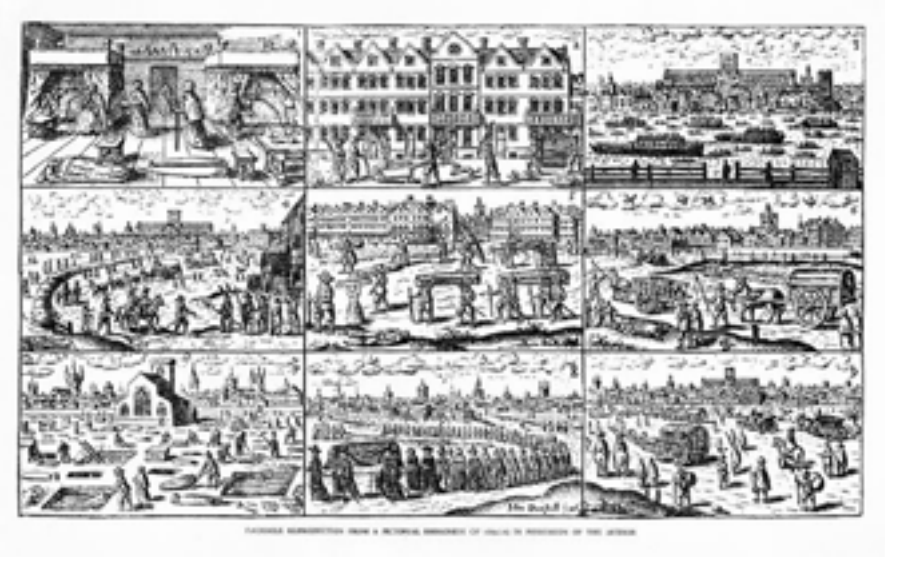

Figure 3. Nine images of the plague in London, 17th century. Credit: Wellcome Collection (CC BY 4.0) < https://wellcomecollection.org/works/cjhjj46y>

Figure 4. "London welcomes home her runaways," taken from a woodcut in Henry Petowe's *The Countrie Ague* (1625). Credit:Wellcome Collection (CC BY 4.0) < https://wellcomecollection.org/works/myt22twu>

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Restorative and Reflective Nostalgia

in *Doctor Faustus*, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*

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Abstract: In the paper nostalgia and their types will first be explained and revisited; then, three examples will be provided for early modern dramatic representations of the then-unnamed concept of the pain of missing one's homeland and the yearning to return safely to where one belongs. The frustration felt by various characters for to the means of escape and for a safe return home, to be finally saved and recover/retrieve/reclaim their possessions, rights, original place, title, etc. (cf. the etymology of nostalgia from Greek nostos "homecoming," ultimately from PIE nes- "escape from, survive, be saved" + Greek algos "pain") can be seen to play a key role in each of the three plays under investigation. The plays investigated here are Doctor Faustus, Macbeth, *and* The Tempest, *and the paper demonstrates that despite their generic and thematic differences all three represent the synthesis of two types of nostalgia—reflective and restorative—giving voice to both elements reflected in the etymology of the word: nostos and algos; thereby informing us of the striking abundance of nostalgic tendencies in the literature of the period.*

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.
(Lady Macbeth, 3.4.109–110)

The etymology of nostalgia can enlighten us of the original meaning of the term, although we must be careful not to deduce too much from the Greek elements of it: nostos "homecoming," ultimately from PIE nes- "escape from, survive, be saved" and Greek algos "pain." The term nostalgia, in fact, is a much more recent coinage, thus only pseudo-Greek. Svetlana Boym in *The Future of Nostalgia* points out

that it is "nostalgically Greek" (24). The word was coined by Johannes Hofer in his medical dissertation in 1688 (Boym, *Future* 24). Boym remarks that "Swiss doctors believed that opium, leeches, and a journey to the Swiss Alps would take care of nostalgic symptoms" (*Future* 13), adding that "among the first victims of the newly diagnosed disease were various *displaced* people of the seventeenth century: freedom-loving students from the Republic of Berne studying in Basel, domestic help and servants working in France and Germany, and Swiss soldiers fighting abroad" (*Future* 24, emphasis added). As Boym further explains, "nostalgia . . . is a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed," it is primarily "a sentiment of loss and displacement" (*Future* 12). Later in her book she adds that "nostalgic longing was defined by loss of the original object of desire, and by its spatial and temporal displacement" (*Future* 66) and that nostalgia is "an ache of temporal distance and displacement" (*Future* 75).

Nostalgic longing and displacement of this sort can be found in all three plays of my choice: in *Doctor Faustus*, the title hero longs for the Golden Age of Antiquity and in his final moments, in despair, wants to be one with Nature, never to be found by God; in *Macbeth*, we sense the desire and backward-looking efforts to re-establish law and order in the realm during and after Macbeth's reign; and in *The Tempest*, the image of a faraway island serves both as a desired place and the present location from where one longs to safely return to one's homeland. These instances of nostalgia may inform us of some of the basic modes of Early Modern thinking regarding complex nostalgic sentiments. The scope of this paper does not reach beyond the Early Modern period. Given, however, that Boym's notions and examples, on which my analyses rely, are almost exclusively modern, their usability in discussing Renaissance play-texts suggests that the discussed types of nostalgia are not historically determined.

As studies on nostalgia in the three early modern plays of my choice are rather scarce, instead of following in the footsteps of Judith Boss, who provided an elaborate system of types of nostalgia in her "The Golden Age, Cockaigne and Utopia in the *Faeirie Queene* and *The Tempest*," I chose to use the newer typology established by Svetlana Boym in *The Future of Nostalgia.* Boss found three traditions in the Renaissance, referred to in the title of her article, which are "similar in some respects and quite antithetical in others, though easily distinguishable by an audience familiar with all three, as modern critics apparently are not." The works she examines, mainly *The Tempest* and *The Faeirie Queene,* are both framed by "the harsh,

corrupt reality of Elizabethan England." All three traditions "were means of escape from or correction of this repugnant reality." In Sidney's terms, which Boss quotes, they were "what may be, or should be," i.e. "the golden world" (145).

Boss's first category is the Golden Age, and as an example she refers to Gonzalo's commonwealth in *The Tempest*, which is described in this tradition (146). Tracing its origins, Boss recalls that this tradition "was introduced into pastoral literature by Virgil in his eclogues and later accepted as one of the universal constituents of the pastoral. The Renaissance writers, with their enthusiastic syncretism, thrust the fully developed conception of the Golden Age into the drama and the prose romance as well as the true pastoral, and even into the heroic poem" (146).

Next, she describes Cockaigne, which is antithetical to the Golden Age. The tradition of Cockaigne, Boss argues, "came from the idea that fallen man's infected Will would tempt him to seek private benefits rather than public good in a paradise of sensual pleasures that explicitly contrasted with the tradition of Eden or the Golden Age. Its basic characteristics are complete lack of restraint and gratification of every selfish, sensual desire" (149). Among her many examples depicting Cockaigne are the fourteenth-century *Land of Cockaygne*, Circe's isle in the Odyssey, *The Satyricon* by Petronius, *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius, the poetry of Callimachus, Anacreon, Propertius, Ovid, Boccaccio, and Tasso (149). Boss concludes that "men dream of Cockaigne who have abandoned rationality and cultivated the vegetative and sensitive. The men who can live as if they were in the Golden Age have cultivated the rational, subduing the other faculties" (150).

Although Boss claims that "Cockaigne and the Golden Age are too antithetical to exist simultaneously in a fallen world where change is ruler," her third category, Utopia,[1] is a synthesis of the first two types. The major purpose of the philosophers' Utopia, she states, is "the incorporation of . . . disparate groups into a single society which is harmonious rather than self-destructive" (150). Utopia differs from the first two traditions mainly because of this incorporation, and because it envisions a class society as her examples, Plato, Montaigne, Erasmus, More, and Bacon clearly testify.

Boss only mentions nostalgia once in her analysis, in her discussion of the Golden Age, saying that "[t]he nostalgia for this lost age of innocence and the longing

1 It is somewhat confusing that in her title Boss names the three traditions: The Golden Age, Cockaigne, and Utopia, and then in the article she talks about three Renaissance "Utopian traditions." So all three are utopian to some extent but nostalgia is only mentioned in her discussion of the first of these.

for its return found expression also in the conceptions of Elysium, the Garden of the Hesperides, the Fortunate Isles, or simply the Earthly Paradise" and she emphasises that "the whereabouts of the other Eden was a burning question" in the Renaissance (147). My hypothesis, in contrast, is that nostalgia is much more fundamental in the literature of the period than this. Not only the Golden Age, but all three traditions discussed by Boss are interwoven with nostalgic ideas. As I see it, all three imagine or create possibilities for moving or being removed from the usual or original place, which is also a common definition of displacement. Boss does not consider the idea of displacement, which Boym has shown to be a fundamental state of the nostalgic.

Furthermore, Boss's categories do not well describe the examples discussed in this paper. For instance, Mephistopheles's summoning of Helen would not only fall into Boss's category of "revisited myth of the Golden Age" but also in that of Cockaigne, i.e. a paradise of sensual pleasures. This sensual paradise is also invoked in *Doctor Faustus* in a more traditional fashion in the pageant of the seven deadly sins. I will focus on nostalgia as longing to return home to escape from pain, for which Boym's categories are much more revealing. Boym differentiates between two types of nostalgia: restorative and reflective. The first emphasises nostos, i.e. home, and "attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home," while the second "thrives in algia, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming—wistfully, ironically, desperately" (*Future* 19). One of her conclusions is that while restorative nostalgia protects absolute truth, reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt (19). In her later essay, "Nostalgia and its Discontents," Boym adds that the "rhetoric of restorative nostalgia is not about 'the past,' but rather about universal values, family, nature, homeland, truth. The rhetoric of reflective nostalgia is about taking time out of time and about grasping the fleeing present" ("Discontents" 14). Before focusing on the future of nostalgia, Boym traces its history. She repeatedly stresses the importance of the new objective sense of time and space emerging in the Early Modern period, yet she does not illustrate the rise of the notion of nostalgia with examples taken from Renaissance literature. This discussion hopes to fill that gap.

In *Macbeth*, the nostalgia for lost order and law might be seen to coincide with Boss's second category of longing for the lost age of innocence and the wish to find this earthly paradise again, but only with some qualifications. For one thing, in Shakespeare's tragedy, this earthly paradise of innocence is not projected into something long lost and already turning into myth; instead, it is the immediate

past that is recollected as such, i.e. the reign of the king killed in the past few weeks. Such an attitude, however, rewrites the past, forgetting about Duncan's responsibility for allowing civil war in the country and jeopardizing the safety of the kingdom by making the country vulnerable to outer attacks. Lady Macbeth's rebuke of her husband for disrupting the banquet with his unmanly folly of weird hallucinations can be extended to include not only the present scene (3.4), but also what Macbeth has done to Scotland in the most general sense. He has displaced mirth, broken the good meeting with his disorder. Hence, the order, mirth, and good meeting, i.e. feeling of belonging to an excellent community, have all been replaced by the violent act of murdering the king, the representative of all these values. Instead, their diametric opposites have taken their place: disorder and sorrow. As Macduff tells us,

> Let us rather
> Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
> Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom: each new morn
> New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
> Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
> As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
> Like syllable of dolour. (4.3.2–8)

This change is also marked by Macbeth's ever-decreasing number of followers and confidants; and after the Lady dies, and his last servant, Seyton disappears, Macbeth is left all alone, supported by no one, his life devoid of meaning. Finally, he, who used to displace others, becomes displaced in more than one sense.

The idea of utopia, clearly expressed in *The Tempest* and revealingly discussed by Boss in her essay, is certainly true to the tradition traced by her, but my emphasis here is rather on the *pain* experienced by the nostalgic person over his/her displacement. It is undeniably true for *The Tempest* as well that "the rational men must destroy the brutes or they must try to reform them." But Boss's conclusion that "Cockaigne and the Golden Age are too antithetical to exist simultaneously" and that "men dream of Cockaigne who have abandoned rationality and cultivated the vegetative and the sensitive" or that "philosophers' Utopias deal with the problem how these disparate groups might be incorporated into a single, harmonious society that can avoid self-destruction" can certainly be challenged (150).

It is true that in *The Tempest* we encounter several attempts at such incorporation, e.g. Gonzalo's ideal commonwealth, and Prospero's ideal world, which first failed twelve years before in Milan, then again it collapses on the island, yet leaves the opportunity open for a more successful accomplishment by Miranda and Ferdinand back in Milan again. Prospero *is* a rational man who subdues the "vegetative and sensitive" faculties in himself, and does try to reform the brute Caliban, but fighting the enemy outside, i.e. Caliban and Ferdinand, as well as Antonio and Sebastian, he delays acknowledging the brute inside until the very end ("this thing of darkness / I acknowledge mine" [5.1.275–276]). We find here a type of nostalgia, that may be grasped through Boyme's terms. According to these, the nostalgic "is never a native, but rather a displaced person who mediates between the local and the universal" (*Future* 35). Such a person will always feel the difference, the pain, which, in Boyme's phrase, means being homesick and sick of home at the same time (*Future* 83). I believe this well describes Prospero and his ambivalent feelings: he is not a native but rather a displaced, uprooted person trapped between the local and the universal.

The applicability of Boss's terms may be challenged in other respects as well. Several details in *The Tempest* suggest that Prospero has not forgotten Cockaigne, i.e. the sensual pleasures he could engage in. This can perhaps be seen in his instruction to Ariel to dress up as a nymph of the sea when no one else can see the spirit but the magician himself:

> Go, make thyself like a nymph o'th'sea.
> Be subject to no sight but thine and mine, invisible
> To every eyeball else. Go take this shape,
> And hither come in't; go! Hence with diligence! (1.2.301–304)

He also organises other pageants, the wedding masque and the "trumpery"—the display of showy but worthless clothes to distract the drinking party—in act 4 scene 1. All this seems to confirm Prospero's preoccupation with indulging and satisfying the senses somewhat more than is proper for a person so much dedicated to the cultivation of his rational faculty.[2]

2 This is not to deny the obvious metatheatricality of the play and the playwright's effort to satisfy the growing demand for spectacle, or the interpolation of the masque to "make the play appropriate to the celebration of the wedding James I's daughter" (Orgel 61).

In Marlowe's tragedy we find the attempt to synthesise the rational and the vegetative/sensual. Faustus exclaims: "O, what a world of *profit and delight*, / Of power, of honor, of omnipotence, / Is promised to the *studious artisan*!" (1.1.55–57). We may hear in these lines "the note if sensual gratification and longing for sheer power, along with excitement" (Bevington and Rasmussen 11). Faustus seems to be both a rational man and a brute, both a sensible and a vegetative-sensitive creature who equally seeks knowledge and wants to indulge in earthly pleasures, if only by the help of the devil. So, much so, that the earthly will become synonymous with the devilish (as W. W. Greg has pointed out, "in this play a spirit means a devil" [106]), or at least deadly (cf. the parade of the seven deadly sins in act 2 scene 3), and despite or perhaps corollary to striving to become omniscient, that is a fully rational being, he yields to temptations and thereby destroys himself.

Therefore, Faustus cannot create a harmonious whole in the form of a new identity, and cannot but fail and destroy himself. All this seems to suggest that his utopia is in himself: he wants to make himself better—where better is not a moral term; to find a "good" place inside (eu+topos), which as he will learn the hard way, is nowhere to be found (ou+topos), confirming what appears to be the case in the play that hell is (also) a state of mind. Utopia presupposes displacement, a device with the help of which "the author can reflect the present in an imaginary future, in a non-existing time, or it can be confined in space, in a non-exiting place, on an island, for instance" (Czigányik 305). If, however, one like Faustus searches for this place inside, then the displacement is also to be found within: he, similarly to Macbeth and Prospero, is divided inside, we could say he is divided against himself, which recalls the Biblical definition of Hell: a place divided against itself.[3] Faustus's nostalgia, therefore, is the pain felt over the loss of his dream of becoming both omniscient and omnipotent, over the abortion of his ambition to synthesise the rational and the sensual; an excruciating pain also shared by Mephistopheles, who cries over the loss of his access to Heaven:

> Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it.
> Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God
> And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,

3 "Every kingdom divided against itself, shall be brought to naught, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. So if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom endure?" (*The Geneva Bible*, Matt. 12.25–26).

> Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
> In being deprived of everlasting bliss? (1.3.78–82)[4]

Division and the desire to overcome the gap between the divided halves/selves is the essence of nostalgic longing. Having been able to taste the joys of Heaven once and then being deprived of them could be the precise description of nostalgia, as a variation of the longing for and pain over the lost homeland. If Lucifer or Mephistopheles cannot have this, they will have to make do with trying to increase the power of hell by collecting lost souls.

Closely connected to this kind of thinking is the effort or inclination of Faustus to overcome time gaps, to reverse time to go back into the classical golden age, fighting the irreversibility of time. Boym describes "nostalgic desires" as trying "to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition" (*Future* 15). Faustus wants to be at home physically—see his kissing and sleeping with the spirit of Helen—in a place purely imaginative, thus only approachable for the intellect and only through time-travel.

Similarly paradoxical is the effort of the nemesis-group in *Macbeth*, who want to get back to a state of law and order, a place they can call their home, as Malcolm later proclaims. The country is to be liberated, and the established order of succession is to be restored. Ironically, however, the nemesis-group can only achieve this by killing another king—albeit a tyrant and himself a regicide. Thus, even if we allow for the possibility that Malcolm does want to return to an ideal state of kingship, we may have our reservations. As Mack claims, "a crown seized is a different crown; now the king must *play at* being king" (189); and although Malcolm cannot be king in the old sense, we know from his earlier performance that he *is* a great actor/pretender, so he may just succeed.[5]

In Mack's view, the word describing the process Macbeth undergoes is *imprisonment*, the "interior punishment exacted by his political crime" (190). In the play, Mack continues, we follow what happens "when a man violates a mode of traditional

4 The cry of anguish itself is the echoing of St John Chrysostom's words, as pointed out by John Searle (quoted by Jump in Bevington and Rasmussen 130).

5 See his "first false speaking" in act 4 scene 3, esp. "It is myself I mean—in whom I know / All the particulars of vice so grafted / That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth / Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state / Esteem him as a lamb, being compared / With my confineless harms" (4.3.50–55).

authority" and extinguishes in himself "not merely the reality but even the dream of such a unity between microcosm and macrocosm as the old, nostalgic vision proposed" (190). This old nostalgic vision, or more precisely, the nostalgic idea of kingship, is best symbolised in *Macbeth* by "images of fertility and divine grace" and by Duncan being introduced as an ideal king for an ideal world (Mack 189). This nostalgic vision is to be re-established at the end of the play—at least verbally—first when Macduff greets the new king announcing that the time is free; yet his speech is framed in a way which creates an eerie link with both Macbeth and the weird sisters:

> *Hail*, king, for so thou art. Behold, where stands
> Th'usurper's cursed head. *The time is free.*
> I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
> That speak my salutation in their minds;
> Whose voices I desire aloud with mine.
> *Hail, King of Scotland* (5.9.21–26, emphasis added)

The return of the word *hail* at the end of his speech replicates and recalls the prophetic greeting of the weird sisters, and functions, therefore, as an uneasy reminder that all is perhaps not well, or perhaps as ironic quotation marks or brackets around the most relevant issue: the liberation of time.

Then Malcolm utilises this new mood and mode, proclaiming

> What's more to do,
> Which would be *planted newly with the time*,—
> As calling *home* our exiled friends abroad
> That fled the snares of watchful tyranny,
> Producing forth the cruel ministers
> Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
> Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
> Took off her life,— this, and what needful else
> That calls upon us, by the *grace of Grace*
> *We will perform in measure, time,* and *place.*
> So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
> Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone. (5.9.31–42, emphasis added)

In his accession speech Malcolm gives due emphasis to all the relevant aspects of a re-established ideal state, listing all the significant symbols of the old nostalgic vision propagandistically set against the all-too-black images of the dead tyrant. This is his typical mode of self-justification and self-affirmation: through a hyperbolic contrast in which black Macbeth will make Malcolm seem as pure as snow (cf. 4.3.50–54).

Prospero, too, wants to reverse time and return to the nostalgic ideal of kingship which can maintain "a stable, just, and energetic order through ordinary political acumen and force" (Mack 25). Prospero wants to see himself as such an ideal ruler, who is efficient enough to root out traitors and resolve civil and familial strife like Mack's generic good king, and wants to be "a god on earth" (25). Yet he is vulnerable, almost inviting attack, warns Mack, because he might ignore his responsibilities, or blindly trust an ambitious relative (192). Prospero, therefore, can indeed be homesick and sick of home at the same time, and if he lives long enough, he can live to miss his island. His isolation both twelve years before in Milan and then for twelve years on the island parallel each other, although the difference is that the first was self-chosen, the second allotted to him, and whereas his enemies were always on his mind, thus populating the otherwise rather uninhabited island, once again back in Milan they will be there in their physical reality, which perhaps only means another kind of danger, not a lesser kind. This second Milan, however, might feel more like home; after all, this was what Prospero wanted to get back to. This is what he wanted to restore, and what he was reflecting upon all along; and this is supposed to be his final and permanent abode.

Beyond the simple structural method of juxtaposing the here and there, the now and then, the this and that, etc., however, there is in all three plays, I contend, a more basic underlying notion of finding a "place of permanent abode." In Kállay's view "both Wittgenstein and Shakespeare seem to allow for the possibility that we may arrive home *in* or *in spite of* our homelessness and neither of them lays an emphasis on an evenly structured and totalising narrative which would finally put everything to its proper place, while they both insist on the unravelling in things congealing into a fixture without, . . . , excluding the possibility of finding a place of permanent abode" (206). The image of "unravelling in things congealing into a fixture" might immediately recall Faustus's congealing blood and his effort to find fixity. It might also suggest another kind of fixity, Prospero's island, an image in which "spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole",

and where "time . . . thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history" (Bakhtin 84). In Prospero's island, the "unravelling in things do congeal into a fixture," and all this does not exclude the possibility of finding a permanent abode, if not here on the island, then maybe once back in Milan.

Cosmologists, Kállay continues,

> have always wished to find a home in the Universe, too, they just started out by adopting a divine standpoint—they tried to look at the scenario from "God's perspective," mostly in the name of "reason"—rather than making their initial steps reckoning with their human limits. This is important to note because Shakespearean tragic heroes can also be seen as precisely marking out the boundaries between the divine and the human. (135)

Whether or not cosmologists wanted to find such a place both in the house and in the cosmos I cannot tell, although the odds are that they do, one may recall Pico's famous lines, "[n]either a fixed abode, nor a form that is thine alone nor any function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam, to the end that according to thy longing according to thy judgment, thou mayest have and possess what abode, what form, and what functions thou thyself shalt desire" ("Oration" 224–225). The two playwrights I am discussing here, I argue, definitely did so.

The words "home," "abode," or "dwelling," surely would have included both meanings, as in *Henry VI, Part I* La Pucelle says,

> Then lead me hence—with whom I leave my curse.
> May never glorious sun reflex his beams
> Upon the country where you make *abode*,
> But darkness and the gloomy shade of death
> Environ you, till mischief and despair
> Drive you to break your necks, or hang yourselves.
> (5.3.86–91, emphasis added)

And in *Doctor Faustus* the title character cries out ecstatically on Helen's re-entry,

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul. See, where it flies!
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I *dwell*, for heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena. (5.1.91–97, emphasis added)

Kállay and Mack would perhaps agree that, as the latter observes, "something in man seems to drive him to challenge authority and limitation," yet at the same time something "in the world and within the challenger, makes action painful and destructive as well as exhilarating and informative" (192–193). One may be reminded of Yeats's two antithetical gyres revolving against each other in the opposite direction: we both feel the need to challenge authority and limitation, and, at the same time, we long for authority, order, and limitation. It is this longing for authority, order, and limitation which informs the dream of the nostalgic world, which Mack notes "is easily deprived of whatever actual existence it may have had, but the dream of order on which it is based refuses to die" (192).

This dream aspect is perhaps the strongest (of the three plays discussed here) in *The Tempest*, where not only Gonzalo ("I'th'commonwealth . . . to feed my innocent people" [2.1.145, 162]) but many other characters as well have a dream or vision: Ferdinand has the masque, three men of sin have the harpy banquet, Caliban has the dream of music, Stephano and Trinculo have the "trumpery," and the Boatswain and the crew have the vision of the renewed ship,[6] and the play itself is the testing of an ideal society in an ideal place at an ideal point of time.

The island *is* an ideal place for Prospero to test his magical skills, and so it is for Gonzalo, who is a dear old fool, but it proves to be a nightmarish place for others, like the three men of sin, as well as for the sailors, who feel fatally displaced and misplaced.[7] Prospero also feels misplaced and uprooted from his original appointed place of duke of Milan, as his bitter recollection clearly shows his anguish,

That he, in lieu o' the premises
Of homage and I know not how much tribute,

6 See Frye, *On Shakespeare* (177–178).

7 Cf. Frye on the spatially elastic nature of the island (*On Shakespeare* 177).

> Should presently *extirpate* me and mine
> Out of the dukedom, and confer fair Mila
> With all the honours on my brother; (1.2.123–127, emphasis added)

where "extirpate" literally means "uproot," and can also mean eradicate, remove, exterminate or drive off (cf. Orgel 108), a continuation of the earlier tree metaphor "that now he was / The ivy which had hid my princely trunk, / And suck'd my verdure out on't." (1.2.85–87).

We may here introduce a relevant example from a somewhat different terrain. Tiffany Stern, writing on the second Blackfriars Playhouse as a place of nostalgia, defines one type of nostalgia as being not somewhere else or something else when she attributes the yearning in Shakespeare's late plays to the melancholy of the Blackfriars atmosphere. She demonstrates that the inclusion of masques in the Blackfriars plays "show how problematic was, and is, nostalgia." She argues how "cut down masques reprise aspects of a missed court production, but by so doing they also remind the audience that it is not actually at court—and that what it is seeing is a reduced and repositioned entertainment." Nostalgia, she claims, is never satisfied, and "always has regret at its core." Her conclusion being that "as ex-monastery, ex-parliament, ex-boy theatre and would-be court theatre, Blackfriars was always defined by being not somewhere or something else" (114).

Prospero, the ex-Milanese ex-duke, "sometime schoolmaster" (Bate 12), also ex-husband and ex-head of family, can also be defined by not being where he thinks he should be and not being what he is supposed to be. (There is some continuity provided, however, by his studies and by being a father to Miranda.) This discontent and regret originating from his uprootedness and misplacement is further highlighted by the series of masques characteristically conducted by Prospero within the play: the choice of genre confirming his conviction—in line with what Stern writes—that he should be somewhere else and someone else, as his reminiscences also bitterly demonstrate. He obviously considers his stay on the island only temporary,[8] a provisional arrangement, i.e. an interim. In the interim, the vacuum is filled with his revenge-plan to get back at his enemies and return home and restore his original condition—a motif similar to how Antonio seized the opportunity to fill the power vacuum created by Prospero's being "rapt in secret studies." What Prospero and

8 Temporality is one of the key themes of the play, cf. Prospero's "Of temporal royalties / He thinks me now incapable" (1.2.110–111).

the nemesis-group in *Macbeth* have in common is exactly this revenge-plan and the secondary task to restore something of the previous order in the state.[9]

This element, however muted, is not completely missing in *Doctor Faustus* either, where all Faustus is about to do and wishes to ever achieve can be interpreted as his revenge on God: if God cannot grant him omnipotence and omniscience, and a proper place in the universe where he can be himself, that is his own god, and fully utilise his ambitions and gifts, he will turn to God's enemy, Satan instead. In Marlowe's play then, nostalgia as displacement is most incisively demonstrated in Mephistopheles's looking back at his time in Heaven with anguish and frustration that he can never be allowed to enter again, as we have seen above. Faustus's desire to visit faraway lands and long-gone worlds, is another example of this attitude: a paradoxical wish to cure the pain over his lack of belonging by travelling—among other places—to the classical golden age where he again can only be a passenger passing through and an all-time outsider.

Beneath the surface similarities between the three plays regarding the characters' nostalgia for a one time "permanent" abode in the world and their wish to belong, there are some important differences of the types of nostalgia presented in them. As I have already mentioned above, Boym distinguishes two types of nostalgia: the restorative and the reflective. The first type "puts emphasis on nostos and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps," whereas the second "dwells in algia, in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance" (*Future* 70). The first kind engages in "myth-making of history by means of a return to national symbols and myths" and reconstructing monuments of the past, while the second "lingers on ruins, the patina of time and history, in the dreams of another place and another time" (*Future* 70).

Given this wider and more refined context, it is perhaps safe to state that in *Macbeth* Shakespeare primarily presents the restorative aspect of nostalgia inasmuch as the play moves towards the final restoration of the unity and values of not only family and nation, but also of nature and time; yet it also takes time out of time and dreams of another place, another time,[10] as it can be seen in Macbeth's famous soliloquy in act 1 scene 7; therefore, reflective nostalgic tendencies also present themselves in that play.

9 Cf. Frye, *Fools of Time* (17).

10 Cf. Boym's description of reflective nostalgia in *Future* (70).

In *Doctor Faustus*, there is perhaps more reflection than actual attempt to reconstruct the one-time abode, as Mephistopheles's cry of anguish in act 1 scene 3 (quoted above) reflecting on his loss of home and his other utterances clearly testify. He replies to Faustus's "Was not that Lucifer an angel once?", "Yes, Faustus, and *most dearly loved of God*." (1.3.66–67), or to Faustus's "And what are you that live with Lucifer?" he answers, "*Unhappy spirits* that fell with Lucifer, / Conspir'd against *our God* with Lucifer, / And are *for ever damn'd* with Lucifer" (1.3.71–74, emphasis added), which sounds like a bitter blame aimed at the Prince of Hell, a small-scale replication of Lucifer's rebellion against God.[11]

The surprising amount of irony (both verbal and dramatic)[12] in this play can also support the claim that it is reflective nostalgia that dominates in *Doctor Faustus*. As Boym points out, "restorative nostalgia takes itself dead seriously. Reflective nostalgia, on the other hand, can be ironic and humorous. It reveals that longing and critical thinking are not opposed to one another, as affective memories do not absolve one from compassion, judgment or critical reflection" (*Future* 81–82).

In *The Tempest*, however, the two tendencies seem to be more balanced, as one plotline centres around the theme of conspiracy, which Boym finds typical of restorative nostalgia. This kind, she observes, incorporates two main narrative plots: "the restoration of origins and the conspiracy theory" (*Future* 72). "The conspiratorial worldview," she argues, "reflects a nostalgia for a transcendental cosmology and a simple premodern conception of good and evil. The conspiratorial worldview is based on a single transhistorical plot, a Manichaean battle of good and evil and the inevitable scapegoating of the mythical enemy" (*Future* 72), which perfectly describes Prospero's and Malcolm's characteristic presentation of their enemies (Sycorax, Caliban and Antonio; Macbeth and Lady Macbeth) as all too black, highlighting their own "whiteness."

