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FOREWORD

> *Gaudeamus igitur,*
> *Iuvenes dum sumus.*
> "Let us rejoice, therefore,
> While we are young."
> (Academic Song)

GAUDEAMUS, the *Journal of the Association of Young Researchers on Anglophone Studies (ASYRAS)*, is the culmination of the Association's work. Since its foundation twelve years ago, the publication of a journal had been a pending task in order to fulfil its goal as a means to promote the work of young scholars in English Studies. We are now happy to present this *Volume 0,* hopefully the first of many to come. *GAUDEAMUS* is named after the academic song and university anthem, *Gaudeamus Igitur,* representing the will of young postgraduate students to enjoy their first steps in academia while they start making a difference in a growingly demanding academic world. We are aware of how challenging the beginning of the academic career can be, just as challenging as seeing one's early work published. That is why *GAUDEAMUS* appears as a journal where our young scholars can submit their work, helping them to get acquainted with the relevant process while maintaining the higher standards.

Numerous thanks are in order. First, to the authors whose overwhelming response made the publication of this volume possible. Not only did we receive enough material to begin this project, but we even decided to launch it as a semi-annual journal, reserving some of the proposals for the upcoming Volume 1. The quality of the manuscripts was outstanding, demonstrating the

exceptional depth of the research carried out by our young scholars. We hope that they have learned and grown after experiencing the revising and publishing process, which is ultimately meant to highlight our best accomplishments and to improve and correct our possible mistakes.

We cannot forget about the Editorial Team and their selfless effort. As soon as this project started, they tirelessly started working to make it a reality, providing valuable ideas and diligently carrying out their duties so that we could see this journal published in good time and in an appropriate manner. We must also thank both the members of the current Executive Board of ASYRAS and those of the previous one, with Sara, our former President, providing the starting push for this journal. Finally, we need to thank the members of our Scientific Committee, who kindly agreed to be of assistance in the revision of the original manuscripts, belonging to the different areas of English Studies.

We are humbled by the successful publishing of *GAUDEAMUS*, and we hope to be of help in the dissemination of knowledge and research. Once again, thank you.

Sergio López Martínez
President of ASYRAS and Co-Editor of *Gaudeamus*

Articles

MAKING HERSTORY: A READING OF MILLER'S *CIRCE* AND ATWOOD'S *PENELOPIAD*

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This article is concerned with *herstories* and the retelling of myths. For the purpose of the present research, we will analyse Madeline Miller's *Circe* and compare it to Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad.* North-American author Madeline Miller gives voice to goddess and sorceress Circe, protagonist of this book inhabited by other Homeric characters. For its part, *The Penelopiad* is a novella written by Canadian author Margaret Atwood in a series of rewritings of myths. In this book, based on the Homeric *Odyssey*, the focus is turned to Penelope, wife of Odysseus, who tells us her story from the Hades, as well as to her maids, hanged by Telemachus after Odysseus's return. Both books are, therefore, related to Greek mythology and, more precisely, to Homer's *Odyssey*. Both authors aim at retelling those myths through a female perspective, making use of *herstory* in order to do so. Analysing the novels from the perspective of feminism, we will see how the authors make their revisions of a canonical work in order to give voice to previously silenced voices in history how they present their female characters by calling myths into question, and, therefore, by challenging male authority and patriarchal society.

Keywords: herstory; myths; women; Odyssey; feminism

1. Introduction

A quick look at new book releases will let us see the allure mythology still has on us. In that sense, many are the writers who are nowadays aiming at rendering myths more inclusive by changing the perspective from which they are told. Among them we find two works, which are the subject matter of the present research. Madeline Miller's novel *Circe* and Margaret Atwood's novella *The Penelopiad* are both focused on the rewriting of myths from the *herstory* perspective, which is the principal notion behind this research. By analysing the novels from the perspective of feminism, this paper seeks to examine the way in which these authors revise a canonical work with the primary purpose of allowing those who have been silenced throughout history to find their own voice by challenging the patriarchal society that gagged them for so long. After a theoretical introduction into the topic, we will examine how myths and, hence, patriarchal society are called into question by both authors and we will draw comparisons between the main characters in both writings, as well as between other female characters important to their respective plots. This analysis will allow us to see the many similarities found in these works, but also their points of divergence.

2. Theoretical Framework: Feminism and *Herstory*

Women's Studies and the notion of *herstory* have gained momentum especially since the 1970s, with the rise of feminist literary theory. Feminism has made the case for the importance of revisionism in literature and history. In the words of Adrienne Rich (1972, 19), "[w]e [females] need to know the writing of the past, and know it differently than we have ever known it; not to pass on a tradition but to break its hold over us." As such, concepts as *herstory* have become paramount in this respect, since it is an "act of survival" (Rich 1972, 18) and "[w]oman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing" (Cixous 1976, 875). This usually means writing new stories or rewriting (hi)stories from the female gaze. As such, myths should not be forsaken, since, according to Vanda Zajko (2008), "[m]yth is important to feminism

because it is one element of literate culture that has the potential to incorporate women's traditions and perspectives".

In that sense, *Circe* can be perfectly considered to fit into this category, for Miller has decided to rewrite part of Greek mythology, most especially that concerned with a canonical work of literature such as *The Odyssey,* from the female perspective, just as Atwood's *Penelopiad* intends to rewrite Penelope's story. This means, at the same time, giving voice to those unheard until now and filling in the blanks. Some authors have argued that Atwood's novella could, in fact, be regarded as a "female epic" or a "mythographic metafiction" (Nunes 2014, 231-232), a category in which Miller's *Circe* could also be included, since both books share similar characteristics, as we shall later examine. We see, therefore, how contemporary literature, as well as other media, nowadays is immersed in creating mythological revisions or reinterpretations which allow us to fill that apparent lack of feminine space in these narratives, for these myths are an important part in Western cultural conceptualisation. This does not mean that the mythological world does not include female characters, but these are oftentimes a reflection of a female aspect devised by men and for men. Hence, these new depictions recover and celebrate female characters and their context, in an attempt to demonstrate the relevance that the past still has over our present.

3.   Mythology Called into Question

Myths are part of human history from the beginning of time and have always played an important role in the shaping of our consciousness. In the beginning of the Atwood's book (2006, 4), there is an introduction to the series that says, "[m]yths are universal and timeless stories that reflect and shape our lives – they mirror our desires, our fears, our longings, and provide narratives that attempt to help us make sense of the world". All cultures have their own mythology. As with history, Western mythology, Greek in this case, has always been characterised by male aristocratic dominance. A simple look at Greek mythology will reveal how all heroes are men and how women are only there as secondary characters, whether as objects of desire or ruinous characters –let us think about Pandora. As feminism reclaims in history with the concept of *herstory*, so do Margaret Atwood with *The Penelopiad* and Madeline Miller with

Circe concerning myths: they focus on female characters and retell a well-known myth from the female perspective. In these novels the "ex-centric" or decentred character, because of gender, race, ethnicity, etc., becomes the focus of attention.

Atwood's novella is a deconstruction of the myth of Odysseus and Penelope, since Atwood "explores the very nature of mythic story telling" as a review in *The Guardian* said (Atwood 2006, 2). Miller shows a similar intention in her novel. Both attempt to self-reflexively question mythology and the creation of myths, as well as storytelling and truth. There are constant references to the difference between truth and rumours, and about how stories are constructed and who builds them, most especially in Atwood. As such, the official version of the story of the *Odyssey*, the one in which Penelope only counts as the loyal and patient wife, is the version Atwood's novella, through Penelope's own voice, attempts to deconstruct. Penelope's intention is very clear from the beginning of the book: "Now that all the other have run out of air, it's my turn to do a little story-making. I owe it to myself" (Atwood 2006, 13). She wants to tell us her side of the story, *herstory*, because she is dissatisfied, and even horrified, with her portrayal in mythology. Howells (2006, 11) notes that "[t]hough Penelope is strictly speaking faceless, it is her words which restore her identity through her narrative of self-justification".

In fact, storytelling can be connected to obliteration and untruth: often stories –or myths– can silence one side of the story or they can narrate untrue facts. Finally, there is another association that Penelope raises –she links storytelling with weaving when she asserts her decision to tell her side of the story and "spin a thread of my own" (Atwood 2006, 13). Nevertheless, this association entails its own risks, for Penelope is renown for using weaving as a method for deception. This makes us wonder –should we completely trust what Penelope is telling us? Together with the maids, we could conclude, "[t]he truth, dear auditors, is seldom certain" (Atwood 2006, 83). Atwood, moreover, uses the chorus of maids to throw more shadow in this respect, since the twelve are quizzical about Penelope's role and behaviour. It is not only the notions of authority and truthfulness which are here in question, but also the idea of different readings that can be made of the same text, whether of *The Penelopiad* or *The Odyssey*. One clear example can be found in

chapter XII, when Penelope is still waiting for news regarding her husband, where rumours and official truths are place face to face:

> Rumours came, carried by other ships. Odysseus and his men had got drunk at their first port of call and the men had mutinied, said some; no, said others, they'd eaten a magic plant that had caused them to lose their memories, and Odysseus had saved them by having them tied up and carried onto the ships. […] Needless to say, the minstrels took up these themes and embroidered them considerably (Atwood 2006, 52).

Something very similar can be found in Miller's novel. Here again we have a female character telling her side of the story from her own perspective. The main source behind this retelling is once more Homer's *Odyssey*, although we can find her story retold by different authors throughout history. As Penelope, Circe is tired of patriarchal order, even among gods and titans, and resolves to uncover her story. In addition to that, she also has to face rumours. In fact, gossip is one of the topics covered throughout the book. Both Circe and Penelope know about the weight of gossip, of all those things which are spread throughout the world about them and about those around them, sometimes with dreadful consequences.

3.1.   Silenced Voices: from the Female Perspective

Myths, as well as history, have always suppressed women and, for that reason, we must "put [ourselves] into the text –as into the world and into history" (Cixous 1976, 875). In her introduction, Margaret Atwood reveals that she has "always been haunted by the hanged maids; and, in *The Penelopiad*, so is Penelope herself"; that is why she has "chosen to give the telling of the story to Penelope and to the twelve hanged maids" (Atwood 2006, 11). The author, thus, (re)tells a story from the female perspective, which focuses on formerly marginalised characters:

> It is by writing, from and toward women, and by taking up the challenge of speech which has been governed by the phallus, that women will confirm women in a place other than that which is reserved in and by the symbolic, that is, in a place other than silence (Cixous 1976, 881).

First of all, we should bear in mind at this point the fact that this epic poem has been considered throughout history as a canonical literary work. That is precisely one of the main goals of different current trends such as feminism, colonial studies, etc., in other words, to change the literary canon so that they become more inclusive.

As a matter of fact, the topic of the voice is an important one in *Circe* too. She is said to be a titan with a mortal voice, which the rest of gods and titans abhor, since for them it sounds "like a gull crying" (Miller 2019, 81). But Circe finds that her voice is a consequential characteristic in herself, for it will allow her to become close to humans, as they will not fear her. Therefore, finding her own voice is a turning point for her. That is why both books, appropriately, are told always in the first person. Furthermore, it is precisely the patriarchy which attempts to silence all these female voices, and they do it in different ways. Ridiculing female voices is one of them, as well as taking women's claim to name things, for names are powerful. As we shall see in Pasiphaë's storyline, men are always in the position to name things, and they usually give their names, while women remain voiceless.

In this section we will analyse the main female characters featured in both texts and we will see the changes and transformations which they have experienced. Conversely, the need to escape from patriarchal society is intense in both books and for all the female characters presented there. As Circe wonders herself, "[w]ould I be skimmed milk or a harpy? A foolish gull or a villainous monster?" (Miller 2019, 183). Women seem to be always depicted within a very powerful dichotomy which only distinguishes between the angel in the house and the fallen woman. The "angel in the house" is the much celebrated topic of the homonymous poem by Coventry Patmore from the mid-nineteenth century which praises the figure of the loving wife and devoted mother, whereas the "fallen woman" is usually connected with the loss of innocence on the part of the woman, who can also become aggressive and manipulate men at will, never submitting to patriarchal order, prompting what will be later called the *femme fatale* (Díaz Morillo 2019, 12-13).

Penelope, for instance, falls into the first category, for those are precisely the characteristics she is always attributed, while Circe would be part of the second one. Women within this last category can find themselves being given adjectives such as "bitch" and "witch", or even both at the same time; in Miller's own words, "'witch' is still used today as a slur against woman with an amount of power that makes society nervous" (Wiener 2019). In that sense, Circe is a depicted as a witch in the patriarchal perspective in the sense that she provokes in men an anxiety about female empowerment for she cannot be controlled by them. Ironically, everyone avoids her and they all fear her, while her brother, who shares her powers, is highly esteemed. As a matter of fact, Circe is punished by her father and those around him for seeking to enhance her powers (Miller 2019, 63) and to "bend the world to [her] will" (Miller 2019, 73).

3.1.1.   Penelope & Circe, Challenging Patriarchal Authority

The comparison between both characters and books is considerably valuable, for both authors have very much in common when retelling a famous myth. Moreover, both characters share different features, the most obvious being that they are part of the same myth as told by Homer in his epic poem *The Odyssey*. Similarly, both women have a relationship with Odysseus himself, albeit a very different one. Moreover, while Circe is only mentioned in Atwood's novella, Penelope is a secondary character in Miller's novel, who will delight in a truly different finale. For the purpose of this article, we shall compare Atwood's Penelope and Miller's Circe, notwithstanding some references to Miller's Penelope.

Both Circe and Penelope go through almost identical life experiences. First of all, they demonstrate their endurance and self-sufficiency, learnt through a harsh childhood. Circe is the daughter of a nymph, while Penelope's mother was a Naiad or a Water Nymph. The latter is a neglectful mother, never present in her daughter's life and whose only piece of advice to her was to "be like water", for "[w]ater does not resist […] [W]ater always goes where it wants to go, and nothing in the end can stand against it. Water is patient. […] If you can't go through an obstacle, go around it" (Atwood 2006, 34). It certainly seemed an oracle. Moreover, the two of them have unloving fathers, who considered their daughters as a

curse, for none of them is suitable enough to attain for them the glory they think they deserve, neither for their qualities nor for their prospects of getting a good marriage.

None of them possess beauty either. Circe and Penelope are both depicted as unattractive women, which causes them many troubles. We can see the importance of beauty in women with the example of Scylla in Miller's novel. Circe's jealousy of the nymph Scylla drives Circe mad and she decides to retaliate by transforming her into a monster. Circe's brother, Aeëtes, goes as far as saying that, instead of a punishment, Scylla's transformation into the much-feared monster is an improvement, for now she will be dreaded but unconstrained. She has freedom and renown. Interestingly, from his point of view, the most suitable chastisement would have been ugliness, as a hideous nymph "would be […] less than nothing" (Miller 2019, 61). Beauty is, therefore, the most precious attribute. Penelope experiences the very same ordeal: she has good qualities for a wife, but she is not physically attractive, as Helen is. As such, those surrounding them always find the moment to scorn them for their lack of beauty. Circe is most especially abused by her sister, Pasiphaë, who never misses an opportunity to remind her of her physical unattractiveness. On the other hand, Penelope is constantly mocked by the beautiful Helen, her cousin.

Circe and Penelope are both, on the other hand, masters of illusion in their own different manners. Circe is a powerful witch with "a knack for illusion" and whose "greatest gift was transformation" (Miller 2019, 74); she transforms Scylla into a monster, she casts a spell over her island to protect her home, etc. Penelope deceives people as well with her weaving and unweaving of the burial shroud. Both women, thus, know their tricks and they know how to use them for their own benefit, just as Odysseus. In fact, Odysseus and the god Hermes are presented as the archetypical tricksters in mythology. Nonetheless, in the two books we are offered two female figures with the same attributes as counterbalance. In addition, Penelope and Circe are weavers, both of cloths and of stories. Penelope is renowned for the trick of the shroud, as we have previously seen, but Circe weaves too, she "spins spells and threads alike" (Miller 2019, 131). It is, therefore, not a surprise to notice how both authors use throughout their books vocabulary very much related to the art of sewing.

As we see, we are here presented with two different but very similar female characters, who defy patriarchal society in diverse spheres. Both are intelligent, resourceful, powerful, epithets which are always associated with men throughout mythology –and history. Circe and Penelope are poised to face those who oppress them, be it gods or suitors; throughout their lifetime they develop boldness. This is especially noticeable in Circe, who, as a protagonist in a *Bildungsroman*, turns from her innocent and hopeless youth to plain adulthood, learning about herself and her powers throughout the novel. Hence, women are not here depicted as "delicate creatures, flowers, eggs, anything that may be crushed in a moment's carelessness" (Miller 2019, 174). They are not passive, as mythology has recorded most of them. In fact, when we think about the adjectives used to describe Penelope (faithful, patient…), we can see that these attributes refer mainly to passivity, a state in which women do not have to do anything; on the contrary, what is expected of them is to remain inactive.

It is interesting now to note how Penelope and Circe are both portrayed by Homer as very different models of femininity: whereas Penelope is the faithful wife, the perfect prototype of how a woman should be, Circe is a goddess, a witch, terrifyingly imposing her will upon men, even upon Odysseus, who cannot resist her charms. The "official version" of the story, therefore, transformed Penelope in an "edifying legend. A stick used to beat other women with" (Atwood 2006, 12). In other words, while Homer's Penelope is portrayed as a faithful and patient wife, shaped according to the feminine model of virtue of patriarchal society, Atwood's Penelope reclaims the opportunity to tell her version of the events, even to advise women not to follow suit (Atwood 2006, 13). Penelope, as Atwood, is aware of the narrative imperative of happy endings ("happy endings are best achieved by keeping the right doors locked", Atwood 2006, 13), which means that one side of the story has to be silenced, and, in this case, it is hers.

On the other hand, Circe lives alone on an island, while Penelope languishes in a palace waiting for her husband to return. Again, we see that firm dichotomy which classifies women into two different categories, the angel in the house and the fallen woman. While Penelope represents the perfect wifely attributes, Circe is depicted throughout mythology, history and art almost as a *femme*

fatale, a predatory woman, even a misandrist, sexually free and independent, who, as a mermaid, lures men to her home only to transform them into swine. In fact, she is considered to be the very first witch in Western literature, modelling subsequent female witchcraft (Hodges 2020, 18). The figure of the witch, in effect, "was the stereotypical opposite of the good wife. She was the woman who was trying to act independently of male control, asserting her own powers, sexual and otherwise" (Jackson 1995, 72). No wonder, then, that John William Waterhouse, so fascinated by beautifully sensuous women, painted Circe at least three times to represent feminine power and sexuality.

Nonetheless, by the end of her adventure with Odysseus in the epic poem, Circe is brought down by the Homeric hero. In fact, according to Homer, Circe outdoes herself in order to become the perfect host. Therefore, a female who was first portrayed as sexually predatory and powerful is later depicted "before the hero's sword, kneeling and begging for mercy. Humbling women seems […] a chief pastime of poets. As if there can be no story unless we crawl and weep" (Miller 2019 181). Here, Miller refers to the moment in *The Odyssey* (Book XX) in which, guided by Hermes's advice, Odysseus rushed at Circe with his sword as if to kill her and she, terrified and debased, screams and pleads for her life. And, thus, order is restored, for Circe is spellbound by Odysseus and submits to him. Yet Miller offers us a Circe who seeks sexual pleasure and asserts her independence regardless of the situation.

3.1.2.   Of Witches and Bitches, Other Female Characters

In this part of the article we will focus on other female characters included both in mythology and the retellings, such as Helen and Pasiphaë. Both women are represented as the antagonists of Penelope and Circe, respectively.

Firstly, we shall briefly talk about Helen, who appears above all in Book IV in the *Odyssey* and who also suffers some alterations in *The Penelopiad*. Atwood's Helen is the source of all the woes inflicted on Penelope, according to this character (Atwood 2006, 75). Helen is here shown as a beautiful and vain woman, who is always the point of comparison: Penelope blames her cousin, she reprimands her for being evil especially towards her and, moreover,

she compares herself as someone less beautiful but more good-natured. Helen, therefore, undergoes a process of magnification in her role (Ingersoll 2008, 116) and, besides, she is here depicted as Penelope's archenemy. Therefore, Helen serves the purpose of presenting a sort of sororophobia among women. To a certain extent, she is used by Penelope as an excuse for her problems ("Helen the septic bitch, root cause of all my misfortunes", Atwood 2006, 78).

For her part, Pasiphaë is depicted as a beautiful and powerful witch, Circe's enemy for the most part. Nevertheless, her role is an important one, since it is thanks to her that Circe understands two decisive things: the true force of their magical abilities and the essential need for female independence. Both sisters have been striving all their lives towards the same aim: self-reliance. In contrast to Circe, Pasiphaë was given in marriage to a king, Minos, son of Zeus, a man who is constantly unfaithful to her. Pasiphaë evidently sees this as an affront to her, who is a witch, the daughter of the Titan Helios. Therefore, she takes matters into her own hands and, in return for her husband's infidelities and his ceaseless appetites, she takes revenge on these women. Moreover, Miller's proposes a rather interesting turn of events: contrary to what mythology tells us, Pasiphaë is not driven by lust to copulate with a bull, rather, she chooses to create a monster of her own free will so that she might be feared and recognised. Hence, this well-known incidence in mythology is not presented here as a punishment or a curse. Pasiphaë is not "ruled by appetites; she ruled with them instead" (Miller 2019, 117). She performs this on purpose so that people will talk and remember her as the mother of a terrifying monster. And, notwithstanding all this, Circe understands her sister's reasoning, as the monster is her "sister's triumph, her ambition made flesh, her whip to use against Minos" (Miller 2019, 121). Yet, patriarchy attempts to counteract Pasiphaë's agency and triumph by naming her monster, for Minos calls it the "Minotaur" and reclaims the glory by naming it after himself (Miller 2019, 120).

Returning to the relationship between Circe and her sister, Circe thinks Pasiphaë calls her to help with the Minotaur's birth to humiliate her, just as Helen constantly humiliates Penelope in Atwood's novella. However, Atwood's sororophobia is here overcome by Miller, who offers a different perspective on women's

relationships, a more positive one indeed. Pasiphaë is, in fact, the one who opens Circe's eyes to the reality of womanhood. That is why the moment in which both sisters reunite and have a long conversation in chapter XI is a turning point in the novel. In a noteworthy dialogue, Pasiphaë reveals how things work in a man's world. According to her, being beautiful, responding to their sexual desires is never enough, "[t]he only thing that makes them listen is power" (Miller 2019, 126). For Pasiphaë, her power comes from hatred; her means to be heard, to protect and impose herself is through witchcraft and fear. It is at this point that Circe realises that her sister and herself have more in common that she had thought, for both had been scorned by men, punished by the male divinities who wish to exert their power upon them by way of chastisement, as, in reality, they are terrified of their magical abilities and increasing power. It is the never-ending story, men trampling on women as a means of wielding their power; a common experience shared by many a woman.

3.1.3.   Amid Rapes and Groping: A Common Female Experience

Physical violence and abuse is not absent in neither of the books, for, in Circe's own words, both maids and nymphs are here "an endless feast laid out upon a table, beautiful and renewing. And so very bad at getting away" (Miller 2019, 171). First, we will discuss the role of the maids in *The Penelopiad* and, then, we will analyse similar instances in Miller's novel.

Very interesting is the case of maids, who are portrayed in the *Odyssey* as unfaithful and promiscuous servants, which leads to the final misfortune in the epic poem. *The Penelopiad*, thus, offers the opportunity for these characters to explain their reasons and their version of the story: they had to play along with the suitors, which led them to endure the abuses of these men, who "order[ed] the maids about and pinch[ed] their bottoms as if they were in their own homes" (Atwood 2006, 64), so that they could render Penelope a good service. Hence, they were loyal to their very end, whereas Penelope only used them as mere instruments. These maids offer us their narration as a chorus, which reminds us of Greek choruses of classical dramas, following, thus, the postmodernist literature approach and its interest in playing with the narrative structure while delivering different narratives within a single work. In fact, Suzuki

(2007, 271) considers this act of bringing the maids to the very centre of the narrative as Atwood's most significant innovation.

Just like Penelope, the twelve maids also introduce themselves from the second chapter, which ironically is in the form of a rope-jumping rhyme –let us bear in mind that the maids were hanged by a rope. Therefore, to a certain extent they are predicting their own destiny. The maids' narrative is precisely characterised by a great use of irony, as they become "satirists who eloquently critique the ideology of the dominant order (Suzuki 2007, 272):

> we are the maids
> the ones you killed
> the ones you failed (Atwood 2006, 14).