Beyond these restorative tendencies, *The Tempest* also incorporates reflective nostalgia, as in Boym's view, this kind "can foster a creative self" (*Future* 417). In her 2007 essay quoted above, Boym puts it slightly differently when paraphrasing herself, which I find both revealing and useful: "Instead of recreation of the lost home, reflective nostalgia can foster *the creation of aesthetic individuality*" ("Discontents" 15,

11 Note the parallel between the possessive, "*our God*" and Faustus's repeated utterances, "My God" towards the end of the play, expressing his growing despair.

12 One relevant example is Faustus's famous exclamation, "Come, I think hell's a fable" (2.1.130) addressed to Mephistopheles, whom he has just conjured up from hell.

emphasis added).[13] Prospero's magic, which he also calls (his so potent) Art, can be seen as such an effort to create for himself a purely aesthetic individuality, which, however, he will have to relinquish at the end of his twelve years on the island.

Further distinguishing between the two types of nostalgia Boym writes, "if restorative nostalgia ends up reconstructing emblems and rituals of home and homeland in an attempt to conquer and spatialise time, reflective nostalgia cherishes shattered fragments of memory and temporalizes space" (*Future* 81). In *The Tempest*, both of these can be seen, as Prospero manages to restore himself, his family, and his dukedom on the island and at the same time, he heavily reflects upon his memories, in which he incorporates the memories of others (Miranda, Ariel, Caliban). The island thus becomes a fixed place not only in space but in time as well: governed by his auspicious star on the horizon for a limited length of time, the play is very much time-bound. Moreover, the island functions as a chronotope, a space-time continuum, which is repeatedly confirmed as both the origin and end-point of dramatic discourse and is a key stage symbol in itself.

Time undeniably plays a crucial role in all three plays. Although out of the three characters discussed here perhaps Macbeth is the most obsessed with time, especially the future aspect of it, a similar effort to fix one's future can be seen on the part of Faustus as well, with the price very clearly fixed in the bond. Prospero also wants to fix the future especially as related to Miranda and the future of the dukedom. The past, however, is treated entirely differently in the three plays: it is most heavily burdened in *The Tempest*, where the years before the past twelve years is what matters the most; in *Macbeth*, it is the immediate past that has the heaviest impact on the action; whereas in *Doctor Faustus*, the protagonist has last minute regrets and treats the last day and every hour and every minute of the last day as if they were already over, seeing his future as if it was already over. In this respect we can find an ironic frame established by his beginning and end: "Consummatum est" (2.1.74, a-text) and "But mine [his soul] must live still to be plagu'd in hell" (5.2.112). And although the longest period of time lapsing, 24 years, is in this play, the nostalgia is not in that he looks back on his life as it was 24 years before—although his last pledge is, "I'll burn my books" (5.2.123)—as he never really belonged then and there. As we have seen before, the more poignant case in point is raised by Mephistopheles, who elucidates how he feels after having tasted and then lost Heaven in an anguished speech in which time is treated timelessly.

13 This essay is adapted from her book *The Future of Nostalgia*.

The nostalgic thus always seems to be stuck in an in-between state, neither here nor entirely there, neither entirely in the past, nor wholly living in the present, as if the *threshold* between the two times and places has expanded, gaining a third dimension to incorporate and embrace the nostalgic person. This may recall Boym's two types of nostalgia with their respective spatialisation of time and the temporalisation of space. But it may also recall Heidegger's discussion of pain as "the intimacy of the between which bears *world* and *thing* toward each other" (Caputo 151). In examining Trakl's poem, *A Winter Evening*, Heidegger writes that "[p]ain has turned the threshold to stone," and concludes that

> pain indeed tears asunder, it separates, yet so that at the same time it draws everything to itself, gathers it to itself. Its rending, as a separating that gathers, is at the same time that drawing which, like the pen-drawing of a plan or sketch, draws and joins together what is held apart in separation. Pain is the joining agent in the rending that divides and gathers. Pain is the joining of the rift. The joining is the *threshold*. It settles the between, the middle of the two that are separated in it. Pain joins the rift of the difference. Pain is the difference itself. (Heidegger 202)

The basic experience of the nostalgic is pain, caused by the compulsion to be forever in-between, on the road, on the threshold. The pain is the difference, which at the same time defines the gap and makes it possible to overcome or bridge the gap; homesickness—note the origin of the German (Swiss) term nostalgia—can indeed take/bring you home. This pain or difference felt between the world and the thing on the threshold of coming home, or what Boym phrased as feeling homesick and being sick of home at the same time, this everyday feeling of longing to be home and when home longing to be elsewhere, this is what the three plays discuss from their respective angles. Both Macbeth and his opponents want to belong to an orderly state, both politically and mentally, yet Macbeth only feels the rift, see his "here, / But here, upon this bank and shoal of time / We'd jump the life to come" (1.7.5–7), as if the *here* was already cleft into two; Prospero stranded on the island repeats and is about to reenact what he has done before at home, which can be called one way of managing homesickness; and Faustus also seems to suffer from the traditional confines of time

and space belonging wholly to neither.[14] Prospero is likewise constantly on the move, enroute in *The Tempest*, the sea being the perfect symbol of this constant change, like the flying Dutchman, or the Wanderer, looking back with pain on the land he left behind, and is compelled to always take his actual state only as something temporary, like the island, and he also looks forward to returning to the original home where so many things went wrong, and where he was wronged so badly.

All three plays tend to synthetise the two types of nostalgia—reflective and restorative—although in varying proportions, with *The Tempest* displaying the synthesis in its most full; and if not in the figure of the central character like Prospero, then divided between various characters like Malcolm and Macbeth or Mephistopheles and Faustus respectively.[15] Thus, we find here a complex and multi-faceted representation of both aspects of the term: *nostos* and *algia*. On the one hand, the image of the lost home and its potential and attempted reconstruction (nostos); and on the other, the topos of painful longing or reflexion itself (algia). A third aspect, however, should also be considered: the delay of homecoming, the temporal and spatial gap, this hiatus, distance, difference, or rift, which articulates the concept and that seems fundamental to the plays considered here. Delay, the temporal equivalent of the spatial concept of the threshold is essential in articulating the problem of nostalgia in all three plays: the interim makes the drama between losing the safety of one's homeland and the painful longing to recreate it. In other words, time-gaps—between present plans of rebellion in *Macbeth* and their future execution; twelve years in *The Tempest* between Prospero's banishment and his revenge; 24 years of vain pleasure in *Doctor Faustus*[16]—as well as spatial gaps—Milan vs. Prospero's island; and perhaps most complexly in Macbeth's chronotopic image of "here, / But here, upon this bank and

14 Boym comments that the "nostalgic feels stifled with the conventional confines of time and space" (*Future* 13).

15 I am aware that this conclusion is not unlike that of Boss, for her three categories were also found to be "similar in some respects and quite antithetical in others, though easily distinguishable by an audience familiar with all three." This aspect of the approach I am ready to adopt.

16 About a week passes in *Macbeth*; in *The Tempest*, 12 years divide the prelude and the aftermath; and in *Doctor Faustus,* 24 years are given to the hero to find a "place of permanent abode." That time is indeed problematised in all three plays as shown by the technique of compression and reflection as well: one week vs. ten years in *Macbeth*, four hours vs. 12 years in *The Tempest*, and in *Doctor Faustus*, the last of the last 24 hours vs. 24 years. In Holinshed, a decade passes between Macbeth becoming king and his further misdeeds, as Freud famously observed in "Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work" (322).

shoal of time / We'd jump the life to come"—both serve to connect and to divide, ultimately articulating in poetic language the complexity of the concept of nostalgia.

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Rosalind and Celia

Biblical and Renaissance Ideals of Friendship in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

GYÖNGYI MATUS-KASSAI

Abstract: This paper focuses on the relationship between Rosalind and Celia from Shakespeare's As You Like It. *The study investigates a hitherto undiscovered link between their friendship and that of David and Jonathan from the* Bible. *Both friendships are analysed in the context of the classical and Renaissance discourse on* amicitia perfecta, *highlighting the most important features of idealised friendship from Cicero's* De Amicitia *and Montaigne's essay* On Friendship. *Furthermore,* amicitia perfecta *is proposed as a new, alternative framework to understand the relationship of Rosalind and Celia, which is often discussed in the context of homoerotic desire. Finally, the essay emphasises the significance of the fact that the ideal friends presented in Shakespeare's comedy are female in a culture when women were thought to be excluded from, and incapable of, true friendship.*

This paper proposes a new link between the friendship of Rosalind and Celia from Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and the one between David and Jonathan from the Bible, which has not yet received sufficient scholarly attention.[1] Most of the interpretations of the drama focus only on the male protagonists, overshadowing the role which the friendship of Rosalind and Celia plays. This is also true in terms of analysing biblical references in the play: apart from identifying shorter allusions to the Bible

1 Shaheen in his seminal work does not mention the parallel with David and Jonathan among the biblical references to the play (214–229), and there is only one brief remark in Northrop Frye's notes to Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde. Euphues Golden Legacie* (1590), which connects Rosalind and Celia with this biblical narrative: "David–Jonathan set-up with the two girls; in Shakespeare Celia just sneaks off with Rosalind, whereas in Lodge that's only a suggested possibility and the king actually banishes both" (Frye 148). I do not argue for any textual borrowing or direct influence but examine these two friendship narratives as cultural parallels, suggesting new avenues for interpretation.

(Shaheen 214–229), larger biblical frameworks applied by critics to interpret *As You Like It* typically centre around brotherly rivalry between Oliver and Orlando, Duke Frederick and Duke Senior, featuring biblical brothers like Esau and Jacob,[2] while in the case of the two female characters, there is only one model examined: Ruth and Naomi.[3] This study discusses similarities between the Rosalind–Celia and David–Jonathan[4] narratives, and investigates how the concept of ideal friendship, *amicitia perfecta,* born in classical culture and revived in the Renaissance, relates to this Shakespearean friendship and its biblical model.

The first and probably most apparent parallel between the two stories is that in both cases the reigning king or duke is a father of one of the friends and the enemy of the other. The royal child defends his or her friend, confronting his or her own royal father, who in turn calls his child a traitor and reproaches him or her for supporting the friend, to the detriment of his or her own interests. Then he claims that the friend is a rival to his child, and, as such, he or she should be eliminated. Both narratives suggest that the friend seems to be more popular with the people than the king's or duke's child,[5] which is a threat in terms of future royal succession. In the play, Duke Frederick announces that he banishes Rosalind, which provokes Celia to passionately argue that Rosalind is innocent and they are life-long friends. To this pleading Duke Frederick answers:

> She is too subtle for thee, and her smoothness,
> Her very silence and her patience
> Speak to the people, and they pity her.
> Thou art a fool. She robs thee of thy name,

2 See Montrose and Fabiny.

3 See Julie Crawford's analysis in her article "The Place of a Cousin in *As You Like It*."

4 The story of David and Jonathan can be found in the two Books of Samuel in the Old Testament. David, a young shepherd, is taken by King Saul to his court after his victory over the Philistine Goliath. David makes friends with Jonathan, the son of the king. However, Saul becomes jealous of David and starts to persecute him. Although being chosen by God to be the next king, David needs to leave the court and hide from Saul's anger. Jonathan defends him against his father and tries to help him as much as he can. Finally, in a battle against the Philistines both Saul and Jonathan die, and David mourns bitterly over the death of his friend.

5 In the case of David and Jonathan, David's popularity is expressed by the song of his victory over Goliath, which arouses Saul's jealousy (I Sam 18:7–9), thus his fame must have obscured Jonathan's as well. In *As You Like It*, Duke Frederick refers to Rosalind's popularity as a reason for banishing her (1.3.74–79).

> And thou wilt show more bright and seem more virtuous
> When she is gone. Then open not thy lips.
> Firm and irrevocable is my doom
> Which I have passed upon her. She is banished. (1.3.74–81)

In the Bible, Jonathan defends his friend David against the jealous contriving of his father, King Saul. Just like in *As You Like It*, the king answers by pointing out the fact that if the rival were gone, his son would have a great advantage:

> Then Saúl was angry with Ionathán, & said vnto him, Thou sonne of the wicked rebellious woman, do not I knowe, that thou hast chosen the sonne of Ishái to thy confusion and to the confusion and shame of thy mother? For as long as the sonne of Ishái liueth vpon the earth, thou shalt not be stablished, nor thy kingdome: wherefore now send and set him vnto me, for he shal surely dye. (I Sam 20:30–31)[6]

In both cases, Jonathan and Celia are popular with the people, but not as popular as David and Rosalind, towards whom even more sympathy is aroused after they are exiled and mistreated by the king.

The connection between the two narratives is further supported by the fact that the friendships are sealed by oaths, which contain the element of ceding the royal power: both Celia and Jonathan promise to give the throne to their friend in the future. This selfless attitude is characteristic of both figures, and both can be associated with the virtue of charity.[7] Shakespeare's play includes two instances of this kind: the first vow is taken when Celia, daughter of the reigning Duke, expresses her intent to give back the kingdom to Rosalind, the heiress of the lawful, but banished Duke:

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6 In this paper, biblical quotations are taken from the Geneva Bible (1560, first edition), because this translation, made by Protestants who fled to Geneva under Queen Mary, was one of the most popular versions read in Shakespeare's time (Rhodes 20).

7 Knowles claims that Celia's name, "heavenly," refers to Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, in which the allegorical figure of "Dame Caelia" has three daughters: Fidelia (faith), Speranza (hope), Charissa (charity), alluding to the famous Hymn of Love in I Corinthians 13 (Dusinberre 146n2). I would agree that Celia in the play represents all these characteristics, including charity or love, which is an essential force in the dynamics of the drama. Interestingly, Jonathan has also been associated with charity in the Christian tradition (see note 12 below).

> You know my father hath no child but I, nor none is like to have; and truly, when he dies, thou shalt be his heir, for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection. By mine honour I will, and when I break that oath, let me turn monster. (1.2.17–22)

The aggressive seizing of power by the brother "perforce" stands in sharp contrast with giving back that power by the quasi-sister "in affection." Celia's reference to a "monster" evokes inhuman, unnatural behaviour and beastliness, associated with the breaker of the oath.

Another instance which can be considered an oath can be found in Act 1 Scene 3 (93–102), after Rosalind is banished. Celia refuses to be separated from her friend: "Shall we be sundered? Shall we part, sweet girl? / No, let my father seek another heir" (1.3.95–96). In these lines, Julie Crawford identifies an allusion to the liturgical text of the marriage ceremony in the *Book of Common Prayer* (113): "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (qtd. in Crawford 113). Celia ends her speech with the affirmation: "Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee." (1.3.102), which, as Juliet Dusinberre points out in the Arden Third Series edition of the play (185 n103), echoes the story of Ruth and Naomi: "For whither thou goest, I wil go" (1:16). Thus, Celia's words can be considered as a pledge of loyalty, corroborated by allusions to the marriage liturgy and the most famous female friendship narrative from the Bible (Crawford 113). Crawford, commenting on 1.3.70–71 ("We still have slept together,/ Rose at an instant, learned, played, ate together") suggests that although marriage is alluded to as well, the girls' relationship can be regarded as sworn sisterhood: "Celia and Rosalind's bond is thus less marriage-like than a form of sworn kinship that carries a similarly potent social legibility and meaning" (113). Later, she adds: "There is abundant evidence that early modern women's relationships with one another, much like those between men, were enmeshed in complex webs of avowed kinship" (126). Therefore, it seems that the kind of relationship and vows depicted by Shakespeare reflect contemporary social practices.

In the Book of Samuel, three vows can be detected in the narrative of David and Jonathan: the Geneva Bible (1560) translates them two times as "couenant" (I Sam 18:3, 23: 18) and once as "bonde" (I Sam 20:16). The first one is right after David's epic victory over Goliath: "Then Ionathán and Dauid made a couenant:

for he loued him as his owne soule." (I Sam 18:3). The second covenant is made between them at the New Moon feast (ch. 20): Jonathan promises to inform David about his father's intentions and secures David's good will towards his offsprings and kinship, acknowledging him as an equal and potentially more powerful person, whose protection and support is worth asking for (I Sam 20:13–16): "So Ionathán made a bonde with the house of Dauid, *saying*, Let the Lord require it at the hands of Dauids enemies. And again Ionathán sware vnto Dauid, because he loued him (for he loued him as his owne soule)" (I Sam 20:16–17).

The third oath is taken when David is hiding from Saul in the forest and Jonathan secretly meets him to encourage him. The prince acknowledges David's rightful claim to the throne (by divine election), and envisions him as the future king, and himself as his loyal subject. After both promises, the two friends swear loyalty to each other again.

> And Ionathán Sauls sonne arose and went to Dauid into the wood, and comforted him in God, And said vnto him, Feare not: for the hand of Saúl my father shal not finde thee, and thou shalt be King ouer Israel, and I shal be next vnto thee, and also Saúl my father knoweth it. So they twaine made a couenant before the Lord, and Dauid did remaine in the wood: but Ionathán went to his house. (I Sam 23:16–18)

Thirdly, the most striking and far-reaching similarity between the two accounts is the portrayal of an exceptionally strong and close friendship, entailing the unity of the two friends, often expressed with language reminiscent of matrimony. In both cases, this has led to speculations about the homoerotic nature of the relationships in question.[8] My contention is that it is more worthwhile examining these relation-

8 In my paper, I use the term "homoerotic" based on Traub's rationale: "'Homoeroticism,' while somewhat cumbersome and etymologically predicated on gender sameness, conveys a more fluid and contingent sense of erotic affect than either 'lesbian' or 'homosexual'; neither a category of self nor normatively male, homoeroticism retains the necessary strangeness and historical contiguity between early modern and contemporary forms of desire" (16). In the case of Rosalind and Celia, the question of homoeroticism has been raised by scholars including Traub (171, 310) and Crawford. According to Traub, female homoerotic desire has been overlooked by critics and contemporary audiences in plays like *As You Like It*, "because the palpable 'femininity' of these characters blinds us—and, I suspect, may have blinded many of their contemporaries as well—to the eroticism evident in their language of desire" (182).

ships in the light of the early modern discourse of friendship, which also seems to account for the homoerotic overtones of the Shakespearean texts.

The David and Jonathan narrative has a longer and more complicated tradition of homoerotic interpretation than the Rosalind–Celia relationship; it has received considerable attention lately regarding homoeroticism and homosexuality, both in scholarly circles and in popular culture.[9] Although it lies outside the scope of this study to investigate the question in more detail, it should be pointed out that it was not until the nineteenth century that David and Jonathan became synonyms for homosexuality (Harding, "Opposite Sex Marriage" 46), thus our contemporary concerns should not be projected onto sixteenth-century (or earlier) readers. Furthermore, most biblical scholars today argue for a non-homoerotic reading of the story, although the two figures, taken out of their context, have become symbols for same-sex love.[10]

However, David and Jonathan were regarded quite differently in early modern culture: as biblical examples of perfect friendship. For example, in Daneau Lambert's treatise on Christian friendship (1579),[11] they are cited repeatedly as outstanding examples of this kind of relationship. The author discusses the main characteristics of the ideal Christian *amicitia*, supported by Biblical passages, illustrating almost every point with the help of this friendship. Interestingly, the Latin original, unlike the English translation (1586), puts Jonathan's name into the subtitle

9 Some commentators, mostly non-professionals, argue for a homoerotic interpretation of the story; some of them claim that David and Jonathan had a sexual kind of relationship (Olyan 7). However, the majority of interpreters, mainly biblical scholars, reject the homoerotic reading, focussing on the close friendship of the heroes in the context of covenant discourse typical of ancient West Asian cultures (Olyan 7). Thus, the relationship of David and Jonathan, as presented in the Bible, is the subject of heated debates between conservative and liberal theologians (Wernik 49–50). As for the Biblical text itself, there is no definitive conclusion in literature whether it implies that David and Jonathan had homoerotic feelings, let alone a sexual relationship with each other. It seems to be rather a question of hermeneutics, highly depending on the interpreter's views and beliefs on divine inspiration, the unity and consistency of the Biblical text. For a summary of the different standpoints in scholarship, see, for example, Olyan, and the introduction to *The Love of David and Jonathan: Ideology, Text, Reception* by James E. Harding (1–30).

10 This leads Harding to question whether "David and Jonathan are any longer 'biblical characters' at all, since they are detached from their 'original' biblical context and have ceased to be controlled by it" (Harding 3).

11 Lambert, Daneau. *Tractatus Duo* (1579). The English translation, *Trve and Christian Friendshippe* is from 1586.

as well.[12] David and Jonathan were also listed among the classical heroes of friendship, for instance, by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* (1590), which suggests that they had found their way into the pantheon of classical friends by the sixteenth century. The Spenserian protagonist arrives at the garden of Venus, where, after seeing lovers, he catches sight of "another sort / Of louers lincked in true harts consent / Which loued not as these, for like intent, / But on chast vertue grounded their desire" (Book IV, Canto X, 48–51). David and Jonathan are praised as ideal friends among Hercules and Hylas, Theseus and Pirithous, Pylades and Orestes, Titus and Gesippus, Damon and Pythias (Book IV, Canto X, 55–60). This is not surprising, since their story fits the patterns of *amicitia perfecta* well, and I would also suggest that in the Renaissance their friendship was read in the light of the classical tradition; thus, Biblical ideals of friendship were merged with, or rather, dominated by, classical ideas.

Therefore, it seems that the parallel between Rosalind–Celia and David–Jonathan did not come *ex nihilo*: the latter has been viewed as a model for friendship for centuries. Furthermore, both seem to conform to the rules of an ideal friendship celebrated by humanists, which, in my interpretation, can account for elements implying a marriage-like unity in the text.

When investigating these instances in the context of the early modern *amicita perfecta* discourse, two pre-eminent texts serve as the basis for inquiry, which have exerted a huge influence on contemporary thinking. The first one is Cicero's famous treatise entitled *De Amicitia*, which, among other works by the author, formed part of the grammar school curriculum (Gillespie 108). It was very popular in the second half of the sixteenth century, given the large number of printings of the Latin version, but it also reached the English reading public in translation, published in 1481, 1530, 1550, 1562, and 1577 as well (Stretter 348). The other work this analysis relies on is Montaigne's essay *On Friendship*, because he was the one who most concisely articulated the ideas of *amicitia perfecta* in the sixteenth century, heavily drawing on, and sometimes adding to, Cicero. His essay, which can be regarded as a cornerstone of early modern discourse on *amicitia*, was first published in French in 1580, and in English in Florio's translation in 1603 (Gillespie 343). Although concrete

12 In the Latin version, the title of the first section is *Ionathan, sive de amicitia vera et Christiana, quae est Charitatis maximus effectus [Jonathan, or the true and Christian friendship, which is the greatest result of charity]* (5), in which Jonathan's friendship is associated according to the Christian tradition with the virtue of charity.

word-by-word textual links cannot be established between their works and *As You Like It*, my contention is that the friendship ideas expressed in them reflect the cultural context in which the David–Jonathan narrative was read and *As You Like It* was written, and thus, it is fruitful to incorporate them into the analysis.[13]

The friendship of David and Jonathan is famously characterised by the unity of souls in the First Book of Samuel: "And when he made an end of speaking vnto Saul, the soule of Ionathán was knit with the soule of Dauid, and Ionathán loued him, as his owne soule" (I Sam 18:1). The "knitting of souls" is one of the metaphors in the Hebrew Bible denoting friendship (Ryken et al. 309); however, it seems also to bear a resemblance to one of the most essential features of *amicitia perfecta*: the Platonic idea of the mixing of the souls. "In the amitie I speake of, they entermixe and confound themselves one in the other, with so vniversall a commixture, that they weare out, and can no more finde the seame that hath conjoyned them together" (Montaigne 92). True friendship, according to this tradition, is a harmony of character and thinking, which culminates in a kind of unity of the souls, the friend becoming *alter ipse*, another self. In Montaigne's famous words, friendship is "no other then one soule in two bodies, according to the fit definition of Aristotle" (Montaigne 94). The biblical element when "the soule of Ionathan was knit with the soule of Dauid" (I Sam 18:1) thus does not only signal an exceptionally strong relationship, but it could also have been read in the Renaissance with the platonic blending of souls in mind, which provides a stronger reason for admitting David and Jonathan among exemplary friends.

The friendship of Rosalind and Celia are portrayed in a similar vein. The characters are introduced as two young girls, who grew up together, sharing each other's life to such an extent that Celia would have followed Rosalind into exile in the past, as she does later in the play. It is important to note that these character traits are mentioned

13 Cicero, as a school text, was most probably known by Shakespeare. Florio's translation of the *Essais* was published in 1603, later than Shakespeare wrote *As You Like It* (1598) (Dusinberre 1). However, there is a possibility that Shakespeare was familiar with the text: John Florio was part of Shakespeare's circle of friends and acquaintances, and there may have been other, earlier translations of the *Essais* which have not survived, and Gillespie suggests that Florio's version "may have been in progress as early as 1598" (343). Nevertheless, Gillespie warns against identifying Montaigne allusions in Shakespeare, claiming that "[o]utside the *Tempest*, Shakespeare's use of Montaigne as a direct source is a matter of speculation only" (346). Therefore, in this paper Florio's Montaigne is cited not as a source, but rather as a point of comparison regarding early modern popular concepts of friendship.

by Charles, who can be regarded as an objective observer, and it is not in his interests to compliment the ladies. Rosalind and Celia are presented as highly similar throughout the play, sharing the same status at the court (1.1.105–106). They only differ in hair colour: Rosalind is fair-haired, while Celia is brown (4.3.83–85). Rosalind is claimed to be "more than common tall" (1.3.112); however, there are some contradictions in the drama's text concerning the girls' height (177n162). In terms of personality, Rosalind seems to be more active and outspoken than Celia. Apart from these minor differences, their depiction resonates with classical friendship ideals when the friend functions as *alter ipse*, another self of equal status and qualities.

> OLIVER Can you tell if Rosalind, the Duke's daughter, be
> banished with her father?
> CHARLES O no; for the Duke's daughter, her cousin, so
> loves her, being ever from their cradles bred together,
> that she would have followed her exile or have died to
> stay behind her. She is at the court and no less beloved
> of her uncle than his own daughter, and never two
> ladies loved as they do. (1.1.100–107)

The closing remark highlights the strong and affectionate nature of their friendship; as Crawford puts it, "[f]rom the outset, then, Celia and Rosalind are identified not only as cousins—a term, like 'friend,' that encompasses a wide range of relationships—but also as being *in excess* of that nomination" (105). The kind of hyperbolic language used by Charles, singling out the friendship in question as unique, exceptionally close, and unprecedented, is a conventional feature in the *amicitia perfecta* tradition, and should not be taken literally as a sign of homoeroticism. According to Cicero and Montaigne, a perfect friendship is hard to find, if it can be found at all. The authors emphasise how their friendship (Laelius and Africanus, Montaigne and Étienne de la Boétie) excels others, in terms of rarity and unity as well. In early modern friendship discourse, hyperbolic phrases describing the friendship such as "truely a man shall not commonly heare of the like" (Montaigne 90), were a common tool to elevate the friendship in question to the level of *amicitia perfecta*.

The friends' unity involves a certain interchangeability, and thus, sharing families as well. For instance, after Jonathan's death, David takes care of his lame child, Mephiboshet (I Sam 9). In Shakespeare, Celia encourages Rosalind to be happy

for her sake and to assume her own role as Duke Frederick's daughter: as the friend is viewed as another self, identifying and treating the friend's family as one's own comes naturally (1.2.8–16). The first line Celia speaks sums up her endeavours: "I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry" (1.2.1). Crawford reads this passage as indicative of their homoerotic relationship: she cites Masten according to whom "sweet" carries homoerotic overtones, and argues that "coz" or "cousin" "carries a similar erotic valence" (106). However, later she asserts that cousin in early modern times meant "next of kin" or "an intimate more generally" (107), and had several layers of meaning ranging from "familial, erotic, economic resonances" (108). To my mind, this expression aptly illustrates the ambiguities inherent in the discourses of *amicitia*, illustrating the thin line between the homosocial and the homoerotic. While being potentially homoerotic, its meaning is not confined to this interpretation. In addition, in many cases, cousin only denoted "an imprecise degree of kinship" (Donno 62n4), as that of Sir Toby and Olivia in *Twelfth Night*.

When Celia defends Rosalind against her father, she also claims their unity and inseparability in ways which can be read as homoerotic, but also as an example for the perfect unity of the ideal friends.

> I was too young that time to value her,
> But now I know her. If she be a traitor,
> Why, so am I. We still have slept together,
> Rose at an instant, learned, played, ate together,
> And whereso'er we went, like Juno's swans,
> Still we went coupled and inseparable. (1.3.68–73)

Celia completely identifies herself with her friend, who is another self, according to classical theory, and thus requires that she be treated the same way as Rosalind. In her speech, she recalls their common past, childhood memories, in very similar terms as Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Dusinberre 183n68).[14]

The image expressing the harmony of the girls is that of "Juno's swans" (1.3.72), which, according to some scholars, "yokes the goddesses of sexuality and marriage into one powerful image of avowed same-sex love" (DiGangi qtd. in Crawford 113; see

14 "So we grew together / Like to a double cherry, seeming parted, / But yet an union in partition, / Two lovely berries moulded on one stem; /So with two seeming bodies but one heart" (3.2.208–210). Here Helena also echoes the "one soule in two bodies" (Montaigne 93) theory.

also Traub 171). In mythology, Venus' chariot is pulled by swans (Dusinberre 183n72); if the phrase were about her swans, it would more obviously refer to sexual love. However, Juno was the goddess of marriage, and not always a very positive figure of ancient mythology; for the girls, and especially for Celia, who utters this sentence, the institution and thus the goddess of marriage probably was not the most positive one either as it threatened their unity as friends. I would suggest that the image might focus more on the unity and inseparability of the two swans, whether they be Juno's or Venus', than the sexual/non-sexual or marriage-like aspects of the girls' relationship, while bringing together the two goddesses whose "reconciliation . . . was part of Elizabeth's iconography" (Dusinberre, 183n72).

Another passage illustrates that marriage was thought to be inferior to the ideal friendship in the *amicita perfecta* discourse, thus it would not have been a reasonable framework to understand the relationships in question: David's lament over Jonathan's death in the opening chapter of Samuel ("Wo is me for thee, my brother Ionathán: very kinde hast thou bene vnto me: thy loue to me was wonderful, passing the loue of women" [II Sam 1:26]). Before examining the implied comparison with opposite-sex love or marriage, the term "brother" deserves to be highlighted. Calling a friend a brother is not a surprising metaphor, and it must have been read as a commonplace in early modern England, where the notion of sworn brotherhood was familiar (Simonkay 159). Similarly, the female friendship in *As You Like It* is compared to a relationship between siblings.