It is an accusation right from the opening that lays bare a topic which has been obliterated until now. Hence, the novella does not only reflect issues of gender, but also of class, for the maids were slaves and these had no role in mythological accounts. These twelve maids face double oppression: as slaves, they face social oppression; as women in a patriarchal society, they face gender oppression. These issues were suppressed in *The Odyssey*. In this sense, chapter XXVI, titled "The Trial of Odysseus", proves to be very illustrative. Howells (2006, 14) explains how this chapter is a "satire on patriarchal institutions", since Odysseus is here being tried for the slaughter of the male suitors, but there is no mention about the murder of the maids, until they claim justice for their case. When asked about it by the judge, Odysseus' attorney affirms he was "acting within his rights" (Atwood 2006, 96), since he was their master. Penelope describes how

> most maids got raped, sooner or later; a deplorable but common feature of palace life. It wasn't the fact of their being raped that told against them, in the mind of Odysseus. It's that they were raped without permission.
> *Judge (chuckles):* Excuse me, Madam, but isn't that what rape is? Without permission?
> *Attorney for the Defence:* Without permission of their master, Your Honour (Atwood 2006, 98).

The twelve maids not only accuse Odysseus and Telemachus, they also condemn Penelope for her lack of action towards their murders. It is interesting to note that these maids have the last word on the book: theirs are the last heard voice and perspective, for they

are not mere silenced victims, they critique and satirise the patriarchal and aristocratic society which sacrificed them. Hence, whereas Odysseus, as hero and man, can bask during his epic in the male privilege of committing adultery without any punishment or impact, these maids are sentenced to death, which illustrates a sexual double standard (Suzuki 2007, 272).

In Miller's novel it is especially Circe the one who is subdued to the kind of treatment which Penelope's maids had to endure. As all nymphs, she suffers the groping of men within her family: "[a] pinch, a stroke, a hand slipping under the sleeve of [her] dress" (Miller 2019, 168). However, the author decides to include an event which will alter the character of her protagonist. In chapter XIV, Circe receives the visit of a group of sailors and she offers them her kindness. But once these men discover that Circe lives alone and there is no man to be found on the island, they jump at the opportunity of appeasing all their appetites and Circe, albeit being a goddess, a sorceress, the daughter of Helios, is raped by the captain of the crew. Miller describes the scene in a manner which allows us to see how vulnerable and helpless Circe feels at what is happening to her. Her astonishment is evident and she remembers her sister Pasiphaë's words: she has been too tamed, her father Helios would never raise a finger to help her, and she was alone. After all, she was just a nymph, as she had prophetically enunciated at the beginning of the book: "[i]f anyone came, I would only be able to scream, and a thousand nymphs before me knew what good that did" (Miller 2019, 70). This pivotal moment will leave its traces on Circe and shape her later actions towards those who will come afterwards.

Conversely, unlike Penelope and the maids, Circe retaliates and kills those who have abused her. Later on, Circe reflects on this and realises that, ultimately, she "was alone and a woman, that was all that mattered" (Miller 2019, 170). That is to say, even though she is a goddess, men want to take advantage of her. They are never sorry to do what they do, they are only sorry to get caught. That is the reason why Circe becomes who she is and what she is now famed to be: a sorceress who turns men into pigs, somehow "foreshadowing the second-wave feminist cry of 'male chauvinist pigs'" (Hodges 2020, 20) or the current #BalanceTonPorc movement in France (the equivalent of the #MeToo movement).

4. Conclusions

As we have seen, Margaret Atwood makes a revision of the myth of Penelope and Odysseus by using postmodernist and feminist critical perspectives. The author plays with the narrative structure, offering her readers a parallel narrative, since the main story is taken from another work of fiction but now focused on Penelope, as well as traces of narrative collage, as when she presents the maids acting as chorus. Through the voice of Penelope, Atwood (de)constructs myths and critiques notions of story-telling and different versions of the same story. While Penelope attempts here to dispel rumours about her, but her own version of the story is biased, the maids seek justice for their deaths, which makes their narrative also biased. There is, thus, a constant tension about truths and we, as readers, are left with unreliable narrators, becoming aware of the fact that we can never know the whole truth. As Hutcheon (1988, 42) argues, "postmodernism remains fundamentally contradictory, offering only questions, never final answers". For her part, Miller rewrites Circe's myth through the voice of the character herself. For that purpose, the author makes use of the concept of *herstory*, which means that the female gaze is the focal point. Circe here is a character who is allowed to grow and develop her personality: she is not the same when we meet her at her father's palace as when we leave her at the end of the novel.

Atwood's and Miller's reinterpretations, thus, result in the reassessment of subject matters such as gender and class differences. The authors give voice and space to two previously suppressed or undermined voices in Homer's *Odyssey*, while, at the same time, trying to mirror the circumstances of numerous women, even up to our present age. In that sense, Penelope and Circe attempt to deconstruct the official Homeric version, becoming true weavers of *herstories*. If telling stories is what characterises us as human beings, then these two female figures are given the opportunity to fight for selfhood and subjectivity and to define themselves by narrating their story. We are presented with two female quests, Penelope's and Circe's own odyssey, and the perspective of powerless women such as the maids. For this reason, Wilson (2000, 226) argues, "Atwood's re-visioning of patriarchal myths creates a new feminist mythology" and the same could be asserted about Miller. As such, both books examined here stand as clearly feminist

rewrites which confront issues of gender –and class– and how myths/histories are constructed on the suppression of women. The authors, in fact, depict several female characters who struggle for their own autonomy in differing manners.

Furthermore, Miller offers a new perspective on feminism, different from the one portrayed by Atwood. The relationship, for instance, between Circe and Penelope by the end of the book is one of respect and mutual understanding. Miller's Penelope has here the chance to open up, to talk to someone who will, in effect, listen carefully to her side of the story, which is precisely what Atwood's Penelope seeks. Both women share numerous similarities; both have been alone throughout most of their lives. Through the hardship and toils of life both female characters learnt endurance, most especially by facing the distress and trauma of not being as the others want them to be. It is as if Miller wants to offer Circe, and also Penelope, that Penelope portrayed in mythology and in Atwood's novella, the opportunity to find peace, to find someone who understands, to find protection in a true sisterhood. As a matter of fact, Miller gives Penelope a new ending, or rather, a new beginning, for she becomes the new witch of Aiaia. That is how Miller succeeds in writing a *herstory* of nearly epic dimensions. Future research could fruitfully explore this notion of *herstory* further by analysing this trend in literature where mythology seems to stand as a category of its own.

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HOPE IS THE NEW PUNK: POLITICS OF STORYTELLING, QUEERNESS AND MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES IN BECKY CHAMBERS' *THE LONG WAY TO A SMALL ANGRY PLANET*

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With the coining of Henry A. Giroux's concept of 'educated hope', hopefulness has been defined by postcolonial and decolonial scholars as a survival strategy against vertical systems of power, and arguably, as a source of agency (2014, 38). Nevertheless, hope is not the only emotion or affect that has been theorized to be a political form of resistance. In 2016, Judith Butler explored the notion of 'radical vulnerability', arguing that it was vital for marginalized communities (that category referring to those who have been historically kept at the margins) to exercise it as a way to contest the cisheteropatriarchal and capitalist system. This article examines if these emotions and affects truly constitute an act of agency, and how they are intertwined with each other as well as with storytelling, because literature has been employed by 'the other' as a tactic to build places of contestation and subversion (Lorde, 2017, Walker, 1994). Moreover, this analysis will prove that the transformative capacities of storytelling are vital to the margins in a way that is unique to them and that is simultaneously connected with the ideas of community and vulnerability, due to their subaltern positioning. In order to do so, I will focus on the literary genre of

'hopepunk' (quote) and its socio-political implications, as well as the capacity of literature to help to imagine and create better realities through a sense of community and solidarity. In particular, I will focus on Becky Chamber's The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet, (2015) a USA science fiction novel that deals with the intersection of queerness and hope, as well as the interaction between both in relation to Giroux and Butler's theorization.

Keywords: hope; science fiction; vulnerability; queerness; storytelling.

1. Introduction

Despite the fact that hopefulness has been commonly seen as mere optimism by the general public, some postcolonial scholars have coined certain terms, such as Henry A. Giroux's 'educated hope' (2004, 38) or Duncan-Andrade's notion of 'critical hope' (2009, 182) that challenge this preconceived conception and tend to highlight the political nature of hope and its usage as a survival strategy against vertical systems of power, and arguably, as a source of agency. Nevertheless, hope is not the only emotion or affect that has been theorized to be a political form of resistance. In 2016, Judith Butler explored the notion of 'radical vulnerability', arguing that it was vital for marginalized communities (that category referring to those who have been historically kept at the margins) to exercise it as a way to contest the cisheteropatriarchal and capitalist system (2016, 2).

This article examines if these emotions and affects truly constitute an act of agency, and how they are intertwined with each other as well as with storytelling, as literature has been employed by 'the other' as a tactic to build places of contestation and subversion (Lorde 2017, 8; Walker 1994, 405). In order to do so, I will be exploring the diverse definitions of hope and its connection with the socio-political, as well as focusing on storytelling and the capacity of literature to help to imagine and create better realities through a sense of community and solidarity. To explore their intersection, I will be examining the literary genre of 'hopepunk' and its transformative nature in relationship to the margins. Although it has been predominately absent from academia, 'hopepunk' has been

defined in social media and pop culture magazines as a narrative genre that weaponizes hope to imagine more equal realities (Romano 2018). Moreover, as this article focuses on the LGBT+ when discussing the margins, I will also be questioning the notion of 'found or chosen families' as structures of solidarity, intimacy and vulnerability that are born specifically in queer spaces.

To fully examine the connections between these factors, I will be taking Becky Chamber's *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* as a case study. This is a USA science fiction novel that deals with the intersection of queerness and hope, as well as the interaction between both in relation to Giroux and Butler's theorization. Moreover, it discusses the importance of explicitly sharing found family narratives, as well as the transformative elements that are present both in hope and storytelling and are inherently political.

2. What is and is not Hope

Many postcolonial scholars, such as Sara Ahmed (2004, 182) and Stetsenko (2019, 727), have attempted to define and delimit our understanding of hope, and they have often found themselves in contradiction with vague and abstract ideas of 'apolitical' optimism, as well as mere idealism. Yet, this paper is concerned with hope as a deliberate practice of resistance, while claiming that it must be ultimately viewed as a collective and transformative effort to exercise active agency, even (or perhaps especially) in a capitalist and cisheteronormative framework.

However, before discussing what hope is, we need to explore some of the elements it tends to be misinterpreted as, whether the confusion is an accidental one or a deliberate attempt of whitewashing the essence of hope. When discussing Roland Barthes (1972, 133), Ducan-Andrade describes 'mythical hope' as "a false narrative of equal opportunity emptied of its historical and political contingencies" (2009, 183), establishing that hopefulness needs to be understood as a force that operates in an oppressive world that serves vertical structures of power. His view is quite similar to West's denounce of the notion of 'hope in a tightrope' (2008, 12), where a particular and isolated element is seen to subvert socioeconomic and historic disparities, in line with neoliberal ideals

of 'meritocracy' and individualism. Yet, he explains that a "single event cannot, by itself, provide the healing and long-term sustenance required to maintain hope amid conditions of suffering" (Ducan-Andrade 2009, 183).

Therefore, hopefulness can be understood as a concrete affect, always situated in a political context, which implies a connection with what has made to be 'the margins' (Spivak 1988, 25). This hope does not conform to capitalist and neoliberal tactics of erasing difference and using unlike examples of 'success' to gloss over systemic hardship. It is rather situated in line with the collective struggle, at the core of the subaltern, the other, since it refuses to ignore the social and the political. In Ducan-Andrade's words, "critical hope audaciously defies the dominant ideology of defense, entitlement, and preservation of privileged bodies at the expense of the policing, disposal, and dispossession of marginalized "others"" (2009, 190). Consequently, hope can be defined as a tool of social transformation, one in need of awareness of material circumstances to act as an expression of agency. Since this questioning is a collective one, it is inherently linked with ideas of community and solidarity, if it intends to survive.

Challenging the status quo implies a desire to dismantle the hegemonic hierarchies that position certain bodies as lesser, which can only be accomplished by the use of solidarity and community as strategies of unity. Seeing each other as human in a capitalist system that profits from dehumanization is an act of resistance and resilience, and one that is necessary to not only being able to imagine a better future but also to act upon it together. As a result, hope has a certain element of empathy and unity ingrained in itself. This hope that focuses on the collective (Solnit 2005, 12) can be described as a form of 'trust' (2005, 45), 'courage' (Lear 2006, 107) and even an 'ontological necessity' (Van Heertum 2006, 45).

Once we have established that hope is political, we will explore further its connection with the margins and its compromise with concrete and immediate action. Hopefulness has been described as a commitment to action and to the building of a better future (Giroux 2004, 40), as an "inspiration for collective action to build collective power to achieve collective transformation, rooted in grief and rage but pointed towards vision and dreams" (Solnit

2005, 11). Once again, it comes from despair and inequality, and it implies a commitment to social transformation through direct change. It is a promise to the future and to ourselves, a reaffirmation that we deserve better, that we (and I use this plural to refer to the margins) can create a better, kinder world while facing and naming the inequalities of the present that are a consequence of the cisheteropatriarchy, white supremacy and late capitalism.

This is in line with West's previously mentioned notion of 'critical hope', which has been defined as something that "demands a committed and active struggle" against "the evidence in order to change the deadly tides of wealth inequality, group xenophobia, and personal despair the evidence in order to change the deadly tides of wealth inequality, group xenophobia, and personal despair"' (2004, 296). This political understanding of hope has social justice and resistance at its center, and reinforces the idea that imagining and fighting for a better future is connected with solidarity and mutual support.

The last theoretical definition that I would like to highlight is Giroux's 'educated hope'. He believes that "we must see hope as part of a broader politics that acknowledges those social, economic, spiritual, and cultural conditions in the present that make certain kinds of agency and democratic politics possible" (2004, 38). As it "offers alternatives to an age of profound pessimism, reclaims an ethic of compassion and justice, and struggles for those institutions in which equality, freedom, and justice flourish as part of the ongoing struggle for a global democracy" (2004, 39), hope uses emotion as a transformative vehicle. This kind of hopefulness is not empty optimism or a feel-good narrative, as it demands action and awareness. As I have mentioned previously, this form of hope is an exercise of agency and resilience that is preoccupied with marginalized groups, rather than individuals. Having hope and acting upon it in a time of change and fear is, at is core, a political and subversive act.

Now that we have explored the meaning of hope, I would like to connect its ability to transform what is deemed possible with the role and power of storytelling. To do so, the next section of this paper will be mainly concerned with the literary genre of hopepunk and its relationship with more traditional narratives, as well as the connection between storytelling and marginalized groups.

3.   Storytelling and Hopepunk

Storytelling is a form of creating and reclaiming symbolic spaces where marginalized narratives can be finally voiced in order to subvert and challenge the systems of inequality we have been forced to inhabit. Sharing our history and our stories is a way of "exploring difference" (Berger 2019, 18) and "new realms in the knowledge domain" (Indira 2020, 4) that have been deliberately absent from a cisheteronormative and racist literary canon. Since storytelling "intersects with wider institutionalizations of gendered meanings" (Hemmings 2011a, 4) and "the ways in which we constitute, depict and repeat narratives about theorical concepts matter" (Ilmonen 2020, 364), it can be viewed as a tool of social revolution and systemic transformation.

Solnit believes that "from the places that you have been instructed to ignore or rendered unable to see come the stories that change the world, and it is here that culture has the power to shape politics" (2005, 47), which reinforces the idea that subaltern narratives are concerned with politics of visibility, equity and justice. Once again, discussing the difference between margins and center implies an urgent necessity of subverting multi-layered and intertwined structures of oppression where "to speak as a subject who has been made into the other, not white not man, not straight, not human is to challenge that norm" (Lorde 2017, VIII). The narratives of the margins (and this plural is a deliberate one, as we must state clearly that the marginal encompasses diverse realities that can intersect between each other) are innately subversive because our own existence is too.

Another characteristic of storytelling is that it creates spaces where senses of community, solidarity and a sense of 'collective identity' (2019, 16) can be fostered. Therefore, sharing marginalized stories not only fills in the gaps of canonical literature and idealized history, but also in those social gaps that seek to keep marginalized groups isolated. As Ramaro states, "since the voices of the vulnerable do not generally form part of mainstream discourse, narratives which construct their life truths are a formidable conduit to understand the complex interplay between their social situations and dominant development paradigms" (2020, 4). Consequently, we can claim that the practice of storytelling shares the socially

transformative quality of hope, and we might explore the intersection of the two by examining the genre of hopepunk.

This term was coined by Alexandra Rowland (2017, 1), who defended the need, particularly for marginalized people, to write and have access to narratives that contemplated other possible realities by using hope as a rebellious strategy. Again, these stories do not seek to project an image of false optimism or security, but rather a possibility of social justice that must be accomplished by concrete measures and collective struggles. As developed by Rowland,

> hopepunk isn't ever about submission or acceptance: It's about standing up and fighting for what you believe in. It's about standing up for other people. It's about DEMANDING a better, lkinder world, and truly believing that we can get there if we care about each other as hard as we possibly can, with every drop of power in our little hearts. (Romano 2018).

Once more, we can see how "hope becomes a discourse of critique and social transformation" (Giroux 2004, 38) and how the imagining of different futures seems to be connected with a sense of subversion and possibility as well with the politics of cares and the structures of support that belong to the margins.

Hopepunk also embraces the presence and use of emotion as 'our political as well as our life resources' (Lorde 2017, IX), rather than reinforcing the belief that subjectivity delegitimizes political and social fights or that vulnerability and sentimentality are incompatible with concrete and effective change. Rowland continues by defending that "going to political protests is hopepunk. Calling your senators is hopepunk. But crying is also hopepunk, because crying means you still have feelings, and feelings are how you know you're alive. The 1% doesn't want you to have feelings, they just want you to feel resigned. Feeling resigned is not hopepunk" (2017). Here, the personal, the emotional and the political appear to be intrinsically connected to emotion and storytelling, as well as to the notion of educated and critical hope.

However, that is not to say that all that is written by 'the other' is hopepunk, or that it must be necessarily created exclusively by marginalized communities. The idea of hopepunk is older than its coining; it is, arguably, as old as the practice of storytelling itself. And yet, I believe that because of its links to notions of justice and

lasting change, it includes a political struggle that has been and still is being carried out in the margins. It embodies the idea of literature being able to change the world, to transform the foundation of our history. Even if it does not explicitly refer to hopepunk, I would like to refer to a quote by Ursula K Le Guin at the 65th National Book Award that reflects this commitment and faith in the transformations that can be born from literature and storytelling: "We live in capitalism. Its power seems inescapable. So did the divine right of kings. Any human power can be resisted and changed by human beings. Resistance and change often begin in art, and very often in our art, the art of words" (Le Guin 2020).

In conclusion, sharing and crafting stories, especially those from the margins, implies challenging certain social, historical and political structures that rely on certain narratives being unquestioned in order to maintain and ensure organized oppression. Moreover, storytelling is a vital element to ensure community strengthening and the creation and protection of safe spaces where affective connections can flourish. Finally, we must also remember that both hope and storytelling are radical strategies that use narratives and discourse to transform our perception and reality of what is possible.

4.   Queerness, 'Found Family' and Affective Care

Throughout this paper, I have been referring to 'the margins' in more general and abstract terms, but now I would like to shift the focus towards the queer or LGBT+ community specifically, as the analysis of Becky Chamber's *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* will be mainly concerned with this marginalized group in particular. Nevertheless, that is not to say or imply that queer individuals only suffer systemic discrimination due to their gender identity and sexual orientation, nor that we can examine forms of historical persecution as if they were isolated variables that are not deeply intertwined. The exploration of the margins and the processes of the creation of the 'other' must be grounded on ideas of intersectionality where the personal and the political are questioned "in ways attentive to racial and imperial hierarchies" (McElhinny 2010, 313), as well as issues of class, gender and ability.

Earlier in this text, I have referred to emotions of vulnerability and empathy when discussing the implications and effects of storytelling, as well as their relevance in a capitalist framework. In this section, I will be discussing "not what emotions are, but what work emotions do" (Ahmed 2004, 4) when engaging with "feminist care ethics" (Marvin 2018, 3) and "kin work" (Marvin 2018, 11). When examining LGBT+ spaces and communities, we ought to take into account "queer intimacies alongside a queering of intimacy" (Siegfried 2019, 23) in order to be able to understand fully how queerness impacts cisheteronormative roles and expectations.

These safe spaces are constructed upon the base of solidarity and mutual aid and care, as they are "not based in a shared identity or on a presumption about how the other feels, but on also feeling the desire for transformation out of the experience of discomfort, and against the odds" (Hemmings 2012b, 158) so as to offer genuine support and strengthen emotional bonds. What is unique about these forms of kinship and empathy is that they are highlighting "the importance of feeling for others as a way of transforming ourselves and the world, and thus renders affect as a way of moving across ontology and epistemology" (Hemmings 2012b, 148), therefore presenting the same transformative and collective quality of hope and storytelling. This notion is also present in Berlant's *Intimacy*, who believes that "intimacy builds worlds; it creates spaces and usurps places meant for other kinds of relation" (1998, 282), those relations being "relations that exist outside of normative expectations, such as outside the nuclear family formation or the heterosexual couple" (Siegfried 2019, 26).

For this reason, we can claim that queer relationship and intimacy are successful at both challenging the idea of biological and romantic bonds being perceived as deeper and more profound and that family ties are both necessarily sanguineous in nature and irreplaceable in character. In other words, we are discussing the fact that "a queer paradigm challenges the historic hegemony of normativity in the study of human relationships" (Hammack 2018, 4), as well as "the establishment of norms that not only describe but also historically prescribe relational forms denigrates diversity by delegitimizing that which is non normative and establishing hierarchies among forms of intimacy" (2018, 2).

One of the ways in which queer relationships (again, I am not referring to romantic bonds) destabilize those preconceived notions is by creating and caring for 'chosen' or 'found families', which are "family structure[s] defined by identity and community connection" (Hammack 2018, 3). Hammack affirms that "sexual minorities use a kinship discourse ("families we choose") in response to rejection from their families of origin" (2018, 26), which would imply that these structures are a form of resilience and resistance that is defined by practices of vulnerability and community care. Found families are based upon affective care and work, and use emotions as a form of fostering unity and the sense of community that is not provided (or is chosen over) 'traditional' family structures and relationships.

Once again, the presence and active practice of these emotions can be understood as an exercise of agency, as well as a "political action aimed at imagining, enacting, and sustaining a different social world" (Siegfried 2019, 24). As we anticipated beforehand, queerness solidifies the connection between the political, the emotional and the transformative that is already present in narrating hopeful stories. Queer narratives, and particularly those which feature and explore found families "can build affective solidarity as it emerges between experience and bodies that offer radical, ethical and political possibilities for change" (Pullen and Vachhani 2018, 3). Moreover, we need to address the fact that the LGBT+ community has been systematically deprived of canonical stories that portray queerness in a way that imply that non cisheterosexual individuals and communities can find places of belonging, and can aspire to do more than just surviving. Queerness is "not simply a being but a doing for and toward the future" (Esteban Muñoz 2009, 1), as well as 'an insistence or potentiality or concrete possibility for another world' that affects not only the community itself but also how we conceive and prioritize relationships and emotional labor.

In short, queer communities and 'found families' make use of affective resources such as vulnerability and empathy in order to resist their subaltern position. Moreover, these emotional practices help us to redefine the established hierarchies of intimacy, as well as transforming our socio-political reality alongside with hope and storytelling. The imagining of a better world must include queer and gender-non conforming individuals to truly defy the systems of

power it intended to subvert, and that includes listening, creating and amplifying queer stories while recognizing that they have intrinsic value outside exclusively LGBT+ spaces. Therefore, hopepunk narratives need to include these practices and realities, both to contribute to the representation and humanization of the margins and to further the challenging of cisheteronormative expectations.

5.   Hopepunk and Found Families: Becky Chambers' *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* as a Case Study

After defining and exploring the importance of hope, storytelling and found families, it seems reasonable to examine how their intersection is constructed in a particular textual example. In this case, I have chosen to explore Becky Chamber's *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* as a case study. This space opera was firstly published through a Kickstarter campaign in 2014 and due to the outstanding public reaction was then later picked up by the American publisher Hodder & Stoughton.

The main reasoning behind choosing to discuss this novel is not only that science fiction, alongside with fantasy narratives, tends to represent quite accurately the transformative quality of language and literature, but also due to the fact that this novel is quite explicit and revolutionary when dealing with hierarchies of affects and intimacy. Moreover, as it will be discussed in this section, that *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet*, and perhaps Chamber's complete literary production, can be regarded as representative of hopepunk.

This novel appears to be concerned with a wormhole-building ship and its crew, who accept a dangerous governmental offer to travel to a distant planet in exchange for the promise of financial security. However, as the story unfolds, the narrative focus shifts towards the relationships between characters as well as their inner conflicts, relying heavily on the crew's own perception of themselves as a chosen family. Earlier in the novel, in page 39, we can find an abstract that challenges explicitly the conception of biological family, and establishes the ship Wayfarer as an affective community.

> The point of a family, he'd always thought, was to enjoy the experience of bringing something new into the universe, passing on your knowledge, and seeing part of yourself live on. He had come to realize that his life in the sky filled that need. He had a crew that relied on him, and a ship that continued to grow, and tunnels that would last for generations. To him, that was enough. The point of a family, he'd always thought, was to enjoy the experience of bringing something new into the universe, passing on your knowledge, and seeing part of yourself live on. He had come to realize that his life in the sky filled that need. He had a crew that relied on him, and a ship that continued to grow, and tunnels that would last for generations. To him, that was enough (2014, 39).

As we have seen when dealing with found families in the previous section, the politics of intimacy and vulnerability soon become a pivotal element in the story's narrative, as the novel prioritizes the extend and scope of the character's bonds and commitment with one another and the affects and emotions that are deemed as necessary and of the utmost importance in the ship. However, the system of care that Chambers' characters have built is not limited to their physical home, since their empathy and solidarity are usually extended to others in an attempt to create safe spaces and genuine connection.

> "You were comforting her. That's all it was. You just wanted to her to know that someone cared."
> "Nobody should be alone," Sissix said. "Being alone and untouched…there's no punishment worse than that. And she's done nothing wrong. She's just different." (2014, 98)

This exchange takes place at the first third of the novel. Sissix, one of the crewmembers, encounters a neurodivergent individual of her species that appears to have some kind of mental illness that interferes with her ability to socialize with 'normality'. As a result, she appears to be completely isolated and without any external support, so Sissix results to hugging the woman and giving her one of her feathers. Both of these practices are constructed as deeply meaningful and emotional in Sissix's cultural framework, as her species seem to value physical touch as the higher form of care and closeness. The feather giving is also said to hold social significance, as one of Sissix's shipmates narrates later on that she was offered one after consoling and caring for her friend after a family member passed away.

These patterns are repeated multiple times within the story, as the protagonists try to ensure that the emotional support they provide expands outside their inner circle in an attempt to combat the process of othering and socioeconomic isolation that many characters suffer. Nevertheless, these exchanges of kindness and support are not isolated incidents, as they have a transformative motivation at their core: they do not seek to be the exception in a system that deliberately attempts to fragments and dehumanize the margins, but to establish one that uses emotions as a political and philosophical weapon. To cite Audre Lord, "without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression" (Lorde 1984, 2). These practices of vulnerability and empathy are revolutionary because they focus on the collective, rather than on individual change and behavior, ensuring unity and mutuality in and between marginalized groups.

Because of this, I believe that *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* can be said to represent the essence of hopepunk narratives. It "relies fundamentally on the mobilization of vulnerability" (Butler 2016, 15) as a tool to imagine and construct a better world. Emotions and affective care and support become forms of concrete action to directly challenge capitalist, racist and cisheteronormative systems that create the material conditions of marginalization, while ensuring the construction of collective spaces and community building.

However, when discussing found family narratives, it is relevant to highlight that not the entirety of the Wayfarer's characters identify as or are canonically part of the LGBT+ community. While Rosemary and Sissix are both openly queer, as they have a romantic relationship, this is not the case for the rest of the crew. Nevertheless, they do reproduce the structure and practices of a chosen family from their subaltern positioning. For example, Ashby Santoso, the ship captain, is in an interspecies relationship, which are deemed both immoral and illegal, as well as carrying discriminatory consequences at a professional, political and social level. "An Aeluon could lose her family and friends over an alien relationship. She could lose her job, especially when on a government contract" (Chambers 2014, 89).

We also have the example of Artis Corbin, the ship 'algaeist' who is revealed to be a clone of a family member at the end of the narration. His new legal status implies a loss of freedom and humanity, as he suffers a process of otherization that nearly costs him his life.

> "If we do nothing, he'll be sent to a Quelin penal colony. They're labor camps, mostly, from what I've learned. Apparently most of the teracite ore in the GC is mined by Quelin prisoners."
>
> "Now there's a happy thought," Jenks said. "Nice to know what my circuit panels are made from."
>
> "How can they do that?" Dr. Chef said. "Corbin's a GC citizen."
>
> "No, he's not," Rosemary said. "Since cloning is illegal in most GC territories, cloned individuals don't get natural born rights.
>
> They have to go through the same application process that non-GC species do, even if they've lived in the GC all their lives" (Chambers 2014, 225).

Lastly, we could also examine the positioning of Lovelace, the ships' AI. As an artificial being, she is not legally or socially considered as human. She has no control over her own labor, mind or residence, and she is seen as a technological device rather than as a conscious being by the larger population. As a result, even if not all of the characters are positioned as queer, they still endorse the politics of home and belonging through intimacy and care.

Again, from the beginning of the novel the cisheteronormative model of family is challenged, and treated as one of many options of social organization, rather than as the hegemonic model. When discussing Sissix's origins and culture, she explains that "young Aandrisks were cared for by community elders, not their biological parents" (2014, 98), as well as distinguishing between 'hatch' and 'feather family'. The latter would be the equivalent of a found family, as it prioritizes emotional bonds over legal or biological ones.

> "A feather family is friends and lovers, right?"
>
> "Right. People you emotionally depend on."
>
> "But feather families change often, right?"
>
> "Not often, necessarily. Often by your standards, I guess. People change feather families whenever they need to, and people need different things at different times in their lives (2014, 194).

The emphasis relies on the affective relationships, as it creates transformative and new spaces that can accommodate those who inhabit the margins. And even when romantic or sexual attraction takes place in those communities, the focus does not shift from platonic intimacy and vulnerability. "Well, I am attracted to you. You're a wonderful person, and a very good friend. I'm not sure when I started feeling more than that for you. Which isn't a problem, by the way, if your answer is no. I do like being your friend, and I'll be happy if that's all we are" (2014, 214).

In Becky Chambers' narrative, romantic relationships are not prioritized over platonic ones, and emotional systems of support are viewed and constructed as the most relevant practice of any community. At the end of the novel, there is a conversation between Sissix and Ashby, in which he expresses guilt for not being able to fulfill his friends' life as much as a romantic partner may be able to do. The following text is the exchange in question:

> "There has always been a part of me that feels guilty that I can't be the kind of family you need."
> Sissix nuzzled his cheek. "You are the family I need, Ashby. I wouldn't have chosen you otherwise." (2014, 255).

Sissix directly uses the term 'chosen family' and reinforces the community that is the Wayfarer ship. Therefore, there is a somewhat circular structure, in which Ashby is the first and last character to discuss the status of the crew as family, reaching a positive conclusion both times.

In short, I believe that Chambers' *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* represents the transformative spirit of hopepunk as well as the ideological commitment of the notions of educated and radical hope. Throughout the act of storytelling, the novel highlights the importance of narrating the stories of the margins in order to create affective systems that foster true intimacy, vulnerability and empathy. The Wayfarer's crew constructs a chosen family structure because of and throughout their subalternity, and they systematically ensure that the emotional resilience and care that possibilities and maintains said structure in the first place is extended to other (and the other) so as to challenge and resist a racist and capitalist system as well as its cisheteropatriarchal expectations and hegemonic models.

In *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet*, hope is able to flourish and act as a form of resistance because there is a constant effort of opposing vertical and intertwined systems of oppression that offers the possibility of a different reality. The affective communities of the novel are the representation of the different futures than can be build based upon queer legacies, and their survival is a promise to the margins. Thus, hopefulness, storytelling and affective labor are all notions committed to serve the subaltern, while actively fighting for the destruction of the power structures that endorse that historical and social marginality. In Becky Chambers' novel, love, intimacy and vulnerability are political, and serve to create a world where they are no longer the exception.

6. Conclusion

This paper has dealt with the definition of hope and its political implications. From Barthes' notion of 'mythical hope' to Giroux's understanding of 'educated hope', we have examined hope as intrinsically connected to the collective and the political, thus being an active form of agency and political commitment. Moreover, we have defended that hopefulness relies on concrete social action to create possibilities of imagining new realities and transforming our future. It "just means another world might be possible, not promised, not guaranteed" (Solnit 2005, 25), as we are in need of "doing the work of imagining this future and committing to transforming the status quo instead of adapting to it" (Stetsenko 2019, 2).

One of the multiple strategies of social transformation that we can use as an example is sharing repressed narratives that use hope as a political tool. In particular, this article has examined hopepunk as a case study of the use of storytelling to challenge and subvert cisheteronormative, patriarchal, capitalist and racist practices that have systematically oppressed and silenced the margins. As Solnit states, "we need stories that don't gloss over the ugly damage out there but that don't portrait as all there is either" (2005, 115). Storytelling creates an opportunity to ensure that systemic violence is addressed and openly discussed, while ensuring that marginalized communities are not dehumanized and reduced to their suffering. The stories and communities of the margins ought to be voiced,

while taking into account the emotions and affects that helped to construct and preserve them. Moreover, this analysis has proven that the transformative capacities of storytelling are vital to the marginalized in a way that is unique to them and that is simultaneously connected with the ideas of community and vulnerability, due to their subaltern positioning.

Specifically, we have also explored affective tactics of support and community building in the margins, and particularly in queer spaces. We have established that vulnerability and empathy are forms of conscious resilience that are used to protect and care for 'the other' while challenging hegemonic systems that benefit from the isolation and despair of the margins. In particular, we analyzed Becky Chambers' *The Long Way To a Small Angry Planet* and its representation of affective communities in regards to the margins, storytelling and the genre of hopepunk. The novel broadcasts a spaceship crew that have established a found family based on radical intimacy, empathy and vulnerability and that use those same emotions as a political weapon to fight for and to establish a better reality.

Consequently, Chambers' text broadcasts how affects can be used to destabilize the status quo, as well as its pivotal role to sustain and strengthen marginalized communities. Throughout the use of hopepunk, she highlights the transformative quality that is present both in storytelling and in hopefulness, and reinforces the notion that the abolition of our oppressive socioeconomic system must have the margins at its core. Power inequalities cannot be divorced from storytelling and the narrative of the margins, as the stories that are allowed to be voiced contribute to help and shape our reality and ontological possibilities. Therefore, this idea includes the capacity to have and enact hope.

In conclusion, this article has explored the notion that both storytelling and hopefulness are exercises of active agency and political resistance, as well as the fact that they are both necessarily linked to marginalized communities and social transformation. Furthermore, I have also defended that empathy and vulnerability, along with other affects, are political and transformative in nature, as well as key elements in the abolition of vertical structures of power. The imagining and the narration of better realities must include 'othered' communities and their emotional strategies of

survival, in order to create meaningful and lasting change. Hopefully, this analysis can be extended to more marginalized communities and narrations, so as to ensure a more in depth and intersectional approach, as well as the use of more novels (whether science fiction or not) as case studies to examine the representation of found families and emotional resilience in hopepunk as a genre. It would be particularly useful to compare how the genre of hopepunk helps to create different futures in relation to class and racial struggles, as well as to how explore how those realities are constructed by authors of different marginalized identities, since those were not covered in depth within this paper.

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FROM MORPHEME TO PRONOUN: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEPARATED GENITIVE IN THE EARLY MODERN ENGLISH PERIOD

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The separated genitive, or *his* genitive, was a grammatical resource used systematically in earlier stages of the English language to express possession. The general assumption is that it originated at the end of the Early Middle English period as an allomorph for the flexive genitive (*–es*), and that it was later reanalyzed in Early Modern English as an authentic possessive pronoun that required agreement with its antecedent in the possessor phrase. In this paper I provide evidence for said reanalysis using the correspondence of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey (1569-1594) and Katherine Paston (1603-1627) as sources. The main features that will be discussed are the use of a wide range of pronominal forms for the possessive particle (including feminine and plural ones); the lack of non-agreeing examples; the presence of genitives combining morphemal *–es* and the external possessor *his*; the status of the separated genitive when attached to complex possessors; and, finally, a question of orthography and the spelling of *his*.

Keywords: separated genitive; *his* genitive; Early Modern English; pronoun.

1. Introduction

The separated genitive, or *his* genitive, was a grammatical resource used systematically in earlier stages of the English language to express possession. It was defined by a syntactic configuration in which two noun phrases (first, one referring to the possessor and, second, another referring to the possessed or *possessum*) are connected by a particle in the form of a possessive pronoun, usually *his*:

> (1) … is to be at ffelmingham to view Mr Crofts his land
> '… is to be at Felmingham to view Mr Crofts's land'
> (PASTONK,53.017.287)[1]
> (2) a small time after my brother his death
> 'a small time after my brother's death
> (BACON, III,218.363.6299)

The question about its origins is not yet settled, although nowadays it is generally assumed to have appeared at the end of the Early Middle English period (around 1250) as a result of the phonological similarity between the pronunciation of the weak form of the possessive pronoun *his* and the allomorph for the genitive case /-iz/, which contributed to the formal identification of both resources in the mind of speakers.[2] This hypothesis has been backed by scholars such as Wyld (1936, 314), Janda (1980; 1981), Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2003, 668) and, especially, Allen (1997; 2002; 2003; 2008). According to her, early putative examples of the separated genitive can be dismissed as mistranslations or are, at least, amenable to other syntactic analyses (2008, 227).

As for the indisputable separated genitives that began to appear systematically from 1250, Allen argues that the structure appeared at the end of the Early Middle English period as either an orthographical variant or an allomorph for the flexive genitive

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[1] The citations for the examples quoted in this paper from the letters of Nathaniel Bacon and Katherine Paston are taken directly from the PCEEC.

[2] Other authors such as Mustanoja (1960,160), Barber (1976, 200), Seppänen (1997, 202-203) and, more recently, Pérez Lorido and Casado Núñez (2017) affirm the existence of a separated genitive during the Old English period in configurations that were not restricted to the use of *his* as the possessive particle.

(2008, 239-240) that could be attached not only to masculine or neuter possessors, but also to feminine and plural ones. About this, Allen states:

> As in the EME period, there is no justification for analysing the separated genitive in the period 1380–1545 as syntactically different from the attached genitive, whatever analysis we may choose. If we analyse the possessive marker as being in D, the head of DP, in the earlier period, we will surely have the same analysis for this period from LME to EModE. The only significant difference would be that it is quite clear in this period that the possessive determiner, although it may be identical in form to the third person possessive pronoun, is simply a marker of possession devoid of gender features, as necessitated by the absence of agreement with the possessor. (2008, 251)

However, something changed in the middle of the sixteenth century, when the particle was reanalyzed as an authentic possessive pronoun that required agreement with its antecedent in the possessor phrase. Allen calls this stage the "period with agreement," and argues that the rise during Middle English of the group genitive (as in 'the kynge of Spaynes navye') made speakers aware that "the normal position of the possessive marker was at the edge of the possessor phrase," which, in turn, led people to believe that *–es* was a reduction of *his* (2008, 253). Hence, the educated detected a seemingly incorrect use of the masculine pronoun when talking about female and plural possessors, and started using *her* and *their* as hypercorrections (Allen 2008, 267). The aim of this paper is to provide empirical evidence for said reanalysis using two Early Modern English collections of letters: *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey* (Hassell Smith 979; 1983; 1990)—with letters dating from 1569 to 1594—and *The Correspondence of Lady Katherine Paston, 1603-1627* (Hughey 1941). To this date, there are no other corpus-based analyses of the separated genitive during this stage of its existence, so studies such as this one are necessary to support the different theories posed on the emergence and use of the structure. I will focus mainly on the separated genitives I found in the corpus, but other possessive configurations might be brought up in order to provide comparisons and overall statistical data.

2. Methodology

The data quoted in this study has been drawn from two collections of letters dating from the mid-sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a period which coincides with the early stages of what Allen has called "the period with agreement" (2008, 253) of separated genitives. The collections chosen were those of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey and Katherine Paston, both included in the *Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence*, or PCEEC (Taylor 2006). Together, they consist of four books (three volumes of *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey* and a single tome of *The Correspondence of Lady Katherine Paston*), and they amount to approximately 169,000 words.

These are very interesting texts from a linguistic point of view. Because they are letters, they are the best possible reflection of Early Modern English real speech that we can have access to nowadays. Both collections feature masculine and feminine perspectives, and they tackle a great array of topics such as politics, religion and even personal affairs. Furthermore, the Bacon and Paston families were both settled in Norfolk, so any concerns about hypothetical dialectal variations that might affect the present study could, in principle, be discarded.

For the data retrieval, I have carried out a systematic search of every kind of possessive structure in the text, namely flexive genitives (FG), zero genitives (ZG), –*'s* genitives and separated genitives. Different methods were used depending on the kind of structure being recorded. To compile flexive and zero genitives, I have opened the parsed files provided by the PCEEC in a word processor and performed a manual search for the labels N$ (common noun possessor, singular), NS$ (common noun possessor, plural), NPR$ (proper noun possessor, singular) and NPRS$ (proper noun possessor, plural).

As for the compilation of instances of separated and –*'s* genitives,[3] I have used the Java program for linguistic research

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[3] Although the study has revealed many instances of –*'s* genitives in the first volume of the Bacon letters, this seemed strange given the fact that the use of the apostrophe to indicate possession in English was not fully established until the later

CorpusSearch 2. Two different algorithms were input: first, I searched for all the noun phrases dominating an isolated $, which is the label used in the corpus to indicate separated and – *'s* possessive markers; second, I looked for all the noun phrases dominating a PRO$ (the label used for "normal" pronouns) in case I could find any SG structures that were not labeled as such.

Furthermore, to have the results be the most revealing possible, formulaic possessive structures such as those found in the elliptical referral to someone's house ('at Mr Brownes'), in farewells ('Your Lordships redye at commaunde G. le Gascoigne'), or in the mentioning of the Queen's Majesty have not been taken into account for this study, as I considered them to be idiomatic and, in a way, fossilized.

3. Results

3.1. Overall Results for The *Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*

Table 1 below reflects the overall distribution of possessive structures in the Bacon text, both in terms of types and tokens.

	Separated Genitive	Separated + Flexive Genitive	Flexive Genitive	Zero Genitive	Total
Types	52 (7.3%)	2 (0.3%)	571 (80.5%)	84 (11.8%)	709
Tokens	56 (6.4%)	2 (0.2%)	716 (81.7%)	102 (11.6%)	876

Table 1. Possessive structures in *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*

part of the seventeenth century. The rules of transcription for Volume I of the paper edition of *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey* confirmed my suspicions by stating that "in this volume the apostrophe has generally been used, even where the final *es* sign has been transcribed, but it will *not* be used in future volumes" (Hassell Smith 1979, xlix). As a result, I have concluded that there are no real cases of – *'s* genitives in the text. I will henceforth refer to all the – *'s* examples as part of the flexive genitive category. Even if some of them could be, in theory, zero genitives, I haven't had the opportunity to access the original manuscripts in order to clarify this question. Moreover, the statistic deviation caused by this is minimal and not relevant for the purposes of this specific study.

As seen above, I have split up the separated genitives in two categories: the pure ones and those that show a flexive marker along with the detached one. Even though both types may be treated as equivalent in most fronts, it is important to record their differences as these could have interesting implications. In any case, the joint occurrence of all the separated genitives in the text amounts to 54 cases in terms of types (7.6%), or 58 in terms of tokens (6.6%).

Regarding the gender and number of all the possessor heads retrieved from the Bacon letters, results are as expected: most of them are masculine and singular. Feminine and neuter possessors are rather rare, especially in the case of proper nouns where the only plurals present in the text were masculine.

Common Nouns				Proper Nouns			
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter		Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.	233 (32.86%)	116 (16.36%)	34 (4.79%)	Sg.	261 (36.81%)	14 (1.97%)	1 (0.14%)
Plr.	34 (4.79%)	1 (0.14%)	12 (1.69%)	Plr.	3 (0.42%)		

Table 2. Gender and number in the Bacon letters, in types (percentages calculated from total types).

The variety of possessor heads grows substantially smaller when isolating the data for separated genitives. Masculine and singular nouns are the most popular options; only two non-masculine examples are found in these letters.

Common Nouns		Proper Nouns		
	Masculine		Masculine	Feminine
Sg.	13	Sg.	39	1
Plr.		Plr.	1	

Table 3. Gender and number of separated genitives in the Bacon letters, in types.

Another interesting variable when dealing with separated genitives is that of the complexity of the possessor heads. In the Bacon letters, there are 15 examples of complex genitives, 5 of which show a detached marker.

	Group Genitives	Appositive Genitives
Separated Genitives	5	0
Flexive Genitives	5	1
Zero Genitives	4	0

Table 4. Complex possessor heads in the Bacon letters.

3.2. Overall Results for The *Correspondence of Lady Katherine Paston*

The overall distribution of possessive structures in Katherine Paston's letters can be found in Table 5 below. As was the case in the Bacon text, I have identified two distinct categories of *his* genitives. For general purposes, however, it can be stated that there are 17 possessive constructions with a detached marker in the text, which amount to about 14.2% in terms of types and 13.2% in terms of tokens.

	Separated Genitive	Separated + Flexive Genitive	Flexive Genitive	Zero Genitive	Total
Types	14 (11.7%)	3 (2.5%)	91 (75.8%)	12 (10%)	120
Tokens	14 (10.9%)	3 (2.3%)	93 (72.7%)	18 (14%)	128

Table 5. Possessive structures in *The Correspondence of Lady Katherine Paston*.

As for the gender and number of possessor heads in Katherine Paston's correspondence, the situation is similar to that of the Bacon letters: masculine and singular possessors are predominant. In this case, however, no feminine and plural heads appear in the text, and neither do proper noun heads in the masculine plural.

Common Nouns				Proper Nouns		
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter		Masculine	Feminine
Sg.	24 (20%)	7 (5.83%)	19 (15.83%)	Sg.	58 (48.3%)	3 (2.5%)
Plr.	7 (5.83%)	/	2 (1.6%)	Plr.	/	/

Table 6. Gender and number in Katherine Paston's letters, in types (percentages calculated from total types).

The isolation of separated genitives reduces the array of possessor heads even further. As seen in Table 7 below, in this text only masculine and singular nouns are chosen as possessors when using a detached possessive marker.

Common Nouns		Proper Nouns	
	Masculine		Masculine
Sg.	2	Sg.	15
Plr.	/	Plr.	/

Table 7. Gender and number of separated genitives in Katherine Paston's letters, in types.

As for complex possessors in the Paston text, only three examples were found. Surprisingly, the one separated genitive attached to a complex head in this text is an instance of an already archaic structure by the Early Modern English period: the split genitive.

	Group Genitives	Split Genitives
Separated Genitives	0	1
Flexive Genitives	2	0

Table 8. Complex possessor heads in Katherine Paston's letters.

4. Analysis

4.1. Agreement between Possessive Markers and their Antecedents

The overall results of the study are not surprising given the diachrony: most of the possessive structures found in the texts are flexive and zero genitives. However, that does not mean that the separated genitive is infrequent. In terms of types, out of the 709 total examples in the Bacon letters, 54 are separated genitives (7.6%). As for the Paston letters, out of 120 types, 17 show a detached possessive marker (14.1%). This proves that, even though it was not the default option for these speakers/writers, its use was systematic.

Also as expected, most of the separated genitives are non-diagnostic, that is, their head is masculine and singular, and usually a proper name. According to Allen (2008, 257), this seems to have been the norm in all periods:

(3) a. …on Sir Iohn his parte
  'on Sir John's part'
  (PASTON K, 50.014.227)
  b. … Mr Secretary Walsingham his secretary
  'The secretary of Mr. Secretary Walsingham'
  (BACON, II,8.199.3462)

Common noun heads in the masculine singular are rarer, but also appear in my corpus:

(4) a. the Master his good pleasur
  'the master's good pleasure'
  (PASTON K, 72.040.721)
  b. the Quenes Majestye shall be at my Lord his howse
  'the Queen's Majesty will be at my lord's house'
  (BACON, I,257.181.3203)

As for other kinds of heads, I have not found any separated genitives with non-animate (neuter) antecedents. Regarding feminine and plural heads, I have found only one of each in the entirety of my corpus, both in the Bacon letters:

(5) a. …but if Rebecca$^{FEM/SG}$ hir$^{FEM/SG}$ father had a householde so addressed
  '… but if Rebecca's father had a household like this'

(BACON, I,149.115.1958)
b. Mr Yelvertons[PL] their[PL] sute
'the Mr. Yelvertons' suit'
(BACON, III,14.319.5467)

As examples (5 a-b) demonstrate, the possessive particle, which in the past had always been *his* regardless of the gender and number of the possessor head, has by this point in the history of English evolved into a genuine anaphoric pronoun. Pronominal forms other than *his* were used in order to ensure the necessary agreement. It is also important to mention that, once the reanalysis of the possessive particle was completed, no examples of *his* as external possessor with feminine or plural referents are found. In other words, there is no evidence to confirm an overlap in the periods of agreement and non-agreement.