> The other is daughter to the banished Duke,
> And here detained by her usurping uncle
> To keep his daughter company, whose loves
> Are *dearer than the natural bond of sisters*. (1.2.262–265, emphasis added)

Although Rosalind and Celia are not sisters by birth (only cousins), they still have a stronger and closer relationship that might only be expected from siblings. "Dearer than . . . natural" does not refer to an "unnatural" quality of their relationship, but it denotes their kind attitude towards each other, their friendship being closer than kinship ties between sisters in general.[15] This passage also emphasises the con-

15 See Traub: "Despite the fact that his words imply that their love is more dear than is natural, his tone is admiring, and presumably no one would have raised an eyebrow" (310). However, the passage does not necessarily imply homoeroticism if we take into consideration the contemporary

trast between more-than-sisterly love and brotherly rivalry in the play, including the "usurping uncle" and the "banished Duke," but also the bitter conflict between Oliver and Orlando. Conceptualising the friend as a brother or sister is inherent in other discourses of friendship as well, as it had been shown in the David–Jonathan narrative, together with the hyperbolic addition: "dearer than" (1.2.265). Crawford also points at a biblical passage, Proverbs 18, 24 where the two relationships are contrasted: "A man that hathe friends, oght to shew him self friendly: for a friend is nerer then a brother" (105n18).

However, ranking the David–Jonathan relationship higher than "the loue of women" (II Sam 1:26) is one of the hot points nowadays in theological debates concerning homoerotic relationships.[16] It is essential to take into consideration that sixteenth-century interpretations of the passage do not share our postmodern concerns. The marginal gloss of the Geneva Bible, for example, explains to the contemporary reader that here David speaks about the love of women "[e]ther towarde their housbandes, or their children" (136), implying that women are not capable of the kind of love David shares with Jonathan.

Apart from implying women's inferiority, the debated phrase in question also contrasts "the loue of women" (II Sam 1:26) with friendship, which is a typical feature of the early modern *amicitia perfecta* discourse as well. Montaigne explains why the ideal friendship between two men should be regarded as superior to love and marriage. Although love between men and women is based on choice, as opposed to family ties, it is not as balanced and stable as love in friendship, and it has serious drawbacks as well.[17] Furthermore, love grows while it is fuelled by desire, but

meaning of the word "natural." According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "natural" has a meaning of "feeling or exhibiting natural kindliness, affection, or gratitude . . . having natural feeling" (244), which is often linked to family ties: natural behaviour implies the right attitude towards one's relatives. For example, in *King Lear*, Gloucester calls Edmund a "loyal and natural boy" (2.1.83), when he is deceived into believing that Edmund had discovered Edgar's murderous plans against him. Lear refers to his own wicked daughters as "unnatural hags" (2.4.271).

16 See for example Olyan's study, "Surpassing the Love of Women"; for a short summary of the arguments of both sides, see Wernik (54–55); for the main problems with the interpretation of the passage, see Harding (44–45). The well-known scholar and professor of Hebrew, Robert Alter in his recent commentary on the Old Testament dismisses the homoerotic interpretation of the passage (311).

17 "Hir fire, I confesse it . . . to be more active, more fervent, and more sharpe. But it is a rash and wavering fire, waving and diverse: the fire of an ague subject to fittes and stints, and that hath but slender hold-fast of us. In true friendship, it is a generall & vniversall heate, and equally tempered, a constant and settled heate, all pleasure and smoothnes, that hath no pricking or stinging in it,

when it is realised, "having a corporall end" (91), it loses its intensity. As opposed to the "fleshly" sexual desire, friendship is spiritual. "On the other side, friendshippe is enjoyed according as it is desired, it is neither bredde, nor nourished, nor encreaseth but in jovissance, as being spirituall, and the mind being refined by use and custome" (91).

Furthermore, marriage cannot compete with friendship, because it is a bargain: "it is a covenant which hath nothing free but the entrance, the continuance beeing forced and constrained, depending else-where then from our will, and a match ordinarily concluded to other ends" (Montaigne 91). In addition, by assuming women's inferiority, it can be inferred from both Cicero and Montaigne that in marriage the two parties are not equal, thus true friendship cannot develop between them. In contrast, friendship is presented as the utmost good in life, and the best kind of relationship one can have, and as such, it can be an example for married couples, who are yoked together in a less enjoyable and noble way. Montaigne, for example, mentions that gift-giving between husband and wife is prohibited by law "to honour marriage with some imaginary resemblance of this divine bond" (141). Gift-giving in friendship is not conceivable, since friends share everything; in marriage it is also forbidden, in order to render this institution more similar to a higher-level relationship, true friendship. The same contrast can be found in religious texts as well. For example, Henry Smith, "the Silver-tongued Preacher," in his work entitled *A preparative to marriage* (1591) ends his admonitions, exhortations, and catalogue of the duties of husband and wife with the blessing: "And now the Lord Iesus in whom ye are contracted, knit your hearts together, that ye may love one another like David and Ionathan" (89). Here the preacher clearly places friendship and its biblical manifestation, David and Jonathan as a model for the to-be-married couple, drawing on the biblical motif of the "knitting of souls," indicating the source (I Samuel 18:1) on the margin. Friendship, associated with spiritual unity, harmony, and equality, is presented here as superior to a common female–male relationship, often characterised by inequality and strife.

This hierarchy of relationships is important to consider when analysing passages from *As You Like It* which potentially hint at a marriage-like or homoerotic relationship between Rosalind and Celia. For instance, when her friend is exiled by the Duke, Celia claims that by banishing Rosalind, her father banished herself as well, and she

which the more it is in lustfull love, the more is it but a ranging and mad desire in following that which flies vs" (91).

stresses again their unity, evoking the marriage ceremony from the *Book of Common Prayer* and the story of Ruth and Naomi (Crawford 112–119). Although the vows of Ruth and Naomi are frequently quoted by proponents of same-sex marriage nowadays, it should be kept in mind that holding up friendship as an example for spiritual unity for (to-be-)married couples was in line with early modern thought, as it has been shown. Thus, references to Ruth and Naomi, just like in Henry Smith's sermon, did not carry the connotations of same-sex love (let alone marriage), beyond the—often blurry—limits of *amicitia*.

The same is true for handling the girls' claims and acts of showing an extraordinary unity and constant affirmation of parity in general. Crawford highlights several times how they try to balance new, opposite-sex relationships, especially that of Rosalind and Orlando, with the existing old one, the avowed kinship they have with each other, which seems to be recognized both socially and legally (110–112). Considering that *amicitia* was thought to be the best and most enduring form of relationship, it comes as no surprise that the girls want to protect it. Crawford also indicates that although commentators usually interpret the passages when Celia warns Rosalind against falling in love as her unrequited love for Rosalind, she is in fact "working in the service of female cousinship and female chastity more broadly" (109).

Crawford comments on the marriage scene at the end of the play as well, agreeing with Jeffrey Masten that "scholarly editions of *As You Like It* are particularly interventionist on behalf of heterosexuality" (123). Crawford cites an example: editors tend to insert names in the speech prefix to Hymen's line "You and you are heart in heart" (5.4.130), while in the First Folio there are no names specified. Crawford suggests that instead of claiming that it refers to Celia and Oliver (like the Bedford edition) or to Rosalind and Orlando (like the Arden edition), editors should leave the question open, because it may as well refer to Rosalind and Celia, whose marriage would be just as "thinkable and even" (123).

This reference to a possibly equal marriage is not applicable in the case of Rosalind and Celia if we accept that they are already bound together by an oath and have been "inseparable" (1.3.72) throughout the whole play. Although marriage is the comedic ending of the play, facilitated by a *deus ex machina*, it should not be forgotten that it was considered a different, lower quality kind of relationship than *amicitia perfecta*. Thus, for the two girls, the ideal friends, marriage is not a relevant institution; it would be superfluous and would degrade their connection, according to the rhetorics of *amicitia perfecta*. However, the comedy does present

marriage in a positive manner, in harmony with the genre expectations, but ensures that Rosalind and Celia can continue their relationship. Crawford highlights several times that "if, as Stewart points out, the humanist *amicitia* story features men who resolve their conflict by marrying sisters, *As You Like It* takes a similar tack for women; in marrying brothers, Celia and Rosalind effect an outcome, not unlike that in the Book of Ruth, that ensures their continued kinship and the integrity and security of their inheritance" (121).

Thus, Crawford's frequent emphasis on the balance between the relationships (opposite-sex and same-sex ones) and on the inseparable unity of the girls suggests a stronger homoerotic reading (e.g. 122; par. 2). If the rhetoric of unity, so typical of *amicitia perfecta* is taken into consideration, the homoerotic overtone becomes only a possibility—one that cannot be excluded, but is not necessarily the only valid way of interpretation. The use of superlatives or exaggerating terms like "never two ladies loved as they do" (1.1.106–107), stressing the extraordinary and unique nature of their relationship, the use of language evocative of marriage, emphasising the unity of the two people, are all characteristic of the humanist friendship discourse. The spiritual blending of the two people, presenting friendship as more noble than "fleshly" marriage, supports this discourse of *amicitia* and often balances on the thin line between what is considered homoerotic (or even homosexual in today's terms)[18] and what is not. The story of David and Jonathan, regarded through the lens of classical learning, fit this pattern really well.

Considering all this, I would suggest a paradigm shift: instead of homoerotic desire, *amicitia perfecta* seems to be a more appropriate framework which accounts for potentially homoerotic resonances in the play. This kind of reading preserves an openness to a homoerotic reading, but only to such an extent that this kind of ambiguity is inherent in the *amicitia perfecta* tradition.

As it has been shown, the friendship of Rosalind and Celia, just like its biblical model, is presented in similarly ideal and lofty terms in Shakespeare's drama. However, there are some noteworthy differences between the two narratives. Firstly, the Biblical one ends tragically, with the death of Jonathan, whereas the Shakespearean friendship is put in a comic setting. Furthermore, while David and Jonathan are separated by death, by marrying brothers, the two ladies' friendship is strengthened (Crawford 102).

18 Homosexuality as such did not exist as a separate concept in the sixteenth century (Traub 16).

Another, more intriguing difference is related to gender: unlike David and Jonathan and the classical heroes of friendship, Shakespeare depicts a female friendship, which, according to the *amicitia perfecta* tradition, cannot exist. Early modern discourses of friendship, based on the classical tradition, held that women were not capable of having an ideal friendship at all, lacking moral and mental means to form this kind of relationship. According to Cicero, friendship is not possible between people who are in need of help or lack independence, because it would be an asymmetrical relationship, and it would not be desired for itself. Cicero argues that if friendship were for defence and help, "women would seek the support of friendship more than men do, the poor more than the rich, the unfortunate more than those who seem happy" (37; caput 13).[19] Consequently, it becomes dubious whether women can partake in *amicita perfecta* at all. Montaigne gives an unambiguous answer to this question; however, he supports his argument against female friendship differently, implying that women lack the mental capacity and endurance needed for friendship, compared to men.[20] Thus, women are "by ancient schooles rejected" (92) from the circle of friends, which seems disconcerting and unjust for the twenty-first-century reader. Nevertheless, Shakespeare seems to have a different opinion and presents this friendship following the rules of *amicitia perfecta*, emphasising the perfect unity of the female protagonists.

Robert Stretter argues that in early modern England there were two trends concerning dramas presenting friendships: they were either pedagogical, moralising, and dry like Richard Edwards' *Damon and Pythias* (ca. 1564), or they criticised and ridiculed the concept of *amicitia perfecta* as too idealised by representing the discrepancy between ideal and flesh-and-blood friends (346).[21] Shakespeare's engaging green-world comedy certainly does not fit the first category, while it might be worth considering whether his play presents friendship as a twist on classical ideas.

In my view, representing the ideals of *amicitia perfecta* by female friends in a cultural context where discourses of the true male friendship were predominant might

19 Here Cicero uses the word *mulierculae* for women, which is a diminutive form, showing contempt towards the status of women (37n2).

20 "Seeing (to speake truly) that the ordinary sufficience of women cannot answer this conference and communication, the nurse of this sacred bond: nor seeme their minds strong enough to endure the pulling of a knot so hard, so fast, and durable" (91).

21 See Shakespeare and Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Shakespeare's *The Two Gentleman of Verona*, George Peele's *The Old Wives Tale*, Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Coxcomb* (listed and analysed in Stretter 345, 350–351).

be a manifestation of a comic feature, "the world turned upside down." In *As You Like It*, male and female stereotypes and conventions of the era are turned "upside down": Rosalind and Celia, the female friends are allowed to play a key role in the dynamics of the drama, actively managing their own lives, while male protagonists like Orlando or the melancholy Jaques are often passive, only lamenting their fate. It is Rosalind who pulls the strings in the forest of Arden, and by the end, she is the one who "makes things even" (cf. 5.4.107). Apparently, Hymen only gives his blessing, because it would be inappropriate to have everything resolved by the female protagonist. Celia is also actively involved in the plot, although not as much as Rosalind, but she is the one who supports and encourages her all the way, and after all, it is her idea to flee to the forest of Arden. Setting the ideal female friends "whose loves are dearer than the natural bonds of sisters" (1.2.265) against two pairs of real brothers who hate each other provides an even sharper contrast. Therefore, in the world of the comedy, the features traditionally reserved only for male characters, like being the architect of one's own fortune, manipulating events, and having an enduring, mutual, "perfect" friendship seem to be bestowed upon women.

In conclusion, the friendship of Rosalind and Celia seem to be modelled on the David–Jonathan narrative, which sheds new light on the interpretation of *As You Like It*. Both relationships can be better understood in the cultural context of the era when the classical notion of *amicitia perfecta* was revived and celebrated. David and Jonathan were regarded as embodiments of classical friendship; thus, it is probable that their story was read through the lenses of the Ciceronian friendship tradition; Rosalind and Celia also seem to fit the same pattern. In terms of homoeroticism, it is worth considering reframing our questions, and focusing on the heroines' *amicitia*: the rhetoric of contemporary friendship discourse can account for those elements that are regarded as homoerotic by some scholars. In addition, the relationship of Rosalind and Celia is also an interesting twist on the original model, since they represent female friendship, which, according to contemporary theories, was not recognized at all: this can be viewed as a comic tool, which turns the usual roles upside down.

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Nonsense on the Margins

The Verbal Comedy of Sam Weller and Mrs Nickleby

BALÁZS SÁNTA

Abstract: The paper charts certain nuances of the diction of two minor characters in Dickens's early fiction, Sam Weller from The Pickwick Papers *and Mrs Nickleby from* Nicholas Nickleby. *The paper focuses on what David Ellis calls Sam's "extended comic comparisons" and Mrs Nickleby's typical speech acts, called here, by analogy, extended comic recollections. After examining the role both characters' verbal comedy plays in the novels, the paper invites Jean-Jacques Lecercle's critical insight into a Victorian genre contemporary to Dickens: nonsense literature. I approach the underlying structural parallel between Sam's and Mrs Nickleby's comic verbal instances with the aid of the definitive trait of nonsense as established by Lecercle, the paradox of excess and lack on different levels of language. Though not arguing for the novels' inclusion in a nonsense literary canon, I show that Lecercle's conceptualisation of nonsense linguistics proves useful in making sense of the two characters' monologues. Their role in each novel may thus be grasped as functional nonsense.*

In an extensive review of the critical literature produced in 2015, Sarah Gates speaks excitedly of the experience of reading through the different approaches to Charles Dickens as "a heck of a ride" (285), with intermediality studies, ethical readings, cultural-materialist approaches, aesthetics studies, not to mention surveys of postmodern re-writings and adaptations of, and intertextual tributes to, the author. Hardly anything related to Dickens and his works has been left uncovered. It can be the closest of readings, investigating sounds and words from a character's mouth, that gives access to a wider topic (practiced, for example, by Jeremy Tambling in *Dickens's Novels as Poetry: Allegory and Literature of the City*, qtd. in Gates 317) or a completely extrinsic set of background facts that deepens our

understanding of a text (as in Hugo Bowles's study of possible sources for Sam Weller in *The Pickwick Papers*, qtd. in Gates 299). All generate new points of entry to the collective appreciation of one or other aspect of the author's oeuvre. The present study intends to open yet another such entrance, focusing on the surprising connections between the idiosyncracies of Sam Weller in *The Pickwick Papers* and Mrs Nickleby in *Nicholas Nickleby*.

That connection itself will be presented from a perspective that seems to have received little or no coverage in Dickens studies, not even among the critical output that Gates reviewed. I aim to widen the relevance of these characters' peculiarities to another field within Victorian studies, that of nonsense literature as conceptualised by Jean-Jacques Lecercle in *Philosophy of Nonsense* (1994). He abandons the central idea in Elizabeth Sewell's influential account of the genre in *The Field of Nonsense*, according to which nonsense is a self-sufficient play of language not interested in extrinsic reference like parody. Lecercle investigates the linguistics of nonsense literary works and how they anticipate twentieth-century currents in the philosophy of language. He claims that one of the definitive characteristics of Victorian nonsense is the dialectic of excess and lack on different levels of language. This "central paradox . . . of the genre" (Lecercle 31) is born of the juxtaposition of a playful avoidance of (common) sense-making (primarily on a semantic and pragmatic level) on the one hand, and a rigorous insistence on conventions in (especially syntactic and rhetorical) form, on the other. I argue that this juxtaposition is the central motif that captures the idiosyncrasies of Sam Weller and Mrs Nickleby, who equally display such a paradox in the most characteristic of their utterances. By simultaneously defying commonsensical expectations of pragmatics and adhering to strict and recurring syntactic or rhetorical patterns at the same time, these characters invoke nonsense as conceived by Lecercle. Without claiming that the novels should be treated as pieces of nonsense literature, I argue that these characters' speech acts do resemble the ones typical of nonsense and, thereby, infuse their respective contexts with that genre. The characters' speech acts thus create what may be termed functional nonsense; they display qualities of nonsense literary characters—like the protagonists of Edward Lear's limericks or the creatures in Lewis Carroll's Wonderland and Looking-Glass world—and this informs their roles in the novels.

The paper will first explore what David Ellis calls Sam Weller's "extended comic comparisons" (8) and analyse their role in *The Pickwick Papers*. Sam presents a kind of comedy that is different from the one practiced by Mr Pickwick and his fellows,

in part by means of his comparisons, which also reflect the difference between him and the Pickwickians in social status. The comparisons reveal Sam's worldly knowledge and popular wisdom and underline the verbal nature of his comedy and a kind of literary existence that is emphatically oral (talking, as opposed to being talked about): it is characteristically his own direct speech acts that make him up, with little aid needed from the narrator's voice. I will then turn to Mrs Nickleby's monologues that we can label, by analogy, extended comic recollections to identify a logical structure that her frequent reminiscences all share. Her verbosity, especially in light of the way it is framed by the narrator, also exposes (like in Sam Weller's case) the character's existence in language—particularly in speech. Finally, I will try to explain the relevance of the two analyses to the critical concept of nonsense as conceived by Lecercle.

In a chapter about comedy and satire in the Victorian age, John Bowen contends that "Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* properly begins the history of Victorian comic writing" (270). Among the novelties this era brings to the history of English literature, he mentions "the hegemony of prose over poetry . . . , of verbal over visual comedy, and—in the increasingly sympathetic treatment of its main character—of the humorous over the satirical" (270). Verbal comedy is indeed very much characteristic of *The Pickwick Papers*, so much so that it was with the introduction of the verbose and outspoken Sam Weller that the novel's monthly instalments became bestsellers of their time. However, it should be noted that Dickens's comedy was not without any precursors: it carries forward the legacy of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*. It indeed begins "with an exercise in the mock-heroic" (Ellis 7), with anecdotal accounts of the company's journeys in the picaresque fashion.

Although the book abounds in amusing facetiousness from the start, it is especially with the introduction of Sam Weller, who soon becomes Mr Pickwick's faithful page, that consciously provoked humour and sparkling wit (not unlike that of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*) enter the novel. Indeed, "[t]he great stir" with contemporary audiences, as one literary historian puts it, "began with the appearance of the September number [of 1836] introducing Sam Weller," soon raising sales from an initial 400 to 40,000 (Adams 56). Part of this popularity was clearly derived from Sam's "Wellerisms," a "form of proverbial expression that characterized his speech" (Baer 173). Jeremy Tambling recognises this idiom as urban poetry of "image clusters" with an "instantaneity [that] belongs to those people Dickens is most interested

in, living by their wits [now not in the Sternian sense] because they have nothing else to live on" (qtd. in Gates 317). David Ellis calls these idiosyncratic utterances "extended comic comparisons," a term I will also take up in what follows. They consist in quoting mostly fictional characters in reaction to an actual setting that is put in parallel with the context the invented quote comes from.

The first example is in the very first scene where we meet Sam in the Borough, London. He is occupied with cleaning the various footwear of the White Hart Inn's guests when the chambermaid urges him to finish first with the boots of the gentleman in room number 22. To this he replies with some malice: "Who's number twenty-two that's to put all the others out? No, no; reg'lar rotation, as Jack Ketch said, wen he tied the men up" (*The Pickwick Papers* 120, ch. X). The professional killing of criminals (Jack Ketch was, as Ellis tells the reader in the notes to the Wordsworth Classics edition, a well-known hangman in the seventeenth century) and the cleaning of footwear are brought into comparison here for no small comic effect, evoking a historical figure in an imaginary scene parallel to the actual context. Here and in most other cases this is coupled with a macabre sense of humour, with which Sam "[disarms] aggression, in part by making it comically explicit" (Adams 61).

His "trademark fondness" (Ellis 8) for comic comparisons like the above are among the most characteristic features of his humour, and he delivers altogether 36 such comparisons in the course of the narrative. A source of pure entertainment, these comparisons also display a surprisingly strict grammatical structure, the calculated repetition of which contributes in great part to their comic effect. The references they entail to the various trades, folklore, and satirical convictions merge into a panoramic view of early Victorian society, imparting cultural importance to them as well. I am here concerned with what they can reveal about the nonsense that this kind of humour is infused with.

When the husband of Mrs Leo Hunter, a lady renowned for throwing eccentric parties for people of importance, calls on Mr Pickwick in Chapter XV to ask whether he would accept an invitation, and he is given the lady's card, Sam confirms the fact of the call in the following manner: "He wants you particklar; and no one else'll do, as the Devil's private secretary said ven he fetched avay Doctor Faustus" (*The Pickwick Papers* 187, ch. XV). Besides the hyperbolic dramatisation of the setting, the fun also springs from the comparison's dark tone. The structural pattern of this piece perfectly mirrors the one quoted above—a statement, followed by the word *as* and the main clause with the verb *said*, which is complemented with

a subordinate clause describing details of the contrived setting. "The form is readily recognisable," argues Baer in his account of Wellerisms: "'_____,' as _____ said, when (as, and) (s)he _____. I.e., a quotation, speaker named or otherwise identified, and a clause or phrase which puts the quotation in a new light or an incongruous setting, the total effect being ironic" (Baer 173). We may formalise this syntactic pattern even further as

{A}, as {B} said, when {C}

where {A} stands for the quoted statement applied to the situation at hand, {B} for the subject in the main clause (whom Sam quotes), and {C} for the setting described in the subordinate clause.

This abstract pattern is usually complicated with minor additions or a few elements left out. Sometimes it is complemented with an indirect object, headed by *to*, that the quoted person addresses with the statement in the fictional situation. When Mr Pickwick, after some verbal detour on Sam's part upon their second meeting, attempts to drive the conversation politely back to why he had sent for Sam in the first place, Sam expresses his approval of Mr Pickwick's intention this way: "'That's the pint, sir,' interposed Sam; 'out vith it, as the father said *to the child*, wen he swallowed a farden'" (*The Pickwick Papers* 153, ch. XII, emphasis added). Other variations include having different verbs instead of *said* (most commonly *remarked*)[1] and qualifying the main verb.

Despite these variations, almost half of all the comic comparisons found in the novel (14 out of the 36) perfectly adhere to the formula presented above, most of the deviations arising from the presence of the statement's addressee,[2] and the use of alternative main verbs.[3]

How does Sam's light-hearted yet rigorously structured verbosity contribute to the ambience of Dickens's first novel in general? The most apparent function of his comic comparisons is creating a kind of comedy that differs from the source of humour in the rest of the novel. *The Pickwick Papers* attracts and amuses its readers

1 See pp. 572, ch. XLIV; 587, ch. XLV; 615, ch. XLVII; and 663, ch. LI.

2 Seven explicit instances on pp. 153, ch. XII; 241 and 242, ch. XIX; 330, ch. XXV; 506–507, ch. XXXVIII; 559, ch. XLII; and 616, ch. XLVII.

3 Besides *remarked*, Sam also uses *did*, *observed*, and *says*—with a plural subject—instead of *said*, one time each on pp. 426, ch. XXXIII; 484, ch. XXXVII; and 298, ch. XXIII, respectively.

from its first pages with the Pickwickians as figures of daffy aspirations, preposterous plights and mock-adventures. Mr Pickwick's owlish scientific ambitions culminate in a paper entitled "Speculations on the Source of the Hampstead Ponds, with some Observations on the Theory of Tittlebats." The poetry of "the poetic Snodgrass" (8, ch. I) remains completely hidden all through the book, and the "sporting Winkle" (8, ch. I) almost kills himself in a hunting adventure in Chapter VII. Mr Tupman, "a once romantic form" expanded by time and feeding with "the enthusiasms and ardour of a boy" (8, ch. I), is thoroughly disappointed in love in Chapter VIII, being beaten by Mr Jingle, the party's devious antagonist. Though these characters' clumsiness is already comic, a different kind of comedy is introduced with the brightness and buoyancy of Sam Weller, a character of boundless energy and unfailing judgment. It is through him that the reader is invited to laugh *with* a main character, too, besides laughing *at* the novel's protagonists. There is a wisdom behind his ad-hoc quasi-anecdotes that suggests a sense of superiority over a world of childish pretence and struggles that frequently appear miserable at face value.

A related difference between him and the members of the Pickwick Club is social status. There is reason to suggest that the existence of at least Mr Pickwick himself, a creature "suspended between fiction and reality" like a "sympathetic minor local [god]" (Bonadei 74), defies "social or historical context" (Auden qtd. in Bonadei 74). However, one of the most palpable sources of humour in the Sam Weller scenes, marked also by Sam's cockney accent, is the difference in social class between him and his master. While the Pickwickians are all gentlemen in the sense that financial needs are practically alien to them, we find Sam at work in the very first scene where they meet him. His previous experience with odd jobs and the ways of the world in general grants him a sort of popular wisdom that serves as the key to others' survival, too.

An example for the latter comes in the scene when, soon after Mr Pickwick, with a gentlemanly zeal to hold on to his principles, chooses to move to the Fleet Street prison of debtors instead of paying off his dues in the lost legal case against Mrs Bardell. He dismisses the protesting Sam from duty for his sake. Nevertheless, Sam devises a way to get back by his master's side in the prison. His father agrees that the feeble and meek Mr Pickwick does not stand a chance on his own in such a place. "Wy, they'll eat him up alive, Sammy" (*The Pickwick Papers* 566, ch. XLIII), he says when he learns about what has happened. It is also up to Sam's cunning to make the decisive interview happen between Ms Arabella Allen and her

suitor Mr Snodgrass in Chapter XXXIX (under the supervision of the virtuous Mr Pickwick, of course), which will enable the lovers to learn about each other's sentiments and pursue their happy ending.

The popular wisdom Sam possesses, gained through a low social standing, is illustrated by a wide variety of characters and settings invoked in his comic comparisons. These either come from folklore and historical legend, or allude to quotidian, especially lower-class, reality. Allusion to Dr Faustus and the devil's imaginary private secretary (187, ch. XV) and Blue Beard's domestic chaplain (260, ch. XX) evoke well-known fictional figures and stories, while references to Jack Ketch (120, ch. X), Richard the Third (320, ch. XXV), and James the First (626, ch. XLVIII, implicit allusion) likewise summon characters renowned in English history and contemporary popular culture. In other instances, Sam's comic comparisons feature common people most often identified only by their profession or family status. The father (153, ch. XII), the servant-girl (204, ch. XVI), the money-lender (458, ch. XXXV), the Lord Mayor (513, ch. XXXIX), the schoolmaster (547–548, ch. XLII), the mail-coach man (559, ch. XLII), and the (virtuous) clergyman (572, ch. XLIV) all represent society on a scale similar to the menagerie of *The Canterbury Tales*. Sam also very often invokes the plain stock character of "the gentleman," perhaps "the young gentleman" (484, ch. XXXVII) or "the nobleman" (506–507, ch. XXXVIII; 663, ch. LI), sometimes "the (young or old) lady." Child characters and animals also appear, albeit very rarely. This general subject, only identified by gender and/or age, features in eleven instances out of the twenty-six where the main character in the comparison is not a figure known from history or fiction. Sam delivers a typical example when he unexpectedly meets his adversary, Job Trotter, in prison: "This is rayther a change for the worse, Mr Trotter, as the gen'l'm'n said, wen he got two doubtful shillin's and six-penn'orth o' pocket pieces for a good half-crown" (343, ch. XXVII).

Ellis observes that *The Pickwick Papers* gradually changes tone as more serious themes come to dominate the story than the light-hearted picaresque would accommodate. More complicated topics preoccupy the author toward the end of the novel, like character development and social concerns, which applies to the later Dickens in general, too (Ellis 10–15). His third novel, *Nicholas Nickleby*, indeed represents this tendency, in spite of some resurgence of the whimsical after the remarkably grim atmosphere of *Oliver Twist*. While any meaningful change in Mr Pickwick's personality after the carefree joviality of the Pickwickians' adventures becomes apparent only well into the second half of the novel (from Chapter XLI onward, the last

chapter being LVII), it is clear from early on in *Nicholas Nickleby* that the work will be concerned mainly with the fate and fortunes of young Nicholas and his consequent *Bildung*. As Bowen contends, *Nicholas Nickleby*'s is a typical "self-inventive" protagonist entangled in complex social relations (272), one who, unlike either Sam Weller or Mr Pickwick and his company, is always treated seriously by the narrator as he struggles through the vicissitudes of life.

Nevertheless, that novel also entertains its readers with a similar kind of comedy in Nicholas's mother, Mrs Nickleby. Though she plays only a minor role in the story, her very identity is formed in and by her verbal utterances that never fail to incite laughter in her readership. She entertains the readers (and frustrates her audience in the novel) especially with soliloquies or extended comic recollections (exploiting David Ellis's phrase), which are analogous with Sam Weller's comic comparisons. While certain situations trigger a remark and a corresponding joke-like micronarrative in Sam, Mrs Nickleby is induced to tell stories loosely connected to the topic at hand. As Tim Cook comments, "[w]e have little idea of her physical appearance, but we know what to expect when she opens her mouth: a series of rambling reminiscences of the past, often anecdotes about acquaintances, which help to support her optimism about the future of her children" (xx).

What makes these recollections even more comical is a continuous self-impugning gesture of hesitation—Mrs Nickleby expresses doubt most of the time as to details of her own story, a characteristic discursive element I will term "digressive uncertainty." Though the frequent interruption of her "ramblings" does not influence events in any way, Mrs Nickleby's recollections have been shown to form "an integral part of the structure of the novel" (Thompson 222). In line with contemporary optimism and high hopes for progress in general, Mrs Nickleby's monologues (not only the doubtful reminiscences but also her visions of a prosperous future) also counterpoint the novel's otherwise often "bleak pictures" (222) and may thus mirror the author's own initial "vacillation between hope and pessimism" (223). A few examples will illustrate these comic recollections and inform the ensuing analysis.