Since examples (5 a-b) come from the Bacon letters and none were found in the Paston collection, it could seem that this proves the downfall over time of the agreeing separated genitive. However, no such conclusion can be drawn from this data, as feminine and plural possessors were very infrequent not only in separated genitives but in the corpus as a whole. For instance, in the Bacon letters, only around 18% of the overall genitive structures collected had a feminine possessor head in terms of types, which descends to an 8% in the case of the Paston text. As for plurals, both sources show an overall incidence of 7%. Even more important than this is the fact that feminine and plural proper noun possessor heads are extremely rare, as seen below.

	Feminine Proper Nouns	Plural Proper Nouns	Total types
BACON	13	3	709
PASTON	3	0	120

Table 9. Overall occurrence of feminine and plural proper nouns as possessor heads in terms of types.

Proper nouns are the expected possessor heads for separated genitives (Allen 2008, 257), so it should not be surprising that I could not find many feminine and plural examples in the corpus given the numbers in Table 9. In any case, it seems that the use of

the agreeing separated genitive never had the chance to become a staple in the language, at least in its written form, due to its artificial nature. The first example of this kind that Allen quotes actually coincides with (5 a), which dates back to 1575, and the last one is from the early eighteenth century (2008, 254-258). This means that, as far as we know, the construction lasted less than a century and a half. Notwithstanding its short lifespan, its status as a systematic grammatical resource used by the educated cannot be denied.

4.2. Sibilant Contexts and their Influence on the Pronoun Status

As stated in the introduction, the separated genitive is assumed to have originated from the erroneous identification in the minds of speakers of the allomorph for the flexive genitive /-iz/ with the weak form of the possessive pronoun *his*. By the Early Modern English period, the regular use of the aforementioned allomorph when a possessor noun phrase ended in a sibilant sound (/s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʧ/, /ʒ/ and /dʒ/) was the norm, and thus the expected result would be to find abundant instances of separated genitives in these kinds of phonological contexts.

The initial overall results do not seem very promising on this front: in terms of tokens (as I'm dealing with a phonological question, the analysis in terms of types seems less fitting for this purpose), the results are as follows:

	Total sibilant	Separated Genitive	Zero Genitive	Flexive Genitive
BACON	99	19 (19.2%)	68 (68.7%)	14 (14.1%)
PASTON	12	2 (16.7%)	10 (83.3%)	0 (0%)

Table 10. Distribution of genitives with a sibilant head in terms of tokens.

The results in Table 10 show how the sibilant context is dominated by zero genitives. This was another expected outcome, as it was customary not to write any mark after a possessor noun phrase ending in /s/ (Barber 1976, 200). Separated genitives only amount to 19.2% and 16.7% in the Bacon and Paston letters respectively. However, if all the masculine and singular sibilant

heads (that is, those which choose *his* as a possessive marker) are isolated, the data takes a very interesting turn:

	Total sibilant	Separated Genitive	Zero Genitive	Flexive Genitive
BACON	38	19 (50%)	7 (18.4%)	12 (31.6%)
PASTON	3	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.4%)	0 (0%)

Table 11. Distribution of genitives with a masculine and singular sibilant head in terms of tokens.

It is clear that the separated genitive is used in this context in a significantly higher proportion than the other genitives, which seems to confirm the traditional hypothesis about the role of homophony between the allomorph /-iz/ and the weak form of the personal pronoun *his* as a major trigger for the use of detached possessive markers.

Now that the interest of sibilant contexts in the study of separated genitives has been settled, it is time to introduce a special grammatical configuration that I have come across in my corpus. The following examples (6a-e) present a combination the flexive and separated genitives:

(6) a. my frendship yonge Mr Hubbert & Mr Hastettes[FLEXED] his[DETACHED] sonne
'my friendship with young Mr. Hubbert and Mr.Hastett's son'
(BACON,I,141.113.1898) (my underlining)
b. my Lord Kepperes[FLEXED] hes[DETACHED] howsse
'my Lord Keeper's house'
(BACON, I,234.168.2975) (my underlining)
c. sir williame pastons[FLEXED] his[DETACHED] purpos
'the purpose of Sir William Paston'
(PASTONK, 52.016.257) (my underlining)
d. and tom I haue sent to my Cosine Cokes[FLEXED] his[DETACHED] howse
'and I have sent Tom to the house of my cousin Coke'
(PASTONK, 100.079.1668) (my underlining)
e. the good docter wallsalls[FLEXED] his[DETACHED] directions for preparinge your self
'good doctor Wallsall's directions to prepare yourself'

(PASTONK, 102.081.1732) (my underlining)[4]

Although these examples could probably be dismissed as slips of the mind, I do not believe that this is the case and I consider them to be highly relevant for several reasons. First, they seem to reflect the previously discussed generalized use of the separated genitive in sibilant contexts. This configuration suggests that the appeal of such phonological contexts was so great that speakers apparently generated analogical formations where sibilance is created artificially by adding the flexive genitive morpheme –*es* to the head noun, even at the cost of causing redundancy in case marking. To further support this claim, I will reproduce the extended context of (6d) in (7) below:

(7) and tom I haue sent to my Cosine Cokes his howse till mr Birch his returne
'and I have sent Tom to the house of my cousin Coke until Mr. Birch returns'
(PASTONK, 100.079.1668)

This is a particularly interesting sentence because there are two separated genitives in it, *my Cosine Cokes his howse* and *mr Birch his returne*. The possessor heads of both examples are singular, male, proper nouns, so why does one of them display a double genitive marker and not the other? The answer lies in the phonological contexts of both heads: while the last name 'Coke' ends in a plosive sound, 'Birch' ends in the sibilant /ʧ/. The appeal of sibilant contexts when it came to the use of detached markers, along with the proximity of an already sibilant head, most probably led Katherine Paston to "fix" the non-sibilant 'Coke' before adding the detached possessive particle.

A second reason why I consider these doubled constructions to be very revealing is the fact that I have not been able to find any such structure with a feminine or plural head, which leads to two consequences. First: whereas a sibilant phonological context has been proven to be pretty decisive when a speaker chooses to—or not

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[4] It must be noted that I made sure that none of these possessor heads is in the plural. I meticulously revised the immediate context of these examples, as well as the letters in which they appeared, to rule out any suspicions about them being non-agreeing separated genitives.

to—use a separated genitive if dealing with a masculine and singular head, this is not the case for feminine and plural possessors. Of course, the very limited appearance in the corpus of non-masculine heads should be considered, but I believe this adds to the artificial nature mentioned in section 4.1 of these kinds of genitives, further separating them from their non-diagnostic siblings. Second: by this stage in the history of English, speakers have been familiar with the separated genitive construction featuring *his* as the detached marker for centuries already, which must have made them internalize certain facts about it—like its predilection for sibilant contexts—but also allowed them time to consciously ponder over the structure. Hence, later developments such as these doubled constructions are given the opportunity to flourish.

In any case, these slips, intentional or not, denote a fair degree of independence in the relationship between the old flexive genitive and the detached possessive marker. For speakers to use both markers in the same grammatical configuration, there must have been a clear detachment of one another in their minds. If the possessive pronoun *his* had simply been analyzed as an orthographic variant or allomorph for the morphemal –*es*, as it had been the case during the Middle English period, formations like these would have probably not been possible. It is precisely the separation in the minds of speakers which allows these structures to exist even if they are redundant.

4.3.   Group Genitives and their Relationship to the Separated Genitive

Following Jespersen (1894, 279-327), we give the name 'group genitive' to those possessive structures in which the marker is attached to the end of the possessor phrase and not to the head, as in (8) below:

(8) yt is said that the Kynge of Spaynes navye of shippes…
     'it is said that the King of Spain's fleet ad ships…'
     (BACON, III,5.315.5422)

Traditionally, scholars such as Janda (1980; 1981) have considered the *his* genitive to be the flexive group genitive's predecessor. In his opinion, the detached formation provided the perfect excuse to move the possessive marker far from the head and towards the utmost right edge of the possessive phrase. Hence, he

presupposed that the occurrence of group genitives with a separated mark should start much earlier in the texts than that of its flexive counterparts. Allen has since debunked this idea by providing data that confirms the appearance of group genitives with both flexive and separated markings at the end of the fourteenth century (1997; 2003; 2013).

Interestingly, however, she has also claimed in her works that the rise of the group genitive was the trigger for the reanalysis of the detached possessive particle in separated structures as an actual pronoun:

The group genitive steadily gained ground, and just around the time when the combined genitive has nearly disappeared from the texts (mid-sixteenth century), we find the first examples of a separated genitive agreeing in gender and number with the possessor. The group genitive, by now quite common, provided clear evidence for phrasal attachment rather than head attachment. It is probably this fact that made possible the reanalysis of the separated genitive as a reduction of *his*. (Allen 2008, 270).

The combined genitives mentioned in the quote were a more primitive possessive formation, typical of Old and Early Middle English. They are also known as split genitives due to their internal structure, in which a complex possessor phrase is split in two, having the *possessum* in between. This is done in order to achieve head-marking, in a time where edge-marking was not yet possible. (9) below shows an example of one such structure, taken from the Late Middle English letter collection of the Paston family (Davis 1971; 1976).

(9) the parson ys seruaunt of Blofeld
    'the parson of Blofeld's servant'
    (PASTON, II,171.341.9274) [5]

In my corpus, as far as complex possessor heads in separated genitive configurations are concerned, I have found 5 instances (in terms of types) of group genitives in the Bacon letters, most of them with the 'King of Spain' as the possessor head:

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[5] The citations for the *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century* are taken directly from the PCEEC.

(10) a. the King of Spayn his forces
   'the forces of the King of Spain'
   (BACON, III,259.372.6474)
   b. the Bishopp of Norwich his aunswer
   'the answer of the Bishop of Norwich'
   (BACON, II,111.233.4100)

This same possessor was illustrated in (8) above with the morpheme *–es* as its possessive marker, which seems to account for the fact that separated and flexive genitives are interchangeable markers in group structures. However, in her 2013 paper on split and group genitives, Allen suggests that, although the syntactic configuration $_{DP}$[DP $_{D'}$[$_D$[his] NP]] does not seem fit to represent early stages of the *his* genitive where it functioned as a mere orthographical variant for the *–es* genitive, that analysis does become possible once the detached possessive marker is reanalyzed as an authentic pronoun (2013, 22). Therefore, the syntactic configurations of (8) and (10a) would be very different, even if they look the same at surface level.

As for complex possessor formations in Katherine Paston's letters, I have only found one example and, surprisingly, it is one of the rare Early Modern English instances of a split genitive:

(11) a. by Mr Pickerell his sonne of Intwood
   'by the son of Mr. Pickerell of Intwood'
   (PASTON K, 50.014.226)

This example comes from a 1619 letter by Samuel Matchett. Very little is known about this man, other than his not belonging to an affluent family, although that didn't seem to affect his spelling proficiency (Weir 2010, 69). His social status can hardly explain the reason why he chose to employ an already outdated structure by that time, but the structure in itself poses a very interesting question for us: if both the separated and the flexive markers are found in split genitives, should they not receive the same syntactic analysis?[6] And, if that is the case, how can we reconcile the previously mentioned

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[6] I have not recorded any split genitives apart from the one quoted in (11) for this period in my corpus, but Allen mentions that most of the ones she has found have an attached marker (2013, 20).

syntax with this? In Allen's words, "if the possessive pronoun was in D […], we would not expect split genitives with this sort of possessive marking, since there would be no motivation to extrapose the material modifying the possessor" (2013, 22). At this moment, given the data available in my corpus, I find it impossible to draw any conclusions on this matter.

4.4. Spelling of the Possessive Particle

As a final remark, spelling could also be considered a hint towards the newly acquired 'pronoun' status by the possessive particle in separated genitive structures. My study of earlier texts such as the Late Middle English letter collection of the Paston family (Davis 1971; 1976) has revealed that the most common orthography for the detached marker in these epistles is "ys" or "is" (coinciding with some flexive genitive variants), while the spelling "his" or "hys" is usually reserved for real pronouns:

(12) a. Ser John Paston ys^{DETACHED} seale
 'Sir John Paston's seal'
 (PASTON, II,583.516.12528)
 b. he delyueryd to hys^{PRO} wyffe a box
 'he delivered a box to his wife'
 (PASTON, I,298.097.2850)

However, the situation in the letters of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey and Katherine Paston is different: "his" is now shared by real pronouns and the possessive particle in separated genitives, and the spelling "ys" and "is" only appears as the third person singular of the verb to be:

(13) a. for that my hart is ys^{3RD SG TO BE} very full .
 'for that my heart is very full'
 (PASTONK,53.016.277)
 b. Sir Thomas Gresham his^{DETACHED} name
 'Sir Thomas Gresham's name'
 (BACON, I,35.018.331)

I believe that this is a very significant detail, as each spelling seems to be quite specialized. There are exceptions, of course, but the overall impression is that when the perspective on the status of the possessive marker changes, so does its spelling.

5. Concluding Remarks

One of the most significant conclusions that can be drawn from this study is the fact that the possessive particle present in the separated genitives of the Early Modern English period had, indeed, been reanalyzed as a possessive pronoun. This can be seen very clearly in the agreeing examples with female and plural possessor heads, and in the lack of non-agreeing ones. Moreover, the small number of these kinds of structures found in the corpus should not be attributed to a mistake on the part of the writer, but rather to two factors: the overall lack of female and plural possessors in the letters, which leaves little room for separated genitives to flourish; and the artificial nature of these agreeing formations, which can be seen as a reason why authors/speakers would prefer to use one of the other possessive markers that were available to them—unless they wanted to sound solemn or educated.

Sibilant contexts have also been proven to be characteristic to the use of the *his* genitive, especially when dealing with masculine, singular possessors. The existence of examples that combine flexive and separated genitive traits in order to generate analogical formations where sibilance is created artificially by adding the flexive genitive morpheme *–es* to the head noun, hints towards a very clear distinction in the minds of speakers between both markers

Regarding the role of group genitives in the reanalysis of possessive particles, the Bacon letters provide promising results with many examples of edge-marking structures that fit really well in the DP[DP D'[D[his] NP]] syntactic analysis. However, the one example of a separated genitive with a complex possessor head found in Katherine Paston's letters is, surprisingly, a split genitive, which suggests that maybe some speakers had not completed their reanalysis of the possessive particle just yet. Further research should be conducted on this topic.

As for the future of this study, there are a number of issues that are yet to be explored. For instance, the next step should be to record the length of every possessor noun phrase and *possessum* found in the corpus. This would help to determine whether separated genitives are used in more complex syntactic configurations than other possessive structures (i.e., flexive and zero genitives). Furthermore, an exploration of any sociolinguistic clues that the

Bacon and Paston letters might offer about the use of *his* genitives during the Early Modern English period could provide interesting results, especially when taking into the account the claim that the agreeing construction was an artificial device forced by the educated.

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THE ALTERNATIVE –*OUR* VS. –*OR* IN THE OUTER VARIETIES OF ENGLISH WORLDWIDE

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Minor changes in the distribution of the orthographic variants *-our* and *-or* in British and in American English raise the question of competition between these two forms. There already exists a myriad of studies assessing this phenomenon for the varieties of the inner and of the expanding circle. Nevertheless, the orthography of the outer circle has been systematically ignored. This paper thus presents a corpus-driven analysis of the distribution of the pair in eight varieties of Asian English, all belonging to the outer circle. The aim is to assess whether the process of linguistic competition underway elsewhere is also ongoing in these varieties, and to enquire into the factors that enable it. The source material for the investigation has been drawn from the corpus of *Global Web English*, which houses data for India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Hong Kong. The study offers the overall quantitative distribution of the suffixes in the varieties in question, as well as the data by text type. These will be interpreted from the frameworks of Postcolonial Englishes put forward by Schneider (2007) and Kachru (2009), which will determine the significance of the competition, if applicable.

Keywords: orthography; Asian English; outer circle; competition.

1. Introduction

Linguistic competition is the phenomenon in which at least two synonymous forms contend for a specific distributional domain (Aronoff 2019, 42). In the history of the English language, countless patterns and structures have undergone competition, often resulting either in the specialisation of one variant or in its ultimate extinction. The Early Modern period saw the struggle between the derivational suffixes *-our* and *-or*, which eventually concluded with the re-arrangement of the morphological paradigm (Pacheco-Franco and Calle-Martín, forthcoming). In those words that still allow for spelling variation in Present-day English (*colour*, *labour*) the *-our* variants only survived in British English (henceforth BrE), whereas the *-or* forms were specialised on the grounds of diatopic variation, i.e. they became representative of the American standard (Fowler 1926, 428; Trudgill and Hannah 1994, 82-3; *OED* s.v. -our and -or, suffixes). However, grammarians have often found exceptions to such a rule. For example, Greenbaum and Whitcut argued that American English (henceforth AmE) favours the spelling *-our* in words like *glamour* and *honour* (1988, 499), and Gramley and Patzold added that the form *saviour* is also preferred in this variety (2004, 280). Nonetheless, data from contemporary American sources seem to disprove such a claim since these items occur more frequently spelled as *-or* than not (Pacheco-Franco and Calle-Martín 2020). On the one hand, the extension of the orthographical variant *-or* on to where it was rare answers to the claims of regularisation upon which the American spelling system was founded (Scragg 1975, 84). On the other hand, even the slightest change in a system so conventional as orthography is significant since it suggests that the system no longer remains fixed. Instead, the aforementioned historical competition might still be underway.

Studying linguistic competition in English nowadays compels the researcher to consider the varieties that exist outside of the United Kingdom and of the United States due to its status as a global language. Kachru's Concentric Circles Model provides an adequate starting point by categorizing English into three groups: the inner, the outer and the expanding circles (2009, 569). These labels refer to those places where English is spoken as a first, as a second and as a foreign language, respectively. There already exist studies on the spelling alternatives in the varieties of the inner and

expanding circle, including the variants *-our* and *-or*. In the first place, the Englishes of the first group tend to follow the British norm either by tradition or by the cultural links that still unite these countries. Indeed, the spelling systems of Australia, New Zealand and Ireland favour *-our* over *-or* (Gramley and Patzold 2004; Peters 2009; Fritz 2010; Korhonen 2015). In Canada, however, because of its closeness to the US, there is not an obvious trend towards any of these varieties. In 1993, Pratt stated that the choices between British and American orthographical renderings in Canadian speakers did not follow a clear-cut pattern (59), and a decade later Gramley and Patzold reached a similar conclusion (2004, 252). Secondly, in their study of English spelling variants worldwide, Gonçalves *et al*. concluded that the orthographical paradigm of the English language leans towards the American spelling on a global scale. This suggests that the dominance of one form over the other does not remain clear and that the varieties of the outer circle ought to be studied. Indeed, there are very few studies on the orthography of the outer circle, which means that a large part of the English-speaking population has been ignored.

In consequence, enquiring into some outer circle varieties becomes a compulsory exercise in order to assess whether there really is competition between the spelling forms *-our* and *-or*. Therefore, the present paper presents a corpus-based analysis of the orthographical variants *-our* and *-or* in the major Asian varieties of the outer circle, in order to assess whether there is linguistic competition between these two variants, and where the system seems to be going.

2. Methodology

The data for the present analysis comes from the corpus of *Global Web-based English* (or *GloWbE)*. It has been chosen in light of its quantitative and qualitative features. Indeed, the *GloWbE* is a 1.9 billion-word corpus compiled by Mark Davies at Brigham Young University (2013). The corpus provides a substantial input for the linguistic analysis of twenty varieties of English worldwide, including all of the inner and the major outer circle varieties. The texts in this corpus have been gathered from 1.8 million websites, including general websites, which amounts to around 70 percent of

the total word count, and personal blogs, which is the remaining 30 percent. The corpus facilitates the search of a specific item in each of the varieties contemplated in it, and also by text type, thus making it an ideal tool for the investigation of diatopic variation. Moreover, this version is POS-tagged, thereby allowing the exploration of items by lemma and by part-of-speech.

The present investigation has focused on the Asian varieties included in the *GloWbE* corpus, which are the Englishes of India (IndE), Sri Lanka (SLE), Pakistan (PkE), Bangladesh (BdE), Singapore (SgE), Malaysia (MalE), the Philippines (PhE), and Hong Kong (HKE). It has also been carried out in two distinct phases. First, the complete list of occurrences was retrieved for both suffixes, *-our* and *-or*. Then, the fifteen topmost frequent bases in these varieties that still allow for spelling variation in PDE were selected as the focus of the study. These items were *armour*, *behaviour*, *colour*, *endeavour*, *favour*, *flavour*, *harbour*, *honour*, *humour*, *labour*, *neighbour*, *rumour*, *saviour*, *tumour* and *vapour*. In total, 285,702 instances of *-our* and *-or* were analysed, including those items that function both as nouns and as verbs, and also deverbal adjectives.[1] Once the raw frequencies were determined, the text types were also enquired into in order to provide the investigation with further data.

3.   Analysis

Figure 1 illustrates the normalised frequencies of the spelling variants *-our* and *-or* in eight varieties of Asian English. In strictly quantitative terms, the data seem to indicate that most of the varieties in question are undergoing linguistic competition. Calculating the percentage difference that exists between the two forms in each of the varieties is an effective way of looking into the process. For example, Singapore, Pakistan and India present a

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[1] No other verbal nor adjectival forms were included since, as Greenbaum and Whitcut claim, some derivational process may favour the occurrence of one form over another. Indeed, in BrE the *-our* form is preferred, except with the suffixes *-ate* or *-ation*, among others: see *coloration* versus *colourful* (1988, 499). Because suffixal derivation may alter the results, and because the line had to be drawn at some point, prefixal derivatives have not been considered either.

percentage difference of 4-5%, which means that competition is at its peak and, therefore, remains unresolved. In turn, the higher the difference, the more unlikely it is that competition is unfolding at the moment. In the case of the Philippines, there is a percentage difference of 146% between the uses of -*our* and -*or*, thus suggesting that one of the following events has occurred: either (1) competition has never taken place within this variety, (2) it has taken place and it has been resolved already, or (3) it is but an incipient development. In between IndE and PhE lie the varieties of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Hong Kong. The first continues to be clearly differentiated from the rest as it presents a difference of 51%, thus leaning towards one of the scenarios discussed for the Philippines. The remaining three, however, do not present a difference higher than 30%, which indicates that competition is near the aforementioned peak.
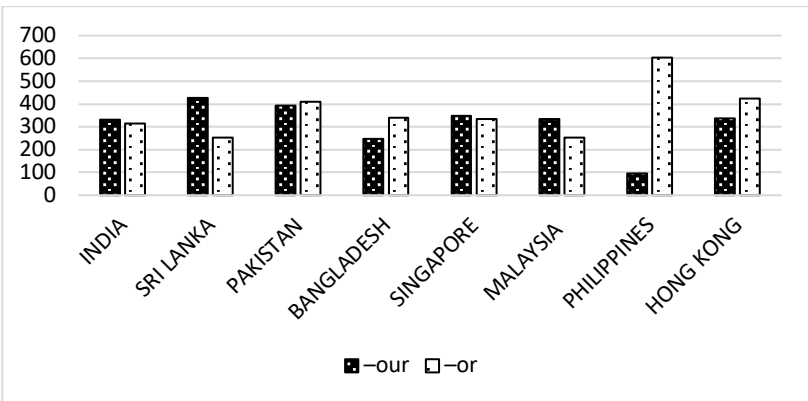

Figure 1. Frequencies of –*our* and –*or* in eight Asian varieties of the GloWbE

Other than determining whether competition is an ongoing process in the varieties under study, Figure 1 also provides insight into which forms are more frequently used within them. In this respect, there does not seem to be a recognisable pattern in the distribution of the two variants. However, it becomes obvious that two distinct groups arise, which will be termed as 'conservative' and as 'regularising'. The conservative group includes the varieties of India, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Malaysia, which present a widespread use of -*our*. The label 'conservative' answers to historical and etymological reasons, seeing that the terms in

question entered the English language through French, that is spelled as *-our* (*OED* s.v. -our, suffix). The regularising group displays Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Hong Kong, where the simplified –or rather regularised– spelling *-or* is favoured (Scragg 1975; Gramley and Patzold 2004).

The revision of these quantitative data is evidently crucial for the present discussion. Nevertheless, it does not allow for interpretation yet as the initial and end points of the linguistic competition are not considered in the Figure. Instead, Figure 1 poses a myriad of questions that can only be answered by means of a qualitative analysis. Indeed, enquiring into the nature of the linguistic competition for each of the variants and examining whether the information presented so far is part of a larger picture ought to be but the next steps in this analysis. In order to answer these questions, the following sub-sections will be looking at the different models of use that these varieties have traditionally followed, and at the developmental process that Schneider described in his Dynamic Cycle (2007).

3.1. The Models of English

Kachru argues that the question of "[w]ho determines the models and standards for varieties of world Englishes" is a "social and attitudinal [one]" (2009, 572). In this way, the scholar is not only answering how the different models that exist today come to being, but also why other varieties adhere to them in particular. Nonetheless, history also plays a determining role both in the creation and in the assignment of models, at least regarding the varieties of the inner and outer circles. Indeed, the two major models of English available today are, as suggested above, the British and the American. These have become, over time, sufficiently differentiated on the levels of phonology, the lexicon, orthography and even syntax as to be considered two different varieties. Other varieties of English have undergone a similar process of differentiation, and yet, because they did not count with a particular set of historical, political and cultural circumstances, they did not

become models as such (Pennycook 2010).[2] In turn, the features of
all other varieties of PDE are contrasted with these two, and
expected to follow any one of them (cf. Trudgill and Hannah, 1994;
Gramley and Patzold 2004; Momma and Matto, 2009; Kirkpatrick
2010). Colonial expansion did, for the most part, dictate the norms
for each of the countries at hand.

The United Kingdom headed the colonial expansion that led
to the spread of English in the world. The phrase "the sun never sets
on the British Empire" exemplifies the scope of their imperialist
endeavours, which were the beginnings of the Englishes of the inner
and outer circles (Kachru 1985, 12-3). The Asian varieties under
study in the present paper originated from such a diasporic exercise.
The colonisation of these areas often implied that the Empire
instilled a number of language policies "to control the manner in
which English was learned and used", thereby suggesting that the
British model was imposed, initially at least (Momma and Matto
2009, 402). Recent literature on the topic continues to support such
a claim. For example, IndE has been described as an
'exonormatively set' variety, where the British norm is allegedly
followed or, at the very least, held as the target (Mukherjee 2010,
169, 173). The cultural ties and the common historical past that
exists between Pakistan and Bangladesh and India indicate that the
first two conform to similar norms (Kachru 1994). Mendis and
Rambukwella analyse SLE in the same terms, arguing that there
exists a mismatch between the speakers' actual competence and the
British standard that they regard as their own (2010, 191). As for the
colonial links that also exist between Singapore, Malaysia, and
Hong Kong, and the United Kingdom, these are indicative as well
of the adopted model of use (Ling 2010, 229-30; Setter *et al*. 2010,
4-11; Tan 2011, 16). The Philippines, nonetheless, presents an
entirely different picture. More than three hundred years of Spanish
colonial rule in the South Asian archipelago came to an abrupt end
by the turn of the twentieth century, as the United States took control

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[2] Among the circumstances leading to the rise of AmE as a global variety are the
independence of the United States from the British, the search for independence
also in the linguistic, and the emergence of their economic and cultural dominance
in the twentieth century (Pennycook 2010; Pacheco-Franco and Calle-Martín
2020).

of the territory. This means that the complex linguistic landscape of the Philippines –in which indigenous languages struggled to coexist with Spanish– saw the rise of English as the language of the state. Gonzalez reads this phenomenon as the "transplantation of American English in Philippine soil", thereby arguing that whatever variety was to emerge from this event would be a derivative of AmE (2009, 213-5).

Being aware of the models of use for each of the varieties under analysis enables the interpretation of Figure 1. On the one hand, the data displayed for the Philippines points to a fixedness in the orthographical system of this variety. The fact that PhE draws from the American norm as a model accounts for the high percentage difference that existed between the use of *-our* and *-or*. In turn, the scenario suggested above where linguistic competition was resolved in favour of the *-or* variants may now be dismissed. This means that two alternatives remain. Figure 2 below presents the percentage values for the distribution of the suffixes *-our* and *-or* in PhE and in AmE in order to ascertain whether the occurrences of the conservative form are characteristic of an incipient change or whether they are simply due to chance. Considering that the status of AmE as a model prevents it from opening to change (orthographical or otherwise), and bearing in mind the equivalence in the distribution of the spelling variants in both of the varieties, it becomes clear that the occurrences of *-our* are not indicative of a change. Quite the opposite situation is at play: the orthographic system in the Philippines remains fixed.
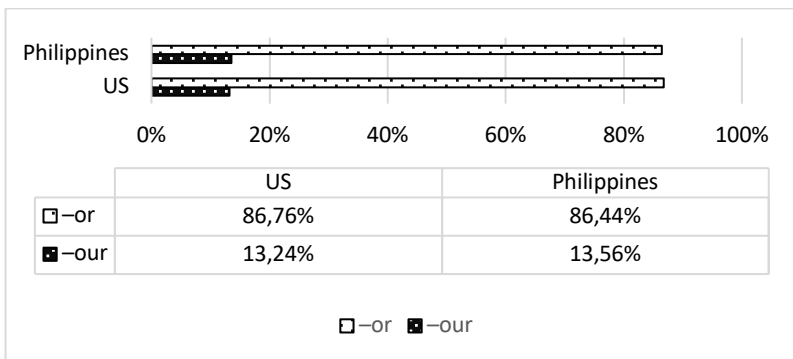

	US	Philippines
□ –or	86,76%	86,44%
■ –our	13,24%	13,56%

Figure 2. Percentage values of the distribution of *–our* and *–or* in PhE and AmE

On the other hand, the previous data indicate that competition is moving towards the regularisation of orthography, instead of approaching the conservative form. Indeed, all of the varieties which showed evidence of linguistic competition have had a historical connection with the British Empire and, therefore, with the British norm. The strong emergence of the *-or* spelling suggests that the orthographic systems of these Postcolonial Englishes are stepping away from convention, even if at different paces. Competition, as was argued above, is not unfolding in a simultaneous manner everywhere. For those classified into the regularising group, the process is in a more advanced stage: namely, for PkE, BdE and HKE. Among them, BdE presents the greatest percentage difference between the two forms (that is, 30 percent), which points to competition being most developed in this variety. Next is HKE with a 23 percent difference, and third would be PkE, with only 5 percent. Regarding the conservative group, SgE, IndE and MalE follow these varieties, with SLE lagging behind in the process.

The differences that exist between these seven varieties in the process of linguistic competition may answer to the disparity regarding their developmental stages. Sub-section 3.2. will provide a more in-depth analysis on this topic, from the perspective of Schneider's Dynamic Model (Schneider 2007).

3.2. The Dynamic Model

The Dynamic Model is a framework that enables the study and the categorisation into five developmental stages of the different varieties of Postcolonial English. The five phases included in the proposal are (1) foundation, (2) exonormative stabilization, (3) nativisation, (4) endonormative stabilization and (5) differentiation. Along this continuum are found all of the varieties of English from the inner and the outer circle. The varieties of the inner circle have for the most part reached the very last stages, as in the cases of Australian or New Zealand English (2007, 125, 132). The varieties of the outer circle remain, for the moment, somewhere between exonormative and endonormative stabilization.[3] The first of these

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[3] According to Schneider, Hong Kong would have reached Phase 3, while still presenting features of phase 2; Philippines would remain in Phase 2, although

phases has already been commented upon in retracing the development of the varieties across history. Indeed, by exonormative stabilization Schneider refers to the use of English as per "external norm, usually written and spoken English as used by educated speakers" (2007, 38). This phase precedes nativisation, which includes those innovations that arise due to contact with indigenous languages, and which is followed by endonormative stabilisation, that is the phase in which "a community is entitled to decide language matters as affairs of its own" (48). Determining in which of these phases the linguistic competition between *-our* and *-or* is illustrative is a crucial, and yet problematic exercise.

The competition under analysis in the present paper is indicative of a development of phase four: endonormative stabilization. Indeed, the growth in the use of the spelling variant *-or* answers to two linguistic processes: regularisation and phonological approximation. The first of them has been introduced beforehand as the process followed in AmE. Indeed, PDE presents a set of words that are systematically spelled as *-or*, such as *emperor* or *doctor*. These items are generally regarded as agentive nouns, and their distinct and univocal orthographical realisation resulted from the competition that is still at play (Quirk *et al.* 1985, 1550; *OED* s.v. -or, suffix; Pacheco-Franco and Calle-Martín 2020). Webster, in view of the spelling of this set of items, brought forward the proposal to change the orthographic realisations of the words that allowed for variation "by the principle of uniformity and by etymology" (Wells 1973, 62). In turn, the regularisation of the spelling alternative *-our* and *-or* in the Asian varieties of English might have resulted from a similar endeavour. This notion gains strength if the phonological factor is taken into consideration. Li explains that English is an inconsistent semiotic system, especially at the level of orthography, as there is great disparity between what is written and what is pronounced (2010, 618). The lack of user-friendliness in such a widely spread language suggests that change will eventually take hold of orthography. The identical phonological realisations of *-our* and *-or* (that is, /-əʳ/ or /-ər/, depending on

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moving to the next one; Malaysia proves to be in Phase 3, and Singapore in Phase 4; and, lastly, India –along with Pakistan and Bangladesh– would be found in Phase 3, with early symptoms of Phase 4 (2007, 133-170).

rhoticity) suggest that the simplification of spelling would not affect pronunciation and would, indeed, be more illustrative of what is ultimately uttered, that is one vocalic representation for one vocalic sound. There are, nonetheless, arguments claiming that the emergence of *-or* derives from the sociolinguistic process of Americanisation.

Americanisation, which refers to the phenomenon promoting the spread of American cultural and ideological values across the world, has been attested for some varieties of the inner and expanding circles in the study conducted by Gonçalves *et al*. (2018). In their study on the competition between British and American lexical and orthographical variants, the authors concluded that the process of Americanisation is behind the dominance of the latter forms, including *-or*. Such a development suggests that there has been a change in the model of use: in moving away from BrE, most of the varieties analysed here are (in the process of) adhering to AmE. A shift like this seems to be characteristic of exonormativity. Such a theory, however, does not correspond to Schneider's conclusions about the Dynamic Cycle. Indeed, he argues that PhE is the only Asian variety to remain in Phase 2, whereas all others – namely, HKE, MalE, SgE and IndE– have advanced onto Phases 3 and 4 (Schneider 2007, 133-70). In light of this situation, it is my contention that the Americanisation of the spelling system does not account as a developmental example of phase two. Indeed, because orthography does not allow for drastic innovations (otherwise language would become unintelligible), any change, however minimal, resonates within the Dynamic Cycle. In the case at hand, one can only shift from one norm to another, which also indicates a level of autonomy typical of later phases in the cycle. In Winford's own words, "[r]esolution of the problem of the orthography will go a long way toward establishing autonomy" (2009, 420). This means that if the emergence of *-or*, whether it be due to Americanisation or not, is characteristic of endonormative stabilisation.

The argument of Americanisation is supported by further analysis. The following section will thus present the distribution of the suffixes *-our* and *-or* by text types: namely, by general website and by personal blogs. In this sub-section the issues pertaining to English online will be discussed.

3.3. Text Types in the Internet as a Medium

The emergence of the internet entailed the birth of a new medium, one which was a combination of written and spoken speech, for it presented features characteristic of both (Crystal 2011, 16). Indeed, Crystal argues that the adherence to the written or to the spoken depends on the output, and describes that these may be found in a continuum where "[the web is] at one extreme, which in many of its functions (such as reference publishing and advertising) is no different from traditional situations that use writing (…). In contrast, email, chat, instant messaging, and texting, though expressed through the medium of writing, display several of the core properties of speech" (2011, 19-20). This suggests that there exist in the internet several text types, each of which displaying a different set of particularities. Among them, the *GloWbE* corpus includes general websites, which are what Crystal defines as "the web", and personal blogs, which are somewhere in-between regarding the classification above (Warschauer 2010, 496). Differences in the characteristics of these text types are fundamental in studying linguistic change, as their situation within the continuum will determine their proneness to innovation. In turn, personal blogs differ from general websites in that a lower register is employed –due to the topics typically included in these texts– and in that there exist increased chances of interaction. This translates, according to Hardy and Friginal, in a greater inclination towards deviating from the norm (2012, 157). Under these circumstances, analysing the occurrence of the spelling variants being considered by text type became a crucial task.

Figures 3 and 4 below present the distribution into general websites and into personal blogs of the suffixes -*our* and -*or*, respectively. The first of these evinces that the form -*our* occurs more frequently in general websites in IndE, SLE, PkE and BdE, whereas it is slightly more common in personal blogs for SgE, MalE and HKE. However, this spelling being the standard in all of the varieties in question, Figure 3 does not provide much relevant information for the present analysis. Indeed, the data exhibited here seems to be more representative of the distribution of the items under study than of the spelling variants per se. Figure 3 does, nevertheless, outline a distributional pattern that might be regarded as close to the standard, and which will be useful for the analysis and interpretation of Figure 4. In turn, Figure 4 shows that the

spelling variant *-or* occurs more frequently in personal blogs than in general websites. For some of the varieties the difference in distribution is insignificant. For example, both orthographical forms are more commonly used in personal blogs in SgE, and the difference is nearly identical in both cases. In the cases of IndE, PkE and BdE, the dominance of *-or* in personal blogs seems to be indicative of an actual trend.
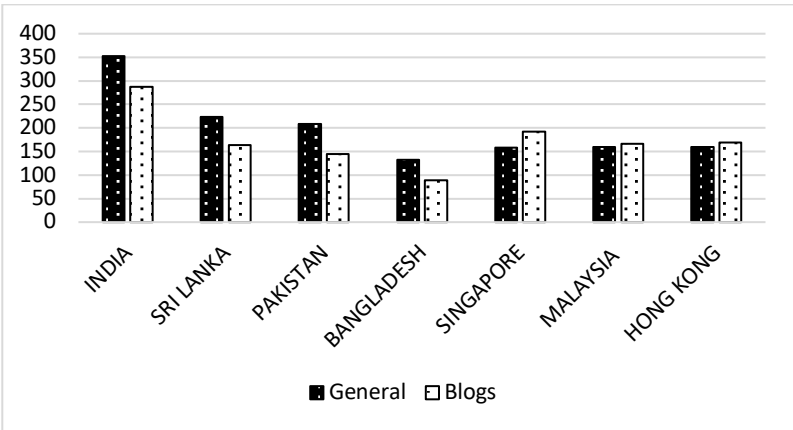

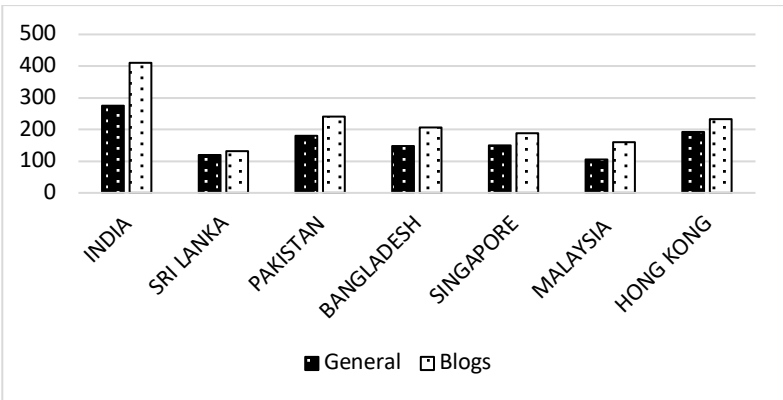**Figure 3.** Distribution of the suffix *–our* by text type

Figure 4. Distribution of the suffix *–or* by text type

The data from the *GloWbE* corpus thus show that there exists a higher incidence of *-or* forms in personal blogs, thereby pointing to these text types as being more inclined to innovation than others. Nonetheless, there are other factors at play which enable

Americanisation: namely, the overall dominance of AmE forms online, the role of English in most varieties of the outer circle – including the Asian ones. In the first place, Crystal argues that the American orthographic forms are more frequently found online than their British counterparts, and that speakers tend to choose "what they see used around them" more often than "[being] conditioned by their educational background (2011, 65). The prevalence of the -*or* variant in the case of Online English is not entirely surprising since the United States is, by a long way, the country with the most internet hosts in the world ("The World Factbook" 2012). This does not necessarily mean that the websites included in a specific host adhere to a specific orthographical rule. Nevertheless, this fact is representative of the United States' dominance in the web, thereby suggesting that Americanisation should occur.

Secondly, the function of the English language in most outer circle varieties enables the process of Americanisation, including the varieties under study in the present paper. Indeed, English has often been regarded in Asia as opening a door to the rest of the world, in terms of communication and of job prospects (Sridhar 2009; Ling 2010; Mukherjee 2010). Provided that most opportunities of both of these typologies originate in the United States nowadays, the adoption of a spelling that is distinctly American might be perceived as the speakers' desire to blend with their peers and to belong (Crystal 2011, 62). At any rate, and referring back to Warschauer *et al*., "technologies […] do not, for the most part, bring about changes in language forms, but rather amplify trends already underway" (2010: p. 494). The authors thus suggest that the findings of this paper are not only applicable to Online English. Instead, any other corpus would present the very same results, although it is likely that the process of linguistic competition would be further behind than at present. Nonetheless, Americanisation would still be an eye-catching phenomenon.

4. Conclusions

The present paper has studied the orthographic variant -*our* and -*or* in eight outer circle varieties of Asian English. The study is based on the fifteen most frequent words with these suffixes in the

GloWbE corpus, which has provided sufficient data for the analysis of this phenomenon. The conclusions are the following.

The data for the distribution of *-our* and *-or* in the *GloWbE* corpus seemed to suggest that linguistic competition was an ongoing phenomenon in seven out of the eight varieties under analysis, thus leaving the Philippines behind. The remaining countries showed varying degrees of competition, as determined by the percentage difference between one form and the other. For example, SLE was described as lagging behind in the process, whereas BdE turned out to be further advanced. These data did, nonetheless, raise the question of where competition was going, i.e. whether striving for the conservative *-our* was the innovation or whether it was the regularising *-or*. After enquiring into the different models followed in these varieties of English, it was concluded that competition between the spelling variants *-our* and *-or* today is leaning towards the latter form. Indeed, the seven countries presenting competition had been colonised by the British Empire, which functioned as an exonormative force in the language. This means that, even slight trends towards the use of a typically American spelling form, are indicative of linguistic change. Such a change was argued to be an instance of endonormative stabilization as per Schneider's theses. It was claimed that the preference for *-or* could be due to issues of a linguistic and of a sociolinguistic nature, such as the simplification of the system and phonological approximation, which would ultimately be influenced by a process of Americanisation.

The distribution of the two spelling variants was also analysed from the perspective of the internet as a medium for language and of its text types. In combining the features of the written and the spoken mediums, the internet proved to be a petri dish for linguistic change. This is especially true of personal blogs, where innovation is most likely to take place. Analysing the competition between *-our* and *-or* proved this to be true, as the latter form was more frequently employed in this particular text type. Other than the very nature of the personal blog as a text, where interpersonal exchanges are far more frequent than in personal websites, and where authors may use a style of their own, the preference for this variant answers to the sociolinguistic as well. The dominance of the United States over the internet inevitably results in the Americanisation of Online English, a process that definitely

affects orthography. Moreover, the English language in the countries of the outer (and also of the expanding) circle functions as a tool for social mobility and for outward communication. Provided that most opportunities for both these endeavours come from the US, it does not seem surprising that the language should shift towards the American.

John Adams already claimed in the last decades of the eighteenth century that English would become the next global language and that American English would be the model of general use. It seems today that the second president of the United States was not wrong: not only has English become a lingua franca worldwide, but his variety of English –which was only being born during his time– is expanding throughout the world. The present study has evidenced that there exists Americanisation, however (under)developed, for the spelling variants *-our* and *-or* in the Asian varieties of the outer circle. Nevertheless, this is only part of a larger issue, as there exist in English a number of pairs which are minimally differentiated in their orthographic realisations and which are representative of one variety or another, such as *-ise/-ize* or *-re/-er*. Nonetheless, future research on the topic must, and will, take a wider scope in order to arrive at a more satisfying conclusion.

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CONFLICTING FEMALE IDENTITIES IN OLD AGE: THE REPRESENTATION OF OLDER WOMEN IN DAVID LINDSAY-ABAIRE'S *RIPCORD*

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In the last decades, ageing has become one of the most important social issues to attract the attention of academics from the social sciences and the humanities. As an interdisciplinary research domain, ageing studies allow scholars to explore the meanings of old age through the various fields that intersect with it. As one of those intersections, theatre offers unquestionable opportunities to analyse its portrayals and to dispute the dominant "master narrative of decline" based on a vision of ageing as an inevitable biological, psychological and social decay (Gullette 2004). Despite the increasing interest of scholars in the analysis of old age in widely-acclaimed classical and contemporary plays, scant attention has been paid to the representation of older female characters in lesser known dramatic texts. While their thriving visibility in the contemporary plays is undeniable, the portrayal of older female characters is rather ambiguous as often based on ageist stereotypes. This paper offers a close reading of *Ripcord*, a comedy by the American playwright, lyricist and screenwriter, David Lindsay-Abaire, winner of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *Rabbit Hole*. Foregrounding issues of care related to senior living facilities, as well as aspects of old-age identity and of later-life creativity, this study interrogates liminal

and stereotyped categorizations of older female characters in contemporary plays through one particular case study.

Keywords: ageing; theatre; gender; old-age identity; later-life creativity

1.   Introduction: On Theatre and Ageing Studies

In the last three decades, reconsiderations of 'old' and new socio-cultural interpretations of ageing have awakened the widespread interest in ageing studies. The inter- and multidisciplinary nature of this field—that "emphasizes 'the inside of ageing'" (Katz 2014, 20)—has united the academics from the social sciences and the humanities in search of the answer to the complex and demanding question: what do ageing and old age mean in the contemporary world? In spite of the acknowledged benefits for both fields, one of the evident challenges for this inter- and multidisciplinary alliance is to find "common ground" for fruitful research (Lipscomb 2012, 118) taking into account cultural, narrative, performative and material conceptualisations of age (Swinnen and Port 2012, 12). Some drama and performance scholars unanimously assert that these approaches "may be beneficial at one research cite: the theatre" (Lipscomb 2012, 118), and highlight its close and direct connection to ageing studies (Basting 1998; Bernard and Munro 2015; Fuchs 2014; Lipscomb 2012; Mangan 2013; Switzky 2016). Theatre's complicity with the construction of social and cultural ideologies is evident (Mangan 2013, 9). It is, "among other things, a sign-system [that] draws on and quotes the signifiers, codes and modalities of everyday life" (*ibid*) and among these are ageing and ageism. First coined by Robert Butler in 1969, the term "age-ism" refers to discrimination and prejudice towards people of a certain age group. The cult of the youthful body, the general lack of ambiguity in understanding as well as portrayals of old age—which is commonly associated with physical and mental decline, dependency and approaching death (Gullette 2004)—trigger society's anxiety and fear of ageing. These "stereotypical designators for life in old age" (Kunow 2010, 307) "reflect a dominant gerontophobia" (Woodward 1991, 7) and spark ageism.

Valerie Barnes Lipscomb considers theatre "a fertile ground for various theoretical angles in age studies" (2012, 117). She has suggested combining critical, narrative and performative approaches for theatre-age scholarly research that would be beneficial for both fields. All in all, this combination can raise society's awareness of ageism, reveal and shape social attitudes towards old age, and help to better understand the notion of performativity of age, which is a natural component of theatre (Lipscomb 2012, 117-121). Núria Casado Gual has added another advantage that can emerge from the interdisciplinary theatre-ageing coalition, the one of theatre's exchangeability, through which "academics, artists and the community" can re-construct "an integrative, more complex, and also more enriching discourse of ageing" (Casado Gual 2019b).

Theatre has always mirrored the world's social and political issues (Billington 2007; Lipscomb 2016, 154; Quilter 2015; Casado-Gual 2019a). The theatre's innate ability to mirror reality can explain a significant increase of plays focusing on the older characters and the process of ageing in the last decades. Through her selective survey, theatre and age studies researcher Bridie Moore notices a considerable growth of new age-centred productions in British mainland theatre in the 2011/12 autumn/winter season. Nevertheless, according to the scholar, this boost does not necessarily assure a subversion of the adverse images and meanings ascribed to old age (Moore 2014, 190). The intersection of age and gender is a decisive component in the theatrical context that needs attention from the triple theatre-age-gender perspective. Some critics and researchers claim that theatre and drama, as part of popular cultures, are considered male dominant environments (Aston 1995, 3; Byrski 2014, 17; Cousin 1996, 67; Curb 1985, 304; MacArthur 2015). Moreover, the portrayal of older female characters in contemporary plays is rather partial, incomplete or ambiguous as it is often based on ageist stereotypes. The majority of the plays analysed by the aforementioned theatre and age critics are mainly commercial plays (many of them winners of the Tony or Pulitzer Awards, or nominees for the Best Play category in those awards), as seen in the seminal monographs of Valerie Barnes Lipscomb (2016) and Michael Mangan (2013). Lesser known works are, unfortunately, not given proper attention, even though they form part of the so called "women-conscious drama", to borrow the

term from Rosemary K. Curb, that is, plays either by or about women which reflect various aspects of women's lives from a socio-political perspective (1985, 302).