Mrs Nickleby delivers her first recollection (she has altogether twenty in the novel) when Ralph, her brother-in-law, expresses his intention to have Kate work for her living at a milliner's shop, and she is quick to recount the advantages of the plan:

> "What your uncle says is very true, Kate, my dear," said Mrs Nickleby.
> "I recollect when your poor papa and I came to town after we were

> married, that a young lady brought me home a chip cottage-bonnet, with white and green trimming, and green persian lining, in her own carriage, which drove up to the door full gallop;—at least, I am not quite certain whether it was her own carriage or a hackney chariot, but I remember very well that the horse dropped down dead as he was turning round, and that your poor papa said he hadn't had any corn for a fortnight." (*Nicholas Nickleby* 119, ch. X)

The narrator's mild irony comes forth in the succeeding paragraph to frame Mrs Nickleby's speech and demonstrate its effect (in line with its relevance): "This anecdote, so strikingly illustrative of the opulence of milliners, was not received with any great demonstration of feeling, inasmuch as Kate hung down her head while it was relating, and Ralph manifested very intelligible symptoms of extreme impatience" (119, ch. X). Recounting these hazy memories is intended to kindle optimism regarding the course of action being discussed (especially in Mrs Nickleby herself). However, the actual effect of the recollections generally proves to be just the reverse—they further discourage her children as well as the reader from laying trust in the proceedings.

Interestingly, at times we can hear Mrs Nickleby's recollections only indirectly, through the narrator's account, like when we are told how she is foretelling a bright future for Kate:

> If her mother's consolations could have restored her to a pleasanter and more enviable state of mind, there were abundance of them to produce the effect. By the time Kate reached home, the good lady had called to mind two authentic cases of milliners who had been possessed of considerable property, though whether they had acquired it all in business, or had had a capital to start with, or had been lucky and married to advantage, she could not exactly remember. However, as she very logically remarked, there must have been some young person in that way of business who had made a fortune without having anything to begin with, and that being taken for granted, why should not Kate do the same? Miss La Creevy, who was a member of the little council, ventured to insinuate some doubts relative to the probability of Miss Nickleby's arriving in this happy consummation

> in the compass of an ordinary lifetime; but the good lady set that question entirely at rest, by informing them that she had a presentiment on the subject—a species of second-sight with which she had been in the habit of clenching every argument with the deceased Mr Nickleby, and in nine cases and three-quarters out of every ten, determining it the wrong way. (Nicholas Nickleby 126, ch. XI)

Sometimes another character disturbs or complements Mrs Nickleby's monologue, rendering the whole recollection a dialogue, like in the above example. Not much after the scene quoted just now, still fancying a promising career for her daughter in the milliners' way of business, Mrs Nickleby's position is challenged again by the family's friend, Miss La Creevy, a single lady who paints portraits. However, the structure of the scene is palpably the same:

> "I am afraid it is an unhealthy occupation," said Miss La Creevy. "I recollect getting three young milliners to sit to me, when I first began to paint, and I remember that they were all very pale and sickly."
> "Oh! that's not a general rule by any means," observed Mrs Nickleby; "for I remember, as well as if it was only yesterday, employing one that I was particularly recommended to, to make me a scarlet cloak at the time when scarlet cloaks were fashionable, and she had a very red face—a very red face, indeed."
> "Perhaps she drank," suggested Miss La Creevy.
> "I don't know how that may have been," returned Mrs Nickleby; "but I know she had a very red face, so your argument goes for nothing." (126–127, ch. XI)

We can identify the following logical pattern in virtually all of Mrs Nickleby's recollections, be they in the form of direct or indirect speech, monologue or dialogue. A given situation ({A}) triggers the telling of an anecdote to buttress Mrs Nickleby's optimistic position ({B}). In a digressive manner, some detail of the anecdote ({C}) is called into question, suggesting Mrs Nickleby's position may not hold after all ({−B?}). Nevertheless, the uncertainty is quickly resolved with a forced conclusion that Mrs Nickleby's initially held position *must* be right, regardless of any doubt. The pattern can be expressed with the following formula:

{A} → ({B}—[{C?} ⇒ {−B?}]—{B})

The subformula after the first arrow, between round brackets, encapsulates the anecdote itself. Mrs Nickleby's conviction is of course significantly weakened in the reader's perception thanks to the looseness of the anecdote's relevance, the uncertainty expressed within the anecdote, and the narrator's ironic remarks framing the recollection.

A few of Mrs Nickleby's anecdotes lack the digressive uncertainty part (only five out of the 20),[4] but they still retain a digressive quality either because they come out of context or are conspicuously inconclusive and apparently imaginary. An example for this comes when Ralph presents his scheme to have Kate around for dinner with his business partners (he hopes to use Kate's womanly presence to gain Sir Mulberry and his company's willingness to continue doing business with him). Mrs Nickleby first laments having had to sell a large part of her jewellery she could now use to prop her daughter up for the evening (219, ch. XIX). She then launches "out into sundry anecdotes of young ladies, who had had thousand-pound notes given them in reticules, by eccentric uncles; and of young ladies who had accidentally met amiable gentlemen of enormous wealth at their uncle's houses, and married them, after short but ardent courtships" (221, ch. XIX). The unspecified anecdotes in the latter instance, although apparently not weakened by uncertainties, are still tainted with doubt arising from their all-too-obvious correspondence with the mother's hopes for the upcoming event.

The narrator's occasional remark on how she ends her usual soliloquy refines her personality:

> ". . . but it was always the way, and was just the way with your poor dear father. Unless I thought of everything—" This was Mrs Nickleby's usual commencement of a general lamentation, running through a dozen or so of complicated sentences addressed to nobody in particular, and into which she now launched *until her breath was exhausted*. (129, ch. XI, emphasis added)

Talking stopped only by the exhaustion of breath is developed into a motif recurring two additional times in the narrative. Recollecting a scene from Kate's childhood

4 See pp. 219, 221, ch. XIX; 544, 545–546, ch. XLV; and 672, ch. LV.

in praise of her daughter's capabilities comes to a halt for the same reason: "Having quoted this extraordinary and most disinterested testimony to her daughter's excellence, Mrs Nickleby stopped to breathe" (211, ch. XVIII). Her monologue similarly ends in exhaustion at meeting Sir Mulberry, Kate's heinous suitor: "Having pretty well run herself out by this time, Mrs Nickleby stopped as suddenly as she had started off" (318, ch. XXVI). In all these instances (and we may well imagine the rest ending the same way), Mrs Nickleby appears to talk as long as she possibly can, never ending her speech consciously, on purpose, but rather extending it until her physical limits.

Mrs Nickleby's extended comic recollections constitute a significant part of her very existence in the novel—it is especially her remembrances that effectively constitute her being. The repeated explicit association on the narrator's part of exhaustion (exhaling, followed by a momentary stop of breathing) and the end of talking—and, conversely, of breathing (the most palpable sign of being alive) and talking—imbues these instances with characterological significance. Talking is her most prominent characteristic and role in the novel (a counterpoint to Newman Noggs, Ralph's clerk, whom we know by what he does rather than what he says). It is her spirit, her *pneuma*, which her speaking represents, and her speech is most typically recollection; her essence, therefore, is constituted by reminiscence. But it is of a past whose reality and relevance is ironically called into question—it is always mock-reminiscence. *The Pickwick Papers*'s Sam Weller, albeit a more fully elaborate character who significantly influences the main plot through his actions, is also identified most commonly by his discourse patterns. Therefore, his "being" in the novel is likewise constituted most prominently by emanations of verbal comedy (in contrast to "neutral" instances of speech).

The differences between Sam and Mrs Nickleby are obvious. The one is a bright young man of relatively low social standing, who ironically comes to play a role of chief importance in the storyline, while the other is an old widow preoccupied mostly with unreliable accounts of her past through which she would compulsively reclaim distinguished social status, but who effectively has little influence over the fate of the main characters (or indeed her own). Even though Sam seems to deliver his remarks in a light-hearted manner, on the spur of the moment, the wit and popular wisdom of the Wellerisms can also appear as intended, consciously provoking laughter on the speaker's part, while poor Mrs Nickleby seems to fall victim of automation when verbally (re)producing memories of her past, unconsciously generating

comedy at her own expense. In short, while Sam seems fully capable of intentionally making his audience laugh, the same can hardly be imagined of Mrs Nickleby.

Despite all their differences, however, the close reading of their most prominent locutions suggests that these speech acts share at least one important characteristic: a double structure. On the one hand, each instance of Sam's and Mrs Nickleby's extended comic speech is triggered by somebody else's words (it is always dialogical). On the other hand, although it does have some relevance to the given context, it is always self-sufficient: it retains its own internal structure and content that lives its own life, as it were. These monologues lend themselves easily to be quoted without any reference to their context. Whatever the scene, it only serves as a catalyst for Sam's comic comparisons and Mrs Nickleby's recollections; once they have emerged, they do not need their context any more to be enjoyed.

Analysing Victorian nonsense poetry and prose, Jean-Jacques Lecercle identifies the characteristic principle of nonsense in the following paradox: "The lack of structure at one level [of language] . . . is amply compensated by excess or proliferation of sense [at another]" (31). This is, according to Lecercle, "the central paradox, or contradiction, of the genre" (31). Though in nonsense the contradiction holds mainly between syntax and semantics, pedantically correct grammar (cf. the narrator's reproach in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* for Alice's surprised exclamation, "curiouser and curiouser" [Carroll 20, ch. 2]) and semantic void (cf. the dubious semantics of the poem "Jabberwocky" in *Through the Looking-Glass* [Carroll 155–156, ch. 1]), a similar contradiction appears in the instances of Dickens's early fiction discussed above. Here we have well-formed (from the perspective of generative linguistics, Sam's cockney English is perfectly correct) and mechanically repeated syntactic—or, in Mrs Nickleby's case, rhetorical—structures counterbalancing impropriety on the level of pragmatics, which is another point that Lecercle sees as central to nonsense literature.

At one point in his analysis (in the chapter "The Pragmatics of Conversation"), Lecercle reads texts such as Lewis Carroll's Alice tales in the context of Herbert Paul Grice's theory of implicature, which holds, in essence, that the participants of polite conversation intend to cooperate and make themselves understandable to each other, even if they sometimes say things which would seem inadequate for that purpose at face value.[5] Grice expresses this intention in the concept of the Cooperation

5 Grice's example is an imaginary conversation between two speakers about a mutual friend who has started a job in a bank. To the first speaker's question about how their friend progresses in the new

Principle (CP) that holds for normal conversation, and establishes certain maxims with which the participants intuitively comply. The CP tells you that you should "[m]ake your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 26). The Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner all specify what a speaker's contribution should be like (not shorter or longer than necessary, true, relevant, and succinct). This theory is intended to provide the necessary background for describing instances of everyday conversation by means of the devices used in formal logic (many practitioners of which, Grice contends, used to have difficulty accounting for utterances not to be taken literally). According to Lecercle, twentieth-century theories of language, including Grice's, treat communication as an essentially irenic, well-meaning joint venture, where even the flouting of maxims is to be regarded as ironically conforming to the CP. But conversation in nonsense works turns out to be mostly agonistic, a verbal battle between the participants—"an anti-Gricean sight" (77). Thus, nonsense pragmatics is best described as conforming to a "Principle of Struggle" (79), flouting Grice's maxims on purpose. The best example for this is Humpty-Dumpty's rebukes to Alice in Chapter 6 of *Through the Looking-Glass*, a scene which "entertains a fantasy of total control over [the speakers'] exchange" (Lecercle 81).[6]

I do not claim that Sam or Mrs Nickleby would consciously provoke hostility with their locutions the way Humpty-Dumpty does (although both characters are always aware of the other participants' disapproval). While unlikely to conform to a Principle of Struggle, their extended comparisons and reminiscences do violate the Gricean maxims with no apparent implicature. Sam's verbosely delivered and striking analogies surely defy the Maxims of Relation and Manner (deserving

job, the second speaker replies, "Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet" (Grice 24). Accounting for why and how the last remark may make sense in the face of its being seemingly out of context is possible with reference to implicature.

6 Perhaps the best-known and most oft-quoted passage from this chapter is Humpty Dumpty's insistence that names should have some meaning:

> ". . . tell me your name and business."
>
> "My *name* is Alice, but—"
>
> "It's a stupid name enough!" Humpty Dumpty interrupted impatiently. "What does it mean?"
>
> "*Must* a name mean something?" Alice asked doubtfully.
>
> "Of course it must," Humpty Dumpty said with a short laugh: "*my* name means the shape I am—and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost." (Caroll 219, ch. 6)

Mr Pickwick's disapproval more than once), while Mrs Nickleby's anecdotes cause annoyance to her conversational partners (reduced to a mere audience) by breaching the Maxims of Manner, Quantity, and Quality, too. (Although Relation also comes close, we may point out that the gist of each anecdote is motivated by the context—cf. the initial part of the formula describing her reminiscences, {A} →). Not only is she loquacious in delivering her micro-narratives, which disregards the third submaxim of Manner, "[b]e brief" (Grice 27), she also packs them with much more detail than would be necessary for the listeners (breaching the Manner of Quantity). The supermaxim of Quality, "[t]ry to make your contribution one that is true" (Grice 27), is also flouted by the digressive uncertainties in Mrs Nickleby's reminiscences.

Lecercle himself quotes Dickens's early works in his study of nonsense literature when treating its fusion of "high" and "low" genres (the literary application of certain phenomena derived from folk literature or the speech of mental patients, for instance). He shows "nonsense at work in a mimetic text" (Lecercle 186) in *Little Dorrit*, particularly in the speech of Flora, a character "afflicted with a kind of logorrhea in which we easily recognise the best of Victorian nonsense" (Lecercle 186) and the rare words of her chaperone, "who usually sits silent, but sometimes breaks into incoherent aggressiveness, addressed to no one in particular, but uttered in a tone of mingled earnestness and malevolence" (187). In the examples he quotes, Lecercle is interested mainly in Dickens's use of elongated and seemingly incoherent speech where syntactic excess coexists with semantic lack. A similar tension is felt in both Sam's and Mrs Nickleby's abuse of the opportunity to verbalise their ideas in a conspicuously regular form and the lack, if not of semantic content, of consideration for achieving a common communicative goal with the participants. If not (consciously) agonistic, Sam's and Mrs Nickleby's obtrusive comments display lack on the level of pragmatics by flouting the Gricean maxims, which is contrasted with excess on the level of either syntax or logical structure, delivering extended comic comparisons and reminiscences in mostly uniform ways. To this paradox, of the kind that Lecercle identifies as characteristic of Victorian nonsense literature, we should add the two characters' attitude with which they deliver the verbal instances so typical of them, the natural flow of their words in each speech situation where their instances, pragmatically speaking, are anything but fitting. This latter attitude is also a benchmark of the speech patterns of characters well known from nonsense.

Yet I will refrain from claiming that Sam and Mrs Nickleby belong in the company of Lewis Carroll's creatures like the Cheshire Cat or the characters of Edward

Lear's limericks. *The Pickwick Papers* and *Nicholas Nickleby* are not pieces of nonsense literature *per se*, nor are the two characters taken from them actors of the nonsense *agon* Lecercle describes in his analysis. They do, however, bear traces of nonsense, a fact that offers us valuable critical insight to complement the analysis of Sam's and Mrs Nickleby's extended comic monologues as functional nonsense in Dickens's two novels. The nonsense of their respective comic monologues plays an important role both in creating comedy (which may be especially important in counterpointing tense scenes in *Nicholas Nickleby*) and in signalling Sam and Mrs Nickleby's difference from the rest of the characters, who are either mostly not meant to make the reader laugh (in *Nicholas Nickleby*) or are assigned a different kind of comic role (in *The Pickwick Papers*). Nonsense has a bearing on the aforementioned double structure as well: while the consistent syntactic or rhetorical form stresses the self-sufficient quality of the monologues, the attendant disregard for the norms of polite conversation (a mark of Lecercle's *agon*) paradoxically reflects their embeddedness in dialogue.

The true qualities of nonsense championed later by Carroll and Lear include a centripetal perlocutionary force, an intellectual attraction, from which it would be hard for any reader to escape. Fun for its own sake, of the kind described above, has a potential to captivate the audience and steal the show from whatever else it ought to pave the way for. Though Dickens self-consciously went on from the carefree jollities of *The Pickwick Papers* to treat chiefly social matters already in *Nicholas Nickleby*, one of the most recognisably Dickensian traits still remained, the kind of entertainment that finds its roots in the merry wonders of Lecercle's nonsense paradox.

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Medical Dehumanisation

in Sylvia Plath's Late Poems

EDIT GÁLLA

Abstract: The denial of the humanness of certain individuals or groups has long been a source of violent conflicts, atrocities, and exploitation. It was only recently, however, that the more subtle and implicit forms of dehumanisation attracted critical attention. In certain social contexts, any individual can be subjected to treatment that negates his or her human qualities. The medical encounter can be identified as a situation in which the individual often feels deprived of human qualities. Medical dehumanisation is often alluded to in Sylvia Plath's late poems, but it is explicitly foregrounded in "Tulips" and "The Surgeon at 2 a.m." While the first poem depicts the process of dehumanisation from the perspective of the patient complicit in her objectification, the second conveys the dehumanising attitudes of the medical practitioner. Through the close reading of these poems, this paper argues that medical dehumanisation turns individuals, not into machines which can never completely lose their functionality, but into functionless, inert matter.

The concept of dehumanisation is inextricably involved with notions of what constitutes humanness. However, there seems to be no critical consensus on these essentially human qualities mostly because the concept is heavily implicated in political and ideological views and interests. It was only with the rise of the study of dehumanisation that qualities constituting humanness were clarified in the light of what constitutes their denial. Despite the long history of denying the human qualities of certain groups or individuals with a view to harming or exploiting them, the close examination of dehumanisation began only in the 2000s, when attention was turned to how this phenomenon can occur not only in spectacularly obvious and violent ways, but also subtly and without drawing much attention. Significantly,

the lack of awareness or intent in many cases of dehumanisation has also been pointed out (Bain et al 2).

Studies of dehumanisation were considerably reinvigorated with Haslam's categorisation of the human characteristics negated by the process of dehumanisation and the types thereof. He closely linked the human traits and the consequence of their negation, establishing two basic categories. According to Haslam, certain "core human characteristics" build up what he calls "'human nature' (or HN)." These include traits such as "emotionality, agency, warmth, and cognitive flexibility." Refusal to acknowledge these traits in individuals results in likening people to machinery or robots, and therefore it is termed "mechanistic" dehumanisation. In contrast, "'human uniqueness' (or HU)" is comprised of "complex emotions like embarrassment or optimism," which animals are devoid of. Thus, when these uniquely human feelings are denied to certain people, "'animalistic' dehumanization" occurs (Bain et al 3).

While Haslam's taxonomy is extremely useful in identifying the human traits being negated, the two types of dehumanisation determined by his theory are not applicable to all cases. Such an exceptional case is medical dehumanisation when patients are divested of a range of human characteristics, most importantly, their agency and volition, yet it cannot be stated with any certainty that they are subsequently considered as either animals or robots. This is because the main purpose of medical dehumanisation is to induce complete passivity and sometimes also immobility in patients. Animals, even though they may lack conscious volition, are still motivated by instinctive forces and a natural vitality to carry out certain necessary actions. These natural animalistic urges, many of which are present in humans, are efficiently suppressed either by the disease itself that the patients suffer from or by medical intervention, for example, in the form of drugs or other treatments, dietary restrictions, and constant monitoring by the medical staff. While the elimination of some primitive emotions such as sensual pleasures can be regarded as an obvious consequence of hospitalisation, simple negative affects like fear and pain are often associated with the condition of being a patient. Still, these negative emotions, though compatible with animalistic dehumanisation, and also, admittedly, part of people's experience in a medical context, are not the intended result of medical dehumanisation since both fear and pain can produce forms of behaviour that hinder the work of the hospital staff.

Literature on medical dehumanisation mostly argues for its "mechanistic" traits: "the process of medicalisation itself can be dehumanising, in its mechanistic view of the human body" (Newnham et al. 6). However, this type of dehumanisation cannot be classified unequivocally as "mechanistic" since this also implies a degree of motility, which, although it can be suspended by disconnecting the machine from the source of power, constitutes the purpose of the machine's existence: a piece of machinery can necessarily be reduced to, and is often equated with its functionality and it can always be repaired—in the worst case, by replacing all its parts. The same cannot be said about the patients who, due to their illness, have lost their productive functions—their ability to work—at least temporarily, and whose complete recovery cannot be guaranteed.

Although it can be argued that medicine sets itself the task of restoring the productive capabilities of individuals, and in the sense that medical intervention is orientated towards future rehabilitation and recovery, medical dehumanisation can be called "mechanistic," there is an important distinction to be made between the temporalities involved in the treatment process. The first temporality, the past, is largely neglected and relegated to oblivion in the medical context since physicians must make sense of the symptoms manifested at the present moment. While the medical intervention aims at restoring the patient to a future of health and normality, it is not concerned with this future mode of existence of patients when the procedures are being carried out. Ultimately, the only temporality that markedly determines medical practices is the present, the time when the medical encounter is taking place.

It is this "presentness" of the hospital stay that Sylvia Plath's poems capture when they depict patients numbed by drugs or anaesthetised and acted upon as if they were not only inanimate but also functionless and malleable objects such as a piece of paper that is cut into shapes or a mound of clay that is pressed and fingered at will. In the two late poems by Plath to be discussed in this paper, "Tulips" and "The Surgeon at 2 a.m.," both composed in 1961, what is foregrounded is the kind of medical dehumanisation that reduces individuals to a state of inert matter, without either volition or functionality. This paper argues that medical practices in the context of hospitalisation induce helplessness and overreliance in patients by means of medical procedures and treatments which are made to seem both miraculous and painless due to analgesic drugs and the unimpeachable authority of the medical staff.

In "Tulips," the speaker is a patient recuperating from an operation in a hospital ward. Even though dehumanisation is represented from the perspective of its

victim in this text, the patient-speaker collaborates willingly in her own depersonalisation and even seems to desire it throughout much of the poem. It opens with the image of whiteness enveloping the speaker's surroundings: the cold brilliancy of snow covering the grounds corresponds to the sterility of the whitewashed walls and the starched bedclothes in the ward. In the female patient's mind, whiteness is immediately associated with innocence and contrasted with the subversive presence of the tulips. She protests her meekness as opposed to the violent insubordination represented by the glaring red colour of the flowers: "I am nobody; I have nothing to do with explosions" (Plath 160). The qualities of innocuousness and peacefulness are closely connected to the forfeiture of personal identity: "I have given my name and day-clothes up to the nurses / And my history to the anaesthetist and my body to surgeons" (Plath 160). Thus, her sense of guiltlessness stems from her renunciation of all objects or knowledge that define her identity, including her physical self. By abandoning her sense of identity, she feels she is also relieved of responsibility for both her present and past.

This almost complete self-abandonment is made possible by the depersonalising practices of medical institutions where patients are expected to subject themselves to the decisions and authority of the medical staff. As Foucault argues, the importance of exercising control over subjects' bodies dates back to the eighteenth century, which was also the period when medical practices became unified and the rules and scientific principles of the medical profession were established. The medical profession—and the establishment of the clinic—obviously had a significant role in maintaining control over bodies. In practical terms, the process of medical discipline over the patient's body begins with the patient's confession of the history of his or her illness while the physician only listens. Then the patient has to allow a physical examination of his or her body. As Lupton states, "[f]or Foucault, the medical encounter is a supreme example of surveillance." These two initial steps of the treatment process were established in the eighteenth century and has been part of clinical practices ever since, allowing the physician to observe in silence while suspending his or her judgment and leaving the patient in ignorance as to the purpose or outcome of the examinations (Lupton 23–24). The same need for confession and surrendering the body is conveyed by the last two lines of the first stanza.

As the speaker is lying in her hospital bed after the operation, she is also becoming an observer, although a completely passive and helpless one:

> They have propped my head between the pillow and the sheet-cuff
> Like an eye between two white lids that will not shut.
> Stupid pupil, it has to take everything in. (Plath 160)

She has assumed the passive role of a student who is "learning peacefulness," obediently watching and listening, without questioning or evaluating her perceptions. She has subjected herself to the wisdom of the hospital staff, who, in turn, seem similarly unthinking as they carry out their tasks. The nurses are indistinguishable from each other due to the uniforms they wear and are also dehumanised as the speaker compares them first to seagulls "in their white caps," then to the water of a rivulet: "My body is a pebble to them, they tend it as water / Tends to the pebbles it must run over, smoothing them gently" (Plath 160). Thus, the medical staff, just like the patient who has become unfeeling as a stone (Bassnett 126), seem faceless, impersonal, and devoid of distinguishing features as they complete their tasks without thinking or even without willing to do so, out of an impersonal but unavoidable necessity: such is the invisible power exercised by the clinical institution.

In addition to the sterility of the surroundings and the impersonal professional competence of the nurses, medication also plays an important role in dehumanising patients. Drugs, in the form of injections, help to lull the patient's consciousness and allow her to let go of an often bothersome individual identity: "They bring me numbness in their bright needles, they bring me sleep" (Plath 160). Medication acts upon the patient, and, despite being inanimate, it contributes to maintaining the unequal relationship between the medical staff and the patient. In his actor-network theory, Latour calls all objects and substances that shape social relationships non-human actants: "*any thing* [sic] that does modify a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor—or, if it has no figuration yet, an actant." He argues that "social action" is "delegated" to objects without their own volition which can nevertheless carry out some tasks and produce effects in a more efficient way than humans in some cases (70–71). The drugs, the syringes, even the clinically white bed linen can be regarded as non-human actants that contribute to a network of knowledge production and meaning making (Lupton 16–17) and serve to further enfeeble the patient's resistance to the process of dehumanisation.

As a result, the speaker welcomes the relief the drug-induced sleep brings her, contrasting this sense of calm to the burdens of life she used to carry:

> Now I have lost myself I am sick of baggage—
> My patent leather overnight case like a black pillbox,
> My husband and child smiling out of the family photo;
> Their smiles catch onto my skin, little smiling hooks. (Plath 160)

All duties and responsibilities involved in caring for her family are referred to as "baggage" and are represented by her personal belongings such as the overnight case and the photo. Both of them are likened to objects that refer to her illness and operation, thus making her feel "sick." There is a hint of resentment in her reaction to these objects, implying that she, to some extent, blames her family for her current illness: the physical and emotional exertion of looking after husband and child has led to her exhausted condition. She wants to rid herself of these conjugal and maternal obligations and seizes the opportunity provided by illness to escape from them.

Thus, she becomes complicit in the dehumanising practices of the medical institution since she not only allows but desires to be deprived of her personal history, memories, and emotional bonds: "I have let things slip, a thirty-year-old cargo boat" (Plath 161). The impersonal sterility of the hospital facilitates her desertion of her family and previous life and makes these attachments seem like impurities of which the patient should be cleansed: "They have swabbed me clear of my loving associations" (Plath 161). In accordance with the idea of cleanliness, the speaker imagines the process of losing her personal memories as being submerged in water. As a result, she experiences a sense of complete purity: "I am a nun now, I have never been so pure" (Plath 161). The image of the nun represents not only virginity, or purity in a sexual sense, but also a lack of social or emotional ties to other people. For Van Dyne, the red tulips signify, through the colour's association with blood, female sexuality and its reproductive consequences: the tulips are "explicitly linked to the speaker's fears of carnal and contaminating flesh" (64). This contention is confirmed by the earlier references to the speaker's child and the painful "hooks" of motherhood she wants to evade as well as the yearning expressed for a nun-like, virginal state of purity.

What the speaker longs for is more radical than freedom from human relationships: she wants to rid herself of all thoughts and feelings. The complete renunciation of the self is represented as a simple transaction, a barter: "The peacefulness is so big it dazes you, / And it asks nothing, a name tag, a few trinkets" (Plath 161).

Thus, attributes of personhood such as her name and personal possessions are downplayed as insignificant and useless items that can be easily exchanged for a sense of serenity that derives from the complete freedom from responsibility. Significantly, this peacefulness is compared to the long final repose after the hardships of life: "It is what the dead close on, finally; I imagine them / Shutting their mouths on it, like a Communion tablet" (Plath 161). Whereas release from interpersonal relationships is symbolised by the image of the nun, the second religious metaphor, the last rites administered to the dying is symbolic of a release from life. So, the speaker does not want to relinquish her duties to her family because she wishes to lead a different kind of life but because she does not want to live at all—even though this is only implied by the image of the last rites, the speaker never makes this wish explicit. This desire for a complete dissociation from bodily existence is also interpreted by Kirsch as a death wish, which he sees as a logical consequence of the speaker's self-deconstruction into a disembodied consciousness (259–260). Indeed, the entire first half of the poem that portrays the speaker's catatonic state with frequent allusions to the sense of relief, purity, and peacefulness she experiences in this condition is indicative of a deep-seated longing for death. Accordingly, some critics were quick to point out that "[i]n the late poems, Plath enters the world of death" such as the hospital ward in this poem (Pollitt 71). Nevertheless, this implicit death wish is complicated by a pervasive irony and criticism with which the speaker contemplates herself in this inert state: she refers to herself as a "nobody," a "nun"—a pun on "no one"—a "stupid pupil," and declares that "I only wanted / To lie with my hands turned up and be utterly empty" (Plath 160–161). This last statement specifically alludes to reproaches or accusations women are particularly vulnerable to: idleness or laziness on the one hand, and intellectual or emotional vacuity on the other. Also, the photo of her husband and child which she associates with the idea of "baggage," leads the reader to infer that the speaker's yearning for release largely stems from a desire to escape from traditional feminine roles which she experiences as agonisingly constraining and wearisome.

While the tulips are cursorily mentioned in the first and fifth stanzas, it is only from the sixth stanza onwards that they emerge as the principal symbols of the poem. Although the tulips are also inanimate, they cannot be called non-human actants in the Latourian sense since their impact is diametrically opposed to the dehumanising social forces at work in the hospital. Their glaring red colour stands out disturbingly amongst the whitewashed surroundings, reminding the speaker of a newborn

baby that symbolises life but is also evocative of the pain of giving birth: "Even through the gift paper I could hear them breathe, like an awful baby. / Their redness talks to my wound, it corresponds" (Plath 161). By reminding the speaker of her surgical wound from her recent operation and thus inducing pain, the baby-like red bunch of flowers becomes the sign of a new life for the speaker since birth, as well as healing, involves pain. Awareness of bodily injury and physical pain makes her mindful of her body which is an important part of regaining a sense of identity. Contrary to the earlier pleasant sensation of emptiness, associated with airy lightness, now the tulips "weigh [her] down" (Plath 161), making her feel heavy.