2. On the Play

This paper offers a close reading of *Ripcord*, a comedy by the American playwright, lyricist, librettist and screenwriter, David Lindsay-Abaire, winner of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *Rabbit Hole*. It examines how the play reveals and subsequently interrogates liminal and stereotyped categorizations of older female characters in contemporary plays through one particular case study. Foregrounding issues of care related to senior living facilities, as well as aspects of old-age identity and of later-life creativity, this study analyses the ways in which the play intends to move away from the socially constructed ageist patterns regarding older women.

Commissioned by Manhattan Theatre Club through the Bank of America New Play Commissioning Programme, *Ripcord* received its world premiere at Manhattan Theatre Club (New York) on October 20, 2015. Set mostly at the Bristol Place Senior Living Facility, the comedy uncovers opposing, at first sight, personalities of two widows, Abby Binder and Marilyn Dunne—both in their seventies-eighties—, who are forced to share the same room in the nursing home. Marilyn, an altruistic, amicable, incessantly talkative and diabolically sweet woman never gets angry because "[i]t always leads to an ugly place" (17). She takes on a challenge of living with her grumpy roommate who reminds Marilyn of her deceased husband: "He was all pushback and bluster too. And I got very good at working around that. It's sort of my area of expertise. If I lived with him, I can certainly live with you" (44). Abby, her solitary, taciturn, sharp-tongued and, above all, unafraid coeval claims that fear, as well as other things in life, disappear "when you live long enough" (30). She openly expresses her dislike of Marilyn and the wish to stay in 'her' room alone: "I don't like you. It's that's simple. I don't like you, and I want you to go. Look, some people like having someone around. I'm not one of those people" (42). The two women decide to participate in a no-rules competition in which Marilyn must get really angry and Abby – be really frightened: "How about this, I try to find something that makes you scared, and *you* try to

find something that makes me *angry*. That'd be fun!" (30) If Marilyn wins, she will have the bed by the window; otherwise, she will leave the room all for Abby. Their apparently innocent bet turns into a dangerous game that reveals not only their peculiar sense of creativity, but some troublesome truths that each of the women would rather keep undisclosed. Even though the play has received somewhat ambiguous criticism—having been called as an "expertly engineered situation comedy", "an amiable if simplistic crowdpleaser", "a lazy piece of writing without […] freshness" or "a non-essential and not very funny new comedy" (Broadway World 2015)—, this theatrical piece is worth considering from the interdisciplinary perspective of theatre-age-gender studies due to the complexity of its older female characters and their ambiguous representations in the play.

3.   On the Care Home

In his seminal monograph, theatre and age studies critic Michael Mangan asserts that contemporary theatre and drama frequently recur to certain "'stock' settings" (2013, 199). According to the scholar, the care home has become "a sub-genre in its own right, with its own conventions, repeatable stock characters and recyclable tropes and plotlines" (Mangan 2013, 199). It is one of those dramatic environments that has recently adopted a specific meaning within the context of ageing (Mangan 2013, 199). The dubious images of residential homes either in modern culture or in the media once were the reason for the widespread negative beliefs or even the notion of crisis within the care home system (Chivers and Kriebernegg 2017, 17; Mangan 2013, 199; Miller *et al*. 2017, 487-488). However, certain shifts in its contemporary representations have been traced by age-studies scholars. There are numerous examples of homelike, safe and friendly assisted living facilities that adopt qualified person-centred care, encourage their residents to pursue their own interests and provide them with certain freedom for creativity (Chivers 2012, 69; Fleming *et al*. 2017, 93; Karpen *et al*. 2016, 6).

The idea of considering nursing home as a site and a symbol that constructs society's images of ageing is not uncommon among scholars (Gilleard and Higgs 2017, 229). A relatively neutral description of the Bristol Place Senior Living Facility in Lindsay-

Abaire's Ripcord, not without occasional negative connotations, represents one of the society's greatest fears, namely that of old age. Situated next to a park, the nursing home is "fairly homey, as far as these places go" (5) with some domestic facilities. The dining room, the mailboxes and the dayroom are situated on the lower floor, while the upper floors contain both double and single rooms for those who can afford the latter. A somewhat negative opinion about the institution is noticed through Abby's complaints about food service. The care home accommodation is quite simple, "[t]here are two beds, a couple of end tables, two sitting chairs, and two identical dressers" (5). The residents can arrange their private spaces according to their wishes. Natural light fills in Abby and Marilyn's room through "[a] wide set of windows line" (5) and allows them to grow some plants. The attentive and amiable personnel do not only provide the residents with their favourite food, but respond to their specific requests, invite them to the shows outside the care home or decorate the common spaces according to the occasions. The older people are given certain flexibility which creates a homelike atmosphere within the institution. Nevertheless, these positive images of the care home are easily questioned and subsequently undermined by constant administration of medications, regular "improv classes" and "sense memory exercises" to mitigate the inmates' health problems (54-55, 84), occasional reminders of a resident's death (7-8)—all of which are signifiers of failure and decline often associated with old age. This paradoxical description of the institution fills it, in James Struthers's terms, with somewhat "conflicting images" in which the meanings of "home, hotel, hospital [and] hospice" all intertwine with one another (2017, 283). The explicit reasons behind the main protagonists' arrival at the care home are quite different. Marilyn, a proud mother of four adult children—who have successfully taken over the family business of skydiving—and an admiring grandmother, is there supposedly because of her heart impairment. For Abby, however, this place seems to be the only one she can afford and dwell in. Nevertheless, as the play's plot unfolds, it becomes clear that the residence has also become a shelter and an escape from her estranged and troublesome son, Benjamin, whom Abby has not seen for four years. It is within this context of long-term care institutionalization that two different life-course stories of the older women protagonists are uncovered and complex human relationships develop.

4. On Old-age Identity

These stories, that are either about or from an individual, "articulate [a person's] identity, a so-called narrative identity" (Baars 2012, 195). According to Jan Baars 2012, the narratives about the identities of older people in particular should not be seen as mere description or portrayal of their lives, but should instead stimulate a significant reflection on changes of those identifications (173-174). Several scholars have pointed out the unfixed and developmental nature of identity as well as its close connection and intersection with age and ageing (Baars 2012, 186; Zeman *et al.* 2017, 258; Cruikshank 2008, 147; Gullette 2004, 121-139). What is more, it is commonly asserted that multiple identities are inherent to all human beings. Nevertheless, each and every one of them may either rise in importance at a different life stage of an individual (Gullette 2004, 127) or interconnect and merge with other identities at the same time (Cruikshank 2008, 147-151). It is in the light of this multiplicity and interconnectedness that the identities of the main older female characters in Lindsay-Abaire's *Ripcord* are analysed.

Though the succession of Abby and Marilyn's multiple identities may vary and the limits between them can be blurred, they may be manageably (but not conclusively) listed as follows: woman, wife, mother, grandmother, old. While the first four are gender based and, simultaneously or not, may be perceived by the heroines as their core identities, 'old' as a fixed identity is resisted by them. Some ageing studies scholars claim the latter to be deficient, limiting, dreaded and socially and culturally constructed (Cruikshank 2008, 149-150; Gullette 2004, 124). What is more, all of these identities would be incomplete without their racial, socio-economic, educational and locational co-identities. All of them are either maintained, revealed, protected or kept in secret and even struggled against. What differentiates the two older female characters in *Ripcord* is the way they embrace their individualities and react to the factors that affect their stability. Abby, seemingly trapped in the isolated care-home-resident co-identity, looks for loneliness and avoids speaking about her past. She is visibly annoyed by Marilyn's talkativeness, kindness, friendly relationships with the personnel and, above all, her family. The play script reveals that Abby used to be a teacher at a grade school, she was happily married and had a son. The treasured status of a wife, a mother, a

job holder and a house owner was undermined and lost as a result of her son's drug addiction. This loss or, in Gullette's terms, "identity stripping" (2004, 130) leads to Abby's search for social isolation. Some social care researchers state that "having a place is akin to belongings" (Fleming *et al.* 2017, 93). Abby has lost all of her possessions, therefore she wants to keep the room all for herself as her only belonging. And in doing so, she struggles for maintaining her fixed co-identity of a solitary care home dweller.

Marilyn's narrative identity varies from the one of Abby in several ways. Unlike her roommate, Marilyn was not successful in her marriage. However, she is really proud of all the people she has "generated" (48), namely her children and grandson who, in turn, would do anything for her. Grandmother is an identity that slightly overshadows the others. According to Barbara MacDonald and Cynthia Rich, it is "the safest identity for an old woman […] whose primary motive for living is to love and nourish the young" (2001, 58). Marilyn's identities of mother and grandmother are harmoniously balanced until this convergence is shattered by the offensive comments of her "not thin-skinned" roommate (40). Abby ridicules the painting of Marilyn's grandson and thus shatters and strips her 'safest' identity, which now has to be defended and restored. These examples of the women's reaction echo the common belief that people usually fight when they are deprived of their essential identity (Gullette 2004, 127-128).

In spite of these obvious differences, there is one identity that both women can equally share—that of 'old'. Even though there exists an absolute interest in keeping "a fixed identity of 'old'" among gerontologists, "age as a primary identity" is questioned by the academics (Cruikshank 2008, 149). Margaret Cruikshank, for example, refrains from embracing it as an identity on various reasons. According to the scholar, it comprises only part of a person's life, invokes negative body image connotations and makes sharp divisions between different societal groups; hence it "reinforces the dualism young/old" (Cruikshank 2008, 149). It is generally asserted that older people abhor the negative meanings that 'old' entails, especially when 'old' is the synonym of stereotypical characterization, sameness, liminality and decline. Nevertheless, contemporary society considers 'old' an "all-encompassing identity", even though chronological age is only one

of the characteristics that define older people (Cruikshank 2008, 150).

5.   On Progress and Decline Narrative

At this point, it is crucial to remember that theatre is "an embodied art" (Switzky 2016, 137) that honestly reveals society's feelings, and these very often include fears of old age and ageing. In one of the scenes, Abby and Marilyn are invited to visit a haunted house where they meet a clown. Lory M. Culvell accurately refers to the clown figure as "a seminal theatrical convention in society [that] will continue to "mutate" and to be present in some form as long as theatre has a society with which to interact" (n.d.). Thus, the appearance of this comic figure in the play may serve a threefold function. Firstly, it epitomizes contemporary society and its deeply ingrained negative meanings ascribed to old age through ageist comments such as "some *aged* meat", "[d]on't dawdle, ladies" or "my *old* friends" (29, 30, 33). Secondly, this symbolic character mocks and laughs at one of the greatest contemporary fears and angsts—that of old age. And finally, through the clown's dramatic interaction with the audience, the reader and other protagonists in the play's scene, this "seminal theatrical convention" (Culvell n.d.) identifies and challenges the dominant "master narrative of decline" (Gullette, 2004, 132).

First theorized by the pioneering age critic Margaret Morganroth Gullette in *Aged by Culture* (2004), the decline narrative articulates ageing in terms of deterioration, impairment and loss (54). Moreover, it is frequently considered gendered (Greer 1992, 335-336; Holstein 2018, 6; Woodward 1991, 8) because contemporary "[s]ociety is much more permissive about ageing in men [than in women]" (Sontag 1972, 31). Therefore, ageism has some gender-based meanings (Marshall 2006, vii; Greer 1992, 286). Both the decline narrative and ageism have been widely applied in the theatrical context. The former, Mangan claims, can be frequently expressed in plays and performances as the human body, which "is always of a specific age", is "the primary medium of theatrical performance" (2013, 8). The latter, according to the theatre and age studies critic, "is articulated and perpetuated […] through stereotypes; and theatre and performance has always made

extensive use of stereotypes and stock characters" (Mangan 2013, 23). Lindsey-Abaire resorts to some stereotyped images in his portrayal of both older women. The examples of these stereotypes are seen through Marilyn's infantilized behaviour at the scary house, her childlike excitement when waiting for her family — "You've been waiting like a kid at Christmas for them to show up." (60)—, the excessive talkativeness— "It's been three weeks. And she never stops talking." (7)—and constant little bets with Abby— "That woman is troubled, Scotty. I think there's something wrong with her. She's always trying to make little *bets* with me." (9) Her companion is not deprived of this adverse characterization either. Abby is seen as a grumpy, stingy, stubborn and silent loner. What is more, both women are involved in gossiping about the young caretakers' affairs. In the grand scheme of things, in spite of Marilyn's unlikeness with Abby, the two women resemble each other in different ways. They share not only the room, the age, the civil status, the stubbornness and the capacity to face the challenge; but the subject of their narratives of decline, which is primarily male, namely Abby's worrisome son and Marilyn's violent husband. Nevertheless, some scholars assert that there have been certain changes in contemporary theatre in recent years. Theatre has not only started to move away from the dominant focus on decline towards the so called "progress narrative" (Gullette 2004, 17), but has done it through the increased portrayal of older women (Henderson 2016). The main protagonists' progress narratives in *Ripcord* develop through the ways both women confront its binary opposition or, with reference to Gullette, through "the collective resistance to decline forces" (2004, 17). Thus, Marilyn survives her victimized wife identity, challenges her roommate who reminds her of her deceased transgressive husband, and in doing so, the woman recovers from the previous victimization. What is more, the protagonist continues to develop her true mother and grandmother identities by helping Abby recover her family. Abby's progress narrative can be traced through the shift of her identities, namely from 'a mother of a drug addict son', towards 'a mother of a recovered from drug addiction son' and, finally, to the 'safest', grandmother identity.

6. On Later-life Creativity

The binary of decline and progress narratives exemplified through the older women's identities would be incomplete without one more essential characteristic inherent to both protagonists, that of later-life creativity. The definitions of creativity vary noticeably among the scholars. While some refer to it as "the ability to generate novel ideas" (Riley 2018, 474), others move further away from this focus on a human capacity. Hence, creativity is understood as "spatio-temporal nexuses of doings and sayings" (Schatzki 2014 quoted in Gallistl 2018, 94), a competence "emergent from assemblages of relations between the human and the non-human (things, ideas, social formations)" (Fox 2015, 523), or "a crucial organising principle of Western societies" (Reckwitz 2017, 2). Despite this diversity of interpretations, the majority of the scholars seem to agree that creativity should not be rigorously limited to the arts, but should instead encompass all aspects of everyday life (Hickson and Housley 1997, 544; Reckwitz 2017, 41). As seen in the play, the peculiar sense of creativity revealed through the variety of tricks and pranks the older women play on each other replicates this belief. Moreover, through Abby and Marilyn's ingenuity, the playwright undermines another ageist stereotype reinforced in today's youth-oriented society. This time, the limited characterization questions creativity in old age which is generally attached to younger generations. However, various scholars underline the interconnectedness between creativity and old age as well as the benefits this interrelation offers to both, the ageing individuals and society (Chivers 2012, 69; Cohen 2001; McCormick 2017; Price and Tinker 2014, 282-283). Older people can self-realize their ageing selves (Gallistl 2018, 94) and, at the same time, express what they really are or, in other terms, reveal and/or develop their true identities (Baars 2012, 169-197; Dollinger and Dollinger 2017, 49-64; Fisher and Specht 1999, 459). These theories find their manifestation within the context of *Ripcord*. Abby and Marilyn alternately express their real selves by means of their creative bet. For the older residents, creativity is "a process of liberation" (Gallistl 2018, 98) from their fears and anger. These are not only deeply ingrained in the selves of the older women, but prevent them from developing the women's true identities. In their 1999 study, Bradley Fisher and Diana K. Specht identify four ingredients that

are necessary for creativity development in later life. These comprise a combination of motivation, positive attitude towards art and life in general, imagination or inspiration of an individual, and finally, but not less importantly, time and health (466-467). Besides the women's apparent desire to have the bed by the window or, in Abby's case, the room for herself, both characters are motivated by negative events experienced during the life course. To make Marilyn angry, Abby spreads the humiliating arrest records of her roommate's husband; while Marilyn resorts to Abby's lost family, her sore spot, in search of Abby's fears. The "late bloomers" (Goldman and Mahler, 1995) are equally inspired and imaginative. Neither lack of time nor ill health interferes with their creative process. The women's creativity, as "late freedom" and reflection of their own life narratives (Gallistl 2018, 97-98), is a constant expression of Abby and Marilyn's real selves and, therefore, a mirror of their creative identities.

7. Some Conclusions

The way in which older people are portrayed in culture may have a twofold effect. On the one hand, their representation can foster society's awareness of the process of ageing and enhance, in this way, the social, political and cultural meanings of old age in our contemporary world. On the other hand, it can cause ageism and hence reduce, undermine or represent the experience of ageing in a discriminatory way, especially when this representation is mediated through the stereotype. Highlighting the topics of old-age identity and of later-life creativity within the care home context, the paper has offered an illustration of the ways in which older women are portrayed in contemporary theatre. The relative lack of ambiguity in society's understanding of ageing may be the cause of stereotyped and stigmatized labelling of older women as "devalued and frequently invisible" (Clark 2008, 460). The increase of plays depicting older female characters might not assure an undermining of the ageist scripts, but it may, "to a degree, inadvertently amplify the normative construction of old age" (Moore 2014, 190). Even though the playwright resorts to some stereotyped labels attached to the advanced age, these may be interpreted as ways of identifying, analysing and resisting its declinist images. Remembering

Lipscomb's notion of the transformative power of theatre (2012, 130), *Ripcord* can be called an anti-ageist play on various reasons. Firstly, it moves away from the unfavourable images of care homes as "a failure of the system, a desperate measure, or at least a last port of call" (Chivers 2012, 56), and reveals it as a "micro-complex of architectural, administrative, financial, clinical, familial, symbolic, and emotional interactions and power relations" (Katz 2005 quoted in Zeman *et al.* 2017, 248) where recovery, self-discovery and self-expression through creativity may happen. Secondly, the play explores the multiplicity of female identities as, in Gullette's words, "an achieved portmanteau 'me'" that combines "private, self-defined traits, relationships, heartbreaks, and desires" (2004, 125). These identities are in constant development and, to different degrees, embrace the binary of progress and decline. Thirdly, the play foregrounds the issue of late life creativity as inherent to old age, and in doing so, it establishes the new meanings of ageing. Referring to Barbara MacDonald's observation, Cruikshank has reasonably asserted that "a woman in her sixties is still in process" (2008, 150). The two widows, though in a much older age group, are "still in process" as well, namely in the one of creativity, self-discovery, self-realization and identity construction. Taken together, this combination is a powerful means of making sense of older women's lives.

There is much to be gained by examining the portrayal of older people in culture, and theatre in particular. Further research on the topics of ageing and old age in myriad cultural settings and contexts is required. It can definitely incite new understandings of ageing and invite all generations to rethink this complex process in the life-course. Even through Lindsey- Abaire's *Ripcord* "is ultimately not a play about jokes" (Haugland n.d.), the playwright uses humour as a corrective tool to recognize society's fears and anxieties concerning old age and to negotiate them. After all, ageing may be recognised not as the end, but as the ongoing process of development of creative identities.

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Notes

SPANISH HISTORY AND SCENERY IN LORD BYRON'S POEMS AND LETTERS

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Lord Byron's association with the Iberian Peninsula, both in historical and literary terms, plays a pivotal role in his early ideological development and subsequent poetical composition. The renowned romantic poet departed on the Grand Tour in Levante in the years 1809 - 1811, in the fashion of many contemporary young English aristocrats. Among the many countries toured in the Mediterranean beside his trusted companion John Cam Hobhouse were those of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain, Portugal, and Gibraltar. The reflections and impressions of the scenery of these southern countries were engraved into his memory and imagination and served as vital poetic material for his great compositions; most importantly the first Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, the first part of *Don Juan* and *The Age of Bronze*.

Therefore, his works are an essential source of anglophone literature for Spain and Portugal in the early 19th century. Moreover, as a member of the House of Lords and the liberal Whig faction, Byron, in his letters, often recorded his thoughts on issues related to the Iberian countries, especially on the War of the Peninsula, the Cintra Congress and the liberal uprising of the Spaniards in the 'Trienio Liberal'.

In this note, we will examine Byron's impressions and commentary on the Iberian countries, as reflected in his Letters

during his voyage and later. Additionally, we will examine specific passages from *Childe Harold I*, *Don Juan I-II*, and *The Age of Bronze*. These poems constitute, respectively, a literary narrative of his Grand Tour trip from Lisbon to Andalusia at the commencement of the Peninsular War; a rather humoristic fantasy of the social morals of Spain during the early 18th century and a fierce political criticism in support of the liberal Spaniards and their uprising during the reign of Ferdinand VII (1820-1823). Centring on the latter, we will discuss on Byron's nationalism, and we will prove that his innate Romanticism profoundly influenced his sentiments on the cause of the Spaniards.

Keywords: Peninsula War; Lord Byron; *Don Juan*; *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*; *The Age of Bronze*; Trienio Liberal

1. Introduction

The sources of Byron's poetry constitute a very important part of the relevant bibliography. The extensive literature on Lord Byron's travels to the East, despite some references to his brief passage through Spain, lacks a systematic presentation of the country's influence on his poetic production and intellectual formation. It must be noted that there is no monograph concerning Byron and Spain. But there are some chapters and periodical articles that are worth mentioning like Estaban Pujals' chapter on Byron and Spain, Philip H. Churchman's ''Lord Byron's Expériences in the Spanish Peninsula in 1809'' in the *Hispanique Bulletin,* Juan L. Sánchez's ''Byron, Spain, and the romance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage'' and D.L. Shaw's research[1].

The purpose of this note is to present on the one hand a summary of the poet's trip in Spain and on the other to examine its impact on his poetry and thoughts. Regarding the theoretical

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[1] Estaban Pujals, ''Byron and Spain'', in *Byron's Political and Cultural Influence in Nineteenth-Century Europe. A Symposium,* ed. Paul Graham Trueblood (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1981); Philip H. Churchman, ''Lord Byron's Expériences in the Spanish Peninsula in 1809'', *Hispanique Bulletin* XI: 125-171; Juan L. Sánchez, ''Byron, Spain, and the romance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage'', *European Romantic Review* 20: 443-464; D.L. Shaw, ''Byron and Spain'', *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 32: 45-59.

framework and methodology employed, the main information is drawn from his correspondence and from his poetic works, both *maiora* and *minora*. In the end of this brief discussion, it will be clear that even if Byron only spent few days in the country, Spain heavily influenced his intellect.

2. Byron's Journey in 1809

On July 2, 1809, after a short delay due to bad weather, Byron sailed from Falmouth for the Iberian Peninsula on Lisbon Packet, *Princess Elizabeth*. He also seized the opportunity to write a short poem to Francis Hodgson for the official commencement of his Grand Tour in Levante. There young Byron appears rather excited about the promise of his journey:

> *Huzza! Hodgson, we are going,*
> *Our embargo's off at last*
> *Favourable Breezes blowing* (*BLJ*, I, 211).

Byron's itinerary was affected by the Napoleonic Wars. The traditional and vital depot in France did not take place because of the war. Also, from 1807 the Iberian War was raging in the Iberian Peninsula.

Four days later, he arrived in Lisbon, from where he left for Spain, crossing through the Portuguese cities of Montemor, Arraiolos, Estremoz and Elvas, before reaching Badajoz. At the time of Byron's arrival in the country, the Spaniards had set up several local committees (*Juntas*) to combat French control of their country. In previous April, a coalition of British and Portuguese troops confronted the Napoleonic forces, gradually driving out the French of Iberia.

Having arrived on July 24, Byron and Hobhouse entered Seville the next day around noon[2]. The town was so congested with soldiers that it was difficult to find proper lodgings. Eventually, they were advised to stay with two unmarried women, Josepha Beltram and her sister, at Callea de las Cruzes no.19. They stayed in Seville

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[2] A reminiscence of one of the stops on the way to Seville can be found in a long-unpublished prose fragment in *BLJ*, VI, 381-382.

for three days and then left for Cadiz, the second major Spanish city they visited. Finally, ten days after their arrival, they left Spain for Gibraltar.

In Seville, they had the opportunity to visit the cathedral, which dazzled Hobhouse. The locals were also overwhelmed by the British lord and his companion; on July 27, a waiter ventured to convince the British aristocrat to hire him while a Spanish army officer was prompt to serve as his servant. They also met a fellow British, Sir John Carr, a renowned travel writer[3]. Byron's well-known interest in love affairs also manifested itself. His hostess, Josepha, was impressed by his beauty, but he refused her offer to share the same bed.

While at Cadiz, the two travellers stayed at Bailly's hotel. On July 30, they met high-ranking figures, Don Diego Duffo, the British Consul, Lord Jocelyn and the nephew of Arthur Wellesley, the then general of the British forces in the Peninsula.

In a note in Stanza 142 of *Childe Harold's* Canto IV, Hobhouse writes sincerely about the sentiments of "horror and disgust" generated by the bullfights they witnessed in Santa Maria's amphitheatre. This custom appeared particular barbaric to the British "who can be much pleased with seeing two men beat themselves to pieces". This reaction appears natural because of Byron's fondness for animals and the love he nurtured for pets, especially his dog Boatswain. At Cadiz, their social interactions provided them with the opportunity to attend an English opera, *A Peep into the Seraglio*.

Besides, on Monday, July 31, Byron, who since his adolescence read Roman history, purchased a related book. The first book he read concerned an incident in Roman history, a battle near lake Regillus.

His erotic adventures continued at Cadiz, where Byron flirted with the daughter of Admiral Cordova during a play. The young lady was willing to teach him Spanish, but, again, the young lord refused the opportunity. In a letter to his mother some days later, Byron offers a particular image of himself as a pretended dutiful son and,

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[3] They met John Carr again a few days later at Cadiz, *BLJ*, I, 215-216.

as a result, we cannot determine if he indeed declined these erotic proposals. Nevertheless, his stay with two unmarried women at Seville constituted a breach of the accepted upper-class decorum of Spanish society. It is evident, though, that his main focus of interest was love and romance.

The few letters of Byron, describing his stay in Spain, provide us with some information. Initially, Seville is described as "a fine town", and Cadiz's memory causes pleasure to the poet: "Cadiz, sweet Cadiz!" (*BLJ*, I, 215-216)[4]. Byron also remarks on the national character of Spanish women and men: ''For, with all national prejudice, I must confess the women of Cadiz are as far superior to the English women in beauty as the Spaniards are inferior to the English in every quality that dignifies the name of man" (*BLJ*, I, 215). It is not uncommon for Byron to make derogatory comments about nations whom we otherwise know he loved and supported their struggle for freedom - such were the oppressed Greeks and Irish Catholics. Further proof of this emotional and social ambiguity is his reference to his mother: "I like the Spaniards much" (*BLJ*, I, 221). Elsewhere, he asserts that "Spaniards are far superior to the Portuguese, and the English abroad are very different from their countrymen" (*BLJ*, I, 216-217)[5].

Furthermore, Byron wrote that the "grandees" who left Madrid during the "troubles" had by then reached Cadiz, "the prettiest and cleanest town in Europe, [...] a complete Cythera". (*BLJ*, I, 215-216)[6]. From Gibraltar in a letter to his lawyer, John Hanson, he mentioned the battle near Madrid and informed him that the "Spanish Government" was in Seville (*BLJ*, I, 216-217). Byron, who was rather sensitive about war brutality, wrote that "Spain is all in arms" and "barbarities on both sides are shocking". We can assume from these reports that he had been informed of the war events by eyewitnesses. In his letter to his mother, he specifically

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[4]In his other letters, Byron expresses the same positive opinion on the beauty and cleanliness of the two Spanish cities but also for the superiority of the road network compared to the English one, *BLJ*, I, 216-217, 218-222).

[5] His mother informed John Hanson a few days after Byron's letter that her son was "delighted with Spain and the Spanish Ladies" (*Byron's Correspondence*).

[6] By "troubles" Byron probably means the events of May 2, 1808, in Madrid, when General Joachim Murat suppressed a Spanish uprising, provoking nationwide resistance against the French.

mentioned the exact British losses in the battle near Madrid (two hundred officers and five thousand soldiers). The battle he penned about most probably related to the British British victory at Talavera, a town southwest of Madrid on July, 27/28 under the command of Arthur Wellesley and Gregorio de la Cuesta[7].

Even though these ten days were the only Byron ever spent in his life in Spain, the beauty of the landscapes, the temperament of Spanish people and the country's history fueled the poet's poetic imagination. In the following section, some references to Spain are examined from the Byronic corpus.

3.   Spain in Byron's Poems

Based mainly on travel experiences, the emotions that overwhelmed him when he observed the various historical places and the thoughts that caused him similar mental irritations, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is the poem that made Byron famous in one day.

In Canto I, Byron quickly transfers his hero to the climate of Spain, where, referring to an area of historical importance, he comments with the style of a philosophical observer on the persons and things that are culturally connected with the country. Characteristic of his experiences is an excerpt from the bullfighting arena, where the bull's agony and despair against the matador and his equestrian assistants are described with unparalleled realism:

> *Foiled, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,*
> *Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,*
> *Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,*
> *And foes disabled in the brutal fray;*
> *And now the Matadores around him play,*
> *Shake the red cloak and poise the ready brand:*
> *Once more through all he bursts his thundering way*

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[7]After this battle, Arthur Wellesley became the first Viscount of Wellington. For the rest of his life, Byron often referred to the later Tory Prime Minister with derogatory remarks in his poems and letters. Byron's dislike of Wellington was primarily based on his victory over Napoleon, Byron's idol. During his stay in Spain, he notes seeing Wellington: "listening to the speech of a patriotic cobbler of Cadiz, on the event of hiw own entry into that city, and the exit of some five thousand bold Britons from this 'best of all possible worlds'" (*CPW,* II, 275).

Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
Wraps his fierce eye – 'tis past – he sinks upon the sand! (*Childe*
Harold's Pilgrimage, I, 774-782)[8].

Byron here, despite the descriptions of the cries of the fanatical crowd and the admiration of the beautiful women for the "heroic" bullfighter, disapproves of this sport, as in Hobhouse's narrative.

In general, in the first canto, Byron comments on political and historical events, criticizes the lack of patriotism displayed by monarchs in Iberia, emphasizes his liberal sentiments both as narrator and as Harold's persona, admires the beauty of Spanish women and praises their extraordinary courage without quoting any sexist stereotype. Harold's course in the Iberian is thus transformed into a narration of political crises relating to freedom, nationalism and politics. Palaces and monuments - apart from the Cathedral of Seville - do not interest him much, thus choosing to focus his storytelling in humans. Finally, he does not mention at all the writers and scholars of the Iberian states.

References of Spain can also be found in his magnum opus, *Don Juan*, where the protagonist originates from the Iberian country. From the first canto, the reader is informed about the wrong upbringing which young Juan received from a shallow maternal personality.

Sagest of women, even of widows, She
Resolvedthat Juan should be quite a paragon,
And worthy of the noblest pedigree
(His Sire was of Castile, his Dam from Arragon);
Then for accomplishments of Chivalry,
In case our Lord the King should go to war again,
He learned the arts of riding, fencing, gunnery,
And how to scale a fortress – or a Nunnery. (*Don Juan*, I, 297-304).

A little later, Juan experiences his first love affair with the married young girlfriend of his mother, Julia. At the same time, Juan's mother is also having an illicit affair with Julia's husband, Don Alfonso. Through the narrative of these extramarital affairs,

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[8]   The lines quoted in this article follow Jerome J. McGann's edition of Byron's complete poetical works.

Byron criticizes the hypocritical society, which tolerates Alfonso's relationship with Juan's mother, while at the same time, the love of the two youths is disapproved. Byron's criticism is more universal sentiments without focusing specifically on Spanish society. Later in the poem, after a series of adventures, Don Alfonso discovers the illegal relationship between Juan and Julia, forcing the young Spaniard to escape the country sailing from Cadiz to France and Italy.

Finally, at the beginning of Canto II, the persuasions of pedagogical nature continue, correlating to the character and actions of Juan at the age of sixteen:

> I
> *Oh ye! who teach the ingenuous youth of Nations,*
> *Holland, France, England, Germany, or Spain,*
> *I pray ye flog them upon all occasions,*
> *It mends their morals, never mind the pain;*
> *The best of Mothers and of educations*
> *In Juan's case were but employed in vain,*
> *Since in a way that's rather of the oddest, he*
> *Became divested of his native Modesty.*
> II
> *Had he but been placed at a public school,*
> *In the third form, or even in the fourth,*
> *His daily task had kept his fancy cool,*
> *At least, had he been nurtured in the North;*
> *Spain may prove an Exception to the rule,*
> *But then exceptions always prove its worth -*
> *A lad of Sixteen causing a divorce*
> *Puzzled his tutors very much, of course. –* (*Don Juan*, II, 1-16).

The other Cantos of the long poem take place outside Iberia, where Juan continues his various adventures while in exile.

The final poem with references to Spain is the last neoclassical satire, penned by Byron in Italy shortly before his departure for Greece, titled *The Age of Bronze*. In this profoundly revolutionary poem, the romantic poet explicitly points to recent political events in Spain. His lines are characterized by a liberal disposition, which favours the Revolution.

In the ideological level, this poem which satirizes the Holy Alliance and supports the liberal upheaval of the Spaniards and the

nationalist war of the Greeks can be labelled traditional Foxite/Glorious Revolution Whiggish, even if at some points the poem leans to a more radical approach. Traditional Whiggism supported the struggle for liberty, ownership and national sovereignty. Jane Stabler underlines, that *The Age of Bronze* "represent Byron's search for a new political identity […] a more carefully targeted repudiation of the cultural and political systems that his English friends wanted him to rejoin'" (2016, 163). Additionally, David V. Erdman, in a series of four articles, has proven that Byron, although in favour of parliamentary and political reform in principle, desired not to be linked with 'blackguard' radicals like Major Cartwright and William Cobbett [9] . This ideologically ambivalent stance was further developed in Italy and is evident in his Venetian tragedies, in *The Vsion of Judgement* and, in *The Age of Bronze*. Beaton insightfully observes that the work reflects Byron's general views on Napoleon's failure, the post-Napoleonic regime and the liberal revolutions. He also points out that in *The Age of Bronz*e we do not detect the excruciating doubts of *Marino Faliero*, and none of Byron's conceptions of the future struggle of 'nations' in *Dante's Prophecy* (Beaton 2013, 212). Furthermore, Beaton remarks that in *The Age of Bronze*, one liberal Revolution looks almost identical with every other (Beaton 2013, 212). In this context, regarding the Spanish and Greek Revolutions, the reviewer of the *Black Dwarf*, a radical periodical comments: 'yet we cannot help wishing his Lordship had at an earlier period animated those nations by these "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," with which his muse is so familiar (Scrivener 1992, 45).

The historical background of the Spanish Revolution is this: In 1812 in Cadiz, a group of Spanish Liberals drafted the Cadiz Constitution. After the end of the Peninsular War, King Ferdinand VII began to employ authoritarian tacts to strengthen his position. As a result, in 1820, General Riego organized a liberal coup d 'état,

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[9] These four articles written by David Erdman constitute an essential study in Byron's politics: David V. Erdman 1941. ''Lord Byron and the Genteel Reformers', *PMLA 56*: 1065-1094˙ 1942. ''Lord Byron as Rinaldo'', *PMĽA* 57: 189-231˙ 1947. ''Byron and Revolt in England'', *Science and Society* 11: 234-248˙ 1962. ''Byron and the New Force of the People'', *Keats – Shelley Journal* 11: 47-64.

which was violently suppressed by French troops three years later, in 1823. This three-year period became known as the Trienio Liberal due to the short-lived liberal reforms that took place and the freedoms that were granted by the king. Byron dedicates many verses from *The Age of Bronze* to Spanish history, seduced by the contemporary democratic uprisings (Beaton 2013, 116).

The first mention of Spain compares the country's past and its colonial campaigns with its liberal present.

> *Spain! which, a moment mindless of the Cid,*
> *Beheld his banner flouting thy Madrid!* (*The Age of Bronze,* 151-152).

And Byron continues:

> *Where Spain was once Synonymous with Crime,*
> *Where Cortes' and Pizarro's Banner flew;*
> *The Infant World redeems her name of "New."*
> *'Tis the old Aspiration breathed afresh,*
> *To kindle Souls within degraded flesh,*
> *Such as repulsed the Persians from the Shore* (*The Age of Bronze*, 265-270).

Byron then focuses his attack on the authoritarian and "bigot" Monarch Ferdinando, who was attempting to counter the liberal coup:

> *Yet left more Antichristian foes than they –*
> *The bigot Monarch and the butcher priest,*
> *The Inquisition, with her burning Feast,*
> *The Faith's red "Auto," fed with human fuel,*
> *While sate the Catholic Moloch, calmly cruel,*
> *Enjoying, with inexorable eye,*
> *That fiery festival of Agony! –*
> *The stern or feeble Sovereign, one or both*
> *By turns; the haughtiness whose pride was Sloth;*
> *The long degenerate noble, the debased*
> *Hidalgo, and the peasant less disgraced*
> *But more degraded; the unpeopled realm;* (*Don Juan*, 333- 343).

But according to the poet all these all belong to the past and the present is rather promising for the Spaniards: *Neglected or forgotten - Such was Spain?/ But, such she is not, nor shall be again* (*The Age of Bronze,* 352- 353). The Spanish revolutionaries are encouraged to advance their struggle for freedom, like some of their

ancestors, have done: Such have been, such shall be, such are. Advance! And win - not Spain, but thine own freedom, France! To his disappointment, however, Byron beheld the Revolution being crushed as was the case in Italy with the Carboni Risorgimento.

One of the last reports of Spain was made on a letter to Kinnaird on March 1, where Byron still contemplated the possibility of moving to Spain (Beaton 2013, 221, *BLJ,* X, 114). However, in the end, he would decide to participate in the Greek War of Independence, during which he died in Messolonghi in April 1824 without ever travelling to Spain again.

4. Conclusions

It is clear that Byron had been influenced not only by the beautiful Spanish landscapes but also by the country's history, its liberal struggles for political freedom and by the manners, customs and social conventions, which he had the chance to observe in Seville and Cadiz. The aforementioned struggle of the Spanish liberals contributed to his revolutionary thinking. In a literary level, *Don Juan* echoes the poet's love affairs in Spain and his perception of the Spanish national character.

A further literary and historic analysis in the form of a potential monograph could trace even more direct or indirect references to the author's relationship with Spain. A more thorough research will provide the readers with additional information on the sources of the Byronic corpus, and reveal more about the social and political history of his contemporary Spain.

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ROCK AGAINST RACISM AND PUNK. HOW MUSIC STOOD UP AGAINST RACISM IN THE ENGLAND OF THE 1970S

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T he 1970s in England was a dark decade which brought discontent to a great part of the English society as inflation, unemployment and the oil crisis scourged the lower classes after the vanishment of post-war prosperity. Along with these examples of economic recession and crisis, England also witnessed the rise and success of the National Front, an extreme-right political party that sided with racism, xenophobia and white supremacy among other principles. Racism was soon to surface in the music industry with the arrival of punk and its use of swastikas and other representations of fascism, even if those fascist symbols were initially used mainly as a desire to shock the audience. The racial tensions in England in the mid-70s, however, were taking their toll and right-wing extremists found in punk a place where they could freely manifest their hatred for non-white individuals. Other artists in the music industry, such as David Bowie or Eric Clapton, also shared racist discourses, which caused the movement Rock Against Racism (RAR) to start up in England with the purpose of using music as a weapon against racism and to raise awareness of the racial problems that were taking place in England at the time.

The aim of this paper is to show how music in the England of the 1970s stood up against racism and the alarming increase of

National Front and racism by raising awareness of these problems among the masses, most specially among the younger generations. The paper will also focus on the way punk artists disassociated themselves from their fascist reputation (showing their support to RAR) and on the bonds that were established between the punk and reggae musical styles during this period in order to eliminate racism from the industry.

1.   Introduction

The 1970s was a hard decade for the British society as the country faced an economic recession that put an end to the prosperity of the 1960s which had allowed the English citizens to grow economically and to progress in different areas of social life (Turner 2013; Martín: 2014; Sandbrook, 2011 & 2012). Those who lived in the Swinging Sixties could witness the effects of the postwar economic boom: a low percentage of unemployment and inflation, an increase of car ownership, the rise of wages and a stable economy, etc. In all, Britain was not only succeeding economically but also culturally: England had won for the first and only time the FIFA World Cup, James Bond leaped to the big screen, British fashion boomed all over Europe and the British Invasion (the spread of British music all over the United States) movement was started. Nevertheless, that welfare was fading out as England entered the 1970s. If we were to describe the economic atmosphere of this period in the nation, stagflation (a combination of inflation, stagnation and high levels of unemployment) would be an appropriate term to illustrate the decline that the country was undergoing at the beginning of the decade. The consequences of the devaluation of the pound in 1967 started to emerge in the following years, when the inflation levels increased which each passing year (Pettinge 2017). 1973 was a turning point for England since the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries carried out an oil embargo for the countries that supported Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Consequently, oil price rose severely causing great damage to the English economy. Along with these adversities came the bailout of the IMF in 1976, power cuts and several states of emergency, which only worsened the

situation. These are only a few examples of how the economy of England fell apart in the 1970s, a decade that culminated with the Winter of Discontent in 1978-79, in which the country was flooded by a wave of strikes.

2. England and the Racial Crisis

The problems of England in the 1970s, however, were not only related to the economy of the country. The English society itself was undergoing a racial crisis, a time when xenophobia, white supremacy and the rising success of extreme right-wing political parties emerged. In this paper, I aim at showing how music fought against racism and fascism in such a problematic period of the English history, and how musicians from different musical genres united with the purpose of raising awareness of the racial issue that was taking place at the time.

In 1967 the National Front was founded, a political party which consisted of the coalition of several far-right groups: the British National Party, the League of Empire Loyalists and the Racial Preservation Society. The party gained popular support significantly in the beginning of the 1970s as "an initial membership of 1500 rose to a peak of 17,500 by 1972" (Barberis et al. 2000, 187). The NF focused primarily on the issue of immigration following the increase in the number of immigrants who had arrived in the country in the previous decade, most of them coming from countries belonging to the Commonwealth. When it comes to its policy

> the NF platform centred mainly on issues of immigration and racial identity. The Front's manifesto for the October 1974 general election promised a ban on all non-white immigration into Britain and repatriation of 'all coloured immigrants'. (Worley and Copsey 2016, 6).

Additionally, Idi Amin Dada, who was the president of Uganda at the time, ordered the expulsion of those Asian who were living in the country and had British passports. As he declared:

> I am going to ask Britain to take over responsibility for all Asians in Uganda who are holding British passports, because they are sabotaging the economy of the country (Keatley 1972).

As a consequence, around 80,000 Asians were expelled from Uganda, of which 28,000 of them arrived in Great Britain. In addition to this, the financial crisis complicated the situation to the migrants who established themselves in the country, as they were targeted as the aggravators of the crisis by 'stealing' jobs from British citizens. (Turner 2013, 215). The NF highly benefited from this situation and kept gaining support from a part of the British population who began to increasingly fear and reject immigration.

But the National Front was not the only political party which flaunted a racist discourse in the Britain of the late 60's and early 70's. Other political figures also contributed to the rejection of immigration, such as Enoch Powell, a Tory minister who, in 1968, pronounced what is known now as the *Rivers of Blood* speech, in which he tackled the issue of immigration by strongly criticizing it. In that speech, Powell declared that

> (…) it almost passes belief that at this moment 20 or 30 additional immigrant children are arriving from overseas in Wolverhampton alone every week - and that means 15 or 20 additional families a decade or two hence. […] We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependants, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. (Telegraph Reporter, 2007).

This discourse is in line with Margaret Thatcher's position, who claimed on a television interview in 1978 about immigration numbers that[1]

> (…) if we went on as we are then by the end of the century there would be four million people of the new Commonwealth or Pakistan here. Now, that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture (Thatcher 1978).

These are only a few examples of how mass immigration appeared to be one of the main concerns of the British society in the 1970s, when it was essentially seen as a problem. Furthermore, racism was not only perceived in the words of political parties and

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[1] Thatcher was the leader of the Conservative Party at the time.

their representatives, but also materialized in the form of racial attacks which began to occur on the streets, such as the Notting Hill Carnival riots of 1976. Just like every year since 1966, the streets of Notting Hill were ready for the celebrations carried out by members of the West Indian and Black community. However, the police presence was considerably higher than in previous years. According to witnesses, a fight took place around 5pm and right after chaos started, the police and those who attended the celebration engaged in fights which included policemen beating up participants and the latter attacking police officers by throwing bricks and other objects. The riot resulted in more than 100 police officers having to be taken to hospital and "around 60 carnival-goers also needing hospital treatment after the clashes which led to the arrest of at least 66 people." (BBC: On This Day, 1976)

3. Racism in Music

Against this backdrop, music and musical movements in Britain played a very important role, showing a striking commitment and compromise to keep racism and totalitarianism at bay. We must note, however, that music in the 1970s in Britain was not exactly a safe place for non-white individuals and that the industry contained remarkable examples of racist and fascists attitudes. To begin with, the 1970s brought the birth of one of the most controversial musical genres: punk, which is strongly connected with to the economic and social decline of England and with the decay of traditional values, so it is no surprise that we can find in punk musicians traces of far-right ideals. Consequently, the punk movement imported , among other aesthetic aspects- the symbology of extreme-right ideologies, such as swastikas and iron crosses, which were an integral part of the clothing of punks bands and punk fans.[2] However, despite the fact that some punk rockers shared far-right standards, the majority of them only used these symbols to shock their audiences and as criticism of the British society. The aim of punks was not to claim

[2] For instance, in one of the first appearances of the Sex Pistols in television (December 1st, 1976 at the *Today* show), one of the fans of the band could be seen sporting a Nazi armband.

racist ideologies, but to denounce the similitude of their situation with a fascist regime:

> fascism had won the Second World War: that contemporary Britain was a welfare-state parody of fascism, where people had no freedom to make their own lives—where, worse, no one had the desire. (Marcus 1989, 118).

Nonetheless, the damage was done, and far-right followers found punk as a co-religionist musical genre which shared their ideals. As Matthew Morley (2017) notes

> (…) these confrontational symbols were often utilized to provoke a reaction and juxtaposed deliberately to avoid easy assimilation. In doing so, however, punk could not prevent political meanings being projected back onto the emergent culture. Just as members of the far right saw punk's swastikas and iron crosses as evidence of the white youth becoming aware of their racial identity, so some on the left saw in punk a formative expression of socialist protest (…) accusations of fascism soon led bands such as the Clash to better define their stance, presenting themselves as 'anti-fascist, anti-violence, anti-racist, pro-creative (10).

In 1974, David Bowie, who had already achieved a successful musical career in the UK, raised a strong controversy: in an interview for *Playboy* magazine, Bowie claimed that

> Rock stars are fascists. Adolf Hitler was one of the first rock stars […] He was no politician. He was a media artist. He used politics and theatrics and created this thing that governed and controlled the show for 12 years. The world will never see his like again. He staged a country. (Sorene 2014)

While he was in Stockholm, Bowie shared some thoughts on fascism: "As I see it, I am the only alternative for the premier in England. I believe Britain could benefit from a fascist leader. After all, fascism is really nationalism." (Buckley 2005: 250) and in 1976, the British music journal *New Musical Express* (NME) published an image of Bowie allegedly doing the Nazi salute in their cover, which was headlined with the words 'Heil and Farewell'.[3] The music industry was therefore being flooded with evidence of the racial tensions present in the country. It was not, however, until Eric

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[3] Tony Stewart, *New Musical Express*, 8 May 1976.

Clapton's polemical comments in 1976 that a major change occurred in the history of the relations between music and racism in Britain, for that sparked the creation of the movement Rock Against Racism. During one of his performances, Clapton addressed Enoch Powell's *Rivers of Blood* speech and encouraged the audience to vote for Powell after having made derogatory comments about immigrants "Vote for Enoch, he's our man, he's on our side, he'll look after us. I want all of you here to vote for Enoch, support him, he's on our side. Enoch for Prime Minister! Throw the wogs out! Keep Britain white!" (Marzoni 2019).

After hearing Clapton's declarations, a letter was sent to *NME, Sounds* and *Melody Maker*, the most successful music journals in the UK

> When I read about Eric Clapton's Birmingham concert when he urged support for Enoch Powell, I nearly puked.
>
> What's going on, Eric? You've got a touch of brain damage. So you're going to stand for MP and you think we're being colonised by black people. Come on... you've been taking too much of that Daily Express stuff, you know you can't handle it. Own up. Half your music is black. You're rock music's biggest colonist. You're a good musician but where would you be without the blues and R&B? You've got to fight the racist poison, otherwise you degenerate into the sewer with the rats and all the money men who ripped off rock culture with their chequebooks and plastic crap. Rock was and still can be a real progressive culture, not a package mail-order stick-on nightmare of mediocre garbage. We want to organise a rank-and-file movement against the racist poison in rock music –we urge support – all those interested please write to:
>
> ROCK AGAINST RACISM,
> Box M, 8 Cotton Gardens, London E2 8DN
>
> P. S. 'Who shot the Sheriff', Eric? It sure as hell wasn't you!
> Signed: Peter Bruno, Angela Follett, Red Saunders, Jo Wreford, Dave Courts, Roger Huddle, Mike Stadler, etc.