The intense vividness of the colour of the flowers invests them with a life of their own: the speaker perceives them as watchful eyes turning towards her, and in the direction of the window. In Plath's poetry, "red is the colour of the empowered self" (Nervaux-Gavoty 122), and therefore stands in stark contrast with the washed-out whiteness of the speaker's lethargy. Hence, she finds herself caught "[b]etween the eye of the sun and the eyes of the tulips" (Plath 161), and the sense of being watched forces her to see herself with the eyes of an onlooker. From this external perspective, she seems pathetic and insignificant due to her efforts to divest herself of her own human characteristics: "And I see myself, flat, ridiculous, a cut-paper shadow / . . . / And I have no face, I have wanted to efface myself" (Plath 161). Flatness, in Plath's poems, often denote a lack of vital energies and creativity (Kendall 16). The persona realises that, by abandoning herself to the dehumanising effects of hospitalisation, she has not become cleansed or spiritually refined, quite the contrary: she has emptied herself of human values and has turned vacuous, inauthentic, and even comical, like the shadow of a paper figure, manipulated in whatever way it pleases the puppet master. Having forfeited her "face," her personality, she is now aware that she cannot gain another kind of worth or significance to replace it.

Nevertheless, the persona still regards the tulips as a threat of which she must be wary: "The vivid tulips eat my oxygen" (Plath 161). She feels she must strive against their encroaching presence that deprives her of the sense of peace she enjoyed before. As the speaker focuses on the way the tulips disturb the previously smooth flow of air, she is, though unwillingly, emerging from her stupor and is becoming alert and conscious: "They concentrate my attention, that was happy / Playing and resting without committing itself" (Plath 161). So, an impulse of self-preservation is generated by the presence of the tulips, and this jolts her out of her state of torpidity.

Simultaneously with the revitalisation of her cognitive processes, the ability to feel emotions is also resuscitated. Even though the first affect she experiences is a primitive one, fear, it still allows her to feel a sensation of warmth, emanating from the intensified beating of her heart that seemed to be dormant before: "And I am aware of my heart: it opens and closes / Its bowl of red blooms out of sheer love of me" (Plath 162). Now the heart, the source of vital forces as well as the seat of emotions, is transmuting into the red flowers that were first disliked and then feared. Perloff calls attention to "the process whereby the 'I' finally *becomes* the hated tulip." She argues that the tulips do not operate as traditional symbols but rather function as conduits for absorbing and then infusing selfhood into the speaker (119). The discernment of her heartbeat infuses a sense of self-love into the persona, who feels a vague gratitude to her body that has kept her alive and thus made a full return to the world of the living possible, even while she was longing to sink into a death-like state. Increased awareness of and identification with her body induces empathy and affection towards herself, and this self-love is indispensable to the ability to feel love for others. Ultimately, it is the ability to love with which the tulips present the persona, who now welcomes the approach of health and the prospect of a return to everyday life: "The water I taste is warm and salt, like the sea, / And comes from a country far away as health" (Plath 162). The heart is associated with warmth and blood in this image of rebirth at the end of the poem, and it also refers back to love, a crucial human emotion that this organ symbolises. In the last analysis, it is love for the self and others that allows the subject to prevail over the debilitating powers of institutionalised dehumanisation.

Whereas "Tulips" conveyes the process of medical dehumanisation from the viewpoint of the patient, who is initially a willing victim, "The Surgeon at 2 a.m." represents dehumanising medical practices and discourse from the perspective of the perpetrator, the operating surgeon. As opposed to Rose's view that the poet identifies with the surgeon in a "loving" and sympathetic manner (134), this poem is more appropriately seen as a trenchant critique of the desensitised but also self-glorifying attitudes of the medical profession.

"The Surgeon at 2 a.m." also opens with an emphasis on the hygienic cleanliness of the hospital environment—the setting, this time, is the operating theatre. The patient has already been anaesthetised and prepared for the ensuing surgical procedure. Before the medical intervention can start, germs as well as the consciousness of the patient have to be removed:

> The white light is artificial, and hygienic as heaven.
> The microbes cannot survive it.
> They are departing in their transparent garments . . .
> . . .
> . . . The soul is another light.
> I have not seen it; it does not fly up.
> Tonight it has receded like a ship's light. (Plath 170)

Bacteria are eliminated in the same way as the soul is made to leave—even though this "scalded" but also "frozen and peaceful" state of cleanliness is temporary, it succeeds in creating a brief suspension of life, preserving the patient in an artificial limbo between life and death during the operation. The surgeon-speaker's attitude to the soul or transcendental beliefs is ambivalent as he partly acknowledges the existence of the spirit, but he also feels able to suspend its existence at will. Moreover, he invests the sterility of the operating theatre with transcendental meaning: it is "hygienic as heaven." This suggests that he endows medical practices with divine power: if the disinfected room is heaven, then the operating surgeon who reigns supreme in it must be God.

The suspension or temporary removal of the patient's soul, or humanity, is indispensable to the surgical intervention, which, fundamentally, treats the body as an object. Ignoring the patient's personhood allows medical professionals to carry out their work efficiently, as Lupton argues. In order to maintain matter-of-fact and socially acceptable conduct on both the doctor's and the patient's part and forestall accusations of sexual impropriety or cruelty, "the patient must be viewed as a technical object rather than an individual" (Lupton 121). As a result, the body on the operating table becomes an inert mass, deprived of all human dignity or volition, and completely at the mercy of the surgeon and his team:

> The body under it is in my hands.
> As usual there is no face. A lump of Chinese white
> With seven holes thumbed in . . . . (Plath 170)

The alien quality of the body deserted by the spirit is further emphasised by the adjective "Chinese" and the callous description of the surgical incisions

as "holes thumbed in," which reinforces the image of the body as a malleable substance that the surgeon's skilful hands can shape.

The operation is first described in terms of a process of colonisation, where the surgeon envisions himself as the pioneer venturing into an untamed and teeming wilderness. The interior of the body is represented as a luxuriant rainforest, crammed with roots, fruits, trees, and flowers. While the surgeon is impressed with the variety and richness of nature's creation, he also considers these organic tissues dangerous and a potential hazard to the human body that is in sore need of the surgeon's civilising efforts:

> It is a garden I have to do with—tubers and fruits
> Oozing their jammy substances,
> A mat of roots. My assistants hook them back.
> Stenches and colors assail me.
> This is the lung-tree.
> These orchids are splendid. They spot and coil like snakes.
> The heart is a red-bell-bloom, in distress.
> I am so small
> In comparison to these organs!
> I worm and hack in a purple wilderness. (Plath 171)

As in the depiction of the exterior of the inert human body, the foreignness of which is indicated by the attribute "Chinese," the representation of the inside as a tropical forest also conveys a sense of the exotic, foreign, and strange. Moreover, the interior of the body is chaotic and excessive: overflowing with viscous liquids, exuding unpleasant smells, displaying glaring colours, thronged with squirming intestines and pulsating organs that seem to lead a life of their own, it defies the sterile orderliness of medical practices. The surgeon is intent on reducing this organic chaos to an artificial order so that he can save the body from the threat that its own organs pose to itself: the snake-like bowel and the distressed heart indicate that the messiness of the internal anatomy carries within itself the danger of self-destruction. This conveys the idea originating in the eighteenth century that nature, if unsupervised and unregulated by man, will turn against its own creations and destroy them. The principal objective of the "physicotheology of the eighteenth century," claims Geyer-Kordesch, "was to reinstate order of a kind which was predictable."

Nature was reconfigured as a set of laws from the knowledge of which objective authority can be derived, and which allows for the complete elimination of passion, unpredictability, and the volatility of inexplicable feelings or other subjective occurrences (Geyer-Kordesch 151). The juxtaposition of a reasonable nature as opposed to a monstrous one was especially salient in the newly emerging discipline of obstetrics, a field of medical practice where male physicians took over female midwives in the eighteenth century (Youngquist 132). In contemporary studies of gestation and birth, heavily pregnant female flesh, contends Youngquist, was regarded as abject matter, food but also waste, embodying death and putrefaction, as opposed to the tender youth and clean vitality of the foetus: "Life is all the child's, while its mother's flesh incorporates death" (136–137). In the image of the jungle teeming with abject forms of life, it is clearly the monstrous aspect of nature that is captured.

Such alien, inexplicable, and uncharted territories must be assimilated into the order of reason. The historical process of colonisation coincided with, and, also, reflected late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century ideas of the rule of reason that must be forced upon deviant manifestations of nature. Although there exists a multiplicity of divergent definitions of colonialism, what is perhaps a common element in most is that the colonisers "sought to impose their own culture on a quite different culture so that it would mime or imitate that of the imperial centre" (Ryan 217). The ideology of colonialism implicitly relied on the subjective notion that the coloniser's culture is the norm against which other cultures must be measured: "the kinds of 'normative' claims made by the settler-state are not simply distinct from indigenous ones but are . . . themselves predicated on the (thread)bare insistence that the state maintains an 'overriding sovereignty'" (Rifkin 96). Therefore, values and practices in the colonised territories that differed from those of the colonisers were deemed as deviations from the norm, which justified or even called for intervention which aimed at normalising the deviant subjects. A similar logic was employed in the eighteenth century with regards to the human body.

As Foucault explains, the idea of the norm of the body originates in the eighteenth century when there was a major shift in the objectives of medicine from a merely negative, restitutive purpose of curing diseases to a positive, active role in promoting the happiness of nations. The ingenious device to achieve this end was the idea that, rather than studying the diseased body, physicians should examine the healthy body and pay careful attention to its workings so that the processes and appearance of the "normal" body could be properly described and then set up as a standard:

> Medicine must no longer be confined to a body of techniques for curing ills and of the knowledge that they require; it will also embrace a knowledge of *healthy man*, that is, a study of *non-sick man* and a definition of the *model man*. In the ordering of human existence it assumes a normative posture, which authorises it not only to distribute advice as to healthy life, but also to dictate the standards for physical and moral relations of the individual and of the society in which he lives. (Foucault 34)

This paradigm shift in medicine formed part of a larger project of imposing order on a shapeless, intractable mass of people and thereby shaping it into a manageable population. This was mostly accomplished by means of surveillance: the constant and widespread monitoring of subjects in diverse areas of social life. The idea was that subjects should be compliant to the rules and regulations of social life without being directly supervised by religious or secular authorities (Youngquist xv). Due to the dispersion of invisible disciplining strategies in society, docile bodies can be created whose strength and mobility are bridled (Youngquist xxv) so that they can be more easily made to obey social norms. Thus, subjects conduct themselves in a way that is useful to society. As a means of achieving such indirect control, medicine and the medical profession were properly reorganised, unified, and regulated so that they could take over the task of disciplining subjects through intervening on their bodies.

Despite his purpose of colonising and normalising the aberrant body, the surgeon's procedure seems somewhat directionless and haphazard: "I worm and hack in a purple wilderness" (Plath 171). As Brain points out, the doctor is losing control of the body's excessive and intractable physiological processes: "The blood is a sunset. I admire it. / I am up to my elbows in it, red and squeaking. / Still it seeps up, it is not exhausted." It is due to this loss of mastery, Brain argues, that the surgeon suddenly switches from the metaphor of the jungle to that of Roman architecture, comparing the circulatory system to aqueducts and thermal baths, since an artificial edifice is more amenable to human intervention than an untamed wilderness (123–124). The speaker's adulation of Roman civilisation confirms his allegiance to the ideology of colonisation and empire-building:

> So magical! A hot spring
> I must seal off and let fill
> The intricate, blue piping under this pale marble.
> How I admire the Romans—
> Aqueducts, the baths of Caracalla, the eagle nose! (Plath 171)

This extolment of the Roman cities of antiquity places special emphasis on the unique sanitation systems that were invented and built and pays respect to the Roman culture of personal cleanliness. By imagining the interior of the human body as a well-planned city with a highly developed system of "piping," the surgeon denies the excessive and intractable nature of the body he previously experienced and reconfigures it as an artificial construct that can be easily repaired by human skill. He turns the body into a miniaturised model of the Roman city, as if nature imitated human architecture. However, this antique civilisation is also, and emphatically, dead: "The body is a Roman thing. / It has shut its mouth on the stone pill of repose" (Plath 171). The conception of the body as an artificial structure inevitably involves its radical objectification and treatment as an inanimate artefact, a result of medical intervention. That is why the doctor can declare complacently: "It is a statue the orderlies are wheeling off. / I have perfected it" (Plath 171). Thus, normalising medical procedures, and especially surgical interventions, turn the body from a natural organism into an artificial construct, a chiselled artefact, a product of medical discourse.

The body that fits the norm—the proper body, as Younquist calls it—is the only kind of body that is able, in a physiological sense, to participate in the life of civil society. Hence, the proper body must be reducible to its functionality. Bodies that cannot be equated with such useful functions have no social value. According to Locke's theory of civil society, all individuals are, at the same time, owners of property. The individual's first possession is his body and he subsequently acquires other possessions through the labour of his body. Ultimately, the individual can be equated with the actions carried out by his body, and the proper body accumulates property. Through labour, the individual transforms a property belonging to all into his own personal possession (Youngquist 20); therefore, the proper body's main purpose is to produce property. In the last analysis, Youngquist contends, the body is fundamentally prosthetic since it increases its social power and significance through the property it acquires. Because the body is a property, it is also

a commodity and as such, can be exchanged—or more precisely, its labour power can be transmuted—for other items. As a consequence, bodies whose actions cannot be exchanged for other articles cannot become individuals and thus, are unfit to participate in civil society (Youngquist 21). Therefore, the social utility of the medical profession consists in normalising aberrant bodies and turning them into proper, productive bodies.

Paradoxically, the process of perfecting bodies involves their mutilation: the removal of faulty parts. The surgeon carefully preserves the deviant tissues excised from the perfected body as proof of his efficiency at extirpating abnormality:

> I am left with an arm or a leg,
> A set of teeth, or stones
> To rattle in a bottle and take home,
> And tissue in slices—a pathological salami. (Plath 171)

The body parts that have been hacked off are presented as abject and repulsive, rejected from the order of useful things and symbolising aberration from the healthy norm. They incorporate abjection in a very obvious way since they are parts that have been cut out of a living organism and have thus become waste. This "falling" away of matter that is no longer useful is an important aspect of Julia Kristeva's definition of the abject: "Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit—*cadere*, cadaver" (3). These deviant tissues may also represent, in a more abstract sense, the characteristics of the individual that are considered deviant or abnormal, and therefore, they have to be eliminated in order for the individual to successfully conform to social expectations. This process of relegating body parts to the domain of abjection clearly deprives patients of their human dignity: it has been reported that the removal and preservation of human organs is considered dehumanising by patients and their relatives (Cheung 115). Such "pathological" traits belong expressly to the past, an irrelevant and dead temporality which can serve only as a negative counterpoint to a "clean" and bright future:

> Tonight the parts are entombed in an icebox.
> Tomorrow they will swim

> In vinegar like saints' relics.
> Tomorrow the patient will have a clean, pink plastic limb. (Plath 171)

Besides the abjection of the removed tissues and their association with a tainted past, they also symbolise sacrifice and imply a certain "martyrdom" of the individual suffered at the hands of the medical profession as they are likened to "saints' relics."

Due to the concept of the body as essentially prosthetic in liberal society since it amasses "bulk and stature with every acquisition" (Youngquist 20), the fact of wearing prosthetics becomes a sign of compliance with rules and conformity to the social order; it also indicates that the body has been appropriately normalised. The origins of the necessity of bodily sacrifice for society dates back to Britain's wars against Napoleon, Youngquist contends, and more specifically, to the battle of Waterloo. Although it resulted in the spectacular victory of the English, they suffered enormous losses on the battlefield. Besides the large number of the fallen, the casualties included a crowd of seriously wounded and mutilated war veterans, who had to be rehabilitated. Injured limbs were usually amputated to prevent further gangrenous infections, then the patient was fitted with a prosthetic limb. First, these artificial limbs were very rudimentary, only a thick wooden stick attached to the stump, but they soon evolved into more sophisticated, almost lifelike sculptures of legs and arms. The process of the rehabilitation of the body with the help of prosthetics carried out on a large number of veterans amounted to the reconstruction of Britain's national identity, one in which patriotism gained considerable importance. As war injuries were a source of pride and proof of the subject's devotion to his country, the almost ritual mutilation and reconstitution of bodies served to rebuild and strengthen Britain's national identity. So, wounds of war became visible evidence of belonging to the nation that demanded physical alterations on the subject's body: only in case of such bodily mutilations could the subject exist as a truly political being and a full-fledged individual (Youngquist 176–184).

While the crippled and prosthetic body was turned into a symbol of national identity in Britain as a result of the Napoleonic wars in the early nineteenth century, this equation of mutilation with belonging to the nation took place in America in the second half of the century in the era of advanced industrialisation when the machinery of mass-manufacturing resulted in such casualties. Therefore, in America, prosthetics symbolised the "values of industrial capitalism—precision, uniformity, mechanical production, the transformative force of work" (Youngquist 184). This necessity

of personal sacrifice, however, has survived into late modern American society, too. Some of Plath's late poems, most notably, "The Applicant," deals with the issue of the crippling effect of conformity to a corporatist consumer society:

> First, are you our sort of person?
> Do you wear
> A glass eye, false teeth or a crutch,
> A brace or a hook,
> Rubber breasts or a rubber crotch
> Stitches to show something's missing? (Plath 221)

In this poem, images of prosthetics convey the idea of psychological mutilation. The subject has to forfeit parts of his psyche and sacrifice the wholeness of his personhood in order to become a full member of society.

Whereas the norm of the proper body extends to the psychological characteristics of the subject in late modern society, with a special emphasis on cognitive, emotional, and behavioural normality, in the early stages of the introduction of this regulatory concept in the eighteenth century, medicine was only concerned with the somatic aspect of health. Deformity was measured against the standard regularity of physical health—or the average body—and all deviant manifestations were labelled pathological, and therefore, requiring medical intervention (Youngquist 9).

With the pathological tissues removed, the patient is now deemed ready to start a "new life." The surgical procedure that frees the subject from both his or her aberrant parts and entire past history gains a transcendental dimension in retrospect: "Over one bed in the ward, a small blue light / Announces a new soul" (Plath 171). Therefore, the soul that departed at the start of the operation is gone forever and is now being replaced with a new one, implying that the surgeon has the divine capacity to create new souls, new human beings, due to the quasi-magical powers of medical intervention on the body. By insinuating that the soul, the essence of personality, can be effectively replaced or completely transformed by medical procedures implemented on the body, the speaker grossly overestimates the powers of medicine and, at the same time, betrays his disparagement of the value of or permanence of selfhood.

The creation of the new soul is accompanied by the conventional iconography of Christianity, especially by pictorial elements related to the Virgin Mary.

The colour blue refers to the Blessed Virgin since she is traditionally represented wearing blue garments. Then the word "announces" alludes to the Annunciation she received from Archangel Gabriel that she would conceive and give birth to Jesus. Finally, the angels that "have borne him up," are a reference to Mary's ascension to heaven after her death:

> Over one bed in the ward, a small blue light
> Announces a new soul. The bed is blue.
> Tonight, for this person, blue is a beautiful color.
> The angels of morphia have borne him up.
> He floats an inch from the ceiling,
> Smelling the dawn drafts.

Here, the male patient, as he is undergoing the process of transformation, is clearly represented as the Virgin Mary.

The angels assisting in his apotheosis are opium-based drugs. Opioids were very commonly applied in medicine due to their analgesic effect and while they were ousted from their role as the only means of pain-relief after the invention of synthetic pain-killers, opioids are still widely used as a basis for various types of medication in the United States, causing severe addiction in patients to the extent that it has now led to an opioid crisis there: "Over the past 25 years, the United States has experienced a dramatic increase in deaths from opioid overdose, opioid use disorder (OUD), and other harms in parallel with increases in the prescribing of opioid medications for pain management." Since morphia, a potent opiate analgesic drug "can produce feelings of pleasure, relaxation, and contentment" (National Academies 2), the patient is not only relieved of his pain but experiences a delightful sense of satisfaction, which is compared to religious ecstasy.

As the doctor is walking through the ward among the sleeping patients, he envisions them as dead people, waiting for their resurrection by the medical staff: "I walk among the sleepers in gauze sarcophagi" (Plath 171). As some of the half-awake patients turn their gaze on him, he feels fully confirmed in his belief that he is master of life and death, thoroughly controlling the destiny of all the patients in the ward: "The red night lights are flat moons. They are dull with blood. / I am the sun, in my white coat, / Gray faces, shuttered by drugs, follow me like flowers" (Plath 171). Thus, the apotheosis of the patient recently operated on is translated into an almost

divine aura of respect surrounding the surgeon who carried out the successful procedure. His presence inspires hope and fear in equal measure since he has the power to heal as well as to destroy: the "red night lights" which are "dull with blood" evoke the bloodshed and butchery carried out on the operating table. Furthermore, the reverence of the patients towards the doctor originates, to a great extent, in the numbing and disorientating effects of the drugs. The word "shuttered" powerfully evokes another word, "shattered," which suggests that the faces, and by implication, the consciousness, of the patients are severely affected, almost destroyed by the medications. These non-human actants facilitate the subjection of the patients' will to that of the doctor by largely eliminating their volition and making them acquiesce in their objectification as an inert mass on the operating table to be subsequently butchered, "wormed," and "hacked" through, until they can be "perfected" and reduced to the status of an artefact, the final product of medical dehumanisation.

In both poems, the erasure of individual self-consciousness and a sense of identity plays a pivotal role in dehumanising patients. While the lifeworld, "the conglomeration of discourses and beliefs that people accumulate through everyday experiences and activities" (Lupton 86) of subjects is completely denied in the medical institution and their personal history is made to seem redundant or even pathological, patients are absorbed into the depersonalised atmosphere of the hospital. In the enclosed and seemingly self-sufficient world of the medical institution, patients are compensated for their loss of selfhood with an illusory sense of serenity and contentment, largely deriving from the soothing effects of drugs as well as the mystification of the aims of medical procedures. Whereas the prophane apotheosis of the surgeon and his artefact, the "rehabilitated" but still unconscious patient, represents the outcome of complete medical dehumanisation, the patient-speaker in "Tulips" manages to salvage a remnant of her humanness by transposing her selfhood onto the blood-red flowers, which, in turn, allows her to be awakened from the complete objectification produced by medical practices. Moreover, a note of irony—subtle in "Tulips" but quite apparent in "The Surgeon"—allows the poems to transcend their literal subjects, the hospital, and the medical encounter. Indeed, they can be read as allegories of the subject's vulnerability and eventual mutilation or castration by wider society. It is the lure of "purity" and even "saintliness" by means of sacrificing individual traits and eliminating the personal that seduces people into utter compliance with dehumanising practices. In the final analysis, the idea of spiritual cleansing as a result of docility that features prominently in both poems, is offered as an illusory reward

for being an obedient subject—and as such, turns out to be a travesty of authentic spiritual transformation.

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Stories of Telltale Eyes

Filmic Gaze and Spectatorial Agency in Krzysztof Kieślowski's *A Short Film about Love*, Ferzan Ozpetek's *Facing Windows,* and Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom*

BORBÁLA LÁSZLÓ

Abstract: This paper attempts to rethink the concept of the filmic gaze through a comparative analysis of three films, namely, Krzysztof Kieślowski's Krótki film o miłości *(*A Short Film about Love*, 1988), Ferzan Ozpetek's* La Finestra di Fronte *(*Facing Windows*, 2003), and Wes Anderson's* Moonrise Kingdom *(2012). 'Filmic gaze' here refers not to the production of the filmic/discursive self through suture but to the whole fabric of the film, which is construed as a looking subject. Kaja Silverman's cinematic suture theory and Descartes's dark room parable are employed to illustrate how the passivising filmic gaze of classical narrative cinema confines the spectator to the position of the voyeur, who observes rather than creates the scene that pleases her.* A Short Film about Love *is analysed to demonstrate conventional film-audience dynamics and is then compared with two contemporary auteur films,* Facing Windows *and* Moonrise Kingdom, *which, by addressing viewers through the characters' telltale eyes, keep reconceiving suture as they go along, blurring the boundary between intra-diegetic and extra-diegetic looks, and thus offering spectators a more active and varied spectatorial agency than that of the voyeur.*

Since the 1970s, much has been said about how we are sutured into the fictional world of cinema. Most prominently, Kaja Silverman's cinematic suture theory has helped reveal the strategies through which movies address viewers and bring about certain types of spectatorial agency (47). According to Silverman's summary of the evolution of suture theory, Emile Benveniste was the first to use the term suture when referring to the subject entering a discourse, and thus splitting the self

into two. In Benveniste's terms, suture is the seam tying the two selves together so that the split cannot be recognised. Applying this theory to film-audience dynamics, Silverman explores how spectators lose their real subjectivity, gaining an illusionary one, the most intrinsic type of spectatorial agency, as they enter the cinematic world. "Interlocking shots," for example the "shot/reverse shot formation," ensure that spectators do not recognise the split because a convincing point of view is provided throughout the film to identify with (201). According to Jean-Pierre Oudart, "[e]very filmic field is echoed by an absent field, the place of a character who is put there by the viewer's imaginary, and which we shall call the Absent One" (36). In other words, the camera as well as other devices like editing, cutting, exclusion, and negation are defined as the absent "speaking subject" which conceal themselves to create "cinematic coherence and plenitude" (Silverman 205) while in fact they "speak," direct, and control the gaze of the viewing subject. In short, conventional film-audience dynamics not only facilitate but also control the viewing subject as "the spectator is identified with the gaze" created by the filmic discourse (Hayward 157).

Many films call attention to the discursive production of the viewing subject. These films, often labelled as postmodern and self-reflective, require a spectator who likes to question the pleasures provided by the classical filmic gaze, having a keen eye for artifice and all those devices that offer moments of disenchantment instead of absorption into fiction. The suture at work in such films is unique only to the degree that it grants access into the diegetic world of a self-investigating and sceptical viewing subject: the diegesis is designed to accommodate such agency and grant her the pleasure of the doubt.

The present paper will not discuss films of this kind. Instead, it focuses on films that, while producing the viewing subject in a way similar to classical cinema, also reveal their function as speaking, or in my reading, looking subjects, and in this way, they bring about a certain dynamic between film and audience which can be perceived as a form of intersubjective communication, an act of looking as distinct from watching. Thus, throughout this article, filmic gaze refers not to the creation of the filmic/discursive self through suture but to the mode of address, the whole fabric of the film, which is construed as a looking subject.

The present conceptualisation of the filmic or cinematic gaze, therefore, denounces the assumptions made by early psychoanalytic film theorists, namely Jean-Louis Baudry, Christian Metz, and Laura Mulvey, who adopted the concept

of the Lacanian gaze into film theory as the subject's source of mastery—albeit illusory—over what he sees. Todd McGowan points out that when they introduced the notion of the filmic gaze in the 1970s, these "traditional Lacanian film theorists" relied exclusively on Lacan's essay on the mirror-stage, thereby consolidating the idea that the spectator derives the illusion of mastery relative to what unfolds in front of his eyes (*The Real Gaze* 2). As Metz puts it, "the spectator is absent from the screen *as perceived*," but also "present there and even 'all present' *as perceiver*" (54). Metz contends that the spectator's agency is created by the illusion that the subject looks at the object (the film), while he is not looked at in return, which prescribes that the viewer believes to be controlling the cinematic image. Baudry explicitly links this kind of spectatorial experience to that of the mirror stage. He states that "the arrangement of the different elements—projector, darkened hall, screen—in addition to reproducing in a striking way the *mis-en-scéne* of Plato's cave . . . reconstructs the situation necessary to the release of the 'mirror stage' discovered by Lacan" (539). Furthermore, Mulvey's seminal essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" perpetuates the notion that the filmic gaze is associated with male spectatorship and the ideological machinations of patriarchal society.

By taking these theoretical positions into account, McGowan highlights that early psychoanalytic film theory conceives of the filmic gaze as fulfilling the function of the Imaginary—manifested in the mirror phase—and the function of the Symbolic—perpetuating ideology—while it oversees a crucial aspect of Lacanian thought regarding the Gaze, namely that of the Real (*The Real Gaze* 4). In Lacan's own terms, the Gaze is something that introduces "the depth of field, with all its ambiguity and variability, which is in no way mastered by me. It is rather it that grasps me, solicits me at every moment, and makes of the landscape something other than a landscape" (96). One can thus conclude that what Lacan originally means by the gaze in *Seminar XI* is exactly the opposite of being a source of mastery for the subject. The gaze in fact characterises the point from which the object (film) is imagined to be staring back at the subject (spectator) (Lacan 84), and for this reason, the cinematic experience is "the site of a traumatic encounter with the Real, with the utter failure of the spectator's seemingly safe distance and assumed mastery" (McGowan, "Looking for the Gaze" 29). This explains why Oudart's and Silverman's theories prove fruitful for my interpretation of the filmic gaze as coming from the film itself. While Baudry, Metz, and Mulvey stress the (mis)conception of the Lacanian Gaze as associated with mastery, suture theory reveals that

the gaze is projected not by the viewing subject but by the cinematic image, which controls the onlooker rather than being controlled by her.

This article argues that this notion of the filmic gaze is best explored by analysing the role of characters' acts of looking, their gestures, body language, and positioning, as well as that of optical devices representing human eyes (i.e. cameras, telescopes, binoculars), since these elements activate moments of de-suturing, coupled with the experience of our non-diegetic (real) selves being confronted. I also contend that stories centred around the motif of looking (peeping, voyeurism, scopophilia) are the most useful to explore the nature and types of the filmic gaze.

My argument is that the majority of films do not create eye contact with, do not look *at* but *through* the spectator, who is immersed into the diegetic universe, treated as a passive observer, a voyeur. This role, however, is not completely identical with that of the voyeur as it is understood in psychoanalysis, because the scene she derives pleasure from is not created by the spectator but by the film, which in this sense is a much more active looking agent than the viewer. As I will argue, films which look *through* spectators and treat them as voyeurs project a passivising filmic gaze, while those which look *at* spectators perform an act of looking that gives viewers a more active spectatorial agency.

Drawing upon theories of the cinematic suture, film scholars have realised that the notion of the filmic gaze as it was reconceptualised by the criticism of early psychoanalytic film theory is worth looking at academically. In the following paragraphs I shall highlight Tom Gunning's and Timothy Corrigan's theories of film reception, since both are based on the hypothesis that the mode of address determines the whole fabric of the film.