And so, Rock Against Racism was created, its purpose being to organize concerts and carnivals that could bring together musicians and fans while raising awareness of the racial issue that was invading England. RAR's slogan "Reggae, soul, rock'n'roll, jazz, funk and punk" exemplifies the wide range of musical genres

that were present in the lineup of its concerts, where the movement gathered a broad audience from different ages and backgrounds, but with the common desire of defeating the far right-wing. [4]

4.   Music Fights Racism

Rock Against Racism gained many adepts since its beginning, not only music fans but also political activists. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) played a fundamental role in the success of Rock Against Racism. Regarding the SWP, the party established strong links with the musical movement as some of its founding members belonged to the party RAR was provided, as Goodyer (2019) puts it, with

> vital logistical support […] in the shape of printing and office facilities, and this enabled the organization to establish itself during a period of rapid initial growth, but the party also supplied many of RAR's leading cadres, and through them, it exercised a significant level of influence over the movement 's politics. (22)

The Anti-Nazi League was an organization originated one year after the creation of RAR, and it was closely linked to the SWP. The RAR and ANL connection gave way to one of the most successful RAR events to date. On 30th April 1978, both organizations set up a *Carnival Against the Nazis* which congregated a crowd of about 100,000 people. The carnival started in Trafalgar Square, where a large mass of people marched towards Victoria Park to culminate the event with a concert. During the rally, the crowd carried posters and banners claiming equality and condemning racism, as it is shown on the image (Figure 1). The gig was headlined by Tom Robinson Band, Steel Pulse, The Clash, X-Ray Spex and the punk poet Patrik Fitzgerald. It was important for RAR to include bands of different genres and with both black and white people, as Roger Huddle, one of the founders or RAR comments, "the concert was all about black and white unity, so it was important we had black and white people on stage together" (Naylor et al. 2008). He also mentions the importance of having

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[4] The movement was a complete success since more than 600 replies were sent to RAR within 14 days. (Goodyer 2019, 11).

organized events like the carnival in times where the National Front was gaining public support:

> We wanted to give people space to stand against the Nazis […] we wanted to do something before the local elections of 1978 to push the National Front off the streets and off the electoral registers. We wanted to get rid of them'. (Naylor et al. 2018)

Figure 1. The crowd of *Carnival Against the Nazis* rally carrying posters for equality

Rock Against Racism clearly achieved their goal of bringing to the public eye the issue of racism and the alarming increasing popularity of the National Front. Those who lived the movement in first person recall RAR as a turning point: "Rock Against Racism made it cool to be anti-racist" (Manzoor 2008) Gurinder Chadha, a film maker, remembers that during the Victoria Park concert

> (…) was when I thought that something had changed in Britain for ever. Before RAR, there was no sense that it wasn't OK to be racist. But with RAR, we got to see that there were others willing to speak out against racism and talk about a different kind of Britain. (Naylor et al. 2018).

In relation to RAR's fight against the National Front, Jerry Dammers, from The Specials, said: "at this time, RAR knocked
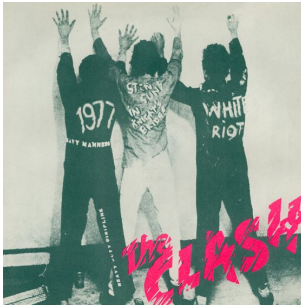
them as they were gaining votes, and played a huge part in defeating them." (Naylor et al. 2018). Goodyer (2009) also remarks the importance of RAR marching demonstrations confronting NF rallies:

> before RAR, the NF had staged intimidatory marches in areas with large immigrant communities, but once RAR began to demonstrate that they could put thousands on the street in opposition to them, the NF were forced to retreat. (Manzoor 2008).

Additionally, the NF's initial success suffered a decline serious blow in the local elections of May 4 1978, just one week after the *Carnival Against the Nazis,* as the National Front "failed to secure any seats and its level of support fell" (Manzoor 2008)

It is worth pointing out that many RAR concerts were headlined by punk bands which had previously shown fascist or racist attitudes, thus giving punk the opportunity to demonstrate to the general public that the genre was not a display of far-right supporters. Punk bands had already written songs against racism but due to their bad reputation, those who were not into the genre were not aware of this fact. This can be observed in The Clash's song "White Riot", which was inspired by the Notting Hill riots, where Joe Strummer (singer), Paul Simonon (bass) and Bernie Rhodes (manager) from the band were arrested during the incident. They represented themselves in this attitude on the single cover (Figure 2). The song calls for a revolution of white individuals after having realized that the black community hadn't been afraid of fighting for themselves during the riot. Nevertheless, the general public interpreted the song as a white supremacy hymn. As Simonon stated:

> I remember there were a lot of places that wouldn't let us play, all over the country, universities, and that was probably something that they read that we have a song called 'White Riot'. They thought we were some sort of National Front group, whereas, really, the song was about white people getting up and doing it for themselves because their black neighbors were doing it for themselves, and so it was, the riots and whatever. So it was time for the white people to get on with their own situation, which I suppose was the beginning of the punk thing. (DVD, *Punk: Attitude)*

White riot, I want to riot
White riot, a riot of our own
Black man gotta lotta problems
But they don't mind throwing a brick
White people go to school
Where they teach you how to be thick

The Clash "White Riot" (1977)
Album: *The Clash*

Figure 2. The "White Riot" single cover where we can see members of The Clash representing their arrest during the Notting Hill Carnival riots of 1976.

Punk bands where not afraid of speaking their mind about the racial issue and musicians often commented on the current situation. When being asked about the National Front on an interview with RAR's fanzine *Temporary Hoarding*, Johnny Rotten, Sex Pistol's lead singer, said

> I despise them. No one should have the right to tell anyone they can't live here because of the colour of their skin or their religion... How could anyone vote for something so ridiculously inhumane? (Manzoor 2008)

Moreover, bands released songs that carried anti-racist and anti-fascist messages as we can see in the examples below:

The National Front are fascists;
We don't hate the Black kids
The National Front are fascists;
Ain't nothing wrong with the black kids, no way

The Pigs "National Front" (1977)
Album: *1977*

The message of The Pigs' song is clear, they present the National Front as a fascist and racist party and sing in favor of racial equality.

In the following song, Tom Robinson makes a statement where he claims that nobody should remain indifferent towards the heated political situation and expresses his sympathy for the Left in a song with the goal of calling for awareness.

You better decide which side you're on
This ship goes down before too long
If Left is right then Right is Wrong
You better decide which side you're on

Tom Robinson Band 'Better Decide Which Side You're On' (1978)
Album: Power in the Darkness

5.   Conclusions

To conclude, the 1970s in Britain was a decade that witnessed an economic and social crisis with more downs than ups. White supremacy and racism, encouraged by the political forces of the time, also appeared in the music industry, and this led to the creation of movements such as Rock Against Racism. We consider that RAR played a key role in England's fight against the emerging fascist forces and the racist standards. All the concerts and carnivals organized by RAR proved to the National Front that music was a powerful weapon that could bring together a large mass of people that was ready to confront them. RAR's impact is still remembered nowadays as it is reflected on the words of the ones who lived its creation back in 1976 until the dissolution of the organization six years later. In addition, RAR also gave punk music the opportunity to mitigate their right-wing reputation and to address and raise awareness among their listeners of the problems non-white individuals were facing in the England of the 1970s as punk bands and their lyrics sent out straightforward messages against the radical right. All in all, the music industry of the 1970s was able to recognize how the racial issue that was threatening the English society, had also started to invade the music scene, which reacted against these unacceptable attitudes in pursuit of shedding some light on the racial question on behalf of those who couldn't be heard. Hopefully, this research will contribute to shed some light on the importance of studying the relationship between music and politics for its analysis will provide us with a less known point of view of societies and cultures.

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THE ENREGISTERMENT OF THE KAILYARDIST PATHOS: A DEBATE ON LINGUISTIC AUTHENTICITY AND NATIONHOOD IN THE LITERATURE OF MODERN SCOTLAND

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This note focuses on the case of Scots as an enregistered variety, in Asif Agha's (2003) terms, and the processes whereby it is represented in literature, the cultural meanings indexicalised in the variety and the Kailyardist movement as an important precursor for the establishment of the variety in literature. Throughout the note various aspects of non-standard language in literature are reviewed and several examples of Scots in kailyardist, revivalist and postmodernist works are commented upon. Considering Scots as the voice of the Scottish nation and a vehicle for political and sociocultural manifestation, this note serves to understand why authentic renderings, in opposition to less elaborate representations, are essential to preserve the indexicalised meanings of the variety. The note concludes with a brief observation of modern-day stereotypes of Scots easily findable in television and the notion of Scottishness as a continuum.

Keywords: scots; enregisterment; authenticity; kailyardism

1. Introduction: Non-standard Language and Enregisterment

Linguistic communication has marked human interaction throughout history in multifarious ways. Splayed into many levels, language appears to have been a powerful carrier of meaning, symbolism and ideology because of its flexible and unique features varying among communities. The sociological impact of language has evolved at the same pace, giving way to the creation of markers and stereotypes associated with a given way of expression depending on the community. Due to this, linguistic choices have been understood as entailing social meaning as a result of their association with different strata of society. Such cultural portrayals in language made their way into literature as a means of constructing fictional characters and signal their origin to specific social groups. This helped to create an image of the attributes and peculiarities of speakers outside the area of literary production, whilst also stimulate the fixation of clichés that were congealed in language. Consequently, the way one character or another expresses themselves in terms of pronunciation or lexis has an impinge on the reader and their conceptualisation of language in relation to that character.

There are several scholarly works that address this issue throughout history. In 1981, Norman F. Blake discusses this question in his *Non-standard Language in English Literature*. This book may serve as a stepping stone to navigate the ample field of linguistic characterisation through literature, since it does a review of non-standard use of language from Chaucer to more recent expressions such as the Victorians and the contemporary era. Speaking of *The Canterbury Tales* (1476), Blake explains that "people from different walks of life band together to form a travelling party to Canterbury" (33), and that by giving them a specific regional voice, their origins would be clear to the average reader. That is to say, the way Chaucer depicted each character by introducing specific traits that could be considered alien or extravagant to the average London-area reader is exemplary in that it helps to understand how language became a token of identity without people considering it strictly so until it was used in that fashion. Such tendency persisted in later centuries. This is obvious in Early Modern theatre, where Shakespeare, among other

playwrights, appears to have resorted to non-standard language to refer to the lowly or rural origins of a given set of characters that would contrast with other nobler ones. Blake corroborates this idea in his *Shakespeare's Non-standard English: A Dictionary of his Informal Language* (2003).

This literary sketch of other people's voices and linguistic perspectives became more apparent during the nineteenth century for a series of reasons that are made clear in many other studies, such as Görlach (1991), Shorrocks (1996) and Beal (2009), amongst others. They explain how the spread and awareness of different varieties of English in this century was prompted by the advancement in transport as well as the perfection or invention of the telegraph and the telephone, accordingly. At the same time, the cheapening of the print industry assisted the distribution of literary representations of regional speech. This naturally contributed to raising awareness of the situation of English in different counties and cities of the United Kingdom, and as with any other butterfly effect, the more different and foreign somebody's English was, the more it was used and represented in literature, generating more and more representations of the original linguistic features in the course of time.

In 2003, Asif Agha coined the term *enregisterment* to handle this literary trend, describing it as "processes through which a linguistic repertoire becomes differentiable within a language as a socially recognized register of forms" (231). It would be noteworthy to relate this notion to Silvertein's (1976) three orders of indexicality. According to Silverstein, one could consider indexes (or "pure" indexes) "features of speech which…signal some particular value of one or more contextual variables" (Beal & Cooper 2015, 29). Therefore, enregistered varieties would have reached the third order of indexicality where "forms which have been linked with a certain social category [not only are noticed by outsiders and vernacular speakers, but] become the subject of overt comment." (35). In light of Agha's and Silvertein's frameworks, dialectal studies within the field of diachronic linguistics have recently focused their attention on those varieties of English which showed distinctive traits with indexicalised social meanings.

Keeping this in mind, the British Isles provide an ample field of study to identify those varieties that could have been perceived differently and acquired meanings different from the standard that rose in the London area. So far, the Northern dialect has gained considerable scholarly attention given that it is often represented and circulated through a relatively stable set of linguistic features, as Beal (2009), Cooper (2013), Ruano-García (2012) and Beal and Cooper (2015), amongst others, show. Other varieties of English in the British Isles remain, however, vaguely examined. In this context, the Scots dialect is another interesting example to explore enregisterment in light of its literary representation.

2.   Scotland and Kailyardism: the Enregisterment of the Scottish Pathos

The history of Scots provides evidence of its uniqueness as a variety. Wolfgang Unger (2013) traces the origins of Scots "to the Northumbrian dialects", stating that the Scots were mainly of Gaelic ancestry (11). Whilst he does not offer a definite description of Scots, Unger acknowledges the existence of two types of Scots: broad and Scottish, the former being heavier and more distant to Standard English than the latter. This contrast is connected to a notion of identity where Scottish features become a dissimilar indicator to detach the Scots-speaking public from England. Robert Lawson (2014) suggests that "issues of identity, culture, and heritage [are] important reasons for using Scots" (9), a statement that is closely related with Even-Zohar's (2000) conception of *energy* as a force spiralling from the cultural power of a particular society. Whereas Even-Zohar speaks of a kind of survival of the fittest in terms of lore and culture when different communities clash, Scots appears to be employed by the Scottish nation as a means of delimiting the power of the neighbouring English culture.

Coming back to literature, this is strongly reflected in Victorian publications for the reasons stated above: cheaper production, ample readership, better means of communication and overall awareness of different types of English in written form. In addition, one must remember the growing tendency to reflect such differences in fiction. At the end of the nineteenth century, a new

literary school was born with the establishment of kailyardism. Andrew Nash (2007) states that 1895 is the year when this term was firstly used to refer to a trend in Scottish literature characterised by a sentimentalist, nostalgia-infused retrospection into rural Scotland, its ways of life and mundane events. Gillian Shepherd (1988) is more precise in her formulation of kailyardism, for she specifies that kailyardist novels are characterised by "an omniscient narrator, an episodic format, a rural setting, an imprecise chronology" (310). Kailyardist authors were scarce but notorious: J. M. Barrie, S. R. Crockett and Ian Maclaren became the pillars kailyardism rested upon. Their novels are freighted with authentic examples of Scots in terms of lexis, syntax and morphology, reason why passages from Barrie's and Maclaren's works, authors whose backgrounds are useful in this study as shown later on, will be used as illustration of the Scottish voice. Whilst guidelines on the pronunciation of Scots words present in the novels are not provided in advance, the apparently outlandish writing of most of the dialogues is engineered to contrast with Standard English. These sentimentalist reminiscences of Scottish parochial life peppered with samples of Scots are also designed to draw a line between a common identity as the British nation (mostly influenced by England, primarily favouring Standard English) and a unique, Scottish-only manifestation of cultural values.

Enregisterment and kailyardism become intertwined because of the above. Kailyardist authors created characters that spoke with what one could consider authentic Scots in that it was used to take the reader to an era where, if Scots themselves, would be compelled to feel homesick. For those non-Scots readers, however, the effect would only be one of strangeness and difficulty in reading, much like when one is confronted with an exotic civilisation. The discrepancy with Standard English is all the more visual in the following examples. Reading Ian Maclaren's *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1894), excerpts like the following are illustrative of the Scottish voice:

> "Think o' you and me, Hillocks, veesitin' the schule and sittin' wi' bukes in oor hands watchin' the Inspector. Keep's a', it's eneuch to mak' the auld Dominie turn in his grave. Twa meenisters cam' in his time, and Domsie put Geordie Hoo or some ither gleg laddie, that

was makin' for college, thro' his facin's, and maybe some bit lassie brocht her copybuke." (Maclaren, 10)

Whilst English by birth, minister Ian Maclaren was able to capture the Scottish voice thanks in part to a lifetime of clerical servitude for the Free Church of Scotland. His representation of the variety greatly coincides with that of Scots-born J. M. Barrie in *A Window in Thrums* (1889):

> "It's no very silvendy his comin' ower the brae by himsel," said Jess, adding in a bitter tone of conviction, "but he'll gang in to no hoose as lang as he's so weel dressed. Na, he would think it boastfu." (Barrie, 178)

A range of diverse linguistic aspects seem to concur, such as:

1. Aitken's Scottish Vowel Length Rule[1]: (a phenomenon which signals difference in vowel length between Standard Scottish English and Received Pronunciation): e.g. *lang* "long")
2. Substitution of short /ɪ/ for long /i/ (*veesitin'* "visiting'", *meenisters* "ministers");
3. /u:/ instead of /aʊ/ (as in *hoose*, "house").
4. Rich Scots lexis (*gleg* 'quick, nimble', *silvendy* 'trustworthy, adequate')

Although Scots in kailyardist works could be so fixed regarding the selection of features as to be considered "synthetic" (Lawson 2014), there seems to be a national consensus whereby most authentic literary depictions of Scots build on the same set of features. Over two hundred years before kailyardism, Robert Burns's poems were none the different in terms of linguistic traits:

> The Robin cam to the wren 's nest
> And keekit in and keekit in,
> O weel 's me on your auld pow,
> Wad ye be in, wad ye be in.

One can speak, then, of coinciding components or nuclear constituents which work as tokens of identification in literature. In other words, by employing those sets of linguistic features, the

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[1] Giegerich (1992) describes the rule in simple terms: "tense vowels are either long or short, depending on their context, while lax vowels are invariably short" (229).

writer is creating a recognisable and unique frame of interaction wherein their readership can entertain a feeling of nationhood and belonging powered by the selection of such features.

3.   Scots in Revivalist and Postmodern Literature: a Political Vindication and the Perils of Unauthentic Renderings

Written Scots suffered from disinterest in the shadow of more prominent varieties of English and the overwhelming nearness of Standard English during the first stages of the twentieth century. Some authors attempted a revival of Scots values (national pride, pathos, nostalgia for a rural Scotland) with poems resembling those of Burns. Hugh McDiarmid was a relevant initiator of this rebirth. A summary glance at his poetry should be enough to notice the similarities with the excerpts above:

> The auld mune shak ʼs her gowden feathers,
> Their starry talk ʼs a wheen o ʼblethers,
> Nane for thee a thochtie sparin ʼ
> Earth, thou bonnie broukit bairn!

Poetry was later replaced by narrative as regards the use of Scots as a vindication of the culture of a nation different from England. Although nowadays he appears to have become more fashionable due to political instability, Irvine Welsh stands out as a sort of champion when it comes to displaying Scotland through the voices of the working-class with no linguistic embellishments. *Skagboys* (2012) is a fine repository of examples such as this:

> "Ah say nowt, but ah dinnae want tae ken that minger ʼs tale. Oan the bus, ah sit beside Dad and a couple ay his auld mates fae the Govan yards." (Welsh, chap. 1)

Whilst in Welsh the representation is easier to follow, presumably for the sake of non-Scots readers, it performs accurately. One finds some of the features that were the norm less than two hundred years before, still infused with a message: whereas kailyardism was less about politics and more concerned with one's childhood and fondest memories in rural Scotland, Welsh's work becomes a vehicle to convey social and political values.

Kino Iwazumi (2001) responds to the issue of nationhood in saying that "Scottish nationhood was constructed through the interaction of various narratives, each representing a particular notion of Scottishness" (1). It would be reasonable to add that Scottishness and the Scottish fight for cultural and political independence is visible in this perseverance in declaring themselves an individual nation by producing pieces of literature where Scots is used. In other terms, Scots and the Scots variety have entered a feedback loop where political and cultural ideas have strengthened the employment of Scots whilst language has served Scots to find something unique in their culture, a weapon to battle with.

That being said, one must return to how the employment of non-standard language in literature, especially since the nineteenth century, evolved through time to understand why unauthentic representations (in this case of Scots) could damage the progress and message carried by the variety of a given community. Buendgens-Kosten (2014) defines authenticity as "related to notions of 'realness 'or 'trueness to origin'…characterizing a quality of the language used in them" (457). If one links this to what Marková (1997) declares when exemplifying language misuse in Orwell's *1984* (1948): "It is generally accepted by social scientists that it is through language that people express their self and identity" (266), one assumes that by providing unauthentic renderings of Scots (either unknowingly or out of deference towards the readership), authors of such pieces are inevitably damaging the sociocultural and idiosyncratic energy upheld by kailyardist (Barrie, Maclaren, Beaton), revivalist (MacDiarmid, Grassic Gibbon) and postmodernist (Welsh, Gray, Donovan) authors. Comparing the excerpts above with the following, one should be able to identify it as meagre and faint:

> "Ye 'd be better off no 'speakin ', lass." Bhaltair replied. 'We 'll be ridin 'through tha moors and mountains tae get tae Clan McColl, so save yer breath."

This passage is taken from Lydia Kendall's *Highlander's Love in Captivity* (2018), where language is used to portray a character mostly related to a romantic stereotype. Although the author adds a glossary of Scottish lexis at the beginning of the novel, one can notice the important differences between Welsh's

representation and Kendall's. In Kendall's case language appears to be more irregular and commercially-driven, since it does not serve a political or sentimental cause as in the examples provided earlier. Rather, language is engineered in a purely mechanical way to spark a series of archetypes in the mind of the reader. It is because of this that unauthentic representations of Scots could endanger its quality and sociocultural values.

There are several instances in the television and film industry (such as Mel Gibson's *Braveheart* or The Simpsons' Groundskeeper Willie) where Scots as a variety composed of very definite traits distinguishable from Standard English is poorly illustrated in comparison with more authentic depictions. In this sense, Bucholtz (2003) proposes the term "authenticity effects" to describe the core of what can be defined as "authentic", indicating that "authentication is instantiated through the assertion of one's own or another's identity as genuine or credible" (408). Bucholtz also identifies a difference "between a performed identity and an assumed target reality." (409). This is fairly obvious in the cases stated above (Gibson's *Braveheart* and *The Simpsons*) in contrast with Trainspotting or its cinematic adaptation. Whereas the former two set Scots as a goal rather than a symbolic rendering of indexicalised linguistic forms, the latter achieves a higher level of authenticity because of its authenticity effects, i.e. more elaborate and relatable linguistic forms (such as the ones offered by Welsh and the kailyardists: Aitkin's rule, richer Scots lexis) with a heavier indexical weight. Bucholtz's differenciation between a performed identity and an assumed target reality could be the reason why it would be fair to assume that Scots has undergone a "branched" process of enregisterment. On the one hand, kailyardism and later Scottish productions have helped standardise a fixed pattern for writing in Scots; on the other, however, stereotypical features have been dissected and repeated to extenuation to catalogue a given character as Scottish (a target reality). In this sense, misrepresentation of the variety could therefore adversely impact on its sociopolitical side if the commercial, or unnatural portrayal, overcomes or takes over those indexicalised linguistic forms vernacular speakers are more familiar with, since it would only insist on a fictitious "notion of Scottishness", as Iwazumi puts it, distantly related to actuality.

4. Conclusions

Briefly, one must take into account all the facts provided so far to realise that whilst Scots can be considered enregistered, in Asif Agha's terms, such status comes with downsides. Non-standard language has been widely employed as a means of signalling someone's origin briefly and without use of further description. The case of Scots has not received as much attention as that of the Northern varieties, but this note has sought to demonstrate its value in linguistic terms as well as to bring attention to the problematics of inaccurate or unauthentic representations. The kailyardist fashion of the late nineteenth century solidified what the poetry of Burns along with other contemporary authors instigated, and the result of their poignant and pathos-filled works can be regarded as valuable evidence of the enregistered state of the variety. If one were to consider Scottishness as a continuum, this would be directed towards the concretion of one single image composed, in a kaleidoscopic fashion, of many unique pictures, where unauthentic representations would be but distracting reflections blotting out momentarily its real colours.

In sum, non-standard varieties are in need of further studies that may help disentangle the linguistic intricacies they are composed of and their historical context, lest they fall into oblivion. This is nowadays more feasible due to the availability of resources such as the *Salamanca Corpus*, which enables us to study usually disregarded varieties by collecting literary pieces from the period 1500-1950 where their prime linguistic characteristics are documented. It is now in the hands of future research to make proper use of these works to bring forth the importance of dialectal varieties and their cultural weight.

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