In this regard, Gunning's genealogy demarcates early-modern, pre-1906 cinema, which he terms the "cinema of attractions" and post-1906, dominant, "narrative cinema" (Gunning's genealogy described in Staiger 13). While the "cinema of attractions" addressed the audience directly so as to confront, astonish, emotionally and critically engage spectators—which effects were mostly achieved through the actors' "mischievous contact with the camera" (Brown 4)—the "cinema of narrative integration" absorbed viewers into fiction, treating them as "static, passive observers" (Staiger 13). According to Gunning, the distinction between the opposing types of cinematic address evolved as follows:

> The performers in the cinema of attractions greeted the camera's gaze with gusto, employing glances, winks and nods. With the establishment of a coherent diegesis, any acknowledgment of the camera became taboo, condemned by critics as destructive of the psychological effect essential for an involved spectator. (*Origins of American Narrative Film* 261)

As the use of direct address has been resumed in postmodernist and contemporary cinema, Gunning, who initially connected the technique to modernist filmmaking, also admitted that "[t]he cinema of attractions persists in later cinema . . . provid[ing] an underground current floating beneath narrative logic and diegetic realism ("An Aesthetic of Astonishment" 826). Thus, one of the strengths of Gunning's theory is that it does not conceptualise the filmic gaze as something completely circumscribed by dominant cultural practices. This is important because, as I argue, it is not only postmodernist, highly self-reflexive films that can engage viewers in the meaning-making process, and, by the same token, it is not only classical narrative cinema that can confine viewers to the role of passive observers. It is crucial to see that films can address, or, in my interpretation, look *at* or *through* spectators irrespective of paradigmatic categorisations.

Gunning's genealogy also takes the fact into account that the gaze of the whole cinematic text is largely determined by the actors' stance vis-a-vis the camera. Indeed, the filmic gaze is often expressed through the characters' extra-diegetic glances. Breaking through the fourth wall, however, is not the sole condition of looking *at* the audience, and Gunning's theory fails to recognise this: it only mentions two modes of address, suggesting that films treat us either as passive voyeurs or as active looking subjects. Thus, the question is: what about the movies that seem to establish a coherent diegesis only to begin ogling us? Or what about those in which direct address is integrated into the diegetic universe? Such films fit neither the category of "narrative cinema" nor that of the "cinema of attractions."

Using a similar binary categorisation, Corrigan distinguishes between "gaze" and "glance cinema" (62). He contends that with the increasing significance of televisual media in the 1980s, audiences watched movies "according to a glance aesthetic rather than a gaze aesthetic" (62), by which he means that films were "watched across distractions rather than the collective gaze" of spectators, and as such, they

disrupted mechanisms of "primary identification" through which cinema sutures viewers into the filmic text (16).1 As for the historical categorisation of the filmic gaze,

> Corrigan creates the categories of "pre-classical cinema" (1895 to circa 1917), "classical and modernist cinema" (1917 to the present and 1950 to the present, respectively), and "postmodern cinema"' (1970s to the present). Like the other theorists, Corrigan creates his system focusing on the experience of the spectator. Emphasising an opposition between the "glance" and the "gaze," he argues that preclassical and postmodern cinema encourages sporadic attention to the screen, while classical and modernist cinema is a gaze cinema. The gaze cinema creates a fixed subjectivity and unified identity through its narrative continuities, closures, central characters, and flexible realism. For the spectator, the gaze cinema is a cinema of interpretation and reading, while a glance cinema is one of performance. (Staiger 15)

The problem is that by glance cinema Corrigan means a type of spectatorial agency based on coherent performativity, a definite, unfailing cooperation in the meaning-making process; thus, glance cinema defines movies that steadily gaze *at* viewers. Once again, we are left with two types of cinema, each implying a corresponding type of the filmic gaze—one that passivises and one that activates—and the question arises: what about the look that oscillates? As this happens often enough in contemporary arthouse and auteur movies, it might be more useful to theorise the film's gaze by considering the distinction between mainstream and independent cinema.

Hollywood films prefer either a restricted or an omniscient mode of address to ensure that spectators are sutured into the illusory reality of the fictional world ("Key Aspects of Media Studies"). Although I cannot compare this scenario to a form of intersubjective communication, it cannot be perceived as the objectification of viewers either. Instead, it evokes the situation of the bearded man in Descartes's engraving from his *Optics*: locked in a dark room, the only view he can get of the external

1 Corrigan's distinction between "gaze" and "glance aesthetic" can be traced back to John Ellis's *Visible Fictions*, wherein these terms were used to distinguish between watching movies (gazing) and watching television (glancing).

world is through the eye of a human being inserted in the wall. As Miran Bozovic explains, Descartes wanted to emphasise that we "can never step out but are forever entrapped in a room in which we deal with our retinal images only and never with things themselves" (162).

This parable can also be seen as an illustration of the gaze of Hollywood films which tend to act upon the limitations instead of the possibilities of human visual perception: we are bound to look at the film, but it does not look *at* us in return, since it is constructed as the external world which one sees only from the dark room of his or her own perspective.[2] In other words, classical narrative cinema re-enacts the "impossibility of stepping out from the world of imitations, copies and simulacra" (Bozovic 162) so that we are not offered more than an absolute point of view, "a point of interiority which can never be externalised . . . a point at which we can be nothing but voyeurs" (164). To put it simply, mainstream cinema restricts the spectator's agency to the role of the voyeur who believes to be the subject of the gaze, hence her feeling of being deeply sutured into the diegesis. Similar to Silverman's suture theory, Descartes's parable thus helps expose the conventional dynamics between film and viewer, the dichotomy between scene and voyeur, the looking and viewing subject.

In contrast to mainstream cinema, independent films frequently suggest the possibility—however illusory—of splitting up suture and providing a more active, if more troubled, spectatorial agency. Often their aim is precisely to reveal the seam that ties us to the absolute point of view of the voyeur. Yet the films which interest me are those that combine different mechanisms, thereby creating ambiguities concerning the binary categorisation of movies based on the mode of address. Since they are characterised by a hybrid, oscillating gaze, these films belong neither to the "cinema of attractions" nor to "narrative cinema," neither to "glance" nor "gaze cinema," and they definitely do not project the passivising gaze of Hollywood films.

The movies in the focus of this article neither look *through* nor look consistently *at* viewers, they just sometimes glance *at* us through a character's telltale eyes to create a momentary, illusory blurring of boundaries between the act of watching and the act of looking. Unlike highly self-reflexive postmodernist movies, they do not fully deconstruct conventional dynamics between film and viewer, questioning their status as spectacle and ours as voyeur. Seemingly, their objective is an *attempt* to look

2 This does not mean that watching Hollywood films is an unbearable experience: we readily suspend our disbelief in exchange for the pleasures of viewing (Rowe 88).

"inside" at us, bearded men, who are forever locked in the dark room of our visual perception. Considering the whole fabric of these films as a looking subject, we find that their gaze does not come across as unrelenting but as tentative, squinting, and ambiguous. For certain moments and in certain ways—not exclusively through direct address—they create a contact with the audience which can be construed as the eye contact between two human subjects.

Summarising what has been said so far, I shall argue for the relevance of the notion of filmic gaze as projected by the film itself, analysing four films in terms of how I imagine they look at viewers. The motif of the gaze in its broadest sense is central in each movie, and the filmic gaze is expressed most emphatically by the main characters who meaningfully stare through windows. Silverman's suture theory and Descartes's parable are employed to show that these characters' position as voyeurs is at the same time a reference to the voyeuristic agency of viewers. However, if one construes the whole fabric of these films as a looking subject, it appears that they relate to the audience differently. To begin with, I briefly refer to Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954) to demonstrate conventional film-audience dynamics because, as I will argue, despite its use of postmodernist techniques, it only reflects on the limitations of our visual agency. To support the argument that not only Hollywood movies passivise the spectator, I also examine an auteur film from the European tradition, namely, Krzysztof Kieślowski's *Krótki film o miłości (A Short Film about Love*, 1988). Although the narrative of the latter also revolves around the trope of the gaze, similarly to *Rear Window*, it sustains its function as mere image and ours as observer. *La Finestra di Fronte* (*Facing Windows*, 2003), directed by Ferzan Ozpetek, seems to follow the traditions of narrative cinema; however, in certain scenes and in its special ways, it calls for a self-reflexive mode of watching, treating viewers both as observers and looking subjects. Since the "eyes" of *Facing Windows* do not stare at us consistently, Ozpetek's drama serves as one of my examples for the oscillating filmic gaze. Among the four films, the one that illustrates most clearly the hybridity of visual address is Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012), yet another example of auteur cinema, which drastically oscillates between treating the viewers as passive voyeurs and as active looking subjects.

Classical Film-Audience Dynamics: How Do Films Look *Through* Spectators?

As a representative example of Hollywood cinema, *Rear Window* demonstrates that the use of meta-cinematic devices does not necessarily entail intersubjective communication with viewers. In my reading, *Rear Window*—as a looking agent—does not bring about an active spectatorial agency, because the camera consistently identifies viewers with the protagonist's point of view, thereby absorbing them into the fiction, and treating them as passive observers. The film's mode of address is solidified, and as such, it does not aim to initiate a type of communication resembling actual acts of looking. Instead, *Rear Window* makes references to the voyeuristic mode of watching films to reveal how restricted the dynamics between film and audience are. As such, this example shall serve perfectly to explain how spectators are sutured into the fictional world of cinema, and at the same time, to illustrate Descartes's dark room parable about the limitations of human visual experience.

If *Rear Window* is indeed a "metaphor for cinema" in which Jeffries stands for the audience (Mulvey 23), the whole filmic text can be read as a rendering of the spectator's inability to escape the viewpoint provided by the looking subject. The viewer's limited agency is underpinned by Jeffries's constrained physical position—being tied to a wheelchair—as a result of which his perspective is as severely restricted by his binoculars and his camera as that of the viewers by cinematic technicalities (movements, positions of the camera, and editing). Memorable references to this shared position are the scenes in which Jeffries zooms in on the flats opposite: the dark framing of the camera is a direct reference to the filming device that controls our gaze. As Silverman argues, *Rear Window* "foregrounds the voyeuristic dimensions of the cinematic experience, making constant references to the speaking subject" (206). Another example in this regard is the episode when Thorwald suddenly looks back at Jeffries and later comes to attack him in his apartment. The alarming sound of Thorwald's footsteps, his menacing stare, the ominous glare of his cigarette in the darkness, his silhouette coming closer and closer reminds viewers that, similarly to Jeffries, we only wish to but are unable to control the spectacle. In our relation to the cinematic image, we are as immobile and helpless as Jeffries.

In Mladen Dolar's interpretation, "*Rear Window* is the Hitchcockian presentation of the Panopticon, his illustrative application of Bentham and Foucault" (144), since the flats opposite Jeffries's rear window evoke the cells under the pervasive scrutiny

of the Supervisor's controlling gaze. Yet, while in Bentham's and Foucault's Panopticon it is the prisoners who live in constant fear of the gaze they cannot see, in *Rear Window*, it is Jeffries who lives in permanent fear in his watchtower, troubled by fact that he cannot make his gaze ubiquitous (as an evidence of his powerlessness, he is asleep at the time of the murder). As Dolar concludes, "the inhabitants are not the prisoners of the gaze of the Other, with its invisible omnipresence; it is rather the Supervisor who is the prisoner, the prisoner of his own gaze—a gaze that does not see" (144). By connecting the experience of Jeffries with that of the viewers, the aim of metacinematic devices in *Rear Window* is thus to expose the conventional framework of watching films, according to which spectators wish to pervade the cinematic image with their gaze yet can only behold it from the position of peepers, as if through binoculars and a rear window.

By the same token, *Rear Window* can be interpreted as a re-enactment of the limitations of human visual perception as such where the window represents eyes. According to this metaphor, the window shades rolling up in the first scene are the eyelids opening to the external world. As Bozovic claims, "[t]hat the window we are looking through functions virtually as an eye is evident from the fact that the room itself functions as a camera obscura—what unfolds in the room on this side of the window is precisely the inverted image of what unfolds beyond the window of the flat on the opposite side of the courtyard—the Thorwalds' flat" (162). Jeff on this side is immobilised in a manner similar to Thorwald's wife on the opposite side, and the actions of these two characters are subordinated to those of their mobile partners, Lisa and Lars, respectively. This insight informs Bozovic's comparison of Jeff's room with the dark room in Descartes's parable: both spaces represent "the world of imitations, copies, and simulacra" in which we are all entrapped (163). In agreement with former criticism, I therefore believe that *Rear Window*, with its allusions to the limitations of the spectator's agency and of human visual perception, looks *through* rather than *at* viewers, or, in other words, it aims not to modify suture, but, as Zizek describes Hitchcock's works, "to pursue the transferential fiction to the end" (10).

The Passivising Gaze of *A Short Film about Love*

Being chiefly about love, "about how lust and love look *at* people and how they look *to them*" (Reeve 271), Kieślowski's *A Short Film about Love* represents a specific mode

of looking at the world, where the scope of sight is determined and distorted by desire. The trope of love makes this film a more nuanced rendering of voyeurism than *Rear Window*, yet, rather than providing spectators a more active agency than that of the observer, it only enhances the sense of being confined to a limited perspective.

A Short Film about Love is the feature length version of a part of Kieślowski's 1988 television series, *Dekalog*. It begins with a flashforward scene in which the young Tomek is dreaming about spying on his opposite neighbour, the beautiful, free-spirited Magda. The narrative recounts how Tomek gradually falls in love with the older woman as he obsessively watches her performing everyday activities and entertaining men in her apartment. One day, when they meet face-to-face, Tomek admits that he has been peeping on her, and when the two eventually go on a date Tomek declares his love. Magda shatters his innocent vision by responding that there is no such thing, only sexual desire. Yet, as she tries to prove her point by seducing him, which ends in Tomek having an orgasm, feeling gravely humiliated, and trying to commit suicide, Magda develops feelings that until that point she has believed to be only a sham. In the closing scene she visits Tomek, looks through his telescope, and imagines that the boy is in her apartment, standing by her side, ready to comfort, and, presumably, love her.

The hallucinatory final scene with the main female character looking back at her former, emotionally self-contained self could imply that Kieślowski's film induces more self-reflexivity in the audience than *Rear Window*. This plot element, however, does not serve to address the viewers but, as I argue, merely to illustrate character development. Accordingly, the fact that the hallucinated double at the other end of the telescope does not return the gaze to establish contact with her actual self means that the film does not make eye contact with the viewers. It is also important to note that the final scene about self-reflexivity was suggested by the lead actress Grażyna Szapołowska, to satisfy "the audience's need for a conventional story" (Haltof 96), which reinforces the impression that the fabric of the film is typical of classical film-audience dynamics.

Reformulating the above hypothesis in terms of suture theory, although the film "reverses the watcher/watched roles" (Haltof 96), the audience is made to identify with the position of the voyeur even after the tables are turned within the diegesis. Initially we occupy the same field, thereby the same role as Tomek, who obsessively snoops on the sexually promiscuous life of Magda. As his obsession grows,

Peeping Tomek[3] finds other ways to pry into Magda's life—he calls her on the phone, sends false notices to lure her into his workplace, the post office, takes a second job as a milk delivery man just to get closer to seeing her—and gradually leaves the role of the voyeur to become one of Magda's beaus. This, however, does not happen in the case of the viewers who, in their relation to the narrative, remain trapped in the space of observation until the end. In the scene when Tomek confesses his crime to Magda, the two figures standing on the street are shown from the viewpoint of a spy hiding behind a car, which implies that even if the camera dissolves a subjective point of view, it does so only to switch to another subjective or an omniscient perspective. After Tomek is sexually humiliated, as a result of which he tries to slash his wrists, the audience remains with Magda, who starts obsessively monitoring Tomek's apartment through a pair of opera glasses. Therefore, while "the object of voyeurism becomes the voyeur" and "the loved one becomes the lover" in the diegetic world (Berardinelli), neither the film nor the spectator changes their roles—the former remains scene, the latter remains observer.

Let us not forget, however, that the movie suggests the possibility—even if only within the diegesis—of creating intersubjectivity, empathy, and understanding through looking. Most importantly, this appears in the form of character developments which are analogous with Tomek and Magda's changing attitude towards love. Tomek's yearning to see Magda, which is initially not different from the physiological cravings of hunger, thirst, and sleep, gradually grows into a kind of love which urges him to initiate actual, not exclusively one-way communication with the desired woman. Thus, when Magda asks Tomek whether he masturbated while looking at her, the boy's answer is: "I used to, but not anymore." The scene when the two go on an actual date also signals the gradual transformation of Tomek's voyeuristic desires into a less objectifying affection.

The female protagonist goes through an even more radical development. After his suicide attempt, she desperately tries to call on him only to be sent away by the over-protective landlady. Her behaviour cannot be simply explained with her bad conscience: just as Tomek develops a genuine interest in Magda, so does she in the initially repulsive boy. In fact, they so thoroughly swap roles that Magda believes she can now understand Tomek's psychological motivations and can

3 The name I use here is a pun which comes about by piecing together the character's name and the commonly known nickname, peeping Tom, referring to the male voyeur.

completely identify with his point of view. As Reeve remarks, "even the musical leitmotif that was his signature at the beginning of the film becomes hers" (282).

The illusion of identifying with the other's perspective is condensed in the final scene in which Magda peeps through Tomek's telescope and hallucinates that she is watching her own self, who apparently finds comfort, reconciliation, and love in the person of Tomek. If one disregarded the fact that with this happy ending the filmmakers wanted to achieve the effects of a conventional love story, the final scene could be perceived as a metacinematic gesture. Yet, the tables are not turned in terms of the film-audience dichotomy, exactly because the aim to please the viewers is that of the passivising filmic gaze, which also explains why looking is represented as inescapably delusive in the movie.[4]

A Short Film about Love can be seen as the intertext of *Rear Window*, inasmuch as it also uses the motif of windows as a metaphor for human eyes. Still, whereas the rectangular rear window in Hitchcock's film stands for the limitations of human visual perception in general, the circular glass surfaces in Kieślowski's film epitomise vision which is inescapably distorted by desire. The lens of Tomek's telescope, the convex lens hanging on the window pane in Magda's living room, the snowball she gets as a present, the round hole in the wall of Tomek's post office cubicle, to mention only a few of several similar objects appearing in the film, signify the deformity and the circular pattern of perception that any person in love would be unable to break.

In this sense, one cannot talk about character development either, since, as Danusia Stok explains, Magda and Tomek "are going round and round in circles, . . . not achieving what they want" (145), namely, a clear vision of the other that could be the basis of their mutual, intimate love. Although the film's ending suggests that "when done with love [looking] can lead to seeing and understanding" (Reeve 285), the overwhelming presence of circular motifs undermines this message, and shows how vision can "feed the obsessive circle of fantasy" (285). Knowing that the positive ending of *A Short Film about Love* was created with the intention of pleasing the audience further problematises the optimistic representation of vision. To sum up, although Kieślowski's drama is a beautifully implemented, visually sophisticated depiction of looking when in love, it reinforces limited spectatorial agency by reenacting the impossibility of the viewer's escape from the position of the voyeur.

4 The opening scene that shows Tomek dreaming about peeping on Magda is a flash-forward to the final hallucinatory scene, which renders the rest of the movie effectively a flashback, a double delusion, Tomek's dream distorting *ab initio* the view of the whole representational world.

Therefore, similarly to *Rear Window*, *A Short Film about Love* consistently looks *through* rather than *at* spectators.

The Telltale Eyes of *Facing Windows*

Ferzan Ozpetek's *Facing Windows*, an example of contemporary auteur cinema, looks at viewers differently. In my reading, it destabilises the conventional dynamics between spectacle and spectator, because it occasionally urges viewers to reflect on their limited voyeuristic agency. This is achieved by three distinct but interrelated means: 1) by refusing the objectifying influence of voyeurism within the diegesis; 2) by providing a multiplicity of perspectives to be identified with; and 3) by creating thorough ambiguity concerning the distinction between fiction and reality, which culminates in a crucial hallucinatory scene. It must be noted, however, that not even in this emotionally elevated, illusory moment does the main character look directly outwards, and, in this sense, *Facing Windows* too is an example of classical narrative cinema. Yet, I argue that the filmic gaze addresses the audience mainly through the main character Giovanna's telltale eyes, as she is able to establish a confidential relationship with the viewers through the camera.

Indeed, the story is told through and *by* Giovanna's eyes, from which it follows that *Facing Windows* displays specific features of the "cinema of attractions." The main character's positioning (more precisely, doubling) and the undefinable direction of her gaze make the spectator self-conscious, the movie ambiguously metafictional, and the gaze of the whole filmic text oscillatory, meaning that it occasionally and implicitly blurs the boundary between the act of watching and actual looking. By inciting spectators to detach themselves from the point of view of the voyeur, that is, the perspective they had originally adopted, *Facing Windows* requires self-reflection from viewers, offering a more active spectatorial agency than either *Rear Window* or *A Short Film about Love*. This also implies that identification here is different from that in the other two movies and is rather conceived "as a series of shifting positions [which] assumes that cinematic identification is as fragile and unstable as identity itself" (Mayne 27). In short, the movie's oscillating gaze results in an inconsistent spectatorial agency.

In *Facing Windows*, the viewers see mainly through the eyes of Giovanna, a young mother of two children, an always nagging wife. Her disgruntlement is not unrelated to her unfulfilled desire to become a pastry chef; she works as an accountant

in a poultry factory. Her yearning is, as it were, sublimated into the habit of peeping: she secretly gazes at the window of the opposite apartment and its handsome resident, Lorenzo. The two eventually meet, and they together end up looking after an old man who is walking the streets of Rome unconsciously, suffering from partial memory loss. While helping Davide unfold his story and regain his identity, Lorenzo and Giovanna's romantic interest in each other also develops toward its climax.

Although it is about love, *Facing Windows* refuses the objectifying, passivising influence of voyeurism. Early in the film, Giovanna's daughter says: "I told you I don't feel like watching TV," and she would prefer to help the adults arrange groceries. At this point, it seems that Martina inherited the willfulness of her mother, who is similarly obsessed with order, annoyed by any disruption or intrusion into her vision.[5] Giovanna's stubborn insistence that only her view is correct could also explain why she starts spying on Lorenzo's life, but her looks, similarly to those of Tomek in *A Short Film about Love*, are infused with shame: her eyes are cast down after catching something private and she always closes the window after peeping. Her behaviour betrays that she does not derive pleasure from voyeurism, and that, by watching somebody else's life, she only wants to elude the disappointments and frustrations of her own. This assumption is also supported by the fact that once she faces her disappointed self, she renounces peeping. In this sense, Martina foreshadows her mother's superiority which results from her self-reflexivity rather than from seeing more accurately than others, and in a similar manner, Giovanna focalises the spectator's self-reflexive agency when facing herself in the window in the hallucinatory scene.

Facing Windows differs from *Rear Window* and resembles *A Short Film about Love* for another reason as well: it does not confine itself to the subjective point of view of the main character. However, contrary to *A Short Film about Love,* where both available viewpoints are influenced by distorted vision, in *Facing Windows*, we are presented with a multiplicity of perspectives not all of which are infused with the delusions of voyeuristic desire. The first scene that disperses the main female character's dominant point of view is the one in which we learn that Giovanna and Lorenzo engage in mutual voyeurism: Giovanna's friend Eminé reveals to her that "He spied on you just like you spied on him." In this light, Lorenzo's perspective is added to that of Giovanna, even if only as its duplication. When, however, Davide appears, his

5 In a scene when Giovanna wants to report an illegal worker at the factory, her friend mockingly calls her an SS officer just to make light of her behaviour.

own oblique and confused perspective is also added to the others'. Therefore, gaze here is not a privilege and, at the same time, limitation, of a male hero, let alone one single character, but belongs to multiple characters and their perspectives. There are a few scenes that I shall highlight in this regard.

In what I term the "scene of the travelling gaze," Lorenzo's perspective gains narrative significance as his attention focuses on the lost Davide sitting on a fountain behind Giovanna. This implies that he is not only interested in the love affair but also dedicated to the common cause of helping the Holocaust survivor find his bearings in the present. At the same time, he passes the gaze on to Giovanna, so it can be suggested that the viewer identifies with the two characters' shared perspective, which, in addition, points beyond their desire towards each other, creating a supplement embodied in the concern for Davide.

The film also stages several instances of a phenomenon which I refer to as "the spinning gaze." In these scenes all main points of view are included and equalised in a full circle tracking shot (with montage), with the camera revolving around the characters and the perspective changing according to who holds the gaze. A crucial scene in this regard is when Giovanna, Lorenzo, and Davide are waiting for their drinks at a street bar, taking a break after the former two followed the old man's ramblings through Rome. Since a fourth male character appears on the scene, who we assume to be Davide's long-gone lover, it is here that we get the first hints of his homosexuality and of his traumatic past inflecting and confusing his present vision. These are important details from two aspects. Firstly, as Davide introduced himself from the beginning as Simone—the name of the object of his desire—his subplot mirrors the relationship of Giovanna and Lorenzo where the roles of the loved one and that of the lover are exchanged, just as in *A Short Film about Love*. Secondly, the presence of the past is also important here, as, by intruding into the present, it blurs temporality. Since the character sees his dead loved ones as clearly as the living around him, scenes such as this imply that according to the film's conception of memory, one never entirely loses others but retains little smithereens of them in oneself. Aided by sensory memory, the fragments of lost people make one see, hear, and smell them as if they were still here. The concept of memory as a form of intersubjectivity can also be aligned with the gaze of the film per se insofar as the latter also alludes to viewers as participants in a form of intersubjective communication.[6]

6 In fact, one can imagine Giovanna ambiguously addressing the audience in the same way as Davide addresses his old love, Simone.

The role of memory is also crucial in the third scene which demonstrates the multiplicity of perspectives. This is the "scene of the dancing gaze," a music-triggered memory sequence showing Davide looking back at his past lover while dancing with Giovanna in the present. Apart from projecting on each other past and present, the scene is also significant because the act of dancing with a pretty woman, with obvious erotic overtones, gains a new, homoerotic perspective. In this way, it is not only the desirer who changes positions in *Facing Windows*: the object of the desire is also rendered multifarious. Scenes like those of "the travelling gaze," "the spinning gaze," and "the dancing gaze," therefore, tend to blur the dichotomy between the object and the holder of the gaze in more than one respect.

In *Facing Windows*, all perspectives have their own focus. What is more, these foci are also looking agents, which changes the traditional one-way relation between the holder and the object of the gaze. Metaphorically, Giovanna's gaze as a ray intersects with that of Lorenzo and, in their relationship, Davide serves as an intersection that allows the other two to connect with each other. In addition, the old man also connects past and present perspectives by unwittingly projecting past images on the present scenarios. This multiplicity and intersection of different points of view enables Giovanna to reflect on her own position, outside the circuit of the narcissistic gaze, while the spectator is also caught in a moment of reflection.

In the scene when Giovanna and Lorenzo are finally together in the latter's apartment, Giovanna goes to his window to spy on her own life—her husband, her children, her friend, and eventually the reflection of her own discontented self—and decides to leave Lorenzo for her family and to give herself the opportunity to change her carrier and start baking professionally. This cinematic moment, which "diverges from the traditional cinematic perspective that champions the male gaze, and . . . assumes male spectatorship" (Occhipinti 532), also challenges cinema's role of providing pleasure for the viewer, because it reveals that the point of view we have been identifying with was affected by Giovanna's delusions. As a symbolic gesture, she takes off Lorenzo's glasses and finally sees her lifeworld as Lorenzo's fantasy in which her own self is absent and her family members are reduced to silhouettes. Unlike in *A Short Film about Love,* where neither Tomek nor Magda break out from the confines of voyeuristic vision, Giovanna's development implies a process of gaining clarity of vision, of coming to terms with her own repressed desires. This is why it is so important that her two selves are facing each other. The contact between her still deluded and more experienced self prevents her from satiating her voyeuristic

drives, helps reveal her true dream that was formerly substituted with an erotic fantasy and, in a broader sense, it also reinstates the potential of the gaze to create empathy, understanding, and intersubjectivity. Thirdly, and most importantly, even though Giovanna does not address us directly, she is positioned in a way that directs the filmic gaze at us, thus turning the whole fabric of the narrative into telltale eyes.

Although, as I have mentioned above, there is no instance of direct address in ninety-nine percent of the film, Giovanna as half-actress and half-character, a half-fictitious and half-real-life narrator plays a crucial role in conveying this story.[7] As such, she could occupy a "superior epistemic position within the fictional world," which is usually allotted to characters who perform direct address in movies, and who consequently seem "to know more—or are in a position of greater knowledge within the fiction—than other characters" (Brown 14). However, since she does not acknowledge the spectator's presence but only seems to be more sensitive to it, her position cannot arise from a heightened sense of knowledge but rather from heightened sensibility—as in sensory perception—which manifests itself in her genuine flair for non-verbal communication—her voice, gaze, gestures, facial expressions, and body language—to impress others and convey meaning. Since these abilities make the character Giovanna occupy a position which one might call superior sensorial, her eyes can be perceived as projecting the filmic gaze per se.

Giovanna's superior sensorial position is epitomised by the closing scene in which we see her walking in a park and hear her voice-over: it is almost clear that she is reading out or reciting a letter written to Davide, explaining how difficult it is to forget him and all the things he had taught her. She says that when she is working in the pastry shop, she still feels the elderly man's guiding presence by her side, which recalls the definition of memory as intersubjectivity, and at the same time alludes to the assumption that the relationship between film and audience can also be regarded as intersubjective. As if to enact this concept, the closing shot features an extreme close-up on Giovanna looking directly into the camera; her eyes are smiling as if knowing something: telltale eyes.

7 An interesting fact that underpins the idea of the film initiating a form of intersubjective communication with viewers is that the characters of Giovanna and her husband Filippo are played by actors with the same names. This detail, along with the actress Giovanna's natural demeanour in relation to the camera, creates the sense of watching real people, real lives, or of hearing a first-hand account of a personal story.

In this light, one could claim that the story is told through Giovanna's eyes. Yet, it remains difficult to decide whom Giovanna's voice and gaze are addressed at: Davide or the viewers outside the diegetic world.[8] It is, however, exactly this ambiguity of address, entailing both the possibility and impossibility of understanding others completely, that makes human communication intersubjective and, consequently, intersubjective communication human. As I argued, it is due to Giovanna's ambiguous cross-diegetic gestures that the filmic gaze of *Facing Windows* oscillates and that at moments such as during Giovanna's hallucination we have a sense as if the film itself was looking *at* us.

The Hectically Oscillating Gaze of *Moonrise Kingdom*

Whether *Moonrise Kingdom* looks *at* or *through* us is difficult to tell, since Wes Anderson's filmic gaze combines all the viewing mechanisms which I have been discussing up to now, and more. By drawing us into omniscient and restricted points of view it passivises us, by "favouring carefully crafted tableaus" it makes us aware of the performance of our watching (Goldberg n. pag.), and by repeatedly addressing us through not one but various characters yet withdrawing the direct gaze the very next moment, it offers a completely baffling spectatorial experience. The sudden shifts between different modes of address underpin the idea that *Moonrise Kingdom* casts a hectically oscillating gaze upon its viewers. As Lily Goldberg argues, this is a film "in which the 'look' is constantly negotiated." Yet while Goldberg refers to the contested dominance of the male gaze within the diegesis of *Moonrise Kingdom*, I shall apply the notion of the constantly negotiated look to describe the special dynamics between this film and the audience, because viewers can never have a clear sense of who does the gazing: they or *Moonrise Kingdom*, the looking subject.

The plot in *Moonrise Kingdom* revolves around two teenage runaways: Sam, who feels cast out because the other boys in his scout unit believe that as an orphan he is "emotionally disturbed," and his pen pal, Suzy Bishop, who has problems controlling her violent outbursts and is treated as a "very troubled child" by her family.

8 It seems that addressivity is in crisis from the very beginning; the miscommunications within the family, Giovanna talking to thin air about love, the undelivered letter written by Davide to Simone, let alone Giovanna's voyeuristic fantasies about Lorenzo, all demonstrate that it is impossible to express desire without misdirecting it.

Fed up with being labelled as cantankerous, naughty kids, they escape together like adult lovers. During their journey across the island of New Penzance they find a beach which becomes their haven and which they call Moonrise Kingdom, while their freedom is threatened by the scouts, the police, and the Bishop family, who are all trying to track them down.

As Dana Bubulj argues, the "initial attraction of two children who don't seem to fit in with their peers/siblings and decide to run away together is something the audience watching can key into as nostalgic escapism." This means that while the film is centred around the trope of scopophilia resulting from emotional alienation, estrangement, dysfunctionality, and failure of communication within the family, it also presents a metanarrative of escaping the aforementioned problems as a gesture to restore our romantic, optimistic, intersubjective relation to fiction. Thus, similarly to *Facing Windows*, *Moonrise Kingdom* tackles the issue of addressivity not only within the diegetic world, but also through references to the film's mode of address which is so utterly ambiguous that it evokes the fancy of the film being a capricious teenage child. It is not by chance that the filmic gaze is manifested in the eyes of the main female character Suzy, whose attitude towards the viewers changes abruptly: one moment we are invited to see through her eyes only to be pushed away as intruders the very next moment.

As a window to the world in which viewers never know where they stand, *Moonrise Kingdom* opens with a scene that both beckons and repels the audience. The camera starts panning the interiors of the Bishop family house that stands on Summer's End, a remote corner of New Penzance. An embroidered picture hanging on the wall depicts the house itself, so that when the camera shows the building from outside, one might wonder whether this is not just another *mise-en-abyme* in the many-layered representational maze. One stratum in this world is a cluster of references to *Rear Window*, which makes *Moonrise Kingdom* an intertext of one of the most influential movies about the gaze, and consequently, a metacinematic manifestation of the voyeuristic mode of watching films.

The opening scene already contains a series of references to the act of watching. As Goldberg explains, "Anderson's tracking shots normalise the violation of the Bishop family's privacy by providing an omniscient and impossible viewpoint, relieving the viewer of the feeling that such voyeurism is *realistic* while simultaneously inviting the viewer to partake in surveillance." Apart from the voyeuristic panning shots, the opening scene also foregrounds the motifs of windows and binoculars,

both of which signify the act of looking, and, more precisely, watching films: just like in *Rear Window*, the curtains are opened as if they were eyelids opening to the external world. However, the flow of intertextual references is arrested when we get a reverse-shot that shows the exterior of the house with Suzy standing in the window and staring directly at us through her beloved binoculars.

This sudden shift between opposing modes of address epitomises the whole fabric of the film insofar as "every time the viewer becomes comfortable accepting Anderson's surveillant practices as a natural aspect of his filmmaking, Suzy appears suddenly, gazing intently back at the viewer" (Goldberg). As Goldberg further argues,

> [t]hroughout *Moonrise Kingdom*, viewers are invited to assume Suzy's gaze through the usage of binocular shots, wherein the ocular circles of Suzy's binoculars frame a wide or panning shot. The addition of the binocular frame lends these shots a constructed intimacy, as the purpose of binoculars is to narrow the gaze on a person of interest. These binocular shots are explicitly voyeuristic; this voyeurism depends upon the viewer's recognition of Suzy as the articulator of the gaze.

Although I agree with Goldberg that the shots framed by Suzy's binoculars are explicitly voyeuristic, I would not go so far as to state that they evoke a sense of intimacy. The intimacy evoked might exist between character and character, but not between character and audience. Instead, recalling my former claim in connection with *Rear Window*, I would suggest that the framing of the camera is a reference to the spectator's limited agency in relation to the filming device.

In my view, the scenes in *Moonrise Kingdom* which, by means of reference, insert the ocular circles of the camera into the mise-en-scène serve to distance the audience by reminding them of the impossibility of leaving the absolute point of view provided by the film. However, with a sudden shift from a binocular shot to a reverse-shot showing Suzy directly gazing at the audience, *Moonrise Kingdom* also invites a more active spectatorial agency. One could even assume that *Moonrise Kingdom* is the reversed image of *Rear Window*, the camera obscura of the camera obscura, since while Hitchcock's film places both the aperture and the absolute point of view in the same vertical dimension, thereby making them occupy the same optical field, *Moonrise Kingdom* occasionally positions the viewer on the infamous "other side" which

is unattainable for Jeffries, and by doing so, it creates the sense of the film watching us through the character's binoculars. The result of this, as Goldberg puts it, is that "the unwavering presence of the camera's look in Anderson's films might prevent viewers from partaking in the voyeuristic identification."

Another element which enhances the oscillations of Wes Anderson's filmic gaze is the use of sound and voice. In the opening scene, we first perceive sound in the form of intra-diegetic music, as the Bishop children begin listening to Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, but at the same moment when Suzy breaks the fourth wall, the melody enters the extra-diegetic sphere, thus serving as a musical counterpoint to the metalepsis visually performed by the character. As Imani Mosley states, "[t]he play of space blurs the line of how we as viewers are supposed to experience the music, asking the listener to understand what they hear as part of their world as well as of the world on screen." The fact that "much of the music is heard by both the audience and the characters inside the film" makes one suppose that the characters also see what we see, thus the ambivalent use of sound and music also contributes to destabilising the dichotomy between spectacle and spectator, between fiction and reality.

The ambiguous mode of address introduced by the opening scene is characteristic of the whole fabric of the film, and the repeated but ambivalent appearances of direct address play a crucial role in achieving this effect. Regarding the use of this device in Anderson's films, Brown suggests that "the question of whom the characters are looking at when they look at the camera is difficult to discern" (175). This means that at one moment we are certain that the character is looking at us, breaking down the fourth wall, only for an immediate insertion of a reverse shot to revert the extra-diegetic gaze into the diegetic world, restoring the sense of being immersed into fictional reality.

The scene when the two runaways are finally found by the search party illustrates the intensity of the oscillation of the filmic gaze. Hiding in a tent on the beach, aware that their liberty will soon be curtailed again, the kids hug each other protectively while projecting frightened looks into the camera, so that we feel like intruders in their world. Similar to the hallucinatory scene in *Facing Windows*, this scene makes us uncomfortably conscious of our voyeuristic mode of watching films, to the point that we feel that we are spying on the characters. In such moments, the viewer is identified not with Suzy and Sam's perspective, but with the parents and the scouts, that is, those who encroach upon the shared intimacy of the two

runaways. However, the camera position abruptly changes once again, and we are shown Suzy's father lifting the kids' tent above his head with all the other members of the search party lined up behind him. Right after being identified and confronted as voyeurs, we are relieved of the burden of conscious watching and of being watched by the characters.

Although in Wes Anderson's film several characters are endowed with an ambiguous awareness, that is, they repeatedly use direct address which they subsequently also withdraw, I regard the character of Suzy the most important in creating an intersubjective connection with the audience, because as a "troubled child," she shares the capriciousness of the filmic gaze of *Moonrise Kingdom*. In the scene where Suzy and Sam are watching deer through her binoculars, the girl says (about the stag): "He knows someone's watching him. I just think he can feel us." Although not addressing the audience directly, Suzy here instils the feeling in the viewer that she knows that she is part of the fictional world and that we are looking at her. Her intradiegetic comment is a gesture directed towards the audience. However, as she later explains her obsession with peeping, her binoculars "help [her] see things closer, even if they're not very far away," and she consistently refers to them as the source of her "magic power" throughout the film. These remarks on scopophilia highlight not the distancing effect of direct address, which would construct the viewer as voyeur, but its potential of providing clairvoyance, of mentally and emotionally involving the viewer into the lifeworld of the character. More clearly put, although Suzy frequently uses her binoculars to look directly at us, the way she perceives peeping emphasises the desire to see, to know things better, to create connections between people within and beyond the boundaries of the fictional universe rather than aiming at alienation.

In this sense, Suzy is very similar to Giovanna in *La Finestra di Fronte*, because her eyes, meaningfully mascaraed with bright-blue eye shadow, carry special significance in addressing the viewers and can be perceived as projecting the filmic gaze per se. Yet, since Ozpetek's movie is closer to classical narrative cinema, Giovanna occupies a superior sensorial but not a superior epistemic position: although she is more sensitive to the spectator's presence than other characters, she does not address us directly, she does not seem to know that we are watching her character. Giovanna's superior position is never separated from her intra-diegetic character-position and *Facing Windows* does not perform such sudden, chiasmic shifts between intra and extra-diegetic roles as *Moonrise Kingdom*. In the latter movie, on the other

hand, even though Suzy's extra-diegetic gazes are instantly withdrawn and are integrated into the coherent fabric of the film, she seems to be in a "a position of greater knowledge within the fiction than other characters" (Brown 14). As Rachel Joseph claims, the consistent "acknowledgement of the camera and an audience watching the spectacle unfold brings forth a kind of 'cinema of attractions'" in the case of *Moonrise Kingdom*, "that makes the whole film framed by an intentional theatricality and address to the audience" (60).

Similar to Giovanna, Suzy's character also functions as the film's narrator. According to Irini Kalesi's insightful observation, the narrative fabric of *Moonrise Kingdom* is comprised of three layers, which I believe also entail three distinct modes of address. As Kalesi elucidates,

> The first level of narration is carried out by a non-perceptible external narrator who visually presents the story to the audience. The second level is the red-coated narrator who provides the viewers with the background story, foreshadowing aspects and his own judgements . . . In the third narrative level, Suzie recites her stories to Sam. (27)

From this narrative structure it follows that, by way of visually immersing the audience into the representational world, the non-perceptible external narrator addresses us as voyeurs, the red-coated narrator verbally addresses us as still quite passive listeners, and, by consistently but ambiguously addressing us through her voice and gaze, Suzy manifests the oscillating mode of address of the whole film.

Suzy's narrator position is also reinforced by her love of reading and reciting fictional stories. As Kalesi argues, she "functions as a storyteller for Sam and thus tries to insert him into her fantasy world" (26). Moreover, the flashback scenes which retell the story of Suzy and Sam's relationship through letters serve as yet another form of intimate address which is most typical of Suzy among all the characters and narrators.[9] Surrounded by emotionally dysfunctional adults, Suzy uses the personal tone of letters and the voice of fictional narration to suspend her disbelief in the effectiveness of human interactions and to gain—even if imaginary—understanding, empathy, and intimacy. In short, Suzy strongly believes that she can tran-

9 This idea explains why Sam, who actually initiates their correspondence, begins his first letter to the girl with a compliment: "Dear Suzy, you have a superb voice."

scend the bleakness of her lifeworld, so her quirks—her fits of temper, her obsession with reading and correspondence, and her arguably premature relationship with Sam—are symptomatic of her superior epistemic position which surfaces in moments when she seems to be reading her story directly to us or when she seems to be looking out of her world into ours. All in all, it is due to Suzy's ambiguous address towards viewers that, despite the overwhelming trope of emotional estrangement, the film has "a rapt quality, as if we are viewing the events through Suzy's binoculars or reading the story under the covers by a flashlight" (Jones).

In conclusion, what the analysis of *Moonrise Kingdom* has shown is that the mode of its address oscillates with great intensity between treating the viewers as passive observers, sympathetic scopophiliacs, unwanted intruders, and equal partners in an intersubjective relationship between film and audience. Compared to *Rear Window*, *A Short Film about Love* and *Facing Windows*, Wes Anderson's film provides the highest amplitude of the changes of the filmic gaze, since it constantly poses the question whether it can split up the suture that is meant to sew the viewer into the unreflective experience of watching films, or, in other words, whether it can break into the dark room of our visual perception. Similarly but more emphatically than *Facing Windows*, *Moonrise Kingdom* undermines the binary distinctions between "the cinema of attractions" and "narrative cinema" as well between "gaze cinema" and "glance cinema," since as its characters first look out at us, then retreat into the diegetic world, it shows that the mode of address can change hectically even within an individual cinematic production.

Conclusion

In this paper the notion of the filmic gaze was not understood as the source of mastery the viewing subject asserts over the cinematic image, that is, as it was introduced by early Lacanian film theoreticians—Baudry, Metz, and Mulvey. Instead, the present notion of the cinematic gaze—evoking the original Lacanian concept—refers to the mode of address, the whole fabric of the film, which is consequently construed as a looking subject. Silverman's suture theory and Descartes's dark room parable were employed to demonstrate this reconceptualised notion of the filmic gaze, and to reveal that most films—even highly self-reflexive ones aiming to call attention to the act of watching—look *through* rather than *at* spectators, since their diegesis adheres to maintaining the image-beholder dichotomy.

Yet, my hypothesis was that there are films which deviate from this convention. By blurring the boundary between an intra-diegetic and extra-diegetic visual experience, these movies look at us mainly through the characters' telltale eyes which occasionally suggests that the film is aware of being watched and is capable of watching us. I argued that such films have a hybrid, oscillating gaze, and since they partly look *through* us as if we were voyeurs, partly look *at* us as if we were equal partners in the act of looking, their mode of address can be perceived as a form of intersubjective communication.

Although Tom Gunning and Timothy Corrigan relied on distinct modes of address when they chronologised and categorised trends of film reception, their genealogies fail to account for the oscillating filmic gaze. Consequently, I contend that films which haphazardly address us through the characters' telltale eyes do not fit into the theoretical categories provided by Gunning and Corrigan. I attempted to demonstrate this idea through the comparative analysis of three films, where the fourth, *Rear Window*, served to prepare the ground for the upcoming argument for the relevance of the term "oscillating filmic gaze."

I selected Krzysztof Kieślowski's *A Short Film about Love*, Ferzan Ozpetek's *Facing Windows,* and Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom*, firstly because these movies abound in optical devices representing human eyes, thereby supposedly activating moments of de-suturing, and secondly because the centred themes of peeping, voyeurism, and scopophilia seemed useful to explore the nature of the filmic gaze. In fact, it was necessary to investigate such films, since I was interested in whether their references to the acts of watching and looking inevitably entail a more varied and active spectatorial agency than the one prescribed by conventional film-audience dynamics, or not. In other words, I wanted to examine whether films address the audience depending on or irrespective of existing theoretical classifications.

Through the analyses I found that although the trope of love makes *A Short Film about Love* a more nuanced rendering of voyeurism than *Rear Window*, it only enhances the sense of being confined to a limited perspective. Even though the object and subject of the gaze change roles within the diegesis, the audience-pleasing ending and the pervasive presence of circular glass surfaces uphold the conventional film-audience relation. Thus, despite its references to the illusory mastery of the viewing subject, the first example showed that self-reflexive films do not necessarily grant us active spectatorial agency. Ozpetek's *Facing Windows* seemingly complies with the traditions of narrative cinema in as much as it does not break the fourth

wall until the very end. However, the telltale eyes of Giovanna—who occasionally and ambiguously addresses the viewer—can be perceived as the manifestation of the film's gaze per se, which thereby treats us as both passive observers and as looking subjects. Therefore, Ozpetek's drama demonstrated that movies classified as narrative cinema can also gaze *at* us and provide active spectatorial agency. The other example that illustrated the oscillatory nature of visual address was Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom*, since it hectically varies between treating the viewers as voyeurs and as looking subjects. Similar to *Facing Windows*, Anderson's movie cannot be classified into either "glance" or "gaze cinema," either "cinema of attractions" or "narrative cinema"; therefore, it also implies that not all films fit into customary theoretical categorisations. Along these lines, my last two examples served to prove that films address the audience irrespective of conventional theoretical categorisations, that in fact, each film regards the viewer in their own special way.

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Extreme Subjectivity

Theoretical Considerations for the First-Person Narrativisation of Death

BRIGITTA GYIMESI

Abstract: The majority of narratives assign death scenes a crucial role in the development of the plot and characters; yet despite its prominence, dying per se frequently remains untold, with works utilising first-person narrators or focalisers proving especially problematic. From a commonsensical point of view, the authors' reluctance at representing the moment of death is justifiable since they do not possess any comparable experience. But the fact that all first-person descriptions of death are inauthentic does not mean that they cannot be subject to narrative representation. As it will be demonstrated through the discussion of some recent work in the field of 'unnatural narratology' and the cognitive sciences, it may be possible to create a valid and valuable narrative of death even from a first-person perspective.

Few topics exert such an enduring fascination on the human imagination as death does. With the possible exception of children's literature, most narratives feature death and mortality one way or another and the majority assign death scenes a crucial role in the development of plot and characters. Yet, despite its prominence, dying *per se* frequently remains untold, with works utilising first-person narrators or focalisers proving especially problematic: authors usually refrain from narrating the moment of death, leaving it to the implicit understanding of the reader that it somehow happened, even though the events leading up to it are often given a cautiously detailed description. From a commonsensical point of view, their reluctance at representing the moment of death is justifiable: since they do not possess any comparable experience, their attempts to describe the process of dying can easily result in a clumsy, grotesque, or outright comical piece of writing, which may disrupt

the stylistic aims and unity of the text. But the fact that all first-person descriptions of death are (in the strict sense of the word) inauthentic does not mean that they cannot be subject to narrative representation. Recent work in the field of 'unnatural narratology' and the cognitive sciences might legitimise such attempts of narrativisation, but before getting ahead of ourselves, let us examine how and why the moment of death, despite near-ideal narratological circumstances, is relegated to the margins by William Faulkner (who employs a dead narrator in *As I Lay Dying*) and Virginia Woolf (whose stream-of-consciousness technique would have lent itself to such an enterprise).

As I Lay Dying is essentially the *marche funèbre* of Addie Bundren, who dies early in the novel, so a touch of the mortal is always palpable throughout. The use of multiple narrators would not be particularly interesting in itself, but one of the perspectives the text allows a glimpse into seems exciting. All chapter titles designate the identity of the narrator recounting the events in the given chapter, so when around the middle of the book the reader encounters a section headed by the name ADDIE, indicating that it is her turn to narrate, it furtively suggests an account of what dying is like from the point of view of the experiencer herself. But in spite of, or rather because of, our eager anticipation, this promise, already implicit in the title *As I Lay Dying*, remains unfulfilled: even though the reader willingly accepts the unconventional and unnatural presence of a dead narrator in exchange for a possibly enlightening shred of knowledge, this section thereafter ruthlessly cheats them as it neither describes nor refers to Addie's moment of death in any way. The reader is robbed of both the involvement and authentic representation resulting from the first-person narration and the detachment arising from Addie's hindsight and retrospective evaluation.

On the one hand, this could be explained away by the main subject matter of Addie's musings, i.e. her contempt for language and her scepticism as to the usefulness of words. Addie repeatedly calls attention to the incapability of language to represent, as when she meditates on love: she draws a sharp contrast between the word love, which she deems "just a shape to fill a lack," and the feeling love, when one "wouldn't need a word for that any more than for pride or fear" (Faulkner 156). If words are not enough to capture and convey one's sensations and feelings (or they even distort them), how could language be a suitable medium for representing such an idiosyncratic event as one's own death? Death, similarly to love, is something that should be *experienced*; regarding one's own death, it is pointless to engage

in discussions on its nature as that would cast doubt on the truthfulness of the experience in question as well.

On the other hand, cognitive and existential constraints might be another reason behind the absence of any reference to Addie's experience as, according to Ann Banfield, "to speak of something always implies reflective consciousness of it" (198). Death is arguably excluded from the list of events that can be subjected to self-reflexive examination; thus, instead of the apparently most qualified character in the novel, it is Dr. Peabody who provides a summary of what death is: "when I was young I believed death to be a phenomenon of the body; now I know it to be merely a function of the mind … it is no more than a single tenant or family moving out of a tenement or a town" (Faulkner 37). While we should not necessarily regard a character's subjective speculations as instances of truth, accepting Peabody's translocational theory would lend further support for Addie's negligent attitude towards her death, which in this respect is degraded to a minor, practically marginal event not even worthy of mentioning.

Although such post-mortem monologues would be at odds with her refined prose style, Woolf's commendable use of the stream-of-consciousness technique carries in it the potential for narrativising the last moments of a character's life. She rejects direct monologues on the grounds that it "traps the reader within a single subjectivity," pushing her towards external yet intimate representations which "allow her to give a literal voice to many characters, particularly in *Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *The Years*" (Snaith 147). This ambiguous, blended technique has led Woolf's critics to liken some of her characters, most notably Mrs Dalloway and Lily Briscoe, to free indirect discourse: "the desire to know the other and the limits intrinsic to an external other's knowability are precariously held within the tensions of the formal properties of free indirect discourse itself" (Edmondson 26). The potential, however, does not oblige Woolf to narrate the death of a character, and often she indeed lets the opportunity slip by.

By virtue of subtle hints, symbols, and allusions, death is always lurking in the background in each of her works and this especially holds true of *To the Lighthouse* where Mrs Ramsay's death is arguably the gravitational point of the plot. From a textual point of view, the importance of Mrs Ramsay's non-existence far outweighs that of her existence. Her death, in the reasoning of Roberta Rubenstein, is repeatedly foreshadowed even in the first section when life is apparently bubbling with all force, the disfigurement of a fruit installation being one such ill omen that "anticipates

the larger emptiness that will occur when Mrs Ramsay is 'not there'" (Rubenstein 42). In the first part of *To the Lighthouse*, Mrs Ramsay is the main focaliser; the reader spends a considerable amount of time getting acquainted with her thoughts, desires, and fears, maybe even bonding with her eventually and feeling sympathy for her private plights, and the implied author certainly seems particularly attached to this creation of hers, whom she carefully nurtures through dozens of pages. It comes as a shock, therefore, that we abruptly learn of Mrs Ramsay's death in a radically marginalised manner: "Mr Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty" (339).

This nonchalant, hurried remark calls attention to the inconsequentiality of Mrs Ramsay's decease, which is further exacerbated by shrewdly-chosen typographical and syntactical cues (i.e. the square brackets and the perfect gerund): the reader, to complete the incompleteness implied by a gerund verb form, unconsciously sweeps over the "Mrs Ramsay having died" subclause to reach the syntactically more important, but semantically less loaded matrix clause (Minogue 291). An internal description of her experience would have marked Mrs Ramsay's death as carrying some meaning and value, which would contravene the alarming suggestion of the text—the insignificance and irrelevance of human death in the grand scheme of things, reinforced by the cold indifference of nature in the "Time Passes" section.

The above examples demonstrate that even when the plot is weaved around someone's death, the critical moment is rarely, if ever, granted the narrative focus its importance would presuppose. This marginalisation might be a consequence of narratological prioritisation or necessity, as can be argued to be the case with Faulkner and Woolf. Alternatively, there is a school of thought that approves this unwillingness on the grounds that there is absolutely nothing to describe. In his essay Paul Edwards calls attention to the absurdity pervading any endeavours to offer a phenomenology of death: he builds on the idea that death is pure nothingness which, in their inability to grasp what this proposition means, people are apt to mistake for a (negative) state of mind and thus for something that, however indirectly, could be investigated, when in fact it is logically impossible to do so. He ridicules the purported sensibility of questions like "what kind of an experience does a person have who no longer has any experiences?" and cuts the matter short by wittily remarking that even "an observer with the most sensitive and highly developed sense of hearing could not discover the language in which somebody is silent" (Edwards 56–58).

This might explain Addie's silence over her own death as there might not have been anything to relate. Edwards furthermore exposes the falseness and inevitable failure of promises to the contrary: in his view, the revelatory verdict on death as "man's untransferable possibility of being no longer in the world," firstly, does not answer the original question of what death is like from the inside, and secondly, gives the false impression of achieving a conclusion, just like the statement that "nobody can eat or digest my food for me" which, although undoubtedly true, "does not explain what eating [or] digesting . . . consist in" (Edwards 64).

Edwards' argumentation was mainly concerned with philosophical investigations, but the fictional realm, despite some overlaps with philosophical discourse, is a different domain where an internal characterisation of death may not be a pointless exercise. The obstinate refusal of narrativisation might have its roots in culturally-fuelled denial and consequently the reluctance to talk openly: Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her influential *On Death and Dying* identifies death as one of the dominant taboos in modern Western society (6), and while there is some degree of truth in her claims, the noticeable prevalence of death scenes in modern fiction (Detweiler 273) implicates that literature is becoming somewhat exempt from this taboo-constructing tendency. The cathartic death scenes and the subsequent resonantly pro-life endings that are characteristic conclusions of Woolf's novels give way to another speculation along these lines. Both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs Dalloway* end with an epiphany tinted with *Schadenfreude*: Clarissa and Lily realise their survival in contrast to another's death, which is symbolised by Clarissa's return to her party and Lily's completion of her painting. By extension, writing or reading about the death of a character is a reaffirmation of one's own (temporary) triumph over death and at the same time allows one to exorcise their fear of it. Literature can thus be regarded as a means of facing and defeating death and it offers a platform for the kind of collective experience, the loss of which is lamented by Kübler-Ross (5*ff.*). Although concerning herself with a different, linguistic-oriented angle, Monika Fludernik also recognises the special status of literature and its expressive capabilities. Positing "the verbal nature of utterance and the fundamentally nonverbal nature of consciousness and perception" as polar opposites or the two extremes of a spectrum, she points to narrative fiction as the medium that is best equipped to "resolv[e] the incompatibilities between experience, consciousness and linguistic representation" (*The Fictions of Language* 379).

Notwithstanding literature's suitability and the increasing inclination to talk about death, authors still do not take that crucial last step and the lack of internal

representation is at least partially a response to the hopeless futility and perceived impossibility of narrating death. The authorial caution regarding the representation of such a thorny topic is not unwarranted as there are several dilemmas to be overcome, with each option containing distinct drawbacks enough for discouragement. First, there is the perennial problem of trying to convey the myriad contents of a moment or a brief period of time via language, a sequentially operating tool that, due to its temporal nature, distorts and dilutes the intensity and unity of the event. In addition, there is the question of narrative tense. Narratives conventionally refer to past events, which practice implies a "later" version of the narrator who must have survived to tell the tale, although experimental fiction is sometimes written in present tense, recording the events of the narrative quasi-simultaneously with their occurrence. Concerning the moment of death, the past-tense rendition (of which Addie in *As I Lay Dying* would have been an example) is problematic exactly because surviving death is an impossibility, thus giving an account of it must be impossible too, while present-tense narration (which Woolf's stream-of-consciousness technique closely approximates) poses virtually the same issue for the narrative that should be interrupted once the narrator dies. To complicate matters further, it is equally difficult to find the suitable narrative point of view: common logic would dictate a first-person narrator who possesses the hands-on experience of dying, but this choice suffers from the same problem as that outlined above. The death of the narrator should coincide with the end of the narrative, whereas a third-person narrator, despite the guarantee of survival and therefore the possibility of retrospective narration, lacks the required authenticity and involvement naturally available to the first-person role. In other words, the chief obstacle in representing death stems from its extreme subjectivity. This "supremely unique and nonpareil event of existence" (Detweiler 277) is characterised by two features: it is a brief, once-in-a-lifetime experience (the German word *Einmaligkeit* is used to refer to this "non-contiguity") and it offers the "experiencer" the ultimate knowledge while at the same time forestalls its future exploitation (Detweiler 288). The moment of death is specified as the "ultimate *Grenzsituation*, touching the boundaries of being and nonbeing" (Detweiler 269), which highlights the complications an author is bound to face in the pursuit of literary representation.

In order to describe this elusive event or moment as faithfully as possible, it is suggested that the author adopt a "double perspective that allows him to combine the intimacy of direct experience with the disinterest of an observer" (Detweiler 283–284).

This "double perspective" strikes one as being similar to Henrik Skov Nielsen's concept of the "impersonal voice," a distinct narrative voice not to be confused with either first-person or third-person perspectives. Nielsen, together with other theorists such as Stefan Iversen and Brian Richardson, studies what they call "unnatural narratology": a field encompassing many areas of interest, from which the relevant for our purposes is how narrators obtain certain pieces of information that textual circumstances seemingly prevent them from obtaining. Although they have not explicitly pinpointed the narrativisation of death as a contentious issue, the emphasis on the perceived incongruity between a character's level of knowledge and their means of acquiring it, and the acknowledgment that "some experiences may go beyond the scope of narrative comprehension, while some narratives may present experiences that resist being recognised as parts of what we would typically refer to as a human mind" (Iversen 93) more than justifies the discussion of death along these lines. Banfield's already mentioned stipulation of the impossibility of directly speaking about non-reflective mental states, together with her caveat that narrative fiction is one of the very few domains where the various states of consciousness can be represented, is another case in point for the treatment of the death event from an unnatural narratological perspective. She asserts that language (form) and consciousness (content) should be kept separate: since the subjective consciousness of a character cannot be mediated in its entirety, all that a narrative can do is have their cognitive states "hypothetically reconstructed and represented in a language sensitive to its various modes." These linguistic units that are about but are not anchored in the represented consciousness, Banfield terms "speakerless sentences" (Banfield 211).

Expanding on this idea, Nielsen builds on Fludernik's warning against mistakenly presupposing the existence of a narrator (Fludernik, "New Wine in Old Bottles?" 621–622). From the premise that "in literary fiction, as opposed to oral narrative, one cannot be certain that it is the person referred to as 'I' who speaks or narrates," Nielsen concludes that "we need to posit an impersonal voice of the narrative" for all those instances when "something is narrated that the 'narrating-I' cannot possibly know" (Nielsen 133). Following this argument, such a detached, independent voice that nevertheless can occupy the inner consciousness of a character retains the involvement necessary for authentic representation and at the same time provides the narrative with the opportunity of continuing after the character's death. Most importantly, the impersonal voice allows the narrative to "say what

a narrating-I cannot say, produce details that no person could remember [or] speak when the character remains forever silent" (Nielsen 139–140). The deictic expressions invoked in such a first-person narration give the account of death the illusion of subjectivity, but ultimately the description is revealed to be a linguistic construct. The fact that a first-person narrator is only "one manifestation of the impersonal voice of the narrative" (Nielsen 148) liberates the voice from the constraints usually associated with such an internal perspective, which includes the impractical post-mortem disclosure of the experience, and provides support for the theoretical possibility of the narrativisation of death.

The objections regarding the irreversibility of time can thus be circumvented, but the problem of authentic representation remains: since "neither [the author] nor the reader has undergone the moment of death that should be the common experience between them," and, therefore, both are lacking a "foundational objective correlative" (Detweiler 272), it becomes impossible to obtain the knowledge required for a strictly valid narrative description, notwithstanding the information-gaining freedom permitted by the concept of the impersonal voice. This is where the "theory of mind" comes into the picture, according to which individuals attribute their own mind functions and processes to their fellow human beings, which is seen as a prerequisite for intersubjective understanding (Nielsen 136). Its extreme version can be regarded as a case of solipsism, but in a moderate dose this belief promotes empathy, i.e. the "power of entering into another's personality and imaginatively experiencing their experiences" (Palmer 138). Alan Palmer extends this philosophical notion to fiction and argues that the "attribution to the character by the narrator of motives, dispositions and states of mind is at the centre of the process of constructing fictional minds and . . . is an essential part of the reading process" (137–138). Theory of mind and, more particularly, such an interpretation of empathy might render it possible to achieve a sense of what dying is like. Curiously and rather fittingly, it has been pointed out that Woolf had the capacity to "relive" someone else's death herself, which propensity she lent to some of her characters, notably Clarissa Dalloway, who is capable of imagining Septimus's death (Brombert 433). Additionally, Woolf's indirect style, as we have observed, is well-suited for giving an external and at the same time internal representation of mental states, providing the perfect grounds for narrativising death. Clarissa's empathetic capability finds its reflection in the popular belief that people very close to each other (which, as Woolf made sure of it by peppering the text with subtle hints at their connection, certainly

is the case here with Clarissa and Septimus) can establish such a strong emotional bond that when one of them dies, the other in some respect "feels" or "participates" in their companion's death. On the surface, this is indeed the case: because of both Clarissa's receptivity and the flexibility of the narrative style, Clarissa is said to arrive at a "remarkably accurate assessment of what Septimus must have thought and felt before he flung himself out the window onto Mrs Filmer's area railings" (Edmondson 26). However, this sort of transubstantiation is a misconception inasmuch as the surviving party, for obvious existential reasons, cannot undergo the death experience themselves and most often they confuse their grief and sorrow with what dying *might* be like. Because of the inaccessibility characterising all deaths, Clarissa's re-enactment of Septimus' suicide is simply a vivid example of the power of the imagination: no matter how convincing it may sound, it has no empirical foundation and thus is essentially a piece of fiction.

The necessarily imaginary nature of all such representations does not mean that the topic should be dismissed as undeserving of attention, however. Since neither of them shares the ontological status of life/reality, fiction serves as the perfect environment for experimenting with descriptions of death, and Palmer (as well as Detweiler 270) alludes to the crucial role imagination plays in empathy and theory of mind, both of which can be useful approaches when tackling complications. Due to death's distinct quality of being unknown and unknowable, the author and the reader need to collaborate on an imaginative level if they wish to create an analogous experience: the author presents their own idea of the dying moments of a character that the reader is bound to at least accept, even if they do not integrate it into their own concept or modify their ideas thereof. This obligation of assent resembles a psychological approach that Daniel Dennett terms "heterophenomenology," a "method of phenomenological description that can (in principle) do justice to the most private and ineffable subjective experiences" (72), which category death arguably falls under. Its basic tenet is that when an individual describes a state of mind that "no critic can find any positive grounds for rejecting, we should accept them—tentatively, pending further discoveries—as accurate accounts of what it is like to be the creature in question" (Dennett 443–444), the dying consciousness included. The heterophenomenological approach validates and authenticates any narrativisation of death on the basis that there is no objectively verified evidence against a certain narrativisation (nor is it likely that there will ever be).

Dennett, however, is aware that "what it is like to them" does not necessarily equal "what is going on in them" (94), suggesting that the majority of narrators must be, following his line of argument, unreliable. Narrators in the process of dying then are unquestionably unreliable, but unnatural narratologists claim that even if we possessed the means for a faithful depiction of death, the experiencer could not give a straightforward account of it because traumatic events, where the "mediating consciousness is unable to capture or grasp the recounted event" (Iversen 102), necessitate the use of "unnatural techniques" (Alber et al. 130). Iversen further states that these narrativisations have the purpose of simply telling the experience, disregarding whether the narrative offers satisfactory or true-to-life explanations (102), which reinforces the imaginary aspect inherent to depictions of death. Nielsen's hypothesis of the impersonal voice can also contribute to the idea of the imagination-driven rendition of the death experience: he argues that the impersonal voice is responsible for the fact that "sentences that would clearly mark the narrator as unreliable or even insane in a nonfictional narrative come to the reader as authoritative [in fiction]," with the consequence that first-person accounts "produce a fictional world that does not exist independent of these sentences" (Nielsen 145), dispelling the urge towards realistic narrativisation and expectations.

Of course there have been several attempts at fictionalising death from the inside, but for want of any real-life experience, these are as often as not schematic representations following established conventions, such as using stock metaphors (entering a bright tunnel and the collapse of one's sense of spatiotemporality being two favourites) or drawing the inspiration for the portrayal of the death scene from other states of altered (intoxicated, feverish, religious-ecstatic) consciousness, disregarding the fact that death is not a state in the conventional sense. Nevertheless, hopefully it has been successfully demonstrated through the discussion of the impersonal voice, theory of mind, and the liberating environment fiction allows for that it is possible to create a valid and valuable narrative of death even from a first-person perspective. Since the acquisition and the forfeiture of the knowledge that would allow for a truthful description coincide in the moment of death, its representation is always speculative, therefore anti-mimesis and narratorial unreliability are not hindering factors. Every passage that gives an interpretation of death, in short, is an independent work of art and they have intrinsic value as such.

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An Irishman and His Irish Folks

David Clare, *Bernard Shaw's Irish Outlook*
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BENCE GÁBOR KVÉDER

Despite the constant critical interest in his dramatic oeuvre, it still seems to be a relatively widespread misconception that George Bernard Shaw was a British playwright. This may be due to the belief that in order to have such a thorough insight and detailed opinion about the social, political, economic, religious, and literary system of Great Britain, he must have been born an Englishman. In fact, Shaw proved to be an outstanding counter-example of this view, remaining a deceptively British Irishman throughout his long career. As a result of this duality, critical literature discusses Shaw as an Irish-born dramatist, but rarely as one belonging to the Irish literary canon. However, even though audiences and critics pay more attention to his English characters, the Irish figures and themes appearing in his plays can testify that Shaw's sense of belonging to his native land and its people is more significant than the majority of the readers and spectators of his works might think. Highlighting Shaw's outsider status, as well as his main sources and influences from this perspective, David Clare's monograph, *Bernard Shaw's Irish Outlook* provides a valuable analysis of how the dramatist succeeded in portraying the British nation critically, while depicting Irish people in a much more realistic way than many previous English writers had.

Bernard Shaw's Irish Outlook is divided into four major chapters, which offer a balanced analysis of British and Irish characters. Shaw's profound knowledge of both Irish and English people helped him construct his characters with meticulous care. To identify the primary source of Shavian dramatic figures, Chapter 1 uses "reverse snobbery" as the key-term. Defining the phrase as an expression most suitable

to describe Shaw's fundamental practice of character-creation, Clare highlights the ways in which Shaw managed to turn conventional theatrical depictions of both the English and the Irish upside down, mercilessly pointing out the most severe faults of the former and doing some justice to the latter. The argumentation here makes it clear that Shaw was deeply concerned about Irish people's treatment on the English stage. Clare proceeds to enumerate chiefly England-based Shavian plays that feature at least one Irish character, briefly summing up their significance within the dramatist's work. Besides the characters of specifically Irish-themed plays like Larry Doyle and Father Keegan of *John Bull's Other Island* (1904), as well as the protagonist and his mother of *O'Flaherty, V.C.* (1915), somewhat lesser known examples are also analysed by Clare: "the surly Kerryman" (Clare 10), Hector Malone (*Man and Superman*, 1903), Sir Patrick Cullen (*The Doctor's Dilemma*, 1906), Mrs. Farrell (*Press Cuttings*, 1909), and Count O'Dowda (*Fanny's First Play*, 1911). Clare highlights that Shaw always provides a detailed social overview related to his Irish characters. This method is similar to the technique that the playwright applies when portraying representatives of the English working class, like Walter Boon, the waiter from *You Never Can Tell* (1898), Henry Straker, the chauffeur from *Man and Superman*, or Alfred Doolittle, the dustman from *Pygmalion* (1913). The last pages of the first chapter broaden the chronological frames in both directions. On the one hand, Clare briefly compares the ways in which eighteenth- and earlier nineteenth-century Irish writers depicted English-Irish hostility to how Shaw handled these issues. On the other hand, the playwright's influence on later Irish authors and scholars focusing on the colonial/post-colonial condition like Frantz Fanon, Brian Friel, and Declan Kiberd is also examined. The chapter ends on the note of Clare praising Shaw's impact on how the Irish and the lower social classes in England appeared in later literary and cultural commentaries (19–20).

Starting with the analysis of the Irish origins of *Pygmalion*'s Professor Henry Higgins and his mother, Chapter 2 suggests a re-evaluation of some Shavian characters as members of the Irish diaspora in certain plays. Clare elaborates on Shaw's ambivalent opinions about this group of people, noting that the dramatist "had a problematic relationship with the idea of Diasporic Irishness. As various critics have noted, Shaw often spoke negatively about the children of the Diaspora" (29). Continuing the line of thought started in the previous chapter, Clare again highlights the dramatic figures through which English and Irish stereotypes are ridiculed, this time taking representatives of the Irish diaspora as examples. Mostly

early instances are given extra credit in this section, with the American Captain Kearney (*Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, 1900), as well as English characters like Cashel Byron (*The Admirable Bashville*, 1901), Bronterre O'Brien "Snobby" Price (*Major Barbara*, 1905), and Alfred "Boss" Mangan (*Heartbreak House*, 1919) being central to the argument. All of them, as Clare shows, stand out from the rest of the roles because of their "Irish stock" (31), defying the expectations audiences, accustomed to the clear-cut distinction between British characters and the Stage Irish stereotype, were likely to have. At the same time, Shavian figures of Irish descent prove themselves considerably more capable in several aspects than the majority of the full-blooded English countrymen they are surrounded by. In addition, focusing on the surnames the young Shaw must have encountered while still living in Ireland, Clare opines that the dramatist used more members of the Irish diaspora in his plays than one would assume. Besides the above-mentioned Higgins and Cashel Byron, characters like Eliza Doolittle (*Pygmalion*), Louis Dudebat (*The Doctor's Dilemma*), and Fergus Crampton (*You Never Can Tell*) are given some cultural background. Although admitting that Shaw's treatment of the Irish diaspora is not thorough enough, Clare concludes the chapter by implying that the playwright's construction and handling of his—surprisingly many—English and American characters with Irish origins can indeed compensate us for the relative lack of contextualisation.

Providing a detailed overview of Irish influences on Shaw, as well as their different dramatic materialisations, Chapter 3 sheds light on some of the best-known Irish cultural and literary traditions on the emerald island from the Anglican perspective. Clare surveys various communities including Gaelic Catholicism, Irish Anglicans, Scottish Presbyterians, the Big House legacy, the Irish middle classes, and farmers or other sorts of working-class people. Furthermore, he adds the names of well-known individuals as examples of each religious and social group mentioned here. With Elizabeth Bowen and Jonathan Swift being cited as sharp-eyed commentators on Irish issues, the general anti-Englishness of Irish literature is emphasised through the political, cultural, and religious conflicts hinted at in the first paragraphs of the chapter as well. Shaw's dramatic work is placed into this line of argument with "three plays which contain no Irish characters at all" (Clare 42). *The Man of Destiny* (1897), *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman* (1921), and *Saint Joan* (1923) reflect Shaw's strongly Irish standpoints concerning themes like British colonisation and religious impatience. With the concept of the Surrogate Irish character—applied in the three mentioned plays to the young Bonaparte Napoleon, the "long-livers"

of the future, and Joan of Arc—Clare scrupulously examines both textual references and performance histories in search of both overt and covert expressions of Shaw's unique national consciousness. While the three mentioned plays are the centre of attention here, the chapter builds rich contexts out of historical data, earlier works, potential sources, and contemporary, i.e. late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century, pieces of literature. The topic of misalliance, exemplified by Shaw's short story collection titled *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search of God* (1932), and the importance of Ireland as the setting are also analysed from an Irish perspective. To illustrate the function of the Emerald Isle as the background for different plots, Clare turns to the Northern Irish C. S. Lewis, who "based the topography of Narnia in *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950–1956) on his native Ulster and the Narnian landscape on the area around Carlingford Lough in Co. Louth" (64). Using this feature of the popular fantasy book series as an analogue for *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman*, Clare argues for Shaw's obvious interest in his country of birth, which critics tend to overlook. Drawing attention to the complexity of Shavian dramas, Clare concludes the chapter by noting that, even though Shaw's conventional image and reputation as a satirist of English manners might be altered by the inclusion of Irish elements, his "pan-European" (66) or cosmopolitan point of view underwrites his treatment of both nations, i.e. of both the British and the Irish.

Arguably the most complex and thought-provoking section in Clare's work is Chapter 4, "Shaw and the Stage Englishman in Irish Literature," which is also the longest of the four parts. Divided into three sub-chapters, it starts with a hypothesis about what the other side of the literary coin may look like: providing a concise historical definition of the Stage Irish figure, Clare asks what kind of Stage English characters Irish literature has to offer. He notes that embodiments of the Stage English in general are not "deeply offensive ciphers" or "crude caricatures like the Stage Irishman," yet they should not be considered "completely objective portraits of English people" either (67). Clare uses "Elizabeth Butler Cullingford's groundbreaking and seminal study *Ireland's Others* (2001)" (68), and especially its chapter "The Stage Englishman of the Irish Drama: Boucicault and the Politics of Empathy" as a fundamental historical source for his own research and argumentation. Nonetheless, Clare defines his methodology as one differing from that of Cullingford in two significant respects. On the one hand, he takes into consideration exactly how and for what purposes English characters are applied in Irish literature. On the other hand, in spite of the terminology of the Stage English*man*,

his analysis does include female Stage English figures, too. Based on these principles, Part I of this chapter broadens the scope and covers a wide range of pre-Shavian, as well as Shaw-inspired representatives of the Stage Englishman not only in drama but also in novels and short stories. Calling them "curious creatures" but, at the same time, "very realistic characters," who "are also meant to serve as satirical portraits of the English" (69), Clare presents a detailed definition of Stage English figures in Irish literature, and also underlines their complex nature before applying the concept to any Shavian dramatis persona. Clare reflects upon authors, playwrights, literary pieces, and characters inspired by Shaw's depictions of the Stage English figure, while also comparing relevant, twentieth- and twenty-first-century interpretations of his works. Part I ends with Clare emphasising the importance of *John Bull's Other Island*—and especially that of its main character, Tom Broadbent, as the ultimate Stage Englishman in Shaw's dramatic work.

Part II of Chapter 4 functions as a kind of axis, dealing with "The Stage English figure in Shaw's Irish plays." Retaining the format exemplified in the previous chapter, it focuses on three of Shaw's works, which—instead of having occasional Irish characters, like the ones mentioned in Chapter 1—have Ireland as their main setting, while the majority of the characters are also native (actual or surrogate) to the Emerald Isle. Clare suggests that *John Bull's Other Island*, *O'Flaherty, V.C.*, and *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman* are prominent instances of using English characters (with no known Irish origins) placed into Irish scenarios—where they "become completely and unequivocally Stage English" (77). The primary example is Tom Broadbent; Clare's analysis emphasises both his merits and his shortcomings, as well as his relationship with the Irish. Broadbent's significance as a Stage Englishman is discussed at some length, detailing his clumsy behaviour as a tourist, his misconceptions about Irish people in general, his often hypocritical or even downright racist comments, and, eventually, his efficiency as a coloniser of Rosscullen. Citing some of Shaw's letters and evaluating what other literary scholars have written about Broadbent, Clare provides a detailed analysis of how Shaw's unique character-construction made this particular figure the classic example of the Stage Englishman in Irish drama. However, it may be somewhat surprising that while Tom Broadbent's character is examined with such thoroughness and is eventually declared to be Shaw's best Stage Englishman, the importance of the Cockney Hodson in the same play is mentioned only once in the entire book. Clare admits in an endnote that "the play's working-class English character—the valet Hodson—is depicted

in a relatively sympathetic and non-satirical manner" (165, n36). Granted, he is a secondary character, but surely he is deserving of an analysis in the same framework of thought that Broadbent is looked at.

The Stage English figure in *O'Flaherty, V.C.*, Lady Madigan, is given due credit, in spite of the fact that she never actually appears on stage but is only talked about by her husband, Sir Pearce, and the protagonist, Dennis. The lady is compared to Philippa, the central character in the *Irish RM* stories written by the Anglo-Irish duo, Edith Somerville and Violet Florence Martin. (Since the latter wrote under the pen name Martin Ross, the team is usually referred to as Somerville & Ross.) Clare continues his argument with an analysis of the two female characters, Lady Madigan and Philippa, while also citing the preface of *O'Flaherty, V.C.* as evidence for Shaw's realistic ideas concerning war-time Britain and Ireland. The transition between *O'Flaherty, V.C.* and *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman* is explored via the brief commentary on the former's production history and the enumeration of some of the events during the years in between, i.e. the late 1910s. There are no actual Irish characters in *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman* (although the "long-livers" appear to function as surrogate Irish), the central figure is an elderly Briton, and this makes his role peculiar. Concentrating on the apparent absurdity of placing an Englishman into an Irish setting with no natives of the land around, Clare draws a parallel between the elderly gentleman and Broadbent, underlining racism, hypocrisy, sexism, and classism as basic attributes of both (104–105). Pinpointed through the elderly Briton's relationship with the rest of the characters, the Broadbentian heritage is highlighted. Although declaring "that it is not a great play" (109), Clare writes about *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman* with deserved appreciation, concluding that despite certain shortcomings, it undoubtedly helps readers and spectators understand "Shaw's Irish reverse snobbery and his perspective on the English national character" (109).

Part III of Chapter 4, appropriately titled "After Broadbent," deals with the immense influence Shaw's Stage English character has had on later Irish literature. Mentioning the best-known and most successful Irish writers like Elizabeth Bowen, James Joyce, Seán O'Casey, and Brendan Behan, Clare sums up what later—as well as possibly even upcoming—generations of Irish authors and playwrights owe to the Shavian mode of characterisation. Clare concludes that "Shaw was a pivotal figure in the history of the Irish use of the Stage Englishman" (120), again using Tom Broadbent to ground his claim. Praising the chiselled

character-construction the playwright achieved, Clare closes his argumentation by emphasising that, despite the occasional criticism aimed at his fellow Irish people, Shaw proved himself to be a proud Irish dramatist, who was never afraid to show the British—and the world—the various ways in which the Stage Irish figure could be defied.

Clare takes into consideration relevant instances of different character-types from the extended corpus of the Shavian oeuvre. Although the three most obviously Irish works receive special attention, the plays with less conspicuous connections to his country of birth are also considered. Thus, the tendency of overlooking Shaw's life-long concern with the Irish seems to be successfully broken by Clare. In a way, he finishes the job started by Declan Kiberd with *Inventing Ireland* (1995) and *Irish Classics* (2000), and later continued by Anthony Roche in *The Irish Dramatic Revival 1899–1939* (2015). As Clare writes in the Conclusion, his own argument reconfirms the idea that "Shaw certainly belongs to the Irish Anglican literary tradition. However, given the time period in which he wrote, his pro-Irish reverse snobbery, the subject matter handled in his plays, his literary influences, and his personal and professional connections, he should also be considered part of the Irish Literary Revival" (123). This remark, supported by the examples preceding it, can persuade readers that not only did Shaw identify himself as Irish, but he also kept up this mentality in his dramatic legacy. Thus, the grandiose collection of works he managed to produce during more than six decades belongs to the literature of Ireland.

Writing in a fluent and reader-friendly critical style, Clare conducts a thorough and well-constructed study of the Shavian works, drawing attention to some of the lesser known pieces as well. The book is an exemplary source of motivation for exploring plays not discussed here through Shaw's inimitable Irish outlook. With this monograph David Clare undeniably contributes to the re-canonisation of George Bernard Shaw—not only as an Irish-born but also as a genuinely Irish dramatist.

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(Yet) Another History of Sexual Science

Ralph M. Leck, *Vita Sexualis: Karl Ulrichs and the Origins of Sexual Science* Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2016

ZSOLT BOJTI

Foucault has cast a long shadow over the scholarship on sexual science. For decades, scholars have been trying to interpret and have been misinterpreting his famous sentence, "[t]he sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43) to vindicate their arguments about the nineteenth-century history of sexuality. More and more monographs are being published on the subject and authors are still tempted to painstakingly tiptoe around Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* (1976) despite the fact that, more often than not, they need to address Foucault's historical inaccuracies. A lacuna in his work was that the German lawyer and gay rights activist, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–1895), "the first theorist of homosexuality," as Hubert Kennedy put it, did not find his way into the book. To remedy the gross neglect in *The History of Sexuality*, articles by Manfred Herzer and books such as *Ulrichs* (1988) by Kennedy, *Karl Heinrichs zu Ehren* (2000) by Wolfram Setz, and *Karl Heinrich Ulrichs* (2000) and *Geschichte der Sexualwissenschaft* (2009) by Volkmar Sigusch were published. Written in a similar vein and highly critical of Foucault, one of the latest additions to this list is *Vita Sexualis: Karl Ulrichs and the Origins of Sexual Science* by Ralph M. Leck. Drawing on his scholarly predecessors, Leck "highlights Ulrichs's heroic and often lonely struggle to decriminalise homosexuality, create a more tolerant society, recognise erotic

rights, and establish a more inclusive version of political liberalism" and "interprets Ulrichs as the inventor of a new science of sexual heterogeneity," claiming that Ulrichs's "pioneering politics mark him as the first post-Victorian sexual modernist" (xi). Instead of offering a biography of Ulrichs or a concise history of sexuality, the book resorts to presenting "a history of ideas" (xi) in six chapters to discuss *vita sexualis*, the idea that sexology belongs to social ethics and that the public should know about a wide range of sexual variety to initiate a dialogue about the legality and morality of same-sex desire.

Chapter 1, "Motifs in Sexual Science" introduces Ulrichs's larger context. It outlines the friction between the acceptance of the legitimacy of sexual science and the decline of sexual modernists. Presenting a compelling argument, it also demonstrates how contemporaneous case studies worked both for and against traditional sexologists who were working on pathologising same-sex desire. The chapter ponders whether sexual science was "specialised or public knowledge," and foreshadows the influence of Ulrichs on British authors the book will later discuss. In the next chapter, "Inventing Sexual Liberalism," denouncing Foucault and building on Ulrichs and Károly Kertbeny, Leck "investigates sexual modernism as an epochal linguistic revolution" (33). It is demonstrated how Ulrichs's coinage, *Urning* (uranian in English) and his typology of sexual intermediaries came into being. Ulrichs's comrade, Kertbeny, who coined the term *Homosexual*, has a pivotal role in this chapter to substantiate how the two fought against pejorative, "traditional" terms for same-sex desire. The following chapter, "The Epistemic Politics of Nature" considers the problem that the theological concept of what counts as "natural" was adopted in science. According to Ulrichs's argument, same-sex desire is just as natural, considering the "empirical knowledge about variance in history" (69). This argument was greeted by the disapproval of its contemporaries; what is more, Ulrichs, too, found himself in conflict with his own arguments on naturalness. One of the reasons of the break between Ulrichs and Kertbeny might have been the fact that the latter found Ulrichs's claims concerning naturalness and innateness (the two terms are nondescript in Leck's study) counterproductive to the legitimisation of same-sex desire.

The forth chapter, "The Science of Agape" studies possibly the most important historical idea of sexual modernism. The major works of three authors receive critical attention here: Ulrichs, Swiss author Heinrich Hössli (1784–1864), and English poet and literary critic John Addington Symonds (1840–1893). Studying their works, Leck

shows that sexual modernism was not interested in *libido sexualis* and somatic pleasure (Eros) only but added the amatory aspect (Agape) to the study of same-sex desire. Thus, the science of Agape, the scrutiny of "double-love" focused on "the romantic, egalitarian, and intellectual preconditions for sexual attraction" (103). Leck, unlike his scholarly predecessors, is bold enough to consider "The Political Aesthetics of Anal Sex" at length to dissect the problem of the contemporaneous public "association of male homosexuality and anal sex" (121). In the penultimate chapter, "Sexual Degeneration and Bourgeois Culture," three theorists of degeneration, "one of the most important power-languages of the late nineteenth century" (141), are under scrutiny. After a brief history of degeneration theories, the chapter outlines the ideas of medical doctor Eduard Reich (1836–1919), who believed that masturbation is the cause of degeneration in modern society. Broadening the scope of this principle, he advocated that the surveillance state should control nonreproductive sexualities. Leck then goes on to discuss Austro-German psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902), the author of probably the most important canonised text of sexology in the era, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886). Krafft-Ebing, pathologising non-heteronormative sexual variants, created a new, classificatory science of abnormalities. Lastly, the degeneration theory of Max Nordau (1849–1923) is analysed. Unlike Reich and Krafft-Ebing, Nordau's primary focus was not medical science but society and culture. Leck also offers an analysis of Nordau's drama, *The Right to Love* (1894) to demonstrate how the theorist used literature to fight against "the progressive politics of literary modernism" (142) and sexual modernism in *belles-lettres*. The last chapter of the book, "Normalising the Marquis de Sade" studies the works of German psychiatrist Iwan Bloch (1872–1922), who is considered to be the "Father of Sexual Science" due to his coinage *Sexualwissenschaft*, giving a name to the discipline. Bloch's interdisciplinary approaches to sexual science were invaluable additions to sexual modernism: historical sexology, anthropological sexology, and feminist sexology. The chapter focuses on Bloch's historical sexology arguing that "many so-called sexual anomalies were socially produced" (185). To prove this point, he published texts of and studies about the Marquis de Sade.

Concluding the monograph, the afterword explains why Leck's work is one of the most welcome additions to the study of sexual science. Leck identifies three major issues with Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*: "inability to recognise voices of social resistance," "Foucault's chronology is inaccurate," and "the mean of discursive production was not controlled exclusively by medical tyrants" (222–223).

He also targets *Gender Trouble* (1990) by Judith Butler, arguing that "a shared indifference to the legacy of the sexual science movement . . . led to an overestimation of Butler's originality" (221). Leck, as a result, calls for the importance of the groundwork in sexual modernism, implicitly questioning the use of gender and queer theories in the study of nineteenth-century sexology.

Vita Sexualis is enriched by Leck's insights into history, science, gender studies, sociology, philosophy, and anthropology. Yet the book seems rather dull, despite its potential, for two reasons. Firstly, it does not at all appear to be capable of conveying the passion with which Ulrichs discussed the legitimacy of same-sex desire. Secondly, it looks as if Leck were writing two separate books: one on Ulrichs and the other on "the affiliation—dare we say causal connection—between sexual orientation and the emergence of sexual modernism" (129). Although it is evident that the two intertwine, they do not mix organically in Leck's execution. After a while the monograph becomes exhaustively repetitive in spite of the invaluable points it raises. I might add here that Leck's double agenda perhaps explains that his use of the word "Victorian" is extremely frustrating in the context of mainly German-speaking thinkers despite his critical foray into terminology: modernist versus traditional sexologists, *vita sexualis* versus *psychopathia sexualis*. Even more frustrating is how opinionated Leck is throughout the book, although his research suggests superficially presented or even false ideas. It is not the present review's aim to set the record straight item by item; nevertheless, in what follows, I would like to discuss three instances briefly.

Concerning "the draft constitution of the Urning League" (56) by Ulrichs, Leck finds it ironic that Ulrichs sent the draft to Kertbeny, who, according to Leck, was heterosexual. The irony lies in "that the proposed composition . . . would have excluded Kertbeny's participation" (57). Leck backs his argument with a quote: "Kertbeny was 'one of the many nonhomosexual men who played important roles in all phases of the struggle to liberate homosexuals'" (56–57). Having checked the notes, I found that the quote did not come from Ulrichs but a German author and LGBT activist, Manfred Herzer, whose works are often cited when it comes to Kertbeny. The steadfast belief in Kertbeny's heterosexuality usually has its origins in the pamphlet in which "homosexual" as a new coinage was used for the first time in public, as Kertbeny referred to himself as "normally sexed." However, Kertbeny's writings beg the question how he found homosexuals and why these men trusted him with their "unnatural" and "criminal" secret. An internationally

recognised article, "The Double Life of Kertbeny" (2004) might have the answer to this problem, in which Judit Takács reports her invaluable find in Kertbeny's diaries—suggesting self-censorship concerning male names, whom Kertbeny knew intimately. The fact that Leck does not have a shadow of a doubt about the matter and his gross neglect that he did not consult Takács's article result in a malcontent and misinformed reader.

The book is not free of logical fallacies either. Regarding the ban on the first book-length sexological study by an English physician, Havelock Ellis's *Sexual Inversion* (1897), Leck argues as follows:

> In 1898, Ellis and his publisher were indicted in *Regina v. Bedborough* for the sale of "a certain lewd wicked bawdy scandalous libel in the form of a book." As witnessed in the press coverage of the 1895 trial of Oscar Wilde, the journalistic temper of the era was censorial and sensationalist. Press coverage of the Ellis case was similarly characterised by condemnation and vilification. Articles in London's *Daily Chronicle* characterised *Sexual Inversion* as filthy and morbid. Unlike Wilde, Ellis escaped prosecution, but the fear of legal trouble led him to publish future volumes of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* outside the United Kingdom. (128)

It is baffling that Leck calls the publisher's trial "the Ellis case." Ellis was not charged. Moreover, although the court and the public had their opinion of the book, the publisher was prosecuted for the volume's distribution and not for its content (see British landmark case *Regina v. Hicklin* in 1868). It is also inexplicable that Leck compares the Bedborough case to Wilde's *trials* (intentionally in the plural). Let us not forget that Wilde's case had nothing to do with censorship. Although his works came up during the trials, he was prosecuted under the 1885 Criminal Law Amendment Act for gross indecency.

My last comment is concerned with Leck's conclusion about Krafft-Ebing and degeneration theory: "Krafft-Ebing's *psychopathia sexualis* confirmed the mores of his bourgeois milieu, and his deployment of degenerative theory drowned out the early flowerings of sexual modernism found in the works of Ulrichs" (162). Krafft-Ebing received numerous unsolicited case studies through the years he was working on the new editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis*. It would be a Foucauldian fallacy

to argue that these subjects were simply passive sufferers of Krafft-Ebing's medical science. Most probably it was the result of the additional case studies that led to Krafft-Ebing recanting his conclusion about the connection between homosexuality and degeneration in the 1901 volume of *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* (Yearbook of Intermediate Sexual Types)—the English edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* in the same year was not updated accordingly.

Alluding to *The History of Sexuality*, I cannot help but call the book *yet* another history of sexual science. Leck's intelligible critique of Foucault is ironic in terms of his monograph's depth and historical accuracy. Nevertheless, Leck's interpretive stance is more than admirable. Attributing paramount importance to Ulrichs, *Vita Sexualis: Karl Ulrichs and the Origins of Sexual Science* is an indispensable attempt at writing a new history of sexual science. Leck, following his critical sensitivity, offers an imperious introduction to the mechanism and birth of sexual modernism in the shadow of Foucault.

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